



# City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

Office of the City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, Alaska 99603

[citymanager@cityofhomer-ak.gov](mailto:citymanager@cityofhomer-ak.gov)

(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

(f) 907-235-3148

## Memorandum

TO: Mayor Zak and Homer City Council  
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager  
DATE: August 17, 2018  
SUBJECT: August 27 City Manager Report

---

### Green Infrastructure Training

Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is hosting a free all day training on September 11<sup>th</sup> on the benefits green infrastructure and how to balance environmental and economic goals in community planning efforts. The training is open to the public, however registration is required. See the attached flyer for more details.

### Senior Population Trends

At the Budget Priorities Conversation during the August 13<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole Councilmember Erickson requested information on the impact of the trend of increasing senior population on property tax revenue for the City of Homer. The attached chart uses current data and projected population trends from the Department of Labor to predict a 36% increase in exempted property tax dollars due to the senior property tax exemption over 10 years. Another way to put it is if all other variables are equal, the City of Homer will have \$154,418 less in property tax revenue in 2025 when compared with 2015 due to senior property tax exemptions.

### Letter to Senator Murkowski

As you know, the City has been working with the Army Corps of Engineers on a Planning Assistance to States grant to look at the Large Vessel Port Expansion project. The Federal Delegation has been very supportive in our efforts and whenever we get the chance to update Senators, Congressman Young, or their staff, on the project we do. Alaska's senior Senator, Murkowski has been particularly helpful. The attached letter from Mayor Zak both updates her on the project and requests an official letter of support and staff assistance as we begin to navigate the complicated federal landscape.

Enc:

Letter to Senator Murkowski

Green Infrastructure Training Flyer

Senior Population Trends





# City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

491 East Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, Alaska 99603

(p) 907-235-8121

(f) 907-235-3140

Senator Lisa Murkowski  
510 L St # 600  
Anchorage, AK 99501

August 27, 2018

Dear Senator Murkowski,

I am writing to update you on the City of Homer's large vessel port expansion project and solicit your continued support as we move forward with the US Army Corps of Engineers to complete a Planning Assistance for States (PAS) study. Specifically, I believe that a letter of support from you to the Alaska district leadership and having one of your staff participate in the kick off meeting for the PAS study with the Army Corps of Engineers would go a long way towards putting a focus on the economic benefits for Alaska and the possibility for future Arctic support our port expansion provides.

As you recall, in 2004 the City of Homer, State of Alaska and the Corps began a Navigational Improvement Feasibility Study on expanding Homer's Port and Harbor by constructing a new large vessel port to the north of our existing small boat harbor. In 2009 the parties decided to postpone any more work on the study due to poor cost to benefit findings at that time.

But times have changed to make the cost benefit ratio much more favorable.

- ✓ The demand for large vessel moorings in Homer has increased over time. Homer's Port & Harbor has evolved into a regional asset serving a fleet of large fishing vessels participating in nearly every fishery in the State of Alaska, multiple Coast Guard assets, and tugs/barges/landing craft whose delivery of supplies to a variety of industries and non-road connected communities in Southcentral, Southwest, Western (and even up into Arctic). Homer's Port and Harbor is foundational to Alaskan Maritime commerce at all levels.

One supply boat company located in Cook Inlet stated that, because they could not find moorage for their vessels in Alaska, they had to send two of their large vessels to Seattle last winter. This firm estimates that they spent about a half million dollars in fuel, crews wages, and moorage out of state. There are many examples of vessels traveling to Seattle to overwinter due to limited moorage in Alaska.

- ✓ Demand is expected to keep increasing. Many of Alaska's harbors were created or improved upon right around the time of Statehood to build infrastructure that communities could grow an economy around. With the State's economy in desperate need of diversification, and with expanding Arctic traffic and new resource exploration presenting emerging opportunities for the marine industrial support sector, now is the time to capture economic opportunities currently being lost while simultaneously advancing Alaska's

competitive position relative to other regions. Alaska needs ports that support the larger working vessels to keep their business in Alaska.

The Homer port expansion project is a clean slate option that provides the opportunity to build exactly what the state need for the future. Homer would be an excellent choice as a home port for vessels that are working seasonally in the Arctic. Built with the proper planning and foresight, Homer could host facilities suitable for one of the new Coast Guard icebreakers cutters.

- ✓ Homer is the ideal location for a large vessel port. Homer offers a deep water, ice-free location in close proximity to fisheries and resource development, is accessible by land, sea and air and are centrally located in the Gulf of Alaska. The topography of the Homer Spit makes it one of the few harbors where building a port expansion of this scale is possible. The City's professional Port and Harbor staff have honed their operations into one of the most efficient customer service based municipal owned and managed ports on the West Coast. The community has a comprehensive, nationally recognized marine trades support industry providing high quality services.

The changes listed above prompted the City and the Corps to initiate the six-month PAS study to reinitiate the general investigation study shelved in 2009. The City has committed the required \$50,000 in local 50-50 matching funds to complete the study. The PAS will quantify these economic benefits as well as account for new cost advantages of local sources of armor rock and an in-water option for disposal of dredge materials during construction.

Homer's port expansion project is an opportunity to build Alaska's economy with infrastructure that will support our maritime industry's current and future needs. The City greatly values your continued support and requests a letter of support to the Alaska Army Corps District Leadership and that a representative from your office join us in person for the first planning meeting of the PAS study sometime in September. By working collaboratively with the delegation from the onset, the large vessel port expansion project in Homer will ensure that Alaska's future economic needs and Arctic exploration are supported, as well as provide valuable insight on how to best navigate federal funding opportunities.

I recognize this project will be a lot of work for everyone involved. Nevertheless, a thriving large vessel port in Homer will positively benefit the lives and livelihoods of countless Alaskans into the future. Thank you again for your support and taking the City of Homer's request into consideration.

Sincerely,

Bryan Zak, Mayor

City of Homer

Enc: Signed Section 22 Agreement for Providing Technical Assistance

# INTRODUCING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR COASTAL RESILIENCE

## SAVE THE DATE!

### FREE TRAINING

SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 9:00 AM- 4:30 PM  
ALASKA ISLANDS AND OCEAN VISITOR CENTER  
95 STERLING HWY, HOMER, AK



#### Target Audiences:

- Local officials
- Land use planners
- Public works staff
- Floodplain managers
- Hazard mitigation planners
- Tribal governments and staff
- Civic associations
- Conservation Organizations
- Environmental organizations

Register by August 20<sup>th</sup>  
[alaskaseagrant.org/events](http://alaskaseagrant.org/events)

#### For more information, please contact:

(907)235-4791

Kachemak Bay National Estuarine  
Research Reserve  
[isbentz@alaska.edu](mailto:isbentz@alaska.edu)

NOAA Office for Coastal  
Management  
[lauren.longq@noaa.gov](mailto:lauren.longq@noaa.gov)

**There is no cost to attend  
this training**

**Lunch will be provided**

#### Would you like to:

- Understand the economic, ecological and societal benefits of green infrastructure?
- Explore ways to protect your community with green infrastructure concepts that contribute to resilience?
- Learn about the wide variety of contexts and scales of green infrastructure approaches?
- Identify existing planning processes suitable for integrating green infrastructure and experts with additional information?

**If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then keep reading!**

“Green Infrastructure” incorporates the natural environment and constructed systems that mimic natural processes in an integrated network that benefits nature and people. A green infrastructure approach to community planning helps diverse community members come together to balance environmental and economic goals.

This interactive one-day training course will introduce participants to the fundamental green infrastructure concepts and practices that can play a critical role in making coastal communities more resilient to natural hazards. Through presentations featuring green infrastructure projects from Alaska, group discussions, and activities, participants will learn what they can do to support green infrastructure implementation in their coastal communities.

Course modules are taught by NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management training staff and local partners. Six hours of certification maintenance credits for this course have been approved by the American Institute of Certified Planners. Five core continuing education credits have been approved for certified floodplain managers.

See attached agenda for session modules and topics, and register at the Alaska Sea Grant Events Page: [alaskaseagrant.org/events/](http://alaskaseagrant.org/events/)

**Space is limited and registration is required**

# COURSE AGENDA

## Morning

**8:30 a.m.**      **Participant Check-In**

9:00              Welcome and Workshop Goals and Objectives  
9:20              Section 1: Green Infrastructure Concepts and Principles  
9:55              Section 2: The Practice of Green Infrastructure

**10:25**           **Break**

10:35             Local Landscape Conservation  
11:05             Local Community/Site Scale Green Infrastructure  
11:35             Section 2: The Practice of Green Infrastructure – continued (activity)

**12:00**           **Networking Lunch**

*\*Provided onsite*

## Afternoon

12:45             Section 2: The Practice of Green Infrastructure – continued (activity debrief)  
1:00              Local Shoreline Protection  
1:30              Section 3: Implementing Green Infrastructure

**2:05**           **Break**

2:15              Local Plans, Regulations, or Policies Supporting Green Infrastructure  
2:45              Group Discussion on Challenges and Solutions

**4:00**           **Wrap-up**

**Sign up for the FREE half day green infrastructure site visit field trip to the Kenai Peninsula Borough River Center in Soldotna Wednesday, September 12th!**

## TRAINING PARTNERS



Senior property tax exempt projections

	2015 certified rolls		2017 certified rolls		2020 estimate*		2025 estimate^
No. of exempt parcels	432		501		606		667
taxable value of exempt parcels	\$61,208,700		\$71,750,500		\$86,817,759		\$95,523,738
property tax value	\$275,439		\$322,877		\$390,680		\$429,857

\*estimate based on DOL projections that senior population in KPB will increase by 21% between 2015 and 2020 and taxable value per property 2017 average, \$143,214

^2020-2025 estimate of 10% increase

Assumptions (assumptions result in an underreporting of dollar value):

KPB projected senior population increase is the same as Homer

Senior population is counted as over 60, however property tax exemption begins at 65. Data does not reflect projected decrease in 60-65 and commensurate increase in 65 plus population

Data assumes average property tax exemption in 2017 of \$143,214 per parcel, in reality this number will increase over time

