



2025 Federal Advocacy Strategy

City of Homer, AK



Prepared in coordination with TFG, LLC.

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2025 Strategic Overview and Priorities

Homer Harbor Expansion Project

ADVANCING THE CITY'S INTERESTS AND PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES IN THE PORT OF HOMER EXPANSION PROJECT

Objective: Ensure that the Homer Harbor Expansion project proceeds in a timely and cost-effective manner by working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Homer's Congressional delegation, and other relevant Congressional and federal agency stakeholders. Specifically, secure the City's preferred workplan in order to defray as much of the cost of the Harbor project borne by the City as possible.

Message: The project has major potential benefits for the City of Homer, including new jobs, increased revenue and more. Further, this project is not just key for Alaska's commercial fisheries – which are important for the national economy – but is also a key national security priority. The aims and purposes of the Expansion project align closely with the President's Executive Orders (EO) on *Restoring America's Maritime Dominance* and *Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness*. The Harbor Expansion is an important component of Alaska's infrastructure development and is important as the Coast Guard fleet undergoes modernization and expansion. The Harbor will help Alaska meet its responsibilities as an increasingly important geostrategic asset to the United States in the Arctic.

As a secondary consideration, the Harbor Expansion would be a critical component of the planned Alaska Gasline, as Homer is the closest deep-water port to the planned Nikiski liquefaction terminal. Overall, the Harbor expansion has a significant benefit for Homer, the State of Alaska, and the Nation.

Political Landscape and Considerations:

- The project is being developed at a time of disruption and uncertainty at the federal level. Federal staffing levels, including at the Army Corps, are being significantly curtailed, leading to project delays and manpower challenges. Though impacts to Alaska are limited at this time, it is possible that this becomes a challenge down the line.
- Federal funding is also in a state of disruption and uncertainty, with the Administration pausing, cancelling, or reducing the scope and amount of various federal funding programs. However, "hard" infrastructure, such as roads, highways, ports, and more are still identified as a priority by the administration and there are efforts to accelerate application and project delivery. Consequently, clearly demonstrating the economic benefit from these projects should be a focus in discussions with federal partners and stakeholders.
- Homer (and other Alaska communities) are well positioned for to be awarded funding with an all-Republican Delegation and Republican Administration, along with Senators that occupy key Committee positions, with Senator Murkowski being a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and Senator Sullivan being a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. All three of these committees have purview over the Army Corps and related public works projects. Congressman Begich, though new to the House, also holds a key position on the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure.
- As referenced in the high-level message, the President has issued EOs on *Restoring America's Maritime Dominance* and *Restoring American Seafood*

Competitiveness that are expected bring new and expanded opportunities for port projects.

Milestones:

TIME FRAME	MILESTONE OR TASK
<i>Rolling</i>	Continued outreach and engagement with the Congressional delegation to keep them apprised of project status and relevant developments. While the delegation will not have direct decision-making authority on the project, they may be able to push the Army Corps and other agencies.
	Support the City's ongoing engagement with agency partners including the Army Corps of Engineers.
<i>Short term (1-6 months)</i>	Collaboration with the City and its partners to develop project-specific materials for distribution to federal partners
	Introduction of City of Homer to Congressman Begich and his team.
	Brief Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW), of which Senator Sullivan is a member, on projects and priorities due to its oversight jurisdiction over the Army Corps of Engineers.
	Introduction to and engagement with the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) to position project for funding and highlight alignment with EOs.
<i>Intermediate term (6 months – 1 year)</i>	Invitation of delegation members and staff to the City to see the Harbor in person.
	Invitation of agency principals and key staff to the City. This can include partners from the Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, Department of Transportation, and more.

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		Refinement of projects and advocacy for submissions in future Congressional appropriations/earmark cycles, which may provide further federal funding for certain aspects of the project, such as specific phases or other discrete components.
	<i>Long term (1+ years)</i>	Secure federal funding for the Expansion project via USACE and/or other federal partners.
		Secure a decision from the Army Corps to move forward with the City's preferred alternative in order to minimize the City's cost burden.
		Identify and develop potential alternative funding/financing programs that may assist the City in developing the Harbor expansion project.
		Secure authorization to proceed to construction of the project.

Homer Spit Erosion Project

ADVOCATING FOR SUPPORT AND FUNDING TO MITIGATE EROSION ON THE HOMER SPIT

Objective: Secure political support and funding for the City of Homer's efforts to mitigate ongoing erosion on the Homer Spit, as well as prevent further erosion into the future.

Message: Erosion on the Homer Spit poses significant risks for critical infrastructure as well as businesses and property across Homer. Notably, parts of the Sterling Highway are under threat of damage and possible closure due to erosion. This has consequences for regular traffic in and out of the City but also poses an indirect economic risk to commercial traffic making use of the Harbor. The State of Alaska declared an emergency over damage to the Homer Spit Road caused by erosion. This problem needs to be addressed with a long-term solution – not just continued band-aid fixes which will not fix the problem and will cost much more in the long-run.

Political Landscape and Considerations:

- Alaska's Congressional delegation holds positions on key Committees that may be helpful in securing funding for the project.
- So-called "hard" infrastructure, such as this project, remain a popular purpose for federal investments across party lines.
- Discussion of this project with federal partners should focus on the economic and safety risks posed by inaction or otherwise short-term band-aid fixes.
- In the near future (end of 2025/beginning of 2026) Congress is expected to begin consideration of the Surface Transportation reauthorization bill, which may provide a pathway to securing authorization/funding for the project.

This bill, whose previous iteration was part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2022, is generally developed and passed every five years.

Milestones:

TIME FRAME	MILESTONE OR TASK
<i>Rolling</i>	Engagement with relevant and potential federal partners including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, and other entities that may help fund or support erosion mitigation projects.
	Monitor funding opportunities that may be useful for the mitigation of impacts of erosion on the Homer Spit.
	Support city staff and officials in developing project proposals and subsequently soliciting political support from the City's Congressional delegation.
<i>Short term (1-6 months)</i>	Develop understanding of separable/discrete project elements in order to best assess and recommend funding pathways and strategies.
	Further refine messaging and talking points over the importance of Spit erosion mitigation efforts: economic and commercial, safety/security, environmental, etc.
	Based on Short-term action item 2, complete a funding strategy that identifies potential funding sources (including competitive grants, annual appropriations, surface transportation authorization, and others) that apply to this priority and begin to position the project with the Delegation and agencies responsible for such funding.
<i>Intermediate term (6 months – 1 year)</i>	Development of potential earmark requests for consideration by Congressional delegation.
	Securing funding for erosion mitigation activities, in whole or in part.
	Identify and pursue opportunities in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization that could be utilized for components of this project.

		Support City applications for FY 2027 (and beyond) grant and financing opportunities.
	<i>Long term (1+ years)</i>	Explore and pursue alternative funding avenues and seek authorizations and/or funding as required to pursue additional programs.

Float Replacement Project

SECURING FUNDING AND A PATHWAY FORWARD TO REPLACE CRITICAL FLOAT SYSTEMS IN THE PORT OF HOMER THAT HAVE REACHED THE END OF SERVICE LIFE.

Objective: Assist the City with securing funding and support in ongoing efforts to replace aging and outdated float systems in the Homer Harbor, which provide berths for hundreds of vessels in the Harbor.

The Message: Homer Harbor Float Systems 1 and 4 are in desperate need of renewal and refit. At a time when demand for berths in the Harbor are increasing for transportation, commercial, recreational, and freight purposes, the need for a sufficient float system is as crucial as ever. Poor or non-functioning floats have the potential to damage vessels, endangering property, livelihoods, and personal safety.

Political Landscape and Considerations:

- Much the same as the City's other projects, we do not anticipate that this will be a politically controversial project as it falls within the realm of "hard" infrastructure.
- Making the economic, safety, and security benefits and considerations clear should be at the forefront of discussions of the project.
- Alaska's Congressional delegation will be influential in facilitating funding and authorization for the project.
- Federal funds are tightening across the board, but infrastructure projects like this are more likely to be funded than many other projects – particularly if funding is applied for construction phase activities as opposed to design/permitting activities.
- Though it is a distinct project from the Harbor Expansion, it will be compelling to present the Float Replacement as a part of the City's broader efforts to modernize and expand Homer's Harbor/Port facilities.

Milestones:

TIME FRAME	MILESTONE OR TASK
<i>Rolling</i>	<p>Monitor funding and financing opportunities to ensure that the City is kept apprised of all potential options to fund the float replacement.</p> <p>Support City's PIDP grant application as it proceeds through DOT consideration.</p>

	<i>Short term (1-6 months)</i>	Assess alternative funding means, including Congressional earmarks, to determine suitable options in the event PIDP grant is not approved.
		Ensure that federal partners including the DOT are kept aware of the project. Introductory discussions with DOT Intergovernmental Affairs.
	<i>Intermediate term (6 months – 1 year)</i>	Development of earmark requests for consideration by Congressional delegation.
	<i>Long term (1+ years)</i>	Securing funding for the replacement of Float 4.
		Pursue funding for the replacement of Float 1

Ongoing Actions and Activities

NON-PROJECT SPECIFIC ACTION ITEMS AND STRATEGIES.

Objective: Provide the City of Homer with a persistent presence in Washington, including identifying threats and opportunities as they arise, while advising and taking direct action to advance needs and projects. This includes federal funding and support for projects, as well as beneficial legislative and/or regulatory for the City. Over time, the objective is to increasingly relieve City staff of day-to-day workload of federal government relations by being its consistent eyes and ears in Washington.

The Message: Though it is a small community, Homer has an outsized impact on Alaska's economy, as well as the nation's. Homer's economy is multifaceted and has numerous paths for growth. As a regional hub for tourism and recreation, as well as a major hub for the State's commercial fisheries and other industries, Homer has a growing role to play in the State's economy as well as nationally important industries.

Political Landscape and Considerations:

- Fully incorporating new federal advocates takes time and effort at the outset, but as TFG becomes more familiar with Homer's priorities (identified and future/specific and general), communication preferences, and other factors it
- Federal funding and advancing priority projects always takes longer than is ideal for communities trying to address immediate needs and limited financial resources. As such, it is important to begin to think about longer-term priorities to position them for engagement when appropriate.
- In addition to the "big-ticket" items identified above, identifying expenditures and needs of the City in terms of public safety, public services, and other general municipal responsibilities will help TFG monitor and advise

on additional funding opportunities that could help relieve general fund pressures for the City.

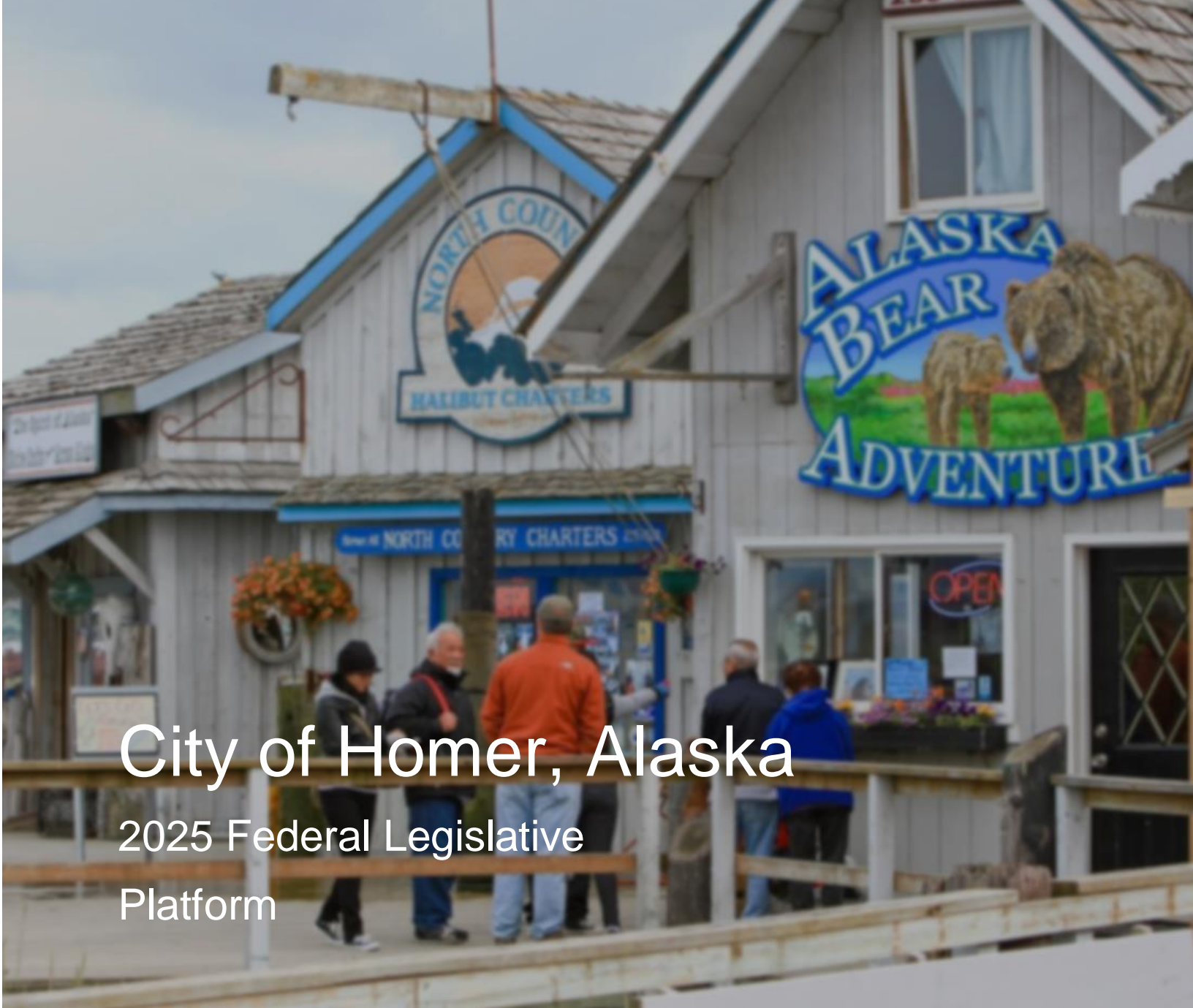
- With a new member of the Alaska Congressional delegation in Representative Begich, it will be important to introduce the City and its priorities to him and his office as soon as possible.

Milestones:

TIME FRAME	MILESTONE OR TASK
<i>Rolling</i>	Discuss and maintain awareness of the City's project and other priorities, particularly in the context of the unique situation faced by rural communities in Alaska. It is key to ensure that federal partners, aside from the Congressional delegation (who are already generally aware), are made aware of how projects advanced by Alaskan communities often do not fit neatly in the framework of many federal programs. Case in point: the Army Corps' National Economic Development score in the Harbor Expansion project.
	Continued advocacy for the protection and development of Alaska's recreational and tourism industry, and commercial fisheries.
	Support City staff and officials in engagements with federal offices and officials as needed, for existing projects, as well as new issues and needs arise.
<i>Short term (1-6 months)</i>	Development of 2025 federal platform.
	Introductory meetings with Congressional delegation.
<i>Intermediate term (6 months – 1 year)</i>	Connect City staff and elected officials with appropriate federal agency personnel as needed for various projects and issues.
	Work with City staff and elected officials to develop and refine future Congressionally Directed Spending/Community Project Funding ("earmark") requests.

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		Organize a visit for key City staff and officials in Washington D.C to meet with Congressional delegation, Committees, Federal Agencies, and more.
	<i>Long term (1+ years)</i>	Modification and continued development of future iterations of federal platform and strategy. Important as the political landscape and composition of Congress, the White House, and federal agencies change.
		Support the City's efforts to secure federal financing and grant funding for various projects, including soliciting political support for these financing mechanisms from the Congressional delegation.



City of Homer, Alaska

2025 Federal Legislative
Platform

SEPTEMBER 2025





Homer City Government



Rachel Lord
Mayor



Donna Aderhold
Councilmember



Shelly Erickson
Councilmember



Storm P. Hansen
Councilmember



Bradley Parsons
Councilmember



Jason Davis
Councilmember



Caroline Venuti
Councilmember



Overview

The City of Homer, Alaska is an economic, maritime, and cultural hub on the southern Kenai Peninsula with a population of just over 6,000. Homer's economy is anchored by maritime transportation and commercial fishing, which support local processing, supply, and marine service industries. The Port of Homer and the four-mile Homer Spit—a designated State freight corridor developed with both marine industrial facilities and tourism-related businesses—provide essential infrastructure for local fleets, freight deliveries throughout Southcentral and Western Alaska, and a robust tourism industry. The port also provides critical pilot boat services for cargo and tanker vessels traveling north to the Port of Alaska, which handles 50% of all freight shipped to Alaska and serves 90% of the state's population. As a key harbor of refuge and logistics hub, Homer supports commercial fishing, charter operations, marine industrial transportation, research vessels, and U.S. Coast Guard operations. These facilities and services play a vital role in ensuring safe maritime operations, giving Homer outsized regional importance.

As a working waterfront community, Homer balances economic growth with environmental stewardship alongside changes that directly impact its fisheries and coastal infrastructure. By strengthening marine industries and transportation networks, maintaining its role as a regional maritime hub, and supporting diverse local economies, Homer continues to grow while serving both community livelihoods and broader state and national maritime interests.

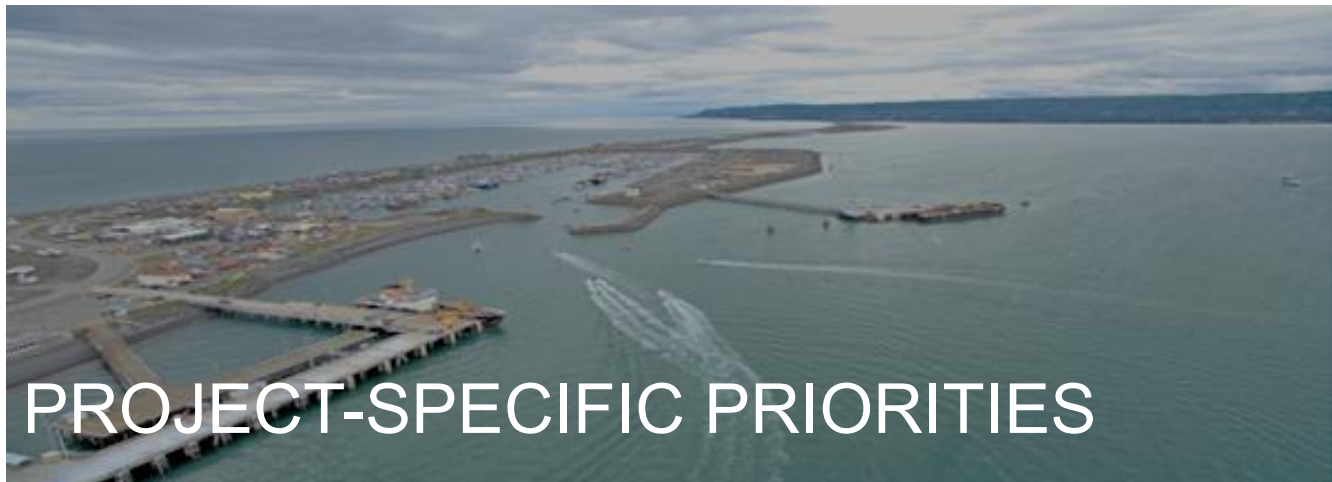
Through the City's Federal Legislative Platform, Homer will advocate for federal assistance and policy in five major areas, including:

1. MARITIME INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES
2. PROJECT-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES
3. GENERAL INFRASTRUCTURE
4. TOURISM AND RECREATION
5. GENERAL GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS



Maritime industry and fisheries are the backbone of Homer's economy. They support countless businesses, marine vessels, and families in Homer, and are also a major draw for sport and personal use fishermen. The City of Homer supports federal efforts to bolster Alaska's – and the nation's – commercial fishing industries and other aspects of the maritime economy.

- Support federal programs that promote and develop sustainable fisheries and fishery practices.
- Support commercial, charter and recreational fisheries.
- Support maintained and/or increased funding for NOAA, the National Weather Service, the U.S. Coast Guard and other federal agencies that provide critical services for the fishing industry.
- Support federal efforts surrounding enhanced fisheries monitoring, species protection and management, and marine biology sciences.
- Support federal investments in marine science research, as well as public-private partnerships for the benefit of fisheries and other maritime industries.
- Support increased U.S. Coast Guard funding to ensure the sanctity of Alaska's waters and fisheries, particularly from foreign interference and illegal fishing operations.
- Support the Clean Water Act and coastal restoration programs that reduce runoff, support shellfish beds, and protect the health of coastal ecosystems that attract anglers, boaters, and recreators.
- Support increased federal funding for harbor and port infrastructure and fair distribution of funds between large and small ports.
- Ensure fishery laws balance sustainability with community needs by supporting small-boat fleets, cooperative research, and flexibility in management decisions.
- Support increased flexibility and cost-sharing options within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers programs, particularly for small and/or rural communities like Homer.
- Support enhanced disaster assistance and more efficient disaster assistance processes for fishing communities, businesses, and regions, particularly during fishery disasters and other marine and coastal disasters.
- Support efforts to develop other marine services.
- Support marine highways and other marine transportation infrastructure.
- Support federal science and technology agencies, including the USGS, NOAA, NSF, and more.



PROJECT-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

The City of Homer has several large-scale, long-term projects that it is seeking federal assistance for. These projects are critical to the City's economy and role in Alaska's – and the Nation's – transportation infrastructure. Further, these projects will require investment and support from Federal partners to ensure their completion and to support the already substantial investments made by the City and its taxpayers. A brief summary of each project, as well as top advocacy priorities for each, are included below.

Homer Harbor Expansion Project

Beginning in 2023, the City of Homer engaged with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a General Investigation to design and scope feasible solutions for expanding the City's Harbor to meet growing demand for berths and the Harbor's facilities. The expansion is necessary for navigational safety and to provide harbor space for large vessels including commercial fishing vessels, marine transportation and freight shipping vessels, the U.S. Coast Guard Buoy Tender Aspen and turn around facilities for USCG Fast Response Cutters. The Port of Homer is one of Alaska's most important ice-free deep-water ports and consequently has an outsized impact beyond the boundaries of the City itself.

Priorities:

- Coordinate with federal partners including the USACE to advance the USACE's Tentatively Selected Plan
- Work with Alaska Congressional delegation to ensure awareness of the project's importance and develop political support for funding the expansion project.
- Emphasize the regional and national importance of the Port of Homer and the necessity of the planned expansion.
- Urge federal decision-makers – particularly the USACE – to prioritize decisions that mitigate the fiscal impact to the City of Homer.



Float System Replacement

The Homer Harbor Float System is an important component of the City's efforts to modernize and grow the City's port facilities. In total, the Float Systems currently accommodate 920 stalls for reserved vessels, as well as 4,100 feet of transient moorage, a significant portion of the Harbor's overall vessel capacity. With a range from 37 to over 60 years old, the Float Systems need replacement and refurbishment – needs that originated before the Systems were transferred from the State of Alaska to the City of Homer's ownership. Ensuring that these Float Systems are functioning in good order will ensure that people and vessels remain safe, are able to access the Harbor's facilities and to keep established freight supply chains uninterrupted.

Priorities:

- Work with federal partners to support funding for the Float Replacement project.
- Advance the City's pending Port Infrastructure Development Program grant and determine potential alternative Federal funding pathways.
- Ensure that the Alaska Congressional delegation is kept apprised of the project's importance and progress in securing funding.

Homer Spit Erosion Mitigation

Coastal erosion is an ever-present threat to Homer's infrastructure, degrading roads and utility equipment. Homer Spit Road, which is the terminus of Alaska Route 1 and the Sterling Highway and provides Homer's only road connection to the rest of the Kenai Peninsula and Alaska is particularly impacted. This State designated freight route supports multimodal access to the port and harbor and airport. The highway is essential for connecting Port of Homer tenants and users to Alaska's overland transportation network. In November 2024, the State of Alaska issued an emergency disaster declaration after severe erosion washed out lanes on the Homer Spit Road. A comprehensive, long-term solution—not just short-term “band-aids”—is necessary to ensure the city can effectively mitigate ongoing erosion impacts.

Priorities:

- Work with Congress to develop potential solutions and funding pathways to combat this erosion, particularly in significant legislation such as the upcoming iterations of the Water Resources Development Act and the Surface Transportation reauthorization bill.
- Support funding/financing for roads, utilities, and other infrastructure impacted directly or indirectly by erosion.
- Support flexibility in federal programs designed to combat erosion including flexibility in usage of dredged materials from harbor dredging, including U.S. Army Corps of Engineers authorization to maintain the Homer Spit with beach nourishment with the aim of preventing long-term negative impacts of erosion.



Homer, as with much of rural Alaska, faces challenges posed by deferred maintenance needs of infrastructure including roads, public buildings, utilities, and more. Moreover, due to Homer's coastal location and discharge slope geography, it experiences significant levels of erosion, which will necessitate federal intervention to help mitigate. As a part of Homer's responsibility to residents and visitors, the City strongly supports federal investments in rural America and local infrastructure resilience.

Roads, Surface Transportation, and Coastal Infrastructure

- Support federal funding for infrastructure that supports entrance and egress points to federal lands, including National Parks, Forests, and more.
- Support federal assistance for communities experiencing coastal erosion.
- Support federal efforts and programs to mitigate coastal erosion, including through increased flexibility for the use of dredged material utilization in beach renourishment.
- Support assistance for infrastructure impacted by coastal erosion, including roads and streets, buildings, utility lines, and more.

Water and Wastewater

- Support funding and programs that improve wastewater infrastructure projects.
- Support funding for water supply infrastructure projects, and programs that protect water supply systems and naturally increase the reliability of clean water.
- Support federal programs that help small and rural communities expand water and wastewater infrastructure to accommodate population growth.



Public Facilities, Parks, Museums, and Libraries

- Support funding for community facilities and programs including parks, libraries, community centers, government support buildings, emergency operations, jail facilities, and more.
- Support funding to increase the energy efficiency of public buildings and facilities.
- Support funding for veteran facilities and programs.



The City of Homer is committed to supporting and maintaining the world-class tourism and recreational opportunities the community and region has to offer. Homer strongly supports federal efforts to invest in Alaska's public lands and waters, as well as effective wildlife conservation and management strategies that ensure vibrant hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation are open to all, and ensuring they will remain open into the far future. The City supports these measures for those who live in our City, as well as those looking to visit our city and the region.

- Support funding for federal land management agencies.
- Support funding for staffing federal land management agencies in order to maintain and keep open America's public lands.
- Oppose efforts to reduce the size of parts of the federal workforce that provide critical maintenance, oversight, and services for public lands.
- Support investments in public lands in order to ensure that they are or remain accessible and affordable for all.
- Support federal programs that invest in and assist small businesses, particularly those involved in marine and tourism industries.
- Support training programs for young people and veterans in commercial fishing, marine trades, conservation, and ecotourism.
- Invest in multi-modal transportation including bike paths and pedestrian routes, and accompanying infrastructure like visitor centers, clean restrooms, and wayfinding that enhance safety and coastal recreation experiences.
- Support efforts to preserve maritime history, indigenous history, historic buildings, historic vessels, and museums that draw heritage tourism and foster community identity.
- Support federal funding to maintain and expand trails, campsites, visitor centers, and recreational facilities on public lands. Programs like the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) must be fully funded and accessible.
- Encourage and support federal efforts to bolster and create year-round tourism economies.



The City of Homer is also responsible for a wide variety of other governmental services that we provide to our citizens. Opportunities to defray costs associated with these critical services and relieve pressure on the general fund is an important ongoing activity at the federal level.

Access to Federal Funding and Financing

- Support policies that increase the accessibility of federal grant funding, including simplified application, local administration, and reporting processes.
- Support tax-exempt financing and other local government tax and financing preferences and incentives.
- Support policies that allow for the extension of spending deadlines for grant funding to ensure work can continue until all funding is expended.

Community Resiliency

- Support legislation that will provide emergency economic assistance to for disaster mitigation and preparedness, response capabilities, and infrastructure resilience against changing weather and erosion patterns and natural disasters. Oppose legislation that would reduce local input to federal regulatory processes.
- Support funding for forest management and wildfire prevention.

Communications and Broadband

- Support funding for public telecommunications, radio, and broadband infrastructure and technology, including advancements to increase the resiliency of public safety communications.
- Seek support for broadband funding for rural communities.
- Support programs that expand the use of GIS and GPS technologies for community and emergency response planning.



Protection of Local Revenue

- Oppose any federal effort to borrow, defer, or take local discretionary revenue.
- Oppose the redirecting of existing revenues and/or the creation of additional unfunded mandates.
- Support efforts to generate new intergovernmental revenue and/or enhance existing revenue and reimbursement levels.
- Support programs and initiatives that offset the loss of revenue on publicly managed lands including the Secure Rural Schools and Payment in Lieu of Taxes programs.

Cybersecurity

- Support funding and programs for cybersecurity services, training, and equipment particularly for rural communities.

Election Reform

- Monitor and track legislation pertaining to local election regulations and processes.
- Support federal initiatives that provide funding for reform and equipment that bring efficiencies to the election process.