



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

citymanager@cityofhomer-ak.gov

(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

(f) 907-235-3148

Memorandum

TO: Mayor Lord and Homer City Council
FROM: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager
DATE: May 20, 2025
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for May 27, 2025 Council Meeting

Land Purchase Complete!

The City is now the official owner of the 20-acre parcel north of Hornaday Park. Thank you to all the folks that helped make that happen – what a great addition to public greenspace in Homer! City staff is coordinating with the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust (KHLT) on trail planning efforts. KHLT contacted the National Park Service (NPS), which offers a free technical assistance program for open space projects such as this. NPS responded favorably to the proposal, but is not able to take on additional projects at this time, unfortunately. It is unknown how the Reduction in Force (RIF) process will affect the NPS, but they expect some movement on this issue in the next month. Staff will follow up in June/July to see where their capacity and programs have landed.

Homer Education and Recreation Center (HERC) Brownfield Meeting

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) is providing technical assistance to the City through the Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Program (DBAC). Consultants were here May 19-21 to finalize contaminant testing at the HERC site and from there they will develop an Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA). The



analysis compares different cleanup methods for a Brownfield site, considering effectiveness, feasibility and cost. The ABCA is slated to be completed in August and ADEC will follow up with a public comment period.

During their site visit, the City, ADEC staff and consultants hosted a community informational meeting regarding the HERC at the Homer Public Library on May 20, 2025 to discuss Brownfields, remediation challenges, and what is happening now at the HERC.

Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update

The Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD) is in the process of updating the Kenai Peninsula's 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, or CEDS. The CEDS is guided by community input and lays out long-term strategies for economic growth, job creation, infrastructure improvement, and regional adaptability. KPEDD is hosting a community meeting in Homer on May 29 to hear from Homer residents. It is from 11 AM–12 PM at the Kachemak Bay Campus at 533 E. Pioneer Ave, Homer. If you cannot attend in person, you can join virtually by scanning the QR code on the attached flier, or visit www.kpedd.org/ceds where you can provide comments online.

Reminder! Public Input Opportunity on a Proposed Community Recreation Center Site

The City Council is interested in public input on a proposed location for a new Multi-Purpose Recreation Facility. Please plan to attend the Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) meeting on June 13th, the Parks, Art, Recreation, and Culture Advisory Commission (PARCAC) on June 15th and/or the Planning Commission meeting on June 18th or visit the City website to provide comments online.

Safe and Healthy Kids Fair

The 32nd Annual Safe and Healthy Kids Fair was a complete success! The City of Homer involvement included staff help and equipment from the Library, Fire Department, Public Works, and Community Recreation. There was an estimated 400 plus visitors, 200 free hot dogs eaten, 85 free helmets given away, 38 vendors, 20 + volunteers, four live bands, four new bikes given away and a countless number of smiles from the kiddos.



Highland Drive

The decrease in spring rainfall has slightly slowed to rate of erosion/subsidence of the downslope side of Highland Drive. The City reduced the impacted section of the road to one lane and placed 50% load limits signs at both ends to reduce the load near the edge of this slope to reduce risk to public and the load passing over this road. The lane closure and weight limit will remain in place for the foreseeable future. The City contracted RESPEC Engineering in March to design the replacement culvert due to the complexity of the Bidarki Creek crossing. The City has received the 50% design drawings and provided feedback to RESPEC. The cost estimate was a little higher than the City expected, so we are applying some “Value Engineering” principles to the design to attempt to reduce the anticipated project costs. The final design is expected to be completed by early June and we anticipate bidding the project after receipt, providing adequate funding is available in the HART Roads Fund.

Beluga Slough Lift Station

This project is near completion and is expected to wrap up before May 30th. Once it's done, East Road Services will be re-initiating pumping operations using the lift station, removing the bypass pumping system, removing traffic control devices, restoring the asphalt path and sweeping up pathway, and demobilizing equipment.

Ohlson Lane / West Bunnell Ave

East Road Services mobilized to the site a week ago and began limited work. As they demobilize from the Beluga Slough Lift Station project, you will begin to see more activity on this project. The initial work on this project has been locating water service connections and widening Ohlson Lane to accommodate the parking lane. Efforts were temporarily paused to complete the lift station project and allow for construction materials to be shipped to Alaska.

Alaska DOT Grader Training

The State of Alaska offers annual training opportunities to communities for free. The City of Homer has capitalized on this free training by sending 3 staff members this year to the training event. The training is sponsored by the Alaska DOT, and they bring up an experienced grader training expert from the Lower 48 who is nationally recognized as one of the top trainers in the nation. This has proven to be very valuable training tool to the City of Homer and other communities around the state.

HVFD Trainings

Fire Engineer, Derek Haws and Samantha Woods, both of Homer Fire completed a 40-hour Fire Officer-1 class this week. The class was taught by Chief Kirko and 6 other firefighters from WES and KESA also completed the course.

HVFD fire personnel trained with our high pressure air bag system, performing rescue operations of a mannequin trapped under a vehicle. The event was modeled after a vehicle vs. bicyclist scenario with entrapment of the bicyclist stuck under the vehicle. Crews systematically used the heavy lift air bags to raise the vehicle straight up and off the patient allowing EMS to care for the injured patient.



Tent Camp West on the Homer Spit is Reopening

Over the last 10-15 years, the Tent Camp West area on the Homer Spit has experienced significant coastal erosion. The storm surge event in November of 2024 further accelerated this erosion, causing serious damage to Tent Camp West. Port and Harbor have been restoring the beach and were able to open the campground for Memorial Day Weekend.

City Manager Meetings and Events:

May 13th – Conversations with a Councilmember w/Councilmember Davis

May 14th – Met with folks re: demonstrations

May 15th – Met with Katheryn Schake, KBNERR, Marie McCarty, KHLT, and KPB Mayor Micciche and staff re: Kachemak Peatlands Project

May 16th – Met with USACES and HDR on Homer Harbor Expansion Project

May 19th - Met with KBBi re: Concert on the Lawn planning

May 20th - Kick off meeting with our federal lobbyist, The Ferguson Group & ADEC/Brownfields public meeting

Ongoing weekly meetings with Departments, Mayor and Councilmembers, and City Attorney

Attachments:

- Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update Flyer
- Homer Harbor Expansion Project monthly report



COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Thursday, May

29, 2025

11 AM - 12 PM

**Kachemak Bay
Campus**

"Big Room"

**533 E. Pioneer Ave
Homer, Ak 99603**

**Can't attend in person?
Join us virtually!**



What is the CEDS?

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a regionally-driven plan that guides economic growth and resilience across the Kenai Peninsula Borough. It's developed and led by KPEDD with input from the community.

Why it matters:

The CEDS drives long-term economic development—supporting job creation, improving infrastructure, and strengthening the region's ability to adapt and thrive.

Your voice matters:

Community involvement is key. Help shape the strategy by sharing your input and participating in the process.

Learn more or get involved at: www.kpedd.org/ceds/



WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

CEDS Outreach Opportunities

May 28th Kenai/Soldotna Joint
Chamber Luncheon CEDS
Presentation
@ Soldotna Sports Complex
12 PM - 1 PM

May 28th Soldotna City Council
Presentation @ Soldotna City Hall
6 PM

*Join virtually on the City of Soldotna website

**This digital flyer will be updated as outreach opportunities are scheduled

Questions?



(907) 283-3335 Ext 2



aubrey@kpedd.org



www.kpedd.org



MEMORANDUM

City Managers Report
City Council
May 27, 2025

Homer Spit Erosion Update

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor and City Council
Date: May 20, 2025
From: Jenny Carroll, Special Projects and Communications Coordinator
Through: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager and Bryan Hawkins, Port Director

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

We are pleased to report that Federal funds to complete the US Army Corps of Engineers final two fiscal years of activities were secured in the Federal Fiscal Year 2025 Continuing Resolution.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Project Development Team (PDT)

Continuing study activities:

- The Geotechnical team:
 - Reviewed geophysical fieldwork results (sub-bottom profiling, hydrographic and topographic survey data) and recommended collecting eight core samples after selection of the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP).
 - Will be coordinating the Ship Simulation, again after TSP.
 - Will continue to refine the TSP according to data and information collected in the core sampling and ship simulation, eventually bringing the TSP design to a preliminary design to be advanced in the Pre-construction, Engineering, and Design (PED) phase.
- The USACE Environmental Resources team:
 - Completed their environmental fieldwork in March.
 - Convened a meeting with the Environmental Stakeholder's Working Group on April 24, 2025 where they shared preliminary information gathered from the environmental fieldwork and solicited recommendations for Post-Construction Environmental Monitoring and Surveys related to Harbor infrastructure (e.g., breakwater, float systems) and Harbor Activities, including vessel operations and dredging operations.
- The USACE Project Development team overall is:
 - Developing cost estimates and reviewing and refining benefits calculations for the four alternatives being considered as they work toward an internal Tentatively Selected Plan Milestone Meeting on June 25, 2025.

- Conducting a preliminary review of the project alternatives using their standard Four Accounts evaluation framework. This comprehensive assessment examines the project from multiple perspectives: national economic efficiency, environmental impacts and benefits, remote and subsistence harbors, and other social considerations. The Corps will analyze how the project performs across these four accounts to ensure that their decisions consider not just economic factors, but also environmental stewardship and community impacts when arriving at a TSP recommendation.

HDR – Owner Representative:

- Presented the In-Person Quarterly Report to City Council on April 28, 2025.
- Attended twice-monthly USACE Project Development Team meetings and twice-monthly meetings with City.
- Joined City of Homer representatives to discuss the Homer Harbor Expansion study on KBBi public radio's May 14, 2025 Coffee Table program. If you were not able to listen live, a recording will be posted at <https://www.kbbi.org/show/coffee-table>.
- Provides communications support as-needed; keeps [Homer Harbor Expansion website](#) updated.
- Is coordinating with a contracted firm to schedule and conduct geotechnical core sampling which will occur later in the summer, after the TSP and the approximate basin size, configuration and location are determined.

City of Homer staff:

- Attended twice-monthly USACE Project Development Team meeting and twice-monthly meetings with HDR.
- Met in person with USACE on May 16 to discuss steps the US Army Corps of Engineers is taking to reach a Tentatively Selected Plan as described above.
- Discussed the Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation on KBBi public radio's May 14 Coffee Table program.
- Ongoing communications/outreach: Information and updates about the study are being disseminated through the [Homer Harbor Expansion website](#), the City's quarterly newsletter, the [City of Homer Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages and through HHE email subscriber list as needed.

RECOMMENDATION:

Informational Only.