



MEMORANDUM

City Council Projects and Initiatives

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Homer City Council
Date: April 9, 2025
From: Rachel Lord, Mayor
cc: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

Over the last several years, the City Council has identified a wide range of projects, initiatives, and policy updates. Some originated as far back as 2022 and continue to evolve, while others are newer efforts that will shape Homer's future. After bringing back the list of strategic priorities from our January worksession, I received some feedback that the list was incomplete, and future discussions truly needed to include the large ongoing projects that the Council has fully committed to. That made me reflect back to the 2022 strategic planning session and try to ensure as complete of a list as possible for the Council's considerations.

Council plays a critical role in establishing clear priorities and expectations for the City Manager to execute with staff. This guidance is essential to ensure that City efforts align with the community's values and needs. At the same time, it's important that we recognize the City's finite capacity—in both time and resources. By working collaboratively to identify which initiatives are most urgent, where sustained attention is needed, and where flexibility exists, the Council can help the City Manager and staff focus their efforts for the greatest impact.

Councilmember Aderhold reminded me of the "Strategic Doing" sessions started by Mayor Beth Wythe. In looking back at those memos and agendas, I believe we should engage in a similar effort to ensure alignment and strong communication. Strategic prioritization, tracking, and communication is not just a matter of efficiency; it's a commitment to good governance and responsible stewardship of public resources.

To strengthen prioritization, communication, and accountability, I recommend establishing **regular worksessions with the City Manager**. These sessions will allow for structured updates, progress tracking, and timely conversations about prioritization, resource allocation, definitions, metrics and benchmarks of success, and Council direction on a **Priority Work Plan** for the year.

In 2015, these ‘Strategic Doing’ sessions were set up as worksessions for the first meeting every other month, beginning in January. **For the remainder of 2025, I would like to ask that we hold these sessions during the second meeting of the month in April, June, August, October.**

Next Steps

At the next Council meeting, I propose we hold our first **Priority Work Plan worksession**, during which we:

- **Compile rankings** from all Council members and the City Manager for each project. Please take time beforehand to rate each on a scale of 1-10 according to level of difficulty and level of impact.
 - Difficulty rated on a scale of 1-10, 1 predicting relative ease in accomplishment, and 10 predicting extreme difficulty in accomplishment.
 - Impact rated on a scale of 1-10, 1 predicting a relatively low impact in accomplishment, and 10 predicting an extremely high impact in accomplishment.
- Identify a short list of projects for **in-depth focus**
- Begin developing **milestones and timelines** for Council-priority projects
- Request staff to provide **status updates** and highlight key decision points

Questions for Council to Consider:

1. Which three to five projects are you most interested in prioritizing for 2025?
2. Are there projects where additional background or a refresher would be helpful?
3. What does success look like for these projects—and what milestones or deliverables should we track?
4. Are there projects you feel can be paused, delegated, or re-evaluated in light of other demands?
5. Would the Council like to see a simple project tracker or dashboard to monitor status between worksessions?

Backup Included:

- Rankings of Council Projects spreadsheet - printed that can be handwritten & returned to the Clerk’s office (you will also get an emailed .xls that can be filled out and emailed back to the

Clerk's office if you prefer electronic!) (**action**)

- Grants Tracker spreadsheet (informational, from Jenny)
- 2025 Worksession Schedule (informational)

Project / Initiative	Difficulty (1–10)	Impact (1–10)	What Would Success Look Like?	Notes/Questions
	1 = relatively easy / 10 = extremely difficult	1 = relatively low impact / 10 = extremely high impact	If we accomplished this project/initiative, what would ultimate success look like to you?	
FY 26/27 Budget				
Comprehensive Plan				
Title 21 Rewrite				
Harbor General Investigation (GI)				
Harbor Expansion Local Services Plan				
Spit Erosion				
Traffic Calming / Street Design				
Election Code Updates				
Procurement Policy Review				
Lease Policies & Procedures				
Public-Private Partnerships				
Expanding Transportation Options				
Financial Policy Development				
HART Policy Manual Update				
Asset & Reserve Management				

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Homer Volunteer Fire Dept. Operations				
Volunteerism at the City				
Cemetery Management				
Rec Center Development				
Town Center Planning & History Review				
New Public Works Facility				
New HVFD Facility				
Sister City – New Fund & Program				
City Employee Morale Survey				
HERC Demolition (2022)				
Stormwater Management Plan (2022)				
Climate Action Plan Update (2022)				
Building Safety & Code Enforcement (2022)				
Strengthening Cybersecurity Program (2022)				
Emergency Preparedness Planning & Training (2022)				

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Public Safety Citizens' Advisory Board (2022)				