



City of Homer Comprehensive Plan Update: Plan Review

July 3, 2024

Purpose

This plan review was conducted as part of the Background Research and Analysis Task for the City of Homer Comprehensive Plan Update. Documents reviewed were developed by local, borough, and state entities and will serve to inform the Comprehensive Plan Update alongside public outreach, mapping, and other data collection efforts.

In addition to summaries for each plan, this review identifies themes, strengths and challenges, and other commonalities amongst the plans and highlights key documents and plan excerpts organized by focus area.

Documents Reviewed

This review focuses on plans published after the 2018 Comprehensive Plan as well as key external components of the 2018 plan.

Name	Author/Source	Publication Date
State Transportation Improvement Plan Volume 1: Project Details (partially approved)	DOT&PF	2024
Transportation Plan (not yet adopted)	City of Homer	2024
Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report	Alaska Travel Industry Association	2023
Homer City Code	City of Homer	2023
2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan	City of Homer	2023
Adopted Biennial Operating Budget FY23-FY25	City of Homer	2023
Land Allocation Plan	City of Homer	2023
City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (Draft)	City of Homer	2023
City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (draft update)	City of Homer	2023
Community Conversation: Housing Solutions in the Greater Homer Area	City of Homer	2023
Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027	State of Alaska	2023
Homer Quality of Life	City of Homer	2022
2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report	AMHS	2022
Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum	City of Homer	2022
City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan	City of Homer	2022
Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska	Alaska DNR DGGS	2022
City of Homer Beach Policy & Management Plan	City of Homer	2021
Executive Summary – Final Report and Recommendations on Tsunami Risk to the Public Works Campus	City of Homer	2021
City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report	City of Homer	2021

City of Homer Community Design Manual	City of Homer	2021
Road Assessment Report	City of Homer	2020
Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer	City of Homer	2020
Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program Policy Manual	City of Homer	2020
Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update	KPB	2020
Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan	KPB	2019
Kenai Peninsula Borough Hazard Mitigation Plan	KPB	2019
Draft Kenai Peninsula Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan	KPB	2019
Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska	Alaska DNR DGGS	2019
Business Retention & Expansion Survey Report	City of Homer	2018
Homer Comprehensive Plan	City of Homer	2018
Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan	City of Homer	2011
City of Homer Climate Action Plan	City of Homer	2007
Homer Water and Sewer Master Plan	City of Homer	2006
Homer Town Center Development Plan	City of Homer	2006
Homer Area Transportation Plan	City of Homer	2005
Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan	City of Homer	2004

Emerging Themes

The following information was either found explicitly in multiple plans or was supported by content in multiple plans.

Mission and Vision

“Keep Homer a lively, vital community that effectively responds to change and growth while retaining what is best about Homer’s character.” (Homer Comprehensive Plan, 2018, p. 3-1)

Opportunities (copied from *2022 Homer Quality of Life*, SWOT analysis):

- Encourage multi-family housing.
- Increase ease of walking and biking.
- Collaborate with community partners on habitat, climate, erosion and other natural environment issues that impact quality of life.
- Find ways to keep young or returning residents in the community.

Values and Strengths

Residents enjoy the small town character and natural environment of Homer. These characteristics also appeal to visitors.

Strengths (copied from *2022 Homer Quality of Life* SWOT analysis):

- Small town feel and scale.
- Eclectic businesses, buildings and people.
- Wide variety of locally owned small businesses.
- Integrated town with outdoor environment.
- Connected community with vibrant cultural and business groups.

Challenges and Barriers

Homer is fairly remote, vulnerable to numerous natural disasters and climate-related threats and lacks some social support for the working population (e.g., transportation, childcare, affordable housing).

Weaknesses (copied from 2022 Homer Quality of Life SWOT analysis):

- Lack of worker support: Housing, Childcare, Training.
- Difficulty for early to mid-career residents to thrive.
- Some infrastructure is in need of repair (roads) or expansion – storm water + green infrastructure.
- Local regulation does not result in the patterns and development the community would like to see.

Threats (copied from 2022 Homer Quality of Life SWOT analysis):

- Difficult to recruit new talent.
- Poor retention of workers.
- Loss of town/wildlife interface.
- New residents may not become involved in the community; slow loss of volunteer run organizations, events and services; risk of gentrification; becoming a community of empty households.
- Costs of living and doing business.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies

Land Use & Environment

- Maintaining and improving environmental quality is a key theme in most plans.
- There are numerous threats from natural disasters that should be considered in land use planning.

Housing

- Affordability and availability are key barriers to housing.
- There is concern that tourism (short-term rentals) will make housing challenges worse.

Public Services & Infrastructure

- The City of Homer wants to provide reliable utilities without overburdening residents with costs.

Transportation

- Improving infrastructure for/access to transportation alternatives (transit, non-motorized transportation) is a goal for the City of Homer.

Economic Development

- Desire for sensible economic development/growth that supports the community without changing its character/charm.
- Tourism and fishing are important components of Homer's economy.
- The cost of doing business and employee recruitment/retention are key challenges.
- Aesthetic appeal/consistency is important to maintain appeal for tourism.

Health & Wellness

- Accessibility, walkability, and well-maintained public parks are priorities.

Sustainability, Resilience, & Climate Change

- More severe tsunamis are a concern.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies are important to the City of Homer.
- Maintaining and improving environmental quality is a key theme in most plans.

Quality of Life

- Residents enjoy the small town feel but struggle with the costs of living/doing business.
- Walkability, accessibility, affordability are all priorities.
- Infrastructure should support an aging population.

Individual Plan Summaries and Key Takeaways

Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (2024)

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) is a funding plan for transportation system preservation and development projects.

Key Takeaways

- Sterling Highway Milepost 157-169 Reconstruction Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill
 - Parent and Final Construction STIP ID: 2670
 - Stage 1 STIP ID: 34434
 - Stage 2 STIP ID: 34435
 - Stage 3 STIP ID: 34436
- Kachemak Bay Drive Milepost 0-3.5 Reconstruction (STIP ID: 34427)
- Homer All-ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway (HAPP) (STIP ID: 34426)

Transportation Plan (2024)

This draft plan identifies goals and objectives for the Homer transportation network. It also provides a description of the current state of the transportation system, best practices, and recommendations. It considers non-motorized transportation, land use, hazard mitigation planning, and climate action planning.

Key Takeaways

- Addresses motorized and non-motorized transportation, including transit.
- Safety and accessibility for all ages and abilities is a priority.

Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report (2023)

This document, created by the Alaska Travel Industry Association, summarizes data regarding tourism in Alaska for the summer 2022 and winter 2022-23 seasons. This includes tourist demographics, trip purpose and details, and tourist satisfaction.

Key Takeaways

- Homer accounted for 9% of destinations identified by the over 4,000 people surveyed.
- 15% of tourists surveyed who visited Homer were independent travelers, 11% were part of a guided group, and 2% were on a cruise.

- 10% of tourists who visited Homer were from the Eastern US, 8% were from the Western US, and 9% were international travelers.

Homer City Code (2023)

The Homer City Code, also known as the “Code of Ordinances, City of Homer, Alaska,” establishes regulations, limitations, and guidelines for activities within the City of Homer.

Key Takeaways

- Duties and powers of the Planning Commission are established in Section 2.72 with the intent of maximizing local involvement in planning.
- Title 10 establishes general provisions and protections for the port, harbor, and waterways.
- Title 14 establishes the City of Homer public utilities (water and sewer).
- Title 21 (Zoning and Planning) of the Homer City Code is applicable to all areas within the City of Homer and the Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District, which extends beyond the city limits.
- Policies, plans, etc. that promote high density should be avoided (Title 21).

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023)

This document identifies and prioritizes capital improvement needs in the City of Homer.

Key Takeaways

- The following legislative requests for FY25 were approved by the city council
 - Homer Harbor Expansion
 - Multi-Use Community Center
 - Slope Stability & Erosion Mitigation Program
 - Homer Harbor Critical Float System Replacement: Float Systems 4 & 1
 - Karen Hornaday Park Public Restroom Facility
 - A-Frame Water Transmission Line Replacement
 - Homer Spit Erosion Mitigation
 - New Public Works Facility

Adopted Biennial Operation Budget (2023)

The FY2023-25 biennial operation budget allocates approximately \$26.2 million to the General Fund, Water & Sewer Special Revenue Fund, and Port & Harbor Enterprise Fund.

Key Takeaways

- The General Fund (\$16.1 million) covers the departments of Administration, Police, Volunteer Fire, and much of Public Works.
- The Water & Sewer Special Revenue Fund (\$4.3 million) is forecasted using a three-year running average and helps fund the Utility CARMA (Capital Asset Repair and Maintenance Allowance).
- The Port & Harbor Enterprise Fund (\$5.8 million) covers expenses related to the Port of Homer and Homer Harbor and revenue from moorage, wharfage, parking, boat launching, and camping.

Land Allocation Plan (2023)

This plan identifies lands available for lease, leased lands, port facilities, city facilities and lands, parks, green spaces, cemeteries, bridge creek lands, and conservation easements. This plan is required by Homer City Code and is adopted annually.

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023)

This document describes the self-evaluation of ADA compliance issues at the City of Homer's parks, play areas, and campgrounds and includes a transition plan for correcting non-compliance. Accessibility is a priority for Homer to ensure people of all ages and abilities can live, work, and play in the community.

Key Takeaways

- Projects were assigned timelines for in-house completion; projects requiring a contractor are assigned a year in which staff anticipate preparing an Invitation to Bid.
 - Timeline A: can be completed within a year.
 - Timeline B: may be completed within 1-2 years.
 - Timeline C: may be completed within 3-5 years, or possibly sooner if done by a contractor.
- Locations of identified projects include Karen Hornaday Hillside Park, Bayview Park, Bishop's Beach Park & Beluga Slough Trail, Mariner Park and Campground, Fishing Hole Campground, Seafarer's Memorial Park, and Jack Gist Park.

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (2023 Draft Update)

This document describes the self-evaluation of ADA compliance issues at city-owned facilities in Homer and includes a transition plan for correcting non-compliance. Accessibility is a priority for Homer to ensure people of all ages and abilities can live, work, and play in the community.

Key Takeaways

- Non-compliance issues are prioritized following ADA standards for accessible design:
 - Priority 1: Building accessibility.
 - Priority 2: Equitable access to goods and services.
 - Priority 3: Restrooms.
 - Priority 4: All other measures.

Community Conversation: Housing Solutions in the Greater Homer Area (2023)

This document describes the results of an event at which community members discussed housing challenges in the Greater Homer Area. A survey conducted prior to the event indicated that affordability and availability were key barriers to housing in the area.

Key Takeaways

- The full notes of the workshop are included in this document (**NEW DATA**).

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027 (2023)

This plan identifies trends in outdoor recreation in Alaska, summarizes outdoor recreation by region, and provides seven statewide outdoor recreation goals.

Key Takeaways

- The plan notes there are no year-round public restrooms between Soldotna and Homer.
- The description of Southcentral is provided in Section B of Chapter 3 (page 24).

Homer Quality of Life (2022)

This document provides a Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats (SWOT) analysis for Homer's quality of life to guide positive economic growth. The analysis considered four broad categories: Business Climate, Built Environment, Natural Environment, and Social Climate.

Key Takeaways

- “Local regulation is not resulting in the patterns and development the community would like to see” (page 3).

2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report (2022)

This report provides passenger and vehicle traffic volumes in 2022 and previous years for the Alaska Marine Highway System, which includes Homer.

Key Takeaways

- *MV Tustumena* provides regular service to Homer.
- Includes **NEW DATA** about passenger/vehicle traffic.

Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum (2022)

This memorandum describes the challenges, opportunities, and perceptions of short term rentals in the City of Homer. Many communities with similar characteristics to Homer are described as case studies.

Key Takeaways

- Approximately 63% of households in Homer are owner-occupied.
- 49% of parcels in Homer are non-commercial residential (**NEW DATA**).

City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

This plan identifies nine hazards, assesses the risk to the City of Homer from each hazard, and identifies strategies to mitigate risk and vulnerability. Hazards include climate change, earthquakes, erosion, floods, landslides, severe weather, tsunamis, volcanoes, and wildfires. The goals of the plan are to enhance climate protection and adaptation efforts, create a healthy and safe community, and protect critical facilities and infrastructure against hazards.

Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska (2022)

This report provides an analysis of the stability of coastal bluffs in Homer and was intended to inform the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update. Most of the coastline was determined to have a low to medium bluff instability hazard score.

Key Takeaways

- Results are provided by region.
- Diamond Creek: low to medium instability score.
- Bluff Point Landslide Area: has the fastest erosion rate in Homer and an instability score of medium.
- Downtown: high instability score.
- Munson Point: very low instability score.
- Kachemak Drive: low instability score.
- East End Road: medium instability score.

City of Homer Beach Policy & Management Plan

This plan encompasses the seven areas of beaches within the City of Homer and is intended to support the enforcement of existing regulations and future regulations and necessary actions that keep the beaches safe and enjoyable without causing detriment to the natural environment.

Key Takeaways

- Property lines of seafront properties may extend into the water.
- Maintenance, preservation, and protection of Homer’s beaches is a priority.
- Public education through campaigns, signage, and other means is important to preserve beaches, promote safety, and minimize user conflicts.

Executive Summary – Final Report and Recommendations on Tsunami Risk to the Public Works Campus (2021)

This report was prompted by the 2019 Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps, which indicated that the City of Homer Public Works Campus would be inundated in a worst-case scenario tsunami. The report reviewed alternatives to minimize risk to public works equipment and buildings that would be needed to respond to a tsunami.

Key Takeaways

- The report recommends using a Long Term Incremental strategy to move the components of the Campus that can be moved.

City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report (2021)

This document provides an update on the city’s actions in relation to the 2007 Climate Action Plan (CAP). The original CAP defined a strategy for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated through city operations by 20%. As of 2019, overall GHG emissions decreased by 29.44% from 2006 levels. The analysis notes that changes in building square footage and average winter temperatures impacted stationary emissions.

Key Takeaways

- Report contains **NEW DATA**.
- Recommendations for further reducing GHG emissions include eliminating use of heating oil and improving the city’s vehicle fleet.

City of Homer Community Design Manual (2021)

This manual outlines aesthetic considerations for certain applicable sites and structures in the City of Homer. The intention of the design manual is to maintain the appearance of the city's built environment to support the visitor industry; it is referenced in several areas of City Code.

Road Assessment Report (2020)

This document describes the road assessment process that was developed for the City of Homer. The process included collecting road condition data and integrating it into the city's GIS to allow road maintenance crews to update conditions in real time. The condition assessments were based primarily on the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) model, with some adaptations to account for vegetation concerns. This assessment process is intended to improve efficiency of road maintenance and provide better justification for maintenance costs.

Key Takeaways

- Most gravel roads were rated as “Fair” or “Good”
- Most paved roads were rated as “Good.”

Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer (2020)

This plan, also referred to as the Green Infrastructure – Stormwater Master Plan, describes techniques for mimicking natural drainage processes for stormwater management. The plan identifies major watershed drainage basins, estimates future runoff volumes for each basin, and estimates the costs to implement a storm drain system that utilizes Low-Impact Development (LID) practices compared to traditional stormwater management.

Key Takeaways

- Implementation of LID strategies would likely produce a positive economic benefit to City of Homer.
- Implementation of LID strategies would benefit water quality.

Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program Policy Manual (2020)

The Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program (HAWSP) was established to improve the health and welfare of Homer residents by extending water and sewer mains without increasing cost burdens on individual property owners. This document provides definitions of terms and defines maximum spending limits for the HAWSP.

Key Takeaways

- “The HAWSP is funded by a voter-approved dedicated sales tax, and assessments levied on benefited properties.”
- The HAWSP should expand the capacity of water and sewer utilities while maintaining a good state of repair for existing infrastructure.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update (2020)

The Kenai Peninsula Borough, including the City of Homer, is part of the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD). This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the action plan for KPEDD to achieve its goal to enhance vitality and quality of life in Kenai Peninsula communities.

Key Takeaways

- Homer's population was experiencing slow-to-moderate growth at the time of the CEDS update.
- Homer has one of three Alaska Small Business Development Center offices in the KPB.
- Homer has one of two large ice-free ports with a Coast Guard presence in the KPB.
- Homer had the highest housing costs in the KPB at the time of the CEDS update.
- Homer was ranked as the 68th best port in the US by value of seafood landings.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan (2019)

This plan documents the visions, goals, and strategies that guide planning, funding, and development in the borough through 2039. Goals include economic diversification, proactive growth management, improved quality of life, access, and connectivity, and increased resident engagement and government efficiency. Homer is one of six incorporated communities within the Kenai Peninsula Borough; the plan focuses primarily on the areas outside these communities.

Key Takeaways

- Plan focuses primarily on land outside the incorporated cities.
- KPB receives a portion of the state's cruise passenger vessel (CPV) excise tax revenue based on dockings in Seward and Homer; this revenue is redistributed to the two cities for port-related capital improvement projects.
- The landings value of Homer's port seems to be decreasing over time (was in the top 50 in 2012 and 2013).
- Objective A. Support a more sustainable and resilient Kenai Peninsula by increasing production and distribution of quality, healthy agricultural products for local, state and export markets.
 - Homer Soil and Water Conservation District is listed as an entity that will be consulted as part of this objective.
 - 64% of residents surveyed in Homer and Anchor Point said agriculture was very important.
- City of Homer and KPB are voluntary participants in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Bradley Lake expansion was expected to increase capacity of the hydroelectric facility by 37,300 megawatt hours (facility owned by Alaska Energy Authority, which contracts with Homer Electric Association to provide electricity to the southern & central portion of the peninsula).
- Homer has high housing costs.
- KPB provides solid waste services throughout the borough. The Homer Transfer Station also collects hazardous waste.
- There are three National Register of Historic Places properties in Homer: Chugachik Island Site, Thorn-Stingling House, and Yukon Island Main Site.
- 44% of Homer and Anchor Point residents surveyed graded public transportation services as a D or F.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019)

This plan identifies actions to reduce the impacts of natural disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, coastal erosion, wildfires, volcanic activity and ash fallout, avalanches, and severe winter weather. It also identifies actions to mitigate damage from human-caused disasters such as levee failures or accidental chemical releases. Local hazard mitigation plans are included as annexes in this plan.

Key Takeaways

- Bridge Creek Dam is identified as a High Hazard and Beluga Lake Dam is identified as a Significant Hazard by the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- The Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District extends beyond the City of Homer but is subject to City of Homer regulations (KPB Ordinance 99-47).

Draft Kenai Peninsula Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (2019)

This plan identifies existing transportation service providers and unmet transportation needs across the borough, including in the City of Homer. It provides goals and strategies to improve the efficiency of transportation services and address unmet needs.

Key Takeaways

- Homer is accessible via the Sterling Highway, Alaska Marine Highway System, and the Homer Airport Terminal & Cargo Facility.
- Transportation service providers serving Homer include: BUMPS (Ninilchik Traditional Council), Independent Living Center, Ryder Transport LLC, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (Division of Employment and Training Services), Alaska Division of Public Assistance – Work Services, and TNT Transportation.
- Information/communication gaps, coordination between local government and programs/agencies, cost to users and programs/agencies, and insufficient accessible vehicles are identified as key challenges.

Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska (2019)

This document provides maps and worst-case scenarios for inundation from tsunamis generated by earthquakes or submarine landslides. The information is based on numerical modeling of tsunami dynamics and provides analyses for the cities of Homer and Seldovia, as well as Seldovia Village, Jakolof Bay, and Kachemak Selo.

Key Takeaways

- Maximum predicted wave height from a tectonic tsunami is 33-40 feet for Homer.
- Maximum predicted wave height from a landslide-generated tsunami is 13 feet for Homer Spit.
- Based on the modeling, numerous tsunami scenarios pose significant threats to Homer and Homer Spit.

Business Retention & Expansion Survey Report (2018)

This report summarizes the results of the Economic Development Commission's Business Retention & Expansion Survey. The survey was conducted to improve communication with local businesses, gather business owners'

ideas, identify needs and concerns, and develop strategies and actions to retain and expand small businesses in the City of Homer.

Key Takeaways

- The survey had a response rate of 7% (112 completed surveys).
- 65% of respondents rated Homer as a good or excellent place to do business.
- 91% of respondents rated Homer as a good or excellent place to live.
- Transportation infrastructure, especially an affordable harbor with expanded infrastructure, are noted as key needs for businesses.

Homer Comprehensive Plan (2018)

This plan serves as a 10-year revision to the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update. It includes background information about the City of Homer and community values and guidance for land use, transportation, public services and facilities, economic vitality, and energy. The plan's key theme is “Keep Homer a lively, vital community that effectively responds to change and growth while retaining what is best about Homer’s character.”

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011)

This plan describes the conditions of the Homer Spit and recommends improvements and future land uses to maintain the unique characteristics of the Spit, which is important to residents and tourists alike.

Key Takeaways

- The Spit was not included in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan (or 2018 update) due to its unique characteristics and importance to the community.
- Transportation (traffic, parking, non-motorized transportation, transit), conservation, and economic development were key topics.
- “[Land] Uses include marine-related industrial and commercial, including fishing and fish processing, the harbor and harbor related business, the marine highway terminal, port facilities, fuel storage, retail, lodging, camping, parking, and recreational, conservation, and public land uses” (p. 6).

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2007)

This plan was developed in recognition of the severe consequences of human-caused climate change. In the interest of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the plan identifies mitigation recommendations in the categories of Energy Management, Transportation, Purchasing & Waste Reduction, Land Use, and Outreach & Advocacy. The plan also includes adaptation strategies to develop a more resilient community.

Key Takeaways

- The mitigation recommendations focus on interventions within the purview of the City of Homer. The Outreach & Advocacy category includes public education and encouraging change at various levels of government.
- Adaptation measures are focused on building a resilient local economy, protecting infrastructure, increasing emergency preparedness, and ensuring future development policies consider the impacts of climate change.

Homer Water and Sewer Master Plan (2006)

This plan was developed to guide improvements and expansions of the City of Homer's water and sewer utilities for a period covering 2006-2025.

Homer Town Center Development Plan (2006)

This plan provides a guide for development policy and public infrastructure improvements for the heart of the Central Business District, which was largely undeveloped at the time the plan was written.

Key Takeaways

- Green space, walkability, and curbing urban sprawl were identified as priorities.
- The plan emphasizes the need for sustainable, human scale development.

Homer Area Transportation Plan (2005)

The Homer Area Transportation Plan and the Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan together encompass the long-term planning for Homer's transportation infrastructure. Both plans will be replaced by the 2024 Transportation Plan once it is adopted.

Key Takeaways

- Traffic, connectivity, walkability, accessibility, and user conflicts (e.g., industrial/commercial and recreational traffic) were key issues with the system at the time.

Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan (2004)

The Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan and the Homer Area Transportation Plan together encompass the long-term planning for Homer's transportation infrastructure. Both plans will be replaced by the 2024 Transportation Plan once it is adopted.

Key Takeaways

- Infrastructure for non-motorized transportation should allow residents and visitors to travel throughout the City of Homer without needing a personal vehicle.

Plans and Plan Excerpts By Focus Area

The content below, which is organized by focus area, is copied from the respective plans and is intended to be used as a quick reference to locate information in each plan. Some plans are relevant in their entirety and therefore specific excerpts are not included. The following plans are relevant in their entirety to the entire Comprehensive Plan Update:

Homer City Code (2023) – *priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Adopted Biennial Operating Budget (2023) – *priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan (2019) – *priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Homer Comprehensive Plan (2018) – *priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) – *priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2007) – *priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Land Use & Environment

Transportation Plan (2024)

Goal 1: Increase safety of interactions between modes of travel

Objective 1B: Provide for safe use of the right-of-way by all transportation modes, considering the land use context and type of vehicle

Goal 2: Provide a connected network of local and collector roads and trails that balances modes based on land use contexts

Goal 3: Maintain transportation network to be viable year-round

Objective 3G: Include appropriate improvements for each travel mode as part of reconstruction or new construction projects within the public right-of-way

As roads are constructed or reconstructed, infrastructure should be considered for each mode. New or improved infrastructure should be consistent with the land use context (such as providing sidewalks in urban areas and wide shoulders or separated paths in rural areas), meet design standards, and help to complete the priority network for that mode.

Policies:

- Truck Network
- E-Bike Legislation
- Bicycle Parking
- Traffic Calming
- Update Non-Motorized Facility Design Standards
- Complete Streets/All Ages and Abilities Policy

Projects:

- Parking Study
- Improve Drop-Off and Pick-Up Locations at Schools

- Neighborhood Connectivity to Schools
- Kachemak Drive Reconnaissance Engineering Study
- Pioneer Ave as an Extension of the HAP Loop
- Old Town Connections as an Extension of HAP Loop
- Regularly Update Existing Trails Maps
- Complete East-West Connections

Definition of Terms includes “Land Use Context” and “Traffic Calming”

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023)

“Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City’s goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were considered in project evaluation:

Land Use: Guide the amount and location of Homer’s growth to increase the supply and diversity of housing, protect important environmental resources and community character, reduce sprawl by encouraging infill, make efficient use of infrastructure, support a healthy local economy, and help reduce global impacts including limiting greenhouse gas emissions.” (p. vi)

Land Allocation Plan (2023) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

Ability to expand resources: “Integrate climate sustainability plans into Homer’s Comprehensive Plan (including measures to reduce greenhouse emissions) through a series of local transportation, land use, building energy, water, waste, and green infrastructure programs and policies.” (p. 5-7)

Recommended mitigation actions: “Adopt a comprehensive flood protection ordinance/overlay zone for areas that are in the SFHA or subject to flooding. Properties in this overlay are often subject to additional standards concerning development/land uses, building elevation, stream buffers, outdoor storage, building materials, and permitting procedures.” (p. 5-9)

Integration of the 2022 LHMP: “Update of the Homer Comprehensive Plan to address hazards in the LHMP that are not currently included in it. Consider creating a hazard profiles section in the Comprehensive Plan. The land use planning process can help identify investments in nature-based solutions to natural hazards, including preserving parks and greenways.” (p. 5-15)

Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska (2022) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Beach Policy & Management Plan (2021) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer (2020) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Kenai Peninsula Borough Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska (2019) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2007)

Land Use/Planning & Zoning Mitigation Measures (p. 33)

Adaptation Measures (p. 37)

Homer Town Center Development Plan (2006) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Housing

Community Conversation: Housing Solutions in the Greater Homer Area (2023) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Homer Quality of Life (2022) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum (2022) - priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

“The popularity of short-term rentals (STRs)¹ have exploded in the last decade with the development and proliferation of online and app-based services such as Airbnb and VRBO. STRs are particularly popular in Homer with an estimated 326 units available, a significant portion of the local housing stock. This memo presents the positive and negative impacts of STRs, local context for STRs, and provides case study information regarding STR regulations methods found in other communities.” (p. 1)

Kenai Peninsula Borough Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update (2020)

Housing Market: “Within the Kenai Peninsula Borough, homes are most expensive in Homer, averaging \$298,209, and the Greater Kenai area homes are the least expensive, averaging \$239,771. Home prices have decreased slightly with the statewide average between 2018 and 2019.” (p. 12)

Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska (2019) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) – priority health plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Public Services and Infrastructure

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023) – various projects

“Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City’s goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were taken into account in project evaluation:

Energy: Promote energy conservation, wise use of environmental resources, and development of renewable energy through the actions of local government as well as the private sector.” (p. vi)

Beluga Sewage Lift Station (p. 34)

Homer’s Waste Water Treatment Plant Improvements (p. 43)

Water Storage Distribution Improvements, Phase 3 (p. 46)

Long-range projects on p. 66

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

“Homer’s mission is to be a dynamic community where all can live, play, work and invest. To make that mission a reality, it needs to be accessible. The City of Homer owns and manages 17 parks, comprised of over 520 acres of land, along with 5.41 miles of maintained trails. These range from small pocket parks and multi-use trails to forested natural areas, larger established parks with play areas, campgrounds, and sports fields. To ensure our parks, play areas and campgrounds are accessible to all, the City commenced the development of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Parks, Play areas & Campgrounds Transition Plan in 2021. This document will be incorporated with 108 the ADA Facilities Transition Plan adopted by City Council in 2019.” (p. 4)

City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report (2021) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Category – Water & Wastewater Treatment Facilities: “As with the previous categories, the primary energy sources for Water & Wastewater Treatment Facilities are electricity and heating oil. The wastewater treatment facility also consumed 2,000 gallons of propane. These records were calculated for GHG using the same methods and emission factors as the previous electricity and stationary fuel consuming categories.

In addition to electricity and stationary fuels, N₂O emissions from aerobic processing of waste, and N₂O from effluent discharge are measured. The calculation for N₂O emissions from waste treatment is based on community population for the given year, which in 2010 was 5,049 people. N₂O for effluent discharge is based on daily Nitrogen load in kilograms released to the environment. The daily nitrogen load was 14 derived from a ratio of average wastewater treatment plant flows and monthly average NH₃ readings for 2010.

All electricity and stationary fuel use for water and wastewater facilities was combined with N₂O emissions from waste treatment to produce a GHG emissions grand total for this category.” (p. 13)

“CO₂e totals for 2019 are 951.22 metric tons less than totals for 2010 – a 21.78% decrease. The most significant decrease belongs to Buildings & Facilities followed by Water and Wastewater.” (p. 17)

“A comparison of electricity use reveals a CO₂e reduction of 987 CO₂e (MT) between years 2010 and 2019. The largest reductions were achieved in the Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities.” (p. 19)

Executive Summary – Final Report and Recommendations on Tsunami Risk to the Public Works Campus (2021) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program Policy Manual (2020) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009)

Energy Management Mitigation Measures (p. 28)

Purchasing & Waste Reduction Mitigation Measures (p. 31)

Homer Water and Sewer Master Plan (2006) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Transportation

Transportation Plan (2024) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (2024)

- Sterling Highway Milepost 157-169 Reconstruction Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill
 - Parent and Final Construction STIP ID: 2670
 - Stage 1 STIP ID: 34434
 - Stage 2 STIP ID: 34435
 - Stage 3 STIP ID: 34436
- Kachemak Bay Drive Milepost 0-3.5 Reconstruction (STIP ID: 34427)
- Homer All-ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway (HAPP) (STIP ID: 34426)

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023) – various projects

“Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City’s goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were taken into account in project evaluation:

... Transportation: Address future transportation needs while considering land use, economics and aesthetics, and increasing community connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.” (p. vi)

2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report (2022) – various references to Port of Homer

Road Assessment Report (2020) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Draft Kenai Peninsula Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (2019) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009)

Transportation Mitigation Measures (p. 30)

Intersections Planning Study (2005) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Homer Area Transportation Plan (2005) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan (2004) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Economic Development

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023) – various projects

“Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City’s goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were taken into account in project evaluation:

...Economic Vitality: Promote strength and continued growth of Homer’s economic industries including marine trades, commercial fishing, tourism, education, arts, and culture. Support development of a variety of well-defined commercial/business districts for a range of commercial purposes. Preserve quality of life while supporting the creation of more year-round living wage jobs.” (p. vi)

Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report (2023)

The executive summary (p. 2) provides an overview of visitation to Alaska.

Data specific to Homer are mentioned on pages 32 and 33.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2023)

Chapter 3, Section B, Southcentral Alaska (excerpt from p. 24, information continues through p. 28):

“This region includes the large majority of Alaska’s population, most visited destinations, and well-developed outdoor recreation infrastructure. Diverse landscapes including long beaches, rivers, lakes, mountains, glaciers, and fjords offer boundless outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Unique resources in the region include:

- This area has the most road-accessible outdoor recreation destinations, developed recreation facilities, and communities that offer visitor services in Alaska. This includes well-developed city parks and greenbelts.
- Southcentral boasts a mix of the most sought-after outdoor recreation experience. This includes accessing the alpine terrain, fishing on the Kenai Peninsula, visiting the marine mecca of Prince William Sound, visiting a growing network of year-round, in- and out-of-town trails, and discovering walkable “destination” communities such as Homer, Seward, Talkeetna, and downtown Anchorage.
- Large state and federally designated public land recreation areas include Chugach State Park, the Chugach National Forest, the southern side of Denali National Park, Denali State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, portions of Lake Clark and Katmai National Parks, the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, and more.
- Parks and trails non-profit organizations in this region are active and successful.”

Homer Quality of Life (2022) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum (2022) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section; see above excerpt from Housing section

2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report (2022) – various references to Port of Homer

Kenai Peninsula Borough Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update (2020) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Human Capital: “Unincorporated communities with highway access, and in close proximity to commercial centers like Soldotna or Kenai show the highest rates of growth. Established cities like Seward, Homer, and Soldotna have grown at a slow-to-moderate pace, and several South Peninsula communities are losing population.” (p. 6)

Infrastructure and Transportation: “The only communities currently on the Alaska Marine Highway System are Homer and Seldovia. Ferry service is a critical link for these cities.” (p. 7)

Strengths: “Three Alaska Small Business Development Center offices: Seward, Homer and Kenai.” (p. 8)

Tourism: “2016 summer visitation from outside Alaska estimates for Seward were 441,000 visitors, more than double Homer, Seldovia, Kenai and Soldotna combined. In Seward, an average of 50% arrive by plane, 45% arrive by cruise ship, and 5% arrive by highway or ferry. In Homer and Seldovia, an average of 77% arrive by plane, 11% by cruise ship, and 12% by highway or ferry. A majority of visitors to Kenai and Soldotna arrive by plane at 87%, 4% by cruise ship and 8% by highway or ferry.” (p. 13)

Commercial Fisheries: “Three Kenai Peninsula ports rank among the top ports in the U.S. by value of seafood landings: Seward (15th), Kenai (37th), and Homer (68th). Adjusted for inflation, prices for pinks have declined since the 1980s. In constant dollars, sockeye prices in 2018 were about the same as in 1984. Sockeyes are the predominant commercial species in the upper Cook Inlet (which includes Seward) sees a larger catch of pinks as

well as halibut and sablefish. Upper Cook Inlet salmon harvests for 2018 included 1,720,295 Sockeye, 163,859 Coho, 129,176 Chum, 70,741 Pinks, and 3,148 Chinook salmon.” (p. 13)

Business Retention & Expansion Survey Report (2018) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009)

Adaptation Measures (p. 37)

Homer Town Center Development Plan (2006) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Health & Wellness

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (2023)

“In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, this document shall serve as the City of Homer’s Transition Plan.

This is an overview of the plan that includes the self-evaluation that identifies barriers to program accessibility and municipal owned properties throughout the City and includes project checklists to track improvements. The plan consists of an Inventory Assessment, implemented requirements and annual reassessment of goals and improvements.

The City of Homer ADA Coordinator will manage all aspects of ADA Compliance. This plan is available on the City of Homer website for review by the general public. Individuals are encouraged to submit comments or issues on accessibility of City programs and facilities by contacting the City ADA Coordinator.” (p. 1)

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023) – see above excerpt from *Public Services and Infrastructure* section

Sustainability, Resilience, & Climate Change

Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska (2022) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report (2021) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer (2020) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section

Quality of Life

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (2023) – See above excerpt for *Health & Wellness*

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section; see above excerpt from *Public Services and Infrastructure* section

Quality of Life (2022) – priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section