



# City of Homer

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

## Office of the City Manager

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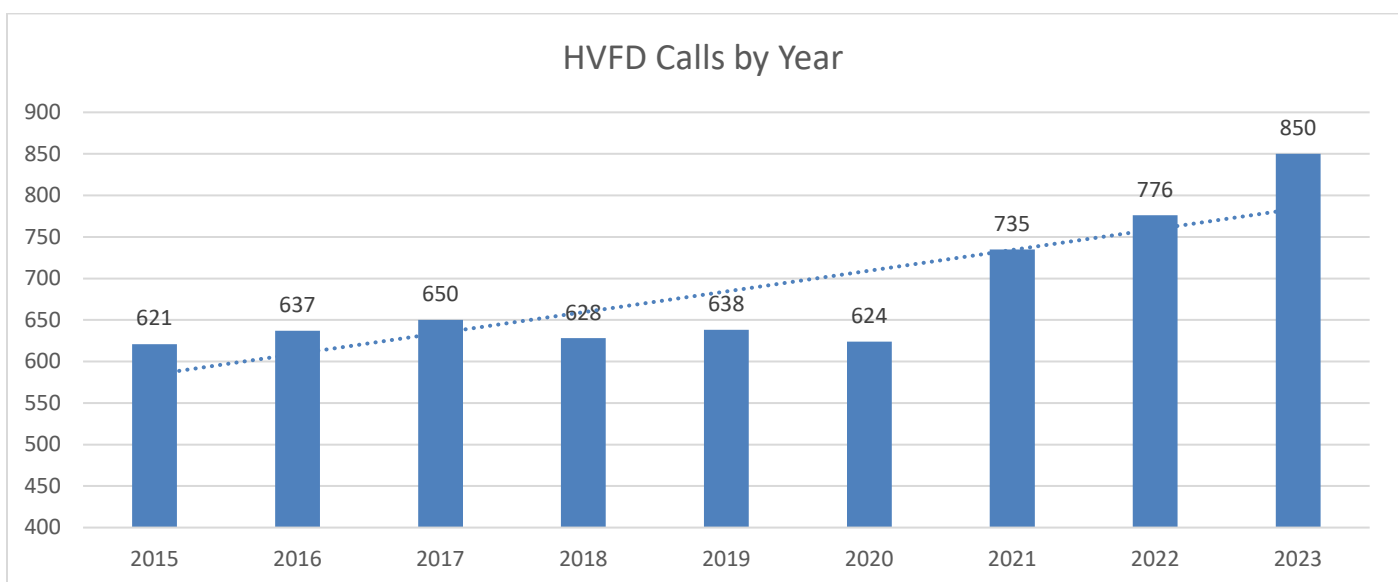
### Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council  
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager  
DATE: February 7, 2024  
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for February 12, 2024 Council Meeting

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#### HVFD Calls for 2023

The Homer Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) has seen significant growth in calls for service over the last decade. For many years, calls hovered in the 620-650 range annually. In 2021 HVFD saw a big jump up to 735, and in 2023 the Department hit 850 calls which is a 34% increase over the average for 2015 to 2020. The Department's staff and volunteers are putting considerable effort into keeping pace with the growing requests for service. Our fleet is doing its best as well, but we continue to have challenges with aged vehicles and slow supply chains. We are fortunate that Council has supported some major fleet purchases across the last couple years which are helping HVFD meet this increasing need – the City's first ladder truck was delivered recently; the new pumper/tanker is on order and in line to be built this year; and a new ambulance has been funded and staff are attempting to lock down a unit that can be delivered in the next year. We have many more fleet replacements to be considered in the near future, and, unfortunately, supply chain issues continue to make it difficult to receive fire apparatus in a timely fashion (lead times on many items have pushed past 2 years!).



#### Transportation Plan Update

The Transportation Plan will be making its way to the Planning Commission on March 6<sup>th</sup>. The plan is a little behind schedule due to the very full schedule the Planning Commission has had across the last couple months. The most recent draft is available at <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/planning-commission-draft-transportation-plan-2024>.

### **Homer Projects Included in Draft STIP**

Alaska's 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) includes mention of a number of projects important to the City of Homer which were considered thanks to input received in Resolution 21-065, Resolution 23-083(A), and comments provided by the City during the STIP's public comment period. It's important to note that the STIP is not final until approved by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The STIP can be viewed at: <https://dot.alaska.gov/admsvc/stip/final/2024.01.19%20%20STIP%20Final%20for%20Approval.pdf>

### **Comprehensive Plan Update**

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee had its first meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>. They are currently reviewing the draft public participation plan developed by Agnew::Beck. More to come soon regarding public engagement opportunities.

### **Visit from Strong Towns and Screening of the Movie "Cruise Boom"**

In February we have some interesting events happening for folks interested in planning and tourism. Charles Marohn from Strong Towns will be in Homer on February 20<sup>th</sup> to give a talk at the college at 6pm. Strong Towns has a mission to promote a "pattern of development that is financially strong and resilient" and works "to elevate local government to the highest level of collaboration for people working together in a place." This event will be a great opportunity for the public to learn more about planning in preparation for the Comprehensive Plan update which will have multiple public meetings in the spring and early summer.

A week later on February 27<sup>th</sup>, there will be a free showing of the movie "Cruise Boom" at the Homer Theater. The movie was filmed in Sitka and takes a look at the cruise ship industry and the impacts of tourism. The Port & Harbor and Economic Development have partnered to bring this movie to town and engage in conversations related to the impacts of tourism on small cities in Alaska.

### **Short Term Rental Update**

The short term rental (STR) ordinance's (23-61) public engagement tour continues with stops at the Economic Development Commission on February 13<sup>th</sup> and the Planning Commission on February 21<sup>st</sup>. By the time the ordinance gets back to the Council on February 26<sup>th</sup>, staff and Council Champions Aderhold and Davis expect to have a substitute ordinance influenced by the public comment received across the last few months. STR information for this project is available on the City website including the schedule of public participation opportunities and a public comment form: <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/draft-short-term-rental-regulations>

### **2023 Library Report**

The Homer Public Library's 2023 Annual Report is now available (attached to this report). The document gives an overview of all the activities that took place during 2023 at the library. Over 125,000 visits were logged to the library last year!

# Homer Public Library 2023 Annual Report



## **Seldovia Adopts Resolution Supporting Harbor Expansion Study Update**

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Seldovia City Council approved a resolution (24-26) expressing support for the Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation. The resolution from our neighbors acknowledged the regional importance of our harbor and its critical importance to those living in the City of Seldovia. Mayor Castner, Councilmembers Aderhold and Hansen, and I will be sharing this, along with other supporting documents, with the state legislature later this month.

## **Finance Reports**

This report will be accompanied by some new financial reports related to cash and fund balances. Expect that these reports will evolve across the next year. If Council has questions or suggestions please forward them to my office and we will work with you to address your concerns.

## **Hornaday Park Master Plan Update**

The Parks, Arts, Recreation, and Culture Advisory Commission will hold a special work session on Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 PM. This commission will be reviewing and commenting on the draft Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan. The whole plan will be up for conversation, but the commission intends to focus much of their energy on the future of Upper Hornaday which has previously been operated as a campground. The work session will be followed at 5:30 PM by their regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

## **AMLJIA Meeting**

On January 26<sup>th</sup> I attended a quarterly meeting of the Alaska Municipal League Joint Insurance Association (AMLJIA) as a member of the board of trustees in Anchorage. My travel and participation is funded by the AMLJIA. The most notable update from that meeting is the continued progress on the potential consolidation

between AMLJIA and the state's other public entity risk pool Alaska Public Entity Insurance (APEI). A consolidation is intended to produce a stronger pool that can provide more services to its membership. The two groups have been meeting and developing a vision and framework for implementation of a new entity that would be called the Alaska Public Risk Alliance (APRA). Much more work remains to develop the concept, and acceptance of a consolidation would require votes of each entity's board and then their membership (which includes the City of Homer). The earliest a consolidation could be complete and APRA operational is July 1, 2025.

Attachments:

- February Employee Anniversaries
- Memorandum from City Clerk re: Memorandums 101
- 2023 Homer Public Library Annual Report
- AKDOT Commissioner Anderson Letter Re: 2024-2027 STIP
- Seldovia Resolution 24-26 Supporting Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation
- Building a Strong Town Presentation Flyer
- Cruise Boom Homer Screening Flyer
- SBDC Quarterly Report





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## Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: Andrea Browning  
DATE: February 12, 2024  
SUBJECT: February Employee Anniversaries

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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.

<b>Jenny Carroll</b>	<b>Admin</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Morgan Tracy</b>	<b>Police</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Kevin Co</b>	<b>Library</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Tyler Jeffres</b>	<b>Police</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Years</b>
<b>Matt Swerdzewski</b>	<b>Fire</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Year</b>
<b>Mike Swoboda</b>	<b>PW</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Year</b>



# MEMORANDUM

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## Memorandums 101

**Item Type:** Informational Memorandum  
**Prepared For:** Mayor Castner and Homer City Council  
**Date:** February 7, 2024  
**From:** Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk

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At the January 22, 2024 City Council Meeting, Council Member Lord asked for some guidance related to the use of Memorandums related to Council actions.

For City Council, Boards, Commissions, Committees, and etc, there are three types of memorandums that are used, informational memos, backup memos, and action memos.

Informational memos, such as this one, are used to relay non actionable information to the body it's prepared for. Another example is the Council Champion memos that give information but don't require action.

Backup memos provide information that provides information on a specific matter the body will be taking action on. For example, back up memos to ordinances or resolutions.

Action memos are used for routine actions that don't rise to the need of having ordaining or resolving language. Action memos are used for matters such as appointments to boards and commissions, to voice non objection to alcohol and marijuana licenses, to review and approve letters from Mayor and Council being sent on behalf of the City of Homer.

# Homer Public Library 2023 Annual Report



*On January 20, chilly patrons waited forlornly for Storytime to begin*

- Jan.-Mar.: The Art in the Library program displays acrylic and graphite paintings by Counsel Langley.
- Jan. 1: The balance in the Library Endowment Fund stands at \$42,460.95.
- Jan. 13: Showing of *King Lear*.
- Jan. 17: The Library Advisory Board responds to the petition to remove titles from the children's and young adult collections.

The year opened with ongoing debate about a petition to remove all the LGBT materials from the children's and young adult areas in the library. On Jan. 17, following hours of public testimony and hundreds of written comments, the Library Advisory Board (LAB) voted to leave all 55 titles in their existing locations. The controversy regarding library materials continues, however: on Nov. 16, the state Attorney General issued an open letter to all public and school libraries in Alaska, advising them of the laws concerning distribution of sexually-explicit materials.

From February through August, staff worked with the Friends of the Library, the Library Advisory Board and the City Council to completely overhaul and modernize all the library's policies. In the last six months of the year, City staff and Council worked on reorganizing the City's administrative structure. Effective Jan. 8, 2024, the library became an official department for the first time since 1985.

The project to upgrade the western lot moved forward. On April 10, Council adopted Resolution 23-030, supporting improvements to the grounds. During the summer, the Friends of the Library hired local experts to conduct a survey of plant species in the area. In October, work crews laid the gravel for the first part of the trail upgrades.

- Jan. 18: New microform reader set up.
- Feb 1-28: National Love Your Library Month. Prize drawings in the library each week.
- Feb. 3: Library videophone replaced.
- Feb. 4 and 9: Alice Porter teaches two workshops on making accordion-book boxes.
- Feb. 6: Scan-to-email function set up on the library's public copier.
- Feb. 25: Celebration of Lifelong Learning honors Samantha Cunningham and Thea Person.
- Mar. 4: In-person workshop led by Dimi Macheras and Casey Silver, authors of *Chickaloonies*.
- Mar. 9: Local writer Derek Stonorov, author of *Living in Harmony with Bears*, visits the library.
- Mar. 14: Lt. Browning from the Homer Police Department delivers a talk on *Parenting in the Digital Age*.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed so much. Our hardworking staff prove every day that the library is the heart of Homer. The Friends of the Library poured their energies into a huge range of public programs and provided invaluable support for library operations, especially the summer reading program. Members of the LAB carried out their duties thoughtfully and considerately, spending many hours reading the challenged titles, hearing input from the public, and debating revisions to library policies. Volunteers donated more than 2,400 hours of labor, not to mention thousands of dollars to the Giving Tree, the library endowment and the Friends of the Library. Finally, a big thank you to all the library patrons and community organizations that gave their time and expertise to speak up at public meetings, collaborate on programs, participate in events and just come in to read. The library is what it is because of your efforts.



*Homer High School Swing Choir performed at the Celebration of Lifelong Learning, February 25*

## January

The library hosted a showing of the Royal Shakespeare Company's *King Lear* on Jan. 13. The new microform reader was set up on Jan. 18, offering much greater zooming, contrast adjustment, cleaner prints and the ability to save and email images.

At the Jan. 17 meeting, the LAB heard more public testimony on the petition to remove LGBT+ books from the children's and young adult collections, then voted to retain each of the 55 items in its existing location.



- Mar. 16: The library upgrades from version 3.1 to version 3.9 of the catalog software.
- Mar. 23: Public phone replaced with a new armored model.
- Mar. 24, 6:15-7:45: Margaret Willson visits the library to talk about her newest book, *Woman, Captain, Rebel*.
- Mar. 31: First-ever wedding in the library.
- Apr.-Jun.: The Art in the Library program displays photographs by R. J. Nelson.
- Apr. 1: Monthly checkout limit on Kanopy is raised to 5 videos per patron.
- Apr. 6: Community Poetry Reading.
- Apr. 7: Final memorial plaque for Duffy Murnane installed in the front entryway of the library.
- Apr. 10: Council adopts Resolution 23-030, supporting improvements to the library grounds.



*The memorial bench for Duffy Murnane was completed and dedicated on April 26*

## February

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Community Recreation and SPH kindly donated four sun lamps to the library for checkout. The library videophone was replaced, and the main public copier was upgraded with the ability to scan to email, not just to USB. Interlibrary loan fees increased by \$2 to cover the rise in postage costs. The LAB and PARCAC committees passed motions of support for improvements to the western lot, and the ADA Commission expressed verbal approval.

Staff began overhauling the library policies, combining them all into a single document and editing to remove duplication, internal contradictions and out-of-date material, as well as adding sections to cover new and emerging policy concerns.

The Celebration of Lifelong Learning on Feb. 25 was a smash hit! Nearly all 80 tickets sold out and the building was packed. Congratulations to Samantha Cunningham and Thea Person, our adult and youth awardees, respectively.

## March

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Marylou Burton, a long-time member of the Friends of the Library, received the Audrey Kolb Award from the Alaska Library Association. The award is given to individuals who “have shown a significant contribution in the life and activities of libraries,” a description which fits her perfectly.

On March 16, the library shifted the catalog into the cloud and jumped eight versions of the software. The new catalog brought significant improvements to workflows and greatly reduced the burden on the City IT staff.



- Apr. 10, 13, 17 and 20:  
Workshops teach participants how to make an accordion book-in-a-box out of a poem and pictures.
- Apr. 21: Reading by local poet Peter Kaufmann.
- Apr. 26: Ceremonial lighting of the lotus lamp marks the completion of the Duffy Memorial Bench.
- May 5-6: Spring Book and Plant Sale.
- May 6: Bookmobile at the Safe and Healthy Kids Fair.
- May 15: *Little Loon Finds His Voice*, by Yvonne Pearson, is the first book of the season featured on the Story Walk Trail.
- May 21: Volunteers with Serve the City help clean up the landscaping at the library.
- Jun. 3: Summer@HPL kicks off with crafts, games and storytime.
- Jun. 6-Aug. 1: Outdoor Adventures and Stories in partnership with the Center for Alaska Coastal Studies.

Building maintenance staff replaced the public phone with a new armored model. The lock on the front door broke in mid-March, forcing us to leave one door closed until March 28.



*Friends of the Library volunteers handed out more than 800 free books during the Independence Day parade*

## April

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Community members gathered in the library on April 6 to share their favorite poems, and local author Peter Kaufmann gave a reading on April 21. The Duffy Murnane memorial bench reached completion this month, with a plaque installed on April 7 and a ceremony of lighting the lotus lamp on April 26.



- Jun. 6-8: In partnership with Challenger Learning Center of Alaska, *Science in the Summer: Be a Physicist* teaches kids about science and science careers.
- Jun. 9: After nine years of invaluable work at the library, Jackie McDonough steps down as Library Technician I.
- Jun. 12: In partnership with Pier One Theatre, kids perform a book.
- Jun. 14: Leap into Science explores light and shadow.
- Jun. 15: The Story Walk Trail features *Butterfly Park*, by Elly MacKay.
- Jun. 17: Cartoonist Lee Post teaches families and adults how to tell a story in cartoon form.
- Jun. 20: David Scheel, author of *Many Things Under the Water*, visits the library to talk about his book and his research on octopi.
- Jun. 19-20: Midsummer Magic takes kids on a trip to find Shakespearian sorcery both indoors and outside.



*Young writers read their work on-air at KBBI on July 18*

## May

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The book and plant sale was successful, as always. On May 19, Samantha Cunningham from the Homer Fire Department provided all staff with training in using the AED machine at the front desk.

Volunteers carried out a day of service on May 21, helping to clean up the library grounds. Parks staff also surveyed the grounds and noted a number of issues, including invasive species, problems with drainage and settling and various minor maintenance tasks. Going forward, the City will care for the Margaret Pate garden on the south side of the library and the flowerbed at the base of the Homer Public Library sign.

## June

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The summer reading program kicked off on June 3. On June 21, local community members celebrated the summer solstice with a street fair on Hazel Avenue. David Scheel's author talk was a great success, with more than 50 attendees. The bookmobile received a new access ramp.

After nine years with the library, Jackie McDonough stepped down as Library Technician I on June 9. Over that time, she did superb work staffing the front desk, repairing materials, training volunteers, assisting with policy rewrites, organizing materials in the vertical files and duplicates collections, and generally being amazing. We will miss her!



- Jun. 21: Summer solstice celebration and street fair on Hazel Avenue.
- Jun. 22-Jul. 14: Teens collaborate to produce their own 'zine.
- Jun. 28: Leap into Science explores balance.
- Jul.-Sept.: The Art in the Library program displays oil paintings by Achim Jahnke.
- Jul. 4: The bookmobile participates in the Independence Day parade.
- Jul. 5: The library implements automatic renewals.
- Jul. 11-18: Mercedes Harness leads a writers club for young participants. Authors have the chance to add their books to the library's collection and read their work on KBBI.
- Jul. 12: Leap into Science explores wind.
- Jul. 15: The Story Walk Trail features *I Got Rhythm*, by Connie Schofield-Morrison.
- Jul. 19-22: LEGO contest.



*Volunteers from Global Credit Union provided mountains of food for the End of Summer Reading Party on July 29*

## July

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The library implemented automatic renewals on July 5, which means items renew themselves without human effort unless a) they're on hold, b) the renewal limit has been reached, or c) the patron's card is blocked. Patrons who have email addresses in the system receive a notice that the item has or has not renewed.

The entryway of the library displayed a friendship banner, painted by local schoolkids in honor of Homer's sister-city relationship with Teshio, Japan. It will hang there all through 2024, the 40th anniversary of the relationship.

Our tiny Friends of the Library volunteers were very enthusiastic about handing out books in the July 4 parade—we distributed 800-1,000 titles.

The summer reading program reached its grand conclusion on July 29! Upwards of 100 people attended, with lots of chalk-drawing, game-playing and hot-dog-eating. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped set up and take down, to say nothing of local businesses which donated prizes and food.

Much of the equipment in the server room was replaced on July 1-2. The new upgrades allow for better routing of traffic within the building and improvements to the wi-fi system. The public works department cut a new drainage channel from the staff parking lot and dredged the ditch at the south side of the main lot.



- Jul. 27-28: In partnership with Challenger Learning Center of Alaska, *Science in the Summer: Be a Physicist* teaches kids about science and science careers.
- Jul. 29: End of summer reading party includes music, games, ice cream and hot dogs, with prizes for reading-challenge participants and LEGO contest winners.
- Aug. 6: Commemoration of the Hiroshima bombing features a replanting of the memorial ginkgo tree.
- Aug. 8: Corky Parker, author of *La Finca*, visits the library to talk about her book.
- Aug. 15: The final Story Walk Trail book of the season is *Blueberry Shoe*, by Ann Dixon.
- Aug. 28: City Council passes Resolution 23-082, adopting the revised Homer Public Library Policies and Procedures.
- Sept. 5: Dawn Brooks begins work as a Library Technician I.
- Sept. 8-9: Fall Book and Plant Sale.



*Staff from Public Works dredged out the drainage channel on the south side of the parking lot on August 15*

## August

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On Aug. 6, the library hosted a ceremonial replanting of the ginkgo tree, commemorating the bombing of Hiroshima. On August 8, author Corky Parker delivered a talk about her life running a bed and breakfast in Puerto Rico.

On Aug. 29, City Council voted to approve the revised library policies and also allocated funding for upgrading the trail surface on the western lot. The Homer Public Library sign at the corner of Heath and Hazel received repairs and a fresh coat of paint. Thanks to artist Brad Hughes, who both created and repaired the work.

The library submitted three building-related projects for Homer's 2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan: replacing the siding, installing a sliding gate at the entrance, and an engineering study for possible future remodeling.

## September

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The library hosted a candidate forum for borough mayor and borough assembly on Sept. 14, and a forum for city council candidates on Sept. 18. Despite some technical issues with the first one, both fora gave candidates a chance to present themselves directly to constituents. Many thanks to KBBI, KDLL, the Peninsula Clarion, the League of Women Voters and the other volunteers who put the event together.

Building maintenance installed new burners in the boiler room, which proved their worth during the later months of the year. The September book and plant sale went well.



- Sept. 14: Candidate forum for Homer assembly seat and borough mayor.
- Sept. 18: Candidate forum for Homer city council.
- Sept. 26: Zoom author visit by Margaret Willson, author of *Woman, Captain, Rebel*. This is a followup to her in-person talk on March 24.
- Oct. 1-Jan. 31: Art in the Library displays works by Elizabeth Kandror.
- Oct. 6: Author visit by John Messick, author of *Compass Lines*.
- Oct. 12: Discussion panel with Guiding Growth.
- Oct. 20: New fish added to the fish wall in front of the library, honoring donors who contributed to the library endowment fund or the Friends of the Library endowment.
- Oct. 24-31: Wi-fi nodes upgraded throughout the library, allowing faster data and more simultaneous users.



*Halloween in Homer is serious business*

## October

On Oct. 20, Moose Run Metalsmiths installed new fish on the fish wall, for the first time in nearly 20 years. The fish wall is an art installation in the plaza outside the library and features copper fish adorned with the names of major donors. Current policy awards a small fish to donors who contribute \$500 in direct financial assistance to the library (preferably through one of the endowment funds), while donors who give \$2,500 or more qualify for a large one.

On Oct. 10, work crews began spreading gravel for resurfacing the Story Walk Trail. Crews from public works have since made some changes to address drainage issues. The survey of plants on the western lot is complete, and the western lot committee chose a few plants to explore further for signage and programs. City IT staff upgraded the wi-fi system, which increases the number of simultaneous users from 40 to 60 and allows higher bandwidth.



- Oct. 26: Author visit by local writer Robert Stark, author of *Warflower*.
- Oct. 31: Trick or treat in the library.
- Nov. 30: *Juneau to Juneau* travelogue by Marylou Burton.
- Dec.: Revisions to the teen area, including new seating, tables and lighting.
- Dec.: Giving Tree up in the lobby.
- Dec. 31: The balance in the library endowment fund stands at \$56,496.11.

## November

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On Nov. 16, the Attorney General of Alaska posted a public letter to all school and public libraries in the state. The letter reviews state laws governing sexual offenses against minors, and warns librarians that including “indecent materials” in the library collection may be a prosecutable offense if minors are able to find those materials.

The library hosted an excellent travel program by Marylou Burton on Nov. 30, describing her six-and-a-half-year voyage around the world with her husband. Ninety-six people attended!

## December

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We added new chairs, tables and lighting in the teen section. Throughout the month, patrons purchased 38 books from the Giving Tree and donated more than \$900 in gift certificates to the Homer Bookstore.

We revived the digital picture frame that displays Homer patrons with their library cards from 2011, and it’s out on the table by the front desk. During 2024, the Friends of the Library will add new photos to the show.



*In 2011, City IT Network Administrator Tomasz Sulczynski showed off his library card for the slide show*

# Thank you!

Our deepest thanks to all those who supported the library over the past year. Many members of the public contributed their time, energy and money to guarantee the success of the institution. We here recognize those who donated to the library's long-term sustainability:

## **Library Endowment Fund**

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Anonymous (2)

National Philanthropic Trust

Donna and Wayne Aderhold

Dave Berry

Marcia Kuszmaul

Kerry Ozel

## **Friends of Homer Public Library Endowment Fund**

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Anonymous

Doug and Landa Baily



# 2023 by the numbers at Homer Public Library



**125,675**

Visits to the library



**157,634**

Items checked out

**729**

New library cards issued

**13,504**

Patrons attended programs

**1,135** attended  
Summer Reading events

**2,919** sessions  
Study Rooms + Meeting Room

**25,595** sessions  
Public computers + library WiFi

**2,466**

Volunteer hours logged



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



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Transportation and  
Public Facilities**

Office of the Commissioner

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January 9, 2023

Jennifer Carroll  
Special Projects & Communications Coordinator  
City of Homer  
491 East Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Ms. Carroll:

Thank you for your comments on the draft 2023-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. We greatly value stakeholder engagement and appreciate your attention to the draft STIP. This letter is in response to City of Homer Resolution 21-065, Resolution 23-083A as well as the City of Homer's comments provided in publicinput.com.

We note your request to add Homer Harbor Expansion to the 2024-2027 STIP and that the Homer Harbor Expansion project is estimated at \$278,000,000. The project description will describe that the project completes a US Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study with the purpose of constructing a large vessel harbor to the north of Homer's existing Port and Harbor. We apologize that this was missed in the initial draft, and this will be added as a community driven project seeking funding in the final STIIP.

We also appreciate the City's diligence in maintaining the Homer Harbor port infrastructure. As you note, we have included the Homer Harbor Critical Gloat System Replacement project in the community driven not yet funded portion of the STIP.

Access to the Homer Spit is critical to the Kenai Peninsula and Alaska. We recognize the need for the Homer Spit Coastal Erosion Mitigation project, and value our partnership in applying for discretionary grants to support mitigation and stabilization efforts. We also appreciate the City of Homer's support for the M/V Tustumena Replacement Vessel project, and recognize the AMHS reliance on the Homer Spit for the ferry terminal.

We note that the city of Homer is officially requesting the inclusion of the REACH (Realizing Equitable, Accessible Connectivity in Homer) project in the Alaska 2024-2027 STIP as an illustrative project. This project involves Planning, pre-development and construction activities to comprehensively transform Homer's major travel routes into complete streets with pedestrian pathways. We understand this initial effort is estimated at \$1,400,000. This will be added as a community driven project seeking funding in the final STIP.

We note your support for the Kachemak Drive pavement preservation project to include non-motorized accommodations and your desire to add it to the STIP. We will add this project to our needs list, and also encourage you to consider it for a discretionary grant opportunity in the future. We would be interested in collaborating with you on this effort.

*"Keep Alaska Moving"*

Thank you for your comments on the Sterling Highway Milepost 157-169 Reconstruction Project (Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill). We have passed your comments along to our design team, and will consider the improvements suggestions to Baycrest Overlook and Dimond Creek Crossing. We have received many comments in support of the Diamond Creek Crossing.

Thank you for your support of the Transportation Alternatives Program, the Community Transportation Program, the ADA Implementation and Guidance efforts, as well as the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure formula program.

We also note your proposal to add the following road projects to the STIP:

- Sterling Highway Milepost 172 Drainage Improvements. DOT&PF appreciates attention to this area, and the potential drainage problems. We have added to our needs list, and will be evaluating this area for subsequent projects in the near future.
- Homer Main Street Rehabilitation and Sidewalk. We appreciate your description of the need and have added this to our needs list.
- East Hill Road and West Hill Road Bike Lanes. We note this request and have added this project to our needs list.
- Sterling Highway Milepost 169-175 Pavement Preservation and Safety Upgrades. We note this request and have added this project to our needs list.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Anderson".

Ryan Anderson, P.E.

Commissioner

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

**CITY OF SELDOVIA  
RESOLUTION 24-26**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SELDOVIA, ALASKA  
EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE HOMER HARBOR EXPANSION GENERAL  
INVESTIGATION STUDY**

**WHEREAS,** Homer's Port & Harbor is a regional port and community hub which is critically important to those living in the City of Seldovia; and

**WHEREAS,** Homer's Port & Harbor serves the needs of commercial vessels operating across southcentral and western Alaska, and the Arctic in the maritime industrial, marine transportation and commercial fishing industries and, over time, the increased demand for services provided by the Homer Port & Harbor has outgrown Homer harbor's ability to safely and efficiently serve this fleet; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Homer ("City") has identified a new large vessel port expansion among its highest ranked priority capital improvement projects since 2004 to (1) meet the growing needs of our commercial fleet, (2) address overcrowding and associated navigational safety concerns and high maintenance costs, and (3) support emerging regional and national economic opportunities; and

**WHEREAS,** in recognition of this need, the City and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE") entered into a Federal Cost Share Agreement in March 2023 to initiate a Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation ("GI") that investigates all planning aspects needed to build a large vessel harbor at the Homer Spit including, but not limited to: selecting a preferred design alternative and construction methods, evaluating social, economic and environmental factors, determining costs and conducting a cost benefit analysis; and

**WHEREAS,** the initial cost of the Homer Harbor Expansion GI study was set per the USACE Project Management Plan (PMP) at \$3,000,000, as a shared partnership between the USACE, the State of Alaska, and the City (\$1.5M federal/\$750,000 State of Alaska/\$750,000 City of Homer; and

**WHEREAS,** after reaching the study's Alternatives and Measures Milestone, the USACE project development team updated the PMP to include two additional activities in the GI scope (geotechnical analysis and ship simulation) so that the study would have sufficient data to develop the most realistic benefit to cost ratio; and

**WHEREAS,** the additional work increases the cost of the GI study by \$1,154,093 to be similarly shared between the Federal and local partners; and

**WHEREAS,** Homer City Council passed Resolution 23-130 agreeing to the revised scope and cost of the GI under the PMP, stating it is prudent to continue to explore options for a harbor expansion to relieve congestion and improve navigational safety within Homer's Port and Harbor; and



**WHEREAS,** consistent with the shared local match partnership, Homer City Council Resolution 23-130 additionally expresses the City of Homer's intent to appropriate funds in the amount of \$288,524 for fifty percent of the required local sponsor match and to seek State matching funds for the remaining fifty percent; and

**WHEREAS,** investment in the GI supports current and future maritime, marine transportation, and commercial fishing industry promoting the livelihood of individuals in the Kenai Peninsula, the City of Homer and its surrounding remote communities, and the State of Alaska; and

**WHEREAS,** support of for the GI study and the completion of the Homer Harbor Expansion project, aligns with the City of Seldovia's Comprehensive Plan and regional priorities and partnership between the City of Homer, City of Seldovia, and Seldovia Village Tribe;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SELDOVIA, ALASKA :**

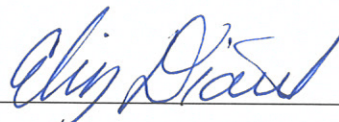
**SECTION 1.** That the City of Seldovia supports the State of Alaska providing \$288,523 in additional match funds in the FY25 State budget in order to fully fund local match requirements for the Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation study in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Homer as the development of this public facility will help enhance safety and economic prosperity among the many Alaskan communities who depend on services operating out of Homer Port and Harbor.

**SECTION 2.** That copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Dunleavy and legislative delegates for the Kenai Peninsula.

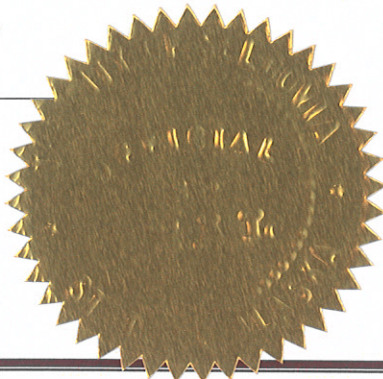
**SECTION 3.** That this resolution is effective immediately upon adoption.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** by a duly constituted quorum of the City Council of the City of Seldovia on this 22nd day of January, 2024.

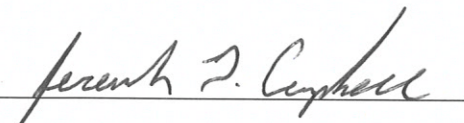
ATTEST:



Liz Diamant, City Clerk



APPROVED:



Jeremiah Campbell, Mayor

# Building a Strong Town

FREE • OPEN TO EVERYONE

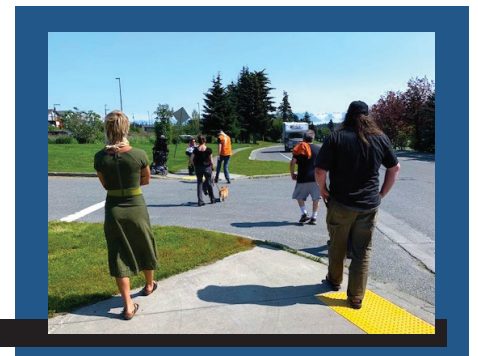
Homer community members, groups, and the City of Homer are actively seeking solutions to local challenges like sustainable growth, affordable housing, a walkable and bike-able community, and fiscally responsible local government.



## A COMMUNITY PRESENTATION WITH CHUCK MAROHN STRONG TOWNS FOUNDER & PRESIDENT

Charles “Chuck” Marohn is the founder and president of Strong Towns. He is a land use planner and civil engineer with decades of experience. He holds a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning, both from the University of Minnesota.

Visit <https://www.strongtowns.org> for more info.



**Tuesday February 20, 2024 • 6 pm - 7:30 pm**

Doors open at 5:30 pm. Talk begins at 6 pm followed by Q&A

**In Person: Kachemak Bay Campus, Room 202**

**Online: Zoom**



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81377496791>  
Meeting ID: 813 7749 6791  
Passcode: 99603

Join the City of Homer and community partners for a special guest presentation, “Building a Strong Town” by Strong Towns founder Chuck Marohn. Strong Towns advocates for a new way of thinking about the way we build our world, and supports thousands of people across the United States and Canada who are working to make their cities safe, livable, and financially resilient.

We look forward to connecting Marohn and his organization’s experience with Homer residents interested in building a resilient and prosperous community, and to spark conversation and solutions as the City of Homer begins development of a new Comprehensive Plan that will guide our community for the next 10-20 years.

**SPONSORED BY THE CITY OF HOMER**

For more event info, contact:  
[planning@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:planning@ci.homer.ak.us)  
Phone: (907) 435-3119



# STRONG TOWNS



A FILM BY ELLEN FRANKENSTEIN & ATMAN MEHTA

# CRUISE BOOM

A community on the cusp of change

- FREE ADMISSION -

**HOMER SCREENING**

sponsored by the City of Homer

**TUESDAY | FEB 27<sup>TH</sup> | 6 PM | HOMER THEATRE**



Archange Inc. presents  
Directed, Filmed & Edited by Ellen Frankenstein & Atman Mehta  
Consulting Editor Shirley Thompson - Animation Ryan Morse  
Audio Post Tom Disher - Original Music by Bryan Lovett, Graham Lebron,  
Fred Knowles, Ritch Phillips & Ethan Vastola  
[www.cruiseboomfilm.com](http://www.cruiseboomfilm.com)



Watch the Trailer



January 29, 2024

City of Homer  
491 E. Pioneer Ave  
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Mayor Castner, City Council, and City Staff,

This letter serves as our quarterly report from October 1 to December 31, 2023. Homer Business Advisor Robert Green finished the year on a high note, supporting 130 business owners and entrepreneurs while receiving 100% client satisfaction on surveys. It was a relatively slow year for capital infusion, with interest rates for business loans often double what they were two years ago. This past year, 78% of Homer clients chose to meet in person with Robert, indicating a strong preference from local business owners and entrepreneurs to have this service in their community rather than travel to Soldotna. Here is a summary of deliverables to the Homer community during the quarter (year):

Client Hours: 122.8 (622.1)	Jobs Supported: 40 (258)
Total Clients: 34 (130)	Capital Infusion: \$0 (\$293,000)
New Businesses Started or Bought: 6 (10)	Client Surveys: 100% positive (100% positive)

This report provides lists of the top advising topics and top industries obtaining technical assistance from the Alaska SBDC in Homer. Assistance to entrepreneurs looking to start new businesses and business planning were the top topics this quarter. Accommodation jumped into the top spot for industries advised, while retail stores and professional guides remained near the top of the list.

#### Topics

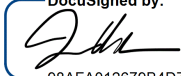
1. Start-up Assistance: 50.7 hrs (41%)
2. Business Planning: 30.8 hrs (25%)
3. General Management: 16.2 hrs (13%)
4. Buy/Sell Business: 9.0 hrs (7%)
5. Legal Issues: 8.1 hrs (7%)

#### Industries

1. Accommodation: 38.7 hrs (32%)
2. Retailers: 17.9 hrs (15%)
3. Guides: 14.5 hrs (12%)
4. Manufacturing: 13.7 hrs (11%)
5. Entertainment: 9.7 hrs (8%)

We would like to thank the City of Homer for their support of the Homer Business Advisor position. The \$10,000 funding provided by the mayor and city council is critical in retaining the Homer SBDC office in 2024. We greatly appreciate the knowledge, experience, and consistency Robert Green brings to efforts in Homer. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
98AFA012679B4D7...

Jon Bittner  
Executive Director  
Alaska SBDC