



City of Homer

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Office of the City Manager

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Memorandum 18-053

TO: Mayor Zak and Homer City Council
FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager
DATE: April 18, 2018
SUBJECT: Water and Sewer Rate Review Work Session

History

2014 was the first year the Consumption Based Rate Model took effect. This was the culmination of many months of work by the Water and Sewer Rate Task Force to make changes to the model that more accurately reflect water usage. Comparing water and sewer rates is challenging due the array of changes to the rate structure.

For example, Resolution 11-094(S) addressed the number of meters per lot and amended the fee schedule to charge on a per-unit basis. Then in 2012-13 the Water and Sewer Task Force (Resl. 12-027(A)) reviewed the cost of customer billing, metering, system maintenance, water conservation, multi-family units, lift stations, sewer only customers. The result of Resl. 11-094(s) and Resl. 13-048 (S-2)(A-3) included an increase in fees for:

- Those served by sewer lift stations (\$ 0.0218 per gallon)
- Those served by sewer without lift stations (\$0.0147 per gallon)
- Those in Kachemak City served by sewer only, \$89.05 per month, per customer.
- Pumping fee, when applicable \$7.75 per month, per customer
- Multi-unit fees (Resl. 11-094(s))
- One-time disconnect fee of \$30.
- Buildings served by sprinkler systems, \$5 per month.
- Bulk water customer, \$19 per month.

All these changes make comparing rates difficult. However, I have included a copy of Resolution 11-094(S) outlining water and sewer rates under old structure, Resolution 17-048 establishing water and sewer rates and the recommendations of the 2012 Water Sewer Rate Task Force for your analysis.

Reserves

With any conversation regarding budget, the question of how much to set aside for reserves becomes paramount. The annual required set aside is \$100,000, which you can see from the attached operating revenues and expenses chart from Finance, is a goal that the funds meet. However, the funds come far short of meeting targets for the replacement of depreciable assets. Perhaps a more reasonable target is the recommendation of the Water and Sewer Treatment

supervisor to set aside a minimum 10% of operating budget for reserves. This is a goal the 2018 budget meets for Sewer, but falls about \$50,000 short of for the Water Fund.

Bridge Creek Watershed

Council has dedicated a lot of time and attention to preserving the watershed to great success; in addition to winning an award for protection of the watershed, the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust is hopefully months away from securing the preservation of 300 acres of private land through a partnership with the City. Funds for the purchase of land, or land preservation fees, has come both from the land reserves fund (General Fund where the City puts proceeds from the sale of land) and the Water Reserves Fund. The City should begin to think about a more systematic approach to preserving the remaining high priority parcels in the watershed and consider a way to fund that through water rates. Limited dollars should be spent on the most high priority parcels. It will take some time working with community partners to determine details of a plan and criteria for prioritizing lots, however, I have included a map of the watershed from the Planning Department with parcel values to start the conversation. With guidance from Council, I believe this is a project we should work on for 2020 rates.

Water Treated versus Water Billed

In years past, Council has asked for information regarding how much water is lost in flushing lines, fire hydrant maintenance and leaks in the system. 2017 the City treated 186.607 gallons of water and had a total metered sale of 122.992 gallons (after operational adjustment). This percent of water loss, 34%, is consistent with prior years. Staff has instituted seasonal unidirectional flushing of the lines which removes organic build up and reduces the reaction between the organics and the chlorine and the subsequent 'chlorine' smell customers complain of. This is an improvement to water quality, but does use a lot of water. The Water Sewer Division is taking measures to improve water accountability such as a leak detection program (where electronic equipment is run through the lines to detect leaks).

Recommendation

Council may want to consider raising water rates incrementally or adjusting rates between water and sewer to ensure there is a sufficient transfer to reserves. If you recall, the last increase to rates was a 6.5% increase in sewer rates in 2015 which has helped produce healthy transfers to sewer reserves. In order to see if the first quarter water consumption trends bear out, I would recommend waiting until mid-year to date data is available to compare 6 months of water consumption and budget versus actual. If Council is in agreement, I will put a resolution on the July agenda with midyear data and recommended adjustments (if any). Remember, the Council sets rates for the following year at mid year, so any adjustment would not take place until 2019. Options include:

- a) Adjusting the water rate up slightly
- b) Adjusting the water rate up slightly and sewer rate down slightly
- c) No changes

Enc:

-Resolution 11-094(S) outlining water and sewer rates under old structure

- Resolution 17-048 establishing water and sewer rates
- Recommendations of the 2012 Water Sewer Rate Task Force
- Lift Station Map
- From Finance Department: Operating revenues vs. Expenditures for 2017 and 2018 budget
- From Finance Department: Comparative analysis of gallons used by year and year to date
- Memo from Planning and Prioritized map of parcels prioritized for preservation in the Bridge Creek Watershed
- Water Quality Report

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**CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA**

City Clerk

RESOLUTION 11-094(S)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, MAINTAINING THE CITY OF HOMER FEE SCHEDULE AT THE CURRENT RATES, AND AMENDING CUSTOMER CLASSIFICATIONS IN THE WATER AND SEWER RATE SCHEDULES.

WHEREAS, Fees are reviewed annually during the budget cycle; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 11-43 amends HCC 14.08.037 regarding the number of water meters per lot; and

WHEREAS, It was determined that there were no rate adjustments to the City of Homer Fee Schedule needed at this time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of Homer, Alaska, that the City of Homer Fee Schedule is amended as follows:

SEWER FEES:

Sewer Connection and Extension Permit Fee

Single Family/Duplex \$255

Multi-Family/Commercial/Industrial \$330

Sewer Rate Schedule.

All sewer utility services shall be billed according to the following schedule. This schedule is for monthly sewer services and is in addition to any charges for connecting or disconnecting the service, installation of the service or any assessment of the improvements.

Customer Classification*	Monthly Customer Charge	Charge per Gallon	Usage Charge per 1,000 Gallons of Water
Single Family Residential	\$20	\$0.00997	\$ 9.97
Multi-Family Residential	\$20 (per unit)	\$0.00997	\$ 9.97
Commercial	\$20	\$0.01264	\$12.64

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***-Customer classification definitions for determining water rates:**

Single Family Residential - A unit providing housing for one household; with less than 25% of the building area used for business or commercial purposes.

Multi-Family Residential - A building or lot occupied by more than one household: contained within one building or several building within one complex. Examples of multi-family units include duplexes, four-plexes and up, apartments, condominiums, co-

45 **housing projects, and multiple structures on one lot (where units are normally rented or**
46 **occupied for longer than one month at a time). Examples of units not considered as**
47 **multi-family include hotels, motels, B&B's seasonal rooms/cabins (where units are**
48 **routinely rented or occupied for less than one month at a time.)**
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50 **Commercial - Any user not defined as Residential.**

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52 Sewer System Residential or Residential Equivalent Dischargers Who Are Not Water System
53 Users:
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55 Sewer system dischargers who are not water system users shall be charged at the rate of
56 \$54.90. Variable rate \$34.90 based on 3,500 gallons per month plus monthly customer charge
57 \$20. The City reserves the right to adjust this rate based on the characteristics of the service
58 for non-residential or non-residential equivalent users. Customers who receive septic service
59 shall be charged an additional \$6.00* per month.
60

61 Sewer System Dischargers Who Are Members of Kachemak City LID:

62 Kachemak City Local Improvement District (LID) members have contributed to the initial cost
63 of the sewer treatment plant and the collection system. Kachemak City LID dischargers
64 connected within the LID and the City of Homer shall bill Kachemak City in one lump sum at
65 the rate of \$60.90. Variable rate \$34.90 based on 3,500 gallons per month plus monthly
66 customer charge of \$20 plus septage cost \$6.00* per month for each residential or residential
67 equivalent discharger. Kachemak City shall be responsible for payment to the City of Homer.
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69 Domestic sewer service customers who use large quantities of City water in addition to their
70 domestic use shall be allowed, with the Public Works Director's approval, to install an
71 additional water meter on the domestic water use line for the purpose of metering and charging
72 for domestic sewer system use. Sewer system use will be billed monthly.
73

74 The City will allow, upon approval by Public Works and a permit from the Public Works
75 Department, a second water usage meter – called a seasonal sewer meter – for each customer
76 that desires to measure the flow of City water that is not discharged to the sewer system during
77 the summer growing season, June 15 through September 15. Rates noted above do not apply.
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79 Seasonal Sewer Meter Fee is \$211.97.
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82 **WATER FEES:**

83 Water Connection Fee
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85 Single Family/Duplex \$300

86 Multi-Family/Commercial/Industrial \$375
87

88 Water Rate Schedule.
89

90 All water utility services shall be billed according to the following schedule. This schedule is for
91 monthly water service and is in addition to any charges for connecting or disconnecting the
92 service, installation of the service or any assessment of the improvements.
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Customer Classification*	Monthly Customer Charge	Charge per Gallon	Usage Charge per 1,000 Gallons of Water
Single Family Residential	\$25	\$0.00442	\$ 4.42
Multi-Family Residential	\$25 (per unit)	\$0.00442	\$ 4.42
Commercial	\$25	\$0.01140	\$11.40
Bulk	\$25	\$0.01269	\$12.69

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***-Customer classification definitions for determining water rates:**

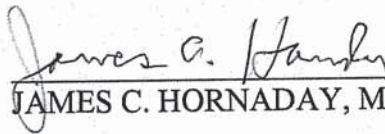
Single Family Residential - A unit providing housing for one household; with less than 25% of the building area used for business or commercial purposes.

Multi-Family Residential - A building or lot occupied by more than one household: contained within one building or several building within one complex. Examples of multi-family units include duplexes, four-plexes and up, apartments, condominiums, co-housing projects, and multiple structures on one lot (where units are normally rented or occupied for longer than one month at a time). Examples of units not considered as multi-family include hotels, motels, B&B's seasonal rooms/cabins (where units are routinely rented or occupied for less than one month at a time.)

Commercial - Any user not defined as Residential.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of Homer, Alaska, this 12th day of December, 2011.

CITY OF HOMER


JAMES C. HORNADAY, MAYOR

ATTEST:


JO JOHNSON, CMC, CITY CLERK

Fiscal Note: Revenue amounts not defined in CY2012 budget.

47 SEWER FEES:
 48 Sewer Connection and Extension Permit Fee

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 50 Single Family \$255
 51 Multi-Family/Commercial \$330

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 53 Customer classification definitions for determining sewer connection and extension permit fees:

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 55 Single Family Residential – A unit providing housing for one household; with less than 25% of the
 56 building area used for business or commercial purposes.

57
 58 Multi-Family Residential- A building or lot occupied by more than one household: contained within one
 59 building or several building within one complex. Examples of multi-family units includes duplexes,
 60 four-plexes and up, apartments, condominiums, co-housing projects, and multiple structures on one
 61 lot (where units are normally rented or occupied for longer than one month at a time). Examples of
 62 units not considered as multi-family include hotels, motels, B&B’s seasonal rooms/cabins (where units
 63 are routinely rented or occupied for less than one month at a time.)

64
 65 Commercial - Any user not defined as Residential.

66
 67 Sewer Rate Schedule.

68
 69 All sewer utility services shall be billed according to the following schedule (Table I, II). This schedule
 70 is for monthly sewer services and is in addition to any charges for connecting or disconnecting the
 71 service, installation of the service or any assessment of the improvements.

Rates

Table I

Customer Classification	Sewer	
	Monthly Service	Usage Charge/Gallon
Lift-Station Customer	\$ -	\$0.0232
Non-Lift-Station Customer		\$0.0157
Multi-units (additional per unit)	\$ 5.00	N/A

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Rates

Table II

Sewer ONLY Customers	Sewer
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	Fees/Rate/Usage	Per Customer Per Month
Lift-Station Customer	\$0.0232/Gal	\$69.60
Non-Lift-Station Customer	\$0.0157/Gal	\$47.10
Monthly Service	\$5.00/customer/mo.	\$5.00 (Kachemak City customers will be exempt from \$5 monthly service fee. Kachemak City will be billed a \$5 monthly service fee to cover all Kachemak City sewer customers.)
Pumping Fee (<i>If Applicable</i>)	\$7.75/customer/mo.	\$7.75
Assumption: Avg. Sewer Usage	3000 Gal/Mo.	

73 Customer classification definitions for determining sewer rates:

74
 75 Lift Station Zone Customer: There are eleven sewage lift/pump stations that are used for pumping
 76 wastewater or sewage from areas with lower elevation than the treatment plant. Customers who are
 77 located in these areas shall be charged additional fees for the cost added to the services (see Table I &
 78 II).

79
 80 Non-Lift Station Zone Customer: Customers who are located in the zone that do not need lift/pump
 81 station services.

82
 83 Sewer System Dischargers (Sewer ONLY customers): Customers who use sewer service only shall be
 84 charged a monthly fee of \$5 plus sewer usage fee based on assessed volume of 3,000 gallons per month
 85 multiplied by the applicable sewage rate (see Table II). Kachemak City Local Improvement District (LID)
 86 members have contributed to the initial cost of the sewer treatment plant and the collection system.
 87 For Kachemak City LID dischargers connected within the LID, the City of Homer shall bill Kachemak City
 88 in one single bill at the Lift-Station Zone Rate of \$77.35 (\$69.60 +\$7.75) per month per customer.
 89 Kachemak City shall be billed a \$5 monthly service charge to cover all Kachemak City sewer customers
 90 and shall be responsible for payment to the City of Homer.

91

92 Domestic sewer service customers who use large quantities of City water in addition to their domestic
 93 use shall be allowed, with the Public Works Director's approval, to install an additional water meter on
 94 the domestic water use line for the purpose of metering and charging for domestic sewer system use.
 95 Sewer system use will be billed monthly.

96
 97 The City will allow, upon approval by Public Works and a permit from the Public Works Department, a
 98 second water usage meter – called a seasonal sewer meter – for each customer that desires to measure
 99 the flow of City water that is not discharged to the sewer system during the summer growing season,
 100 June 15 through September 15. Rates noted above do not apply.

101
 102 Seasonal Sewer Meter Fee is \$251.75.

103
 104 WATER FEES:

105 Water Connection Fee

- 106
 107 Single Family \$300
 108 Multi-Family/Commercial \$375

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 110 Customer classification definitions for determining water connection and extension permit fees:

111
 112 Single Family Residential – A unit providing housing for one household; with less than 25% of the
 113 building area used for business or commercial purposes.

114
 115 Multi-Family Residential- A building or lot occupied by more than one household: contained within one
 116 building or several building within one complex. Examples of multi-family units includes duplexes,
 117 four-plexes and up, apartments, condominiums, co-housing projects, and multiple structures on one
 118 lot (where units are normally rented or occupied for longer than one month at a time). Examples of
 119 units not considered as multi-family include hotels, motels, B&B's seasonal rooms/cabins (where units
 120 are routinely rented or occupied for less than one month at a time.)

121
 122 Commercial - Any user not defined as Residential.

123
 124 Water Rate Schedule.

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 126 All water utility services shall be billed according to the following schedule. This schedule is for monthly
 127 water service and is in addition to any charges for connecting or disconnecting the service, installation
 128 of the service or any assessment of the improvements.

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Rates	Water Table III	
	Monthly Service	Usage Charge/Gallon
Customer Classification		
Lift-Station Customer	\$ 19.00	\$0.0109

Non-Lift-Station Customer	\$ 19.00	\$0.0109
Multi-units (additional per unit)	\$ 5.00	
Bulk Water	\$ 19.00	\$0.0149

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Customer classification definitions for determining water rates:

Bulk Water Customers: The bulk water customers are the resellers of water or water users who purchase water from the water plant directly and are not in the metered water distribution system.

Non-Bulk Customers: All customers who receive water from the metered water distribution system.

Multi-Units: An additional \$5 monthly charge shall apply to each of the units of a building or lot occupied by more than one household or commercial entity contained within one building or several buildings within one complex. Examples of multi-family units include duplexes, four-plexes and up, apartments, condominiums, co-housing projects, and multiple structures on one lot (where units are normally rented or occupied for longer than one month at a time). Examples of units not considered as multi-family include hotels, motels, and B&B's seasonal rooms/cabins (where units are routinely rented or occupied for less than one month at a time.)

This fee applies to all multi-unit structures defined in the sewer section of this for apartments, rental units or multi-unit buildings where each unit would have one or more restrooms and are intended to be rented on a monthly basis where there is only one meter installed, excluding a rental building restroom used for shared or public use.

Meter Size Deposits.

<u>Size (inches)</u>	<u>Residential Users</u>	<u>Nonresidential Users</u>
5/8	\$75.00	\$220.00
3/4	\$80.00	\$230.00
1	\$90.00	\$250.00
1-1/2	\$115.00	\$310.00
2	\$150.00	\$370.00
3	\$220.00	\$525.00

4	\$310.00	\$730.00
6	\$520.00	\$1,225.00

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154 \$750 meter deposit shall apply to metered fire hydrant connections. The deposit will be returned when
155 the meter is returned undamaged. This deposit may be waived upon the recommendation of the Public
156 Works Superintendent.

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158 If a bulk water customer purchases a meter from the City for measuring the quantity of water
159 purchased, it shall be exempt from the monthly meter service charge. It is the responsibility of the bulk
160 water customer to maintain that meter so the City can accurately determine the amount of water being
161 purchased. In the event the meter fails, it is the bulk water customer's responsibility, at its expense, to
162 repair it or purchase a replacement meter from the City. The City may at any time test the meter for
163 accuracy.

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165 PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council on this 8th day of May, 2017.

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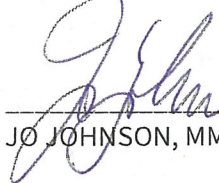
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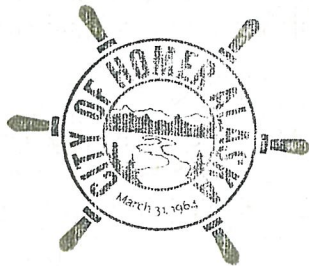
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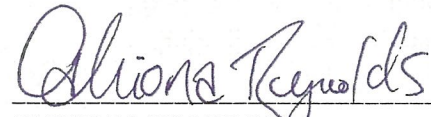
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ATTEST:


JO JOHNSON, MMC, CITY CLERK



CITY OF HOMER


CATRIONA REYNOLDS,
MAYOR PRO-TEMPORE

Fiscal Note: Revenue amounts defined in CY2017 budget.

Water and Sewer Rate Review Proposed Water & Sewer Rate Model and Recommendations

Report of the Water & Sewer Rate Task Force

4/8/2013

Contributing Task Force Members Beauregard Burgess, Ken Castner, Barbara Howard, Terry Yager, Bob Howard, Sharon Minsch, Lloyd Moore, Beth Wythe

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....PAGE 3

CURRENT RATE STRUCTURE.....PAGE 3

FAIR AND EQUITABLE RATES.....PAGE 3

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS.....PAGE 4

DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS.....PAGE 5

OPTIONS FOR DISTRIBUTING COSTS TO CAUSERS.....PAGE5

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE SOLUTIONS.....PAGE 6

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.....PAGE 6

CONCLUSIONS.....PAGE 7

DRAFT WATER RATES.....PAGE A-1

DRAFT SEWER RATES.....PAGE A-2

APPENDICES.....PAGE 8

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES.....PAGE 9

INTRODUCTION:

The Water & Sewer Rate Task Force (the Task Force) was established in accordance with the provisions of Resolution 12-027(A), consisting of five City of Homer residents (Ken Castner, Bob Howard, Sharon Minsch, Lloyd Moore and Terry Yager) and two City Council members (Barbara Howard and Beth Wythe), appointed by Mayor James Hornaday through Memorandum 12-056. Subsequent to the original appointments, community member Terry Yager submitted his resignation from the Task Force and the seat remained unfilled for the duration of the review process. Also, following the October elections, Beth Wythe was authorized to continue on the Task Force through Resolution 12-094 following her election as Mayor. Barbara Howard resigned from the Task Force in November and was replaced by Council Member Beau Burgess through Memorandum 12-161(A). Copies of all Resolutions, Memoranda and information provided by Staff are included in the Appendices to this report; all reference materials accessed or reviewed have been cited as supporting documentation.

The City Council approved the creation of a Task Force after numerous public comments and complaints about the 2012 increase in Water & Sewer Rates and fees.

From the beginning, the Task Force resolved to reach decisions that were not colored by sentiment or popularity. The Task Force began its work of developing a recommendation for the City Council by considering who the benefactors were of the water and sewer systems. In addition to the residential and business customers there are large commercial users such as South Peninsula Hospital and the Port & Harbor. There are also incidental benefits that the system was designed to provide including providing both fire hydrants and sufficient water for buildings that house sprinkler fire suppression equipment. While the City Council will make the final decision regarding any rate changes, the Task Force has included recommendations for allocating the additional expenses related to these specifically identifiable cost centers in an equitable manner.

CURRENT RATE STRUCTURE:

Currently water and sewer rates differentiate between various water usage and sewage returns based on whether they are delivered to or derived from residential customers, or small or large commercial customers. The Task Force believes that a gallon of water or a gallon of waste should be of an equal base cost to all users, and when a class or location of users is found to be more costly, a surcharge should be added.

Public Works states that the size of the City's water system is primarily designed to handle the delivery volume required for the fire protection needs of the City. The current City contribution to the annual water budget does not fully reflect the attributed costs that should be recovered through "hydrant rents".

FAIR AND EQUITABLE RATES:

The Task Force believes the basic service charge for water and sewer customers should accurately reflect the cost of customer billing, banking and accounting expenses. Other system maintenance and treatment expenses should be billed in accordance with the customers' actual usage. There is an inherent fairness in charging all customers hooked into the system(s) the same rate for an indistinct commodity. A gallon of water is the same no matter what its use. A uniform rate lends itself to easy rate adjustments using calculations that are simple and transparent.

The Task Force identified costs associated with the water and sewer system that are derived from the population in general (fire protection, City owned buildings, public rest rooms, fish cleaning stations and support of other community facilities that use water in their day-to-day activities). These costs should be borne by the City as general fund expenses using the same tariff basis as any other user.

Fairness also requires that users that require services beyond the normal, or create additional costs, be charged for those expectations and/or costs. Two examples of the former would be those buildings with un-metered fire protection service lines and multi-unit complexes using a single meter. Two examples of the latter would be the additional cost of treating "hot" (high BOD) sewage and the costs of maintaining and powering the sewer lift stations. In order to address these non-standard users a small surcharge has been recommended.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

The water and sewer system in Homer has some unique characteristics that increase the cost of operations and maintenance. The first is the location of our water source and another is the elevation of many users relative to the sewer treatment plant.

Having water come from the top of the hill may at first appear to be a great asset since many water systems are challenged with pumping water to higher elevation customers. However, reducing the pressure in the delivery system as a result of the gravity fed nature of Homer's system presents its own costly challenges. The construction and maintenance of the pressure reducing valves that are required to safely deliver water into the system and then into the residences and businesses receiving services is a substantial contributor to the cost of Homer's water system over other similarly sized systems across the state.

In addition to these challenges, having a surface source of water increases the volume of treatment required to make the water potable. As a result, Homer has been required to maintain a state-of-the-art water treatment facility for years and has recently built a new treatment facility with the capacity to meet current and anticipated water quality standards for years to come.

The water delivery system has also been sized to provide adequate pressure and flows for a variety of special services including fire sprinkler systems and hydrants. Hydrants benefit all City property owners whether they are connected to the delivery system or not. Therefore the Task Force believes that a portion of the additional system costs related to system size should be shared by property owners independently from the rates charged to water and sewer customers.

There are many service locations on the sewer system that pass through elevations that will not allow for gravity to deliver sewage all the way to the sewer treatment plant. In order to provide service to these areas lift stations are required to pump sewage to a higher elevation in the system so it can continue to the treatment plant by gravity delivery. Just as the pressure reducing valves required on the water system create an additional maintenance expense, these lift stations create an additional maintenance expense for the sewer system. Unlike the pressure reducing stations that benefit all customers, the lift stations only provide benefit to those that are in areas where they are required. For this reason, the Task Force has included a nominal monthly fee to the billing for customers that live in areas served by lift stations.

DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS:

In addition to the above expenses specific to Homer's water delivery and sewer collection systems, other costs of operating the systems which the Task Force determined to be identifiable to specific users included:

High BOD waste; and water required for flushing dead-end lines

A nominal fee is recommended for the purposes of identifying the existence of high BOD waste contributors and to marginally off-set additional expenses related to treatment.

The water loss related to dead-end lines is considered a cost of the system in general and no fee was recommended in association with this impact.

Another potentially disproportionate impact that was identified but not quantifiable was the presence of facilities that have water delivered, but return sewage through the sewer without being billed.

OPTIONS FOR DISTRIBUTING COSTS TO CAUSERS:

The proposed rate model provides a spreadsheet for the calculation of water rates independent of the spreadsheet for calculating sewer rates, although the proposed structure continues the practice of billing sewage based on water usage. The singular exemption to this was in reducing the volume of projected sewage from the Spit due to the large volume of water used at the Port that is not returned as sewage.

When reviewing the proposed water model you will observe first that the model begins with the required revenue in mind. The required revenue is then reduced by a variety of alternative revenue sources including:

- Service fees (finance fees/number of customers)
- Hydrant Rents (10% of required water system revenues)
- Sprinkler Differential (\$5/month/identified user)
- Surplus (Bulk) Water sales (estimated sales X \$0.004)
- Dwelling Fees (\$5/month/business or residence)

This identifies the amount of revenues that need to be collected through the commodity (usage) rates. In the projection provided, consideration is also given for the potential reduction in water use that may result from the commodity based fee schedule (conservation).

Using this model, rate reductions are as easy as updating the "Total Water Revenue Requirements", the "Metered Sales Projections"; the "Number of Meters"; and the "Finance Department O/H" cells. Updating these cells will generate the "Water Rate" which is the commodity fee, and the "Metered Service Fee" which is rounded up to the next highest dollar amount and becomes the monthly base rate for water services.

The use and maintenance of the proposed sewer rates is very similar. Beginning with the projected annual revenue assumption reduced by:

Lift Station Charge (lift station maintenance costs/users);
High BOD fees (\$10/month/identified user);
Multi-residential facility & Kachemak City fees (\$5/month/identified facility);
Kachemak City Fees (less pumping);
Dumping Station Fees; and
Water Only Meters (no septic returned).

Resulting in the total revenue required through rates. Rates are allocated based on historic usage allocated to those meters that are in sewer return areas that require a lift station and those that are not to generate two rates; Non-lift zone customers – sewer rate/gal, and Lift Station Zones – Sewer Rate/gal.

Again, with the adjustment of the key cells, new rate projections become simple.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE SOLUTIONS:

Because the primary complaint regarding the current rate structure has consistently been the perception of unfairly allocating costs, the Task Force was assigned the responsibility of reviewing the current rate model and recommending new rates for the 2013 rates review process. Through reviewing not only the current rate model, but also the components of the water and sewer system and identifying not only the billed users, but also others that benefit from the system, the Task Force believes that the proposed commodity based, uniform rate structure provides the most fair distribution of the expenses for operations and maintenance of the water and sewer system.

In addition to the current rate model that is "class" based, with a large base rate, the Task Force considered rate structures designed to encourage conservation (increasing rates when usage increased); structures that encouraged usage (reduced rates as usage increased); and rates that were fully commodity based (a flat fee per gallon, regardless of base expenses and extraordinary expenses). Ultimately, it was determined that the proposed rate model would best meet the test of "fairness".

By distributing the administrative costs of billing between all customers and then charging the same rate per delivered gallon of water, water users can take control of their bill and no customer is subsidizing the use of another customer. By separating expenses related to making water available for non-standard uses such as fire protection and bulk water sales the model removes subsidies. Customers are merely being charged for the service they are receiving.

Similarly, on the sewer side subsidies are being removed by allocating extraordinary expenses related to lift stations and high BOD waste to the users that benefit from them, and multi-family dwellings are contributing proportionally to the cost of maintaining a larger system to accommodate sewage generated by more than one customer using the same metering system.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

In developing the proposed rate structure, the Task Force accepted the costs that had been promulgated by the City Administration and approved by the City Council.

Eighty percent of the combined budgets are costs necessary for the treatment and delivery of water for the City and its customers, together with the cost of collection and treatment of the produced effluent. The remainder is the allocated cost of administrative service. The decision as to the size and appropriateness of that allocation, and the decision to use City employees to provide those services, rests with the City Council.

The Task Force does not believe that the proposed rate model will resolve all of the complaints regarding fairness in the allocation of the expenses for maintenance and operation of the water and sewer program, but we do feel that the concerns identified and those brought before us through public comment have been appropriately addressed through this model. Additionally, the model provides an ease of administration and future rate setting that if properly applied will help the City continue to adequately fund the program for years to come.

CONCLUSIONS:

In conclusion the Task Force is pleased to provide the City Council with the following recommendations with the anticipation of improved rate stability in the water and sewer program.

- Replacing the current rate model with the proposed commodity based model found on page A-1 - A-4.
- Continue to periodically review the allocation of administrative and other overhead expenses to ensure they properly reflect the actual expenses being charged to Water & Sewer.
- Clearly delineate water and sewer rates, by location, in future budget documents (i.e., revenue from City facilities and related expense lines in Port & Harbor, Water & Sewer, and other administrative budgets.)
- Confirm that ALL City of Homer facilities receiving water and sewer services are being properly metered and billed.
- Consider alternatives for refreshing the water in dead-end lines that does not result in the waste of large volumes of treated water.
- Renew the contract with Kachemak City and ensure that the rates adequately reflect the cost of this area on the system as a whole, including any added administrative expenses.
- Conduct rate-setting in a manner that will not allow political influences to result in the under collection of rates in the future.
- Establish a periodic meter inspection program to ensure that all meters are properly installed and reading.
- Customer/Tenant Fees as applied within the proposed rate model for Water and Sewer are defined as apartments, rental units, or multi-unit buildings where each unit has one or more restrooms. This fee applies to all units whether commercial or residential that is intended to be rented on a monthly basis or longer, excluding public or shared restroom facilities.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Creation of the Task Force

- Resolution 12-027(A), Establishing a Water & Sewer Rate Task Force
- Resolution 12-094, Amending Resolution 12-027(A), The Composition of the Water and Sewer Rate Task Force to Allow Mayor Wythe to Continue to Serve
- Memorandum 12-161, Appointing of Councilmember Burgess to the Water & Sewer Rate Task Force

Appendix B – City of Homer Water & Sewer Rates

- Resolution 11-094(S), Maintaining the City of Homer Fee Schedule at the Current Rates and Amending Customer Classifications in the Water & Sewer Rate Schedules
- Ordinance 11-43, Amending HCC 14.08.037, Water Meters Regarding Number of Meters Per Lot
- Resolution 11-062(A) Maintaining the City of Homer Fee Schedule Under Water and Sewer Fees.

Appendix C - Budgets

- 2012 Operating Budget Water & Sewer
- City of Homer 2012 Operating Budget Fund 200 – Water & Sewer Special Revenue Fund
- Fund 400 - Water Fund Administration, Fund 400 Water & Fund 500 Sewer Fund Revenues
- City of Homer Year End 2011 Utility Special Revenue Fund 2011 Balance Sheet
- Year to Date figures Water & Sewer June 2012
- Year to Date figures Water & Sewer August 2012

Appendix D – Classifications & Sample Invoices

- Classifications & Average Monthly Usage for 2011
- Actual Random Sample Invoices depicting various gallonage used for comparison

Appendix E – Fire Protection, Flushing, Water Treatment Plant, Depreciation, Meter Sizes, Maps

- How Fire Protection Affects the Water System – Public Works
- Flushing Fire Hydrants & Water Mains- Public Works
- Water Treatment Plant Flows in Millions of Gallons – Public Works
- Depreciation Reserves Requirements and 2012 Depreciation Reserves – Water & Sewer – Finance Dept
- Maps Indicating Lift Station Locations and Areas Served – Public Works
- Number of Gallons of Water delivered to the Spit Annually – Public Works
- Staff Response to Questions regarding Staff time to produce Invoice – Finance Dept.
- Staff response to Questions regarding How Budget Numbers are calculated – Finance Dept.
- Staff Response to Number of Meeting Sizes - Meter Sizes & Number of Each Size – Public Works
- Staff Response to Question regarding Gallonage Used in the Harbor – Public Works

Appendix F – Spit Surcharges

- Resolution 04-94(S) (A), Amending Homer Fee Schedule Regarding Water Rates
- Resolution 04-95, Amending Homer Fee Schedule Regarding Sewer Rates
- Excerpt from City Council Minutes, 2004, regarding Resolution 04-94(S) & Resolution 04-95
- Resolution 05-121(A), Amending the City of Homer Fee Schedule Regarding Water Rates
- Resolution 05-122, Amending the City of Homer Fee Schedule Regarding Sewer Rates
- Staff Response Analysis on Proposed Spit Surcharge – Public Works

Appendix G – Public Written Comments

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Rate Setting for Small Water Systems, Texas Cooperative Extension Service, Texas A & M University System
Excerpt from Basic Guide to Water Rates, www.lwua.gov.ph/water_rates_08/rates_two.html
Chart Table 2-1 Annual Funds Required – Unknown Source
Anchorage Water & Sewer Rates 2012 www.awwu.biz/website/Service/water_tariff13-2.htm
Intergovernmental Agreement for Kachemak /Homer Wastewater System between Kachemak City and City of Homer, dated August 10, 1988
KPMG Peat Marwick, Water and Wastewater Utilities Rate Study, February 11, 1991
Montgomery Watson, Utility Rate Study, August 11, 1997
City of Homer 2000 Rate Model Matrix – Water & Sewer 2008 Rates Analysis Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund
City of Kenai Water & Sewer Rate Study Prepared by Kurt Playstead, CH2M HILL, February 7, 2011
M54: Developing Rates for Small Systems, the American Water Works Association, Copyright 2004
City of Soldotna Water & Sewer Rate Study Prepared by HDR Engineering (No date)

Lift Station Parcels 2017

▲ Lift Station

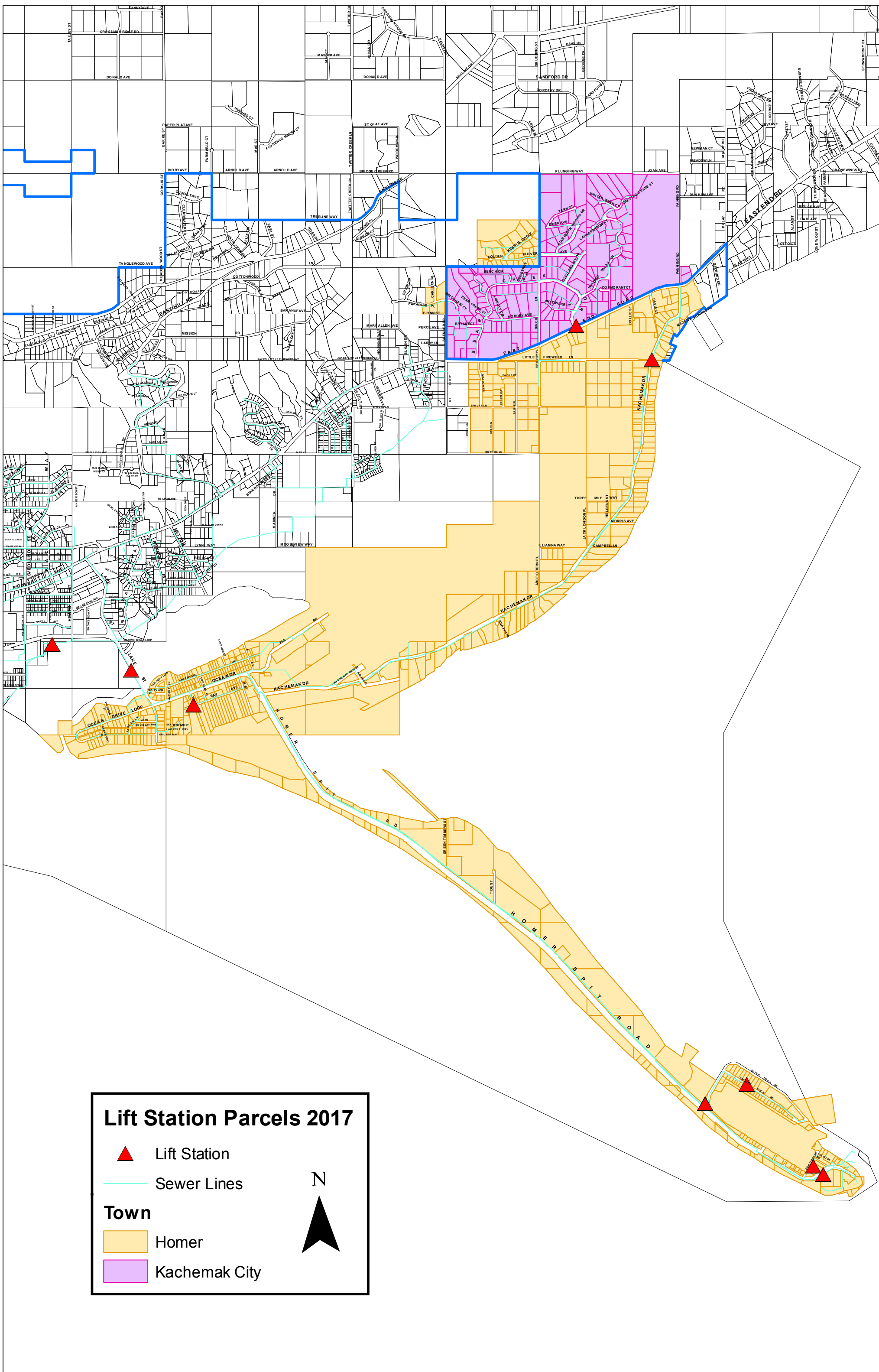
— Sewer Lines

Town

■ Homer

■ Kachemak City

N



Revenues & Expenses - Utility Fund

	FY 17 Budget	FY 17 Actual ¹	FY 18 Budget
Water			
Meter Sales	1,839,784	1,846,233	1,900,570
Other Revenue	49,887	52,736	45,169
Hydrant Transfer	180,956	180,956	92,222
Water Fund - Total Revenue	2,070,627	2,079,925	2,037,962
Salaries, Wages & Benefits ²	899,186	958,165	904,776
Maintenance & Operations ³	907,315	913,333	961,605
Transfers to:			
Reserves	246,259	246,259	153,714
Other	17,867	17,867	17,867
Water Fund - Total Expenses	2,070,627	2,135,624	2,037,962
Revenues over Expenses	0	(55,699)	-
Sewer			
Meter Sales	1,727,214	1,714,745	1,754,415
Other Revenue	14,683	36,814	43,266
Sewer Fund - Total Revenue	1,741,897	1,751,559	1,797,681
Salaries, Wages & Benefits ²	740,415	717,773	741,884
Maintenance & Operations ³	665,641	695,636	703,599
Transfers to:			
Reserves	310,309	310,309	326,667
Other	25,531	25,531	25,531
Sewer Fund - Total Expenses	1,741,897	1,749,249	1,797,681
Revenues over Expenses	1	2,310	0
Utility Fund Total	1	(53,389)	0

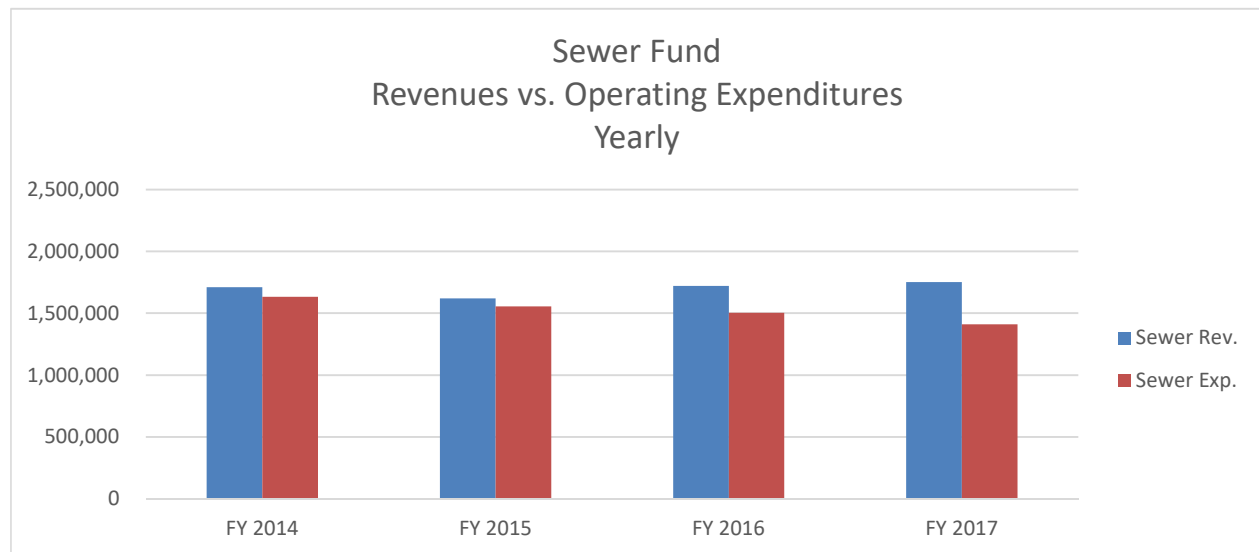
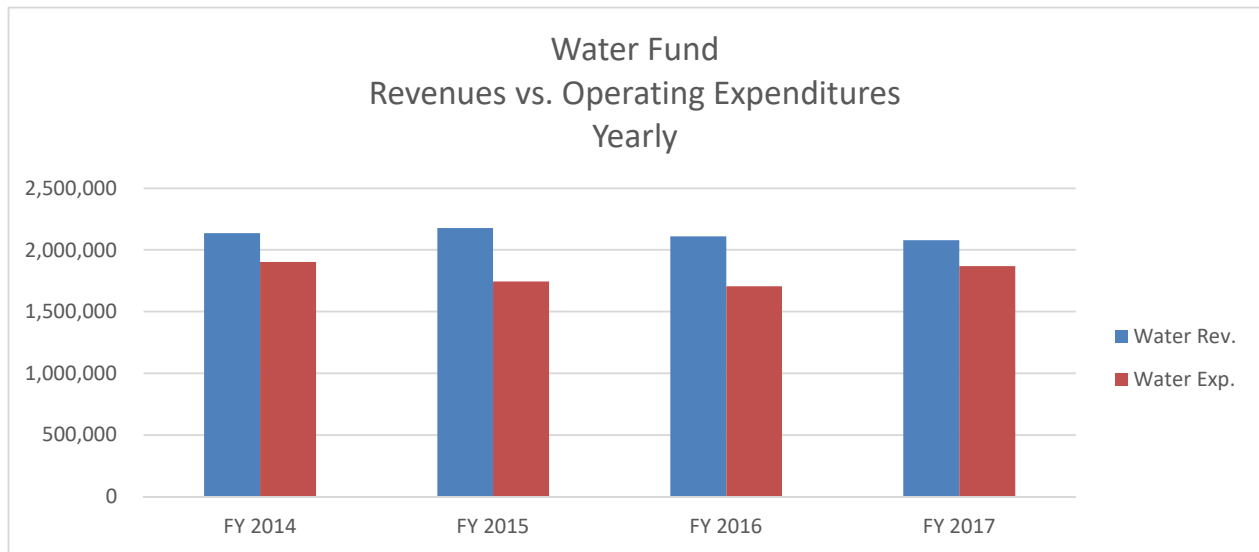
¹ Unaudited (Independent Audit will be finalized at the end of July, 2018)

² Includes leave cash out

³ Includes GF admin fees (overhead costs)

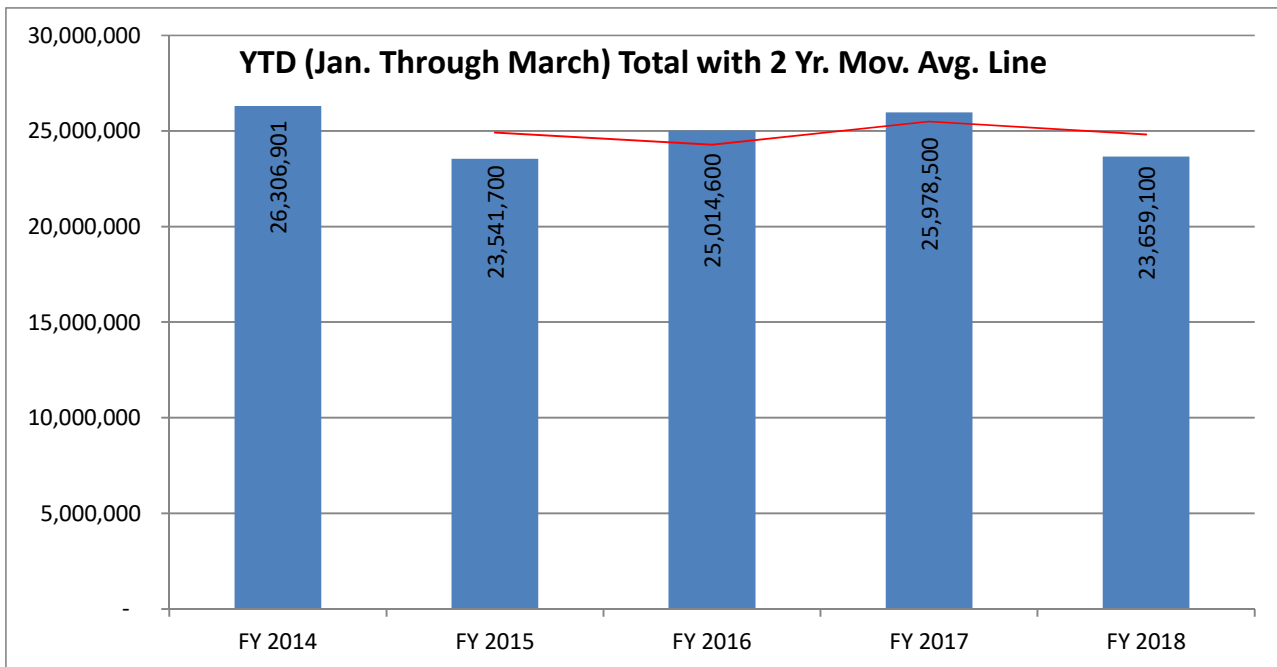
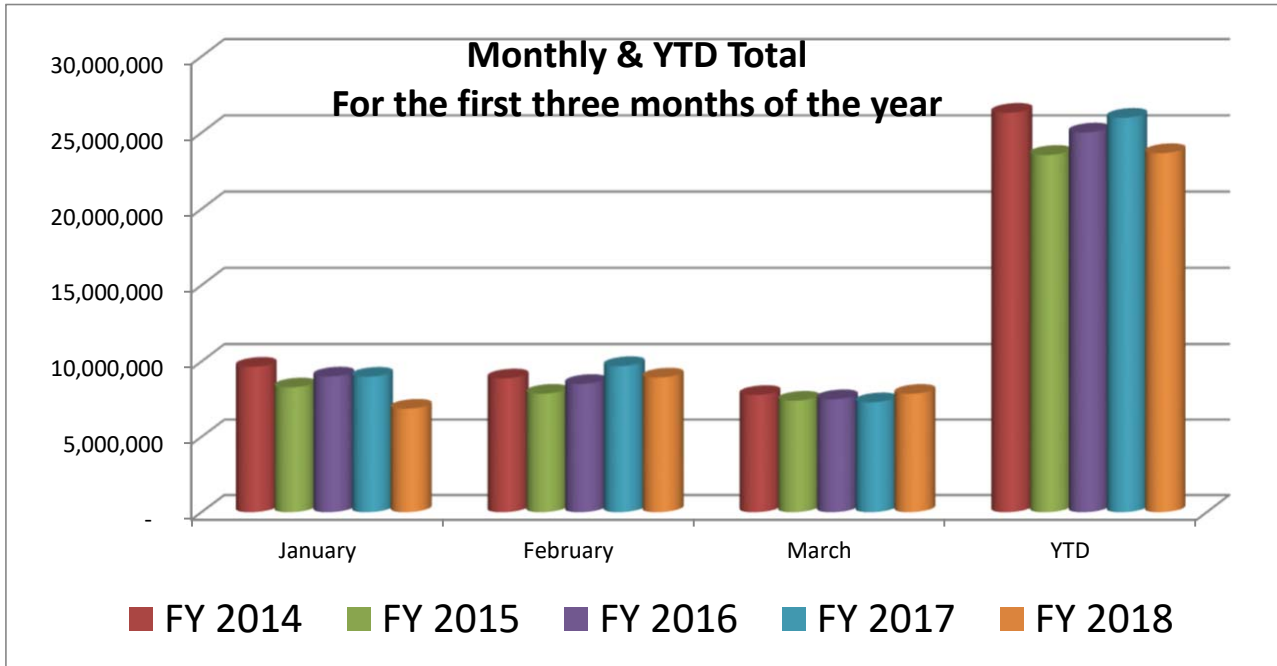
Yearly Comparison: Revenues vs. Expenditures (Unaudited)

	<u>FY 2014</u>	<u>FY 2015</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>
Water Fund Revenues	2,135,861	2,178,018	2,108,835	2,079,925
Water Fund Expenditures (excluding transfer to reserves)	1,901,902	1,744,744	1,704,623	1,868,341
Water: Revenues over (Under) Expenditures	233,958	433,273	404,212	211,584
Sewer Fund Revenues	1,709,323	1,618,595	1,719,555	1,751,559
Sewer Fund Expenditures (excluding transfer to reserves)	1,633,833	1,555,044	1,503,397	1,410,314
Sewer: Revenues over (Under) Expenditures	75,490	63,550	216,158	341,245
Water & Sewer: Total Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	309,448	496,824	620,370	552,829



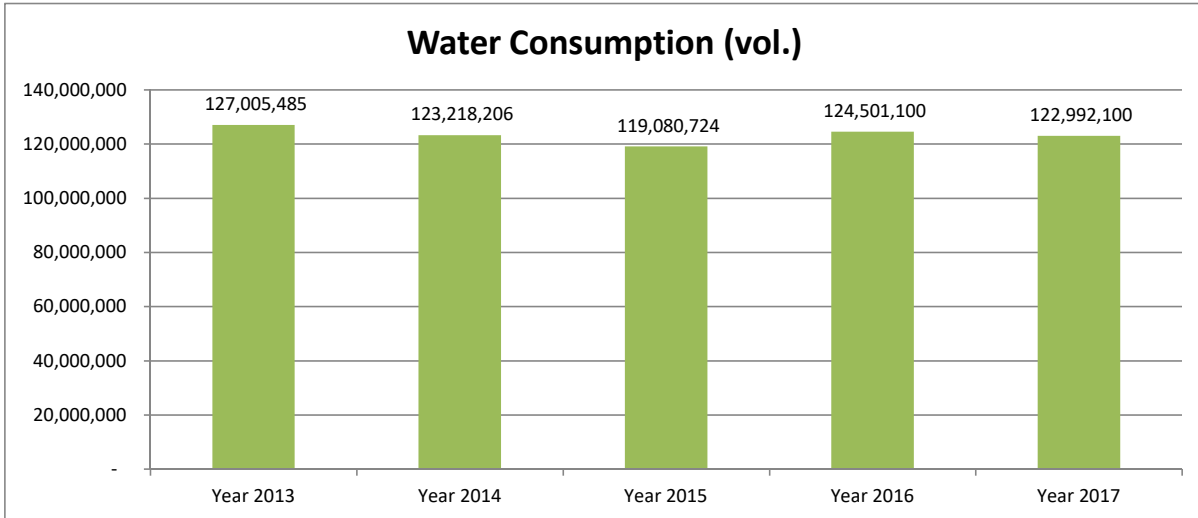
Water Consumption (Gallons)

<u>Yr.\Mo.</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>YTD</u>
FY 2014	9,648,900	8,878,200	7,779,801	26,306,901
FY 2015	8,280,300	7,862,200	7,399,200	23,541,700
FY 2016	9,005,200	8,511,100	7,498,300	25,014,600
FY 2017	8,991,000	9,692,600	7,294,900	25,978,500
FY 2018	6,868,000	8,937,000	7,854,100	23,659,100

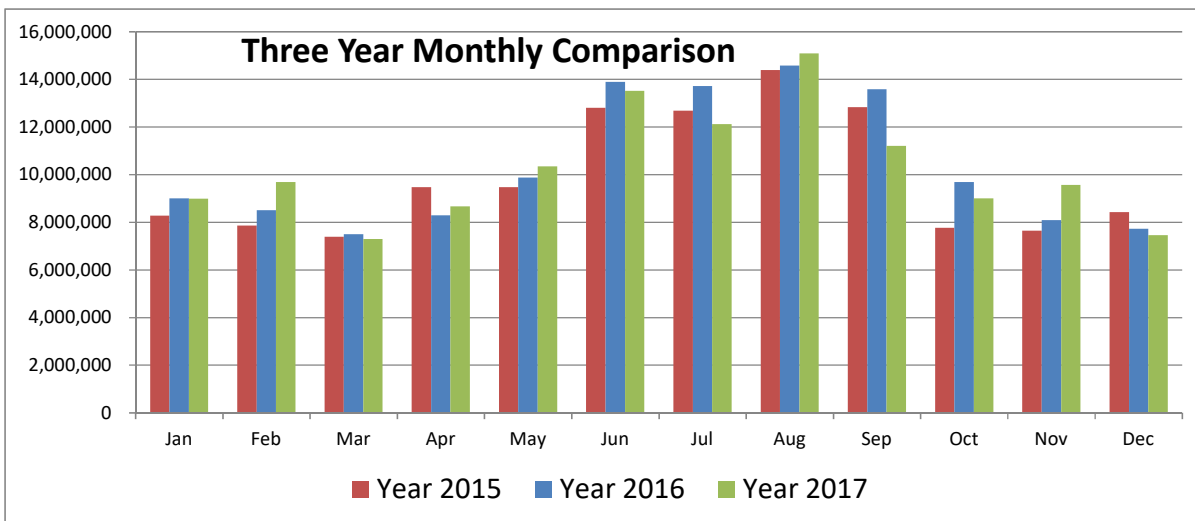


Water Consumption

By Year	<u>Year 2013</u>	<u>Year 2014</u>	<u>Year 2015</u>	<u>Year 2016</u>	<u>Year 2017</u>
Water (vol.)	127,045,485	125,926,274	132,291,300	131,119,200	130,252,600
Operational Adj.	(40,000)	(2,708,068)	(13,210,576)	(6,618,100)	(7,260,500)
Water (vol.) after adj.	127,005,485	123,218,206	119,080,724	124,501,100	122,992,100



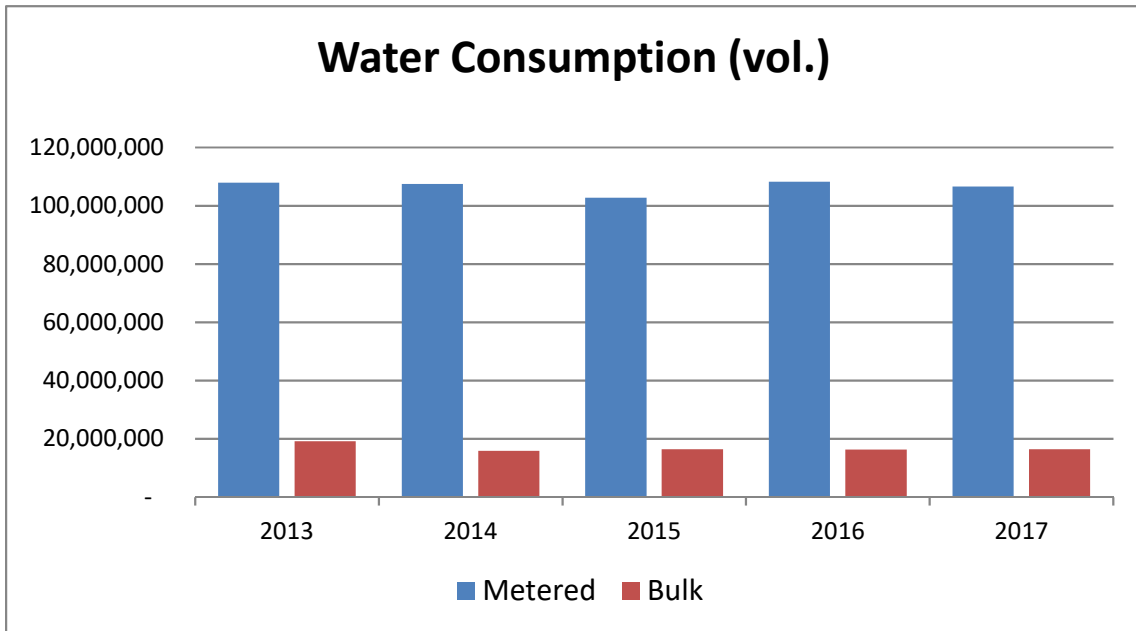
<u>Month\Year</u>	<u>Year 2015</u>	<u>Year 2016</u>	<u>Year 2017</u>
Jan	8,280,300	9,005,200	8,991,000
Feb	7,862,200	8,511,100	9,692,600
Mar	7,399,200	7,498,300	7,294,900
Apr	9,471,700	8,293,400	8,675,000
May	9,481,952	9,876,500	10,350,500
Jun	12,815,584	13,904,500	13,528,300
Jul	12,686,496	13,719,400	12,119,600
Aug	14,402,524	14,581,400	15,091,400
Sep	12,833,256	13,589,000	11,213,400
Oct	7,773,632	9,693,400	9,010,900
Nov	7,649,316	8,097,300	9,569,500
Dec	8,424,564	7,731,600	7,455,000
	<u>119,080,724</u>	<u>124,501,100</u>	<u>122,992,100</u>
	-3.4%	4.6%	-1.2%



	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Metered	107,875,885	107,403,206	102,688,524	108,248,600	106,566,800
Bulk	19,129,600	15,815,000	16,392,200	16,252,500	16,425,300
Total Consumption*	127,005,485	123,218,206	119,080,724	124,501,100	122,992,100

Bulk as % of Total Volume 15.06% 12.83% 13.77% 13.05% 13.35%

*Includes Operational Adjustment





City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Planning

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

Planning@ci.homer.ak.us

(p) 907-235-3106

(f) 907-235-3118

Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council
THROUGH: Katie Koester, City Manager
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner
DATE: April 18, 2018
SUBJECT: Bridge Creek Watershed Preservation Plan

Attached is a map of the Bridge Creek watershed.

- Yellow lots are protected in some fashion – city/govt/nonprofit ownership, or pending conservation easement.
- Lavender lots have either creek or wetlands within the property, but also have an improvement like a house. These lots would likely not be candidates for city purchase due to their high cost, but could be opportunities for future conservation easements.
- Blue lots also have wetlands/creek, but very low value if any improvements – basically raw land. They could be city purchases, cost shares, or conservation easements.

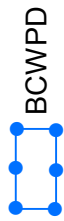
Wetlands and drainages provide filtration and other contributions to water quality. Lots with either creek or wetlands are a priority for protection, regardless of where they are in the watershed; properties without water are not a priority.

The purple lots have a total assessed value of \$7.3 million. The blue lots are assessed at \$3.3 million.




There are 3 ways the city can preserve land, beyond zoning:

1. Land purchase
2. Conservation easements
3. Cost sharing with other entities to purchase land. For example, perhaps the Center for AK Coastal studies could purchase additional lands near Wynn, if the City paid half.





Legend

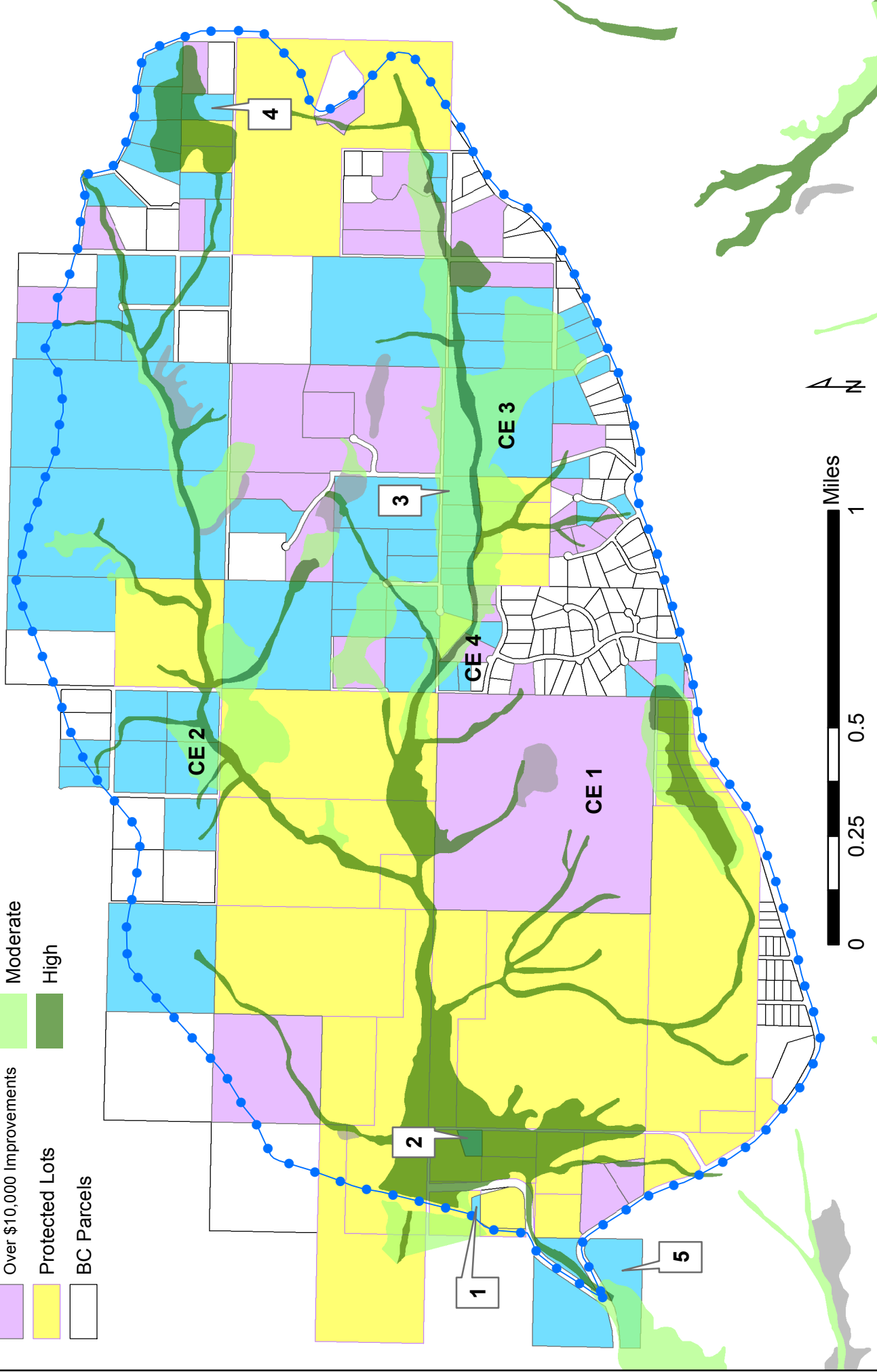


Wetlands

Wetlands	RANK
	Low
	Moderate
	High

Unprotected wet lots

	Under \$10,000 Improvements
	Over \$10,000 Improvements
	Protected Lots
	BC Parcels



Your Award Winning Water

2016
Best Tasting Water
in Alaska

2017
Wastewater Operator
of the Year

2017
Source Water System
of the Year



This report contains information about your drinking water:

where it comes from, results from quality testing in 2017 and how you can help protect your water supply.

We are committed to providing you with a clean and dependable supply of drinking water.

We are proud to report that the water delivered to our customers meets or exceeds all federal and state standards.

The City of Homer's drinking water clean and safe. It's also Alaska's best tasting water!

Awarded in 2016 by the Alaska Rural Water Association, its clarity, taste and aroma topped the competition.



What Makes Our Water Taste So Good?

It starts with working proactively to protect our water source—the 37-acre Bridge Creek Reservoir and its watershed—from pollution.

The soils and native vegetation surrounding Bridge Creek absorb and filter rainfall and snowmelt on their way to the reservoir. However, the land's capacity to absorb and filter water is reduced when land is cleared and compacted for development.

To protect against increased sedimentation and pollution that could deteriorate the quality of our only drinking water source, the area was designated a Watershed Protection District. Land use activities are governed by specific provisions that benefit the health, safety, and welfare of City residents (and other customers of the City's water system).

The City's commitment to protecting our watershed earned the **Source Water System of the Year** award from the Alaska Rural Water Association, naming Homer a model for other communities sourcing their drinking water from surface water.

We follow that up with cutting-edge treatment techniques at our water treatment plant and with diligent maintenance of three water storage tanks, 53.5 miles of distribution pipes and 413 fire hydrants to make sure water gets to customers safely and efficiently for both general use and fire emergencies.

You Can Help Protect Water Quality Too!

When recreating at the reservoir, remember it is our only source for drinking water. Help protect it!

- Motorized boats are not allowed in the reservoir;
- Pick up your pet's poop;
- No camping, campfires or shooting, please.

Even when you are further away from the reservoir, your actions can impact our water resources. Many everyday products contain hazardous substances that, when they get into the environment, can endanger both our drinking water and the waters of Kachemak Bay. Stormwater can pick up these substances and be a source of pollution.

Ultimately, a treatment plant can't solve stormwater pollution, nor is our reservoir or the ocean big enough to dilute the problem. So what can we do?

Luckily, since runoff comes from small, individual sources in all parts of the watershed, it is a problem that residents can help prevent with small, individual actions.

- Dispose of hazardous wastes at the Solid Waste Transfer Station rather than dumping them outside or down storm drains. Learn more at <http://www.kpb.us/swd-waste/about-solidwaste>.
- Eliminate or cut down on pesticides and herbicides; use organic fertilizers.
- Rather than flushing unused medications down the toilet, dispose of them (anonymously and for free) in the drug drop box in the Homer Police Station's lobby.

City of Homer Drinking Water Monitoring Results

The City of Homer routinely monitors your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The table below shows the results of our monitoring from January 1st to December 31st, 2017, unless otherwise noted. The state requires monitoring for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year.

Test results indicate excellent water quality that meets and exceeds all Federal and State requirements.

2017 Water Quality Test Results						
Contaminant	Sample Date	Violation Yes/No	Level Detected	Unit of Measure	MCL	MCLG
Volatile Organic Contaminants (Locational Running Annual Average)						
Total Trihalomethanes	2017	No	64.7 LRAA BW 59.3 LRAA Spit Range: 37.6 - 83	ug/L	80	N/A
Total Haloacetic Acids	2017	No	31.7 LRAA BW 37.2 LRAA Spit Range: 15.1 - 53	ug/L	60	N/A
Radioactive Contaminants						
Gross Beta	2013	No	2.4	pCi/L	50	0
Radium 226/228	2013	No	0.043		5	
Gross Alpha	2013	No	0.85		15	
Microbiological Contaminants						
Turbidity	1/30/2017	No	0.25	NTU	0.3	N/A
Inorganic Contaminants						
Barium	2011	No	26.5	ug/L	2000	2000
Chromium	2011	No	0.453	ug/L	100	100
Total Thallium	2011	No	0.0839	ug/L	2	0.5
Nitrate	2016	No	0.159	mg/L	10	10
Arsenic	2012	No	0.221	ug/L	10	0
Lead*	2017	No	0.0077	mg/L	.015	0
Copper*	2017	No	0.16	mg/L	1.3	1.3
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring						
Manganese	10/21/15	No	36	ug/L	N/A	N/A
Strontium	10/21/15	No	38	ug/L	N/A	N/A
Chlorate	10/21/15	No	79	ug/L	N/A	N/A

Definitions:

MCL

Maximum Contaminant Level: the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

MCLG

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal: the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected health risk. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

LRAA

Locational Running Annual Average: the average and range of sample analytical results from Best Western (BW) and Spit locations during the previous four calendar quarters.

N/A

Not applicable.

AL

Action Level: the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

TT

Treatment Technique: a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water. For example, we are required to use filtration technology to remove turbidity from our water.

Turbidity

Suspended material or cloudiness measured in NTUs.

NTU

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit: Units of turbidity indicated by an instrument that measures refracted light through a water sample.

Units of Measure:

Ppm or mg/L

Parts per million or milligrams per liter: parts per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

pCi/L

Radioactive measurement: 1 trillionth of a Curie.

*Violation determination is based on the 90th percentile. Results of 20 samples ranged from non-detected to 0.00373 ppm of lead and 0.0143 to 0.157 ppm of copper.

Ppb or ug/L

Parts per billion or micrograms per liter: parts per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

Substances that may be found in your drinking water

The sources of any drinking water—tap and bottled water alike—include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. While the City of Homer has taken steps to protect the land in the Bridge Creek Reservoir's watershed, as water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and in some cases, radioactive material. It can also pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. **Contaminants that may be present in source water include:**

Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metal, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses.

Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally-occurring or by the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

To protect public health, water treatment plants reduce these contaminants to safe levels established by regulation. However, drinking water (including bottled water) may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk.

Special Information for Vulnerable Populations

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons with organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections.

These people should seek advice from their health care providers. Guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available by calling the EPA/CDC Safe Drinking Water Hotline: **800-426-4791.**



To deliver the highest water quality possible, the Public Works Department flushes the water system annually between April & September.

Flushing the water main is a routine operation done to clean and maintain our water system. During this activity, water is forced through underground water mains at high speed and flushed out of fire hydrants to remove accumulated sediment.

This flushing is done until the water coming through the main runs clear. At times you may experience low water pressure. If your water becomes cloudy or discolored, flush your water until color returns to normal. If you have questions, call Public Works for assistance: 235-3170.

We would also like our customers to know that we are currently in the process of upgrading all the water meters within the system. The change out will be phased in over the next 4 years, with an expected completion date in 2021.

The new Orion ME Water meters have some unique advantages over our past models. They can hold 6 months of readings, allowing you and the Meter Tech to more easily figure out water issues.

The new metering system will be able show water usage down to the minute, for up to 6 months. If you have a leak, it can show when it started, how long it leaked and how much water was used. It will also show when the water leak was shut off, and a total amount of usage during specific time periods.

