



MEMORANDUM

CC-26-068

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Lord and Homer City Council
Date: March 17, 2026
From: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Through: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

SUMMARY:

The Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) has been discussing Short Term Rentals (STR's) and requests Council direction and city resources to work on potential regulations.

DISCUSSION:

The EDC's conversations at their February and March meetings resulted in the following comments to Council:

- STR's are an important topic - there has been a lot of community conversations on this issue through the housing forums, community comments in the Comprehensive Plan process, work through MAPP and Guiding Homer's Growth, the real estate community, among others.
 - STR's potential impact on housing has been a recurring theme and discussion point
- This issue is worth a deep dive in volunteer and staff efforts
- There is a need to better define STR's (which may be included in Title 21 rewrite) and also define potential tiers of accommodations
- The EDC is looking to take a deep dive on STRS to determine the impacts of various mechanisms that the city may explore and what the outcomes could be for STR's
- This may include a permit or registration process

The EDC is seeking Council direction and city resources to research possible scenarios to guide future ordinances. These scenarios could include researching communities in and out of Alaska, and examining the potential economic outcomes in Homer of the following levels of regulation:

1. Do nothing – no additional regulation
2. Basic registration system
3. Moderate regulation/more impactful STR regulations
4. Restrictive STR regulations

The EDC's work could include working on draft ordinances.

RECOMMENDATION:

Council provide direction on next steps for the EDC.

ATTACHMENTS:

Draft EDC Minutes from 3/10/26

CALL TO ORDER

Session 26-03 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:00 p.m. on March 10th, 2026 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS AREVALO, MARKS, NOOMAH & YOUNG

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS STARK & ZUBEK

STAFF: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ENGBRETSSEN & DEPUTY CITY CLERK
PILLIFANT

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks requested a motion and second to approve the agenda.

AREVALO/NOOMAH MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

Scott Adams- commented about affordable housing and opposition to using information from other areas of the nation to influence decision making in Homer, the definition of affordable housing and unfortunate attacks against short term rental ownership.

Miguel Romez commented about hotels, competition and free markets. Asked about decision making.

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Unapproved Regular Meeting Minutes of FEBRUARY 10, 2025

YOUNG/NOOMAH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. EDC Staff Report-Engbretsen gave report and asked EDC for any additional topics that they'd like to discuss ahead of time. STR topic discussion and how it will relate to Title 21 and Title 8, the importance of commenting. She gave an update on HERC that they are working with DEC and looking at Brownfield alternatives.

- B. Clerk's Report-Pillifant reviewed 4 elements of Robert's Rules. Chair is leader among equals, members have equal rights, courtesy and one issue at a time.
- C. Homer Chamber of Commerce Director's Report-Winter King Tournament potential postponement due to weather, Planet Youth presentation, State of the City Melissa Jacobsen.
- D. Homer Marine Trades Association Report-not available
- E. KPEDD Report-they meet quarterly, so report is not out yet
- F. Guiding Homer's Growth and Housing

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Short Term Rentals-Conflict of Interest.

The Commission discussed the memorandum on City of Homer Conflict of Interest Code, because Commissioner Young owns short term rentals. It was determined after review of information that Commissioner Young does not have a conflict of interest as his interest is shared by several hundred people who also own STR's within the City of Homer, which is a large class of citizens.

- B.

Discussion of Memo written by Commissioner Noomah.

NOOMAH/AREVALO MOVED TO SEND MEMO TO CITY COUNCIL

Discussion topics included- Council sponsors, priorities of city council, EDC willingness to take on STR issue, housing, bias, strategies of other communities in Alaska and the US, lenient vs. strict rules, collaboration with city council, definitions for tiers of STR's, and a proposal to wait for Title 21 draft to see how far it goes look for direction from CC.

Draft of new memo working from original.

Engbretsen read revised memo.

Chair requested a motion and second to approve memo.

YOUNG/NOOMAH MOVED TO APPROVE MEMO AS AMENDED

Chair asked for roll call vote on the motion of the substitute memo.

VOTE(substitution) YES: AREVALO, MARKS,NOOMAH,YOUNG

ABSENT: STARK, ZUBEK

Motion Carried

VOTE (send memo to council) **NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

Motion carried.

Memo will go in next City Council packet.

C. Itinerant Merchants

Discussion included other Alaska communities and what they are doing. What are goals? Issue determined to be not a high priority and there was agreement on postponement until November and add it to work plan.

Chair requested motion to postpone until November EDC Meeting

YOUNG/NOOMAH MOVED AND SECONDED TO POSTPONE THE TOPIC OF ITINERANT MERCHANTS TO THE NOVEMBER (EDC) MEETING.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Budget Recommendations
The EDAC didn't have any budget requests.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. City Manager Reports- Chair requested that commissioners look at KPEDD. Requested clerk to print hard copy.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Charles Anderson-Recommended Chat GPT for crafting language on memorandums, he is happy to be involved in research, has been involved with STR's, housing, real estate and is putting together data to present to EDC. Importance of good data. Data from last time painted a very different picture than what was expected.

Scott Adams-Major concerns on issues in packet on STR's such as taxes, impacts to visitor industry. He believes there is a conflict of interest as one of the commissioners is on the Guiding Growth of Homer and they have radical views. Concerned about income and impacts of strict STR regulations.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Clerk Pillifant-Thank you for your attention to Robert's Rules training.

Director Engebretsen-Thank you for the Jurassic Parliament tool and training. Thanks to everyone for their work tonight. I want to make sure everyone has access to resource materials for citizen and commissioner research. She'd like to put things on website and a paper version like the KPEDD document.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Noomah-Homer is behind the times concerning STR regulations. We should be doing something. A very good first step is a basic, easy, free online registration. Anchorage and others have done this so we could learn from many other communities.

Arevalo- Putting forth the memo has good value as there is a lot of barking about STR's and housing and being able to do a deep dive is valuable. Topic isn't going anywhere. Hoping to handle it thoughtfully.

Young- Grateful for opportunity to be on EDC to share experience and be a part of a positive outcome in STR's and other topics. Lots of things with education and school consolidation. Honored to be on the EDC.

Marks-Thanks audience and commissioners. She stated that it is very good that we have matured to a level to do these actions. Thrilled with variety of viewpoints and information. They will allow us to make the best decisions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 8:04 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, April 14th, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar.

MARYA PILLIFANT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____