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Homer Comprehensive Plan Update

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a comprehensive plan?

A comprehensive plan is a public declaration of policy statements, goals, standards, and maps for guiding the City's physical, social and economic development, both public and private. It may include a land use plan, a community facilities plan, and other specific plans, including recommendations for implementation of the various plans.

2. Why does Homer need a comprehensive plan?

Homer is undergoing a period of growth. A current comprehensive plan will help City officials better understand the community's goals and objectives. Alaska statutes require a comprehensive plan as a prerequisite to land use regulations, and an updated plan will help the City craft appropriate zoning regulations.

3. Why did the City appoint a Citizen's Advisory Committee?

The mayor, with the city council's approval, appointed a committee of volunteer citizens to work with the City's consultant, Agnew::Beck, to prepare a draft of a new Homer comprehensive plan. The Citizen's Advisory Committee will help the consultant gather public input, act as a sounding board, review the consultant's work at various times, and keep the process moving forward in a positive manner. Committee members were selected to represent a cross-section of the community. They are expected to represent their personal views as well as consider the views of the broader community. As a whole, the committee is to consider what is best for all of Homer.

4. Can the public have input into the work of the Citizen's Advisory Committee?

Yes, the Citizen's Advisory Committee is designed to increase the public involvement, and public input is highly encouraged. The Citizen's Advisory Committee meetings are all open to the public. The



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committee will hold a number of public hearings at which they will ask the public for input. Please contact the Planning Department at 235-3106 or visit the website www.homercompplan.com for dates, times and locations of committee meetings and public hearings.

5. Isn't the Homer Planning Commission supposed to do planning for Homer? When does it get involved?

Yes, the Homer Planning Commission does do planning for Homer, and it will certainly become deeply involved in this process after the public discussion draft is prepared by the consultant. However, the Planning Commission is already very busy with important zoning, platting, and planning work. The work of the Citizen's Advisory Committee is not to replace the Planning Commission, but rather to assist the Commission by preparing a draft for formal Commission review. This leaves the Commission free for now to carry on with its already full agenda. When the consultant and the Citizen's Advisory Committee have completed the draft plan, it will be sent to the Planning Commission.

6. What happens after the draft plan is sent to the Planning Commission?

The Planning Commission will receive the draft comprehensive plan and review it in detail. The Planning Commission will hold one or more public hearings. The public will be notified when these public hearings are scheduled. Eventually the Commission will vote on whether to recommend the plan for adoption, either with or without changes. When the Commission has completed its review, it will forward the draft plan and its formal recommendations to the Homer City Council.

7. When does the City Council get involved? What will it do?

The City Council will be kept informed about the progress of the draft comprehensive plan as the consultant's work progresses. However, the Council's official review of the plan will not begin until after the Planning Commission has completed its review and sent its formal recommendations to the Council. Then the City Council will conduct one or more public hearings on the draft comprehensive plan and invite the public to comment. Eventually the Council will consider an ordinance to adopt the draft as the official comprehensive plan of the City. In voting on the ordinance, the City Council will either adopt or reject the proposal, with or without amendments.

8. What happens after the City Council adopts an ordinance approving a new comprehensive plan?

After the City Council adopts the new comprehensive plan by ordinance, it must go to the Kenai Peninsula Borough for its review and approval. The borough must approve it because Alaska statutes



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give boroughs the duty and authority for comprehensive planning, including comprehensive plans for cities in the borough. As provided in Kenai Peninsula Borough Code § 21.01.025, the Borough Planning Commission will first review the City's request for approval of the new plan and then forward its recommendations on to the Borough Assembly. The Assembly will then hold another public hearing prior to its review and vote on an ordinance to approve Homer's new plan. When finally adopted by a Borough ordinance, the new plan becomes the official comprehensive plan for Homer.

9. When the new comprehensive plan is finally approved by the Borough, does that mean Homer's zoning code is changed?

No, the comprehensive plan does not change existing law. The plan is only a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, and maps for guiding future development of the City. In order to implement the new plan, the City and the community will have to take additional steps. One means of implementing the land use plan portion of any comprehensive plan is by adopting or amending a zoning code or other land use regulations. The City may review and amend its zoning code after the new comprehensive plan is approved, but until changes in the current zoning code are approved.

10. I have more questions. Where do I go for answers?

If you have additional questions, you can contact the City of Homer Planning Department at 235-3106. You can also contact Agnew::Beck, the Comprehensive Plan consultants at (907) 222-5424 or visit their website at www.agnewbeck.com.



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