



## City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

## Planning

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# Memorandum

## Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION  
FROM: ZACH PETTIT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II  
DATE: MAY 21, 2025  
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL

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### **WORKSESSION**

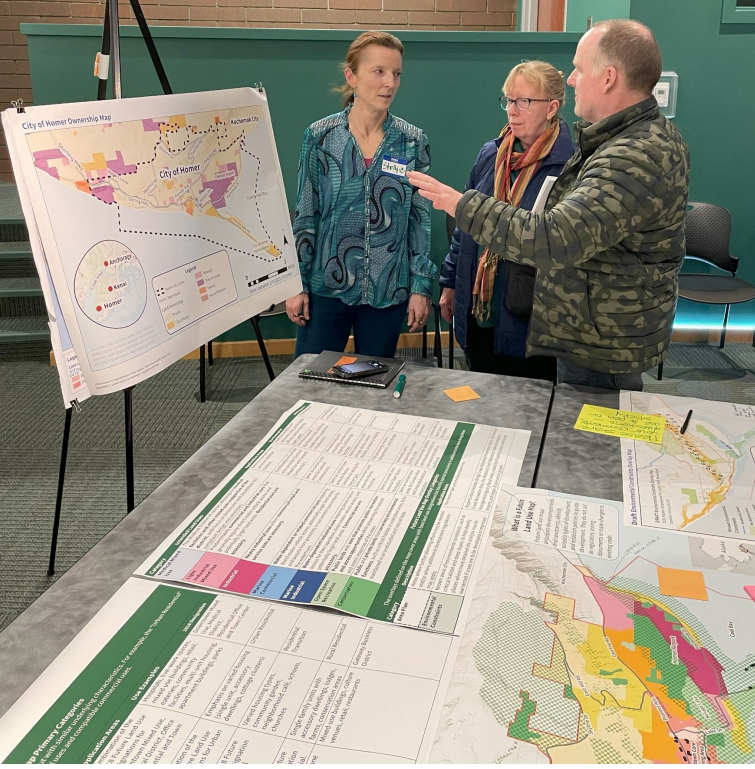
#### **3. DISCUSSION TOPIC(S)/PRESENTATIONS**

3. A. Presentation by Agnew::Beck & Stantec to Discuss Title 21 Zoning Code Rewrite

A. Phase 2: Title 21 Update Slideshow

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# **Phase 2: Title 21 Update**

## **Homer Planning Commission Work Session**

*May 21, 2025*



# What We'll Cover

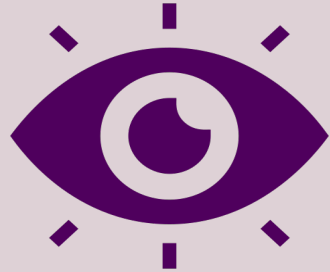
- Grounding – Project Goals & Schedule
- Summary of Engagement-to-Date
  - City Council Member Interviews
  - Stakeholder Dialogues
  - Community Tour
- Topic-Focused Discussion:
  - Land Uses
  - Housing Types
- Next Steps



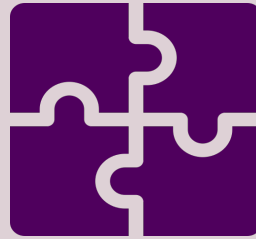
# Code Revision Goals



Streamline development processes and increase predictability



Increase code clarity and flexibility



Better align the code with community plans



Consider natural hazards and preserve natural features



Simplify, reorganize, and add visuals to make the code more user friendly



# Project Schedule

## January - March 2025

- Launch Phase 2
- Compile background and gather initial feedback from City staff and Planning Commission
- Review existing code and identify updates

## April - May 2025

*We are here*

- Meet with key stakeholders, partners, and Planning Commission to gather input
- Develop proposed code type and structure

## June - September 2025

- Gather input from public on potential changes
- Internal drafting of updated Title 21

## October - December 2025

- Share code for public review
- Consider and incorporate revisions based on feedback
- *Code adoption process starts early 2026*

Ongoing: Monthly updates and/or work sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council

# April 2025 Engagement Highlights



# Week of April 28 Activities

- Council Member Individual In-Person Interviews
  - 5 Interviews; ~30 minutes each
- Three Stakeholder Dialogues
  - 90 minutes each
  - Builders/Developers; Business Owners; Realtors
- Community Tour
  - Examples of code working, how the code could work, challenges/code not working





# Themes Across CC Interviews

## **Modern Zoning & Land Use Reform**

- Clarify ambiguous code
- Reduce setbacks & minimum lot sizes
- Allow higher lot coverage & smaller lots
- Discourage SF homes in CBD; encourage mixed-use

## **Town Center & Corridor Revitalization**

- Focus on Pioneer Ave, Central Business District, Town Center
- Encourage walkable design, rear parking, active frontages



# Themes Across CC Interviews

## **Diverse & Affordable Housing**

- Promote cottages, ADUs, townhouses, infill
- Enable upstairs/behind-business housing
- Reduce barriers (e.g., CUPs) for small-scale projects

## **Environmental Considerations**

- Use wetlands, slopes, peatlands data to inform development guidelines – protect sensitive areas

## **Walkability & Transportation**

- Reduce parking minimums; explore shared parking
- Improve pedestrian orientation/experience Connect trail & sidewalk fragments

# Themes Across CC Interviews

## **Implementation Tools**

- Integrate GIS layers with public zoning info
- Strengthen code enforcement for violations

## **Community Education & Input**

- Provide clarity and guidance on how public testimony is considered as part of CUP review process
- Educate on rezoning impacts





# Themes Across Stakeholder Dialogues

## **Modernizing the Zoning Code**

- Align zoning with the Comprehensive Plan
- Simplify and clarify zoning language
- Make zoning maps user-friendly
- Update outdated terminology and processes

## **Expanding Housing Options**

- Need for townhouses, condos, multi-family, and mixed-use housing
- Support for increased building heights and density
- Address affordable housing, especially for local workforce
- Emphasize employee housing for business growth

## **Reducing Development Barriers**

- Delays from complex subdivision and permit processes
- High infrastructure costs: water, sewer, utilities
- Lack of local fire marshal slows approvals
- Bureaucratic layers (e.g., Army Corps) add 45–60 days to timelines





# Themes Across Stakeholder Dialogues

## **Improving Coordination and Communication**

- Strengthen collaboration between City and Borough
- Improve transparency with developers and businesses
- Clearer guidance to avoid project delays

## **Supporting Economic Growth**

- Zoning must also enable commercial revitalization
- Consider development incentives and strategic exemptions
- Balance environmental priorities with economic and housing needs
- Predictability and faster processes are key for business investment

*Concerns that  
bureaucracy adds  
to costs of  
development.*

## Builders/Developers

- Need simpler, more predictable code.
- Streamline the code to encourage more housing and business development.
- Create a consistent set of rules.
- Manage the impact of public comment.
- A lot of land is not allowed to be built upon.

*Onerous standards and CUPs make projects die.*

## Business Owners

- The CUP process seems too discretionary – adds a lot of uncertainty and cost.
- Site standards are too rigorous (landscaping, requiring curbs and “art”).
- Allow more mixed use and employee housing.
- Subdivision requirements are costly and involve multiple agency review.

*More housing,  
more places.*

# Realtors

- More housing of all types is needed:
  - Employee housing
  - Housing in commercial zones
  - ADUs
  - Cottage courts (multiple principal structures on the same lot)
- Remove CUP requirements for townhouses, condos.
- Better organize the code. Make all regulations that apply to a property available in one spot.



# Community Tour – We learned a lot!



We checked out examples of, as shared by City Council Members, Staff, and Stakeholder Dialogue Participants:

- **“Good Development”** – in alignment with preliminary goals/vision for the code update
- **“Poor Development”** – out of alignment with preliminary goals/vision for the code update
- **“Code Not Working”** – development where current code is overly restrictive, unclear resulting in “poor development”

Example of **“Good Development”** – potential model for future development – how do we need to revise the code to achieve this?

# Land Uses & Housing Types

# Next Steps & Closing Comments

# What's Up Next?

- **May/June –**
  - Continued **stakeholder dialogues & interviews**
  - Preliminary **recommendations re: code structure & type**
- **June 18<sup>th</sup>** – Planning Commission **Work Session**
- **July 16<sup>th</sup>** – Planning Commission **Work Session**
- **August** – Team in **Draft Code Development**
- **September** – Planning Commission **Work Session**
- **September/October** – **Public Comment / Engagement**

## June/July 2025:

- Zoning districts (new and consolidations)
- Use standards
- Sign code
- Administrative flexibility



# Thank you! Questions, Comments?

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Check out the project  
website for more info!

[HomerT21CodeUpdate.com](http://HomerT21CodeUpdate.com)

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