

**NOTICE OF MEETING  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

**1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

**4. RECONSIDERATION**

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. August 9, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes **Page 3**

**6. VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

- A. Ken Castner - Public Safety Building Update (10 minutes) **Page 9**

**7. REPORTS** (5 minute each)

- A. Marine Trades Association Report  
B. Chamber Director Report  
C. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report  
D. Staff Report **Page 11**

**8. PUBLIC HEARING**

**9. PENDING BUSINESS**

- A. Comprehensive Plan Update Economic Vitality Chapter **Page 13**  
B. Action Plan Goals on Marketing and Promoting Complementary Medicine  
i. Memorandum re: Scheduling an Information Gathering Session with Business Owners **Page 35**  
ii. Wellness Video **Page 37**

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Memorandum re: South Peninsula Amateur Radio Club **Page 39**

**11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- A. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings **Page 41**  
B. Homer Relocation Package – Final Draft **Page 43**

**12. COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

**13. COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

**14. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER *(If one is assigned)***

**15. COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

**16. COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

**17. ADJOURNMENT/NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Ave, Homer, Alaska.**



Session 16-06 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Marks at 6:10 p.m. on August 9, 2016 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONER GUSTAFSON, KEISEL, MARKS, RICHARDSON, SANSOM

ABSENT: PETERSON

STAFF: DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN  
CITY PLANNER ABBODD

### **AGENDA APPROVAL**

Chair Marks asked for a motion to amend the agenda to move the new business item A Capital Improvement Plan review before Pending Business.

SANSOM/RICHARDSON MOVED TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA CHANGES AS NOTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

The amended agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

### **RECONSIDERATION**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Regular Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2016

Chair Marks noted the Pioneer Project Task Force Report second paragraph similar to Pioneer Avenue should be corrected to similar to Bunnell Street Art Gallery.

SANSOM/RICHARDSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

### **VISITORS**

A. South Peninsula Amateur Radio Club

Club President Shandley Kerls, Vice President Mike Velikanje, and Secretary Toby Reich presented to the Commission. Ms. Kerls opened with an overview of the club, which was established in May of 2014 after 30 years without a club and their current membership is 39. They explained the importance of Ham operators as a source of free emergency communication in times of disaster. When disaster happens, today's main sources of communication can fail, including telephones, cell phones, internet, satellites, and radio systems, but Ham radio doesn't need those things to operate. Ham operators can go out portable and mobile at any time and set up and have worked through wildfires, earthquakes, tsunamis, search and rescue and other community emergencies. A lot of Ham radio operators in Alaska work closely with local, state, and federal agencies during times of disaster. They also work with the Borough EMS out of Soldotna. Dan Nelson from the Borough's Emergency Services Department has talked with the club and other agencies during emergency service demonstrations, mentioning that the southern part of the Kenai is lacking in resources as far as communications with everyone in the area, unlike Anchorage where there are a lot of Ham radio repeaters. They work closely with the Red Cross, MARS Military Amateur Radio Services, CERT Community Emergency Response Training, and ARES Amateur Radio Emergency Service. The club's goal is to work with local agencies and establish a network of linking repeaters that would adequately provide coverage of emergency communications in times of disaster.

Ms. Kerls explained the how repeaters work to enhance the radio signal and send it farther out. Instead of line of sight from the spit to the bluff, the repeaters will allow them to have signal to communicate with Kodiak, Soldotna, across the bay, Anchorage, and so on. In times of emergency when systems can fail or become overloaded they can get on their radios and talk to people in other communities. They would like to work with the City to find locations that would provide the best coverage in their area and a small space in a secure location to put a repeater, radio, and equipment that would be used in emergencies and day to day communications.

They briefly shared some personal experiences working with Ham radios in emergency situations including 2003 Space Shuttle disaster, Hurricane Katrina, the 1964 Alaska earthquake, and locally with search and rescue of a snow machiner who was lost in the Caribou Hills a few years back.

In response to questions about location, Mr. Velikanje said there are various locations around town and out on the spit. An important criterion is that it will still be there after a main event so right on the bluffs and spit aren't ideal locations. In town the library is a good location that provides reasonable coverage along the bay to McNeil Canyon, which is a challenging area to reach consistently. There are towers up on the hill but they need to find locations accessible to the group with good coverage.

Mr. Reich said they can piggy back on existing towers, but need to be able to access it and maintain the equipment, and they would have to get permission to use it. There is one on Diamond Ridge they can use, but it's on private property, the tower has been there since the 50's and they aren't able to maintain it. The cost for a multi band repeater is \$1,500 to \$2,000, and then you have a tower, coax, a filter systems so an entire set up could be up to \$25,000. Piggy backing on an existing tower is less expensive, and they would only need a space the size of a closet for their equipment. They have not reached out to tower owners as they are hoping to gain support from the City.

Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen said this could be scheduled on the next Commission agenda and memo could be provided for the commission to review and make a recommendation to council

## **REPORTS**

### **A. Marine Trades Association Report**

The Marine Trades Association provided a written report as a laydown item.

### **B. Chamber Director Report**

The Chamber Director provided a written report as a laydown item.

### **C. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report**

Chair Marks reported the task force is progressing with plans on the gardens with the City and with property owners. There will be planting and some work done this fall and more done in the spring. A couple of murals are still being worked on and there is a peony path paving and painting project demos for the fall. We'll see what it looks like in the spring and decide whether it should be continued or not. There has been some discussion about doing something at Baycrest letting people know what's down the hill with the Pioneer Project.

### **D. Staff Report**

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. 2017-2022 Capital Improvement Plan Review**

Chair Marks commented the commission discussed the Capital Improvement Plan at their worksession and asked if there is a motion for a recommendation from the Commission.

SANSOM/KEISEL MOVED THE COMMISSION SUPPORTS TWO PROJECTS, THE ICE PLANT UPGRADE AND THE COMMUNITY CENTER.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

### **A. Comprehensive Plan Update Economic Vitality Chapter**

The Commission discussed chapter 8 and the economic vitality chart with the City Planner.

Chair Marks noted in the old chapter there were specific items like finding an high tech business to come into town, and the updated chapter suggests we need to have some of these businesses but doesn't specify the type of business. She submitted that one thing that needs to be added back is there should be a city employee who works as an economic development staff member. She recognized Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Carroll who works with the Commission and is indirectly doing this, but thinks it's important that it be listed as a function for a staff member to have in their title.

There was brief discussion around the success of high tunnels increasing the growing season for local farmers and for the Farmer's Market, and also wind turbines. City Planner Abboud commented that city code could be improved in relationship to high tunnels depending on how we want to see them supported. He referenced item 2A1 in the list. He explained there are rules for for wind turbines and in researching them there is concern of the view shed and in town there are just a few very specific areas that will provide enough wind for a year to pay for a device. There haven't been any requests other than then demonstration project on Pioneer. When the spit was suggested City Planner Abboud noted it is unique because there may be too much wind and that he hasn't had any permitting requests for them. Commissioner Sansom suggested a fast track permitting process as an incentive for people wanting to install solar or wind energy systems.

They reviewed and discussed the Economic Vitality chart in the packet the following suggestions:

- Expand Residential Office zoning
- Continue commercial zoning out East End Road where there is more opportunity and open land available
- Increase GC1 zoning allowing for more industrial and commercial activities
- It would be important for the commission to know what commercial land is available before we start looking for businesses
- Including the EDC in item 2A1 to look at different types of land use options
- Information Infrastructure
- Lobbying to expand the nursing program at the local campus and also develop student housing
- Encouraging multifamily development and rental properties to accommodate student rentals and affordable housing.

The commission agreed to finish this up at the next meeting.

#### B. Action Plan Goals on Marketing and Promoting Complementary Medicine

Commissioner Sansom noted information she passed out to the commission to take a look at and said she will have more at the next meeting specific to wellness.

Chair Marks noted their work schedule of trying to have something to Council in time for the budget, but recognized it may take more time to prepare a complete package and they continue to work on it for a future budget request. She also suggested they continue to work on a catch phrase as Councilmember Smith had suggested as it has worked well for the Peonies on Pioneer project. Lastly

she suggested they need to start discussing pros and cons of Homer from a business perspective in an effort of emphasizing the pros and being aware of the cons.

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

##### **A. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings**

Commissioner Sansom said she would attend the next City Council meeting.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

#### **COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF**

There were no staff comments.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER**

#### **COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Marks said she's excited to have Ms. Keisel join the commission. She is looking forward to making more progress. It's great they are charting the course and framework, but it seems sometimes to spin wheels when just working on charts and not actually doing something. She appreciates everyone coming and thanked them.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Keisel said she's excited to be part of the board and looks forward to making some progress.

Commissioner Richardson said it was a good meeting.

Commissioner Sansom thought they got a lot done.

Commissioner Gustafson had no comment.

#### **ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 803 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_





PROPOSITION NO. 1  
GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS FOR A NEW POLICE STATION  
AND RELATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS;  
0.65% SALES TAX RATE INCREASE TO 5.15%

Shall the City of Homer incur debt and issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed Twelve Million Dollars (\$12,000,000) to finance the planning, design and construction of a police station and related capital improvements; and shall the rate of City sales tax be increased by sixty five hundredths of one percent (0.65%) to five and fifteen hundredths percent (5.15%) from April 1 through September 30, for the purpose of paying debt service on the general obligation bonds, until September 30 in the year when the City has received funds from the tax that are sufficient to pay all debt service on the bonds?

The bonds shall be secured by a pledge of the full faith and credit of the City. (Ordinance 16-30(S-2)(A-2))

*Explanation of Payment Mechanism:* The seasonal sales tax will add 65¢ for every \$100.00 in taxable purchases. An \$80 water and sewer bill, for example, would have an additional 52¢ added during the months of April, May, June, July, August and September.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

- 1) **Question:** Why do the public safety buildings – the police station and the fire station – need to be replaced now?

**Answer:** Homer has grown considerably since the existing buildings were constructed. Annexation, expansion of the core center of town, and new neighborhoods together with an expanded population require additional human resources to deliver First Response services. As additional personnel are added to the physical plant, and additional demands for space allocations are made, the built-in areas for expansion are quickly filled. As the workspace becomes overcrowded, sacrifices are made that affect the quality of the workplace. Fire and EMT calls are at an historic High. The police station is no longer adequate to house the personnel and services located there. The fire station also has some serious aging issues, but the decision has been made to make some strategic upgrades and deferred maintenance repairs to extend the life of the station. The City Council has authorized the funding for this construction and the repairs and renovations are underway.

- 2) **Question:** Couldn't we tear down the existing buildings and build at the same location?

**Answer:** The committee, the architect, and key personnel from public works, spent considerable time examining the possibility of phasing new buildings on the existing lot. It was determined that restraints in both the lot size and placing critical facilities in temporary homes would be impractical and add a lot of expense to the project.

- 3) **Question:** Why is the HERC location the best site?  
**Answer:** The 4 acres located at the corner of Pioneer Avenue and the Sterling Highway are owned by the city; there is no acquisition cost. The site contains two existing structures, one of which can be incorporated into the new police station. The site has existing water, sewer, and electrical services as well as existing paved and unpaved parking. The costs associated with finding or improving an existing building or a lot in the core area of town would likely double the cost of the project.
- 4) **Question:** Is there room at the HERC site for a future new fire station?  
**Answer:** Yes, the site plan indicates where a future fire station may be built east of the HERC building.
- 5) **Question:** What happens to the existing uses at the HERC site?  
**Answer:** There currently two main uses of HERC facilities: the skateboard park and the old school gym. These will not be “orphaned”. The gym activities will be relocated to the new SPARC facility scheduled to be constructed later this year and located nearby. A new skateboard park will be located elsewhere on the HERC site, and funds for its construction are included in the project cost.
- 6) **Question:** Can’t we remodel or expand the existing buildings?  
**Answer:** Essentially, the city is doing exactly that. The fire station is being remodeled and the HERC building is being expanded and repurposed to become a police station.
- 7) **Question:** If we build new buildings what happens to the old buildings?  
**Answer:** After the new police station has been constructed, and the old building vacated, the City Council will decide the disposition of the old building.
- 8) **Question:** What have you done to reduce costs?  
**Answer:** Cost considerations, given the fact that no state or federal grants are known to be available for construction assistance, have heavily influenced the decisions made in this project. Repairs are much less costly than replacements and that is the solution for the fire station. Incorporating existing space with minimal remodeling costs will greatly reduce the costs of new construction, and that is the solution for the police station. We are working diligently with the architect and the general contractor, acting as our construction manager, to arrive at a project cost that can be supported this fall in the bond proposition.
- 9) **Question:** Do we really need a shooting range?  
**Answer:** A shooting range has been on the list of capital improvement projects for a number of years. The department believes this is a critical training facility. By locating it in the repurposed HERC building classroom space, the costs have been seriously reduced. It should also be available, at specific scheduled times, for paid public use.
- 10) **Question:** How much will a new building increase the cost of operations?  
**Answer:** While the cost of maintaining a larger building will increase, there must be some savings in the fact that new buildings require less maintenance and upkeep than older buildings. It will be more energy efficient, provide a healthier work environment for the employees and reduce other operating costs. Public Works believes \$144,000 to be a conservative number, and adequate for planning purposes.



## City of Homer

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

## Administration

491 East Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, Alaska 99603

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## Memorandum

TO: Economic Development Advisory Commission  
FROM: Jenny Carroll, Special Projects & Communications Coordinator  
DATE: September 13, 2016  
SUBJECT: Staff Report to EDC

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### CITY OF HOMER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Last month Rick Abboud, Planning Director attended the EDC meeting to elicit feedback on Chapter 8 of the Comprehensive Plan and its implementation table. Rick will attend the September 13 meeting to continue work on revising the Chapter's implementation table. Please refer to Rick's Memo in the packet, and take some time with the Chapter to develop concrete feedback on how to revise the implementation table into a more useful tool. The Chapter will reflect the goals and guide the EDC's implementation of those goals well into the future.

### 2017-2022 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

I recently incorporated advisory commission updates into the CIP and completed a final draft for consideration by City Council at their September 12 worksession. Public Hearings on the draft plan will be held at the September 26 and October 10, 2016 City Council Meetings. Thank you for your feedback and EDC's nominations for priority projects as part of this process.

### HOMER RELOCATION GUIDE

Some months ago, the Homer Chamber of Commerce asked that city staff update the Homer Relocation Guide, which the Chamber distributes to people who contact them about moving to Homer. I recently completed a revamp of the Guide to be ready for distribution in mid-October. The guide's welcome letter is signed jointly by the City of Homer and the Chamber of Commerce, recognizing the cooperative efforts at its production, and the complimentary services provided to prospective new residents by the Chamber and EDC. I provide a draft of the Relocation Guide to you in this packet for your information; final draft and production will take place after the upcoming Regular Municipal Election.





## City of Homer

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

## Planning

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## Memorandum

TO: Economic Development Commission  
FROM: Rick Abboud AICP, City Planner  
DATE: September 8, 2016  
SUBJECT: Chapter 8, 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

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### Introduction:

I am looking for comments and guidance on the Economic Vitality Chapter of the Homer Comprehensive Plan. Chapter 8 is one of the larger chapters and it seems to have something for everyone. In fact, it has over 60 implementation strategies which create a large unwieldy table. Input from the EDC that I would find particularly valuable deals with the direction of the chapter, in particular are we coving too much ground or have we left out any components.

### Review:

The Commission has reviewed the plan and liked the reorganization and focus of the chapter. The implementation table was included in the last meeting. It was particularly difficult to perform a comprehensive review due to the number of items. I have been feeling that the implementation items might be a bit too ambitious and some maybe unrealistic from the perspective of how a municipality might address the items. For example, how will the city influence the cost of electricity and high-speed internet service?

The chapter was updated so that the goals do not look so much like objectives, while a great deal of the implementation strategies is retained. The implementation table of this chapter is basically a table of all of the implementation strategies found in the chapter. This is where I need the attention of the Commission. Please consider the implementation items with a focus on the “working column” of the implementation table.

### Requested action:

Please discuss the ability of the city to facilitate the action in the implementation items, while paying special attention to the comments in the “working column” of the implementation table. We may want to eliminate items that are unrealistic and/or combine other items that cover the same subject matter. I would like to get suggestions for revision or exclusion from the table. If you take notes, I would be glad to receive a copy in an email at [rabboud@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:rabboud@ci.homer.ak.us) or at the meeting.

**Attachments:** Comprehensive Plan Chapter 8 & Implementation table



## ■ CHAPTER 8 ECONOMIC VITALITY

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**Vision Statement:** Homer's economic industries including marine trades, commercial fishing, tourism, health care, education, arts and culture remain strong and show continued growth. Quality of life is preserved while Homer benefits from the creation of more year-round living wage jobs, a stronger local economy and an increased tax base to support desired government services and facilities.

### Overview

This chapter presents goals and objectives related to economic development. While the private sector, along with state and federal spending, ultimately drives much of the economic activity, local government plays an important role in stimulating and guiding growth through its land use and infrastructure policies and projects.

The 1989 comprehensive plan stated:

Though it is generally recognized that fishing has been the backbone of the Homer economy for the past forty years, diversification of the Homer economy has taken place, especially in the last few years. Tourism, commercial and government services, retail trade, and a retirement population have been added in [the 1980s]...

These trends have continued and perhaps accelerated during the twenty-seven years since the 1989 plan. Additionally, as state and federal funding has changed, local and regional governments are bearing increased costs in providing services. Private sector economic health and growth are required to build the tax base if residents want to maintain existing government services and facilities.

Most of the economic development actions presented here are tied to topics addressed in other chapters. For example, recommendations regarding commercial development are included in Chapter 4 – Land Use. As a result, much of the value of this chapter is for those readers who are focused on economic issues and want to see a compilation of plan policies regarding economic development together in a single chapter. In 2011, the city adopted the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS document is a broad document covering many sectors of Homer's economy.

Homer's quality of life is a principal economic asset. Maintaining and improving the quality of life in Homer is crucial to keeping existing business and attracting new business and professional activity. Quality of life is challenging to define because it involves many different dimensions of a community and different people place different degrees of importance on these factors. The elements of quality of life that particularly contribute to economic development are those features that make the community especially attractive to residents, visitors, and small businesses. While there is room for further improvement, Homer currently possesses many such elements. These include:

- A strikingly beautiful natural setting.
- A clean, healthy, natural environment.
- A diverse, engaged, involved community and rich civic life.
- An active arts community, tradition of skill and interest in performing and visual arts.
- Access to education and lifelong learning;

- Multiple transportation and access options, a developing trail system, and road access to Anchorage.
- Eclectic neighborhoods such as Old Town and Pioneer Ave.
- Diverse culture and leisure activities, including ready access to parks and a wide range of year-round outdoor recreation.
- Good health services and shopping.
- A feeling of safety and freedom from crime.

## Summary of Goals

**GOAL 1:** Define and encourage economic development that meets the desires and interests of Homer residents and positively supports the unique character of the community.

**GOAL 2:** Encourage the retention and creation of more year-round, higher wage jobs.

**GOAL 3:** Identify and promote industries that show a capacity for growth.

**GOAL 4:** Support regional renewable and non-renewable energy exploration and production.

**GOAL 5:** Strengthen Homer as a tourism destination.

**GOAL 6:** Support community efforts to establish affordable housing.

## Goals and Objectives for Economic Vitality

**GOAL 1:** Define and encourage economic development that meets the desires and interests of Homer residents and positively supports the unique character of the community.

For many communities it is easy to identify the type of economic development that they dislike or are not in favor of encouraging. What is harder to define is the type of economic development a community wants to foster. The goal of this chapter is to frame economic development that Homer can support.

Currently, Homer would like to foster economic development in many of its existing sectors: education, sustainable tourism, health care, construction, commercial fishing and marine industries, arts and culture. These are the industries that Homer has been built upon. The industries are viable and stable today, and offer good prospects for growth. The remainder of this chapter looks in more detail at steps to further strengthen these economic sectors, and to do so in a manner which both provides economic opportunity and sustains Homer's unique character.





Economic development strategies include:

1. Continue the growth of local businesses by supporting a buy local campaign and continuing the local bidder's preference in city procurement policies.
2. Encouraging the production or sales of goods and services to better serve the local market.
3. Encourage "import substitution;" i.e., leakage control by producing locally what is otherwise imported. An example is the local farmer's market, which provides produce that would otherwise be trucked into the community with profits leaving the community.
4. Partner with and support the efforts of other organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce to plan for economic development.
5. Review the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy periodically; consider creating a 5-year action plan.

6. Support efforts by the private and non-profit sectors to upgrade Homer's information technology infrastructure to provide low cost high bandwidth internet services.

## **GOAL 2:** Encourage the retention and creation of more year-round, higher wage jobs.

Homer residents desire more year round, living wage jobs. This in turn will help support small businesses, and the tax base.

**Objective A:** Increase year-round employment that will enable local people to work, live, and raise their families in Homer.

While almost all city actions will ultimately affect the course of economic change and job growth, city actions to promote year-round jobs include those listed below:

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Ensure that zoning and land use regulations do not unduly restrict entrepreneurial development and new business formation. Also ensure that the value of adjacent property is not degraded through noise, odor or similarly negative impacts. For instance, provide flexible zoning to support home-based businesses. *See Land Use chapter.*
2. Continue to improve Homer's public infrastructure, including the port, airport and road systems and work with regional partners on public transit opportunities. *See Chapter 6, Public Services and Facilities.*
3. Promote and enable small-scale employers who may have different land use and infrastructure needs than one or two-person sole proprietorships.

4. Encourage science, information infrastructure, and technology-based business development that will help position Homer as a leader in responding to global challenges, including affordable health care and environmental sustainability.
5. Consider incentives for local business growth or relocations. This could be part of a broader business expansion and retention program in partnership with another organization, such as the Chamber of Commerce and economic development agencies.
6. Examine the benefits that could be gained by outsourcing government services.
7. Examine and replicate appropriate regional successes.

**Objective B:** Encourage retention of existing and the relocation of new Federal and State Government jobs and training programs to Homer.

Government jobs are an important part of the local and regional economy. Government employment, whether research, visitor or education related, comprises 17.5% of local jobs. (American Community Survey 2014). Some government employment is found in every community, such as local, borough and state jobs related to day to day activities (airports, roads, schools, etc). In addition, Homer has many residents who are employed through agencies such as state parks, the court system, public health, the university, the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve Fish and Game operations, and federal agencies such as the Coast Guard, Fish and Wildlife Service, , and the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, which are headquartered in Homer. The Coast Guard also has a presence in the community. The City of Homer is also known as an important base for marine research and education activities.

**Implementation Strategies**

1. Lobby to retain state and federal jobs in Homer.
2. Support the retention of existing and expansion of future Coast Guard facilities and staff in Homer.
3. Promote the relocation of and sustain the existing government marine activities in Homer, such as the Coast Guard and ferry home porting of vessels, and scientific research vessels.

**Objective C:** Support efforts to increase the scale and scope of the education industry to support a skilled workforce.

Education is important to Homer's economic vitality for two reasons. First, it provides residents with the ability to acquire the skills and knowledge ("human capital") needed to succeed in the global economy, and find a local job. To the extent people can acquire these skills and knowledge without leaving home, they can earn higher incomes, create new businesses and jobs for others, keep their education expenditures circulating in the local economy, and provide the skilled workers needed for existing local jobs. Education is also an exportable product if people come to Homer to learn.

The existing KBC of the University of Alaska provides essential post-secondary and vocational education to Homer residents. The economic impact is broad and significant. Additional educational programs are provided by several nonprofit organizations operating in Homer and across Kachemak Bay. The unspoiled marine environment and spectacular setting of Homer and Kachemak Bay are a

significant asset that could be leveraged into growth of the education industry. The implementation strategies below apply not only to KBC, but to any other interested educational institution.

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Support the continuation and expansion of certificate, and two- and four-year degree programs offered through the KBC such as marine biology, art, construction, welding, allied health and marine technology.
2. Work toward expansion of KBC into a residential campus of the university by supporting the private development of student housing.
3. Support university efforts to establish a “Study in Homer” program for students enrolled at the Anchorage campus.
4. Support discussions about new collaborative educational programs that capitalize on Homer’s assets, including marine biology, coastal ecosystem management, outdoor leadership studies and medical care.
5. Encourage the development of vocational and technical training opportunities, including welding, construction, and industrial technology, through the university and/or other private or nonprofit institutions.
6. Encourage partnerships between major local and regional employers and education providers to train workers.
7. Continue to partner and work to support efforts of the Kenai Peninsula School District.

## **GOAL 3: Identify and promote industries that show a capacity for growth.**

### **Objective A: Identify emerging industries.**

Homer is a place of big ideas and entrepreneurial spirit. Examples include the fervor with which local agriculture has developed, particularly high tunnel cultivation and commercial peony growing. These are growing local and regional business opportunities. Over time, there will be new economic opportunities that arise; the city should be open to these new ideas and support those that show reasonable opportunities for growth.

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. The City should continue participating on the Chamber of Commerce Board on Chamber activities and programs to maintain a presence in the local business community.
2. Periodically review land use regulations to ensure that new business activities fit within the zoning code.

### **Objective B: Strengthen the marine trades including mariculture and shipping industries.**

Homer’s harbor and associated marine trade and services activities are an important component of the local and regional economy. Marine related activities could be expanded to increase the number of living wage, skilled jobs in the community. Local seafood processing, boat building, and fabrication services offer a chance for a local product to reach the local, state and national markets.

Homer's public and private port facilities also serve as a staging area for freight destined to more remote parts of the coast.

### Implementation Strategies

1. Facilitate the year-round availability of ice for fish processing.
2. Support and encourage commercial fishing.
3. Support the expansion of the Deep Water Dock.
4. Support East Boat Harbor expansion studies.

### **Objective C:** Promote recreation and the arts as a complement to tourism and as an export industry.

Recreation and the arts are key components of the Homer economy and support the tourism industry and Homer's quality of life. Actions to promote the arts include those listed below. Some of these objectives are best carried out by the City, while others are best undertaken by local arts groups and tourism marketing organizations with City cooperation and encouragement.

### Implementation Strategies

1. Review zoning for opportunities that accommodates art studio, art education activities, and residential living. *See also Chapter 4.*
2. Investigate options for creating a new, multi-purpose cultural, performing arts and community center in Homer's town center. See the Town Center Plan and Park Art Recreation and Culture Needs Assessment.

### **Objective D:** Support the health care and wellness industries.

Health care and wellness are a growing sector of Homer's economy. This is partially driven by an aging population, but also by resident's desire for improved health. Over the past decade, South Peninsula Hospital has completed a major expansion, several new dental clinics have been constructed, and the Seldovia Village Tribe constructed both a medical clinic and a wellness center. Specialized medical services such as surgeries, sleep studies, oncology and VA care are also available. As the health care industry continues to change, Homer can expect to see growth in the types of medical services available, and more jobs in this field.

### Implementation Strategies

1. Support increased local educational programs that allow health care workers to earn, maintain and upgrade their credentials.

## **GOAL 4:** Support regional renewable and non-renewable energy exploration and production.

Homer citizens support researching and pursuing renewable energy projects. Outside of the city, oil and gas exploration continues. Supporting the exploration, extraction and renewable energy industries does not necessarily have to compromise Homer's scenery or quality of life. There are many opportunities to benefit from the construction, research, and extraction activities, whether

through direct employment, or by providing services such as worker housing, catering, fuel, payroll and transportation to local and non local contractors who work on site. *See also Chapter 9, Energy.*

### Implementation Strategies

2. Support staging areas for large development projects.
3. Encourage bioremediation, reclamation, decontamination, pollution control solutions at the local level.
4. Encourage utilities to provide lower cost electrical power to residential and industrial users
5. Promote renewable energy development locally and regionally.
6. Encourage business activities that provide support services to the energy, mining, oil and gas industries.

### **GOAL 5: Strengthen Homer as a tourism destination.**

Homer is already one of Alaska's premier tourist destinations and appears to be enjoying continuing growth in visitation and expenditures. Future tourism growth depends in large part on overall trends in visitation to Alaska, shifting demographics, fuel prices, and other global trends. However, City actions can have a significant impact on the economic importance of tourism by promoting longer stays, increased expenditures per person, and more repeat visitation. Equally important, City government plays a crucial role in guiding the growth of tourism to maximize its benefits and to minimize the costs imposed on the people of Homer.

**Objective A:** Invest in local infrastructure, parks, and civic improvements that will serve locals well as visitors by promoting longer stays, increased expenditures per person, and more repeat visitation as a form of economic development.

One economic development strategy is to find ways to encourage visitors to stay in the community longer during their visit, or to visit again in the future. The Farmer's Market in downtown Anchorage is an example; visitors to the market also visit other downtown businesses. Even staying an hour or two longer in the community may result in visitors eating more meals in local restaurants or spending more money shopping. The City benefits through increased sales tax revenue. To keep Homer an attractive destination requires that the City and private business work in partnership to provide the basic services that visitors and locals expect. These improvements and public expenditures should also benefit local taxpayers.

Seasonally, the Spit is a huge draw and will continue to be. Effort should be made in the future to have more tourists visit downtown Homer to support year round businesses. Investment in tourist amenities should be equally focused on the Spit and downtown Homer.

### Implementation Strategies

1. Support and fund beautification efforts on Pioneer Avenue.
2. Ensure that City facilities are sufficient to support events that draw visitors such as festivals and activities (e.g., restrooms on the Spit, RV dump stations, trash collection, park maintenance, etc).

**Objective B: Support efforts to improve community attractions, including trails, and access to marine activities and the marine environment. Improve links between attractions.**

Homer can be considered to have three main tourism destination areas: The downtown and Old Town area, the Spit, and the area across Kachemak Bay. While each of these areas currently attracts numerous visitors, it is likely that more tourists could be accommodated and more spending could be encouraged if the unique attributes of each area were further developed and if better connections were made among the three areas. Ideally, the enhancements that attract more tourists equally benefit local residents as well, resulting in a win-win for business activity, tax receipts, and quality of life.

**Implementation Strategies**

1. Encourage the continuation of private sector shuttle service between downtown and Spit areas.
2. Create a wayfinding system that includes the Spit, Pioneer Ave and Old Town.
3. Consider constructing ADA accessible sidewalk improvements, and installing benches and trashcans at central shuttle stops, such as the corner of Bunnell and Main.

**Objective C: Increase the net benefits that tourism brings to Homer.**

Homer's distinctive character and attractions create substantial economic benefits to the community in terms of jobs, business opportunities and tax revenues. Tourism also helps the community to host greater diversity and number of businesses and services than what local spending could support on its own. While tourism creates a wide array of benefits, it can also be disruptive to local life. For example, tourism may exacerbate traffic congestion, transform commercial areas from local to visitor-serving, cause crowding at recreation destinations enjoyed by residents, and potentially adversely affect fish, wildlife and other elements of the natural environment. Community members have expressed a desire to encourage tourism activities that do not require extensive changes to the existing environment, but rather help to conserve Homer's natural setting and improve the area.

As a result of this mix of positive and potential negative impacts, Homer should pursue a guided tourism growth policy. The community will promote tourism growth, but do so in a manner that helps sustain the qualities of the community that attract residents and visitors.

**Implementation Strategies**

1. Maintain attractions, services, and facilities that draw large numbers of visitors, in a clean and well-kept state.
2. When constructing new amenities, emphasize projects that benefit both residents and visitors (e.g., trails).
3. Promote environmentally friendly tourism or "eco-tourism." Activities such as tidal pool exploration, bird watching, wildlife viewing, and educational activities, are examples of passive or quiet recreation with minimal impact to local residents.
4. Take advantage of opportunities to collaborate with or support private sector establishment of conference and convention capabilities.
5. Ensure that adequate basic infrastructure, such as water, sewer, and transportation capacity is available to meet peak demands of increasing summer tourism activity, as well as "shoulder season" activities.

6. Ensure that fiscal mechanisms are in place so that tourist spending covers the costs that tourism generates in the community (e.g., demand for water, sewer, public restrooms parking and other public services and facilities).
7. City efforts to guide the growth of tourism shall aim to maximize the benefits of tourism and to minimize the costs imposed on the people of Homer.
8. Support shoulder season activities. The private and non-profit sectors have extended the effective length of the tourism season by promoting “shoulder season” and year-round activities, which creates new jobs, sustains existing jobs, and adds revenue to city coffers through sales tax.
9. Actively promote Homer to identified target markets, including Alaska residents, out-of-state independent travelers, and small group package tour travelers. Specific actions include:
  - a. Collaborate with Chamber of Commerce, KPB, Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council, and other organizations to actively promote Homer.
  - b. Maintain and enhance Homer’s reputation as a welcoming and exciting destination by accommodating and encouraging events such as the Shorebird Festival and Kachemak Bay Writers’ Conference, and sporting tournaments.

## **GOAL 6: Support community efforts to establish affordable housing.**

Many residents expressed the view that economic development depends, at least in part, on a balance between income and the cost of living. Specific strategies to promote a diverse range of housing options are discussed elsewhere in this plan. This goal is included as a component of economic vitality to explicitly reflect the connection between housing opportunities and the economic well-being of Homer.

City government has few tools to address the issue of affordable housing. The direct role of the City of Homer is limited by the fact the City is not a housing authority, and city taxation and development fees are relatively low. In recent years, the Economic Development Commission has studied Homer’s tax policies. The EDC found that the tax credits for housing that the city could institute do not significantly affect the cost of housing. The market demand is for homes that are more expensive, and the high cost of real estate and land development results in very few new ‘affordable’ housing units. However, the city can support the efforts of other groups in building new affordable housing units, which will free up units on the private rental market.

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Support efforts to build provide housing units for target populations such as seniors, low-income residents, and those with special needs. (Example: Homer Senior Citizens Inc, Kenai Peninsula Housing Initiatives, Habitat for Humanity)
2. Support housing units for older residents as they age within the community, such as assisted living, and long-term care.

### **Economic Vitality Implementation Table – will be added later**





## Economic Vitality

WORKING COLUMN

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
1-1 A Support Chamber's Buy Local campaign and source city purchases locally when price competitive				x	Administration
1-1 B Continue the local bidders preference in city procurement policies				x	City Council
1-2 Support local retail and service businesses					
1-3 Support local production of items usually imported in to the community, such as food, fabrication, manufacturing services and specialized services					greater homer?
1-4 Plan for economic Development by partnering with organizations such as the Chamber or Commerce. Retain an active board role with the chamber, and involvement with KPEDD and other similar organizations.				x	Administration
1-5A Review the CEDS Plan		x			EDC
1-5B Create an action plan from the CEDS plan	x				Administration, EDC
2-A-1 Review zoning regulations to ensure new businesses and development are not unduly restricted					HAPC
2-A-2 Continue to invest in community infrastructure and transportation systems (see also chapter 6)				x	City Council, Administration
2-A-3 " Promote and enable small-scale employers who may have different land use and infrastructure needs than one or two-person sole proprietorships."					

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

other than buy local, what are some methods the city can use? Ask EDC?

~zoning, purchasing, shipping, energy costs....anything else?

team w EDC?

~zoning for land use? PUD for infrastructure requirements - arterial access - or other? Example might be how does bay weld or nomar differ than home mfg operations?

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
2-A-4 4. Encourage science, information infrastructure, and technology-based business development that will help position Homer as a leader in responding to global challenges, including affordable health care and environmental sustainability.					
2-A-5 Consider incentives for local business growth or relocations. This could be part of a broader business expansion and retention program in partnership with another organization, such as the Chamber of Commerce and economic development agencies.					EDC
2-A-6 When cost saving and efficiency measures are reviewed, consider outsourcing government services.				x	Administration
2-A-7A Identify successful regional economic development projects (phrasing?)					EDC
2-A-7B Examine and replicate appropriate regional successes.					EDC/City Council
2-B-1 When local state or federal jobs are being considered for elimination or relocation, lobby to retain them				x	City Council, Administration
2-B-2 Actively work with the Coast Guard to support the retention and expansion of facilities in Homer.					City Council, Administration
2-B-3 Support the continued presence and expansion of government vessels in Homer, by supporting...					

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

~support private or non profit sector development/expansion of high speed broadband within Homer

I'm thinking over the years the city administration or P&H has worked to meet w CG reps etc, much more so than we do with private sector development, ie fred meyer, safeway, or small scale businesses (like people who want a lease)

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
2-C-1					
2-C-2 Support private development of student housing that will expand KBC					
2-C-3 When requested by KBC, pass resolutions in support of or write letters in support of the establishment of a “Study in Homer” program for students enrolled at the Anchorage campus.					City Council, Administration
2-C-4					
2-C-5					
2-C-6					

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

Support the continuation and expansion of certificate, and two- and four-year degree programs offered through the KBC such as marine biology, art, construction, welding, allied health and marine technology.

letters of support and resos?

Support discussions about new collaborative educational programs that capitalize on Homer’s assets, including marine biology, coastal ecosystem management, outdoor leadership studies and medical care.

Encourage the development of vocational and technical training opportunities, including welding, construction, and industrial technology, through the university and/or other private or nonprofit institutions.

Encourage partnerships between major local and regional employers and education providers to train workers.

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
2-C-7					
3-A-1 Continue participating on Chamber of Commerce Board				x	Administration
3-A-2. Periodically review land use regulations to ensure that new business activities fit within the zoning code.				x	HAPC or just planning?
3-B-1 Make ice available year round for fish processing	x				Port
3-B-2					
3-B-3 Continue efforts to expand the Deep Water dock	x			x	Administration, Port, City Council
3-B-4 Continue East Boat Harbor expansion studies				x	Administration, Port, City Council
3-C-1 Review zoning for opportunities that accommodates art studio, art education activities, and residential living. <i>See also chapter 4.</i>	x				Planning, HAPC
3-C-2 (might not need this as it's a duplicate of other chapters?) 2. Investigate options for creating a new, multi-purpose cultural, performing arts and community center in Homer's town center. See the Town Center Plan and Park Art Recreation and Culture Needs Assessment.			x		
3-D-1 Support the efforts of KBC programs allow health care workers to earn, maintain and upgrade their credentials.					

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

Continue to partner and work to support efforts of the Kenai Peninsula School District.

Support and encourage commercial fishing.

reso's and letters? Big picture is to support/foster an education skilled workforce

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
4-2 (is this more spit plan oriented? as in reserve a spot on the spit for staging?) Support staging areas for large development projects.					
4-3 Support community efforts to remediate brownfield locations via letters and resolutions of support, and technical assistance for grant applications					Administration, City Council, other departments as appropriate
4-4 Lobby utilities to provide lower cost electrical power to residential and industrial users					
4-5 Promote renewable energy development locally and regionally.					
4-6 6. Encourage business activities that provide support services to the energy, mining, oil and gas industries.					
5-A-1 Support and fund beautification efforts on Pioneer Avenue through budget appropriations, CIP, cost sharing and grant applications				x	City Council, Administration
5-A-2 2. Ensure that City facilities are sufficient to support events that draw visitors such as festivals and activities (e.g., clean restrooms on the Spit, RV dump stations, adequate trash collection, park maintenance, etc.).				x	City Council, Administration, Public Works

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

Encourage bioremediation, reclamation, decontamination, pollution control solutions at the local level.

see also energy plan? To me this speaks to our city relationship w HEA

see also energy plan?

could go a few ways here...support construction compaines having offices in homer thorough land use ie adequate GC lands.

EDC? PW? HAPC? P&R? We don't really have a city support mecahnism here. Soldtona made a downtown improvement plan, that inlcuded wayfinding. Effort was spearheaded by econ dev + planning dept...we have somewhat of an institutional disconnect in Homer for stuff like this.

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
5-B-1 Encourage the continuation of private sector shuttle service between downtown and Spit areas.				x	
5-B-2 2. Design and build a wayfinding system that includes the Spit, Pioneer Ave and Old Town.		x			
5-B-3 3. Consider constructing ADA accessible sidewalk improvements, and installing benches and trashcans at central shuttle stops, such as the corner of Bunnell and Main.	x				Public Works, City Council
5-C-1 Adequately fund maintenance (operations and repairs) to public facilities that serve a high volume of visitors, including restrooms, parks and public facilities such as the library.					City Council, Administration, Public Works
5-C-2 When constructing new amenities, emphasize (prioritize?) projects that benefit both residents and visitors (e.g., trails).					
5-C-3 Support eco-tourism concepts and passive or quiet low impact recreation activities in marketing information				x	City partnership with Chamber of Commerce

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

system seems to work well as is.

not really a P&R function, not really a PW function, thoughts? EDC? Kind of goes w pioneer beautification. Is this a transportation activity/HAPC?

Again, kind of a streetscape conversation. Maybe not PW? Council is about funding but who is doing the planning/outreach? This also supports the shuttle service

When constructing new amenities, emphasize projects that benefit both residents and visitors (e.g., trails).

Promote environmentally friendly tourism or “eco-tourism.” Activities such as tidal pool exploration, bird watching, wildlife viewing, and educational activities, are examples of passive or quiet recreation with minimal impact to local residents.

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
5-C-4 When opportunities arise, work with private sector partners to support private sector establishment of conference and convention capabilities.					
5-C-5					
5-C-6 Enact taxation policies and fee structures that result in revenues from tourism that cover the city's costs in providing services to tourists.	x			x	City Council...how are depts tasked w analysing some of these costs, and then recommending fee changes?

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

Take advantage of opportunities to collaborate with or support private sector establishment of conference and convention capabilities.

Ensure that adequate basic infrastructure, such as water, sewer, and transportation capacity is available to meet peak demands of increasing summer tourism activity, as well as “shoulder season” activities.

Ensure that fiscal mechanisms are in place so that tourist spending covers the costs that tourism generates in the community (e.g., demand for water, sewer, public restrooms parking and other public services and facilities).

Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty	Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing		
5-C-7 ...Future/new/expanded amenities to serve tourists should have minimal ongoing cost for Homer residents? I'm trying to find something to say about ongoing operations/maintenance costs.						5-C-7 City efforts to guide the growth of tourism shall aim to maximize the benefits of tourism and to minimize the costs imposed on the people of Homer.
5-C-8 8. Support shoulder season activities and festivals as a way to expand the local economy. Budget for extended seasonal maintenance of park and public facilities.					Public Works, City Council	
5-C-9 Identify target visitor markets, including Alaska residents, out-of-state independent travelers, and small group package tour travelers					Chamber of Commerce, KPTMC	
5-C-9A Collaborate with Chamber of Commerce, KPB, Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council (KBTMC), and other organizations to actively promote Homer.					Administration, EDC	
5-C-9B Maintain and enhance Homer's reputation as a welcoming and exciting destination by accommodating and encouraging events such as the Shorebird Festival and Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference, and sporting tournaments.						
6-1 Support the efforts of other organizations to provide housing for target populations such as seniors, low income and special needs residents. Write letters or pass resolutions in of support these projects.				x	City Council, Administration	
6-2A Support senior housing that allows seniors to age within the community, such as assisted living and long term care. Write letters or pass resolutions in of support for grant applications to expand housing.				x	City Council, Administration	



Project	Timeframe				Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
6-2B Maintain land use regulations that support cradle to grave housing options for special populations				x	HAPC

Implementation item that needs a direct strategy, or some ideas for implementation

we support assisted living pretty well in our code, we updated this part in 07?





## City of Homer

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

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### Memorandum

TO: CHAIR MARKS AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

FROM: MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

DATE: SEPTEMBER 6, 2016

SUBJECT: SCHEDULING ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION WITH BUSINESS OWNERS

---

Chair Marks and Commissioner Gustafson would like to conduct a round table discussion with invited business owners to gather information to assist in developing a marketing plan to attract more year round businesses, jobs and people to Homer, and strengthen current businesses. Their concern is having the right message to send out and they both believe there are several people in the area who can help craft the message and help deliver it.

They propose scheduling the two hour information gathering session on or around October 18<sup>th</sup> at an alternate location like the Homer Foundation meeting room or Chair Marks' upstairs gallery area. They will invite around 10 business owners and plan to provide a list of questions in advance so the time spent will be more productive. They would also like to keep it as a small information gathering team to allow for flexibility in scheduling.

If the Commission approves of Chair Marks and Commissioner Gustafson scheduling this information gathering session, they will plan to report back to at the November 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve by consensus that Chair Marks and Commissioner Gustafson hold an information gathering session and bring their report back to the Commission at their November 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.





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## Memorandum

TO: CHAIR MARKS AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

FROM: MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

DATE: SEPTEMBER 7, 2016

SUBJECT: WELLNESS VIDEO

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Commissioner Sansom requested time on the agenda to view a wellness video she is working on developing to its final version. She provided the following information outline regarding the plan objective and goal:

### Plan Objective

Show the diversity of treatments available, and make Homer a year round destination for people seeking complimentary medicine. I believe the first step is to attract media attention to publicize the wide variety of practitioners in Homer, after which the medical community will be targeted.

Video and interviews, using this and similar material, the Chamber of Commerce can reach out to various media; with the goal of creating interest in Homer.

### Plan Goals

Show the City Council what talent there is in Homer Assess the value of having a promotion packet for Homer Wellness Gauge the interest level for Wellness Communities as a draw for year round visitors Justify funding for the Chamber of Commerce to use to develop further promotional material.





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### Memorandum

TO: CHAIR MARKS AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

FROM: MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

DATE: SEPTEMBER 6, 2016

SUBJECT: SOUTH PENINSULA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

---

Members of the South Peninsula Amateur Radio Club presented to the Commission at the August 9, 2016 regular meeting. They provided an overview of the clubs activities and emphasized the abilities of Ham Radio Operators to provide emergency communications for communities in times of disaster when primary systems fail.

Their goal is to gather support and partnerships with the city, borough, state, and federal agencies for establishing a network of linking repeaters that would provide adequate coverage of emergency communications in times of disaster. Currently the repeaters and equipment available to local Ham Radio Operators only allows for coverage of a limited communication area and the equipment is not accessible to club members for maintenance.

They are seeking locations that would provide the best communication coverage of the Homer area and also a secure location to place and maintain the communication equipment that is accessible to the club's members. The equipment includes dual band repeaters, HF transceivers, antenna masts, antennas, and coax cables. Having this equipment in place will allow for expanded coverage across the bay, and to Kenai, Soldotna, Anchorage, and possibly Kodiak.

To accomplish these things the South Peninsula Amateur Radio Club is asking for support from the City of Homer in determining repeater locations, towers, and secure areas to place and maintain repeaters. Having the improved availability of increased coverage areas will support their mission to promote and enjoy the hobby of amateur radio in our community; train and educate new amateur radio operators; and provide emergency communications for the local areas in times of disasters.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Make a motion to forward a memo to the City Council through the City Manager that the Economic Development Advisory Commission supports the efforts of the South Peninsula Amateur Radio Club and encourages the City Council and staff to support them as well.





**2016 HOMER CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION ATTENDANCE**

There is a time on the City Council's agenda for Commissions give a brief report on what the Commission is currently addressing, projects, events, etc. This agenda item comes fairly early in the agenda after public comments, visitors, and staff and Borough reports. If the Commissioners would like to take turns reporting to Council at one or both of their meetings, it is a good opportunity to keep them up to speed on what's going on. The EDC is fortunate to have a Councilmember assigned as an advisory member who can relay information, but Commissioner face-time can be beneficial as well.

The remaining Meeting Dates for City Council for 2016 are:

June 13, 27	_____
July 25	_____
August 8, 22	_____
September 12, 26	_____
October 10, 24	_____
November 28	_____
December 12	_____



# HOMER

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## *RELOCATION GUIDE*

*YOU BELONG HERE*



2016

Thank you for your interest in our beautiful city - Homer, Alaska!

On behalf of the Homer Chamber of Commerce, Homer's Mayor and its Economic Development Commission, we are excited to provide you with this information about the numerous opportunities and advantages Homer has to offer.

Enclosed you will find general information about our area including employment opportunities, cost of living, weather, as well as highlighting the wonderful aspects of Homer that residents have enjoyed for years – friendly people, quality public schools, comprehensive health and wellness care, vibrant arts, and world class recreational opportunities in every season.

If you're making a pre-relocation visit to Homer, or just want to get better acquainted with Homer, please explore the Chamber of Commerce website ([www.homerak.org](http://www.homerak.org)) for information on outstanding restaurants, local attractions and activities – you'll find everything you need to feel right at home! In addition, you will soon receive a copy of the Homer Visitor's Guide which provides further information regarding the many activities and adventures that await you in Homer.

Both the Chamber of Commerce and the City's Economic Development Department are more than happy to assist you in any way possible. Feel free to contact us if you need further assistance, or if you have any questions.

Thank you again for your interest in Homer. Homer offers an unsurpassed quality of life. We are delighted to have you join us.

Warm regards,

Karen Zak, Executive Director  
Homer Chamber of Commerce

\_\_\_\_\_, Mayor  
City of Homer

Awaiting  
photo  
from  
Chamber



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# Discover Homer

*Quality of life rarely found in one location: endless opportunities for outdoor recreation, arts, culture-- a great place to raise kids and a profound sense of community.*



The City of Homer was established as a first class municipality in March 1964. Named for Homer Pennock, a con man who arrived in 1896 and lured others to the Homer area with promises of gold, today genuine treasures attract people to live and work in Homer.

The southernmost town on the state's highway system, four hours south of Anchorage on the southern tip of the Kenai Peninsula, Homer is variously described as "where the land ends and the sea begins," "the comic hamlet by the sea," an arts community, and a fishing community. Each description captures a part of Homer's enduring character: creative, rich in maritime and homesteading traditions, committed to the environment, engaged and independent.

Common to every description is an acknowledgement that Homer is situated in one of the most beautiful places in the world, with

spectacular views of Kachemak Bay, the Kenai Mountains, and several volcanic peaks across Cook Inlet including Mt. Augustine, Mt. Iliamna, and Mt. Redoubt reaching to over 10,000 feet.

Homer is also famous for the Homer Spit, a 4.5 mile natural finger of land extending into Kachemak Bay. Accommodating Homer's port facilities and small boat harbor, it is a vital component of the local economy supporting both the marine trades industry and commercial fishing. Homer lands more halibut than any other port in the world, earning Homer yet another title, "Halibut Capital of the World."

The Spit also supports Homer's burgeoning tourism trade. Its numerous shops, restaurants, campgrounds, lodgings, charter fishing, water taxi, adventure and eco-tourism businesses are a beehive of activity during the summer months.

Rounding out Homer's economic drivers are healthcare services, the arts and independent farm growers, all contributing to Homer's economic diversity and extraordinary quality of life.

Homer is widely acknowledged to have the best arts scene and the best restaurants of any small town in Alaska. Many of these businesses are located on Pioneer Avenue in the heart of the City, where an abundance of peonies grace both gardens and public murals; or in historic "Old Town" on the shores of Bishop's Beach.

Homer prides itself on being an ambitious, forward-thinking community that embraces responsible economic development. Major goals for the next decade include expanding Homer's port facilities to support the region's growing maritime industries and developing thirty acres in the heart of Homer as a new and vibrant Town Center.

Since 2000, the city has added residents at an average rate of 0.6 percent annually for a total population of about 5,300 in 2015. Births, and in-migration of new residents, primarily families and senior citizens, account for the population growth.

While Homer is not a retirement community, it is popular for retiree living, both year-round and seasonally. Alaska's senior population has been growing faster than in any other U.S. state, with the Kenai Peninsula's growth rate leading the way at 11.33%.

New residents who can live anywhere they want, choose Homer partly for its beauty; partly for outstanding arts, culture, education and recreation opportunities. Mostly, they choose Homer because people here are friendly, outgoing and welcoming.

Homer boasts an overall low cost of living (for Alaska living) and superior schools. Residents enjoy year-round outdoor recreation opportunities that include fishing, hiking, skiing, kayaking, hunting, snow-machining, birding, kite-surfing, and more.

A diversity of arts, cultural and recreational activities throughout the year makes Homer welcoming, and makes time with family and friends extraordinarily enjoyable.

Homer is a caring community. Many residents are committed to making Homer a better place and give generously of their time and talents to contribute to overall quality of life. Civic, non-profit and grassroots efforts bring neighbors together to help those less fortunate, create solutions for shared concerns and complete civic projects.



Fireweed blooms paint Homer's landscape in late summer.



Photo Credit: Sharon Larson

Kachemak Bay, a Natural Estuarine Reserve rich with a diversity of marine life, is a kayaker's paradise.



Photo Credit: Kathy Sarns

Homer's groomed ski trails host fun community events for all ages, from evening Tiki Torch ski events to Wine and Cheese tours, from Junior Nordic Ski lessons to marathon races.



Photo Credit: Pete Fineo



## Location & Climate

Homer is located on Kachemak Bay, tucked into the southern portion of Cook Inlet on the Kenai Peninsula. The Pacific Ocean moderates Homer's climate, resulting in relatively warmer winters and cooler summers. Its location on the north shore of the Bay provides great solar exposure and breathtaking views of the Chugach Mountains to the southeast across Kachemak Bay. The Chugach Mountains provide more than an awesome view. They shelter Homer from high winds typical in the Gulf of Alaska, and provide somewhat of a rain shadow. Homer receives only about 25 inches of rainfall annually, arid compared to other Alaskan coastal communities.

Climate Comparison	Homer	Seward	Cordova	United States
Rainfall (in)	24.7	68.2	162.7	36.5
Snowfall (in)	54.9	83.4	101.5	25
Precipitation Days	143	167	201	100
Sunny Days	135	133	133	205
Avg. July High (°F)	61	62	62	86.5
Avg. January Low (°F)	16.7	20.4	24.7	20.5



Sunset over Cook Inlet

## Homer Stays Connected to the World

Though Homer is known as the 'end of the road,' it is by no means the middle of nowhere. Homer is a transportation hub for the region. Freight is barged to coastal Alaska and supplies loaded at Deep Water and Pioneer Docks support oil and gas exploration in Cook Inlet. Millions of pounds of fresh seafood are trucked from Homer every season. The airport's 6,700 foot runway accommodates jet traffic and hosts multiple commercial flights a day. A 30-minute flight or 4-hour world-class scenic drive north on Alaska's Route 1 Sterling Highway is close enough to the 'big city' – Anchorage – for most Homer residents, who appreciate that Homer has plenty of amenities while maintaining a small-town feel.

Homer is also a communications hub. With six high-speed internet providers and three submarine fiber cables landing on the beach for further expansion in connectivity, it's no wonder Homer was named Google's Alaskan "eCity" in both 2013 and 2014 in recognition of Homer's strong web utilization to find new customers, connect with existing clients and help fuel the local economy.

## Daylength

Because the top of the earth is tilted toward the sun in summer months, Alaska gets an abundance of daylight in mid-summer. On Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year, the sun rises in Homer at 4:45 am and sets around 11:30 pm for nearly 19 hours of daylight.

Keep in mind, though, this represents only the amount of time the sun is above the horizon. Twilight, when it is light enough to function outside (if no clouds are present) is very long in Alaska, extending daylength to a total of twenty-two hours!

The opposite is true for winter. On Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year in December, sunrise is at 10 am with sunset at 4 pm, giving us six hours of daylight. Twilight extends winter daylight hours, though soft, to eight hours.

### Homer's Average Daylength Hours

January	06:55
February	09:08
March	11:46
April	14:33
May	17:05
June	18:34
July	17:53
August	15:35
September	12:51
October	10:04
November	07:33
December	06:08

# A Great Place to Live *and Play!*

*Homer's 5,000 residents appreciate that Homer has plenty of amenities, options for entertainment and world class outdoor activities, all while maintaining a small-town feel.*

**Housing:** Living in Alaska presents many opportunities and challenges, and finding a home is often one of them. Luckily, Homer has an active real estate market. Average home prices and rents on the Kenai Peninsula are among the lowest in the State. Housing, which is typically a family's largest expenditure, is 21% less expensive in Homer than Anchorage.

**Health Care** - The diversity and quality of health care services available in Homer is notable. South Peninsula Hospital is Homer's full-service hospital offering a wide range of general and specialty services in a patient-focused and state-of-the-art facility. It, combined with Homer's wide variety of highly skilled complimentary medical practitioners, provides residents with the highest quality, comprehensive health and wellness care.

**Outdoor Activities:** Homer is well known for its sport fishing (it is the "Halibut Capital of the World" after all), for a vast and varied State Park system offering over 25 miles of maintained hiking trails, campsites and a rental yurt system, and exceptional public recreational facilities. Come prepared to ski, play hockey, snowmobile, kayak, surf, bike, hike, hunt, boat, and golf—all within five miles of your home and mostly year-round.

Sport enthusiasts will also enjoy Homer's annual festivals: Kite Surfing Festival, Fat Tire Bike Festival, Sea-to-Ski Triathlon, Winter King and Halibut Fishing Derbies, Ski Marathon, ...and more! Homer's three fitness clubs, lap swim hours at the community pool, a track and artificial turf field and sports clubs help you stay in shape and enjoy all these outdoor recreation pursuits.

**Dining** - Hands down, Homer has the best selection of high quality restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, bakeries and ice cream shops to suit all tastes, including two local coffee roasters, two breweries and one winery. Restaurant meals feature locally-sourced spirits and ingredients fresh from Homer's many local food growers.

**Vibrant Arts Scene** - With so many arts events to attend and participate in, Homer residents have to plan ahead to make time to stay home! Local galleries present monthly First Friday art exhibits, and two arts centers promote visual, literary and performing arts through a variety of workshops and programs. Throughout the year, bands can be heard most weekends at Homer's venues -- both local and world renowned--as Homer is a regular stop on Alaska's concert circuit. Pier One Theatre comes alive in the summer with plays, from side-splitting comedies to thought-provoking dramas. While most of the actors and actresses are local residents, you don't have to don rose-colored glasses to enjoy the shows. Pier One puts on top-notch productions that often sell out the house.



"Peonies on Pioneer" --in gardens and murals-- are a visual treat when exploring Homer's Pioneer Avenue shopping district.



Fat tire bicycling - Homer's recreational opportunities offer something for everyone.



Homer's Farmers Market showcases the finest local purveyors and producers of Alaskan-grown produce.



Two Homer icons: Pier One Theatre located on the Homer Spit and the Time Bandit hauled out nearby.



# A Great Place to Raise Kids!

*Great schools, relatively low crime, and lots of parks, playgrounds and outdoor pursuits are part of the package that makes Homer great for children.*



Homer's beaches provide a wonderful natural playground.



Homer's Public Library features over 36,000 books and a variety of youth and adult activities and programs.



Designing a boat to be printed from the Maker Space's 3D printers.



Homer has over 80 km of groomed ski trails, a small downhill ski area with a rope tow and extensive snow machine trails for winter fun.

## **Recreation - world class opportunities in every season**

Homer has 17 dedicated public parks with amenities ranging from playgrounds, ballfields, disc golf course, skate park, fishing lagoon, picnic areas, campsites and trails, and vast stretches of undeveloped beaches and intertidal zones.

Additionally, the City of Homer's Parks & Recreation and other nonprofit community groups organize many youth clubs and programs, ranging from sports, nature education, visual and theatrical arts, music, wilderness leadership, engineering/design and more.

## **Early Childhood Education - new families are supported in Homer**

Homer has eleven licensed child care providers, Head Start, a Title 1 Preschool Program at Paul Banks Elementary School, an infant learning program and a private pre-school education program.

## **Schools - your choice of high quality public school options**

Homer has three public elementary schools, one public charter school a middle school and a high school -- all part of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. Two of the schools (McNeil Canyon and West Homer Elementary) earned the distinguished Alaska Blue Ribbon School designation for achieving superior standards of academic excellence.

Parents also have the choice of two optional programs. Flex is an alternative high school for students that want to move at their own pace or that are graduating in three years because they can work faster while at the same time achieving proficiency. Connections is the school district's supported homeschool program, giving families direct access to tutors, counselors, academic support materials and funds through the program's Homer office.

Homer High School, with enrollment of 410, consistently ranks as one of the highest scoring schools in Alaska:

- Wide variety of course offerings: seven Advanced Placement courses, foreign language, creative arts (including a ceramics studio) and applied arts courses such as culinary arts, welding and mechanics with a focus on college and career readiness;
- 95-98% graduation rate;
- 70% student population involved in co-curricular activities ranging from sports, band, choir, drama/debate/forensics and student government;
- High average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score of 1628;
- Opportunity to take college classes and earn college credits while in high school through the local Kenai Peninsula College "Jump Start" Program;
- Merit-based college scholarships awards average \$12,000 to \$20,000 per student annually.

**Vacationing in Alaska** is a great way to learn about the state, and explore job opportunities. Alaska is vast, stretching thousands of miles in all directions, with starkly contrasting climate zones, breathtakingly beautiful scenery, abundant wildlife, and Native people with rich cultures. It presents abundant and varied recreational opportunities. No wonder it is a prime tourist destination! Come for a visit, savor the flavor of various communities, experience the weather, and check out the job scene.



Downtown Anchorage at sunset on a clear day.

**Anchorage:** Alaska's largest city, with a population of 298,908 on the shores of Cook Inlet, is the hub of the Anchorage /Matanuska-Susitna region in Southcentral Alaska. Anchorage has the most job openings and a relatively reasonable cost of living.



Fields, mountains, and waters near Valdez, Alaska.

**Valdez:** Located on Prince William Sound, east of Anchorage, Valdez is home to the terminus of the Alaska Pipeline which transports oil from the North Slope for shipping from . It has a stable economy where tourism is growing to compensate for recent declines in the oil industry.



A snow-capped mountain reflecting off a lush green lily pad covered pond on the Kenai Peninsula.

**Kenai Peninsula:** The Kenai Peninsula has a population of 57,763. A popular recreation area, seasonal work in tourism or seafood processing may be available. The Kenai also supports oil and gas exploration and extraction industries. With a high growth rate in the senior population, health care is an expanding Kenai Peninsula industry.



View from Pillar Mountain down to the town of Kodiak.  
Photo credit: Katie Miller.

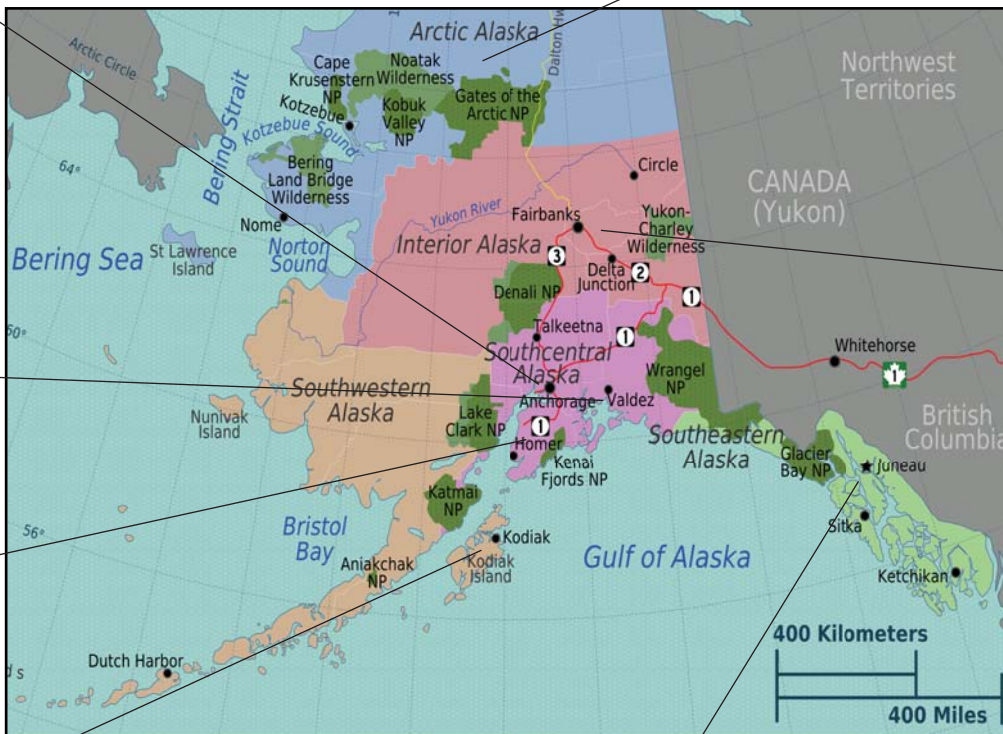
**Kodiak Island:** Ninety miles south of the Peninsula (and accessible by jet and the Alaska Marine Ferry), Kodiak Island has a large commercial fishing industry and supports the largest Coast Guard base in Alaska.





Whaling monument in Barrow, Alaska a Native whaling village.

**Western & Northern Alaska:** These areas are mainly off the road system. In the north, winters are severe, and the sun makes only brief appearances. Midsummer days have no nightfall. Villages outside the hub communities of Nome, Kotzebue, and Barrow often have difficulty finding qualified professionals and technical employees. The western Alaska towns of Bethel and Dillingham are sometimes in need of qualified medical, city government, and education professionals. Food and other purchases in the Alaska's Bush villages can cost twice the price than in urban areas.



**Fairbanks:** The state's second largest city has long, warm summer days and long, cold winters with temperatures of -50 degrees. The population of the Fairbanks North Star Borough is 98,645. Fairbanks is home to the University of Alaska Fairbanks; government is also a major employer there.

**Juneau:** The state capital has a population of 33,277. State government is the largest employer, and tourism is a source of seasonal employment. Apartment rental prices in Juneau are amongst the highest in the nation, averaging about \$1,500 for two bedrooms, without utilities.



A view of Fairbanks, Alaska and the Tanana River in the Fall.



Alaska State Capitol Building.

# A Glimpse of Alaska's Economy

Alaska is anticipating some job losses Statewide, directly related to low oil prices, and to a lesser extent to declining oil production. Sustained low oil prices impinge Alaska's economy on two fronts: directly, through cuts to oil industry investment and employment, and indirectly, through state government budget deficits that lead to spending cuts. Despite downward pressure, job losses in the next year are anticipated to be fairly isolated to the oil and gas industry and state government, as well as the commercial construction industry which will be hit by reduction of the State capital budget. Ripple effects of lower employment and spending aren't likely to extend into other industries this year.

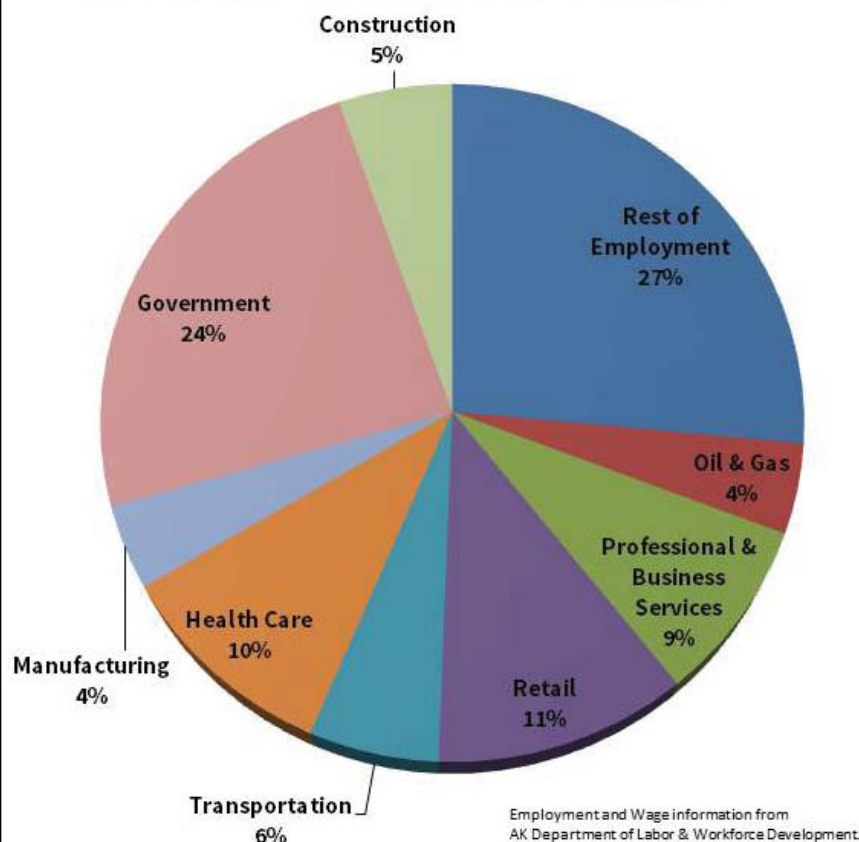
*Growth in health care, tourism and technology industries*

A good number of Alaska's jobs are in the fast-growing health care industry: primary care providers, pharmacy technicians, registered nurses and respiratory therapists, among others.

Maritime industries and cargo/freight industries are also strong. Anchorage occupies a strategic location in the world for air cargo and the State's proximity to Asia is an asset for marine transshipment. The increase in arctic maritime activity associated with research, fishing, oil and gas exploration on Alaska's outer continental shelf and shipping all have the potential to spur maritime service demand.

The technology industry is also experiencing growth. Due to the vast size of the state, technology is critical to virtually all facets of life. This, combined with the fact that Alaska has high online usage, creates high demand for information technologists.

**Total Employment by Major Industry in Alaska, 2015**



## 2015 Mean Wage Rates by Occupation

Accounting/Bookkeeping	\$21.64
Administrative Support	\$23.25
Carpenters	\$32.69
Computer Programmer	\$45.97
Customer Service Rep	\$17.24
Environmental Engineer Tech	\$28.47
Health Technologists	\$25.52
Janitor/Cleaner	\$15.29
Police Officer	\$37.13
Registered Nurse	\$38.57
Retail Salesperson	\$12.12
Social Service Specialist	\$22.93
Welder/Cutter	\$33.46



As Alaska's largest private sector employer, commercial fishing is a major contributor to the State's employment and wages.



# Kenai Peninsula Borough Economy

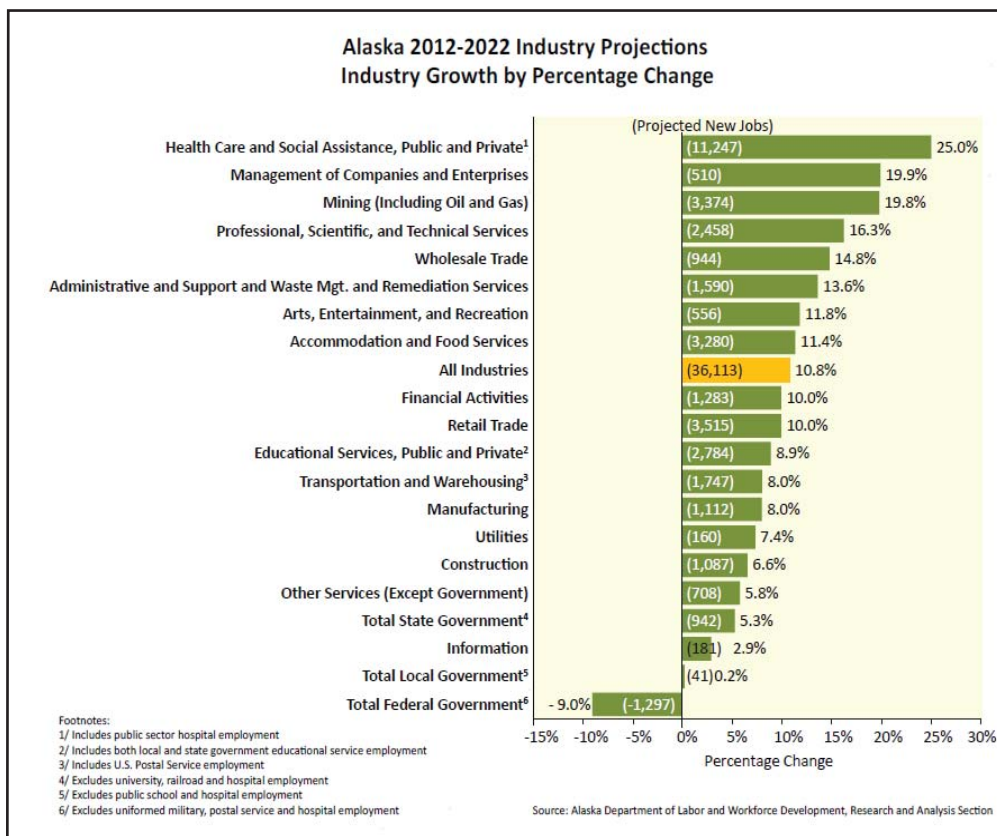
The cost of living on the Peninsula is low for Alaska. Typically household goods cost just a bit more than Anchorage. Land is plentiful and homes and apartments are among the most affordable in the state. Less expensive natural gas is available for heating, while the cost of electricity is on the high side compared to Anchorage, and the cost of health care is high compared to U.S. averages. Taxes are relatively low and stable.

The Borough's economy enjoys a higher degree of diversification than most parts of the State. Strong tourism, commercial and sport fishing industries and oil and gas activity and infrastructure bring people and money from outside into the area. The proposed Alaska Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) project holds future economic potential for the Kenai Peninsula. Two of the LNG project's largest components (a gas liquefaction plant and marine terminal) are proposed to be located on the Kenai Peninsula. This presents enormous opportunities for future growth, requiring that significant workforce gaps be filled to take advantage of them. High quality workforce regional

training programs support the oil and gas and maritime trades, as well as the construction trade which relies on these strong sectors.

Maritime commerce centers on transportation, the seafood industry, ship-building and repair, marine surveyors, scientists, water transporters and other marine trades.

Healthcare and social assistance is the largest employment sector in the Borough, and like elsewhere in the State, is a fast growing industry due to medical care shifts from predominantly acute care to chronic disease management and prevention and due to the growth of the senior population on the Kenai.



The health care industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in Alaska, including the Kenai Peninsula.

Local demand for services to assist people to age in place, for traditional assisted living and long-term care, for home health, hospice, palliative and respite care is expected to keep increasing. Local real estate and rental leasing are modest economic drivers, showing positive employment growth as well. Comprehensive employment information is available at <http://labor.alaska.gov/jobseek/>.

Not surprisingly, entrepreneurship is alive and well, with many business owners working creatively from their passions to develop new products and services, or provide innovative solutions to market opportunities. Homer's branch of Alaska's Small Business Development Center stands ready to assist those considering the launch of a new business. Contact them at [www.http://aksbdc.org/](http://aksbdc.org/).

# City of Homer Information

## City Government

Homer is a first class city with a City Manager/ City Council form of government. Elected officials consist of six City Council members and the Mayor. The City of Homer provides road, public safety, water and sewer, library, recreational and other services associated with local government, including an airport terminal and extensive Port & Harbor facility. The City is part of the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

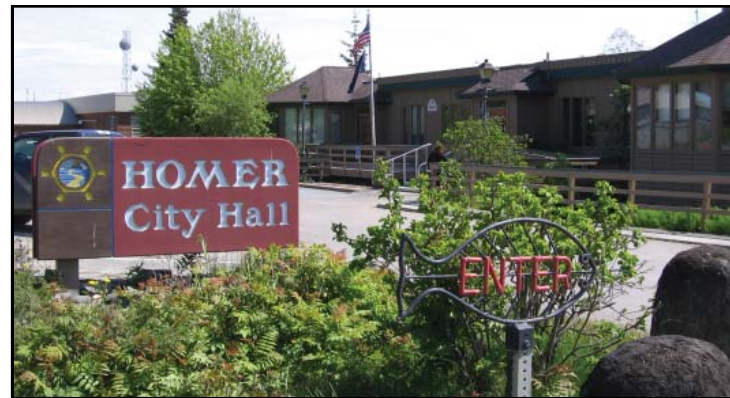
### Sales Tax:

There is no state income tax or state sales tax in Alaska. The sales tax in Homer is 7.5% (4.5% City of Homer and 3% Kenai Peninsula Borough). Non-prepared foods are exempt from sales tax from September through May.

### Property Tax:

Homer:	4.50 Mills
Borough:	4.50 Mills
So. Penin. Hospital:	<u>2.30 Mills</u>
Total	11.30 Mills

The property tax rate translates to a levy of \$1,130 for every \$100,000 in assessed value. However, the first \$20,000 in value is tax exempt for most residents upon request. Senior citizens (age 65 and older) benefit from an additional exemption on the first \$150,000 in value for the City of Homer portion and on the first \$300,000 for the Kenai Peninsula Borough portion.



Homer Public Library offers over 45,000 loan items and a variety of programs.

### Water & Sewer:

Water and sewer utilities are provided by the City of Homer within City limits. City water (which exceeds Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standards) is sourced from the Bridge Creek Reservoir via an adjacent water treatment plant. Households not hooked up to City water obtain water from commercial water haulers.



Bridge Creek Reservoir is in a designated Watershed Protected District to insure Homer's quality drinking water for the long term.



Homer's Port and Harbor a small boat harbor offers 950 reserve slips and additional docks for transient moorage.



491 E. Pioneer Ave.  
Homer, AK 99603  
Phone: 907-235-8121  
Monday - Friday 8 - 5 p.m.  
[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)



# Power & Utility Industries

## Electric Utility

In 1945, nine forward-thinking citizens of Homer met and began working together to form Alaska's fifth rural electric cooperative. By March 13, 1950, the system was energized, making Homer brighter for 56 cooperative members. Today, 80 Megawatts of generation is needed to fulfill 23,000 member-owners' electrical needs in a 3,166 square-mile service area on the southern Kenai Peninsula.

HEA's mission is to safely provide reliable electricity to members and the community through superior customer service and innovative energy solutions at fair and reasonable prices. Power generation is primarily from natural gas (88%) with almost all of the remainder from the Bradley Lake hydroelectric facility and a tiny but growing amount from small-scale wind and solar installations on private property. Rates change frequently, mostly in response to fluctuations in the price of natural gas. Current rates can be found on HEA's website.

## Home Heating Options

ENSTAR's development of a southern Kenai Peninsula natural gas distribution system in 2014 introduced natural gas as a heating option.

ENSTAR Natural Gas Company, headquartered in Anchorage, Alaska, is a regulated public utility delivering natural gas to approximately 140,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in and around Southcentral Alaska. ENSTAR has four rate classes for Gas Sales Service, based on the capacity of the gas meter required to serve the home or business. Currently, lots in Homer, Anchor Point and Kachemak City have access to natural gas.

Other home heating options in Homer are electric, heating oil, propane or wood. Two fuel oil companies serve Homer: HomeRun Oil and Petro Marine. Two companies also supply propane: Amerigas and Suburban Propane.



The aurora borealis (or northern lights) brighten Alaska's winter nights.



3977 Lake Street  
Homer, AK 99603  
Phone: 907-235-8551  
[www.homerelectric.com](http://www.homerelectric.com)



36225 Kenai Spur Hwy  
Soldotna, AK 99669  
907-262-9334  
[www.enstarnaturalgas.com](http://www.enstarnaturalgas.com)



3518 FAA Road  
Homer, AK 99603  
907-235-8772  
[www.amerigas.com](http://www.amerigas.com)



60998 East End Road  
Homer, AK 99603  
907-235-1393



4755 Homer Spit Road  
Homer, AK 99603  
907-235-8818



60970 East End Road  
Homer, AK 99603  
907-235-8565  
[www.suburbanpropane.com](http://www.suburbanpropane.com)

# Educational Institutions

## Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

With the mission to develop productive, responsible citizens who are prepared to be successful in a dynamic world, the Kenai Peninsula School District (KPBSD) serves nearly 9,000 students in forty-four public schools in a district larger than the entire state of West Virginia. Six of those schools are in the Homer area.

In order to register students for the KPBSD, new students are required to have the following:

- Original Birth Certificate.
- Physical Examination. Forms are available in local doctor's offices.
- Immunization Records: Typically a yellow card provided by healthcare providers that lists immunizations your child has received.



148 North Binkley Street  
Soldotna, AK 99669  
Phone: 907-714-8888

[www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us](http://www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us)

## UAA's Kachemak Bay Campus of Kenai Peninsula College

The Kachemak Bay Campus of Kenai Peninsula College (KBC) is located on three acres in the heart of Homer overlooking Kachemak Bay and a vista of glacier-capped mountains. The campus offers a wide variety of degree and continuing education courses and programs of excellence in a friendly, personalized setting. Kachemak Bay Campus is recognized for teaching excellence.

KBC offers 650-800 students a variety of classroom and online courses leading towards two-year Associates of Arts and Associates of Applied Science degrees, as well as vocational certificates including the following:

- Biology, Natural Sciences, Psychology, Education, Business and Fine Arts;
- Nursing (RN), Certified Nurse Assistant, Medical Assisting and Coding;
- Fisheries and Maritime Technology, Welding, Corrections, General Business and General Education Degrees.

A number of other four-year degree programs are available via distance delivery through other University of Alaska campuses. KBC is nationally recognized for its many art and cultural programs including the Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference and "Semester-By-The-Bay", a marine science field studies program.

The campus includes classrooms, computer lab, learning center, bookstore, art studio, library and a student services and enrollment center. Small classes, individualized attention, and the highly qualified faculty give the campus a private college feel.



Kenai Peninsula College

533 E. Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, AK 99603  
Phone: 907-235-7743

<http://kpc.alaska.edu/kbc>

<http://www.kpc.alaska.edu>

### Spring 2016

Jumpstart (High School)  
Lower Division (100-200)  
Upper Division (300-400)  
Professional Development

### Resident Tuition:

\$58/credit  
\$183/credit  
\$221/credit  
(Varies)

### Non-Resident Tuition

N/A  
\$649/credit  
\$687/credit



# Health Care

## South Peninsula Hospital



South Peninsula Hospital is a full-service hospital offering a wide range of general and specialty services to the Homer community. Its newly constructed and remodeled areas provide first-rate services in an entirely patient focused and state-of-the-art facility. SPH's home-like, healing environment, combined with the best in medical expertise and technology allows patients to receive the comprehensive care they need close to home. Available services include: Birthing Center, Cancer Care, Emergency, Functional Medicine, Home Health, Imaging, Laboratory, Long Term Care, Surgery, Orthopedics, Rehabilitation Services, Sleep Center and Specialty Clinics.



### Family Practices

Homer Medical Clinic (a branch of South Peninsula Hospital) and Kachemak Bay Medical Clinic provide solutions for preventive, diagnostic, and treatment needs through personal, professional and experienced health care.

## Seldovia Village Tribe (SVT) Health & Wellness

SVT Health & Wellness provides a wide variety of integrated medical, dental and natural wellness services on a sliding scale according to income. SVT has medical clinics in Anchor Point and Seldovia, with its main location in Homer featuring a health and wellness center and family dentistry.

Comprehensive, primary health care services include exams, chronic disease management, immunizations, laboratory services, pharmacy and tobacco cessation. Wellness services include functional medicine, behavioral health and psychotherapy, acupuncture, Chinese Herbal Medicine, medical massage, therapeutic sauna and nutritional and lifestyle coaching.

SVT also offers free events such as Thriving Thursday classes and Brown Bag Lunch talks to help improve health and well-being. The Outreach & Eligibility Department helps all community members, whether patient or non-patient, with Veteran Benefits, Medicare and Medicaid, navigating the Affordable Care Act and Health Insurance Marketplace, courtesy medication assistance and specialty service referrals.

