



## City of Homer

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

## Volunteer Fire Department

604 East Pioneer Ave  
Homer, Alaska 99603

[fire@cityofhomer-ak.gov](mailto:fire@cityofhomer-ak.gov)

(p) 907-235-3155

(f) 907-235-3157

### Memorandum 22-074

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council  
THROUGH: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager  
FROM: Mark Kirko, Fire Chief  
DATE: April 20, 2022  
SUBJECT: Homer Volunteer Fire Department Fleet Future Outlook

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The Volunteer Fire Department's fleet is aging and many of the apparatus are long overdue for replacement. This causes concern for operational ability and the safety of our first responders and the public. The condition of the fleet also puts the City's ISO rating<sup>1</sup> at risk. An unfavorable change in the ISO rating could increase insurance premiums for home and business owners throughout the City. Gaining Council approval to replace tanker-2 this year is a great start to solving this larger problem.

With the current state of the national economy, and supply chain problems, the cost of apparatus is increasing and deliveries are twice as long as they were just 2 years ago. Currently, it takes between 22-25 months to receive a pumper/tanker. Longer waits are expected for a ladder truck. Manufacturer representatives are projecting that the delivery time will increase by another 6 months next year.

When I arrived in Homer, I conducted an NFPA<sup>2</sup> community fire assessment that helps guide the community in risk mitigation and management and to develop pre-incident response plans to fire related emergencies. Part of that planning includes assessing fleet requirements to manage and respond to fire risk in the community. Four of the five pumping apparatus are more than 30 years old. The fire fleet is in a critical state, and these apparatus are a high priority for replacement. Additionally, two of our ambulances are over 15 years old and overdue for replacement.

Our utility vehicles see the most use and have more hours and miles than the rest of the fleet. These vehicles are vital to the operation and used to transport volunteers to emergency incidents after the primary emergency vehicles have left the station. They are also used to

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<sup>1</sup> An ISO fire rating is a score provided to fire departments and insurance companies by the Insurance Services Office. The score reflects how prepared a community and area is for fires.

<sup>2</sup> National Fire Protection Association

provide a means of transportation to training events all over the peninsula and even the Anchorage area.

Fleet needs change over time, and as a result of the community fire assessment, I'm suggesting that we do not replace fleet items that are not meeting the response needs of today which are driven by community growth in residential, commercial, and industrial areas of Homer. The purposes served by those vehicles will either be folded into a new type or vehicle or met in a different way, like use of a trailer.

Examples:

- We no longer have a need for a Heavy Rescue and can do all of our rescue needs with a light rescue and a cargo trailer
- We no longer need the all-terrain Polaris UTV (sold last year in surplus sale)
- To better serve the remote residents on the hillside we need to add a Quick attack pumper that is much smaller in size then our current ones. This type of vehicle will be the only one able to access certain areas of Homer during the spring as our larger vehicles cannot negotiate the spring breakup road conditions. This vehicle can also be used as a backup brush unit.
- Homer's commercial and industrial areas have grown considerably, so a ladder truck is a high priority for the future. It will also be very helpful in response to some of the larger residential apartments and homes in Homer.
- One additional command unit is also needed. It is imperative that all of the chief officers are able to respond direct to calls and provide vital information to incoming personnel. We, much like police officers that have take-home vehicles, need to be able to quickly respond directly to emergencies to mitigate threats and provide life saving measures. It is not uncommon for chief officers to respond directly to incidents from their homes in the middle of the night.

Knowing that we are already behind the required replacement dates for most of the City's fire apparatus, below is an example accelerated replacement timeline.

<b>Unit Name</b>	<b>Order Date</b>	<b>Expected Delivery</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
<i>Tanker-2</i>	June 2022	May 2024	\$720,000
<i>Brush-1</i>	August 2022	May 2023	\$185,000
<i>Command Truck</i>	August 2022	April 2023	\$90,000
<i>Engine-4</i>	January 2023	January 2025	\$785,000
<i>Medic-1</i>	January 2023	May 2025	\$230,000
<i>Utility-2</i>	January 2023	August 2023	\$75,000
<i>Light Rescue-1</i>	January 2024	May 2025	\$375,000
<i>Utility-1</i>	January 2024	September 2024	\$80,000
<i>Engine-3</i>	July 2024	January 2026	\$540,000
<i>Cargo Trailer</i>	May 2025	June 2025	\$60,000
<i>Ladder-1</i>	July 2025	July 2027	\$1,600,000
<i>Medic-2</i>	July 2026	December 2027	\$240,000
<b>4-year Total</b>			<b>\$4,701,000</b>

Below I have listed the fire department vehicles and expected surplus dates and a best guess at what they may bring in for revenue. Emergency response vehicles have a higher standard

for performance and dependability than many other types of vehicle within the City's fleet. While a vehicle may quickly age out of the fire fleet, many types of vehicle could easily find a second life within the Public Works fleet if we found it was economical to retain these vehicles as opposed to selling them as surplus when replaced.

#### Fleet Surplus:

- Tanker-2, surplus in 2024, Estimate sale price \$5-10,000 or donate it to another fire department
- Rescue-1, surplus in 2025, Estimated sale price: \$15-20,000
- Engine-4, surplus in 2025, Estimated sale price: \$3-7,000
- Squad-3, surplus in 2024, Estimated sale price: \$6-8,000
- Brush-1, surplus in 2023, Estimated sale price: \$6-9,000
- Utility-1, surplus in 2024, Estimated sale price: \$2-5,000
- Medic-1, surplus in 2025, Estimated sale price: \$2-4,000
- Utility-2, surplus in 2023, Estimated sale price: \$2-3,000

Total projected income from surplus fleet: \$59,000.00

The Volunteer Fire Department will be working with the City Manager's office to continue developing the fleet plan and figure out the best way to integrate it into the capital budget process for FY24/25 and beyond. The Department is also actively working with Jenny Carroll in the Manager's office to submit grant applications to support future apparatus purchases. In recent years it has been extremely difficult to win grants for fire apparatus, but we may have a better-than-average opportunity in the next few years as additional federal funds flow to various existing grant programs.