



Baycrest Hill Overlook Interpretive Plan

Prepared for: Baycrest Overlook Improvement Committee
Prepared by: Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Funded by: City of Homer and Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game

3/27/2013

CONTENTS

Background.....	2
Project Location	3
Planning Process.....	3
Goals and Objectives	5
Interpretive Themes.....	7
Existing Interpretation and Information	8
Recommendations.....	9
Design Guidelines	14
Evaluating Interpretation	16
Appendix A: Lower Cook Inlet/Kachemak Bay Area Public Lands and Waters.....	18
Appendix B: Interpretive Panel and Sign Materials	21

BAYCREST HILL OVERLOOK INTERPRETIVE PLAN

BACKGROUND

When you drive to Homer on the Sterling Highway, it is hard to resist pulling over at the Baycrest Hill Overlook—even if you have been there before. This gateway into Homer is the primary entrance to the community. This interpretive plan is part of a larger project to improve the gateways through which visitors enter Homer. Many agencies are involved in this project including:

- Homer Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center
- City of Homer, Public Arts Committee
- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Pratt Museum
- Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge
- Homer Garden Club
- Lake Clark National Park and Preserve
- Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Kachemak Bay Conservation Society
- Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

The view from the Baycrest Hill Overlook is stunning. So, one may ask, why provide anything other than benches and restrooms to meet my basic needs at this spot? Freeman Tilden, a legend in the field of interpretation, summed up the importance of interpretation when he quoted a National



VIEW FROM BAYCREST HILL OVERLOOK, PHOTO COURTESY OF MARGARET VISGER

Park Service administrative manual in his book *Interpreting Our Heritage*. It stated, “Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection.”¹

Interpretation goes beyond just providing facts and information. It provides an opportunity to connect the facts to our own experiences in life. The National Association for Interpretation states that it is a process “that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and meanings inherent in the

¹ Quoted in Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), 38.

resource.”² Each individual can connect in their own way. The goal for interpretation is to provide the opportunity for visitors to explore how the resource or concept is meaningful to them.

This plan provides guidelines to help the Baycrest Improvement Committee make decisions regarding the establishment and maintenance of interpretive sites and services. It does this by considering the location and resource to be interpreted and comments from the public to decide how to tell effective, meaningful, and relevant stories at Baycrest Hill Overlook.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Baycrest Hill Overlook is located at milepost 169.6 of the Sterling Highway. The pullout is signed and is approximately two miles from Homer on the southwest side of the Kenai Peninsula. Here, visitors may take in sweeping views of Kachemak Bay framed by the Kenai Mountains, nearby volcanoes, the Alaska Peninsula, and the Homer Spit.

PLANNING PROCESS

Members of the public attended a meeting from 1:00-2:30 p.m. and a workshop from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Islands and Ocean Visitor Center on September 18, 2012. The purpose of the first meeting was to discuss draft goals, objectives, interpretive themes, topics, and concepts for the Baycrest Hill Overlook Interpretive Plan. The group crafted a primary interpretive theme and selected topics to be interpreted as subthemes. The second meeting, an evening workshop, was a hands-on event in which the public was invited to write a word or phrase about each of the eight topics chosen during the first meeting. This information was used to craft the interpretive subthemes outlined in this plan.³

Members of the public were also given the chance to provide additional feedback for the planning process by answering four questions on a form provided at the evening workshop. The form was also posted on the city’s website and comments were accepted until October 2, 2012. The following information provides a list of the written comments related to the form questionnaire. Some of these comments may seem repetitive because this is a comprehensive list.



PUBLIC WORKSHOP AT THE ISLANDS AND OCEAN VISITOR CENTER

² National Association for Interpretation, “Definitions Project,” available online: <http://www.definitionsproject.com/definitions/index.cfm> [October 3, 2012].

³ Four additional meetings were held on October 23 and December 11, 2012 and January 15 and February 19, 2013. During these meetings, the committee discussed each of the sections of the plan, but they especially focused on interpretive themes and recommendations.

What stories would you share about the Baycrest Hill Overlook with a visitor?

- The view through the seasons
- Identifying landmarks
- Ecology of the Kachemak Bay/Cook Inlet watershed
- Diversity of marine/terrestrial wildlife
- The view from Baycrest was the “selling point” for many people who live in Homer
- The geologic story
- More history about Overlook Park—geological, biological, and how it became a park
- Eruptions of Augustine volcano
- Stories about falling in love with Homer and Kachemak Bay from this vantage point and making decisions to move to the community permanently
- The feeling residents get like they’ve come home when they see Baycrest
- Halibut fishing
- Baycrest is a favorite place for photographers and oil painters
- Provide information and orientation
- Interpret the cultural and biological aspects and geology of the bay (communities, critical habitat, and stewardship)

What do you like most about Baycrest Hill Overlook?

- The view (four people wrote that the view is what they like most)
- The openness and expansiveness—the ability to step right into this place
- It is one of the best combinations of city and wilderness views in Homer
- Eagles
- Ample parking
- Baycrest Hill Overlook is the place where most folks get that “Oh my gawd, this is gorgeous” moment.
- I love the beautiful flowers and plants
- Sunsets
- Feeling like you’re “home” when driving back from Anchorage and seeing the view at Baycrest
- Love the “Homer-Halibut Capital of the World” sign
- It’s a grand welcome to Kachemak Bay communities

What, if anything, would you change at the Baycrest Hill Overlook to benefit visitors and Alaska residents?

- Move the outhouse out of the view (off the viewing edge)
- Eliminate all local affiliates signage
- Emphasize native plantings in flower areas
- Add artistic interpretive signage that ID’s major horizon features
- Don’t do too much—the view is what’s so valuable
- More about what to do in Homer (where to visit)

- More wildlife and natural history
- Clear day photographic images of the four volcanoes aligned with the volcanoes in the distance on the handrail
- Include more plant interpretation into the displays
- A few benches would be nice in case some folks would like to spend a little more time enjoying the view
- More interpretation of tides and currents (point out how they enrich the bay but also open it to oil and gas development, thus possible oil spills)
- Good volcano interpretive displays with emphasis on Augustine
- More toilets—modern and heated
- Benches where one could comfortably enjoy this “spectacular place”
- Tables with benches for picnics, photo equipment, or writing
- Eco-friendly toilets
- Provide an area viewing platform so that visitors can see Overlook Park below
- Provide some picnic tables

What effects do you foresee interpretation and improvements having on the overlook?

- Inspiring visitors’ interests, hence sending them to certain local destinations and taking local adventures
- Concern—managing trash; opportunity to educate about importance of recycling
- Welcome home feeling for local residents
- To guide people to more points of interest in Homer
- People will have the opportunity to understand and be inspired by the forces responsible for the beauty before them and be filled with wonder
- It may require more parking
- Cost more in maintenance and upgrades in bathrooms and trash removal
- Care has to be taken to ensure that use does not spill over the rails to the fragile slope below the overlook as they are prone to erosion
- More visitors and possibly longer visits
- Make it the most beautiful welcome to Homer and Kachemak Bay
- Concerned that a site plan (drafted by landscape designer) isn’t being done first

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Guided by comments from the initial public scoping meetings, the following goals for interpretive media are general statements about what this plan hopes to accomplish through interpretation at the overlook. The corresponding objectives are specific ways to measure whether the goal has or has not been accomplished. Recommendations outlined later in this plan will correspond with the following goals and objectives.

1. **Welcome and orient** visitors to the Baycrest Hill Overlook and the Kachemak Bay communities in a comfortable setting.
 - After visiting the overlook, visitors will be able to confirm that they received adequate interpretive opportunities and orientation to major points of interest in the Kachemak Bay communities.

- While visiting the site, visitors will be able to easily locate and use amenities such as restrooms, benches, and picnic tables.
 - Visitors will be able to recognize a unified appearance of interpretive displays after visiting the overlook.
 - After viewing interpretive media at the overlook, a majority of travelers will express an interest in visiting one of the major points of interest in the local communities.
2. ***Instill stewardship and inspire*** visitors to learn about the diversity of the bay and the potential experiences awaiting those just arriving in Homer or returning home.
- The majority of visitors will be inspired by the interpretive media to personally relate to the interpreted resource after visiting the overlook.
 - After visiting the site, the majority of visitors will be able to state at least three facts about the surrounding landscape.
 - Immediately after viewing interpretive media, visitors will be able to paraphrase the interpretive theme used in three to five of the displays.
 - After viewing interpretive media, the majority of travelers will have a positive response toward efforts to protect the interpreted resources for future use.
3. ***Enhance*** the Baycrest Hill Overlook without detracting from the view
- After overgrown vegetation is cut back, visitors will have unobstructed views from vantage points along the fence and by the “Halibut Capital of the World” sign.
 - When implementing updates, the Baycrest Hill Overlook Improvement Committee will consider environmentally friendly alternatives to basic amenities such as toilets and recycling containers.
 - When implementing updates, the Baycrest Hill Overlook Improvement Committee will promote and encourage interpretive art such as metal sculptures, wood cutouts, and poetry.



BAYCREST HILL OVERLOOK, PHOTO COURTESY OF NICOLE ACEVEDO

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

The primary interpretive theme guides the focus, intent, and subject matter for interpretation at Baycrest Hill Overlook. Subthemes will support and reinforce the primary theme. Both the primary theme and the subthemes must relate to what can be seen from the overlook and should not repeat any other themes or topics from nearby interpretive sites.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME:

Homer, with its famous Spit, reaches into Kachemak Bay, inviting us to explore public lands, waters, and diverse communities beyond the end of the road, while drawing us back to the “Cosmic Hamlet by the Sea.”

SUBTHEMES:

The Spit: The Homer Spit, a striking geologic feature that has been shaped by a receding glacier, impacted by an earthquake, and shored back up, maintains our vital link to the bay’s communities and resources.

Volcanoes: Perched on the Pacific Ring of Fire, this area is witness to our dynamic earth’s simultaneous powers of creation and destruction as evidenced by the active volcanoes seen across Cook Inlet, and the continuously rising Kenai Mountains that dominate the horizon across Kachemak Bay.

Bay and Inlet: Kachemak Bay and Cook Inlet are wild, ecologically diverse, and expansive estuaries shaped by dramatic and dynamic forces, like earth movements, climate patterns, tides, and currents.

Wildlife and Habitat: Visitors may view a diverse range of terrestrial and marine life and their habitats from Baycrest Hill.

Public Lands and Waters: The surrounding public lands you can see from Baycrest Hill have been designated as special places such as parks and refuges that allow a seemingly endless list of recreational opportunities. (See Appendix A for a list of possible public lands to interpret.)

Glaciers and Kenai Mountains: The glaciers of Kachemak Bay and lower Cook Inlet are constantly reshaping the landscape and seasonally mixing freshwater with saltwater, creating a rich estuarine soup.

EXISTING INTERPRETATION AND INFORMATION

Visitors to Baycrest Hill Overlook generally drive into the site from the north. A large welcome sign with multiple affiliation group logos is located at the northern entrance. The sign is somewhat dated, but effectively lets visitors know to pull over while also partially obscuring the view of the restrooms from the road.

A sign near the southern entrance proclaims that Homer, Alaska, is the “Halibut Fishing Capital of the World.” This sign is very popular with visitors who take photos of their friends and family standing beneath the sign with the Kenai Mountains in the background.

The overlook has three landscaped planters and some of the plants are edible and donated by the Homer Garden Club to the local food bank. There are nine benches at the overlook and two trash receptacles (the number changes seasonally) that are not bear-resistant. Visitors can use one of two spotting scopes located near the fence to look more closely at the scenic beauty and vibrant activities taking place in Kachemak Bay.

Currently, there is very little interpretation at Baycrest Hill Overlook. An interpretive panel about the Gold Rush era, titled “The Wheelbarrow Nightmare” is located in one of the planters. The topic seems out of place at an overlook welcoming visitors to Homer as it interprets gold mining on the Kenai Peninsula in general. The word “nightmare” is the largest word on the panel and is, therefore, the first word that visitors see as they walk from their vehicles to the overlook, potentially casting a negative and confusing shadow on an otherwise pleasant experience.



VISITORS READ THE INTERPRETATION AT BAYCREST.
PHOTO COURTESY OF NICOLE ACEVEDO

A panoramic wood carving placed on the top rail of the fence is painted to depict the natural features of the bay. Many of the features are numbered and identified. It is rotting and somewhat outdated, but was recently re-painted by a member of the community. Because the carving interprets a large area on a relatively small scale, visitors from outside the region may find it difficult to relate to the media and accurately identify the features in real life.



WOOD CARVING DEPICTING THE NATURAL FEATURES OF KACHEMAK BAY AND COOK INLET,
PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE MEEHAN

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for improvements at Baycrest Hill Overlook should be realistic, achievable, and budget friendly, while showcasing the artistic side of Homer. It is important to remember that any new interpretation should not detract from the views from the overlook, but rather, they should enhance the view by providing opportunities for visitors to connect intellectually and emotionally to the resource. A site plan showing existing conditions and recommended projects follows this section of the interpretive plan.

Interpretive Panels

It is recommended that the existing Gold Rush interpretive panel be removed and replaced with six new interpretive panels using the identified themes and a unified design scheme. The new interpretive panels should be placed at the overlook based on the topic and view. For example, when a visitor is reading about volcanoes, they should be able to see the volcanoes on the horizon. If necessary and useful, a QR code on the panels can be used to provide additional information.

The interpretive theme, “Public Lands and Waters” is a complex theme and will most likely require a larger sized panel, up to 52 inches wide and 30.5 inches high. Due to its complex theme and the committee’s specific recommendations the following describes some of the details that should be included.

- Text should welcome and orient visitors to Homer and the surrounding public lands.
- Include a map of the surrounding area to identify these places
- Include a subset map of Homer with important points of interest.
- Text should identify Homer as an arts and fishing community and could use quotes from locals about how they fell in love with Homer when they saw the view from Baycrest.

Interpretive Art

The existing wood carving that is on the fence rail at the eastern end of the overlook should be replaced with three to five metal panoramic sculptures. The new sculptures should depict and identify the natural features as seen from their specific vantage points and be able to withstand the elements. The new metal art should be a part of the long fence line, but should not obstruct the view.

Details such as the type of metal and how it is applied to the fence should be left to the artist. The artist needs to consider the strength of these pieces of art because children may climb up on the fence and cause damage if they are not durable enough. It is also strongly recommended that the artwork has a “safe design” without any sharp or jagged edges.

Poetry works well as interpretive art and it could be utilized if possible in new designs such as the metal sculptures and it can enhance some of the recommended site amenities in the following section.

Site Amenities

Many visitors and residents picnic at the overlook even though there are no picnic facilities. Up to four picnic tables should be added to the overlook with bear-resistant trash and recycling

containers within easy access of each picnic area. Two of the locations could be to the east and west of and adjacent to the core area of the overlook where cars currently park. If picnic facilities are placed in this area, a attractive barrier, such as concrete planters, should be placed in a wide buffer around the tables so that cars do not pull up close to picnickers enjoying the view. Concrete planters, or any other barrier that serves this purpose, also provides another opportunity to provide interpretive art. The other two locations for picnic tables could include one by the “Halibut Fishing Capital of the World” sign and one among the planters. (See the site plan following this section.)

Photography is a very popular activity at the overlook. Many visitors leave Baycrest with a photo of their friends and family standing below the “Halibut Fishing Capital of the World” sign as a memento of their trip that helps to make their experience at the site more memorable. A small pillar should be placed in the ground at a carefully selected spot in front of the sign so that visitors can take self portraits under the sign. This pillar could be artistically decorated so that visitors know that it is to be used as a camera base and could incorporate the halibut theme in the design. Depending on the size of the pillar, this may provide another opportunity to use interpretive poetry in the design. The area around the sign also has a tendency to get very muddy due to heavy foot traffic and the area’s climate. It would be beneficial to visitors if the surface area was covered with a durable material such as local beach pebbles and shells, crushed aggregate or another suitable



"HOMER, ALASKA: HALIBUT FISHING CAPITAL OF THE WORLD"

material. Part of this design should include a curb to retain the material and separate it safely from the parking area.

The current restrooms function properly and seem to handle the current visitation; however, toilets that are more efficient exist. When funding is allocated for new toilets, consider using a more eco-friendly, low-maintenance, and weather-resistant type such as the CXT model and consider incorporating interpretive art in the design of the new latrines.

Currently, only one section of the fence is low enough for children and visitors in wheelchairs to enjoy the view. If possible, alter the fence and

railing so that there are more areas that allow for unobstructed viewing by visitors in wheelchairs as well those of small stature such as children.

Baycrest fortunately has a large parking area, but it could be better organized with striping, curbs, and planters.

Partnerships

The city of Homer and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) should expand their partnership so that vegetation that is impeding the view from interpretive panels and artwork can be removed or cut back.

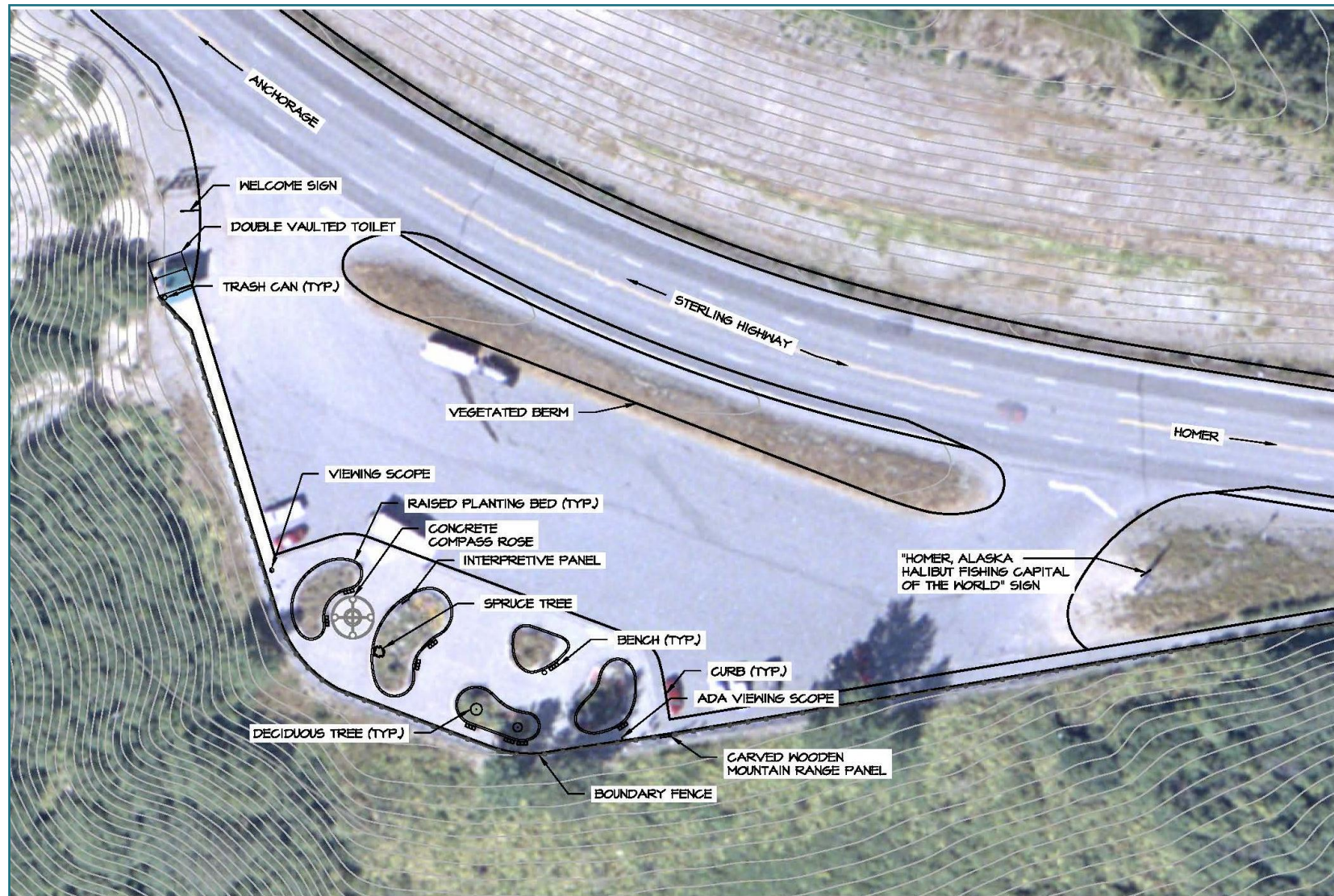
The Homer Chamber of Commerce and DOT&PF should open a discussion about relocating the existing welcome sign that has affiliation group logos on it. The sign currently blocks the initial view that visitors could have when they drive to the overlook.

VISITOR FLOW

In most cases, visitors enter the site by personal vehicle from the north as they drive into Homer on the Sterling Highway. Most turn into the overlook from the northern entrance; however, some may miss this turn and use the southern entrance. It is important to note that some visitors may arrive on the ferry and drive out of Homer from the south. Very few visitors arrive on the multi-use path by other means of transportation. It may be assumed that many visitors use the restrooms before reading any interpretation and if it is a very clear day, many visitors also enjoy the views before they read any interpretation. The trash cans are also heavily used at the site.

NUMBER AND SIZE/ORIENTATION OF PANELS

Content and placement of new interpretation should be written and designed so that there is not a specific order in which the visitor must read them. There are numerous options for choosing the type of material used for each panel depending on the type of conditions at a site. In general, high-pressure laminate is used in Alaska for its resistance to extreme weather conditions, ultraviolet rays, and vandalism. A summary of common materials used for interpretive panels can be found in the appendix.

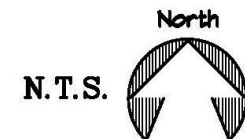


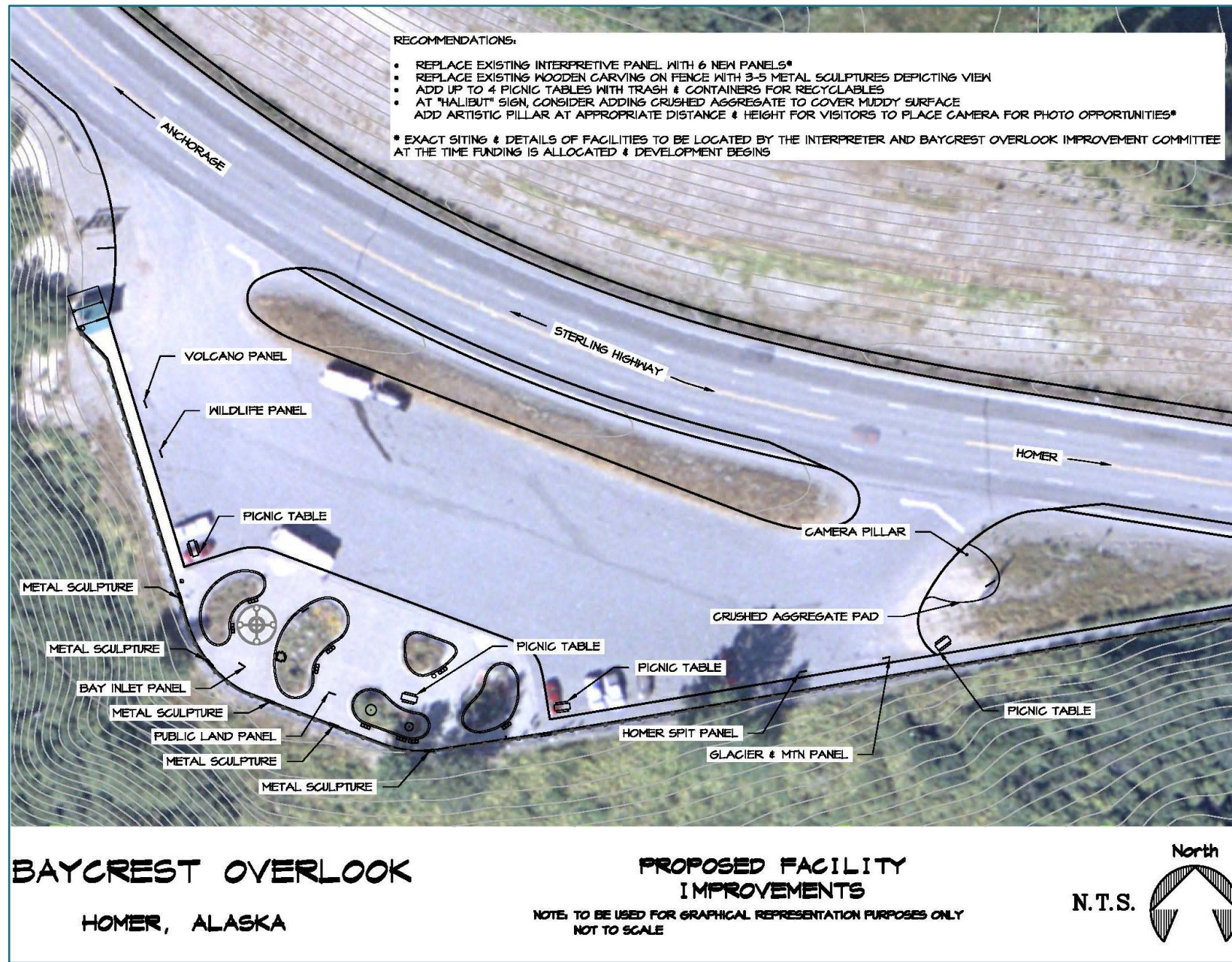
BAYCREST OVERLOOK

HOMER, ALASKA

EXISTING CONDITIONS

NOTE: TO BE USED FOR GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION PURPOSES ONLY
NOT TO SCALE





DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section provides design guidelines for new interpretation at the Baycrest Hill Overlook. Interpretive sites and materials should use a cohesive design to give the area a distinctive appearance. To best implement the following guidelines, the Baycrest Improvement Committee should work with professional interpreters.

A high quality, professional standard should be used for interpretive panels, parking facilities, structures, kiosks, and restrooms. New interpretive panels should use materials that are both low maintenance and vandal resistant. New facilities should be carefully designed so that they are ADA accessible and use universal design standards.

The following section outlines the basic elements of design for interpretive panels. They are intended to guide the committee as they update and develop new interpretation for the Baycrest Hill Overlook.

PANEL DESIGN

A typical interpretive panel at a wayside will be approximately 36.5 inches wide by 30.5 inches high with 200-250 words. The interpretive panel about public lands and waters could still use the same panel mount as the other panels, but the panel itself could be up to 52 inches wide by 30.5 inches high with 300-350 words. The content of an interpretive panel, including theme and topic, should determine the types of graphics used. Graphics or a font style that works beautifully in one panel may not be appropriate for others; however, it is highly recommended that a cohesive and thematic design is used throughout all the panels at the same wayside.

This plan recommends that a serif font such as Goudy or Garamond be used for titles and headings. A sans-serif font such as Calibri or Segoe should be used for body text. Although these are general rules to follow when developing written interpretation, they are not mandates; the contracted interpretive specialist and the improvement committee will decide what is appropriate for each panel. Typographical techniques can occasionally allow the title and headings to work as graphic elements.

DONOR AND AGENCY RECOGNITION

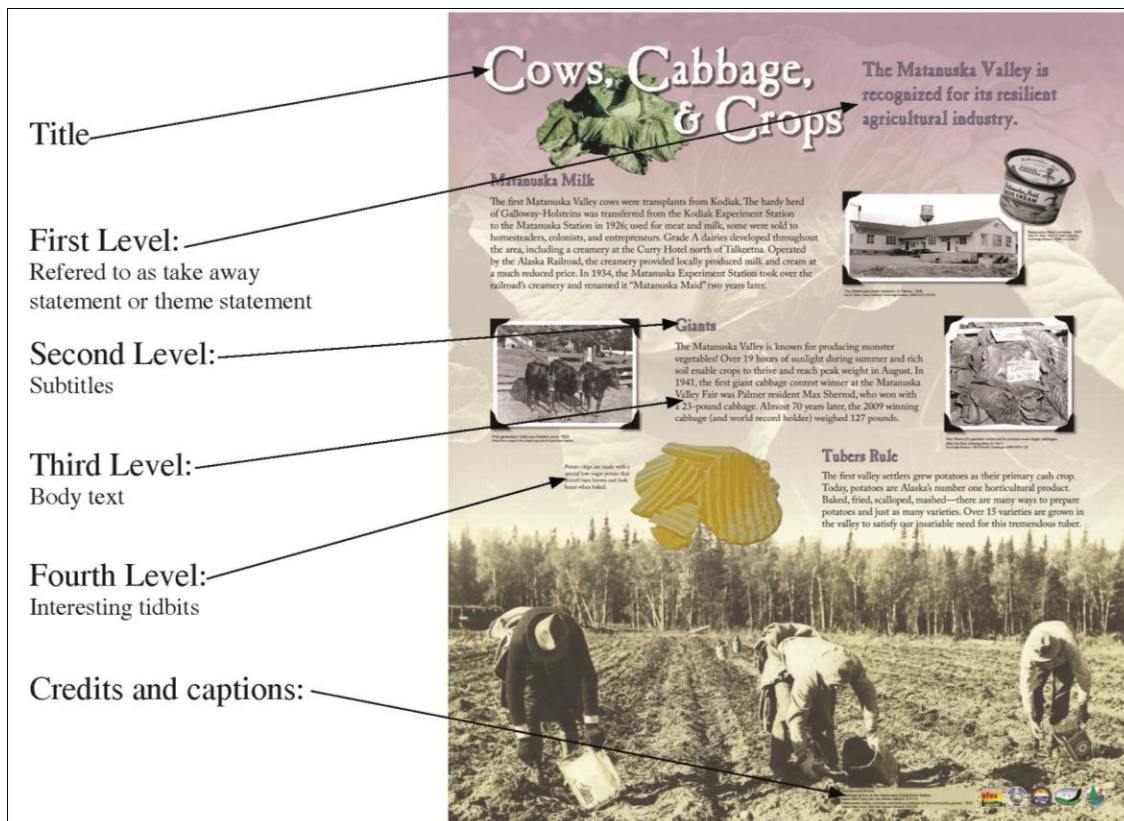
Small logos for funding sources should be included, but having too many logos can clutter a panel and potentially confuse visitors. One option for replacing multiple logo images is to create a funding line on the interpretive panel that is written out. Font size and style should be similar to photo captions. Another option is to develop a separate plaque that recognizes donors and agencies involved in the project.

PANEL LAYOUT

Interpretive panels at the overlook should have a similar layout if possible, but the format may be slightly altered to better represent the panel theme or to accommodate any city, state, or federal agency-adopted standards that are not flexible.

The textual components of a typical panel are as follows:

- **TITLE:** The title tells visitors what the panel is about and should intrigue them continue reading.
- **THEME STATEMENT (1ST LEVEL):** The theme statement presents the overall theme of the panel and provokes the audience to read further. However, if this statement is the only thing the visitor reads, he or she should still grasp the main message of the panel.
- **HEADINGS (2ND LEVEL):** The headings introduce readers to the body text. Typically, the theme statement and headings should have the same font type and size.
- **BODY TEXT (3RD LEVEL):** The main body of the text supports the theme statement and should relate the resource being interpreted to the audience and reveal something meaningful about the resource.
- **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (4TH LEVEL):** This part of the panel reveals interesting information not included in the body text; it can be a quote or poem, or it can be a statement that further describes a process, person, event, or photograph.
- **PHOTO CAPTIONS:** Captions should describe the photograph and give credit to the photographer.



COLOR PALETTE

Interpretive displays at roadside pullouts should have a consistent color scheme. However, there needs to be some flexibility to ensure that the color palette of individual panels complements the chosen topic and theme as well as the graphics and surrounding landscape.

People tend to rely heavily on visual cues and, so, the visual elements of a display or panel or panel are of great importance in conveying a message and helping people connect to the site. Colors may influence how a visitor interprets the site's story and the type of connections he or she forms. Warm colors—red, yellow, and orange—can convey a sense of movement, energy, and excitement

or a sense of anger or violence. Cool colors can evoke a sense of calm or create emotional distance. Complementary colors such as green and red or purple and yellow create strong contrasts—a bold look. Analogous colors such as green, green-blue, and blue create a calm and relaxed look. Monochromatic color schemes composed of varying shades or tints of the same color create a sense of depth.⁴



EXAMPLE OF A PLACE-BASED COLOR SCHEME

EVALUATING INTERPRETATION

Creating guidelines for evaluating the effectiveness of interpretive sites and materials is an essential part of the planning process. The purpose of evaluations is to help the improvement committee measure whether the plan's goals and objectives are being met. The intent of evaluations is to collect information to make improvements and decisions about future planning. It is important to remember that this plan should also be evaluated to ensure that it stays relevant to the needs of the site visitor.

There are many appropriate methods for evaluating interpretation at the Baycrest Hill Overlook. A combination of methods will produce the best results. Media, especially interpretive panels, should be evaluated at least every ten years for both content and graphics. Using peer reviews, oral interviews, exit questionnaires, observation, and suggestion boxes would all be effective methods for evaluating the Byway's sites and services.

- **PEER REVIEWS:** Professional interpreters developing media for the Byway should allow for a peer review process that includes members of the Baycrest Improvement Committee. A group of people with varying interests will provide valuable input in the developing stages of interpretation and the product will greatly benefit from this process.
- **ORAL INTERVIEWS:** Visitors could be approached for a short interview about interpretation at the overlook. Interviews can provide the committee with a person's impressions and allows for follow-up questions to learn more about someone's opinions.

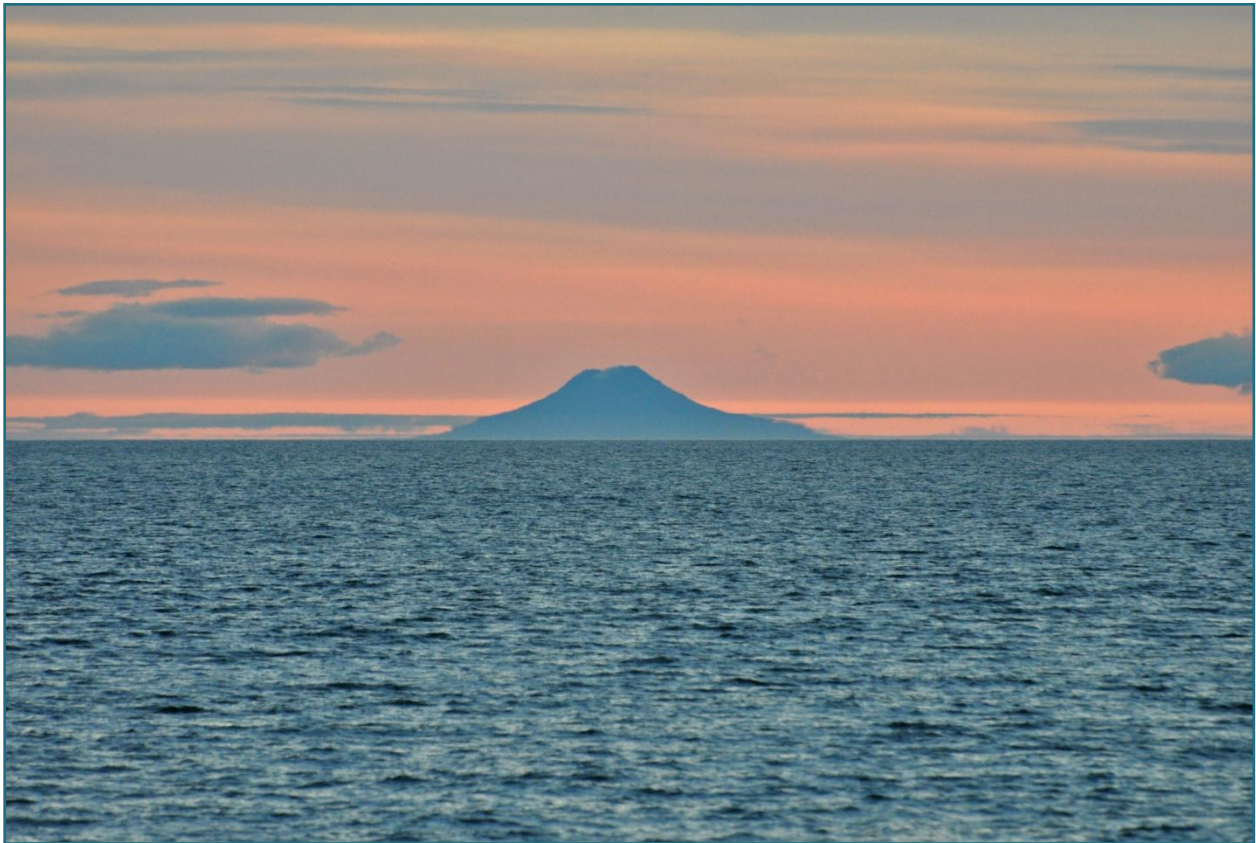
⁴ The content of this section has been heavily borrowed from Chapter 4 of *Interpretation by Design: Graphic Design Basics for Heritage Interpreters* by Paul Caputo, Shea Lewis, and Lisa Brochu.

- QUESTIONNAIRES: Visitors could be given a questionnaire with pointed questions to determine whether the interpretative media's objectives were met and the themes communicated. The questionnaire should also solicit ideas for improvement. Volunteers or committee members could hand questionnaires to visitors during peak hours at identified points of contact.
- OBSERVATION: Indirect observation—having someone observe how visitors react to interpretive exhibits—is a good method for evaluating the effectiveness of each display, including its ability to attract and hold a visitor's attention.
- SUGGESTION BOX: Suggestion boxes or guest books could be placed in areas of high visitation to provide travelers a place to share their thoughts, suggestions, and ideas. A system should be established whereby the comments are regularly retrieved. Paper and pencils would need to be supplied and restocked. If the committee decides that a suggestion box or guest book is not appropriate at the overlook, a digital "suggestion box" on the internet could also yield helpful post-trip insights.

"Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection." (Quoted in Tilden's *Interpreting Our Heritage*)

APPENDIX A:

Lower Cook Inlet/Kachemak Bay Area Public Lands and Waters



AUGUSTINE VOLCANO, PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY LOCHART

The following is a comprehensive list of local, state, and national parks, monuments, wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, wildlife refuges and game sanctuaries, critical habitat areas, important bird areas, etc.

- Kachemak Bay State Park and State Wilderness Park
Including Overlook Park unit, directly below the west end of the scenic overlook
- Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge – Gulf of Alaska Unit
 - In K-Bay: Gull Island, 60 Foot Rock, Yukon Island;
 - In Cook Inlet: Chisik and Duck Islands / Tuxedni Wilderness;
 - At Kennedy Entrance to Cook Inlet: the Barren Islands
- Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness
S.E. K-Bay uplands / West Kenai Mountains and glaciers / S.W. Harding Ice Field
- Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area
- Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area (not visible from scenic overlook)
- Homer Airport State Critical Habitat Area (not visible from scenic overlook)
- Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and Kasitsna Bay Lab (both NOAA/State partnerships)
- Mud Bay/Mariner Park Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) site (not visible from scenic overlook)
- Lake Clark National Park and Preserve (including Lake Clark Wilderness Area, three Wild and Scenic Rivers [Tlikakila, Chilikadrotna and Mulchatna], and the Redoubt and Iliamna National Natural Landmarks and Kijik National Historical Landmark.)
- Augustine Island - within the Kamishak Special Use area (state) and surrounded by EFH for several marine fishery species (under federal Magnuson-Stevens Act). Active volcano, AVO/UNAVCO instrumentation site, UAF Geophysical Institute research site with two permanent camps.⁵
- McNeil River State Game Refuge and Sanctuary, also a National Natural Landmark under NPS
- Katmai National Park and Preserve (Cape Douglas within the boundary is visible from the scenic overlook)

⁵ Augustine Island: Kamishak Special Use Area – state designation, managed by Kenai Peninsula Borough. The designation recognizes the importance of the area for its remote character and fisheries resources, both habitat and harvest. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) – federal designation under the Stevens-Magnuson Conservation and Management Act. This applies to the marine waters surrounding Augustine Island. Specifically identified are weathervane scallops, arrowtooth flounder, Pacific cod, Pollock and all five species of Pacific salmon, as well as “other marine species.” Augustine Island is under an Interagency Land Management Assignment to the University of Alaska, Fairbanks for research purposes. The 2001 Kenai Area Plan lists management purposes as scientific research and education.

- Including Katmai Wilderness Area
- Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Critical Habitat Area (particularly the west side of Cook Inlet nearshore habitat and all of K-Bay)
- Northern Sea Otter Critical Habitat area (southwest AK Distinct Population Segment [DPS] only) west side of Cook Inlet nearshore habitat from Shelikof Strait/Cape Douglas to Redoubt Point, including Mt. Augustine. (NOTE: K-Bay not included)
- Important Bird Areas (IBAs) for waterbird and seabird species and colonies:
 - The Barren Islands, Kachemak Bay, Kamishak Bay, lower Cook Inlet

OTHER PUBLIC LAND AND WATER DESIGNATIONS IN THE SURROUNDING AREA:

Cook Inlet Region:

- 1) Lower Cook Inlet (but not visible from scenic overlook)
 - Anchor River/Fritz Creek Critical Habitat Area
 - Anchor River State Recreation Area
 - Stariski Creek State Recreation Site
 - Clam Gulch State Critical Habitat Area
 - Clam Gulch State Recreation Site
 - Deep Creek State Recreation Site
- 2) Central and upper Cook Inlet (not visible from scenic overlook)
 - Kalgin Island State Critical Habitat Area
 - Redoubt Bay Critical Habitat Area
 - Trading Bay State Game Refuge

Upper central Gulf of Alaska Region:

- 1) Kenai Fjords National Park (eastern half of the outer Kenai Peninsula coast and Kenai Mountains, not visible from scenic overlook or from Kachemak Bay)

APPENDIX B:

Interpretive Panel and Sign Materials



KACHEMAK BAY AND THE KENAI MOUNTAINS, PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY LOCHART