GREETINGS FROM CITY HALL

Harbor Facility Grant Program Award

The City was officially awarded a FY23 Tier II Harbor Facility Matching Grant from the State of Alaska DOT & PF in the amount of $366,000 for cathodic protection in the Port & Harbor. Funds allow the City to complete a years-long, phased approach to protect over 487 steel piles harbor-wide from corrosion due to electrolysis.

Most of the float system pilings predates 1999 ownership transfer from the State. When originally installed, the pilings were protected from corrosion by a hot-dipped galvanized coating, which is typically effective between 15 and 20 years. At their current age, the original protective coating is depleted to the point where it was no longer protecting the pile. Port and Harbor reserve funds were utilized in 2018 and 2021 to add protection to about 44% of the harbor piling. This FY23 State is a 50-50 match of City funds, which will allow us to complete protection for the remaining 56% of pilings.

WHAT'S NEW?

- Library News
- Community Corner
- City Clerk’s Office
- Community Recreation
- Fire Department
- Public Safety Notes
- Planning Department
- Port & Harbor
- Public Works
- Meet the Staff
- City of Homer Roster
- Municipal Art Collection
- Stay Connected with City Council
- Join Our Team

We hope you'll discover something new today as we share the latest information and ways you can tap into what's going on at City Hall and in the Homer community.

Check us out on Facebook

- City Hall - @cityofhomerak
- Parks & Recreation - @homerparksandrec
- Homer Public Library - @homerpubliclibrary
- Homer Police - @homerpolice
- Fire Department - @HomerVolFireDept

Share this link with your friends, so they can get the newsletter too - https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/monthly-email-newsletter

"where the land ends and the sea begins"
Art in the Library
Exhibits in the fireplace lounge include works by Thelma Gower, Audrey Wallace, Scott Ulmer, the Senior Friendship Center and the Brewer Family.

Green Dot Training
Saturdays in August, 12:30-2:30pm
Bystander Intervention Training to empower you to know what to do when you encounter a volatile situation.

StoryWalk®
Be sure to check out the enchanting tales on the StoryWalk® trail during your adventures summer. We hope you enjoy the three remaining stories for the season.

**July 15 - August 15**

**August 15 - September 15**
Berry Song, by Michaela Goade

**September 15 - October 15**
The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything, by Linda Williams

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**4th of July - 1st 50 Years Photo Contest**
Jenny Carroll, Special Projects and Communications Coordinator, took the prize for ‘Most Creative’ during an employee photo contest on the 4th of July. Take a look at 1967 Jenny and her today with a pretty spring peony.

**Adding Sidewalks to Main Street**
Sidewalk construction is going strong along Main Street. Adding a sidewalk from Pioneer all the way up to Bayview Park is a welcome improvement for walkability in the Homer community. Earlier this year Council adopted Resolution 22-043 to confirm the interest of City’s interest in investing time and resources into non-motorized transportation systems. This project is one example.

There will be a two week break to wait for materials to arrive. Work is scheduled to resume August 15th.

**Coast Guard Day is August 4th**
Did you know the Coast Guard has been around since 1790? Coast Guard Day, celebrated annually, commemorates the anniversary of the founding of the U.S. Coast Guard on August 4, 1790 by then-Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton. The US Coast Guard are one of five Armed Services, and the only military branch within the Department of Homeland Security.

On Coast Guard Day we show appreciation for the important work the USCG does throughout the year. We honor and celebrate them and hope you will take the time to find out more about what they do in the Homer community.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary sponsors educational events like National Safe Boating Week around Memorial Day weekend. They also conduct recreational boating safety and Kids Don’t Float education courses. Click here for more information. So, be sure to thank a US Coast Guard service person when you spot them around town.
City Clerk's Office

Candidacy Filing for City Regular Election

Homer citizens interested in running for Homer City Council in the October 2022 Regular Election must officially declare their candidacy with the Homer City Clerk’s Office and meet qualifications.

**Candidate filing opens Monday, August 1, 2022 and closes Monday, August 15, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.** for two City Council member seats (3 year terms) and City Mayor (2 year term).

To qualify, candidates must be:

- A US Citizen
- At least 18 years of age
- A registered voter of the City of Homer at least 30 days prior to the election
- And have been a resident, fixed habitation, of the City of Homer for at least one year prior to Election Day (October 4, 2022)

Absentee Voting

Absentee Voting for the August 16th State Primary Election will be **open August 1st through August 16th**. Voters can come to the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers **Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**, with the exception of **Monday, August 8th it will close at 3:00 p.m.** due to the Regular City Council meeting that day.

Community Recreation

Community Recreation offers indoor programs at the HERC Gym and Activity Room, Homer High School and Homer Middle School. Bookmark [https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/com-rec](https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/com-rec) and make plans to participate in the latest programs!

From flag football, to pick up soccer, pickleball to tai chi, dance cardio to the community kids program, there is something for everyone to stay active and have fun this summer.

Go to [cityofhomer-ak.gov/com-rec](http://cityofhomer-ak.gov/com-rec) to:

- Find out more and register for your favorite program
- Do you have a program idea you’d like to see for the Fall schedule?
- Info on how to teach a class or volunteer!

Mark your calendar for the Labor Day Weekend Pickleball Tournament

**Cosmic Hamlet Open - September 2 - 4**

Register by August 12th for the best deal on registration!

Register online at: [pickleballbrackets.com](http://pickleballbrackets.com) or contact Mike Illg at [millg@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:millg@ci.homer.ak.us)
Fire Department

HVFD Fleet Struts its Stuff in 4th of July Parade

Wow! Did you go to the 4th of July parade? If so, you saw our area’s public safety fleet in full force. Emergency response vehicles from HVFD, HPD, Kachemak Emergency Services all showed up to strut their stuff and the community loved it!

Before the parade, the HVFD hosted a fun family open house event at the fire hall. Kids got to work the hose with the Chief, do some obstacles and enjoy a hot dog and ice cream before heading to the parade. The whole HVFD was on hand to lead the fun.

Burn Permits

On July 16, HVFD Chief Mark Kirko resumed issuing burn permits in a restricted capacity inside Homer city limits. Land clearing piles are still prohibited. Acceptable burning includes small brush piles from yard work clean up, cooking and warming fires or any natural wood material not to exceed 4’x4’ in size. A water source must be available to extinguish the fire if necessary.

Rules for burning on the beaches in Homer remain the same. Fires must be 100’ below high tide line and fires must be smaller than 3’x3’ in size and all fires must be extinguished before leaving your site.

Smother Ride for Patients

Sometimes, it’s the little things that make all the difference! The HVFD has worked hard to fill its staff needs this year and since Deputy Chief Kahles’ arrival, the workload has pleasantly shifted from reacting to daily emergencies to having time to resolve outstanding projects. One example is that our ambulance, Medic-3, lacked ‘air ride’ suspension that made it challenging to comfortably transport patients. Deputy Chief Kahles quickly identified this critical need and took the steps necessary to get air suspension installed on the rig.

I recently had the opportunity to ride in the back of Medic-3 on a call returning to town down West Hill Road, a notoriously rough and bumpy ride, with a critically ill patient who was in a great deal of pain. The patient and I were profoundly grateful for the noticeably smoother ride. Kudos to our proactive staff and the great mechanics of the Public Works department who take care of our rigs every day. This rig can now provide the level of comfort and care Homer residents deserve when being transported in an Advanced Life Saving (ALS) ambulance.

-Deputy EMS Chief, Samantha Cunningham
Stay Strong! Stay COVID Conscious

Even though case numbers are on the rise in the Homer area, we can still have fun. Remember the basics:
- Stay 6 feet apart
- Wear a mask when in crowds
- If you’re sick, stay home and get tested

Testing and vaccines are available at South Peninsula Hospital
[https://www.sphosp.org/covid-19-information/]

Scan the QR code to the right to go to the State of Alaska Case Dashboard to see the Red Zone Map of cases over the last 7 days.

The New 3-digit dialing code for Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is Live

In Alaska and across the nation, callers can dial 988 to connect to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s network of highly trained and compassionate call center professionals. Alaskan callers who dial 988 from a 907 area code will be connected to Careline Alaska where a trained crisis counselor will provide confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone of any age, including non-English speakers and those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

You can continue to use the Lifeline’s 10-digit number, 800-273-TALK, too.

Planning Department

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Adopted

After an eight month process, our 2022 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan has been adopted. Every five years, the plan is updated and requires local, state, and federal inputs and approvals. Inputs and approvals were received from the State and FEMA Region 10 and the City Council adopted the plan by Resolution 22-51, which made the plan effective through June 26, 2027. The plan identifies hazards and natural risks in Homer with ways to help reduce those risks and allows the City to seek non-emergency Stafford Act assistance and FEMA mitigation grants from the following programs:

- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
- Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
- Flood Mitigation Assistance
- Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dam Grant Program

Coastal Setbacks

After evaluating a report on coastal bluff erosion rates, stability and policy that was completed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGS), the Homer Planning Commission made policy recommendations, which were recently adopted by the City Council to regulate required setbacks along the Homer coast. The Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment used the latest technology and techniques to assess erosion rates along the bay and defined the bluff top edge (pictured above). The policy prescribes a 40’ setback from properties from roughly Soundview Avenue east along the bay, excluding the spit, and a 60’ setback heading west. However, there is still an opportunity to develop closer if an engineered site plan is approved by the City Engineer. The new regulations better address our unique coastal features and the inherent risks associated with developing near the bay.
Port & Harbor

Scrap Metal Recycling

Alaska Scrap and Recycling has been hard at work last month preparing their product for market. Alaska Scrap gathers materials from around the Kenai Peninsula, which they then process into marketable size and truck to the Port until they can schedule a barge to make a backhaul load to Seattle. Eventually these materials will head overseas for recycling.

The tug Island Champion and barge Atlas arrived at Homer's Deep Water Dock on July 6th. Crews worked around the clock loading the accumulated scrap steel product that had been stowed at the harbor’s secure storage yard facility.

Of particular interest is that somewhere mixed in with all the other parts and pieces of scrap rubble is our old ‘friend’ the abandoned North Pacific. As a contrasting story, the Hallo Bay was also scrapped during the same time period, but her owners hired Fortune Seas to take her apart and move the materials over to the scrap pile, good job Trident, well done Fortune Seas you are rock stars!

Used Oil Disposal Collection at the Harbor

Homer Harbor has two collection sites to deposit used oil, antifreeze, used filters and oily rags/absorbents. It is a Federal (MARPOL) requirement that we provide this service to vessel owners who keep boats at the Port and Harbor in support of clean harbors and environmental stewardship. Unfortunately, non-harbor users and the general public often choose to dump their hazmat materials here too. Examples of hazmat materials we have seen include: paint; fiberglass resin; gasoline; solvent; contaminated bilge water; epoxy; “mystery fluid”; and human waste. On occasion, we have seen large loads of automotive (not marine) filters from an unknown commercial venture.

Increased usage equals increased operation costs to the Harbor. Two main factors attributed to increased costs are 1) Non-boating and non-harbor-patrons who utilize the facilities; and 2) Disposal costs.

Roughly five years ago our disposal contractor did not charge for the processing of used oil, only labor and transportation. Now they charge $1.25 per gallon. This charge has effectively doubled the cost to dispose of 10,000 gallons of used oil, which now is approximately $22,500. Total expenses in the past 12 months associated with Used Oil Disposal were $41,546.97. Costs for waste disposal have also increased for materials such as bilge water, antifreeze, and oil sludge (caused by detergents).

To prevent over use of the collection facilities, Harbor Staff are looking into methods to limit waste disposal for harbor vessel owners only.

You can help! Please let us know if you see someone dumping or depositing materials who is not a harbor patron. Oil waste generated in households and other commercial ventures is accepted at the Borough Landfill. If you do not have a vessel in the harbor, please take your waste materials to the Borough landfill to dispose them properly.
Drink to Good Health!

So far, this summer has been pretty nice. Warm weather means more outdoor activities and more fun in the sun! Here are a few healthy reasons to up your H2O intake:

- **Increases brain function:** Studies have shown that even moderate dehydration, in the 1% to 3% range, can have a negative effect on your concentration, energy levels, memory capacity, and brain performance.

- **Promotes cardiovascular health:** If your body lacks enough water, it may negatively impact your heart because it will lower the volume of blood and your heart will have to work harder to ensure that your body has enough oxygen.

- **Great for weight loss:** Drinking water is better for you than drinking diet beverages and will improve your insulin resistance. Increasing your water consumption can make you feel fuller, so you can avoid frequent snacking during the day, it will increase your metabolism, which will burn more calories than usual. Try drinking water before a meal too.

- **Improves physical performance:** Hydrate before you start to exercise, and drink regularly during your workout. Dehydration impairs physical (and also mental) performance.

- **Helps joints and muscles to work better:** Proper hydration helps lubricate your joints, and improve the joint’s shock absorption capabilities, preventing joint pain and muscle cramps.

- **Improves skin health:** Dehydration will make your skin less elastic, becoming more susceptible to skin issues. Proper hydration helps to remove toxins from your body and skin, contributing to cellulite reduction and better skin health.

- **Regulates your body temperature:** Proper hydration will help regulate your body temperature.

- **Prevents kidney damage:** Your kidneys use water to filter waste from your body and blood. Dehydration can cause toxins to accumulate in your body.

- **Helps to prevent and treat headaches:** Drinking water may help relieve headaches in people with frequent headaches. Other studies have shown that mild dehydration may trigger headaches.

- **Relieves constipation:** Even if you consume fiber, if you don’t have enough water in your body, the stool won’t be soft enough to move through leading to constipation.

- **Prevents bad breath:** Proper hydration prevents your mouth from becoming dry which can cause bad breath and leaves a bad taste in your mouth.

Don’t let dehydration spoil this beautiful summer for you. Drink plenty of water. If you have small children make sure they are getting enough water too. And don’t forget you pets, they need a little extra water this time of year as well.

City Flower Beds Get Makeover

The City of Homer Division of Parks is proud to introduce Michelle Morton who joined our team this season to provide much needed assistance to improve the flower beds we maintain around town. Many of you have probably already noticed Michelle’s efforts at the flower beds on Pioneer, City Hall, Animal Shelter, Baycrest Overlook, and many points in between that have been revitalized. Her passionate work has been on display for the 2022 Annual Peony Festival and has garnished the City much praise.

Michelle’s experience in landscaping, gardening, and particularly peonies has allowed the City to rediscover, and in some cases completely reinvent, a number of our flower beds. She is also working with us to create a Beautification Master Plan for the City that will chart the course moving forward. If you see Michelle out and about, take a moment to stop and thank her. She makes us look good. Literally.
Administration Staff Gets Grand Tours of Water & Sewer Treatment Plants

Staff members from the City Finance Department and Administration toured the Water Treatment Plant and the Sewer Treatment Plant in July. They learned about the city's water treatment and sewer treatment plants from the team that makes the water flow in Public Works. These intricate systems are maintained by strict standards and requirements by Alaska State DEC and are kept in pristine condition. Operators carry certifications based on the type of system they operate with continuing education requirements.

Operator III, Jason Hoffman, lead the tour of the Water Treatment plant and explained the process of how our water travels from the reservoir to the plant, how it is processed and ultimately made available to city water customers. The automated system is programmed and carefully maintained to keep up with consumer demand with room to grow in the future.

At the Sewer Treatment plant, Superintendent Todd Cook began the tour with a lesson on the city's Deep Shaft process, a high-intensity biological process for treatment of sewage and bio-degradable industrial wastes. It works by circulating the sewage in a 50 foot-deep shaft, divided into two sections, a downflow and an upflow. Operator I, Jim Tingley, gave us a look at a few organisms under the microscope. The team monitors biological levels throughout the process and use a variety of indicators to evaluate the health of the system. Operator III, Joe Young provided an in-depth tour of the plant and the process the wastewater goes through before it is safely deposited into the bay.

We left in amazement and gained a new appreciation for these services and their importance to the community. The Public Works team is on-call 24/7 to assure the continuous operation of the water and sewer system that keeps everything flowing into and out of our homes.

Homer Animal Shelter

Looking for your new best friend? Check out petfinder.com for animals available through Alaska Mindful Paws. Even though the shelter is temporarily closed to visitors to stay safe from Covid, they can still accommodate adoptions outdoors by appointment.

Call 907-235-3141 or go to Facebook.
Meet the Staff

This section is to highlight staff achievements, promotions, retirements, departures and new hires to the City’s workforce.

Employee Appreciation Picnic

Summertime wouldn’t be complete without a picnic. The City of Homer staff gathered last month to enjoy a friendly picnic luncheon on the lawn at City Hall. It was so nice to see employees from all the different departments in one spot. Many of us don’t get to interact on a daily basis, so it’s nice to see one another, meet someone new and show appreciation for each other.

Folks from Port & Harbor, Public Works, Library, and City Hall all had smiles, laughter and stories to share on what turned out to be a beautiful day in Homer.

Special Projects New Hires

David Parker joins us as a part-time special projects coordinator working out of Anchorage. David holds an M.A. in Sociology from Georgia Southern University and a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of South Carolina. He has worked with state, county, and local governments for over twenty years on projects involving data identification, collection, management, reporting, and policy analysis. David is also a professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage where his research focuses on the integration of information technology into healthcare to improve health outcomes and reduce costs. David made his first visit to Homer in July and is already engaged in multiple projects with various City departments.

Ryan Foster joined the team in mid-July as a full-time special projects coordinator working as a hybrid (mix of in-person and remote work) employee. Ryan has a B.A. in Geography/Anthropology from the University of Southern Maine and a Master of Planning degree from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. Ryan has been a professional planner, working for both public and private employers, for the last 14 years. He most recently worked for the City of Kenai as their planning director. Prior to that he served as the principal planner for Los Alamos County in New Mexico. As much of our special projects work, as outlined by the 2022 visioning process, is very planning heavy, we are very excited to expand our capacity by bringing Ryan on board.

July Anniversaries

We would like to recognize City staff members with anniversaries this month. Thank you for the dedication, commitment and service you’ve provided the City and taxpayers of Homer over the years. You all are an integral part of what makes the City of Homer a great place to work and the community.

Lori Sorrows  Finance    23 years
Dan Olsen      Public Works    21 years
Julie Engebretsen    Planning    20 years
Rick Abboud     Planning    14 years
Dave Welty  Public Works    14 years
David Bernard  Library    11 years
Jason Hoffman  Public Works    7 years
Clinton Scritchfield  Police    4 years
Jason Hanenberger  Public Works    3 years
Mark Kirko  Fire    3 years
Owen Meyer      Public Works    1 year

Empty plate club winners!  From left to right: Mike Illg, Community Recreation, Joe Inglis and Ralph Skorski of Public Works and Travis Brown, Planning.

Check out the cool Nikes on City Manager Rob Dumouchel. If you know Rob, you know he's famous for his colorful Nikes.

Mixin’ it up and all smiles!  Left: Public Works Admin. Assistant, Bethany Christman and City Clerk, Melissa Jacobsen with Economic Dev. Manager Julie Engebretsen and Parks Superintendent Matt Steffy, (right).
City of Homer Roster

Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk
Andrea Browning, Personnel Director
Rick Abboud, City Planner
Mark Robl, Chief of Police
Mark Kirko, Fire Chief
Bryan Hawkins, Port Director/Harbormaster
Elizabeth Walton, Finance Director
Jan Keiser, Public Works Director
Dave Berry, Library and IT Director
Nick Poolos, Info. Technology Manager
Mike Illg, Community Recreation Manager
Julie Engebretsen, Economic Development Manager

Mayor - Ken Castner (2022)

City Council
Donna Aderhold (2024)
Jason Davis (2022)
Shelley Erickson (2024)
Storm P. Hansen-Cavasos (2022)
Rachel Lord (2023)
Caroline Venuti (2023)

Commissions & Boards
Planning Commission
Economic Development Advisory Commission
Library Advisory Board
Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission
Port and Harbor Advisory Commission

Standing Committees
ADA Compliance Committee

Fish Wall at Homer Public Library

The Library’s entrance walkway welcomes visitors with artwork by our own Mayor Ken Caster and Ben Gibson. The metal and wood sculpture is 32 feet long and stands some six feet high. Materials were donated by the artists as part of a $77,000 fundraiser.

This stunning piece is a main focus of the entrance design for the library for the grand opening in 2006. The fish wall depicts the abundance of resources in our waters that play an integral role in our culture and community's economy.

Click here to discover more about the Homer Public Library.

STAY CONNECTED WITH CITY COUNCIL

Go to: cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/stay-connected-city-council. Here you will find instructions on how to listen, provide testimony and participate in the meetings via Zoom.

Upcoming Meetings

August
3  5:30pm  Planning Commission Worksession
     6:30pm  Planning Commission Regular Meeting
8  5:00pm  City Council Committee of the Whole
     5:30pm  City Council Regular Meeting
9  6:30pm  Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting - CANCELLED

15  5:00pm  ADA Compliance Committee Special Meeting
16  5:30pm  Library Advisory Board Regular Meeting
17  5:30pm  Planning Commission Worksession
     6:30pm  Planning Commission Regular Meeting
18  5:30pm  Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission Regular Meeting
22  5:00pm  City Council Committee of the Whole
     6:00pm  City Council Committee Regular Meeting
23  6:00pm  Economic Development Advisory Commission Special Meeting
24  6:00pm  Port & Harbor Advisory Commission Regular Meeting