



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Lord and Homer City Council
FROM: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager
DATE: September 17, 2025
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for September 22, 2025 Council Meeting

Kachemak Peatlands Project Update

The City is excited to share that the Kachemak Peatlands Project (aka "The Sponge") is moving forward! The project team recently met with the Kenai Peninsula Borough to discuss the purchase of five properties south of the boatyard. Thanks to productive conversations and support from Mayor Micciche and his staff, the City will begin moving forward with the purchase in the coming months.

Ohlson Bunnell Water and Road Construction

This project is in its final stages. Paving work is wrapping up, and all water main replacement, service reconnection, fire hydrants, storm drain and sidewalk work is completed. Remaining items include driveways, speed humps, roadway striping, signing, topsoil/seed and gravel shoulder cleanup work.



Meeting with Senator Sullivan's Staff

On Friday, September 12 City staff, Mayor Lord and The Ferguson Group (TFG) lobbyists met virtually with two of Senator Sullivan's staff, Erin Johnson and Alex VanWyhe to give them a briefing on the status of the US Army Corps of Engineers' Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation, touch briefly on the need for Homer Spit Erosion Mitigation and advocate on behalf of the City's recently submitted 2025 Port Infrastructure Development Program application for construction funds to replace Float System 4 in Homer Port & Harbor. Erin Johnson is Senator Sullivan's Policy Advisor who works closely with the US Army Corps of Engineers; Alex VanWyhe works on Transportation and Public Works issues. The meeting was productive, and we greatly appreciate Erin and Alex's time and thoughtful engagement on Homer's infrastructure priorities.

Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) 1 Class

Homer Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) has an EMT-1 Class underway with a full roster of attendees. In this training future volunteers learn foundational Basic Life Support (BLS) skills and knowledge including patient assessment, CPR and AED use, airway management, hemorrhage control, basic splinting, oxygen administration, and use of life saving medications like aspirin and epinephrine. The class includes 180 hours of classroom learning and hands-on practical training and prepares the students for certification exams. Five of the students are with HVFD and there are other participants affiliated with KESA and WESA. Kudos to the HVFD team for facilitating this important training opportunity!

9/11 Stair Climb

HVFD participated in the 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb with KESA this past Thursday. The 9/11 Stair Climb Challenge is a commemorative event where participants climb the equivalent of the 110 floors of the World Trade Center, or approximately 2,000-2,200 steps. It honors the courage and sacrifice of the 343 firefighter and other first responders who ascended the towers on September 11, 2001. Staff and volunteers took part in 1-hour rotations, on the hour, from 9am-11pm.

Annual Firehose Testing

On Sunday, September 14, nine members of the Homer Volunteer Fire Department dedicated their time from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to complete annual hose testing. A total of 52 lengths of 5-inch, 100-foot supply hose were tested, meeting the annual requirements set forth by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Each 100' section weighs 105 lbs dry! All in-service hose must be tested and documented each year to ensure safety and readiness. HVFD currently maintains over two miles of hose in circulation, all of which are hand-loaded onto the apparatus by department members.

Fire Department vs Police Department Softball Game

The City of Homer invites the public to attend the First Annual Fire Department vs. Police Department Softball Game on Sunday, September 28, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Jack Gist Park. This friendly competition will bring together members of our public safety departments for an afternoon of community spirit and camaraderie. Admission is free; however, attendees are encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item or toiletries to be donated to local non-profit organizations. Additional information will be available on the Fire Department and Police Department Facebook pages.

Welcome Karyn DeCino!

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Karyn DeCino, the new Special Projects and Communications Assistant. A longtime resident of the greater Homer area for over 25 years, Karyn brings valuable experience from her work with borough and federal government, local nonprofits, and private industry. Karyn has also experienced Alaska and gained specialized knowledge through her work mapping vegetation communities and wetlands statewide. Current passions in her off-time include hiking, exploring, skiing, quilting, and competing in agility with her Golden Retrievers. We are excited to have her expertise and local perspectives as part of our team.

City Manager Meetings and Events:

September 10th – Microsoft 365 Pilot Team Meeting

September 17th – The Ferguson Group Training Webinar “The Big Picture: Federal Trends, Funding Flows and Local Readiness and Meeting with USACEs on Harbor Expansion Project

And, ongoing weekly meetings with Departments, Mayor, Councilmembers, and City Attorney

Attachments:

- Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation Monthly Report
- Leasing Report and attachments
- 2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Virtual Event Flyer
- Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council Update
- Title 21 Update Progress Report
- USCG Reports



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Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation Update

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Homer City Council, Port & Harbor Advisory Commission
Date: September 17, 2025
From: Jenny Carroll, Special Projects Coordinator
Through: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

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

Background:

At the USACE Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) Milestone meeting on July 23, 2025 General Goetz of the Pacific Ocean Division directed the Alaska District Project Development Team (PDT) to reassess economic benefits under the Comprehensive Benefits policy before finalizing the recommended TSP. Additionally, he announced a new USACE Headquarters policy that requires Feasibility Studies to include 35% design level, increased from the original 15% scope, significantly expanding the project requirements.

Update: On September 16, the Port Director and Special Projects & Communications Coordinator met with Curtis Lee, USACE Project Manager, to discuss revisions to scope, schedule, and budget proposed by the PDT to meet the new General Investigation design standards.

Tentative Scope, Schedule and Budget Modifications: To get to 35% design the study will need an additional 7 months and \$880K, with a signed Chief's Report targeted for October 29, 2027.

The PDT proposes to complete 35% engineering design before the TSP reevaluation to ensure all data gaps related to break water design are addressed prior to final plan selection, with the draft feasibility report now proposed for release on May 29, 2026.

The 35% design phase cannot begin until the Geotechnical Data Report is delivered, which is anticipated by December 29, 2025, assuming no further weather-related delays affect the contractor's return to Homer from Dutch Harbor.

The primary cost drivers for GI budget increases include additional PDT labor for 35% design, economic model certifications, and review costs not anticipated in the last approved GI budget. The timing for additional funds from USACE and the City (in match) is probably in late Spring 2026.

Discussion: This policy change introduces both challenges and benefits familiar to us, as this is not the first USACE policy shift related to reduced risk tolerance we have experienced in the GI.

The benefits of advancing engineering and design work during the feasibility phase are significant. This approach reduces cost risk by identifying and addressing any seismic design requirements for the breakwater earlier in the process, ultimately delivering a more robust and reliable draft feasibility report. Projects will no longer be accepted for Chief's Report review unless they are at 35% design. Additionally, completing 35% design now will reduce costs in the next phase, Project Engineering and Design, if the study is recommended to proceed.

However, the expanded scope creates a funding challenge for the city. The estimated additional local sponsor commitment of \$444,000 (at 50% cost-share) must now be absorbed during the current Feasibility Phase rather than deferred to the Project Engineering and Design Phase, where cost-sharing would be more favorable at 90%-10%. We are anticipating that additional USACE and local sponsor funds will be required by early summer 2026 to maintain study progress. While the city will have the opportunity to again request matching funds from the State of Alaska, it should be prepared to shoulder these costs independently if state funding is unavailable, as insufficient funding could jeopardize the study's continuation.

Follow-Up: City staff have identified and shared specific bottlenecks in the USACE implementation process that have challenged the study to date, as well as the funding challenges with the PDT team. These concerns will be discussed with Colonel Palazzini, Commander of the USACE Alaska District, and Randy Bowker, Deputy District Engineer for Program Management and Chief of Programs and Projects, during a scheduled meeting on September 17, 2025.



MEMORANDUM

Port Property Associate Report for 09/22/2025 City Council

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Lord and Homer City Council
Date: September 11, 2025
From: Mark Bowman, Port Property Associate
Through: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

Current Front Burner Items:

- As part of the process to bring all Subleases in compliance with City Code, nearly all Sublease Applications and required documents have been received. Requirements that were not met and documentation inconsistencies are being corrected in the process. The staff review process is next.
- Wind and Tide LLC dba Peninsula Seafoods has submitted a partially complete Sublease Application for office space in the Alaska Custom Seafoods building.
- Happy Face LLC Sublease Approvals for all available Sublease spaces are complete.
- A completed Silver Bay Seafoods, LLC Application for Lease Assignment from OBI Seafoods has not yet been received.
- Homer Spit Oyster Bar has begun submitting documents for a Lease Application.
- The US Coast Guard has requested feedback regarding an anticipated formal request to abandon their building to the City with improvements. A building and Improvements inspection was completed with the City Manager, Port Director, Port Property Associate, and Building and Maintenance Staff.

Work Plan:

- The Port Property Associate is looking forward to a gradual shift of focus from Applications and correcting specific Leases and Subleases to system wide improvements for Lease management and efficiency.
- Follow up with the City Council for a Joint Work Session with the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission in the first quarter of 2026.

Virtual Event



**Tuesday
September 23rd
10-11:30am**

2026

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Learn More at
www.kpedd.org/CEDS/

Have your voice heard!

- SWOT Analysis
- Community Goals
- Strategies & Partners

Scan to RSVP



CONTACT US:
Caitlin@kpedd.org
907-283-3335

Scan to Attend





Carla Stanley, representing the
City of Homer

Update from the Board of Directors

Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council

The Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council held its regular meeting September 5th in Seldovia.

Todd Paxton, General Manager of Cook Inlet Spill Response, Inc. (CISPRI) updated the Council on his organization's most recent operations, including supporting the response to the Morning Midas incident south of Adak Island in June of this year. Under new branding that will be rolled out at the beginning of 2026, CISPRI will continue to seek new opportunities beyond Cook Inlet to support response efforts and provide assistance with oil spill compliance. We support CISPRI's efforts to ensure its ability to respond to incidents in CIRCAC's area of responsibility as the dynamics of Cook Inlet's oil industry continue to change.

Todd Duke, General Manager of Compliance Services for Resolve Marine detailed his experience working on the salvage response to the M/V Dali. That cargo tanker collided with the Frances Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore in March of 2024. Mr. Duke highlighted the extensive environmental, safety, and logistical challenges involved in that operation, for which he served as a key stakeholder for the Unified Command. The Council appreciates these firsthand accounts of notable response events.

Homer Harbormaster Brian Hawkins gave an update on the proposed expansion project at the Homer Harbor. With a primary focus on navigational improvements, Hawkins reported that the city is currently nearing the end of Alternative Evaluation and Analysis phase of the project. While final cost estimates are not yet available, Hawkins noted that recent policy changes within the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) include a 35% contribution from the local level for the future design phase. Ultimately, the project will accommodate increased demand for moorage at the harbor, which currently has nearly 400 small and medium vessels on a waitlist; a growing commercial fishing fleet; and increasing vessel sizes. The next step for project is the release of a draft report, expected in the first quarter of 2026.

We also received updates from several Ex-Officio members, including Capt. Christopher Culpepper, Commander, Sector Western Alaska and US Arctic, United States Coast Guard. Capt. Culpepper noted timelines for expected deliveries of new vessels with ice breaking capability and the commissioning of the first of three new, 154-foot Fast Response Cutters (FRCs), to be homeported in Kodiak.

Our next meeting is scheduled for December 5th in Anchorage.



Homer Title 21 Update

Progress Report to City Council

Prepared September 17, 2025

View related materials at HomerT21CodeUpdate.com

Upcoming Activities

- **October:** Planning Commission review of proposed draft code at the October 15th regular meeting.
- **October:** Host Community Open House on Wednesday, October 22nd (tentative).
- **November:** Public Review Draft is posted for public comment.

Accomplishments to Date

Recently Completed Activities (since last Progress Report)

- **September:** Staff conducted an initial review of the draft code; project team is planning for an October Open House.
- **August 27th:** Port and Harbor Advisory Commission. The project team presented and gathered input from the commission at an August 27th Worksession.

Featured in August 2025 Progress Report

- **July and August:** Conversations with staff around zoning administration, enforcement, district consolidations, and allowed uses to inform code drafting.
- **August 15th:** The draft Title 21 code was shared with City staff for review, including an initial legal review.

Featured in July 2025 Progress Report

- **June 5th:** Additional Stakeholder Dialogue. An additional stakeholder dialogue was held June 5th with representatives from Guiding Growth and Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP).
- **June 18th:** Planning Commission Meeting. The project team attended and facilitated a conversation with the Planning Commission on Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), Land Uses, Housing Types, Zoning Districts.
- **June:** Proposed Code Type and Structure. Prepared preliminary recommendations on how to structure the updated code. This included a current/proposed table of contents, with a companion report describing the changes.
- **July 15th – 16th:** Additional Stakeholder Interviews. The project team conducted additional interviews to fill in gaps/missing perspectives from groups that work most closely with the zoning code.
- **July 16th:** Planning Commission Meeting. The project team attended and facilitated a conversation with the Planning Commission focused on use standards, sign code, and administrative flexibility.

Featured in June 2025 Progress Report

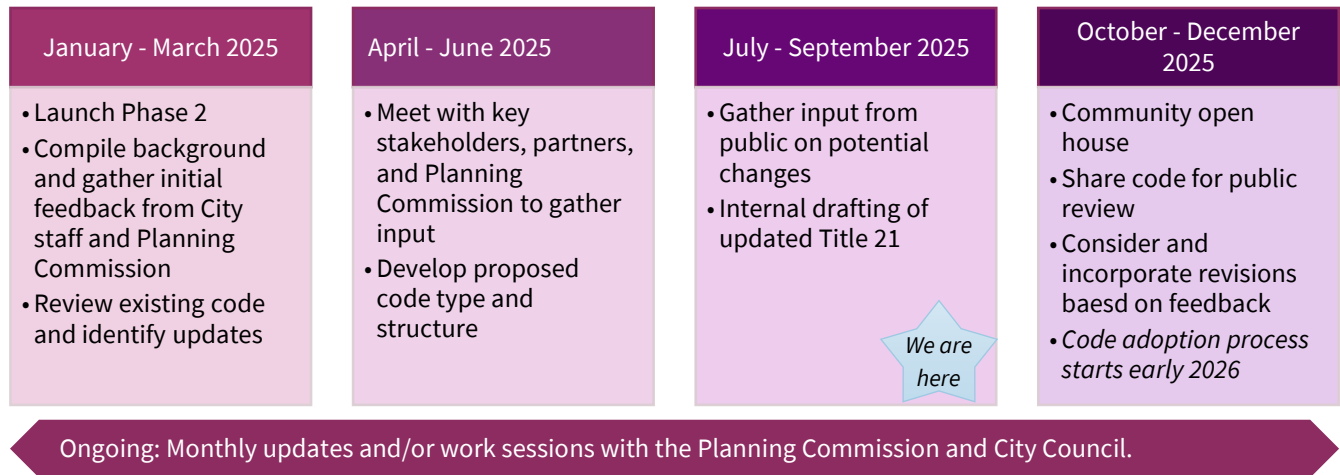
- **April 16th:** Planning Commission Work Session. Presented key findings from the Summary Background and Code Audit, and related topics.
- **April:** Stakeholder Dialogues. Convened three dialogues to talk with Homer-area professionals that use/engage with the code (Title 21). This included builders/developers, business owners, and realtors.
- **April:** Community Site Tour. Led by City staff, toured Homer by vehicle to visit example areas where zoning policies resulted in positive outcomes, and areas of concern/tension.

- **April:** *City Council Interviews.* Conducted five in-person interviews with Council members.
- **May 21st:** *Planning Commission Work Session.* Shared an overview of April stakeholder engagement activities and guided a discussion around specific sections of the code.

Featured in April 2025 Progress Report

- **November 2024:** *Initial Introduction to City Council*
- **February 2025:** *Staff Listening Session*
- **March 2025:** *Planning Commission Kickoff Meeting*
- **April 2025:** *Summary Background*
- **April 2025:** *Code Audit*
- **April 2025:** *Website Launch*

Project Schedule



Roles of the Planning Commission and City Council

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is the advisory body for the Title 21 Update process.

- Share guidance, feedback, and local knowledge during the code drafting process.
- Provide feedback on draft materials, including the draft code.
- Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding adoption the Title 21 Update.

City Council Engagement

- The project team will share periodic updates with the City Council, often via the City Manager's reports.
- City Council members are invited to stay informed about the process by attending Planning Commission meetings, reading project documents, participating in community activities, and reviewing the public review draft of the revised code.
- The City Council will be responsible for the adoption of the Title 21 Update.

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

**United States
Coast Guard**



Commanding Officer
United States Coast Guard
Civil Engineering Unit Juneau

709 W 9th St.
Suite 817
Juneau, AK 99801
Staff Symbol: CG CEU Juneau (prp)
Phone: (907) 227-7720
Email: Moira.H.Meek@uscg.mil

11100

July 30, 2025

City of Homer
Harbormaster Office
4311 Freight Dock Road
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Mr. Hawkins,

Thank you for your previous communications on the future of the leased parcel of land and pier space previously providing the homeport and uplands for the now decommissioned CGC NAUSHON under Lease HSCG89-16-1-0084. While the USCG continues the process of evaluating any future need of the real property associated with this lease, we would like to formally request consent from the City of Homer to abandon in place USCG improvements made upon the Premises upon termination, in accordance with Paragraph 10.a.2 of Lease HSCG89-16-1-0084.

Specifically, if it is determined there is no future use and we are directed to terminate the lease, the USCG requests consent to abandon in place the following improvements:

1. 5152 Sewer Lines
2. 5153 Water Lines
3. 5154 Communication Lines
4. 5155 Electrical Lines
5. 5158 Hazmat Storage
6. 5159 Paint Locker
7. 5160 Cutter Support Building
8. 72523 Gate – Security
9. 72524 Fence – Perimeter
10. 72541 Parking – Unsurfaced
11. 72926 Sidewalks
12. 852766 Paint Locker (2019)
13. 812782 Misc Equip Pads
14. 812783 Electrical Dist System
15. 812784 Elect Utility Floating Dock
16. 812785 Elect Utility Shed On Floating Dock

If the City of Homer identifies any additional improvements or real property on the Premises not listed above, please include them in your response and we will determine their status.

The Coast Guard would like to thank City of Homer for providing use of their property through the duration of CGC NAUSHON's tenure in Homer, Alaska. We appreciate City of Homer's support of our mission and look forward to continued partnership in Homer!

Sincerely,

M. H. Meek, LT
Branch Chief
Planning & Real Property
Civil Engineering Unit Juneau
U.S. Coast Guard

8/28/25 Inspection of Cutter Support Building and Improvements To Consider USCG's Likely Request of Approval to Abandon Them

Participants: Port Director, City Manager, Port Property Associate and Buildings & Maintenance Staff: Dave Welty, Russell Anderson & Patrick Houlihan. The group met at the USCG building to inspect the building and improvements to consider the USCG's anticipated request for approval to abandon the building and many of the improvements in place, and transfer ownership to the City.

Summary: the building is generally in good condition. It was solidly built and remains structurally sound. Most of the main building and other improvements have not been changed since they were originally constructed. City staff will make a recommendation to the City Council after obtaining a building appraisal, estimated cost of building maintenance, estimated cost of renovations needed and receiving confirmation that the US Coast Guard would like to transfer ownership of the building and additional improvements to the City.

Work that the City would need to do to be able to use the building and improvements:

- Roof - gulls have taken over. Some mitigation, as permitted by US Fish and Wildlife regulations, may help discourage nesting.
- Paint the building
- Repair broken concrete
- Replace ceiling tile
- Replace carpet with Luxury Vinyl Flooring (LVF) or similar
- Inspect boiler – possible replacement is required: Have it inspected by a certified person to determine an estimate of remaining life, recommendation to replace or tune-up. If the boiler needs to be replaced, a natural gas system would be the likely choice. The natural gas assessment is fully paid.
- Replace many of the electrical fixtures, especially lighting. Replace current lighting with LED lighting.
- Removal of double-walled fuel tank – if natural gas boiler is installed.
- Building security system – determine whether to remove or transfer the system to the City.

Building Use Possibilities:

- The facility could be used by up to two entities, based on size and building layout.
- RFP for Long - term lease(s) of the Property and structures.

- Lease the Land with the building as-is with any improvements to be made by the Lessee.
- Retain the facility for City use.

Action needed:

- Provide the USCG with a list of Improvements items the City would accept or request removal.
- Request Building & Maintenance Staff to assess the approximate cost of the necessary work.
- Consider the appraised value and rental potential of the property.

PROPOSED RESPONSE TO THE USCG

Request removal by USCG: This equipment was for dedicated use by the Naushon and cannot be repurposed for general use.

- 5152 Sewer Lines - to dock
- 5153 Water Lines - to dock
- 5154 Communication lines - to dock
- 5155 Electrical Pedestal on the dock

Approve abandonment of:

- 5158 Hazmat Storage
- 5159 Paint Locker
- 5160 Cutter Support Building
- 72523 Security gate – damaged, needs replacement
- 72524 Fence around perimeter
- 72541 Parking area - unsurfaced
- 72926 Sidewalks
- 812782 Misc. Equipment Pads
- 812783 Electrical Dist. System
- 812784 Elect Utility Floating Dock

Listed by USCG but found to be in duplicate or an error:

- 852766 Paint Locker (2019) – DUPLICATE of 5159 (above)
- 812785 Electrical Utility Shed on Floating Dock (City understands this to currently be City owned)

Items not listed by USCG:

- Washer and Dryer in laundry room – OK to abandon
- Kitchenette: Refrigerator, oven range, microwave – OK to abandon
- Double-walled fuel tank - OK to abandon – City will remove it if the boiler is switched to natural gas.

Photos:



USCG Cutter Support Building



Garage



Common area inside the entry



¾ Bath

Report prepared 09/10/2025 by:

Mark Bowman, Port Property Associate