



MEMORANDUM

Ordinance 25-49, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending the FY26 Capital Budget by Appropriating \$52,500 from the Port Load and Launch Reserve Fund for the Purpose of Making Improvements to the Launch Ramp Area. City Manager/Port Director.

Item Type: Back Up Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Lord and Homer City Council
Date: July 7, 2025
From: Bryan Hawkins, Port Director
Through: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

Staff is requesting funding to address two persistent infrastructure issues at the Load & Launch Ramp on the Homer Spit:

1. Storm water drainage failure and asphalt degradation
2. Energy inefficiency and maintenance challenges in the restroom facility

These upgrades are necessary to maintain a safe and functional infrastructure for residents and visitors, while also reducing long-term maintenance and energy costs.

Drainage and Asphalt

The Load and Launch Ramp driveway has developed a persistent puddle due to a design flaw from the 2017 construction project. We had initially intended to drain storm water from this area to the street. However, the system has proven ineffective, resulting in standing water and eventual breakdown of the asphalt, forming a large pothole.

Staff recommends the installation of a drywell at this location to capture and manage runoff from vehicles and trailers using the load and launch ramp. Drywells have proven to be a cost-effective and reliable solution for similar water issues on the Homer Spit and are a method we've successfully implemented in other locations. Estimated cost for a drywell installation is \$20,000.

This is, admittedly, a case of after-the-fact engineering. However, as growth on the Spit has outpaced our original drainage planning, these types of retrofits have become necessary. Addressing this now will prevent further degradation and ensure safe, long-term use of the ramp.

Restroom Energy Efficiency Retrofit

The restroom facility at the Load and Launch Ramp, along with those at Ramp 4 and 6, was constructed around 2002. These buildings were originally designed for a warmer climate and have required significant retrofitting to be usable year-round in Homer's cold environment.

Current restroom issues include:

1. Poorly sealed steel doors that leak air, rust, and require frequent maintenance (\$7,500 to replace doors)
2. Vaulted ceilings and single-pane skylights that allow heat loss (\$15,000 to install insulated drop ceiling)
3. An aging furnace, approximately 10 years old, that is critical to maintaining winter functionality (\$10,000 to replace)

The goal is to improve energy efficiency of the Load and Launch restroom and we anticipate cost savings through the winter and spring.

Funding

These improvements, which have a total estimated cost of \$52,500, can be funded using the Load and Launch Ramp Reserve Fund, which was established specifically for maintenance and improvement projects at this facility. The Load and Launch Ramp Reserve currently has sufficient balance to cover the costs of both the storm water drainage upgrade and the restroom retrofit, without impacting other operations or requiring additional appropriations.

These improvements, storm water management through a drywell and energy upgrades to the restroom, addresses ongoing maintenance problem and reduce operational costs.

Recommendation

Staff respectfully requests authorization for use of the Load and Launch Ramp Reserve funds to complete these upgrades.