



City of Homer

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Memorandum 21-091

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
DATE: May 28, 2021
SUBJECT: Update to HCC Chapter 7.20 Snowmachines to Include All-Purpose Vehicles

In March 2021 the Dunleavy Administration proposed a statewide rule change which would allow snowmachines and all-purpose vehicles to be operated on roads with speed limits of 45 miles per hour or less (<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/Attachment.aspx?id=127160>). All-purpose vehicles are broadly defined to include many types of off-road vehicles. Under current state regulations these vehicles may cross streets but not travel along them. This restriction is mirrored in Homer City Code (HCC) Chapter 7.20 which was written to regulate snowmachine usage in the City.

While the ultimate fate of the Dunleavy Administration's proposal is unknown, it is clear to staff that this proposal is not compatible with Homer's roads or traffic patterns. Even if the State makes a change which allows snowmachines and other all-purpose vehicles to travel on roads, cities are able to restrict or prohibit that use within their borders.

When news of the regulation became public, Councilmember Aderhold reached out to administration to discuss our options. I had further discussions with Chief Robl and the three of us collaborated on some potential modifications to HCC Chapter 7.20. Ordinance 21-0xx is a result of that collaboration.

The solution presented for introduction in Ordinance 21-33 expands HCC Chapter 7.20 to include all-purpose vehicles. This regulation is intended to cover vehicles such as ATVs, dirt bikes, quads, UTVs, side-by-sides, etc. It is not targeted at pedal-powered all-terrain capable fat bikes or mountain bikes which provide an electronic assist to cyclists (E-Bikes). The proposed amendment exempts snowmachines and all-purpose vehicles used for official government business from the regulations set within HCC Chapter 7.02.

Staff Recommendation: Introduce Ordinance 21-33 on June 14th and adopt on June 28th.