

October 6, 2025

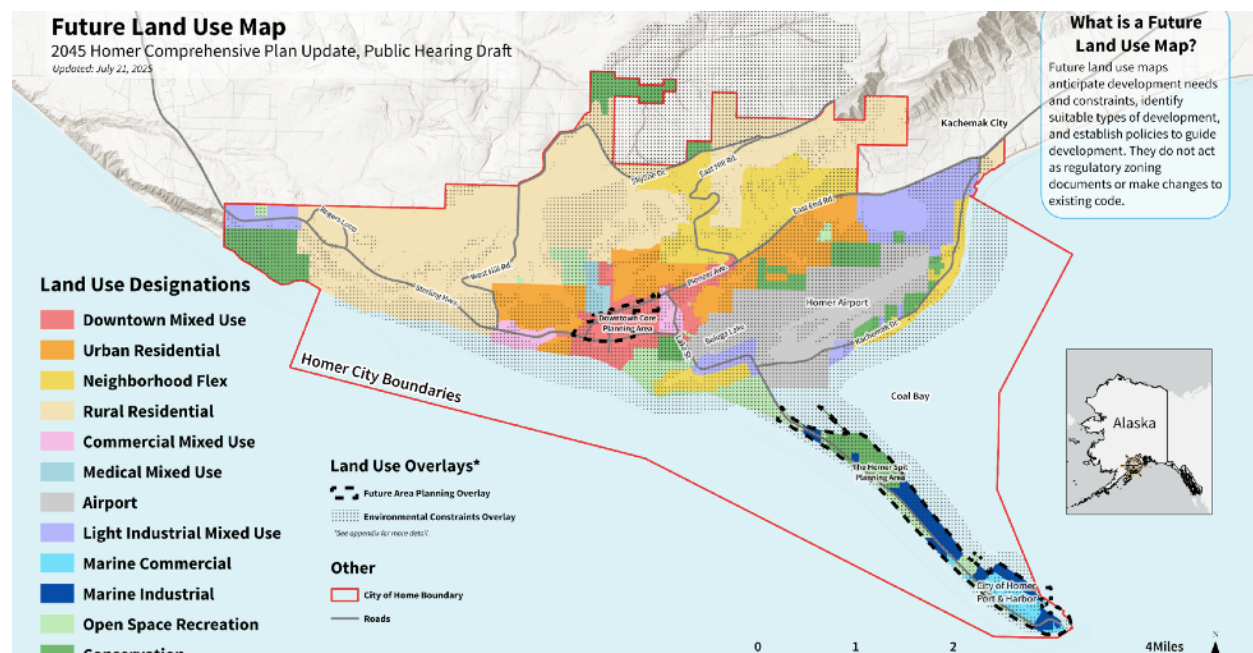
Protect Open Spaces in Homer!

If we don't protect some Open Spaces, Homer will likely be completely developed in 20 years or so. We don't want that, and we have a chance now! Open Space is great for recreation, critter habitat, and protecting us all from hazards like flooding, ice on the roads, and landslides.

Homer City Council will be introducing the draft Comprehensive Plan at their meeting on **Monday, October 13 at 6 PM**, and they will hold a public hearing on **October 27**- now is the time to **ask for changes to the Future Land Use Map and zoning to ensure that we protect some open spaces in Homer** (re. Ordinance 25-64).

Kachemak Bay Conservation Society supports changes to zoning code that align with the public value for open space, and responsible, best-practice water management. One of the most consequential portions of the Comp Plan is the "Future Land Use Map." which generally translates directly into zoning code--zoning code shapes what we do with our lands. We support the following actions:

- 1) The "Future Land Use Map" needs to show more Conservation/Recreation Lands, and/or lands with a new designation "Low Impact Development."
- 2) All mapping in the Comp Plan-- of Future Land Use, [Environmental Constraints](#), Zoning, etc.-- needs to be in GIS format, so everyone from potential buyers to the





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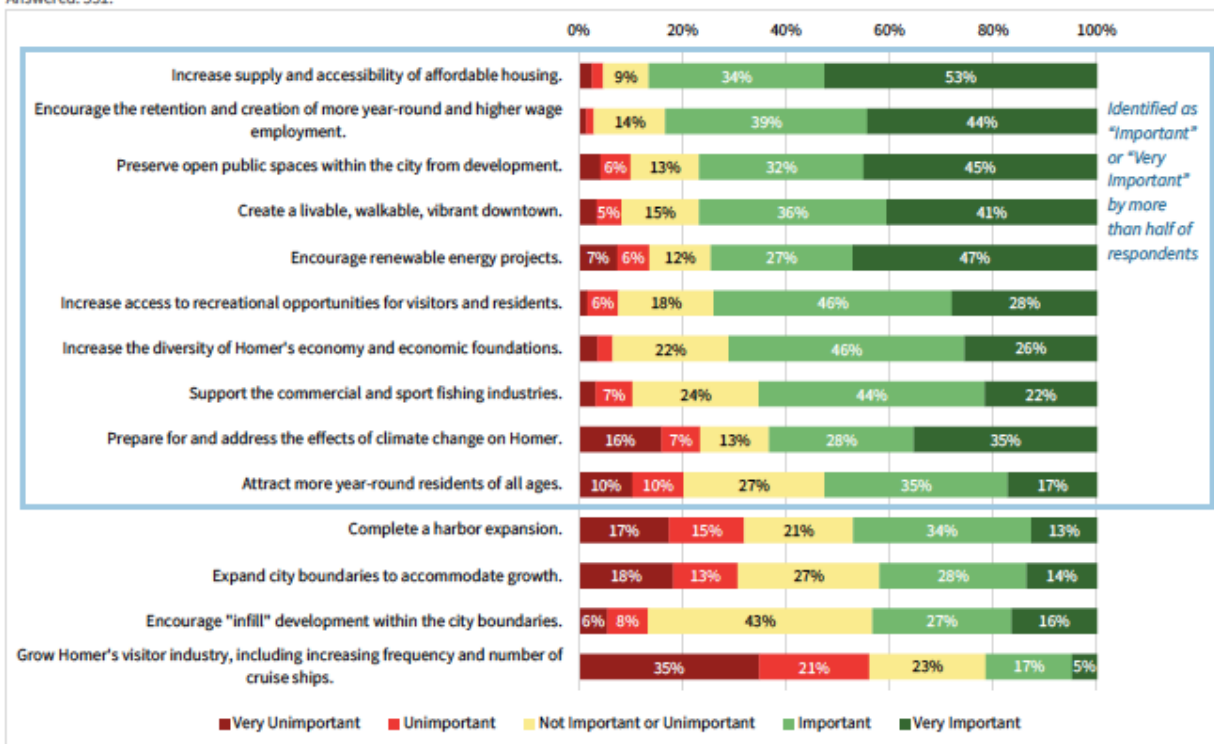
Planning Commission, can see which parcels we are talking about when we are looking at zoning and constraints.

Why is open space important to all of Homer?

- Seventy seven percent of a survey of Homer-area residents last year said that they wanted to "protect open public spaces within the city from development" --it is our # 3 priority-- and 74 percent said they want to "increase access to recreational opportunities"--it is our # 6 priority.

Q13: Listed below are potential priorities for the greater Homer community to focus on for the next 10-20 years. For each potential priority, please indicate level of importance.

Answered: 551.



- Homer is a tourist town, and our economy turns on the ecological diversity, vitality and picturesque beauty of places like Mud Bay, Beluga slough, and the Beluga Wetlands, as well as our popular trail systems like the Homer Spit bike trail and Diamond Creek and Beluga Slough.

- [Protected land increases the value of the lands around it](#)--boosting City Revenues, also see [here](#).



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- [Bird tourism is big money in Alaska](#) and should not be overlooked as a key economic driver for Homer. Homer's Shorebird Festival is Alaska's largest wildlife viewing festival, and Mud Bay is designated as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network Site of International Importance, which means that at least 100,000 shorebirds annually return here.



- Open Spaces provide recreational access, habitat and critical green infrastructure slows the flow of water that helps manage our significant water-related hazards including, flooding, landslides, bluff-erosion, ice and water on the roads, overflowing culverts, and septic system failure.

What Lands should be rezoned?

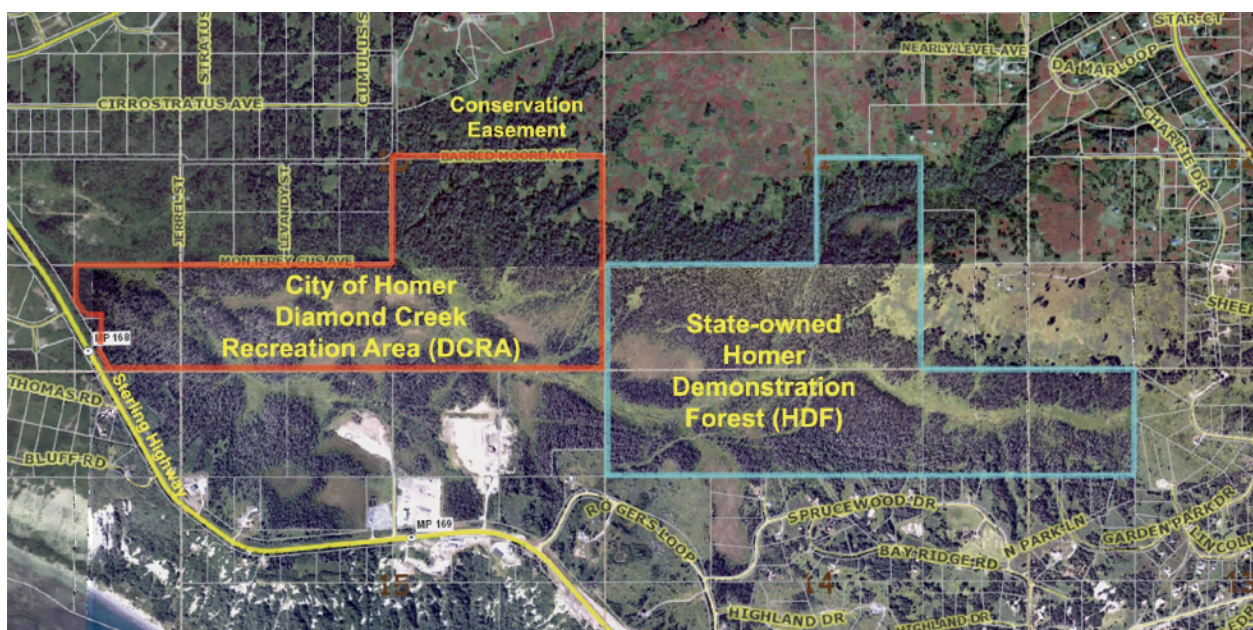
You are likely aware of the [proposed parking lot along the bike path on the Homer Spit](#) (folks seen birding in that location in image above). That fill application to the Corps of Engineers was possible because that land is currently zoned "Marine Industrial". The current (draft) Future Land Use Map maintains that designation (see blue stripe at the base of the spit in the Future Land Use Map). The Council should correct this inappropriate zoning and direct marine industrial use to the end of the spit. These lands should be zoned for conservation or "Minimal Impact Development."

We also want to draw your attention to lands around the [ADF&G Airport Critical Habitat Area](#) and conservation/recreation lands around Beluga Wetland and Slough, owned by City of Homer, KHLT and Moose Habitat Inc. (seen in green in the Future Land use maps). Checkered conservation and "General Commercial" (blue) and Urban Residential (orange) does not make sense in this area. We should have a more consistent buffer around these valuable conserved lands. These wetlands do a very important job of mitigating flooding, ice in the roads, bluff erosion etc. They are also critical habitat for migratory birds and moose in the winter - more conserved lands in these areas would make great recreation if trails could be put in.

Other lands that are good candidates for rezoning for Low Impact Development and/or Conservation or Recreation include those around the [Woodard Creek Watershed](#) and the [Diamond Creek Watershed/Recreation Area](#). These are great candidates for recreational sites that also are important for stormwater management.



Let's not forget the landslide hazard zones above the hospital (at the base of the





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Woodard Creek Watershed) and along Baycrest. Note that the future land use map designates some of the Baycrest Overlook, which has a potential for a massive slide, as Light Industrial, and the area above the hospital is zoned like everywhere else. This is a mistake. Both these areas should have minimal development and would make great recreational areas.

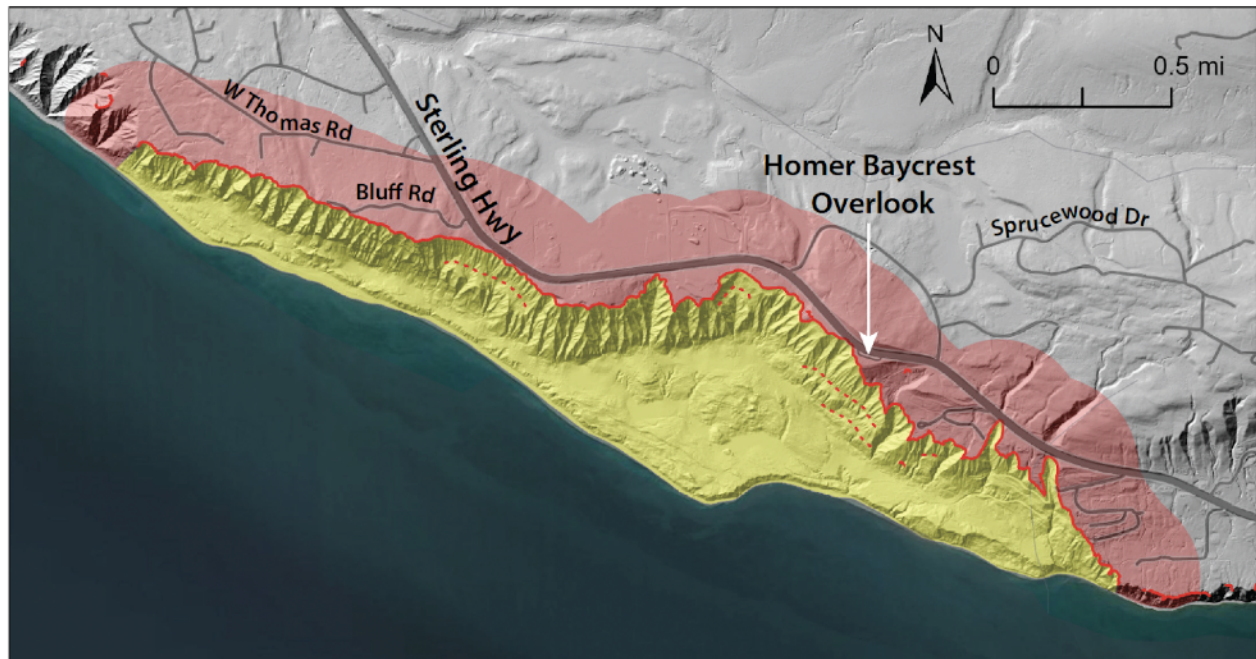
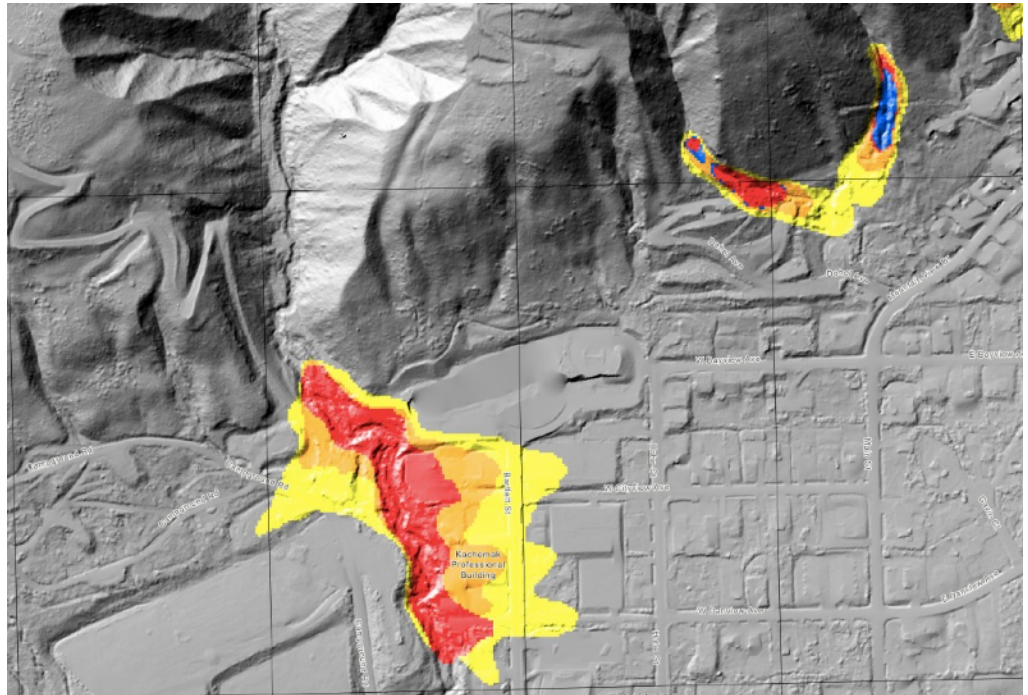


Figure 8. Deep-seated landslide susceptibility near the Bluff Point landslide (red polygon). The landslide body (yellow area, south of the red headscarp line) is the landslide deposit and is also susceptible to repeated failure.