



# City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Administration  
491 East Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, Alaska 99603  
(p) 907-235-8121 x2222  
(f) 907-235-3148

## Downtown Homer Alaska Brownfield Investigation & Remediation

R10-24-M-001

### IV.D.1 Applicant Identification

City of Homer, Alaska  
491 E Pioneer Ave  
Homer, AK 99603-7624

### IV.D.2 Funding Requested

#### IV.D.2.a. Grant Type

Multipurpose

#### IV.D.2.b Federal Funds Requested

Funding Amount Requested: \$1,000,000.00

### IV.D.3 Location

City of Homer, Alaska

### IV.D.4 Target Area and Priority Site Information

Target Area: Downtown Homer, Central Business District  
Census Tract: 02122001000  
HERC Sites 1 & 2 450 Sterling Highway, Homer Alaska  
Old Gas Station, 305 E Pioneer Ave, Homer Alaska  
Homer Electric Site, 3768 Snowbird Street (also has frontage on Lake Street)

### IV.D.5 Contacts

#### IV.D.5.a Project Director

Julie Engebretsen  
491 E Pioneer Ave  
Homer, AK 99603-7624  
907-435-3119  
[jengebretsen@ci.homer.ak.us](mailto:jengebretsen@ci.homer.ak.us)

#### IV.D.5.b Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

Rob Dumouchel, City Manager  
491 E Pioneer Ave  
Homer, AK 99603-7624

### IV.D.6 Population

5,515

### IV.D.7 Other Factors

Sample Format for Providing Information on the Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less.	3
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	

The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the proposed site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	
The reuse of the proposed cleanup site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	6
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	6
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	5
At least 20% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority sites(s) within the target area.	
The target area(s) is located within a community which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2013 or later) or is closing.	

**IV.D.8 Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority**  
Attached.

**IV.D.9 Releasing Copies of Applications**

The applicant understands that the information included will be treated in accordance with [40CFR 2.203](#). No passages are considered confidential.



THE STATE  
*of* **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

## Department of Environmental Conservation

DIVISION OF SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE  
Contaminated Sites Program

1700 E. Bogard Road  
Building B, Suite 103  
Wasilla, AK 99654  
(907) 376-1850  
[www.dec.alaska.gov](http://www.dec.alaska.gov)

October 30, 2023

**ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY**

Julie Engebretsen  
City of Homer  
491 E. Pioneer Avenue  
Homer, Alaska, 99603

RE: State Environmental Authority Letter

Dear Ms. Engebretsen,

This letter acknowledges that the City of Homer notified the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the designated State Environmental Authority, that Homer is submitting a 2024 Brownfields Multipurpose Grant application to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). DEC understands that the City is seeking this grant in order to conduct site assessment activities and cleanup planning for multiple buildings within the Homer Education and Recreation Complex (HERC), as well as to begin addressing other brownfields in the community.

DEC Brownfields is committed to assisting Alaska communities in their efforts to address brownfields properties. We believe the proposal to be a positive and necessary step to addressing the contaminated buildings within the HERC, consisting of two older school buildings contaminated with hazardous building materials, among other potentially contaminated areas or buildings in the project area.

We believe a successful award from EPA would greatly assist the City in its efforts to address contamination within the project area and get this property and other brownfields back into productive use.

This letter establishes Homer's compliance with the notification requirements of Threshold Criterion for EPA Brownfield Multipurpose Grants. We wish Homer well on both their pursuit of EPA assistance, and success in addressing their priority brownfields site in the City. The DEC Brownfields Program looks forward to working with the City in the future to support this project in any way we can.

Please contact me directly if we can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

*Breanna Mahoney*

Breanna Mahoney  
Environmental Program Specialist  
(907) 269-7503  
1700 E. Bogard Road  
Building B, Suite 103  
Wasilla, AK 99654  
breanna.mahoney@alaska.gov

Electronic cc: Marc Thomas, ADEC  
Madison Sanders-Curry, U.S. EPA

## **1. Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization**

### **1.a. Target Area and Brownfields**

#### **1.a.i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area**

The City of Homer (City)(pop. 5,500) is a small rural city in Census Tract 10, approximately 220 miles south of Anchorage, Alaska. It encompasses 15 sq. mi. and 10.5 sq. mi of water in tidelands surrounding the Homer Spit, a long narrow finger of land jutting 4.5 miles into Kachemak Bay, on the southern Kenai Peninsula. Homer’s downtown, defined by its Central Business District Zoning District (Target Area), is the service center for the entire southern Kenai Peninsula and as such serves a much larger geographic area, which adds more than 15,000 year-round residents from smaller communities and unincorporated areas who directly benefit from City services. In the summer, tourism, seasonal residents and workers increase the population by several thousand people, enjoying exceptional recreational opportunities and the diverse and productive marine and migratory bird environment along Kachemak Bay, a Critical Habitat Area. Homer Harbor on the Spit is a gateway to Kachemak State Park, Katmai National Park and several National Reserves, and is a transportation hub for over 47 non-road connected, underserved communities and Native Villages in southcentral Alaska. Downtown Homer is known as ‘The Heart of Homer.’ Amenities such as the grocery stores, post office, medical and government services, retail, public spaces and residential development share this modest density downtown. Within the downtown area, three major roads form a triangle: the Sterling Highway, Pioneer Avenue and Lake Street. The four Brownfield priority sites are along these routes. Contamination or perceived contamination at these properties have hindered redevelopment. The two priority HERC sites are located on a 4.3-acre property with a sunny, southern exposure, fantastic views of Kachemak Bay and the Kenai Mountains, but are underutilized eyesores at the gateway to downtown Homer. Community desire to revitalize these sites is high. The third site is a former gas station in the middle of the downtown area on Pioneer Avenue, and could be redeveloped into a small park with public parking and a shuttle bus stop, an important amenity in this tourism based community. The fourth location is on the eastern edge of the downtown area, and represents one of the largest undeveloped tracks in the district. Remediation of the site is well underway, with timing ripe to plan for redevelopment.

#### **1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s). All priority sites are located in the 02122001000 Census Area, Tract 10 Homer, Alaska.**

**Site 1 & 2: Homer Education and Recreation Complex (HERC), 450 Sterling Highway, Homer, AK 99603 (City-owned):** The complex is located on the Sterling Highway, the main and only access road into the City. There are two sites within the 4.3-acre complex that have been identified as priority brownfield sites. The first site, **HERC 1**, is a former school building and is a 16,800 sq. ft. wood frame building on a concrete foundation, built in 1956. The building is currently in use, housing indoor recreation programs and city building maintenance and parks division employees. The second site, **HERC 2**, is a derelict, two-story 7,600 sq. ft. concrete building built between 1952 and 1956, prior to Alaska statehood. This is a vacant building in much disrepair with broken windows and peeling paint. In spring 2023, the City contracted with Hazardous Building Materials Consulting, LLC to carry out a limited Hazardous Materials Assessment of HERC 1 and a comprehensive assessment of HERC 2. The results revealed that both buildings contain or are likely to contain hazardous materials, which was expected due to their age and the prevailing construction materials utilized in the 1950s. Examples include lead paint, asbestos, and materials like paint and varnish that can harbor PCBs. These test results hold significant implications for their reuse. These sites would be utilized for in-fill redevelopment to

include public indoor and outdoor recreation, ranging from an outdoor skateboard park, basketball court and turf activities, to indoor facilities such as a gymnasium and dance studio spaces. This grant would fund the environmental due diligence for this property so that it could be developed.

**Site 3: 305 E. Pioneer Ave, Homer, AK 99603:** This former gas and service station sits on a 0.39 acre and is located mid-way on Pioneer Avenue. Although a community supported mural adorns the remains of a portion of a cinder block building, it cannot hide the truth this is a derelict building blighting Homer's main retail street. The documented hazardous materials on the site have made private sector revitalization difficult; despite being listed for sale several times over the past two decades, ownership has not changed hands and new investment has not materialized for this centrally located downtown property. This site has had some community planning through a Pioneer Avenue Revitalization effort led by an ad hoc group of businesses, the City and nonprofits. Ideas included remediation and revitalization as a shuttle bus stop and downtown pocket park to provide some green space and pedestrian resting area along the main downtown walking area. A UST assessment performed in 2011 and 2012 found numerous contaminants including, but not limited to, diesel range organics (DRO), gasoline range organics (GRO), VOCs (including, but not limited to, benzene, toluene, trimethylbenzene, and xylenes). An estimated 1,600 cubic yards of petroleum contaminated soil remains on site.

**Site 4: 3768 Snowbird Street, Homer, AK 99603:** This 3.7 acre property is on the eastern side of the downtown area, and currently owned by the local electric utility. Other than monitoring wells, this undeveloped site is vegetated and appears to be a greenfield on the surface. As the City understands it, this site is nearing the end of the remediation phase, and could be redeveloped in the coming years. According to the State of Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Spill Response Contaminated Sites, the site is monitored for Benzene and BTEX concentrations. As part of a municipal project to build a new police station next door, this property now has road access on three sides and a new sidewalk and street lights. To capsize on this taxpayer investment, the City would utilize grant funds to do environmental due diligence in order to possibly purchase or assist a third-party to purchase with the hope of redeveloping it as an asset to the community. The 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan supports a more vibrant and thriving downtown, with mixed use land use and a healthy Pioneer Avenue economy.

#### **1.a.iii Identifying Additional Sites**

The City will use any funds available after addressing the priority sites to create an inventory of possible brownfield redevelopment properties and engage the public, City advisory commissions and leadership for input.

### **1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area**

#### **1.b.i. Overall Plan for Revitalization**

For more than a decade, the community has discussed what to do and the City has had extensive public engagement regarding the HERC sites as they relate to central business district revitalization and community need (described below). Revitalization of the HERC complex ties in with the City's Comprehensive Plan, which has a stated goal of promoting a concentrated mixed use center for the community, with the HERC complex being the main gateway focus. In 2014, the City considered the site for a public safety campus to include new police and fire stations. The City contracted for needs assessments, community engagement and conceptual design. However, voters, citing the desirability of the complex for community recreation, did not support the ballot measure and the plan was abandoned. The City conducted two extensive recreational needs assessments (2015 & 2022) in which the public cited HERC complex renovation for needed facilities. In 2018, an 8-member HERC task force was appointed by the City Council, held 17

public meetings over a five-month period and recommended a number of actions for the future of the HERC complex. The main recommendation was to demolish the building sites when they exceeded their useful life as the cost and outcome of renovations at the time exceeded the cost of demolition and new construction. In 2021, the City awarded a \$75,000 contract for the planning and conceptual design of a Multi-Use facility and outdoor recreation amenities to redevelop the HERC complex. The public, again, participated extensively in the planning process through an online survey that garnered 479 responses, a website comment form with 100 comments, public meetings and pop up events. This effort was focused on creating a community supported redevelopment plan, with the goal of applying for an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to accomplish a portion of the redevelopment work. Overall, the Homer community strongly supported municipal indoor/outdoor recreation over a public-private partnership for a larger, more expensive building with leasable space. As municipal services were not eligible activities under the competition, the City chose not to pursue an EDA grant but rather explore a stand-alone municipal recreation center. In 2022 City Council approved moving forward on clean up and demolition plans for HERC 2. However, after conducting additional hazardous materials assessments, the haz-mat remediation requirements and cost had exceeded the City's ability without financial and technical assistance. The gas station site has had some site assessment analysis, but the project needs to progress under the guidance of a QEP in order for the property owner and the City to understand the next steps in remediating site for future re-use. The utility company site is a large parcel in the downtown area that could host any number of commercial or public uses as one of the few large parcels with access to roads, sidewalks and full utilities, this site could be home to a number of public or commercial uses.

#### **1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Overall Plan for Revitalization**

Expanding economic development opportunities in Homer's downtown area is a community priority. Homer relies heavily on summer season tourism to support the tax base. The Homer Spit is one of the most iconic locales in Alaska and a popular destination. It features long expanses of beach, wildlife-rich tidal shore environments, a municipal harbor which serves up to 1500 commercial/recreational boats and a plethora of recreational opportunities and visitor support services. The City and local businesses have a goal to create a more vibrant downtown corridor that better supports community, commercial and recreational activities and draws more people to downtown to support Homer's locally owned small businesses that provide year-round services to the community. "The Spit" is particularly vulnerable to coastal erosion and winter storm damage. While Homer Harbor cannot be relocated, coastal erosion has become a complex and expensive issue for land and business owners on the Spit. Support from EPA Brownfield investment will allow the City to tackle difficult-to-develop downtown properties to make downtown Homer a more desirable location for businesses to relocate and spur redevelopment in an area not subject to coastal erosion or flooding, which will only worsen with climate change.

The HERC site is located at the western gateway to the downtown core, along the major highway that delivers all visitors to Homer. Although Homer is a small town and the community initially supported recreational uses, housing has become a community priority and significant planning issue. The HERC site could hold a housing complex or an infinite array of mixed use opportunities, which the community would support given the right developer and a site design responsive to the community's needs and interests. A recreation center as part of the complex has been the most recent development idea. Unfortunately, the hazardous materials present are a roadblock to forward progress of any of the ideas, and other sites are now under consideration for a new

recreation facility. The City hopes by remediating the HERC complex, future community members can capitalize on the location and amenities of this site. Redeveloping the former gas station site as shuttle stop/respice ties into a Pioneer Avenue economic revitalization goal of improving pedestrian experiences, specifically on the mile-long stretch of Pioneer Avenue and its connections to principal destinations and points of interest in the Central Business District (CBD). The HEA site could support mixed-use development, which fits with infill and densification of development in the CBD.

### **1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources**

#### **1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse**

Multipurpose grant funding will advance 10 years of coordinated planning and assessment efforts to overcome the environmental and economic challenges of these brownfield properties. The City has extensive expertise in leveraging and developing partnerships that bring resources to advance critical phases of community priority projects. The City's robust grant writing team has been successful in bringing State and Federal investment into significant local infrastructure projects such as \$1.2M from NOAA and EPA to construct green infrastructure systems for storm water management, \$2.1M from FEMA to replace raw water transmission mains and \$2.25M in Federal and State funding in support of Homer Harbor improvements. The City will pursue ADEC site-specific cleanup funding, EDA and a variety of other funding sources to support site reuse. The City also has the ability to leverage City funds for future phases of redevelopment through bonding or voter-approved increases to sales tax, the most recent being a soon-to-sunset .03% sales tax increase for the construction of a new Police Station. As a First Class City in Alaska, though, the City has limited access to property tax and sales tax revenues are already high relative to other municipalities at 7.85%.

#### **1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure**

The target area is supported by an established network of existing infrastructure (City and State owned streets, sidewalk facilities, water/sewer, utilities, broadband). Clean up of the sites will allow better utilization of existing infrastructure. Cleanup of the buildings on the HERC 1 and 2 and Pioneer Avenue sites is required due to hazardous materials and noncompliance with modern building code and ADA requirements. New construction on the HERC property will need necessary infrastructure upgrades including natural gas hook up and new water and sewer service lines, but due to its central location, it has access to adequate infrastructure for future development. All major utilities can be accessed at the property line; no new mainline extensions are required to serve future development on the site. Renewable energy systems, energy efficient construction, and green infrastructure, such as biological filtration of storm water runoff, will be incorporated into site redevelopment wherever possible; funding will be sought by the city to incentivize these project activities.

## **2. Community Need and Community Engagement**

### **2.a. Community Need**

#### **2.a.i. The Community's Need for Funding**

The City has managed over time to save up \$153,000 for the demolition of HERC 2, but after a comprehensive hazardous material assessment on HERC 2 and preliminary assessment on HERC 1, the level of testing, an ABCA, cleanup planning and actual remediation will require significant additional funding. The City's \$16.1M General Fund Budget and \$5.9M Capital budget is funded primarily through sales tax revenues. Homer's small size and tax base, and lack of big industry (due to its remote location) limit the City's ability to increase revenues. This, coupled with a series of regional disaster events that have negatively impacted two important revenue generating sectors



in Homer’s economy (tourism and commercial fishing), culminate in a lack of funding to address sites.

The Swan Lake Federally-declared wildfire disaster closed the Sterling highway in the summer of 2019, resulting in reported revenue losses for businesses of up to 20%. In 2020, COVID-19 closures and interstate travel/business restrictions greatly hampered Homer’s tourism and hospitality industries. City sales tax revenues suffered a 19% decrease. While visitation has stabilized over time, increased costs due to inflation have offset the gains. Commercial and sport fishing are significant economic drivers. In 2020, there were 594 commercial fishing permit holders, 442 commercial crewmember license holders, and 615 vessels home ported in Homer. However, reductions in Pacific halibut, cod and Bering Sea crab biomass have led to Federal Fishery Disaster Determinations every year since 2018 and Federal closures in 2020 and 2022. Historically low fish stocks have decimated the local Cook Inlet commercial salmon fishery, which has been down 70% over the past four years. Closures diminish tax revenues from commercial fish sales and from the maritime trades that support the fleet. Low fish stocks also lower sales of sport fish charters in the sport fish industry, further lowering tax revenues.

Homer’s unemployment rate is 5.2%, higher than Alaska’s at 4.0% and the US at 3.9%, which reflects Home’s highly seasonal employment pattern in the summer hospitality sector, and a workforce skills gap for filling highly technical positions in a small, remote town. 37.6% of the population is not in the labor force, which reflects significant growth in the senior population (aged 65 and older). From 2010 to 2020, the 65+ population in Homer witnessed a remarkable increase of 86%, which has helped fuel Home’s 6.4% population growth in the last ten years. 38% of Homer’s population is 55 years or older. Population living below poverty (9.8%) is high. (*US Census 2010 and 2020 ACS 5-Year Survey*) Overlaying all this is a continuing state-wide recession, triggered in 2015 by a downturn in oil prices and decreased oil industry investments. Since then, the State of Alaska has been reducing its budget to make up for a significant fiscal gap resulting from plummeting oil industry investment. The State’s cost shifting to municipalities means the City shoulders more operating costs for services that the State had previously provided. The same holds true for capital funding. The State has greatly reduced (and in some cases paused) their capital projects grant programs, which limits the City’s ability to extend the capacity of the City’s capital budget with leveraged State funds. EPA Brownfield funding provides a critical path forward on revitalization, helping the City quantify cleanup costs and beginning the remediation process.

**2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations** The majority of residents can be classified as members of sensitive populations: 20.3% are children; 20.3% are over the age of 64 (8 percentage points higher than the statewide average); and 7.3% Native Alaskan and 27% are Individuals living below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line (seven percentage points higher than the statewide average). The [South Peninsula Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment](#) (CHNA) completed in 2022 identifies additional sensitive populations in the southern Kenai Peninsula (SKP) service area:

<b>% POPULATION:</b>	<b>SKP</b>	<b>AK</b>	<b>US</b>
<b>OVER AGE 64</b>	20	12	16.8
<b>LIVING BELOW 200% FEDERAL POVERTY LINE</b>	27	20	27.5
<b>VETERANS</b>	10.8	10	7
<b>EXPERIENCING FOOD INSECURITY</b>	13.5	11.9	12.8
<b>RECEIVED CANCER DIAGNOSIS</b>	13.1	9.6	5.8

According to the USDA Economic Research Service Atlas, the SKP is a low access food desert, meaning that a high percentage of residents must travel up to 20 miles to a full-service grocery store. The CHNA reports that in 2022, the percentage of residents with food insecurity was higher in the SKP Kenai Peninsula (13.5%) than Alaska (11.9%). The total of unique households served by the Homer Community Food Pantry increased from 564 in 2021 to 744 in 2022. 10.5% of the population live with a disability and the percentage of adults with a personal care provider has increased from 67.9% to 80.2%, higher than AK's rate (65.4% to 76.1%).

Homer's isolation, lack of government resources, low employment and seasonal fluctuation of daylight triggers mental health issues such as depression/anxiety. The percentage of adults who report frequent mental distress has been increasing from 11.2% in 2020 to 14.7% in 2022. The percentage also increased for Alaska between 2021 (10.7%) and 2022 (12.0%). In 2022, the SKP (14.7%) had a higher percentage report frequent mental distress than Alaska (12.0%). The CHNA also assessed self-harm. The number of suicide deaths has been steadily increasing in the SKP, with 51 from 2012-21. The suicide mortality rate per 100,000 increased slightly between 2021 (25.7) and 2022 (26.2), while the state rate remained steady.

**2.a.ii (2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease & Adverse Health Conditions:** The City is a Medically Underserved Area (MUA) and a Mental Health HPSA geographic high need area and according to the US Health Resources Services Administration. Contaminants that exist at the target sites include asbestos, PCB's, potential petrochemicals and other hazardous substances. These contaminants can have serious impacts on the health of our residents living and working in proximity to brownfields sites. The cumulative leading cause of death for the Southern Kenai Peninsula for years 2000 to 2021 were cancer (538) and diseases of the heart (509). The percentage of adults who have received a cancer diagnosis has increased in the Southern Kenai Peninsula (11.3% to 13.1%) and Alaska (9.4% to 9.6%) between 2020 and 2021; the percentage for the Southern Kenai Peninsula (13.1%) higher in comparison to the state (9.6%) in the most recent year. The lung and bronchus cancer incidence at 62.6% is 13.4 percentage points higher than the AK average.

## **2.b. Community Engagement**

### **2.b.i. Prior/Ongoing Community Involvement**

The City has had extensive public engagement and public meetings which has led to action on the HERC complex over the past decade. Most meetings were held at City Hall, which has ADA access. The City has also conducted public engagement using social media, a telephone survey, stakeholder interviews and informational sessions at the local high school, at the HERC sites and at the community museum during evenings and weekends, some with Zoom participation opportunities. The City also hosts a series of websites with current project information as well as a historical record of the various studies and ideas for this property. Prior to the pandemic, there was a community led effort to remediate the gas station, with some desire to form a community wide assessment coalition to pursue funding. The fourth site owned by the electric company has had no public engagement in the past decade.

### **2.b.ii. Project Involvement**

The City of Homer will work with the Homer Chamber of Commerce, Homer Independent Living Center, neighborhood residents, business owners, existing recreation users, MAPP a community coalition of non-profit organizations and individuals focused on Community Health Needs, and City of Homer Advisory Commissions and Boards. to review the results of the hazardous materials testing and ABCAs. Ideally this project will include an ABCA for both HERC 1 and HERC 2.

This project will not likely fully fund the remediation of both buildings and compromises will need to be made. Community engagement will focus on the results of the ABCA and community decision making on how to best utilize grant and municipal funds to remediate one or both of the two buildings.

### 2.b.iii. Project Roles

.Name of organization/entity/group	Point of Contact (name, & email)	Specific involvement in the Project or assistance provided
Homer Chamber of Commerce	Brad Anderson, <a href="mailto:exdir@homer.alaska.org">exdir@homer.alaska.org</a>	Assist with public outreach via the extensive Chamber membership of local small businesses and residents, including Chamber luncheon and small focus groups to provide information and solicit feedback.
Economic Development Advisory Commission	Karin Marks, Chair [REDACTED]	Chair will work with City staff on public outreach and with the Commission on their recommendations
Homer Independent Living Center	Brad Parsons, <a href="mailto:bparsons@peninsulailc.org">bparsons@peninsulailc.org</a>	Aging and Disability Resource Center, Homer Advocate, conduct outreach for underserved populations
Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission	David Lewis, Chair <a href="mailto:davelyn@gci.net">davelyn@gci.net</a>	Parks and greenspace planning recommendations for target sites.
Planning Commission	Scott Smith, Chair [REDACTED]	Land use recommendations for target sites.
Homer Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Board	Donna Adderhold, Chair <a href="mailto:DonnaAderhold@ci.homer.ak.us">DonnaAderhold@ci.homer.ak.us</a>	Review plans for public lands redevelopment in accordance with the City's adopted ADA Transition Plan
Mobilizing Action Through Planning And Partnerships	Hannah Gustafson, Coordinator <a href="mailto:mappofskp@gmail.com">mappofskp@gmail.com</a>	Health improvement coalition that will partner with the city to conduct community conversations on site remediation and redevelopment choices after an ABCA has been completed

### 2.b.iv. Incorporating Community Input

The City has engaged the Homer community to assess community needs, collaborate with adjacent property owners and key stakeholders, and begin envisioning the redevelopment of three of four brownfields in Homer's downtown. Ideally the Multipurpose grant will yield an ABCA for two priority sites, HERC 1 and HERC 2, and build on previous public process to inform next steps. The City will conduct targeted public outreach to include in-person meetings at a variety of public locations, days and times, some with zoom options to provide information on the testing and ABCA results. Participants will be able to ask questions and provide comments to the moderator. Information will also be provided at publicly advertised City meetings such as City Council and Advisory Commissions. The City's website, monthly newsletter, releases to the local media, social

media and Chamber of Commerce newsletter provides additional outreach avenues. A survey hosted via the city website, social media platforms and paper copies will provide all residents with the opportunity to comment. This project will not likely fully fund the remediation of both buildings and compromises will need to be made. Community engagement will focus on the results of the ABCA and community decision making on how to best utilize grant and municipal funds to remediate one or both of the two buildings. Constituent and stakeholder feedback is provided to the City Council, who will ultimately make a decision based on that public feedback on how to proceed after the ABCA's have been conducted. It is at that point the Council will have enough information to supplement EPA funding with municipal funds if needed to result in at least one remediated building.

**3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Progress**

**3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs**

**3.a.i. Project Implementation**

**3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, & MEASURING PROGRESS**

**3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities & Outputs**

<b>3.a.i. Project Implementation: Task/Activity 1: Program Management</b>
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> Project management of EPA-funded activities for the priority & non-priority site(s), cooperative agreement oversight; budget management, scheduling and coordinating subcontractors, monthly team meetings, conference/workshops travel for purposes of staff development and efficiency improvement; ACRES reporting <i>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</i> in-kind resources including City project team staff effort
<i>ii. Identifying additional sites:</i> As noted in section 1.a.i., Additional sites would be identified by creating an inventory of possible redevelopment properties using data from the State of Alaska Contaminated Sites Database and prioritizing sites through community and city official engagement activities.
<i>iii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Months 1-60, project activities will commence immediately upon issuance of cooperative agreement. The project team will meet monthly throughout the program.
<i>iv. Task/Activity Lead(s):</i> Project Manager with support from QEP and project staff
<i>v. Output(s):</i> Quarterly reports, ACRES data entry; notes from monthly team meetings; maintenance of a project file.
<b>Task/Activity 2: Assessment Phase I &amp; 2, Pre-Demolition, and Data Gap Assessments</b>
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> EPA-funded activities for the priority site(s)– After the generic QAPP is developed, a significant amount of funding will be allocated to the priority sites. Comprehensive investigation will be completed relative to each of priority sites once data gaps are identified. This work will also include Phase I ESAs and Phase II ESAs (including site specific QAPPs) for priority and additional sites identified. <i>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</i> in-kind resources including staff time for oversight of the QEP and review of reports/activities
<i>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Months 3-18, assessment of the priority site launching by month 3
<i>iii. Task/Activity Lead(s):</i> QEP with oversight by the City project manager
<i>iv. Output(s):</i> a.) Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) b.) Data Gap Review c.) Environmental Investigation/Pre-demolition Assessment HERC Sites d.) 2 FASTM-AAI compliant Phase I e.) 2 Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (including site specific QAPPs)
<b>Task/Activity 3: Brownfields and Remediation Planning</b>
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> ABCAs will summarize the strategy for cleanup and ultimately reuse of priority sites. <i>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</i> in-kind resources – staff time
<i>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Months 18 through 36

<i>iii. Task/Activity Lead(s):</i> QEP experienced in these task elements will lead the remediation design planning and the project manager with assistance from QEP, will lead the reuse planning portion of this activity
<i>iv. Output(s):</i> a.) 2 Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternative (ABCAs) b.) Cleanup Design/Bidding Document development;
<b>Task/Activity 4: Public Engagement</b>
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> City website, social media, press releases, newsletters and other outreach will be used to keep the community informed of project progress. Additionally, once the Phase 1 and 2 ESA's and ABCA's have been completed, the City and project partners will hold community meetings to gather comments on which site to focus on; grant and city funds are not expected to cover remediation of more than one priority site. The City Council will make the final decision on which site to remediate and the use of additional city funds. EPA funds will support QEP time for public information development, translation of reports into non-technical easily communicable information for citizen decision making. <i>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</i> in-kind resources – project staff and partner time and materials promoting and engaging community participation. The City can provide significant resources and staffing to this effort building on pre-existing planning efforts on the priority sites, reserving grant funds for actual remediation work.
<i>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Months 3 through 60
<i>iii. Task/Activity Lead(s):</i> The City project lead will work with the project team and partners to create an outreach plan, engage community members and facilitate an end decision by the City Council
<i>iv. Output(s):</i> Community Participation Plan, website and standardized outreach mechanisms with regular updates, community meetings and presentations when technical and financial information have been compiled
<b>Task/Activity 5: Remediation</b>
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> Remedial activities at priority sites 1-2 will be led by a QEP experienced in remediation. The project will result in the removal of hazardous building materials or other onsite contamination, such as described in the next section. The City will contract with an expert abatement firm through an open bid process. <i>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</i> in-kind resources - staff efforts for procurement and oversight of QEP
<i>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Months 36 through 60
<i>iii. Task/Activity Lead(s):</i> QEP will provide oversight of the remediation contractor. The City project staff will provide procurement services and will review technical documents.
<i>iv. Output(s):</i> Remediation activities and removal of regulated materials

**3b. Cost Estimates:** Cost estimates are based on our grant project experience other Alaskan grant applications.

<b>Budget Table</b>						
<b>Project Tasks</b>	<b>1: Programmatic</b>	<b>2: Assessment</b>	<b>3: Remediation Planning</b>	<b>4: Public Engagement</b>	<b>5: Remediation</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel						
Contractual	\$33,000	\$200,000	\$40,000	\$27,000	\$700,000	\$1,000,000

**Program Management:**

*Contractual:* **\$33,000** is budgeted for program support by a QEP (200 hours at \$165 per hour) over the project period. The City, with support from QEP, will complete quarterly reports, MBE/WBE forms, & ACRES database input with contractor assistance while providing oversight and review of programmatic elements. **Task 1 total: \$33,000**

**Task 2 – Assessment:** *Contractual:* a.) Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) = \$8,000; b.) Data gap review and Environmental Investigation/Pre-demolition Assessment pf HERC Sites 1 and 2: \$100,000 (includes site specific QAPP); d.) Two (2) ASTM-AAI compliant

Phase I for priority sites 1 and 2 @ \$11,000 each = \$22,000.00; and e.) Two Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (including site specific QAPPS) @ \$25,000 each = \$50,000 f.) Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternative (ABCA) report for HERC Sites 1 and 2 @10,000 each: \$20,000; **Task 2 total: \$200,000**

**Task 3 – Remediation/Reuse Planning:** *Contractual Costs:* Two ABCAs for Phase II sites: \$10,000 ea. = \$20,000 b.) Design/Bidding document development for cleanup activities at the 2 HERC sites: \$40,000; c.); **Task 3 Total: \$40,000**

**Task 4 – Community Engagement:** *Contractual Costs:* \$27,000 in QEP support are approximately 164 hours at \$165 per hour (\$27,000) for development of Community Involvement Plan (CIP); community meetings, materials and outreach. **Task 4 total: \$26,400**

**Task 5 – Site Remediation:** Contractual costs are included for the cleanup of the HERC 1 and 2 sites, which includes removal and disposal of ACMs and PCBs. No cost estimates are available due to the uncertain ability to dispose of PCB contaminated materials in the State of Alaska. The Strategy to transform the HERC site into a reusable property will include detailed remediation planning documents. Given that some assessment has been completed at this site, and it poses a significant environmental risk to the community, remediation of known contaminants (asbestos) can begin immediately and concurrently with characterizing the potentially unknown remaining hazardous and regulated materials. The abatement should begin in atop down approach to prevent recontamination **Task 5 Total: \$700,000**

**3.c. Measuring Environmental Results:** The Project Manager with support from key staff and a QEP will document, track, and evaluate outputs and outcomes through quarterly progress reports, and in quarterly communication with the EPA Project Officer. The activities and outcomes are tracked through an invoice management system. *Outputs:* a.) Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); b.) HERC Sites 1 & 2 Gap Review; c.) Environmental Investigation/Pre-demolition Assessment of HERC Sites 1 and 2; d.) ASTM-AAI compliant Phase I ESAs.) Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (including site specific QAPPS); f.) Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternative (ABCA) reports; g.) Design/Bidding Document development; h.) Number of formal community meetings, i) Community Involvement Plan; j.) ACRES data entry; and k.) subsequent project funding received for other environmental activities *Outcomes:* Acres of land remediated and redeveloped and square footage of buildings positioned for demolition. Should the project run into delays or obstacles, the City will work the assigned EPA Project Officer and QEP to implement countermeasures, such as budget reallocation.

## **4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance**

### **4.a Programmatic Capability**

#### ***4.a.i-iii. Organizational Capacity and structure and Key Staff***

The City of Homer (the City) is the lead applicant for the Brownfield grant and will manage and implement the project. The City is a municipality experienced in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of a variety of infrastructure such as public buildings, water/sewer systems, streets, parks and a municipal port. The City has established standardized procedures and fiscal controls for project management, procurement, accounting and reporting requirements and grant compliance review that support a successful track record of managing community and grant funded projects.

**Organizational Structure & Capacity:** The Project Manager is **Julie Engebretsen, Economic Development Manager**. She will implement the grant agreement and ensure all Tasks are carried out in a timely fashion. In her 21 years with the City’s Planning Department, she has a wealth of

experience with municipal planning and development, as well as public engagement. To date, she has led all City efforts to locally assess and plan for the HERC and other Brownfield's sites in the focus area. She will develop RFPs to competitively procure a Qualified Environmental Professional and professional services to help create a cleanup plan. She will work closely with EPA, community stakeholders, manage environmental consultants, and coordinate grant administration activities among the City's project team to successfully steward Brownfield funds and achieve timely deliverables according to the work plan.

**Public Works Director Jan Keiser**, will provide technical support and site specific project assistance. Ms. Keiser holds degrees in Civil Engineering, Engineering Management and Law and has over 35 years' professional experience as a Civil Engineer, construction contractor and municipal project manager, coordinating successfully with contractors, and State, Borough and Federal agencies regarding regulatory and project funding requirements.

**Jenny Carroll, City's Communications Coordinator** will carry out public engagement activities through a variety of best practices and with the support of the Assistant to the City Manager. Ms. Carroll holds an MA in Anthropology from Stanford University and has 35 years' experience in public nonprofit management, program planning, grants, and public administrative service. Over her eight years with the City, she has worked range of city planning projects and has a successful history of proactively soliciting and addressing community input to align project plans with community needs and aspirations. Community engagement will build upon the City's extensive engagement related to the Brownfields properties to bolster public input under the Multipurpose grant and will include stakeholder representatives from adjacent landowners, area residents and the business and nonprofit sectors.

Grants are accounted for in independent cost centers to ensure that grant funds are used for their intended purpose and can be fully accounted for at any time. Financial systems and grant reporting are supervised and verified by **Elizabeth Walton, Finance Director**. Ms. Walton has over 13 years of experience in local government financial management, MBA in Capital Markets, BBA in Accounting, and BBA in Business Administration. Jessica McGuire, Accounting Technician/Grants Administrator will coordinate with the project manager for timely reporting. The team monitors progress toward achieving grant deliverables on a quarterly basis to inform adjustments that will address issues and ensure timely achievement of results. The team structure provides backup capabilities to maintain project schedule and compliance in the event of employee turnover.

#### **4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources**

#### **4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments**

#### **4.b.ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Assistance**

#### **4.b.ii.1. Purpose and Accomplishments**

The City of Homer has not previously received any EPA Brownfield grant funds, though it has extensive grant management experience. The City successfully administered \$10.1M in Federal CARES Act funds in 2020; two Federal ARPA awards totaling \$1.5 million in 2021; and 9 State grant awards totaling \$1.47M in 2022. The City's finances are audited annually for compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements in accordance with Government Auditing Standards including federal single audits. The results of the City's audits by BDO USA, LLP did not contain any findings, questioned costs, or deficiencies in internal control

over compliance with laws, regulations, rules, and provisions of contracts and grant agreements applicable to the City's federal or state programs.

The following describes three most recent Federal and State awarded projects comparable in size and scope, and relevant in terms of management structure and community engagement. (1) Subrecipient of \$1.17M NOAA FY2022 National Estuarine Research Reserve Habitat Restoration and Conservation funding to implement and manage the Kachemak Drive Peatlands Water Quality Improvement Project. (2) \$1.5M US Army Corps of Engineers funding matched by \$750,000 in State of Alaska Designated Legislative Grant funds and \$750,000 local sponsor funds to produce a design and conduct a feasibility study to expand Homer's municipal Harbor. (3) \$987,940 from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds.

#### **4.b.ii.2. Compliance with Grant Requirements**

The following describes three most recent Federal and State awarded projects comparable in size and scope, and relevant in terms of management structure and community engagement.

(1) Subrecipient of \$1.17M NOAA FY2022 National Estuarine Research Reserve Habitat Restoration and Conservation funding to implement and manage the Kachemak Drive Peatlands Water Quality Improvement Project. Purpose: after public outreach and input, acquisition and long-term conservation of area wetlands as public lands; Phase 1 environmental assessment and stormwater monitoring; construction of nature-based stormwater conveyance and filtration system to renourish wetlands and protect water quality of Kachemak Bay. Accomplishments: the project is in its first year; project milestones (public outreach, contracting, and initiation of appraisal and environmental services and design) and all terms and conditions of the grant agreement, including reporting, have been met. (2) \$1.5M US Army Corps of Engineers funding matched by \$750,000 in State of Alaska Designated Legislative Grant funds and \$750,000 local sponsor funds. Purpose: produce a design and conduct a feasibility study to expand Homer's municipal Harbor to alleviate overcrowding and navigational safety issues. Accomplishments: the project is in its first year and successfully met the first Alternatives and Measures Milestone which involves extensive, region-wide public engagement, NEPA coordination with agencies, contracting for and managing engineering consultants, and initiation of economic data collection. All terms and conditions of the Federal Cost-Share Agreement and State grant, including reporting, have been met. (3) \$987,940 from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds. Purpose: design, competitively bid and connect 27 properties that relied on on-site sewage disposal systems and hauled water to municipal water and sewer infrastructure. Accomplishments: Public engagement with affected property owners to form a Special Assessment District, permitting and successful completion of improvements on time and within budget and successful close out of loan/principal forgiveness documents.



## **Threshold Criteria for Multipurpose Grants**

### **III.B.1. Applicant Eligibility**

#### **III.B.1.a. Applicant Eligibility**

The City of Homer affirms that the organization is a city and therefore eligible to apply for this assessment grant.

#### **III.B.1.b. Applicant Eligibility 501(c) 4 Status**

Not applicable; not a 501(c)4 organization.

### **III.B.2. Community Involvement**

The City of Homer maintains a website, social media presence, monthly newsletter, live streams public meetings and Council meetings are broadcast by radio. The City also has the capability of creating an email list of interested citizens. The City partners with the Homer Chamber of Commerce, whose email newsletter reaches hundreds of businesses and individuals each week. The City will use all these avenues to keep stakeholders and interested citizens informed of progress, in addition to conducting open house and pop up informational events as needed.

### **III.B.3. Target Area**

Downtown Homer, Central Business District

### **III.B.4. Affirmation of Brownfields Site Ownership**

The City of Homer affirms that the organization is the sole owner of a brownfields site as defined under CERCLA § 101(39) and that the site is a) not listed or proposed for listing on the National Priorities List; b) not subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA; and c) not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. government.

### **III.B.5. Use of Grant Funds**

Complete at least one Phase II environmental site assessment: page 10

Remediate at least one site: page 11

Develop an overall plan for revitalization of the target area that includes a feasible reuse strategy for at least one priority brownfield site: pages 10, 11

### **III.B.6. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds**

No open EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant or Assessment Grant.

### **III.B.7. Contractors and Named Subrecipients**

Not applicable.