



# City of Homer

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

Office of the City Manager

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## Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND HOMER CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: ROB DUMOUCHEL, CITY MANAGER  
DATE: MAY 6, 2021  
SUBJECT: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT FOR MAY 10, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING

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### **FY22/23 Budget**

A draft of the operating budget numbers will be in the meeting packet for the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. We will be introducing the actual budget ordinance at the May 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. At that meeting we are also aiming to provide a draft of the Capital Budget with intentions of submitting a capital budget ordinance on June 14<sup>th</sup>. The operating and capital budgets are both on track for approval before the end of the 2021 fiscal year on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Update: Cameras at Library and Airport**

In February, Council approved Ordinance 21-04 allocating additional funds for the security camera replacement project at the Library and the Airport. Sherman Technologies, the winning bidder, sent a crew to Homer in early April and installed the new security cameras. At this time, all cameras are up and running with much higher resolution and much better coverage of the buildings.

### **Mariner Park Dredging**

It took two attempts, but we have successfully dredged a channel which allows Mariner Park Lagoon to drain. This is an action the City takes as needed. The first attempt did not stand up to the tides and other natural forces in that area. A second cut has proven to be more durable. The work was done under an existing US Army Corps of Engineers' permit which expires this year, staff is working with the Corps to renew it for another ten years.



### **Update: Poopdeck Trail ADA Ramp**

The current installation scheduled for the customized steel ramp which will allow ADA access to the Homer Land Trust side of the Poopdeck Trail is May 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>. The manufacturer will be on hand to assist Kachemak Heritage Land Trust staff with some City support.

### **National Police Week and Peace Officer Memorial Day**

Monday, May 10th marks the start of National Police Week. The City of Homer joins many communities across the US in recognizing National Police Week and thanking members of our Police Department for their care and professionalism. We appreciate our officers for the dedicated service they provide to our community every day of the year. The week concludes with Peace Officers Memorial Day on May 15th. Flags will be lowered that day, and our officers will wear black bands on their badges in remembrance of fallen officers.

### **Technology Plan**

The IT team has been working on a draft technology plan for the coming years. Much like the plans we've seen recently from Public Works, we must plan for the regular replacement and maintenance of the City's digital infrastructure. I have attached a draft overview of the plan which is still under development.

### **Employee Updates**

I am very excited to welcome Christine Drais to the City Manager's office! Christine is the new Assistant to the City Manager and started with us on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Christine recently moved to Homer from South Carolina and has a B.A. in Business Administration from the University of Central Florida and a M.S. in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management from Clemson University.

While welcoming Christine, I also want to say thank you to Rachel Tussey in the Clerk's Office. Rachel has been assisting me with many City Manager Office admin tasks across the last five and a half months and has been a huge help in navigating the period between full-time assistants.

From the Library Director's report:

*Claudia Haines announced her departure, effective April 30. Claudia has worked at HPL for ten years and has made a tremendous impression on the institution and the town. She will be sorely missed! Without Claudia, some of the regular ongoing programs she pioneered (such as the Kids Book Club and Radio Storytime) will be suspended. The Summer Reading Program will go forward on a somewhat reduced scale, and we will consider resuming the major programs once a new librarian is hired for the position.*

From the Public Works Director:

*Staci LaPlante – Public Works Office Manager for about 8 years, recently departed so she can relocate to Ketchikan with her husband. We wish her well and will miss her efficiency and the big-hearted way she kept the rest of us in line.*

*Bethany Christman is taking Staci's place in the Public Works Office. Bethany is no stranger to Public Works, having worked almost 2 years as a Maintenance Technician with the Water/Sewer Utility. Bethany said she needed a change of pace and volunteered to step into Staci's position, which was lucky for us, because she already knows what Public Works does. In her other lives, Bethany was a certified welder/boiler maker and is the proud mother of 4-year old twins.*

*William ("Will") Kern took Bethany's place as Maintenance Technician with the Water/Sewer Utility. Will and his wife recently relocated from Montana to join their son & family in Homer. Before coming to Homer, Will operated an equipment-intensive family business for over 29 years where he learned to fix anything with duct tape and bailing wire, a skill that will come in handy in our water/sewer world.*



Bethany and Will in the Public Works front office

## **COVID-Related Updates**

### **COVID Risk Status**

On March 30<sup>th</sup> I moved the City from the “Orange” to “Yellow” level on our COVID risk framework. The City remains in yellow status after the most recent review completed on April 19<sup>th</sup>. On April 26<sup>th</sup>, I directed a limited opening of City Hall and the Library. Both sites are doing well with visitors from the public. I still ask that the public consider whether their visit needs to be in person or if it could be handled at a distance through other channels. While the COVID context does not feel as intense right now, it is still a very real threat and there are many individuals in the community who are vulnerable to infection or have not chosen to take the vaccine.

Enclosures:

1. City of Homer Technology Plan FY 2021-23 (Summary)

City of Homer  
Technology Plan  
FY 2021-23  
(Summary)

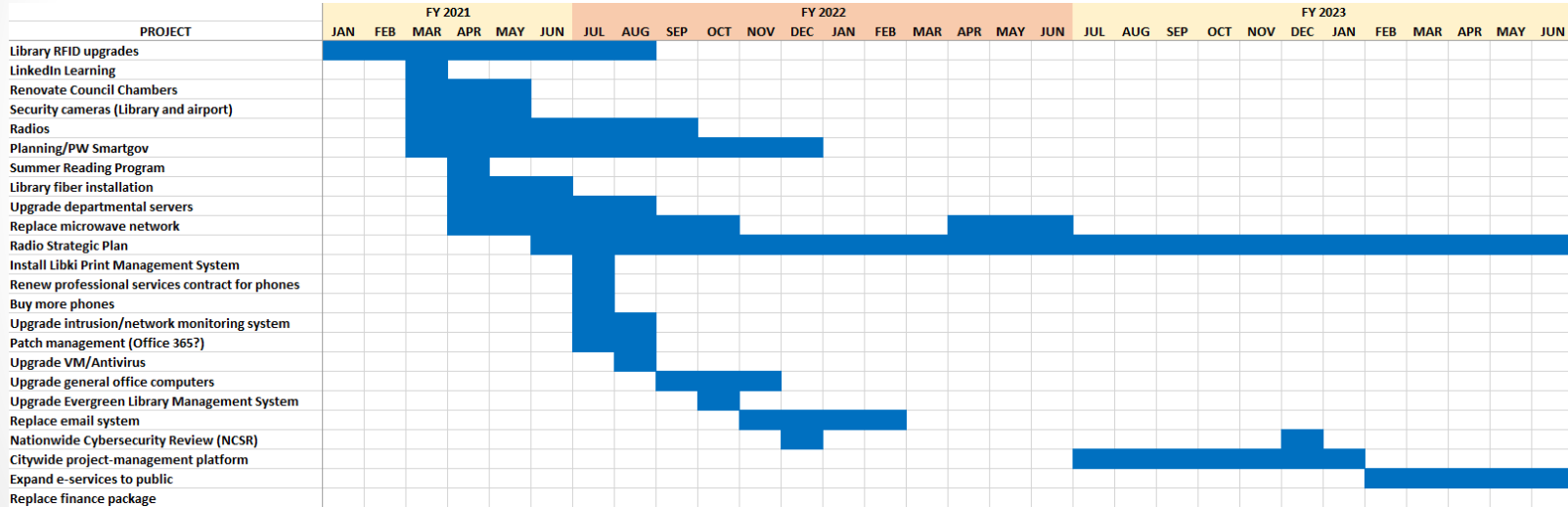


# Background

- In order to coordinate ongoing IT projects and plan for future operations, the IT Division has begun drafting a Technology Plan for the fiscal years 2021-2023.
- The timelines and figures presented here are based on reasonable assumptions about equipment needs, staff capability, current market prices and predicted trends. These estimates are as accurate as possible given present knowledge, but they are only estimates.
- This slideshow is a summary of the Technology Plan as it currently exists, but information is still being gathered, and a more complete report will be forthcoming in future.

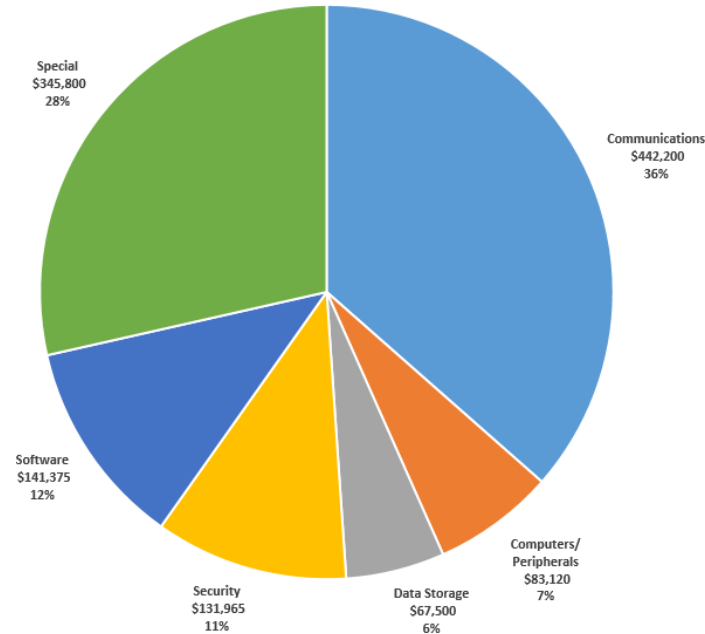


# Overall Timeline (Major Projects Only)



# Anticipated Technology Needs FY 21-23

- Chart includes major projects even those funded by grants and CARES Act
- Does not include minor projects or maintenance
- Data is still being gathered
- Current total is roughly \$1.2 million over 3 years





# Communications

- **Phones:**
  - Desk phones with Polycom and Avaya VoIP handsets - ~120 extensions, 36 simultaneous external calls
  - 2/3 of City staff have City-issued Smart phone/Dumb phone, or take a stipend for use of personal device
- **Data connections:**
  - External communications are over copper and fiber links provided by commercial carriers
  - Internally City data/phone traffic flows over a microwave Wide Area Network (WAN)
  - City has direct connections to the State of Alaska
- **Radios:**
  - Land mobile repeaters are near the top of east Skyline and on the Spit, Police and Fire have redundant repeaters and access the Alaska Land Mobile Radio system (ALMR)
  - Port and Harbor, Fire and Police have P25 digital radio systems, handheld and vehicle radios.
  - Public Works has a “Commercial” grade analog radio system.
- WAN upgrade is a funded project, now ready to go with the HPD move completed
- The City’s email system will need replacing towards the end of this calendar year.





# Computers and Peripherals

- Roughly 180 computer terminals, plus a huge variety of peripheral equipment.
- Terminals are distributed all across Homer and increasingly in employees' homes.
- Printers and photocopiers are leased centrally, with costs passed along to individual departments.
- Expect to replace computers every 4 years and peripherals every 8.



# Data Storage

- Data is stored on enterprise storage systems located in each city building.
- The total capacity of all storage systems (except video storage) is currently 8TB. Some departments urgently need more capacity.
- Servers not only store files, they deliver those files over data connections.
- Expected lifespan for new servers is 5 years.



# Software

- Standard office software (funded by the IT Division)
- Numerous specialized programs require IT support (funded by departments)
- Centralized software underlies all City operations, which requires servers
- Some software patches can be applied centrally, but many must be done machine-by-machine.
- Software has a lifecycle and requires constant maintenance, upgrading, and eventually replacement



# Security

- **Physical security:**
  - IT staff support security camera systems at several City buildings
  - Several City buildings have Access Control Systems which are IT Managed
  - Alarm/Fire systems are managed by contractors
- **Information security:**
  - Staff back up data regularly
  - Apply software patches as they are released by vendors
  - Monitor networks and update security software
  - Track emerging threats and evaluate the City's threat surface and mitigation strategies
- **Recommended improvements:**
  - Invest in a next-generation threat intelligence system
  - Work on formalizing IT Security posture as needed in the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR)
  - Consider a transition from standalone terminals to virtual desktops



# Special Equipment and Projects

- Individual departments have many one-off projects and unique equipment
- Special projects account for more than a quarter of IT expenditures
- The wide variety of equipment places strains on staff, who must be familiar with the operations of all this equipment and how it interacts with other devices
  - Currently IT staff must have enterprise level knowledge of mobile, desktop, servers, storage, local and wide area networking, telephony, security
- Budget projections often do not account for staff time and maintenance costs