



# City of Homer

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## Memorandum

### Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION  
FROM: RENEE KRAUSE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II  
DATE: MARCH 6, 2024  
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL

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#### WORKSESSION AGENDA

#### DISCUSSION/PRESENTATION

A. City of Homer Draft Transportation Plan

Presentation by Jeanne Bowie with Kinney Engineering

**pages 3 - 30**

Comments from Commissioner Barnwell

**pages 31 - 34**





# City of Homer Transportation Plan

PLANNING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024





# What is a Transportation Plan?





# The Homer Transportation Plan

- Builds off of the Homer Comprehensive Plan
- Documents the Homer transportation system NOW
  - Public comment
  - Traffic volume data (now and 20 years in the future)
- Establishes 20-year GOALS and OBJECTIVES for the Homer transportation network
- Provides GUIDELINES for developing the transportation system
- Describes POLICIES and PROJECTS that work towards those goals
- Feeds into the Homer Comprehensive Plan





# Outreach and Public Involvement



# Public Involvement: Plan Direction and Content

- In the fall of 2022, the City of Homer sought input on the plan:
  - Non-motorized Transportation Symposium led by Homer Drawdown (October 1, 2022)
  - Online mapping tool (locations of specific concern)
  - Online survey (how do people travel and how do they want to travel)
  - Public Open House (goals and objectives)



# Public Involvement: Draft Plan

- In the fall of 2023, the City of Homer gathered input on the draft plan
  - Public meeting
  - City website
  - Open to public comment through October 10<sup>th</sup>.



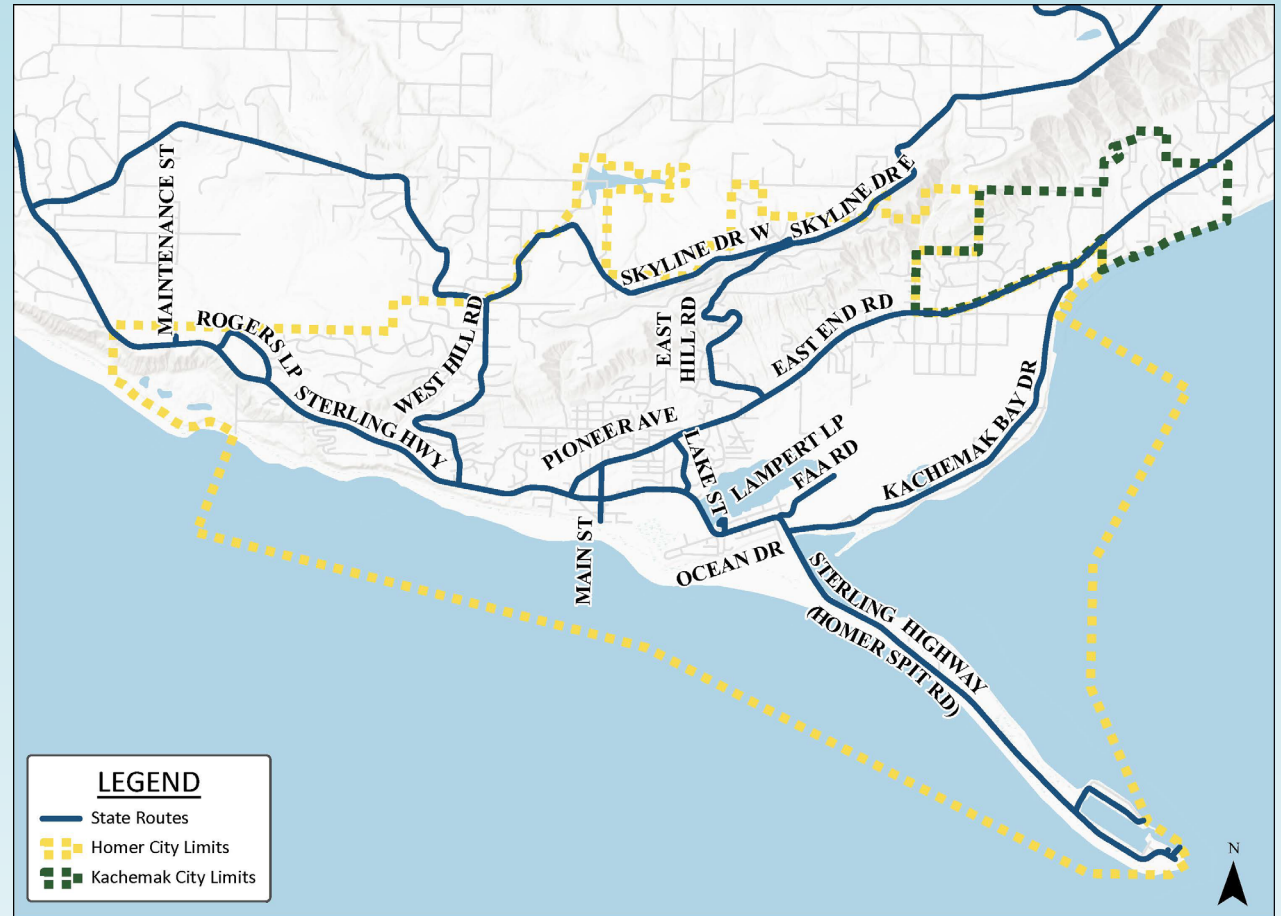


# State of the Transportation System



# State of the Transportation System

- DOT&PF roads make up the backbone of the transportation system.
- City of Homer roads fill in the network, providing access to residents, businesses, and attractions.



# State of the Transportation System

- The DOT&PF roads have varying levels of walking and biking infrastructure.
- There are many DOT&PF routes without dedicated infrastructure for walking and biking.



# State of the Transportation System

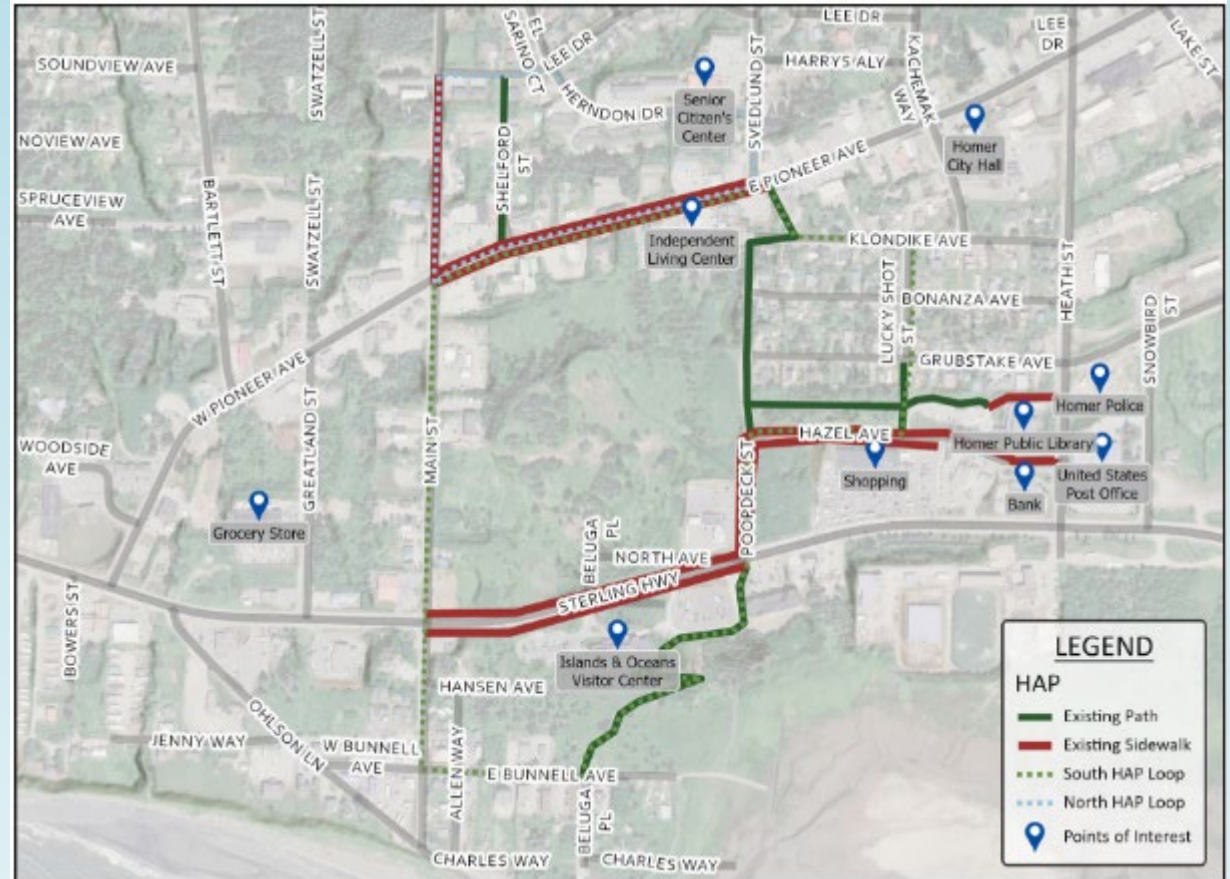
- The City has been working to build a well-connected network of local and collector roads.
- These connections can provide
  - Improved pedestrian and bicycle connections.
  - Reduction of short vehicle trips on arterials.
  - Vehicle access to signalized intersections on the major arterials.
- Examples: Grubstake Avenue extension, Greatland Street extension.





# State of the Transportation System

- The City has also been adding walking and biking infrastructure.
  - Ben Walters Lane sidewalk
  - Svedlund Street sidewalk
  - Homer All-Ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway



# What improvements are needed?

- Year-round maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle routes (including along DOT&PF routes)
- Plan to keep up winter maintenance as more infrastructure is built
- New, connected infrastructure to improve walking and biking
- Design of trails and sidewalks to make maintenance easier
- Infrastructure for electric vehicles
- Separation of heavy trucks from high pedestrian use areas
- Affordable transportation options
- Opportunities to park, then walk or take a bus
- Reduction of environmental impacts of the transportation system
- Reauthorization of HART fund





# Transportation System Guidelines



# Transportation System Guidelines

- Included in the Plan are Transportation System Guidelines and examples
  - Designing for persons of all ages and abilities
    - Speed & Safety
  - Pedestrian Crosswalks
  - Traffic Calming



*Traffic Calming on Beluga Place*







## Complete Streets

- Designing and operating streets to enable safe use and support mobility for all users (including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders)

## Designing for People

- Design streets to balance the needs of diverse users in order to shape an enticing environment that ensures access, safety, comfort, and enjoyment for everyone.

## Streets as Places

- Design and construction of public streets focused on building places that improve the quality of life and the environment rather than simply move vehicles from place to place

## Vision Zero

- Strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all

# Safety-focused Transportation Planning



# Transportation System Goals and Objectives



# What are Goals and Objectives?



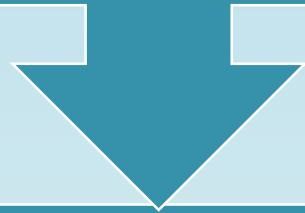
**GOAL:** Statements describing the fundamental outcomes the plan is aiming to achieve



**OBJECTIVE:** Specific statements of outcomes the plan is aiming to achieve (measurable)



The goals and objectives were developed with input from city staff and members of the community.



The goals and objectives represent the community's commitment to building a safe, sustainable, and accessible transportation system that meets the needs of all members of the community.



# GOAL 1: Increase Safety of Interactions Between Different Modes of Travel

- Community members want travel within the city to be safer, including for people walking, biking, and driving.
- Objectives:
  - Improve safety at conflict points between pedestrian and motor vehicles
  - Provide for safe use of the right-of-way by all transportation modes
  - Improve user understanding of how to safely share the public ROW



## GOAL 2: Provide a Connected Network of Local and Collector Roads and Trails that Balances Modes Based on Land Use Contexts

- Community members desire a connected network for all users.
- Objectives:
  - Identify a priority pedestrian network that connects key generators and develop a plan to build these connections.
  - Identify a priority low-stress bicycle network that connects key generators, develop a plan to build these connections, and encourage appropriate bicycle parking.
  - Identify gaps in the collector road network and develop a plan to build these connections.
  - Identify and address opportunities for parking once and then walking, ride-sharing, or using transit





# GOAL 3: Maintain Transportation Network to be Usable Year-Round

- Community members desire roads and walking and biking facilities to be maintained so they are usable in the winter and summer
- Objectives:
  - Reconstruct and proactively maintain pedestrian, bicycle, and City of Homer facilities to ensure year-round usability.
  - Manage resources to maximize and balance maintenance efforts.
  - Update and enforce design standards for walking, biking, road, and public transportation networks
  - Include appropriate improvements for each travel mode as part of reconstruction or new construction projects within the public right-of-way



# GOAL 4: Provide Expanded Transportation Options for Residents and Visitors

- Community members desire a transportation system that provides additional transportation options and reduces environmental impacts
- Objectives:
  - Support the development of a public transportation network.





# Recommendations

POLICIES AND PROJECTS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED TO ACHIEVE THE  
ESTABLISHED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



# Goal 1: Increase the Safety of Interactions Between Different Modes of Travel

## POLICIES:

### “Truck Network”

- *Establish Truck Routes to reduce the number of through trucks travelling on Pioneer Avenue.*

### “Traffic Calming”

- *Develop a Traffic Calming Manual that describes treatments that are effective and acceptable to the City of Homer.*

## PROJECTS:

### “Improve Drop-Off and Pick-Up Locations at Schools”

- *Study schools with circulation concerns and develop plans to improve them.*

### “Kachemak Drive Reconnaissance Engineering Study”

- *Conduct a reconnaissance engineering study to identify concerns, needs, and obstacles for improving Kachemak Drive for non-motorized travel and to develop potential solutions.*



## Goal 2: Provide a Connected Network of Local and Collector Roads and Trails that Balance Modes Based on Land Use Contexts

### POLICIES:

#### “Bicycle Parking”

- *Adopt a bicycle parking ordinance for new and existing buildings that specifies the amount and location of secure, convenient bicycle parking available.*

### PROJECTS:

#### “Parking Study”

- *Conduct a parking study to determine the location and benefits of centralized parking lots. Many members of the community voiced frustrations with parking options, especially along the spit and in the Central Business District.*

#### “Neighborhood Connectivity to Schools”

- *Encourage Kenai Peninsula Borough to build improved trails between schools and surrounding neighborhoods. This will ensure the safety of children walking to school by creating more connectivity to the schools and providing a set of identified, constructed, and maintained trails.*



# Goal 3: Maintain Transportation Network to be Usable Year-Round

## POLICIES:

“Transfer of Responsible Agreements for State Roads”

- *Pursue additional Transfer of Responsibility Agreements (TORAs) to allow the city to maintain roads and pathways that are currently maintained by DOT. Currently, DOT and the City have TORAs for Pioneer Avenue and the Homer Spit.*

“Maintenance Standards”

- *Set maintenance standards for the City of Homer to meet expectations, such as how frequently or under what circumstances roads, sidewalks, paths, and trails will be plowed in winter and swept in summer.*

## PROJECTS:

“Identify Additional Priorities for Walking & Biking Infrastructure”

- *Identify priority areas for non-motorized travel and develop plan for construction sidewalks, paths, and trails in those areas.*
- “Pioneer Avenue as an Extension of the Homer All Ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway (HAP) Loop”
- *Evaluate pedestrian crossing improvements for Pioneer Avenue intersections. The main intersections on Pioneer Avenue have been identified as high stress locations for crossings.*



## Goal 4: Provide Expanded Transportation Options for Residents and Visitors

### **POLICIES:**

#### “Transit Options”

- *Seek out partners to provide public transportation service in the Homer area. Year-round transit options that serve area residents and seasonal options that encourage visitors and employees to park their vehicles and travel to the Homer Spit by bus and on foot.*





**COH Transportation Plan  
Final Draft  
3/4/24**

Comments by Charles Barnwell  
City of Homer (COH) Planning Commission commissioner

**General Comments:**

I think this Plan is vastly improved from the previous version the Planning Commission reviewed, for these reasons:

- Organization of the plan is logical, and coupled with good writing and layout, makes for a Plan that is understandable to layperson and professionals.
- The layout of the plan, including sectional divisions, graphics, are very well done, and make for easier reading
- The maps are clear, simple, and effective;
- The Goals and Objectives section is very well organized, nicely presented for readability; and goals and objectives are well phrased. Overall, very well written.
- The goals and objectives fit the currently expressed needs of Homer at this time, addressing such issues as non-motorized transportation, truck routes, pedestrian safety, ADA needs, and more. I think the Complete Streets approach is a nice addition to the Plan addressing the strong connection between land use and transportation.
- Policy and analysis-wise, I think the Plan “hits the nail on the head” especially with regard to pedestrian/non-motorized routing and safety. I think the Plan presents some innovative approaches, such as Complete Streets.
- Truck routing and heavy vehicle routing is addressed, but perhaps lacking a bit in analysis. This is difficult as there aren’t a lot of options in moving large vehicles East-West through core City. But, somehow for a 20 year timeframe, some real options or solutions should be presented now, along with analysis of the pros and cons of these options.
- I like the mention of electric vehicle charging stations. I personally have an EV, and believe Homer should be forward looking in establishing charging infrastructure.

**Specific Comments:**

p.6

Figure 3:

Comment: This map makes clear that the core City of Homer is a walking town. It is interesting to see the high density of biking routes appear on Westhill Road, despite no bike lane on that road; and on Ocean Drive near the intersection with FAA Road.

p.10

TABLE 3. ADOT&PF Routes and non-motorized infrastructure.

Comment: it is striking that out of the 14 roads listed, 10 of these have no non-motorized infrastructure.

Figure 6. This map makes clear that although there are sidewalks and separated pathways on the core city area State routes, there are no non-motorized pathways leading up to the higher ground of Homer, or in other words nothing up West Hill, East Hill, or Skyline (realizing that this route isn't in COH boundaries).

p.12.

Figure 8. Showing traffic volumes.

Comment: it is striking that Ocean Drive has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest volume (9,000) of COH area routes (next to connecting Sterling Hwy at 9,300). Further evidence of the congestion in the Ocean Dr area to Homer Spit Road.

p.13

Electric vehicle charging infrastructure may be needed. I would note that "may" should be changed to "will." Currently, thanks to some progressive community members, there are 3 places to charge in Homer: AJ's Restaurant, The Art Shop Gallery, and Homer Electric Association. The latter 2 stations are low kWhr charging stations (<7 kWhr). With the increase in EV's and electric bikes as well, it would be good, especially with a 20 year Plan timeframe, to plan a good charging infrastructure.

p.17

Truck Routing;

The 2 proposed route options are both problematic in terms of pedestrian safety; realizing that we don't have many options. The Kachemak Drive option is especially problematic, as it has no designated pedestrian sidewalk or corridor. Truck traffic would only exacerbate this problem. Kachemak Drive also has significant boat transport with large vehicles. Making this a truck route would require substantial improvements.

p.20

Transit:

This page contains a good summary of current transit options in Homer.

I think what is missing is mention of an option of providing a shuttle to the Harbor area from the city core area. This would relieve parking on the Spit.

p.28

Complete Streets:

A great addition to the Transp Plan. I think the approach applies to Homer. I would like to see (not necessarily in this Plan), a GIS type map showing different zones in Homer corresponding to the Complete Streets categories (improvements depending on land use context).

p.33



Goal 2 in particular fits with Complete Streets, and is very appropriate to Homer—a workable approach for this community.

p.34

Goal 4 is an excellent forward looking goal for Homer, in expanding transportation options for both residents and visitors. A public transit system is needed, and particularly in the summer from city core to the Spit. East End Road transit would serve the expanding population in east Homer commuting or traveling to the city core.

p.37

Objective 1B: An excellently phrased objective. Emphasizing the need for safe use of right of way, and considering vehicle types, mode of transport.

Objective 2B: Again, well phrased language recommending bicycle parking, and city ordinance for parking at buildings.

Objective 3D: Needed language speaking to the necessity of COH and ADOTPF cooperation and joint planning for roads in the COH (and broader) area.

p.40

Objective 3G:

I fully agree with development of a Complete Streets policy for Homer. As mentioned above, a GIS mapping of Complete Streets “zones” based on land use would help guide the policy.

p.41

Objective 2D: Well phrased language advocating for planning of parking and transit . These two aspects should be coupled as stated, and are really needed for connection of Spit to core city, and East Homer to city core. Centralized parking lots are a great idea and the time has come for these to be planned for in Homer before land is not available for these.

p.42

Objective 1A, 2A, 2B

I like the idea of identifying conflict points of pedestrians and traffic, and improving safety at these connections. An example is Ocean Drive where many conflict points exist, and some potential ones, such as the proposed Doyon Hotel.

p.44

Objective 1A and 1B:

This is a great objective, again well phrased, that speaks to the need to figure out what to do with Kachemak Drive and pedestrian corridor, safety and non-motorized transportation.

This important road, a key connector between core city and eastern Homer, poses a real safety threat to walkers, bikers, and other non motorized transportation along it.

### Survey Results

I think this section succinctly presents results of the Kinney survey. The maps are well chosen, simple, and present clearly the various transportation needs in Homer.