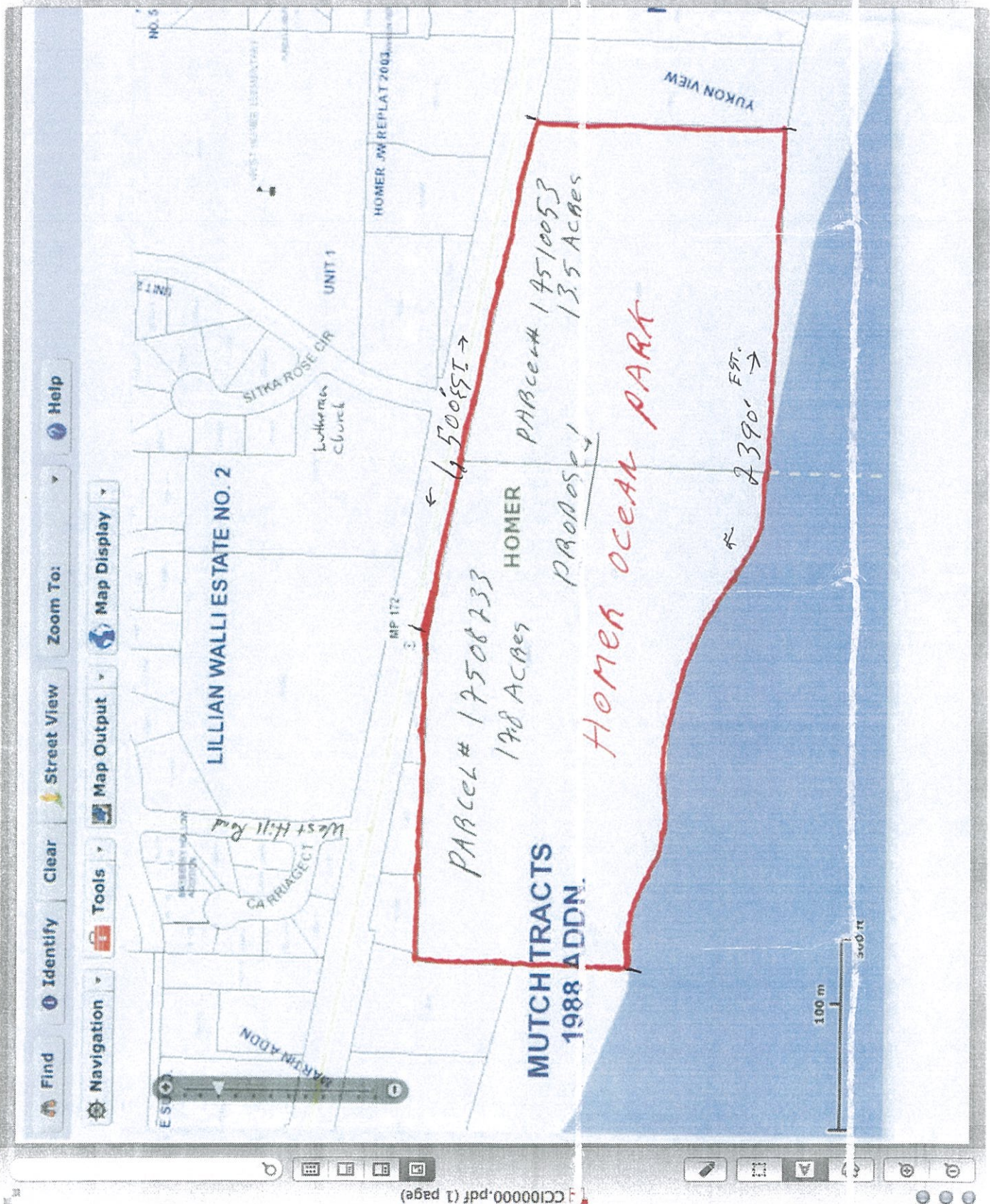


ARTISTIC DEPICTION OF POSSIBLE CONVENTION CENTER/PARK







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*TAKEN FROM HOMER 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN*

### COMMUNITY VALUES (Chapter 3)

This chapter briefly lists Homer's community values as defined through community input in the Comprehensive Plan process. The overarching theme throughout is to "Keep Homer a lively, vital community that effectively responds to change and growth while retaining what is best about Homer's character."

### LAND USE (Chapter 4)

The Land Use chapter of this Comprehensive Plan seeks to respect the past, to recognize the current realities of building and living in Homer, Alaska, and to create a new paradigm for the future. Befitting the aspirations of a unique and vibrant city, Homer seeks to further develop as a city which respects the environment, is wonderful to live in, and inspiring to visit. Specific goals of the chapter are listed below; the remainder of this section gives an overview of some of the most important policies in this chapter.

GOAL 1:

GOAL 2: GOAL 3:

GOAL 4:

Guiding Homer's growth with a focus on increasing the supply and diversity of housing, protect community character, encouraging infill, and helping minimize global impacts of public facilities including limiting greenhouse gas emissions.

Maintain the quality of Homer's natural environment and scenic beauty.

Encourage high-quality buildings and site development that complement Homer's beautiful natural setting.

Support the development of a variety of well-defined commercial/business districts for a range of commercial purposes.

The chapter outlines strategies for building a compact, walkable community core, partly in response to concerns regarding energy use and climate change. Ideas for maintaining the functional benefits of the natural environment are presented in this chapter's green infrastructure discussion. Other, more traditional motivations support compact development, including reduced infrastructure costs. Close neighbors

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July 21, 2017

City of Homer  
Economic Advisory Commission  
491 E. Pioneer Ave.  
Homer, Alaska 99603

Mayor Bryan Zak; This is a letter written to those below and it is my wish that I am certain you have a copy.

Dear Members of the Economic Advisory Commission;

In response to your recent request for input regarding economic development for Homer we submit the following for your consideration: Homer needs a community/convention center situated in our natural setting.

Homer Alaska's entry has one of the best, if not the best, National Geographic Cover views of any place on earth. Because we live here we too easily take for granted the beauty which nature has provided us. Paris has the Eiffel Tower, New York has the Statue of Liberty and Central Park, St. Louis has the Gateway Arch and Seattle has the Space Needle. It seems that countless Cities and communities have some outstanding feature. But Homer, Alaska, our community, has the greatest gift of all, its outstanding natural beauty of the ocean, the ever changing mountains accented by snow white glaciers. And it's all natural and free.

Homer is a fishing, tourist and arts, residential and retirement community with principally only a seasonal economy. Many businesses shut their doors as soon as the summer tourist season ends and even long-time locally oriented businesses close in the winter months. Having lived in Homer for fifty years we have observed a great number of City and State infrastructure investments in our community. In fact, we have had enough infrastructure development without equal property tax structure that we have the highest property taxes on the Kenai Peninsula except Seldovia.



Thus; it would certainly be advantageous to the City of Homer to help institute a convention/community center that would certainly attract conventions, conferences, festivals. It also would provide for local community gatherings of many sorts, year round. Any such facility should compliment and enhance our natural beauty. In being conspicuous it would provide an extraordinary visual experience upon entering Homer providing a positive feeling about our community.

Most Alaskan communities have convention/community centers. People with convention/conference experience tell us that people seeking such accommodations prefer out-of-area venue i.e. (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau) because it allows for a much greater opportunity for attendees to intermingle/interrelate with each other. Tour ships arriving in Homer appear to offer nearly nothing to do for visiting tourists to our community other than directing them to the gift & art shops. Sitka's convention center has Gold Rush Dancers. What if Homer offered simple lectures of native Alaskan and colorful history? Music festivals are popular and well attended as are fine arts & natural science camps, corporate retreats. We know that Homer is well situated for any or all of these. But we need a facility to make this happen. Our present accommodations are small and meager at best.

Yes, we are part-owners of what we think is certainly the most ideal land for such a convention/community center at the the gateway to Homer. Ownership has helped cause us to picture the **highest and best use** of this property. The land has 1922ft.+ hundred feet of shore line and 1,400ft. of highway frontage, with the advantage of an average elevation of one hundred feet making for the best view and providing tsunami protection as well. While the two parcels of land are 30 plus acres to the 1917 meander tide line, the upland usable land is 10 plus acres. Eagles and Sea Gulls choose the shore line bluff as a fly-way enhancing the "natural" experience.

Once before this concept of a park (not the playground type) / community/convention center was presented to the Parks and Recreation Committee and it was unanimously accepted. Further endeavors to have other commissions accept the concept fell short for the fear of costs. If this concept can only be considered to be an expense it should not be considered. But investment in our community and our future is different. Investment generates a return. This investment would (will) create tax based businesses. It is noteworthy that Homer has supported many sizable projects over the years: new Port & Harbor office twice, the deepwater docks, 4

public restrooms at near one million dollars, the building and expansion of the hospital, the building of the museum and now re-building it, City Hall was moved & the structure extensively remodeled and refurbished, the high school was built, junior high was built, the post office moved twice, the library was built twice and the present effort underway to build a new police station. All of these are good and necessary improvements to Homer and we have been most supportive of them. History shows that Homer repeatedly does what Homer cares to do. **However, infrastructure is not tax base.**

Some media attention has been given to the bluff and erosion. First, the bluff has been eroding for upward of a thousands of years. The real question is the **rate** of erosion. Two years ago we had surveying done by Mr. Roger Imhoff on Binocular Bluff where we own bluff property lots. He surprised us by telling us that survey stakes placed at the bluff edge over forty years ago were still in their same place today. Erosion at the Elks hall was an issue just after the hall was built. This was intelligently vegetated and erosion is not a concern today. Ocean level rise is projected to be 3mm per year. A recent survey on the end of the spit indicated a 3mm rise in sea level in the past year but interestingly the land mass in that area had risen 8mm. A Kachemak Bay Research Reserve study from 2010-2013 showed that Kachemak Bay land mass is raising at the rate of 8.6mm or .34" per year. Interestingly, our land mass is raising faster than the sea level rise which cannot help but ameliorate bluff erosion.

**As owners we have owned this pristine property for over forty years. It would only seem appropriate that by now either the concept of a community/convention center - park, gains needed community support or the land should be developed for some other less desirable use.** Financing can be found just as infrastructure financing has been found and at a minimum should at least be discussed. We, as the land owners, could well be approached for acceptable sales terms.

We trust you will give this idea your most sincere consideration.

Sincerely,

William and Judy Marley