



MEMORANDUM

Proposed Community Recreation Center Site Selection Recommendation

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor and City Council
Date: January 2, 2024
From: Recreation Champions Working Group

In an effort to continue the efforts and review possible options for a future City of Homer Community Recreation Center, the Recreation Champions group has recently met and reviewed three different possible locations: the Homer Electric Association (HEA) lot bounded by Lake, Grubstake, and Snowbird; the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB)/Homer Middle School lot; and the City of Homer-owned town center lots. Public Works Director Kort visited and inspected each property and provided preliminary cost estimates for related to initial utility infrastructure costs. Based upon the logistics, location, and initial costs, the group agreed to eliminate the KPB lot as a possible option. The HEA lot would potentially be the least expensive site to develop for utilities, but would require negotiation with HEA for purchase, meaning that overall, the City-owned town center lots may be advantageous to consider for a new Community Recreation Center. This memo focuses on the City-owned town center lots.

When discussing the three sites in November, the Recreation Champions group recognized potential positives and negatives associated with the town center lots and decided it is warranted to gain additional commission, neighbor, and public insights into the town center lots before deciding whether these lots may be chosen as a preferred site for a new community recreation center. The lots are centrally located, could include public parking for pedestrian access to Pioneer Avenue businesses, and could support future efforts to develop the privately owned portions of town center. However, the area is also currently undeveloped and is adjacent to a wooded trail through Kachemak Heritage Land Trust property and the edge of one City-owned lot. Receiving public input on the pros and cons of these lots will be important before making a decision on a preferred site for the Community Recreation Center.

The Recreation Champions group is interested in soliciting feedback from neighboring property owners, organizations, and community members, and receiving formal reviews from the Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission (PARCAC); the Planning Commission; and the Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDAC) for selecting the City of Homer-owned town center lots as the preferred location for a future Community Recreation Center.

The City Center Property offer's some interesting challenges as well as potential opportunities when considering developing this parcel. This property extends to Pioneer Avenue and the lower portion of the property is confined by property owned by Valentin Caspaar LLC to the south and east; Kachemak Heritage Land Trust to the east; and properties owned by Guy Rosi, Rosi Community Property Trust, and Lulu Mae LLC to the west. Water is available along Pioneer Avenue, and a sewer main passes through the northern portion of the property. Providing water service to a potential Recreation Center is relatively simple and could be done by extending the water main to the building

site or running a water service into the property to serve just this building. Providing sewer service to this building using the sewer main passing through the northern side of the property will likely require a lift station dedicated to the building. Alternatively, sewer service could be extended from Grubstake Avenue or Hazel Avenue by acquisition of a Utility Easement to provide gravity sewer service to the property.

One thing to consider, there may be a unique opportunity to partner with the owner of the Valentin Caspaar LLC property as part of a larger development plan and run both sewer and water mainlines into both properties by extending the sewer mainlines from Grubstake Avenue and/or Hazel Avenue to serve these properties and possibly looping the water main service between Pioneer Avenue, Main Street, Grubstake Avenue, Hazel Avenue or a combination of these locations.

The entrance to this new facility would most likely be best served by coming off of Pioneer Avenue, or a future road extension originating from the intersection of Poopdeck Street and Hazel Avenue as part of a development agreement with the owner of Valentin Caspaar LLC properties. Access to the building site off of Grubstake Avenue would not be recommended due to the neighborhood density and street design.

Utility Cost Estimate:

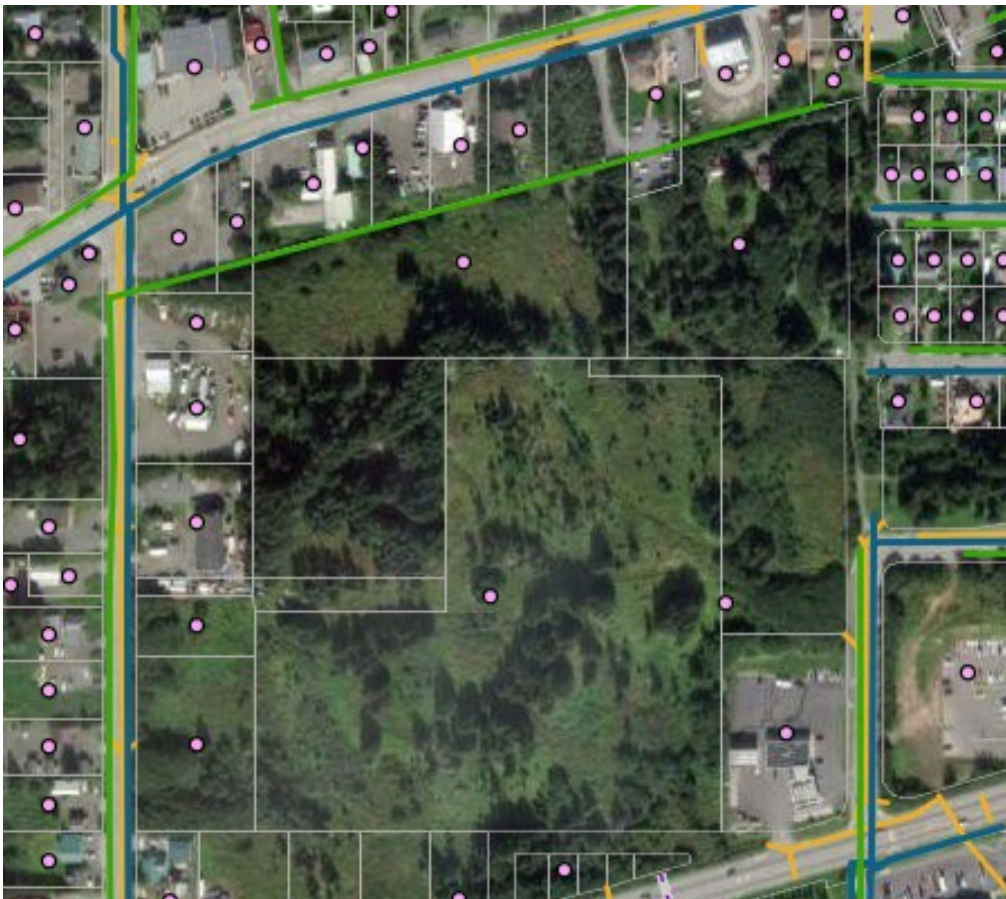
There are a lot of factors and alternatives that play into the development of a facility on this property that are difficult to isolate without a deeper investigation with proposed ideas. For the purpose of demonstration, we will offer a couple of ideas.

- Water Service from Pioneer Ave, Sewer Connection to sewer main along north property line with a lift station – \$482,000
- Water service from Pioneer Ave, Sewer connection to gravity sewer on Grubstake (could be done with development agreement or purchase Utility Easement (excluding cost of purchasing the easement)) – \$355,000

Access Road Cost Estimate:

Road costs would depend on the project development plan and access location. For the purpose of demonstration, we will offer a couple of ideas.

- Access off of Pioneer Avenue – \$158,000
- Access off of the intersection of Hazel Avenue and Poopdeck Street – \$710,000 (could share costs with other developers)





Recommendation: Request PARCAC, Planning Commission, and EDAC review the City-owned town center lots as the possible preferred location for a Community Recreation Center and provide feedback to the City Council. Additionally, request the city manager to direct staff to solicit feedback from neighboring property owners, organizations, and community members regarding selecting the City-owned town center lots as the preferred location for a Community Recreation Center.

Attachment:

Memorandum from Public Works Director Kort dated October 21, 2024



MEMORANDUM

Proposed Future Recreation Center Site Alternatives

Item Type: Informational Memorandum

Prepared For: Recreation Champions and City Councilors Aderhold and Erickson

Date: October 21, 2024

From: Daniel Kort, Public Works Director

Through: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

Summary:

The Public Works Department (PWD) was requested to investigate the feasibility of utility accessibility at 3 proposed future Recreation Center Sites at the City Councils October 14th meeting. In addition to the feasibility, it was requested that the Public Works Department provide an order of magnitude cost estimate to provide utilities to the proposed sites. The three lots under further consideration and associated estimate costs for utilities, site access, and potential development costs are as follows:

- Homer Middle School - \$427,000 to \$1,114,000 (site will likely also have \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 additional site development costs beyond the other sites due to topography)
- Homer Electric Association - \$235,000 to \$435,000
- City Center Property - \$513,000 to \$1,192,000

Discussion:

The PWD has reviewed the proposed properties for utility feasibility as detailed below. The PWD attempted to create an order of magnitude cost estimate to provide utilities to a proposed building site on the property, however some of the properties are large and assumptions had to be made as to the building location and development that could impact these costs, so they are strictly hypothetical order of magnitude estimates and should not be considered a true cost estimate. Access to some sites is complicated and will have an impact to the decision, so the PWD took it upon itself to also include this evaluation and information as well.

The sites identified by the City Council are as follows:

- The vacant land behind the athletic field at Homer Middle School (Homer Middle School)
- The HEA property at the corner of Snowbird Street; Grubstake Avenue; and Lake Street (HEA)
- Property owned by the City of Homer (City) commonly referred to as the "City Center" (City Center)

Homer Middle School:

The feasibility of gaining utility access to the location north of the track/athletic field is possible. It is believed that there are a few options to facilitate this sites development. Sewer service could be provided to this location by constructing a lift station and pumping the wastewater to the sanitary sewer along Spruceview Avenue to the North. However, it may be more economical over the long-term to construct a sewer main extension and utility easement along the eastern property line of the School District and connect the Recreation Center to this new sewer main. This would eliminate the long term ownership and operation of an additional lift station. The City water supply could be fed from either a water main extension from the Sterling Highway towards from the south within the common utility easement as the sewer main, or fed from the water main on Spruceview Avenue to the North.

Access to this site may be very challenging. It is the opinion of the PWD that developing site access from Spruceview Avenue is undesirable and not recommended because this development would significantly increase the traffic on that street beyond what the street was designed for and it's intended use. Therefore, access to the site would need to come from the south.

The site could be access by either constructing an entrance along the Homer Middle School's east or west property line. An entrance along the east property line could be constructed by either extending Woodside Avenue and purchasing property from the Broshe-Lowney Community Property Trust for the driveway access, or by creating a driveway entrance off of the Sterling Highway along the HERC property line. Both of these options have challenges associated with the two previously mentioned storm water drainages passing through this area and poor soils. To facilitate the development of an entrance to the east side of the lot will require a lot of drainage improvements and road subbase improvements to accommodate this access. An access to the west was not fully evaluated due to the SPARC entrance already sharing the driveway for the Homer Middle School. It was assumed that the additional traffic associated with the Recreation Center would not be desirable to the School District or the Alaska DOT using the already shared entrance. It was further assumed that the Alaska DOT would not be receptive to adding a separate entrance to the Sterling Highway in close proximity to the shared entrance for the Homer Middle School and SPARC due to potential traffic safety.

Site development upon this parcel will have additional challenges due to the topography and two previously mentioned storm water drainages that pass down along the west side of the property. This parcel has approximately 30-feet of elevation change across the lot. While constructing a building on this property is physically possible, the topography could add \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 to the development of the Recreation Center at this location compared to similar development plans at other locations.

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Some special considerations for this site revolve around the KPB School Districts willingness to sell half of this property for this development and allowing the creation of a utility easement along the Eastern property line.

Utility Cost Estimate: \$494,000

Assuming providing water service from Spruceview Avenue and Sewer service from the Sterling Highway. The following estimates of cost are provided with the understanding that this is purely an order of magnitude cost estimate with no building site on the large parcel identified.

Access Road Cost Estimates:

- Woodside Entrance: \$1,052,000
- Sterling Highway Entrance: \$1,114,000
- Spruceview Avenue Entrance: \$427,000

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HEA Property:

The HEA property provides some additional challenges for Sewer. There is only one sewer main passing this property and it is on the East side of Lake Street. The sewer main is approximately 8.5-ft below ground surface in this region and may be low enough elevation to provide sewer service to a building developed upon this property without being pumped depending upon the buildings location on the large parcel, building design, and the building sewer elevation. However, there is no guarantee that gravity flow will work for this site. Water service to this site will be straight forward and the building could be served from either Grubstake Avenue or Lake Street, however a water service is already established off of Grubstake Avenue.

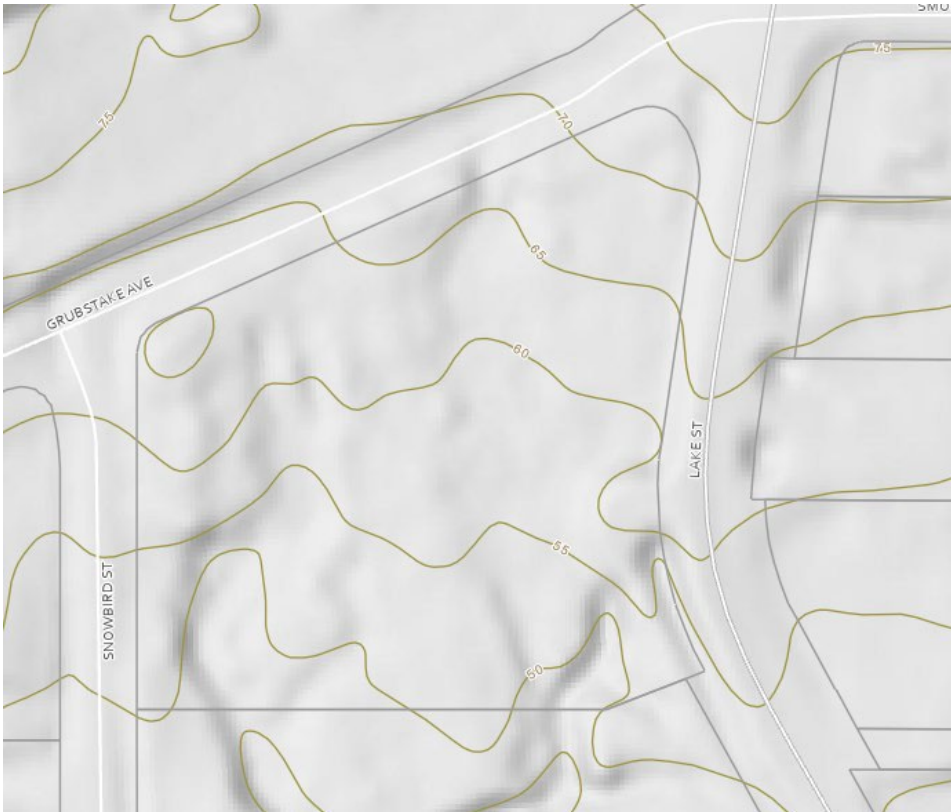
The driveway entrance to the proposed site could come off of any of the three proposed streets. Due to the higher traffic volume on Lake Street, the City may want to take the approach to place the facility entrance onto either Grubstake Avenue or Snowbird Street to reduce road congestion associated with this facility at this location. It is the opinion that Grubstake Avenue would work best to lessen the conflictions with the Post Office.

Utility Cost Estimate: \$150,000 - \$350,000

Assuming providing water service from Grubstake Avenue and Sewer going towards Lake Street, and the driveway going to Grubstake Avenue. The cost estimate is an order of magnitude estimate and is based off a theoretical building and location. The upper end of the estimate represents if a lift station is required as well.

Access Road Cost Estimate: \$85,000

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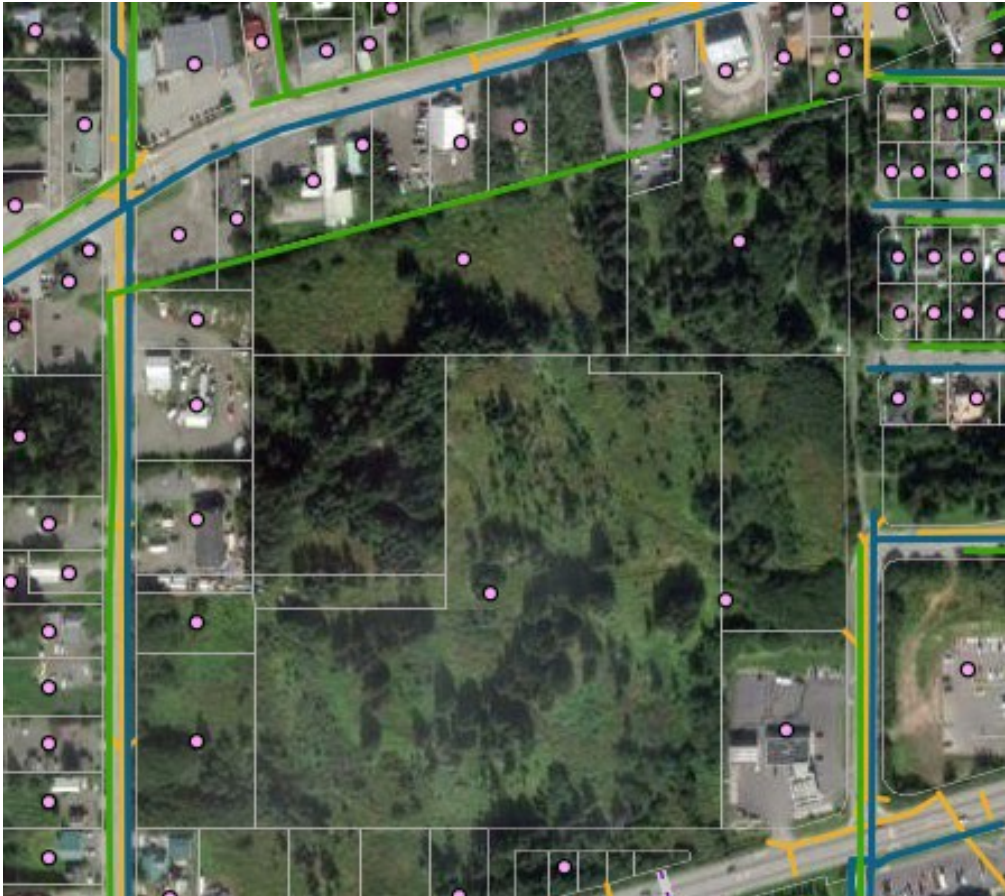
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