

WORK SESSION AGENDA

1. Call to Order 5:30 p.m.
2. Hickerson Cemetery
3. Discussion of Items on the Regular Meeting Agenda
4. Public Comments
The public may speak to the Planning Commission regarding matters on the work session agenda that are not scheduled for public hearing or plat consideration. (3 minute time limit).
5. Commission Comments
6. Adjournment



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Planning

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Homer, Alaska 99603

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(p) 907-235-3106

(f) 907-235-3118

Staff Report PL 16-25

TO: Homer Advisory Planning Commission
THROUGH: Rick Abboud, City Planner
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner
DATE: May 4, 2015
SUBJECT: Hickerson Memorial Cemetery

Introduction

This staff report contains many attachments. Please keep them for future reference. Additionally, staff will have a power point presentation at the beginning of the work session. The Soldotna Cemetery is a modern facility, complete with written policies, many of which Homer lacks or needs to address. Soldotna also has several types of internment, from traditional grave sites, to memorial plaques, cremains plots, and more. There are many options that could be incorporated into the expansion of the Hickerson, that would use less land, be cost effective, and be more attractive.

Background

The City Manager held a neighborhood meeting on February 10th to address cemetery concerns. Then, the City Council discussed the issue, and referred the Hickerson Cemetery Project to the Planning Commission for recommendations. There are several questions Council would like the Commission to address.

The immediate questions are:

1. Should the city expand the cemetery?
2. What might a partial expansion look like?
3. Should the phase 1 expansion as designed be carried out?
4. What can be done to work with the neighbors?
5. Long term, say in the next 10 years, would the City want another organization, private or non-profit, to run the cemetery? What partnership opportunities are there?

Another question is, should the City be in the cemetery business? For now, staff recommends the commission table that question. We own a cemetery in town and the Hickerson cemetery, and finding new owners for those facilities is not the immediate problem. The question is, do we build more internment capacity, and is this a service the community wants or needs city government to provide? Again, Soldotna is an excellent example of a public private partnership to ensure the community has a cemetery, but that its not a significant burden to

tax payers. Soldotna has a 19 page, adopted policy manual that describes some of these partnerships, and the associated fees. If the Commission and community are interested in expanding the cemetery, city cemetery policies should be modernized and Soldotna can be used as a template. The policies would be a future agenda item, if desired.

Side note: at the February neighborhood meeting, there was mention of a portion of the existing cemetery where the American Legion has a building. An idea was to move the building and use the area for grave sites, if the Legion was amenable. Staff spoke with Parks staff, and found out the building houses remains and memorials, so moving it is probably not appropriate and that the way the site was used wouldn't be conducive to additional grave sites. Lastly, people generally buy multiple plots at one time, so adding plots around the building would not adequately address the near term demands for new plots.

Staff Recommendation

1. At the work session, staff will present a power point presentation of the Soldotna Cemetery, and some suggestions for moving forward with the expansion. Staff recommends the Commission then take public comments.
2. Commission request any additional information desired from staff and area property owners.

Next Steps

3. On a future agenda, the Commission will make a recommendation to the Council if any expansion should occur.
4. If the Commission recommends expansion, staff can create a scope of work accordingly – fees, private partnerships, cemetery policies, and a process for a different cemetery design.

Attachments

1. Cemetery Expansion Plans Phase 1
2. Full build out plans
3. Excerpt of City Manager Report February 17, 2016(Feb 22 meeting)
4. Excerpt of Council Minutes February 22, 2016
5. Letter dated 2/11/2016 from Jill Gann
6. Written comments from Robert Means 4/27/16
7. Neighborhood Letter 4/22/16
8. City website with Frequently Asked Questions about the project
9. Soldotna Community Memorial Park Map
10. Soldotna Cemetery web page

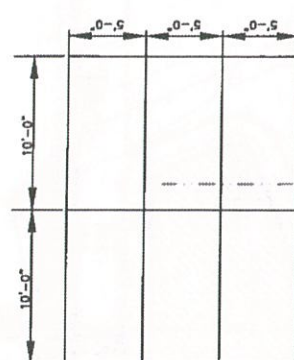


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DATE	

NELSON ENGINEERING
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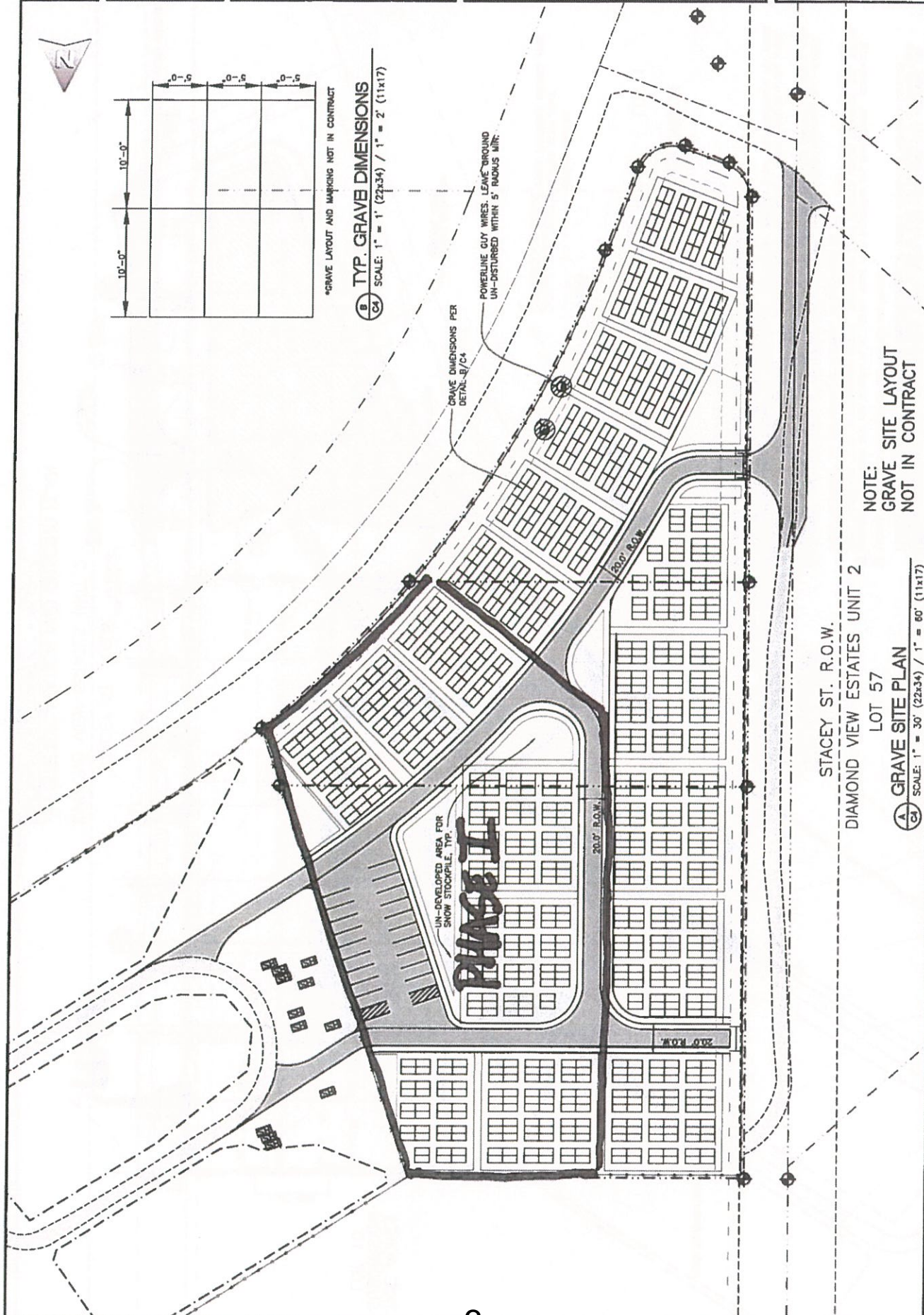
HICKERSON MEMORIAL CEMETERY
CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA
GRAVE SITE PLAN

PROJECT NO. 1275
DRAWN BY: MTD/CAM
CHECKED BY: MAN
DATE: 03/19/13
SCALE: NOTED
HORIZ: NOTED
VERT: NOTED
SHEET: C4
4 OF 13



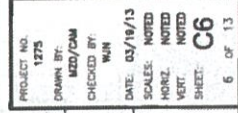
*GRAVE LAYOUT AND MARKING NOT IN CONTRACT
TYP. GRAVE DIMENSIONS
SCALE: 1" = 1' (22x34) / 1" = 2' (11x17)

GRAVE DIMENSIONS PER
DETAIL B/C4
POWERLINE CUY WIRES LEAVE AROUND
UN-DISTURBED WITHIN 5' RADIUS MIN.



NOTE:
GRAVE SITE LAYOUT
NOT IN CONTRACT

STACEY ST. R.O.W.
DIAMOND VIEW ESTATES UNIT 2
LOT 57
GRAVE SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 30' (22x34) / 1" = 60' (11x17)

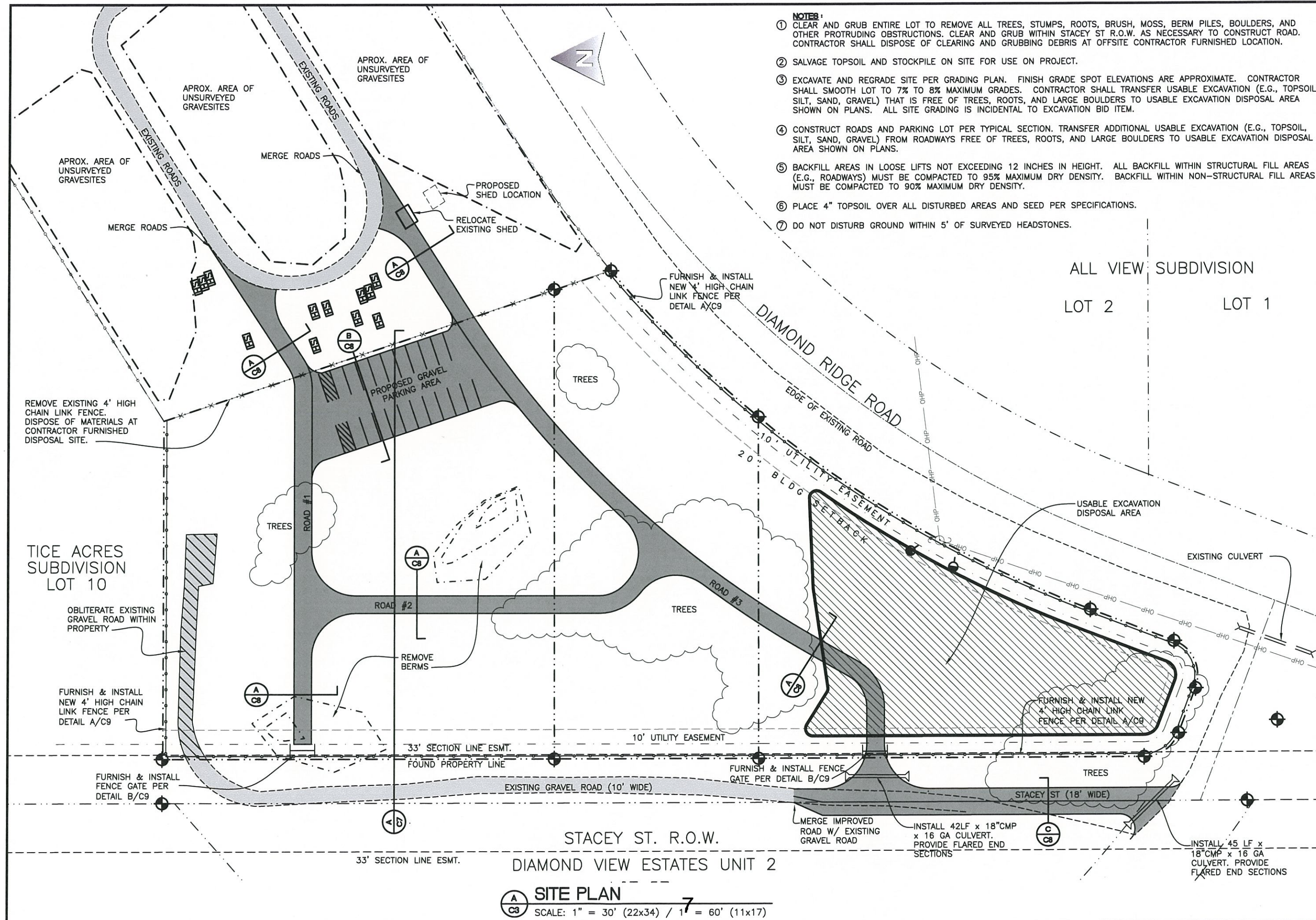


SCALE: $1'' = 30'$ (22x34) / $1'' = 60'$ (11x17)

Engineer's Estimate - Hickerson Memorial Cemetery (Phase I)

ENTIRE PROJECT						PHASE I ONLY	
Item Number	Pay Item Description	Unit	Estimated Quantity	Unit Bid Price	Amount Bid	Estimated Quantity	Amount Bid
101	Mobilization and Demobilization	Lump Sum	1	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	##	\$ 15,000.00
102	Construction Surveying	Lump Sum	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
103	Traffic Maintenance	Lump Sum	1	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ -
202	Clearing and Grubbing	Acre	3.9	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 39,000.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 20,000.00
203a	Removal of Obstructions (Chain Link Fence)	Linear Foot	322	\$ 30.00	\$ 9,660.00	\$ 322.00	\$ 9,660.00
204a	Excavation	Cubic Yard	6,600	\$ 10.00	\$ 66,000.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 35,000.00
204b	Disposal of Unusable Excavation	Cubic Yard	500	\$ 6.00	\$ 3,000.00	-	\$ -
205a	Type II Classified Fill and Backfill	Cubic Yard	335	\$ 30.00	\$ 10,050.00	\$ 225.00	\$ 6,750.00
205b	Type III Classified Fill and Backfill	Cubic Yard	1,185	\$ 35.00	\$ 41,475.00	\$ 720.00	\$ 25,200.00
206	Leveling Course	Ton	125	\$ 40.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 85.00	\$ 3,400.00
208	Compaction Control by the Contractor	Lump Sum	1	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 2,000.00
702 (W)	Woven Geotextile Fabric (Mirafi HP570)	Square Yard	3000	\$ 4.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
708	Seeding (Type I)	MSF	143	\$ 130.00	\$ 18,590.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 9,750.00
710	Topsoil (4")	MSF	143	\$ 125.00	\$ 17,875.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 9,375.00
711a	Chain Link Fence (4-Foot High, 9 Gauge)	LF	1460	\$ 40.00	\$ 58,400.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 32,000.00
	Relocate existing fence	LF	0	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 230.00	\$ 5,750.00
711b	Gate (Double Swing Gate, 14-Foot Wide)	Each	2	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
802	Furnish and Install CMP (18", 16 Gauge)	LF	87	\$ 55.00	\$ 4,785.00	\$ -	\$ -
802-E	Furnish and Install CMP End Section (18", 16 Gauge)	Each	4	\$ 350.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ -	\$ -
					Total Est.: \$ 331,735.00	Total Est.: \$ 187,885.00	
					Contingency \$ 18,265.00	Contingency \$ 12,000.00	
					Total Project \$ 350,000.00	Total Project \$ 199,885.00	

Phase 1 assumes 1/2 of area will be cleared, 2/3 of access improvements built



- NOTES:**
- 1 CLEAR AND GRUB ENTIRE LOT TO REMOVE ALL TREES, STUMPS, ROOTS, BRUSH, MOSS, BERM PILES, BOULDERS, AND OTHER PROTRUDING OBSTRUCTIONS. CLEAR AND GRUB WITHIN STACEY ST R.O.W. AS NECESSARY TO CONSTRUCT ROAD. CONTRACTOR SHALL DISPOSE OF CLEARING AND GRUBBING DEBRIS AT OFFSITE CONTRACTOR FURNISHED LOCATION.
 - 2 SALVAGE TOPSOIL AND STOCKPILE ON SITE FOR USE ON PROJECT.
 - 3 EXCAVATE AND REGRADE SITE PER GRADING PLAN. FINISH GRADE SPOT ELEVATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE. CONTRACTOR SHALL SMOOTH LOT TO 7% TO 8% MAXIMUM GRADES. CONTRACTOR SHALL TRANSFER USABLE EXCAVATION (E.G., TOPSOIL, SILT, SAND, GRAVEL) THAT IS FREE OF TREES, ROOTS, AND LARGE BOULDERS TO USABLE EXCAVATION DISPOSAL AREA SHOWN ON PLANS. ALL SITE GRADING IS INCIDENTAL TO EXCAVATION BID ITEM.
 - 4 CONSTRUCT ROADS AND PARKING LOT PER TYPICAL SECTION. TRANSFER ADDITIONAL USABLE EXCAVATION (E.G., TOPSOIL, SILT, SAND, GRAVEL) FROM ROADWAYS FREE OF TREES, ROOTS, AND LARGE BOULDERS TO USABLE EXCAVATION DISPOSAL AREA SHOWN ON PLANS.
 - 5 BACKFILL AREAS IN LOOSE LIFTS NOT EXCEEDING 12 INCHES IN HEIGHT. ALL BACKFILL WITHIN STRUCTURAL FILL AREAS (E.G., ROADWAYS) MUST BE COMPACTED TO 95% MAXIMUM DRY DENSITY. BACKFILL WITHIN NON-STRUCTURAL FILL AREAS MUST BE COMPACTED TO 90% MAXIMUM DRY DENSITY.
 - 6 PLACE 4" TOPSOIL OVER ALL DISTURBED AREAS AND SEED PER SPECIFICATIONS.
 - 7 DO NOT DISTURB GROUND WITHIN 5' OF SURVEYED HEADSTONES.



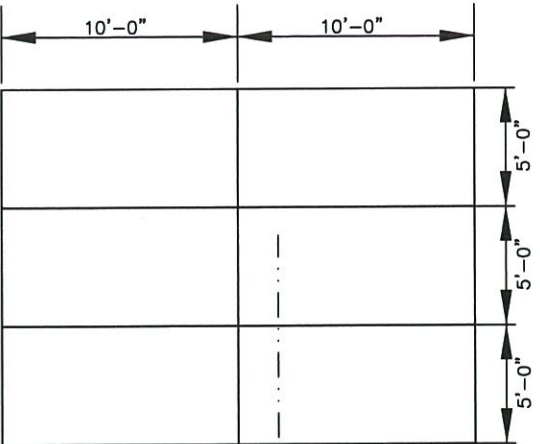
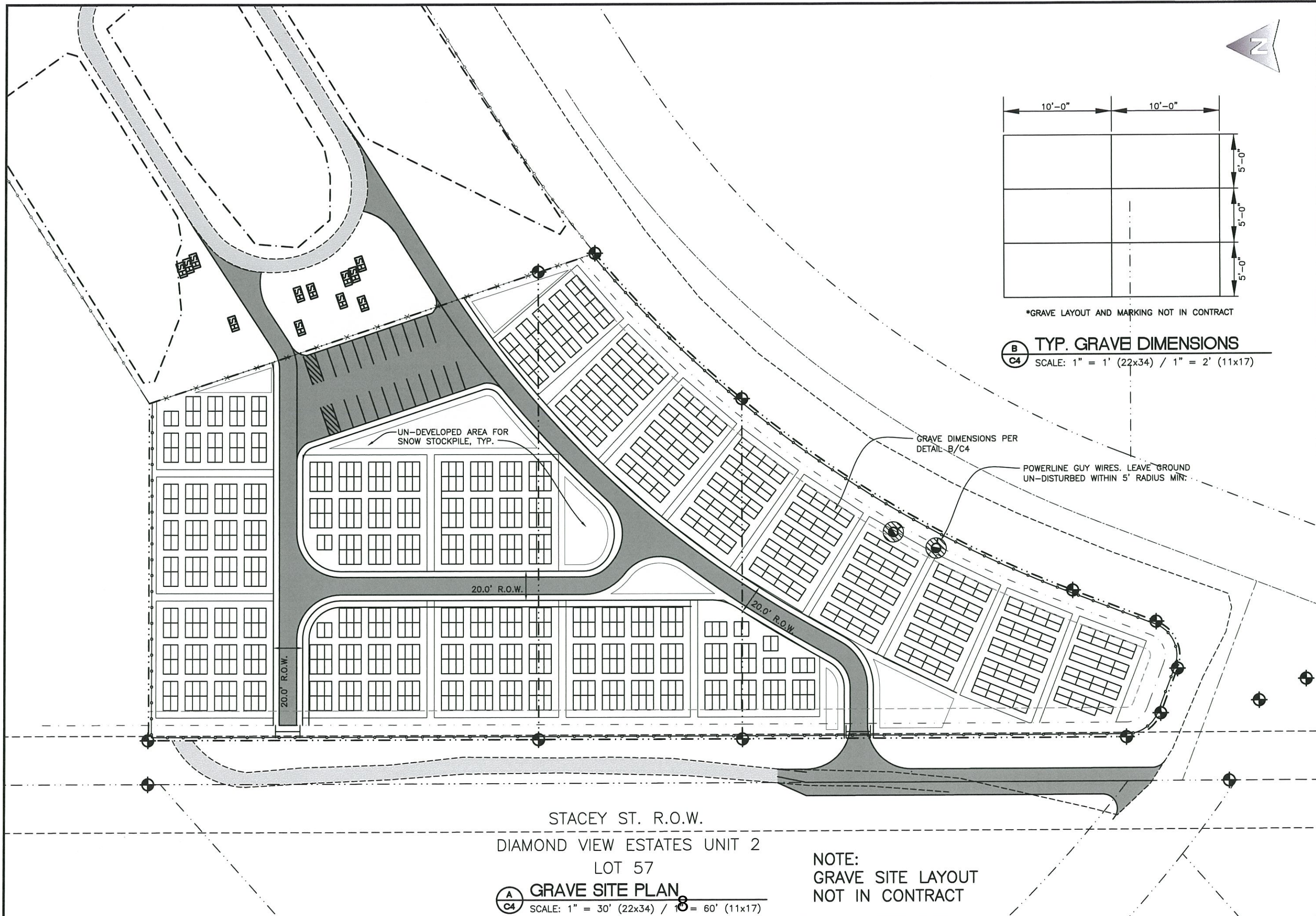
NO.	REVISION	DATE
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NELSON ENGINEERING

HICKERSON MEMORIAL CEMETERY
CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA
SITE PLAN

PROJECT NO.	1275
DRAWN BY:	MZD/CAM
CHECKED BY:	WJN
DATE:	03/19/13
SCALES:	NOTED
HORIZ.	NOTED
VERT.	NOTED
SHEET:	C3
	3 OF 13



*GRAVE LAYOUT AND MARKING NOT IN CONTRACT

TYP. GRAVE DIMENSIONS

SCALE: 1" = 1' (22x34) / 1" = 2' (11x17)

STACEY ST. R.O.W.

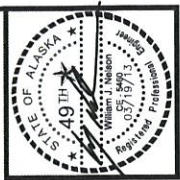
DIAMOND VIEW ESTATES UNIT 2

LOT 57

GRAVE SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 30' (22x34) / 1" = 60' (11x17)

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SHEET:	C4
4	OF 13

seemed to be a commitment to tackle the budget issues the state is facing with each of the legislators we met with, which is encouraging.

We also met with Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Walker John Hozey. We spent almost an hour with him, focusing on general budget issues and revenue concerns for municipalities, the concerns with addressing PERS issues including termination studies (where municipalities have to pay a fine in perpetuity if they get rid of a class of employees) and PERS contribution rates. The later issue is going to be a big fight on the hill – every % increase in PERS contribution rate equates to an additional \$59,000 for the City of Homer.

We were able to touch base with Commissioner of Revenue Hoffbeck and OMB Director Pitney briefly and share information on Resolution 16-017. In addition to making some important connections during the trip, we were able to get insight on what the administration is thinking and bring the Homer perspective to Legislators in Juneau.

Hickerson Cemetery Neighborhood Meeting

Public Works Director Meyer and I had an almost 2 hour neighborhood meeting with 8 residents who live around Hickerson Cemetery and a couple other citizens concerned about the impact of development of the cemetery, including Cook Inlet Keeper. Many thanks to Councilmembers Aderhold and Reynolds who also attended. The residents were frustrated and felt like they had not been given proper notice of the project, though staff did point out all aspects of the project: purchase of the land and funding for design, have gone through the public notice requirements of the City. Their recommendation was for the City to send out public notice directly to area residents like the City would for a project within City limits. The City did send 210 individual notices to everyone in the surrounding area for the neighborhood meeting. The group had many items that they would like to see considered in the project including:

- No chain link fence should be installed around the cemetery a higher quality and more attractive fence should be used.
- Use trees and berms as visual buffers.
- Leave existing trees on the property/add more.
- Develop regulations that require burial vaults to eliminate potential for groundwater contamination.
- Make new expanded area more beautiful. Existing cemetery not maintained and an eye sore.
- Monitor groundwater for evidence of contamination.
- Planning Commission should hold public hearings.
- Enforce requirement that all headstones be flat to the ground to make them less visible.
- Down size the expansion.

- Take into account reduced property values of surrounding neighborhood due to expansion.
- Move existing shelter to allow for more burial plots in existing cemetery, no need for expansion right now.

There are no State, Federal or Borough regulations guiding Cemetery development. Many of these items would increase the cost of the project. If the City wants to mitigate the subsidization of the Cemetery, increasing the cost of plots is the only way to recoup these costs (currently \$1,000 a plot). One way to move forward with the project would be to refer details of the expansion to the Planning Commission with specific parameters and guidelines from Council.

Draft WSRN Letter of Support

In July of 2015 Council passed a resolution to include Beluga Slough in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. In the nomination letter the City must agree to the following three conditions:

- To make shorebird conservation a priority at the site;
- To protect and manage the site for shorebirds; and
- To update the Network at least annually in the event of changes in the site's status (boundaries, degree of protection) or in the contact information of the person responsible.

On the eastern parcel of almost 40 acres, there is a BLM conservation easement, and agreeing to these three conditions is not an issue. The parcel below the Public Works complex, 21 acres, is not under a conservation easement, however, its tidal wetland, and zoned Open Space Recreation (see attached map). Because these conditions were not spelled out in the Resolution, I wanted to let Council know before we forward the attached nomination letter to WRSN and confirm that the conditions are consistent with Council's intent.

Moving Beluga Slough

Property owners who live near the outlet of Beluga Slough have organized and petitioned the Corps for a permit to move Beluga Slough. The Slough has been relocated back to the west to eliminate erosion of lots in the Ocean Drive Loop neighborhood many times over the years. Permits to accomplish this work again are currently being reviewed by state and federal agencies.

Decades ago, no permits were secured, but in the last 12 years or so, a Corps permit has been obtained. The City has prepared and submitted permit applications in the past, but the last few permits have been submitted by the affected property owners (with oversight by Public Works). US Fish and Wildlife has given the land owners authority to access the site within certain guidelines. The cost of relocating the outlet has been paid for by the property owners.

Permit agencies are requiring that the City monitor work on the beach as part of their proposed permit conditions. Public Works has played this role in the past and will continue to support this work as directed by the City Council. Work won't begin until winter to minimize

City Manager Koester noted:

- The Library received a grant for books and supplies from the Rasmussen Foundation.
- Having a working group of Councilmembers who can touch base with the lobbyist in Juneau once a week. Councilmembers will check in with the City Manager to sign up and participate.

Councilmember Lewis commented regarding the issues last time there was a jack up rig at the dock. He questioned if we should vote to have a rig tied up at the harbor.

There was brief discussion on scheduling the Councilmember lunches and Councilmember Smith's conflict on Monday's when the Council is scheduled to meet.

Councilmember Lewis initiated the discussion about the requests that came from the Hickerson Cemetery meeting. He thinks if the property owners in the area want something special we should start discussing cost sharing. He also touched on whether there can be a requirement that embalmed bodies must be in a vault.

City Manager Koester suggested one way to proceed would be to send the project to the Planning Commission for some vetting provided the Council accompanies it with specific directives. They could also choose the option to move forward with the project with a policy for burials. Other things to address are raising the cost of a plot to help offset increased cost of making a more aesthetically pleasing cemetery and conversation about the no build option as the city incurs costs to maintain the cemetery.

Brief comments were made regarding if a fence is required, disrepair of the current fence, raised headstones despite the code language that the must be flat, and if it's viable to expect someone else to take over the business.

Councilmember Aderhold raised the point they need to decide if the City wants to expand the cemetery and continue running it.

Councilmember Smith suggested there are other options noting that at cemeteries in other countries there are a lot of urn holders used for entire families and they are very beautiful. It doesn't have to be putting bodies in the ground.

City Manager Koester said she spoke to the funeral home about a Niche Wall that is being built up the road for about \$25,000. She couldn't recall the capacity and it is something that can be researched further. She will ask the Planning Commission to look the Niche Wall, the no build option, and addressing requirements for a vault if a body is embalmed and not requiring if the body isn't embalmed.

Lastly, City Manager Koester talked to the Council about the Homer Volunteer Fire Departments request for a councilmember to participate with setting their strategic planning goals. Councilmember Smith expressed interest, depending on when they plan to meet.

B. Bid Report

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

From: [Jill Gann](#)
To: [Katie Koester](#); [Carey Meyer](#)
Subject: Hickerson Memorial Cemetery
Date: Thursday, February 11, 2016 11:11:33 AM

Dear Katie and Carey,

Thank you for providing the community with a forum for the public meeting about the Proposed Expansion of the Hickerson Memorial Cemetery. The information you provided was very helpful to understand the project plan.

We expect you will inform the City Council of our requests:

1. Create a buffer zone of trees around the North and West sides of the cemetery.
2. Do not remove or otherwise disturb the grove of trees on the West portion of the site adjacent to Stacy Street. Plant addition trees for aesthetics purposes. There was much concern from numerous people about improving the image of the cemetery to include the existing cemetery appearance.
3. Downsize the proposed project footprint by 50% and utilize the vacant areas adjacent to the American Legion Post 16 pavilion. Inquire with the American Legion about moving the pavilion. Contact Lynn Whitmore for assistance when talking to the American Legion about relocating the facility. This can be done with volunteer work.
4. Change the municipal code to require vaults as part of the burial requirement. This will eliminate the concern for water contamination and can save the city thousands of dollars in monitoring well costs and hydrology studies.
5. Do not use chain link fence – use something different that will be aesthetically pleasing.
6. Consider building an earthen berm around portions of the cemetery to create a natural barrier which will promote growth and vegetation.
7. Do not place the overburden in the lower South section of the site Near Stacy Street, utilize the top soil and overburden to create an earthen berm; seed the berm. This will eliminate the risk of runoff into the streets and lower lots adjacent to the proposed cemetery.

Your time and efforts are greatly appreciated. We look forward to hearing from you soon about future developments and recommended changes to the projects. If the City Council considers these changes the City of Homer will realize substantial cost savings.

Thank you

Jill Gann



City of Homer

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RECEIVED

April 22, 2016

APR 27 2016

Dear Diamond Ridge Property Owner,

CITY OF HOMER
PLANNING/ZONING

You are invited to a meeting of the Homer Advisory Planning Commission, to talk about expansion plans for the Hickerson Memorial Cemetery. The meeting will be in Council Chambers at City Hall, on Wednesday, May 4th. The meeting starts at 5:30 pm and will last up to an hour.

The purpose of this meeting is for the Planning Commission to become familiar with the cemetery and neighborhood concerns about the expansion project. After the last neighborhood meeting in February, the City Manager discussed the project with the City Council. The Council then tasked the Planning Commission to look into the details of the expansion, and also consider whether the city should expand the cemetery at all. Accordingly, the work session on the 4th will be an introduction for the Commission on the cemetery, and an opportunity for you to comment.

Questions to be discussed:

Should the City expand the cemetery?

What would a partial expansion look like?

What ideas do you have to change the design?

How can you stay informed? Subscribe to cemetery email updates!

Visit the City of Homer Planning website, <http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning>. Click on the cemetery expansion website and follow the subscription link. Planning staff does not expect to mail future notices to homeowners. If you are not online or prefer a paper letter, please let us know!

Questions about the meeting? Give us a call at 235-3106.

Sincerely,

Rick Abboud, AICP
City Planner

- 1) Should the city be in the cemetery business?
- 2) Is there a legal requirement?
State law? City Code?
- 3) Consider privatization.

Robert S Means
41080 Solstice Dr.

15

399-2003



City of Homer

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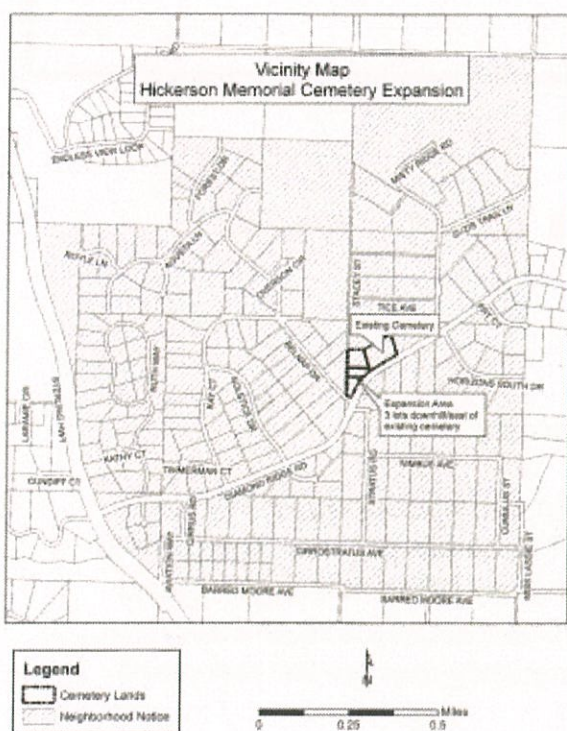
Rick Abboud, AICP
City Planner

Overcast, 44 °F

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HOMER ALASKA

Hickerson Memorial Cemetery Expansion Project



What's Happening? The City of Homer is planning to expand the Cemetery. Due to concerns from nearby property owners, the Homer Advisory Planning Commission has been tasked with looking at the details of the project, including if the City should proceed.

The Commission has scheduled a work session to discuss the expansion project on Wednesday, May 4th, 2016, 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. This is an introductory meeting for the Commission to become familiar with the cemetery, and neighborhood concerns. The meeting will last up to 1 hour. (Work sessions end by 6:25pm.)

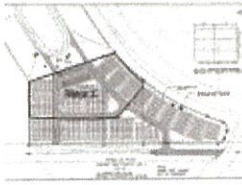
The Frequently Asked Questions below have been compiled to help provide area residents with more information.

A future meeting schedule will be posted here.

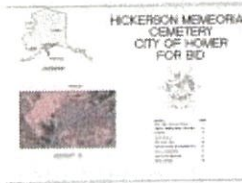
Want to stay informed? Subscribe to email updates! Click here

<http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/newsletter/subscriptions> and select Hickerson

Memorial Cemetery.



Hickerson Memorial Cemetery Phase I



Hickerson Design - Full Build Out

Frequently Asked Questions

[Show All Answers](#) [Hide All Answers](#)

How many burials are there at the cemetery?

According to the Public Works Department, who surveys every plot before a burial, there is an average of 12 burials per year. The current cemetery has 700 plots and it took 57 years before it was nearly sold out. It will likely take many years to fill up the expanded cemetery (but demand for plots has increased substantially over the last few years).

How much does a plot cost?

The 2016 budget cycle increased the cost of a plot from \$200 to \$1000. This will help recover some of the cost of construction, operating and maintaining the cemetery.

I have a well in the neighborhood below the cemetery, is it safe?

When Public Works was looking at this site for expansion of the cemetery, they were concerned about the existence of wells close by, but found no evidence that there were any within 100 feet of the

property. Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) requires that septic systems absorption fields be greater than 100 feet from drinking water wells. There are no ADEC separation distance requirements between cemeteries and drinking water wells.

Is the City following the rules for the expansion project?

There are no State regulations regarding the creation or expansion of cemeteries as it relates to zoning, separation distance, or buffering. The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) has established no zoning in the area of the proposed cemetery and does not regulate the creation or expansion of cemeteries. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has no regulations associated with cemetery development. The City will have to apply for a Storm Water Protection Plan to ensure that proper drainage is maintained and the potential for erosion is minimized during the construction of the project.

What about embalming?

Embalming fluid is a mixture of chemicals designed to help preserve the body for burial. According to the Homer Funeral Home that provides this service, approximately half of Homer burials they perform choose to be embalmed. The trend does seem to be toward "green" burials; away from embalming.

What about vaults/caskets?

Vaults are strong encasements for caskets designed to protect the body from degradation. They have an air seal, contain the body as it decomposes and help to prevent water seepage. Locally plastic vaults are preferred and cost around \$800 each. Caskets can be constructed inexpensively of wood, or commercially produced caskets costing thousands of dollars can be utilized. According to Homer Funeral Home, vaults are not used frequently in Homer burials.

What are the City's rules for operating the cemetery?

Homer City Code 19.04 governs the cemetery. The Office of the City Clerk, who sells plots to the public, hands out this flyer to people when they purchase a plot.

What are the plans for expansion?

Original design is for 700 plots, however due to budget constraints Council approved a phased design (first 325 plots) which can be found here.

What is the hydrology of the area like?

According to the Public Works Director, the hydrology of the site is conducive for minimizing or eliminating the potential for metals or embalming fluid from entering groundwater and moving off site. This has been a concern at other locations where groundwater moves freely through the subsoil of a cemetery site. In the Homer area, in general (and this site in particular), the soil regime consist of a 2-3 foot thick organic surficial layer under laid by impermeable clays, cemented sands, and silts. With a burial depth of 6 feet and groundwater generally perched on top of the impermeable subsoil (in the surficial organic layer); the potential for groundwater movement is inhibited by the impermeability of the surrounding soils. In addition, the site has significant grade that moves surface water relatively quickly from the site, minimizing the potential for surface water to pond and infiltrate into the underlying soil.

What's wrong with the existing cemetery - there seems to be plenty of space?

Plots are reserved for individuals when purchased. Often families will purchase large groups of plots so they can be buried together. There are only 11 plots left that are not reserved in the existing cemetery, and those are spread out.

When did the expansion of Hickerson Cemetery project begin?

Council approved the purchase of three lots adjacent to the existing cemetery in 2010. Due to budget constraints, approval to develop the land was not given until 2016, and then in a phased approach to cut down on project costs.

Why does the City of Homer run a cemetery outside City limits?

It is common for municipalities to provide a burial place for their community, and most communities on the Peninsula do. The Hickerson Cemetery is outside of City limits - however, it was not developed by the City. It was deeded to the City of Homer in 1970 by the American Legion Post 16.

(End)

Soldotna Community Memorial Park

Date: 4/22/2016

Kenai River
Overlook

Scatter
Garden

Section A
Natural Burial Area
Cremains Only

Note: Blocks, 1, 3, and 6
of Section E allow either
upright stones or flat markers.
All other blocks in Section E
allow flat markers only.

Memorial
Walk

Section B
Baby Lawn

Scatter
Garden

Section D
Upright Stones
& Family Plots

Section C
Columbarium

Front

Back

Section H
Upright Markers

Section E
Memorial Lawn

Section I
Flat Markers

Section J
Cremains Plots

Section G
Veterans Memorial

Key

Legend
Plot Status

Lot #

The City of Soldotna would like to sincerely express our thanks to the many people in our community who gave their time, energy, and ideas to realize the Community Memorial Park.



River Overlook

A primary feature of the Redoubt location was the recognition of the site's proximity to the Kenai River. The River Overlook celebrates our community's relationship with the river and provides a secluded location for park visitors to reflect on the memories of those who have passed.

The River Overlook provides a location to sit and reflect. A scatter garden in this area of the Park is used for the scattering of cremains (ashes). Future plans include an overlook deck and additional benches. The River Overlook captures the passing of time as the river flows within view of the area.

Memorial Wall

Past citizens of the Soldotna area did not have the choice to be interred within their community. The Memorial Wall was included by the design committee to bring back the history of Soldotna. Those interred in other locations can now forever be remembered at the Soldotna Community Memorial Park.

The area represents the braids of the Kenai River and includes rails where plaques celebrating the lives of those interred elsewhere will be affixed. For those whose hearts will always be in Soldotna, the Memorial Wall is designed to bring their memory back home to our community.



Columbarium

The columbarium contains niches for the interment of loved ones in an above-ground visible monument. The granite structure will include inscriptions for those that are interred within, allowing families to feel a closeness to those that have passed.

Baby Lawn

The loss of a child is one that is shared by the entire community. The Baby Lawn area embraces the celebration of lives that were cut short too early, in a community setting. The setting is landscaped in a circular fashion, representing the community's desire to shield and protect those whose brief lives amongst us brought us joy that will never be forgotten. There is no cost for City services to families who have lost a child from birth to 7 years of age.

Veterans Memorial

The Veteran's Memorial was designed in collaboration with local veteran groups in recognition for their service and sacrifice in protecting our freedom and way of life.

The Veteran's Memorial includes the insignia's of all five branches of the U.S. military in front of three flag poles for the United States, Alaska and Veteran's flags. The area is expandable similar to all sections of the park with the forest as a background.



TOP CONTENT:

- [Memorial Park Policy and Fee Schedule](#)

For more information on park policies and fees, or to learn how to reserve plots or plaques.

- [Memorial Park Map](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[Shellie Saner, City Clerk](#)

177 N. Birch St.

Soldotna, AK 99669

Phone: 907.262.9107

Physical Location:

600 West Redoubt Avenue

Soldotna, AK 99669