

CITY OF HOMER  
HOMER, ALASKA

City Clerk/Parks, Art,  
Recreation and Culture  
Advisory Commission

RESOLUTION 24-123

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA  
ADOPTING THE AMENDED CITY OF HOMER BEACH POLICY AND  
MANAGEMENT PLAN TO EXTEND THE PERIOD FOR COAL AND  
SAND COLLECTION AND THE POLICY AUDIT REVIEW TIMEFRAME.

WHEREAS, City Council adopted the current City of Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan with Resolution 21-053; and

WHEREAS, As part of those duties assigned, the Beach Policy is reviewed every three years, or as deemed necessary to ensure the policies are kept current; and

WHEREAS, The Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission (PARCAC) was requested by a member of the community to consider issuing a Special Permit to allow collection of coal from areas currently off limits to vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Title 7.16 of Homer City Code addresses vehicles in beach areas; and

WHEREAS, PARCAC reviewed the Beach Policy and Management Plan at their regular meeting on October 17, 2024 in consideration of the request; and

WHEREAS, PARCAC did not support issuing permits to allow vehicles in the restricted areas but supported extending the period in which coal and sand can be collected; and

WHEREAS, PARCAC supported the recommendation that the audit or review of the policy should be conducted as needed or directed by City Council.

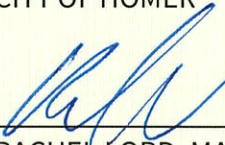
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska hereby amends the Beach Policy and Management Plan as follows:

- Section - General Policy and Plan for all Homer Beaches
  - A.1.b. An Audit/review for updates of the beach access points and documentation shall be ~~done every three years~~ **conducted as needed or as directed by City Council.**
- Policies and Plans for Specific Areas, Area 4, South End of Mariner Park to East End of Ocean Drive Loop Seawall,
  - A. Vehicles are allowed between the south-end of Mariner Park Beach and the east-end of the Ocean Drive Loop Seawall from ~~October 1<sup>st</sup>~~

45 ~~through March 31<sup>st</sup>~~ **September 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>** for the sole  
46 purpose of gathering sand and coal. The beach is closed to vehicles at all  
47 times for any other purpose.  
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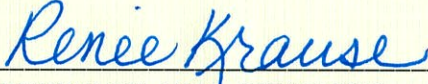
49 PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council this 25th day of November, 2024.  
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51 CITY OF HOMER

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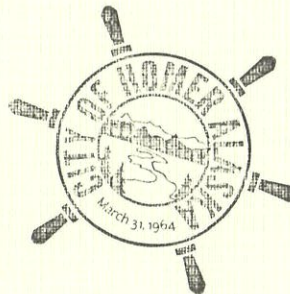
56 RACHEL LORD, MAYOR  
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59 ATTEST:

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62 RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, CITY CLERK  
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64 Fiscal Note: N/A





# MEMORANDUM

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**Resolution 24-123, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer Alaska Adopting the Amended City of Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan to Extend the Period for Coal & Sand Collection and the Policy Audit Review Timeframe. City Clerk/Parks Art Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission.**

**Item Type:** Backup Memorandum  
**Prepared For:** Mayor Lord and Homer City Council  
**From:** Mike Illg, Recreation Manager  
**Thru:** Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager  
**Date:** October 22, 2024

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**Background Information:**

At the October 17, 2024 regular Parks, Arts, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission (PARCAC) meeting, the Commission reviewed the City of Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan to consider the concept of establishing a “special permit” process to allow qualified citizens the ability to collect coal year round from approved beach areas. This proposal was reviewed by staff within Public Works Department, Police Department, Clerk’s Department, Community Development/Planning Department, Administration Department and the City Manager and it was staff’s recommendation not to establish a special permit process for this purpose.

In lieu of establishing a special permit process, staff recommended expanding the access dates within AREA 4 “South-end of Mariner Park to East-end of Ocean Drive Loop Seawall” from the existing October 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> timeframe to *September 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>*.

POLICIES & PLANS FOR SPECIFIC AREAS (page 10 of Beach Policy document)

AREA 4 South-end of Mariner Park to East-end of Ocean Drive Lop Seawall

- A. *Vehicles are allowed between the south-end of Mariner Park Beach and the east-end of the Ocean Drive Loop seawall from ~~October 1st through March 31st~~ to **“September 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>”** for the sole purpose of gathering sand and coal. The beach is closed to vehicles at all times for any other purpose.*

An additional amendment to the Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan was to change the audit and review language to strike “done every three years” and replace with “as needed”.

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GENERAL POLICY & PLAN FOR ALL HOMER BEACHES (on page 5 Beach Policy document)

Under A. 1. “b”

*An audit/review for updates of the beach access points and documentation shall be done ~~every three years~~ to “**as needed**”.*

In summary, PARCAC was unanimous with the following recommendations:

- Not to establish a Special Permit for beach access.
- Change the access date for Area 4 from October 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> to *September 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>*.
- Language changes: An audit/review for updates of the beach access points and documentation shall be done ~~every three years~~ “*as needed*”.

**Recommendation:** Approve the resolution to adopt the amended City of Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan.

**Attachments:**

Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission

- Unapproved Meeting Minutes for October 17, 2024
- Approved Meeting Minutes for June 20, 2024
- Approved Meeting Minutes for May 16, 2024

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Session 24-05, a Regular Meeting of the Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair David Lewis at 5:30 p.m. on May 16, 2024 from the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar. The Commission met at 4:30 p.m. for a worksession with Agnew::Beck on the Comprehensive Plan Update.

**PRESENT:** COMMISSIONERS ARCHIBALD, HARRALD, LEWIS, KEISER, ROEDL, PARSLEY

**ABSENT:** COMMISSIONER FAIR (EXCUSED)

**STAFF:** ACTING CITY CLERK KRAUSE  
RECREATION MANAGER ILLG  
PARKS MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR FELICE

## **AGENDA APPROVAL**

KEISER/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO POSTPONE NEW BUSINESS ITEM D TO THE JUNE AGENDA.

There was a brief discussion of the Commission's responsibility to review the Beach Policy every two years and it would be appropriate to address the subject in the broader sense of the policy review.

VOTE.(Amendment) NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

ARCHIBALD/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)**

Scott Adams, city resident, commented in support of the proposed Karen Hornaday Master Plan.

Melissa Jacobsen, Interim City Manager, commented on the budget requests under Memorandum PARC-24-034 for Additional Parks Maintenance Personnel providing clarification on funding.

## **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS (10 minute time limit)**

A. Kachemak Nordic Ski Club

Bob Glen, president of the Nordic Ski Club, and Anna McCarthy discussed the construction of an equipment shed to store the club's ski equipment. The club, which promotes Nordic skiing through 90

kilometers of trails and various events, including Junior Nordic programs for 175 kids, spends a significant portion of its budget on ski equipment. The decision to build the shed was prompted by the need to protect the equipment from the elements, particularly during winter, and was made possible by a change in management and volunteer efforts from Dave Brann. The shed will be located near the Rogers Loop trailhead on city property.

## **RECONSIDERATION**

**CONSENT AGENDA** All items on the consent agenda are considered routine and non-controversial by the Parks Art Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission and are approved in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a Commissioner or someone from the public, in which case the item will be moved to the regular agenda and considered in normal sequence.

- A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for April 18, 2024

ARCHIBALD/HARRALD MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

## **STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS** (5 minute time limit)

- A. Parks Monthly Report – April/May 2024  
Memorandum PARC-24-029 from Parks Maintenance Coordinator Felice

Parks Maintenance Coordinator Felice reviewed his report and noted the following:

- the new tractor was delivered and is in use
- A track grader was employed for the Karen Hornaday park road and its doing fine for now but not sure how long it will last since Little League has started.
- Serve the City event is this weekend (April 20<sup>th</sup>) and working on the coordination
- New swing set installed at Ben Walters Park and swings will be hung on Monday April 22
- Working on electric and lighting for Karen Hornaday Park

Mr. Felice facilitated a discussion on Parks Staffing and lowered seasonal staffed.

- B. Community Recreation Report – May 2024  
Memorandum PARC-24-030 from Recreation Manager Illg

Mr. Illg provided highlights on the following:

- use of the Mobi mats that were requisitioned by the ADA Advisory Board
- Birding Backpacks
- new Youth Volleyball game schedule
- Youth Recreational Summer Programming, Gymnastics and Tumbling opportunity provided by a new business, Frontier Tumbling
- Safe and Healthy Kids Fair was off the charts this year and commended the organizers.
- Part-time Rec person and seasonal person until June

C. PARCAC Staff Liaison Report – May 2024

Memorandum PARC-24-031 from Recreation Manager Illg as backup.

Recreation Manager Illg reviewed his report noting that council adopted the resolution approving fees and that they will be bringing forward a budget request for bringing the part time person into full time by using the funding for seasonal temporary staffing.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**PENDING BUSINESS** (15 minute time limit)

A. Performance of A SWOT Analysis and Creating a Strategic Plan

Memorandum PARC-24-032 re: Setting Priorities

Mr. Illg reported that he has facilitated discussions with various entities that are willing to work within the budget. He has narrowed it down to Wellspring.

Commissioner Harrald supported that option noting the company was great to work with.

Discussion ensued on the intent of the worksession by the Commission and that none of the commissioners did their homework on prioritizing the proposed strategic goals. They discussed having a worksession prior to the next meeting.

ARCHIBALD/HARRALD MOVED TO HAVE A WORKSESSION TO REVIEW AND DISCUSS THE PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN.

Discussion on Commissioners submitting their prioritized review to the Clerk by June 12<sup>th</sup>.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

- B. Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan  
Memorandum PARC 24-036 from Community Development Director as backup

Chair Lewis introduced the item and deferred to Community Development Director Engebretsen

Ms. Engebretsen reviewed the proposed draft of the Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan.

Discussion and points made on the plan were as follows:

- Have ADA Parking at trails and paths
- Cost estimates needed
- Geotechnical Reports needed for the proposed access road on the west side
- Restrooms will be in place this summer
- Addressing the “low hanging fruit” method of items in the plan
- Drainage issues
- Running electrical to the area between the two upper fields
- Seasonal Traffic Calming measures
- Corvus Design to attend June meeting

**NEW BUSINESS** (15-20 minute time limit)

- A. Recommendation to Propose the City Construct a Pedestrian Trail and Viewing Platform in the South B Street Right of Way.

Memorandum PARC 24-035 from Commissioner Keiser as backup

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and invited Commissioner Keiser to present her request to the Commission.

Commissioner Keiser explained that the city has the right of way and can construct a pedestrian pathway to a viewing platform to replace the one that was removed.

Commissioner Archibald noted that it is a platted road and has been used as a social trail.

Discussion facilitated by Staff ensued on the concept and feasibility. Staff stated that the Commission can make a motion to request City Council approve the Commission’s request and direct staff. The Commission cannot direct staff to perform the work.

ARCHIBALD/ PARSLEY MOVED TO SUBMIT A MEMORANDUM TO CITY COUNCIL REQUESTING STAFF TO CONDUCT THE FEASIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY AND VIEWING PLATFORM IN THE B STREET RIGHT OF WAY SOUTH OF BAY AVENUE.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION UNANIMOUS CONSENT.



Motion carried.

B. Comprehensive Plan Update Recommendations

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and open the floor to discussion and recommendations by the Commission.

Discussion facilitated by the Chair made points on the following:

- top three recommendations are related to Parks and outdoor/indoor recreation
- Parks and Recreation deserve their own section within the Comp Plan rewrite
- Planning Commission and Parks Art Recreation & Culture should have a joint worksession
- A memorandum can be provided to the planning regarding comments from the commission
- Pending business item a future meeting
  - o Review the document and determine what items go into the section

C. Mid Biennial Budget Amendment - Parks FTE and Community Recreation Equipment  
Memorandum PARC-24-034 from Commissioner Keiser as backup.  
Budget Request form - Community Recreation for Equipment

Chair Lewis introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Commissioner Keiser

Commissioner Keiser commented on her memo noting that the Commission can submit memorandums to Council in support of budget requests.

HARRALD/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL AMEND THE OPERATING BUDGET TO ADD ONE FTE TO PARKS MAINTENANCE.

A brief discussion was entertained on the comments of Interim City Manager Jacobsen regarding funding and PARCAC responsibility.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

HARRALD/ROEDL MOVED TO REQUEST CITY COUNCIL AMEND THE CAPITAL BUDGET BY \$4500 TO PURCHASE A VOLLEYBALL NET SYSTEM.

D. Amending the Beach Policy and Homer City Code to Allow Vehicular Access by Special Permit to Closed Areas of the Beach.

Memorandum PARC 24-033 from Commissioner Keiser as backup

Excerpt from City of Homer Beach Policy pgs 8-14

Memorandum 15-131 from Chief Robl dated July 7, 2015

Memorandum 16-031 from City Attorney dated August 26, 2015

Ordinance 16-05 (S-2)(A-2) Vehicles on Beaches

Memorandum 20-109 from Interim City Manager/City Planner dated July 17, 2020

Chair Lewis noted that this item was postponed to the June meeting.

E. Long Term Memorandum of Agreement with Kachemak Nordic Ski Club

Memorandum PARC 24-037 from Community Development Director as backup

Chair Lewis requested a motion and second.

Commissioner Harrald requested clarification on the project as reflected in the CIP versus what is being proposed in the new amended agreement.

HARRALD/ROEDL MOVED TO SUPPORT THE AMENDMENT TO THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH KACHEMAK NORDIC SKI CLUB.

There was a brief discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

F. Welcome New Commissioner, Lucas Parsley

The Commission expressed a warm welcome to Commissioner Parsley.

G. Letter to the Editor Topic Recommendation

The Commission discussed various topics for Commissioner Keiser to write a draft Letter to the Editor. She will provide a draft for the June meeting approval.

**INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

A. PARCAC Annual Calendar 2024

B. City Manager's Report for City Council May 13, 2024

Commissioner Harrald commented on errors in the date shown on the Annual Calendar and speaking at the next Council meeting.

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE** (3 minute time limit)

Scott Adams, city resident, expressed his appreciation for the Commission discussion on the B Street proposed project, Harbor revenues for the Haul Out Facility versus the camping and he has requested the funding information used for the purchase of the parcels, private campgrounds charge \$100 a night and not everyone can afford. He has been a proponent on using existing facilities and commented on the need for a full recreational facility. He recounted the revenues made by camping.

**COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBER** (If Present)

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Acting City Clerk Krause noted it was a fun meeting as always.

Recreation Manager Illg noted that it was a good meeting.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Keiser commented that it was a pleasure working with everyone on the Commission.

Commissioner Archibald expressed his appreciation for staff and commented it was a good meeting.

Chair Lewis noted that they got through all the items and it was still before 8 pm

Commissioners Harrald and Roedl did not comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission Chair Lewis adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is **Thursday, June 20, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.** A worksession is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

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Renee Krause, MMC, Acting City Clerk

Approved:\_\_\_\_\_

Borough, crafting the Letter to be neutral not literal with the use of the word “shabby”. Further recommendations were made on the proposed “letter to the editor” to address the recent accomplishments and donations and that the Clerk can make the edits and submit for publication.

HARRALD/ROEDL MOVED TO ACCEPT THE LETTER TO THE EDITOR WITH THE AMENDMENTS PROVIDED.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

D. Memorandum PARC-24-042 re: Beach Policy Review and Special Permits

Vice Chair Archibald introduced the item and opened the floor for discussion.

Discussion ensued on the following:

- Having a worksession on the beach policy
- The process involved in making amendments to the policy
- Having a discussion when interested people will be available to attend a meeting to provide comment.
- Receiving input from the Police Department and Port & Harbor

HARRALD/ROEDL MOVED TO POSTPONE DISCUSSION ON THE BEACH POLICY TO SEPTEMBER MEETING.

Mr. Foust arrived and proceeded to speak from the audience and was provided clarification by Vice Chair Archibald when the appropriate time to comment on the topic would not be now but during Comments of the Audience stating that he was not present when the earlier opportunity was available.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

E. Memorandum PARC-24-044 re: Vessel Haul Out Recommendation

Vice Chair Archibald introduced the item by reading of the title and opened the floor for discussion.

Recreation Manager Illg reviewed the memorandum outlining the actions requested by the Commission.

Discussion was facilitated by Staff with points made on the following:

- Line 56 - Delete the words, “Moral obligation” and amend to state “Strong financial benefit to ensure this is available and accessible.”
  - o This statement could be debated regarding the financial benefits of the vessel haul out proceeds;
- State the questions listed in the proposed memo as bullet points not questions
- Quality of life impacts
  - o Camping creates memorable experiences

**STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS** (5 minute time limit)

- A. Parks & Trails Report for September 2024  
Memorandum from Parks Maintenance Coordinator as backup.

Parks Coordinator Felice reviewed his report for the Commission noting the following:

- Maintenance on the road up to Karen Hornaday Park to help with rain and drainage
- Trail maintenance in preparation for winter including cutting back brush on trails
- West lot, Lucky Shot, and Story Trail are completed
- Bayview Park: Walkway to be paved by East Road Services, playground and swing set are installed, concrete is set
- Jack Gist: Water and sewer hookups are in place for restrooms, fall cleanup on fields
- Winter prep around the city: transplanted peonies, wrapped flower beds and barrels, ditching alongside Ben Walters Trail

- B. Community Recreation Report for October 2024  
Memorandum from Recreation Manager as backup.

Recreation Manager Illg reported on the following:

- Purchase of score clock console at Homer High School for Adult Basketball League
- Rec Champions met to talk about the multi-use community center. Investigating HEA property, city's town center property, borough land behind Homer Middle School, focusing on cost for water, sewer, and electric for each site.
- Local community members working with the Homer Foundation to potentially start a 'Friend of the Community Center' organization
- Update on attendance to National Recreation Parks Association Conference in Atlanta, Georgia

Mr. Illg responded to questions on the potential lots for the Community Center and if assessment of each lot is allowing for future growth.

- C. Staff Report for September 2024  
Memorandum from Recreation Manager as backup

Recreation Manager Illg reviewed his report for the Commission noting the upcoming City Council worksession on October 28 to talk about the Land Allocation Plan. He noted the Commission had made some recommendations, as well as the Port and Harbor Commission. Mr. Illg concluded with indication of a potential worksession in 2025 to discuss the property more specifically.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**PENDING BUSINESS** (15 minute time limit)

- A. Beach Policy Review  
Memorandum from Recreation Manager as backup

Chair Lewis introduced the topic and deferred to Recreation Manager Illg.

Mr. Illg reported reaching out to multiple staff from different departments to review the beach policy for potential proposals and changes. Mr. Illg received feedback from Police Chief Robl including a recommendation to consider changing the access dates from October 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>. He noted there were conversations with staff to strike audit and review of beach access points and documentation from 'every 3 years' to 'as needed.' Mr. Illg also reminded the Commission of any proposed changes brought forward would need final approval by City Council due to changes needed in city code.

Chair Lewis opened discussion of Beach Policy.

Commissioner Archibald brought up concern over 'as needed' wording of audit and review of beach access points and documentation.

Commissioner Harrauld agreed with this point, expressing concerns that the beach policy review would turn into a monthly discussion issue.

Commissioner Parsley asked the last time the beach policy was reviewed since being created; discussion followed including last amendment date.

ARCHIBALD/KEISER MOVED TO CHANGE THE DATES OF OPEN VEHICLE ACCESS TO SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>.

There was a brief discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

KEISER/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO CHANGE THE AUDIT REVIEW OF UPDATES TO THE BEACH POLICY FROM 'EVERY 3 YEARS' TO 'AS NEEDED' TO ADDRESS CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES.

There was no discussion

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

#### B. City of Homer PARC SWOT Analysis- Review and Discussion

Chair Lewis introduced topic for discussion.

Commission agreed analysis was time well spent and information gathered will be helpful in forward thinking for the City. The Commission noted the information will be utilized creatively to build capacity and funding in the future with further discussion revolved around the term 'underlying contradictions' in terms of budget challenges and scale back, possible existing revenue streams, and organizational structure.

KEISER/ARCHIBALD MOVED TO ACCEPT THE SWOT ANALYSIS DATED AUGUST 15, 2024 AND FORWARD TO THE CITY COUNCIL.

There was no discussion



# **CITY OF HOMER**

# **BEACH POLICY &**

# **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Adopted August 9, 2021

Resolution 21-053







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## DEFINITIONS

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- A. "Berm" means a natural, linear mound or series of mounds in a beach area composed of sand, gravel, or both, generally paralleling the water at or landward of the elevation of mean high water.
- B. "Storm berm" means a berm formed by the upper reach of storm wave surges or the highest tides. Storm berms generally include an accumulation of seaweed, driftwood, and other water-borne materials. A beach area may have more than one storm berm.
- C. "Submerged land" means land covered by tidal water from the elevation of mean low water seaward to the corporate boundary of the city.
- D. "Tideland" means land that is periodically covered by tidal water between the elevation of mean high water and mean low water.
- E. "Beach area" means all of the following, whether publicly or privately owned: submerged land, tideland, and the zone of sand, gravel and other unconsolidated materials that extends landward from the elevation of mean high water to the place where there is a marked change in material or physiographic form.
- F. "Motor vehicle" means a device in, upon, or by which a person or property may be transported or drawn upon or immediately over land, that is self-propelled except by human or animal power.
- G. "Personal watercraft" means a vessel which uses an inboard motor powering a water jet pump as its primary source of motive power. The vessels are designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing or kneeling.



*Grassy area of Beluga Slough where highest tides and storm deposit logs and driftwood. Tall grasses and other plants grow there most of the time, and only at the highest tides and largest storms are logs thrown up on this area of the beach.*



## INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, & GOALS

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### Purpose and Intent

The purpose of the City of Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan is to support the enforcement of existing regulations, proposed new regulations, or actions that may be needed, for the seven areas of beaches in City limits. The intent of the policy is to provide guidance to keep Homer's beaches safe and enjoyable for all users while preserving the natural environment. This document will be reviewed and updated on a bi-annual basis by the Parks, Arts, Recreation, and Culture Advisory Commission or as deemed necessary by City Council.

### History

The original Beach Policy Task Force was established in 2000 as the result of strong public concern on the current and future use of Homer beaches. They completed the beach policy in 2001 which was adopted by City Council on June 25, 2001. In 2003, per Ordinance 03-27, the City was awarded a \$75,000 Coastal Impact Assessment grant to fund beach access restriction improvements, regulatory signage, a GIS coastal erosion and beach habitat information mapping project and funds for the 2004 United States Geological Survey sediment transport study camera operation.

The Task Force made further recommendations in 2005 through Memorandum 05-78, and concluded their work. In 2007, City Council adopted Ordinance 07-01(A) which added advising on public beaches to the duties of Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission. The Commission formed a Beach Committee to update the Beach Policy, which resulted in this document.

In fall of 2014 the Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission was directed by Council to review and recommend revisions to the Beach Policy. The Commission worked on the policy the first six months of 2015 and made recommendations via Memorandum 15-102. Council adopted Ordinance 16-05 (S-2)(A-2) on February 23, 2016. Ordinance 16-13 then made minor amendments. The Beach Policy was amended to reflect these revisions through Resolution 16-029(S-2). Resolution 17-021 amended the policy for clarity providing corrections for grammar and content.



*Storm Berm in front of Bishop's  
Beach Parking Lot  
Photo provided by PARCAC  
Member circa 2000*



## Goals of this Policy

### ❖ Education

Educate beach users by providing signage and beach information at convenient locations.

### ❖ Safety and Prevention

Limit conflicts between motorized users and pedestrians by encouraging courtesy and common sense.

Protect sensitive beach habitat and wildlife from inappropriate use of beaches - e.g., keep motorized vehicles out of lagoon areas and personal watercraft off beaches.

### ❖ Enforcement

Ensure adequate staffing on holiday weekends, that regulatory signage is installed where needed so laws can be enforced, and gates are operational to prevent or limit access to sensitive or prohibited areas.



*Bishop's Beach has a 2-tier parking area that is delineated by driftwood, rocks, and grassy areas. Vehicle access to the west end (Area 7) is located at the northwest corner of the lower lot and a gate at the southeast end restricts access to the East-end of Ocean Drive Loop Seawall to Bishop's Beach Park (Area 6).*



## GENERAL POLICY & PLAN FOR ALL HOMER BEACHES

**A. Identify and improve beach access points.** Heavy impacts are created by a large number of people accessing the beach at a small number of places. By finding, improving, and publishing all public beach access points, this will diffuse the impacts and provide a more enjoyable experience to all.

1. Improve and maintain beach access points.
  - a. Document the known public beach access points and tracks their current status, development, and other notes of interest.
  - b. An audit/review for updates of the beach access points and documentation shall be **done every three years. conducted as needed or as directed by City Council.**
2. Provide signage at selected public access points.

**B. Install and maintain signage as needed.** Signage shall be positive and informative to encourage courtesy to pedestrians, appropriate pet control and clean up, and indicate where vehicles are permitted. All signage must be installed in a manner that meets the needs of law enforcement.

1. Installed signage shall address the following:
  - a. The berm building process, shore zone wildlife habitat, etc.
  - b. The risks of driving on the beach and the responsibility the owner/driver accepts, specifying that the City shall not be held liable.
  - c. The prohibition of removal and burning of driftwood along the berm, and where campers can locate campfire wood.
  - d. City code prohibitions and applicable fines, so that any violators of the law on City beaches may be ticketed.
2. City shall coordinate with U.S Fish and Wildlife (USFW) on a uniform interpretative signage plan for all City beach parks. Adjust signage language over time to meet changing needs. Include the project in the annual budget.
3. Ensure there are line items in the City's budget for sign repair, updating, and replacement.



*Northwest end of Mariner Park*

*Signage clearly states City Code and vehicle restrictions, rocks adequately delineate the parking area, and the Alaska flag adds a positive touch.*

**C. Be aware of seaward property boundaries when making municipal decisions.** Although many believe property lines stop at a water boundary, it has become apparent this is not always the case in Kachemak Bay. Normal property lines next to the ocean are established at mean high tide, and slow erosion does change boundaries. The 1964 earthquake caused the sinking of the Spit and Homer area and the sea flowed over the lowered land. This sudden change is called avulsion and legally does not change land boundaries. However, avulsion does have to be proven which can be difficult without adequate historical records. Common in Alaska, the area below mean high tide is owned by the State of Alaska, and this is true in a few spots in Homer. But generally speaking, the City owns the tidelands below mean high tide.

**D. Encourage better enforcement of applicable existing state and local laws.** Examples of applicable laws include: HCC 19.08 Campgrounds, HCC 7.16 Vehicles in Beach Areas; HCC18.28.200 Waste or injury to land, and Alaska State Traffic Regulations regarding: DWI, Reckless Driving, Negligent Driving, Basic Speed, and Littering.

1. Evening quiet hours shall be posted and enforced in applicable areas.
2. City driving laws in City beach parking areas and on west Bishop's Beach where driving is permitted shall be enforced.
3. Any observed violations of policies or laws shall be reported to the Homer Police Department.

**E. Develop a coordinated public relations campaign.** It is important to enlist the public in the campaign to keep our beaches enjoyable for all, to limit the human damage to fragile areas, and to minimize friction between user groups. The City requires everyone's help.

1. Prior to major holiday weekends, beach rules and etiquette in the local newspapers, on social media, and local radio stations shall be advertised.
2. Beach maps and brochures on beach etiquette shall be provided at all City campground facilities, Homer Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, and the Port and Harbor's Office.
3. Beach educational materials shall be distributed to local school district officials to ensure information is included in existing curriculum pertaining to beach activities and field trips.
4. Ensure there are line items in the City's budget for advertising expenses.

**F. Perform an annual assessment of beach health and developing impacts.**

1. Provide City Council with annual updates from local organizations and entities that support clean-up efforts on city beaches. Host on City Website.
2. On a biannual basis, take photographs of sensitive areas or places and keep a photo record of changes. Host on City website.

**G. Driftwood from berm areas should not be removed.** Testimony by scientists emphasizes the importance of the natural berm building process to protect the Spit, Mariner Lagoon, and Beluga Slough and provide wildlife habitat. The driftwood plays an important role in building and stabilizing berms and is an esthetic enhancement to the beach. Therefore, it is hoped that providing an alternate source of campfire wood for campers serves the important function of protecting the berms.

1. Prohibit the burning of driftwood from berm areas.
2. Provide alternative wood sources for campfires, or install signage that informs campers where campfire wood can be found.



#### **H. Find ways of supporting beach clean-up.**

1. Encourage the elimination of unsightly waste on properties near the beach by working with landowners, particularly in the Louie's Lagoon, Homer Spit, and Mariner Park areas.
2. Support volunteer efforts by providing trash bags for annual clean-up events and dumpsters or trash removal at locations such as Bishop's Beach.
3. Support local organizations and entities that provide clean-up efforts on city beaches. Support may be in the form of providing trash bags, dumpster service at beach parks, and City funding for newspaper advertising educational and beach clean-up activities.

#### **I. Keep cars from encroaching onto beach berms and beaches in city campgrounds, parks, and along the Homer Spit Road.**

1. Define parking lots so they do not spread onto the beach.



*Gates and use of natural vegetation are used to delineate parking lots at parks and beaches at the south end of Mariner Park (top), Southeast end of Bishop's Beach (middle), and Louie's Lagoon parking lot (bottom)*


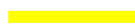





## POLICIES & PLANS FOR SPECIFIC AREAS

The following are management plans for specific beach areas, identified as Areas 1 through 7, and follow the beach line from East to West.

### Color Key for Area Maps

	No Vehicles Allowed
	Boundary Lines Identified in HCC 7.16
	Vehicles Allowed per HCC 7.16.020 Exceptions

### AREA 1

#### Miller's Landing to East of Airport Beach Access Road

- A. Miller's Landing – Maintain a public viewing spot in the Airport Beach Access Road Right-of-Way off of Kachemak Drive through the use of signage stating the location of the public access. A small parking area may be designated with the use of boulders to discourage trespassing on adjacent properties.
- B. Airport Beach Access Road – Support state efforts to place signage or interpretive displays.
- C. Vehicle use at the bottom of Airport Beach Access Road on the beach is not allowed – Vehicles are allowed east of that area, but there is no public vehicle access point to get to that part of the beach. Land owners, or those with land owner permission, may access the beach from private vehicle access points. Once on the beach, nothing in City laws or policy condones trespassing on adjacent private lands.
- D. Vehicles are allowed on the beach east of the vacated easement (formerly known as Shirlene Circle).

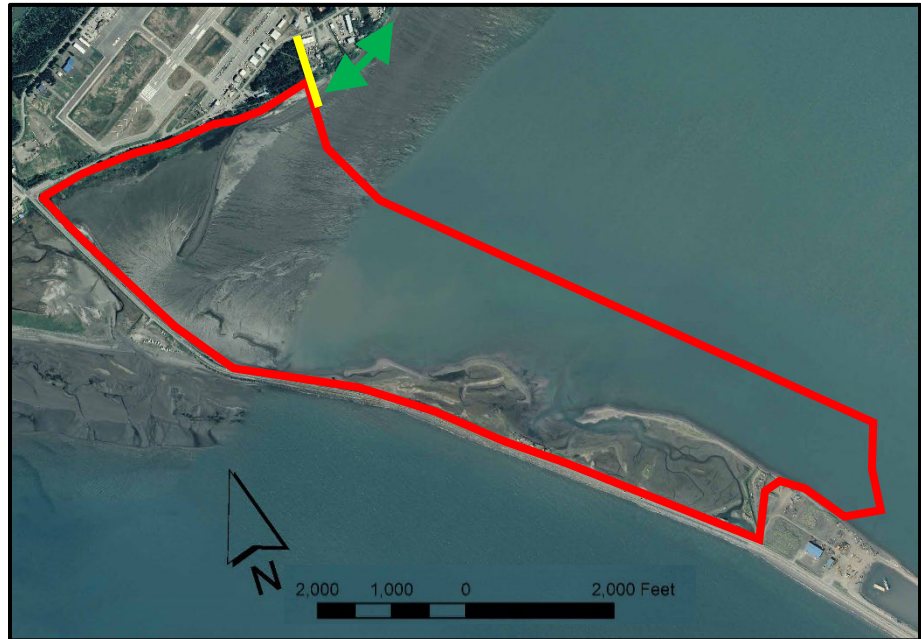




## **AREA 2**

### **Airport Beach Access Road to North-End of Berm outside of Louie's Lagoon, and Louie's Lagoon**

- A. Vehicles are prohibited in this entire area, excluding designated access driveways and parking. Vehicle restriction is necessary to protect the fragile habitats of Mud Bay and Louie's Lagoon.
- B. Maintain signage identifying public pedestrian access points and vehicle parking areas.
- C. Ensure area and easements are zoned for conservation.
- D. Preserve subsistence fishing access through the northern portion of the English Bay property, which traditionally has included pedestrian and vehicle access.



## **AREA 3**

### **Louie's Lagoon-South to End of Homer Spit, then North to the South-end of Mariner Park**

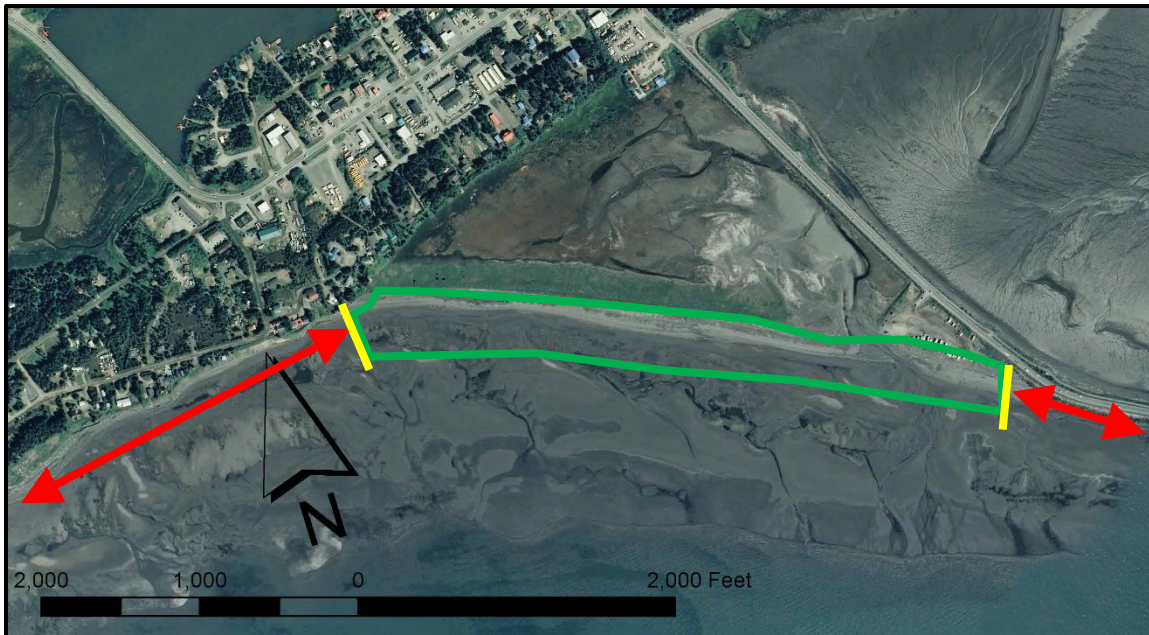
- A. Vehicles are prohibited in this entire area, excluding designated access driveways and parking.



#### **AREA 4**

##### **South-end of Mariner Park to East-end of Ocean Drive Loop Seawall**

- A. Vehicles are allowed between the south-end of Mariner Park Beach and the east-end of the Ocean Drive Loop seawall from ~~October 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>~~ **September 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>** for the sole purpose of gathering sand and coal. The beach is closed to vehicles at all times for any other purpose.
- B. The area in front of the seawall west to the Beluga Slough outfall is closed to vehicles.
- C. Mariner Park Campground and day-use area has defined campsites and controlled vehicle access to the beach through the use of logs, rocks, and a gate. Maintain the campground and these

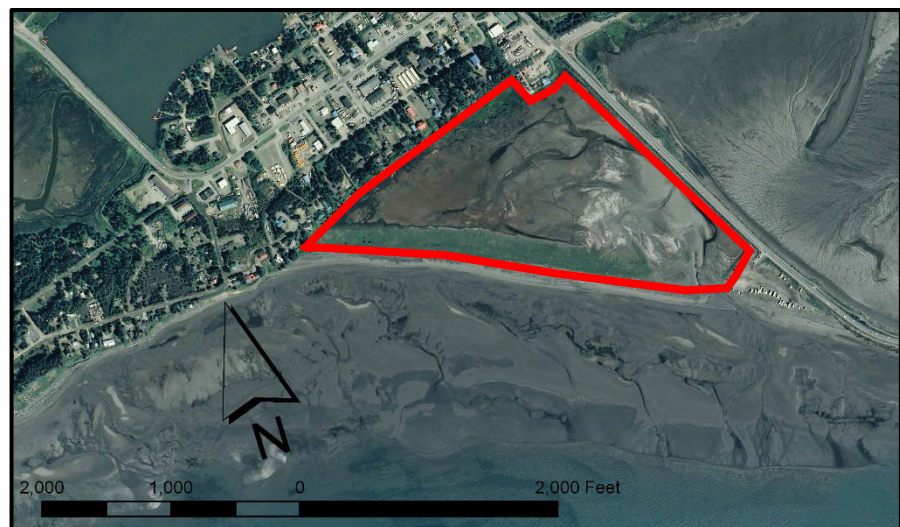


measures as they provide protection to the berm, encouraging natural vegetation growth.

#### **AREA 5**

##### **Mariner Park Lagoon and Storm Berm**

- A. Vehicles are prohibited in this entire area.
- B. Ensure there are line items in the City's budget to dredge Mariner Slough on a biennial year period.





## **AREA 6**

### **East-end of Ocean Drive Loop Seawall to Bishop's Beach Park**

- A. Vehicles are prohibited in this area.
- B. Maintain the gate and rocks at Bishop's Beach Park to physically block access to vehicles.
- C. Support U.S. Fish and Wildlife efforts to protect berm and promote rye grass/driftwood build-up.
- D. Support U.S. Fish and Wildlife's efforts to develop a plan to maintain the ecological integrity of their



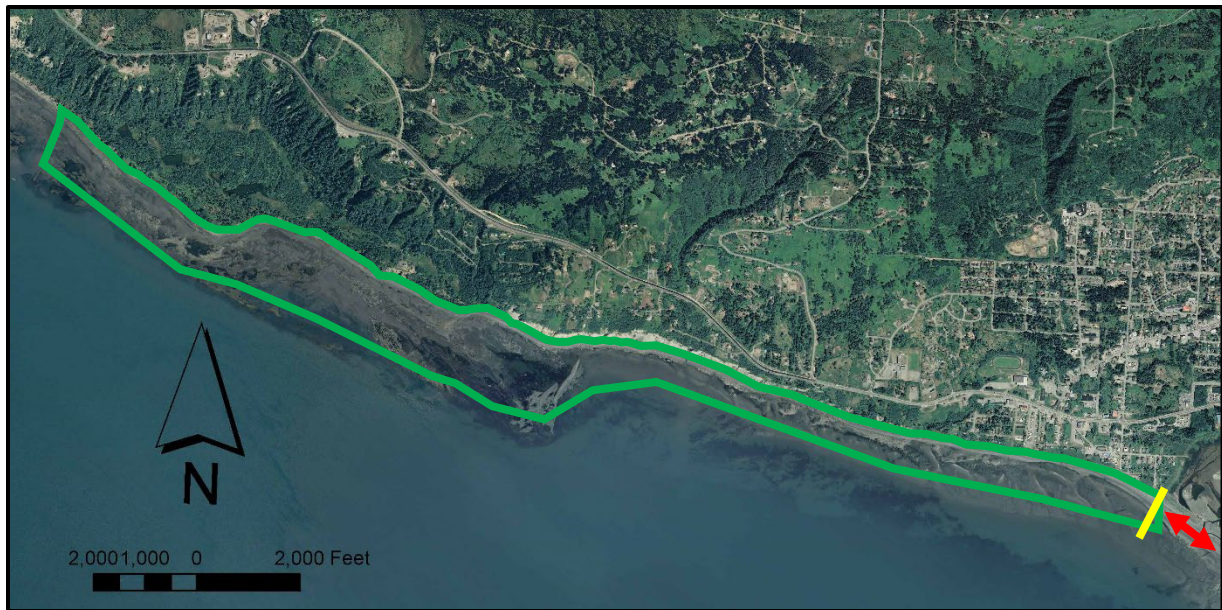
educational reserve, including possible conservation zoning.

## **AREA 7**

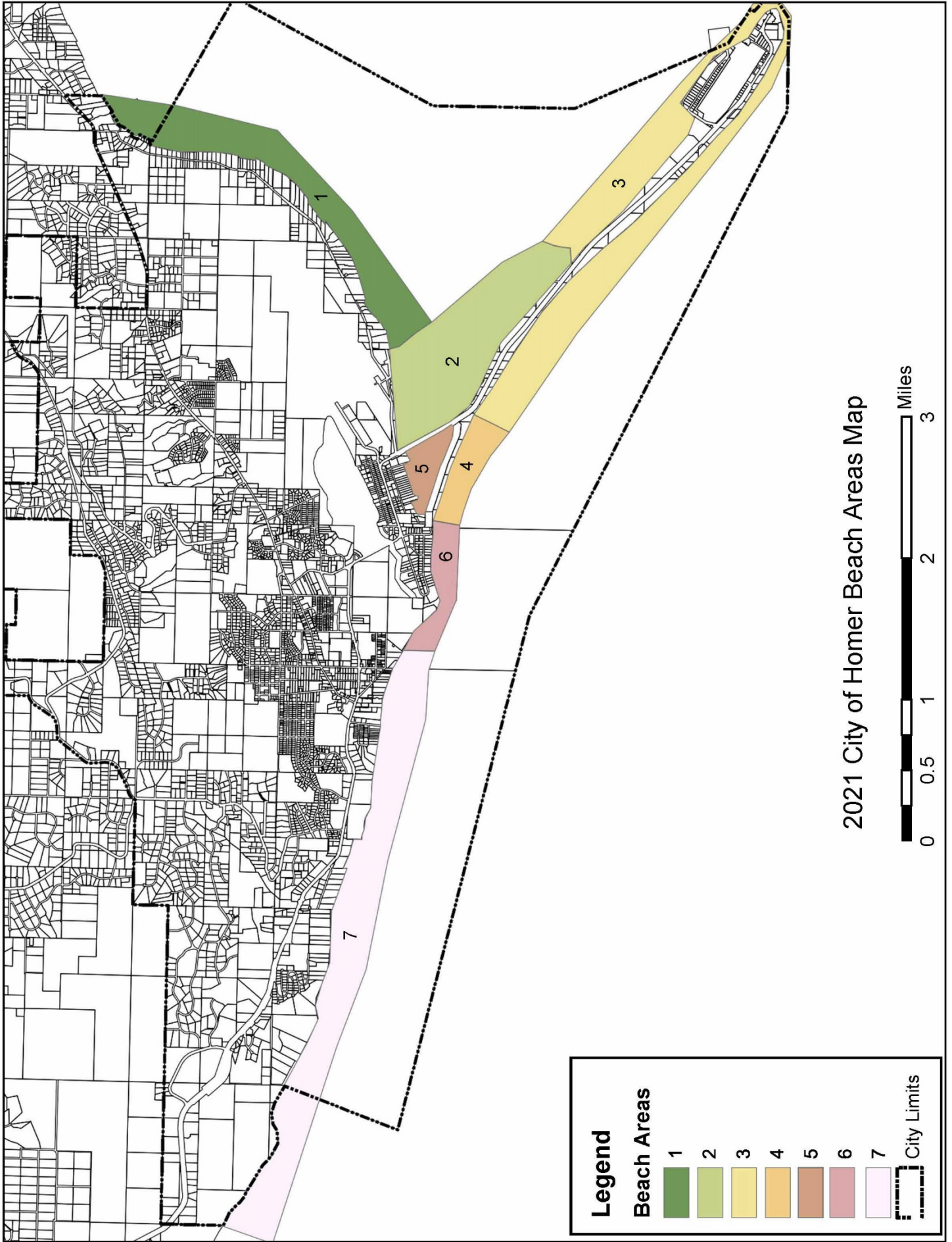
### **Bishop's Beach Park Access-West to Homer City Limits**

- A. This is a heavily used area and has the greatest potential for conflicts between user groups.
- B. Ensure there is adequate parking and signage at Bishop's Beach Park and in the area. Wayfinding signage may direct people to nearby public parking (e.g., Homer Chamber of Commerce, Islands and Ocean Visitor Center).
- C. Vehicles are allowed west from Bishop's Beach Park access and prohibited to the east. Posted signage shall warn drivers to proceed at their own risk.
- D. Improve erosion control and maintain beach access points.

- E. Work with property owners and interested volunteers to remove derelict vehicles from City beaches. Owner will be responsible for the costs and removal of vehicle(s).







2021 City of Homer Beach Areas Map