



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Melissa Jacobsen, Acting City Manager
DATE: June 8, 2023
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for June 12, 2023 Council Meeting

Kenai Peninsula Regional Assistants Visit Homer

On Tuesday, June 7 Jill Shaefer, the Director of Governor Mike Dunleavy's Kenai Peninsula Regional Office, Elaina Spraker, the Kenai Peninsula/Kodiak Regional Director for U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan, and Tanya Lautaret, the Regional Special Assistant for Senator Lisa Murkowski paid a visit to Homer. Mayor Castner, Acting City Manager Jacobsen and Special Projects Coordinator Carroll welcomed them at City Hall and answered questions related to the USACE Homer Harbor Expansion study and the recent Design Charrette. The rest of their itinerary took them to locations in Homer where they learned about some of the City's Federal and State priority capital projects, including:



1. The Homer Spit to discuss Spit Road Erosion Mitigation;
2. Homer Port and Harbor for a meeting with Port Director Hawkins, Port & Harbor Advisory Commission Chair Matthews, and to see conditions and talk to large vessel owners and Port & Harbor Commissioners Pitzman and Velsko on System 5 in the Harbor;
3. Homer Airport, where the State will be initiating a project to improve safety of the runways, aprons and lighting systems;
4. Beluga Wetlands Overlook to meet with Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve staff Syverine Bentz, Ben Peters and Lauren Sutton to discuss groundwater research supporting Bridge Creek Reservoir watershed, conservation land acquisition through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and providing support information on Homer Harbor water quality and science to inform the Homer Harbor Expansion study; and
5. Kachemak Drive road condition and the need for a pedestrian pathway

East Bunnell Ave/Charles Way Water and Sewer Infrastructure Improvements Underway

Southcentral Construction began construction on a sewer and water infrastructure improvement project on East Bunnell Avenue, Charles Way, and Allen Way on May 23. The primary purpose of this project is to connect properties in Old Town to water and sewer system services and extend services to Bishop's Beach Park. These improvements are part of a Special Assessment District initiated by property owners in partnership with the City. Construction is expected to be completed by mid-July and during the construction phase, Southcentral Construction will implement a traffic control plan. Drivers are urged to comply with the posted signs and directions provided by the flaggers to ensure a smooth and safe flow of traffic throughout the project area.



East Bunnell Ave/Charles Way improvement area

Homer Serve the City Day

On May 21st, 2023, our community embarked on one of the largest coordinated volunteer efforts in Homer in recent time, Serve the City Day. Five area churches, and a large number of additional volunteers took on over 30 projects with 300+ volunteers providing 1,300 volunteer hours, trucks, equipment, tools, and wise cracks. An enormous amount of work was accomplished at Karen Hornaday Park, Jack Gist Park, the Library, Woodside Park, Fishing lagoon ramp, Fishing Hole Campground, and Spit clean-up, as well as many private residences and Little Fireweed. Parks Planner Matt Steffy worked closely with Serve the City organizers to outline City projects, acquire materials, assign leads, and oversee projects.

Projects at Karen Hornaday Park included: Park-wide trash pick-up, painting the playground, removing playground hazards, pulling weeds, rebuilding and painting bleachers, extensive brush removal in the Upper Park, redistribution of picnic tables and fire rings, and the construction of a temporary 9-hole Disc Golf Course.

These kinds of volunteer efforts bring our community together and instill a strong stewardship for all ages when in caring for our shared public spaces. *(Photo Credit Matt Steffy)*



Tuyanitun Tuggeht Dedication June 21st

In September 2020 Council adopted Resolution 20-079 accepting a donation from Bunnell Street Art Center of a sculpture entitled Tuyanitun by artist Argent Kvasnikoff to be placed at Bishop's Beach Park. The sculpture is composed of graduated naturalistic shapes to mimic the ch'wala (boreal spruce) and the tinitun qatnigi (stone trail markers) used to mark trails between settlements, campsites, and important spiritual places, along with their respective place names. Argent Kvasnikoff is a local artist, a member of the Lower Peninsula's Ninilchik Tribe and has ancestry that includes indigenous Dena'ina lineage of the peninsula and Kachemak Bay. The sculpture dedication is on June 21st starting at 5:30 at the Bishop's Beach Park and Pavilion.



Things I never thought I'd hear at work

“OH MY GOSH! THERE'S A BABY POSSUM AT MY WINDOW!” On a quiet Friday morning, those words rang out as the little fellow in the photo was walking along the window sill downstairs outside the Clerk's office. Clerk's office staff was directed to contact Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) who quickly responded and captured the possum in a live trap. Reports from ADF&G are that three young possums, called joeys, have been caught and indications are that at least one, and maybe more are still at large. Anyone who sees a possum should contact ADF&G immediately at 907-235-8191 during business hours, outside of business hours contact Homer Police at 907-235-3150.

(Photo Credit Renee Krause)

Attachments:

June Employee Anniversaries

Homer Harbor Expansion Study Monthly Written Update

City Council Work Session Schedule

Tuyanitun : Tuggeht Sculpture Dedication Invitation



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Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Andrea Browning
DATE: June 12, 2023
SUBJECT: June Employee Anniversaries

I would like to take the time to thank the following employees for the dedication, commitment and service they have provided the City and taxpayers of Homer over the years.

Melissa Jacobsen	Clerks	19	Years
Mike Illg	Admin	17	Years
Rachel Tussey	Clerks	12	Years
Mike Szocinski	Public Works	11	Years
Jessica Poling	Police	6	Years
Bethany Christman	Public Works	4	Years
Russell Anderson	Public Works	4	Years
James Tingley	Public Works	3	Years
Winifred Shigley	Police	3	Years



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Administration

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Jenny Carroll, Special Projects and Communications Coordinator
THROUGH: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager and Bryan Hawkins, Port & Harbor Director
DATE: June 6, 2023
SUBJECT: Homer Harbor Expansion Study Monthly Written Update

Purpose: This memorandum provides the second Homer Harbor Expansion Study written update to Homer City Council per Resolution 23-037.

Study Activities Update

Currently the USACE is in the first phase of the General Investigation study: Scoping. Two objectives for this phase have been completed: conducting the design charrette (described below) and developing an initial array of conceptual design alternatives based on public input from the charrette for consideration.



The next USACE steps include screening the designs to narrow the array for further consideration and modeling. The goal is to get an initial array of potential designs presented by June 30, 2023 and complete the evaluation of those selected alternative design solutions to arrive at a tentatively selected plan (TSP) by the end of the first year of the study.

Alternatives Screening: The USACE Project Development Team will meet on 6/7/2023 to screen the alternatives from the Design Charrette (listed below with the number of votes the design attracted from charrette participants in parentheses) plus any other designs the USACE may have created.

- 0 – No Action (2)
- 1 – L-shaped w/ breakwater (6)
- 2 – L-shaped w/ extended uplands and sheetpile dock face (15)
- 3 – T-shaped basin (15)
- 4 – Large clamshell basin (8)
- 5 – Combined breakwater and floating breakwater (7)
- 6 – Modify ramp 8 with piers (2)
- 7 – Remove material inside spit, inside harbor modification (2)
- 8 – Diamond Creek (1)
- 9 – Alternative harbor location, east (3)
- 10 – Seldovia (0)
- 11– Entrance relocation (4)
- 12– Detached breakwater (10)
- 13- Tranquil environment (Breakwater) (8)

During screening, the USACE will go through the process of looking at each alternative and qualitatively rank them based on six categories (see below) to evaluate which alternatives drop off and do not warrant additional consideration.

Ronald McPherson and Bryan Hawkins will be present for the screening. Staff has requested that City Council and/or the Port & Harbor get an opportunity to weigh in on any alternative that are dropped during the screening process in the event either body feels there needs to be additional USACE consideration.

The criteria USACE uses to screen alternatives is the following:

Criteria	Definition	Metric
Completeness	Will the plan work? Is it implementable, does it depend on outside action?	H/M/L
Effectiveness	Does the alternative measurably meet the planning objectives? An effective plan contributes significantly to planning objectives, and it will solve problems and achieve opportunities. A plan that fails to address the more important planning objectives is not effective. An effective plan does not violate any immutable constraints.	H/M/L
Efficiency	How cost-effective is the alternative at solving the problem and achieving the objectives? An efficient plan meets a given level of objectives in the least costly fashion	H/M/L

	or that maximizes contributions to objectives for a given level of resources expended is an efficient plan.	
Acceptability	The extent to which the alternative is feasible from a technical, financial, and legal perspectives. An acceptable plan is one that can be implemented legally, regardless of its popularity.	Y/N
Implementability	How feasible is it from a technical, financial, and legal perspective	Y/N
Satisfaction	The extent to which the plan is welcome from a political or preferential perspective.	H/M/L

Modeling: On 6/7/2023, the USACE Project Development Team will also meet with representatives from HDR to coordinate the modeling component, which will be done by HDR as part of the work-in-kind agreement. Coastal models developed will be used as tools to formulate potential alternatives to address the problems, take advantage of the opportunities, evaluate potential effects of alternatives, and support decision-making. Modeling will be done on some, but not all alternatives presented above.

Charrette Synopsis

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) recently concluded the first scoping milestone, a three-day, in-person design charrette May 17 through May 19, 2023. The charrette included a site visit to the harbor and brought the USACE’s 13-member project delivery team together with the public, stakeholders and City of Homer representatives to:

- Identify problems to be solved by a harbor design, confirm data and obtain new data
- Reach consensus on the study’s problems, opportunities, objectives and constraints
- Create an array of conceptual design alternatives to meet objectives
- Discuss proposed alternatives and the criteria and metrics by which alternative design plans are evaluated, compared, and selected for further development by the USACE.

Day 1: The opening day of the charrette focused on establishing a shared understanding of the purpose, stages and milestones of the USACE’s three-year General Investigation study process.

The USACE provided an overview of the Cost-Sharing requirements for construction of the breakwater, basin and navigation channel. The Non-Federal Sponsor provides 10% of construction costs of the portion of the project with channel depths up to 20 feet and 25% for portions where channel depth is in excess of 20 feet.

The USACE also gave an overview of previous Homer Harbor expansion feasibility studies, noting that while the current GI study will benefit from those studies and from the wealth of knowledge about Kachemak Bay, the USACE had no preconceived notions about solutions. They began the charrette with a blank slate

and engaged stakeholders so that the designs respond to community needs and input as well as necessary technical, environmental, and regulatory standards.

After lunch, the USACE engaged the public in a comprehensive discussion about existing harbor conditions and compiled lists of problems and opportunities to be addressed by a design, as well as the constraints on and objectives for the designs.

The first day ended with the USACE meeting with environmental stakeholders at Cook Inletkeeper.



Day 2: Brainstorming and Collaboration

On the second day, the USACE made a harbor site visit and met with large vessel owner stakeholders to further understand harbor concerns from a user perspective and solicit ideal solutions. In the afternoon, they held a second charrette public work session where the public reviewed and discussed important features and objectives to be considered in the harbor design and then set to work developing conceptual design alternatives to meet identified project objectives, one of which was a no-build option.

Day 3: Refining the Design Alternatives and Next Steps

On the final day, charrette participants reconvened to review 13 design alternatives collected from public input. Each design was presented to the group in a collaborative, creative-thinking environment for feedback on the design's constraints and benefits and additional measures to be considered. Participants then had the opportunity to individually rate the designs by preference.

The USACE discussed the Corps' next steps during the wrap up on the third and final day, which was described earlier in this memo. A robust environmental review process is mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). A NEPA document will be developed concurrently during the study to provide the analysis of each considered alternatives' impacts to the current environmental baseline during the study.



This synopsis, and the USACE May 17-19, 2023 Design Charrette PowerPoint Presentation is posted on the City's website <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/port/homer-harbor-expansion>. Staff is working to provide the recorded audio of the presentations as well. A story about the Design Charrette also ran in the Homer News <https://www.homernews.com/news/army-corps-hosts-workshops-on-harbor-expansion/>.

Project Delivery Team Meetings

City staff attended four USACE project meetings in the past month. While the meetings typically occur once per week, one more was added for final coordination of logistics for the Design Charrette.

The May 11 and May 12th meetings covered logistics and technical needs for the Design Charrette, including supply lists, testing the online participation link, confirming lunch orders, etc.

The May 24 meeting shared the list of alternative designs developed to date and the USACE evaluation criteria matrix.

The May 31 meeting confirmed the date USACE would conduct the alternatives screening and work with HDR on developing modeling.

Interactive Project Website

The Homer Harbor Expansion website www.homerharborexansion.com is live, but still under construction by HDR's communications team. At a 6/2/2023 meeting with HDR, City staff reviewed the expanded website draft and provided feedback. We hope the full website will be launched within a week or two. Even though the full features have not been launched, the HHE website's *Contact Us* feature (info@homerharborexansion.com) is the formalized mechanism for City Council and Commissioners to provide significant questions to the project development team. In the meantime, utilize www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/port/homer-harbor-expansion to access study information.

WORK SESSION

AGENDA CALENDAR 2023

Council Meeting Dates	4:00 p.m. Worksession Topic
<i>Monday, May 8</i>	
<i>Tuesday, May 22</i>	<i>Coast Guard ws 2 5 COW @ 4</i>
<i>Monday, June 12</i>	<i>2023 City of Homer Salary and Benefits Survey</i>
<i>Monday, June 26</i>	
<i>Monday, July 24</i>	
<i>Monday, August 14</i>	<i>HERC – Economic Development Manager & Recreation Manager</i>
<i>Monday, August 28</i>	<i>2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan & FY25 Legislative Priorities - Special Projects & Communications Coordinator</i>
<i>Monday, September 11</i>	<i>HERC Construction Budget – Economic Development Manager & Recreation Manager</i>
<i>Monday, September 25</i>	
<i>Monday, October 9</i>	
<i>Monday, October 23</i>	
<i>Monday, November 27</i>	<i>Recreation</i>
<i>Monday, December 11</i>	
<i>Monday, December 18 If needed</i>	

Tuyanitun : Tuggeht Sculpture Dedication and Reception at Bishop's Beach Park

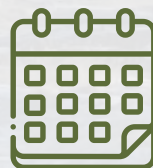
The City of Homer, in collaboration with the Bunnell Street Arts Center and the Ninilchik Traditional Council, is pleased to announce the addition of a new sculpture to the City of Homer Municipal Public Art Collection. The dedication ceremony will take place on Wednesday, June 21 at 5:30 p.m. at the Bishop's Beach Park and Pavilion.

The sculpture, titled "*Tuyanitun : Tuggeht*" (pronounced too-yan-eee-toon : to-get), was installed in October of 2022 and is a significant addition to the public art landscape. Designed by Argent Kvasnikoff, a member of the Ninilchik Village Tribe and a talented artist, the sculpture aims to honor the Indigenous stewardship of the lands, both in the past and for the future.

The name "*Tuyanitun*" references an ancient Dena'ina wayfinding system, while "*Tuggeht*" represents the Dena'ina name for the location, also known as Bishop's Beach, a place beloved by all, and evokes boreal spruce, rock cairns, and beach glass.

This noteworthy public art project has garnered support from various organizations and individuals. Funding contributions have been provided by the Alaska Community Foundation Social Justice Fund, Alaska State Council on the Arts, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, National Endowment for the Arts, National Performance Network, Rasmuson Foundation, the Ninilchik Village Tribe, as well as individual donors.

For more information please visit the [Bunnell Street Gallery website](https://www.bunnellarts.org) or contact info@bunnellarts.org.



Wednesday, June 21
Refreshments at 5:30 p.m.
Dedication at 6 p.m.



Bishop's Beach Park
and Pavilion