

City of Homer Title 21 Update

*Joint Work Session of Homer
City Council & Planning
Commission to Develop
Public Hearing Draft*

June 22, 2026

June 22, 2026 Joint Work Session Presentation, Homer Title 21 Update



Welcome & Objectives

Objectives for Today

1. Title 21 Revision Project Refresher
2. Summary of Public Review Draft Feedback
3. Key Policy Topics Requiring Direction
4. Next Steps



Meeting Agreements

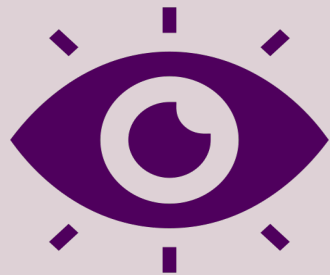
- Focus on the decisions before us.
- Share perspectives succinctly and respectfully.
- Seek understanding before responding.
- Move from concerns to solutions.
- Support clear direction when consensus is not possible.
- Value our time together.

Project Refresher

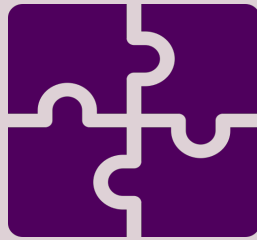
Title 21 Update: Code Revision Goals



Streamline development processes and increase predictability



Increase code clarity and flexibility



Better align the code with community plans



Consider natural hazards and preserve natural features



Simplify, reorganize, and add visuals to make the code more user friendly

January – March 2025

- Compile background and gather initial feedback.
- Review existing code and identify updates.

Other Homer Plans (e.g., Transportation Plan, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Community Design Manual)

Analysis of City of Homer Land Use Applications and Trends

Technical Code Audit

Small Group Discussions with Homer Groups that work with the Code (Builders, Developers, Guiding Growth/ Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships, Business Owners, Realtors)

*Monthly Meetings with **Planning Commission** on Code Topics and Potential Changes*

Path to Public Review Draft

April – November 2025

- Staff, legal team, PC review of draft code.
- Gather stakeholder and public input on potential changes.

2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan

Community Input from Open House (in person & virtual)

Planning & Zoning Best Practices

Input from City Staff (ongoing)

*One-on-one interviews with **Planning Commission** and **City Council***

Community Open House

November 2025 – Spring 2026

- Conduct Planning Commission work sessions on key topics.
- Refine draft code for public review.

*One-on-one interviews with **Planning Commission** and **City Council***

*Input from **Planning Commission** via Work Sessions: Housing and District Changes, Development Process, and Environmental Features*

Public Comments

March 31 – May 15 2026
Public Review Draft

Components of the Title 21 Update

Full Revised Draft Code

Revised Homer City Code
Title 21 ZONING AND PLANNING

Public Review Draft
Clean Version

March 2026

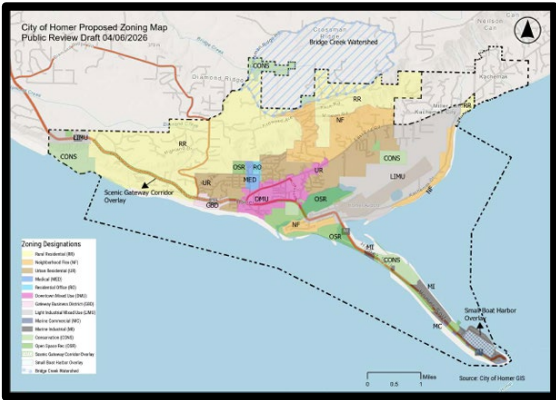
Proposed Table of Allowable Uses by District

Allowed/permitted (P), Allowed Accessory (A), Conditional (C), and Not Allowed (blank)	Residential			Mixed Use		
Uses	RR - Rural Residential	NF - Neighborhood Flex	UR - Urban Residential	M ¹ - Medical	DMU ¹ - Downtown Mixed Use	GBD ¹ - Gateway Business District
Residential						
Detached Dwelling	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dormitory						

Proposed Table of Dimensional and Intensity Standards

Table 21.30.a Dimensional and Intensity Standards		
	RR - Rural Residential	NF - Neighborhood Flex
Structure Height (maximum)	35-ft	35-ft.

Proposed Zoning Map



See the full Public Review draft at homert21codeupdate.com/#resources

Summary of Public Review Draft Feedback

Public Review Draft Comments – By the Numbers

96 individuals submitted a total of **929 individual comments**

698 comments from
80 residents

116 comments from **8**
elected or appointed
officials

66 comments from **6**
staff members (not
included in tracker;
considered
concurrently)

Roughly **~600 signatures**
submitted in **two petitions**
about short-term rentals
and development standards
(attached to comment
tracker)

Comment Tracker: Organization

One set of
comments

April 27, 2026

Dear project team,
Here are my edits.

1. Add regulations to parking.
2. Change the boundaries of DMU.
3. I really like the expanded housing options!

-Jane Doe

Contains **three individual** comments that are logged separately:

Topic	Date	Comment	Name
Parking	4/27/26	Add regulations to parking.	Jane Doe
Zoning Map	4/27/26	Change boundaries of DMU.	Jane Doe
Housing	4/27/26	I really like the expanded housing options!	Jane Doe

Comment Tracker: Responses to All Comments

See column, “**Team Recommendation**” for more information on how each comment was considered. Responses include:

- **“Change”**
- **“Partial Change...(with explanation).”**
- **“No Change... (with explanation).”**
- **“TBD” – To be discussed at 6/22 work session or in follow up with staff.**

Public Comments – Most Discussed Broad Topics

Short-term
Rentals (STRs)

Large Format
Development

CUP Process

Wetlands &
Environment

Definitions

Review
Process

Allowable
Uses

Specific Topics We Will Cover Today

1. Large Format Development
2. CUPs
3. Building Height
4. Administrative Adjustments
5. Wetlands & Steep Slopes
6. Short-Term Rentals
7. Definitions

Large Format Development

Topic: Large Format Development

*See Chapter 21.42 and
Dimensional Standards Table
of the draft code*

What the Public Review Draft Says:

The PRD retitles the “Large Retail and Wholesale Stores” to “Large Format Development” and increases the threshold for these standards from 15,000 sf. to 30,000 sf.

The CUP requirement for large format development remains.

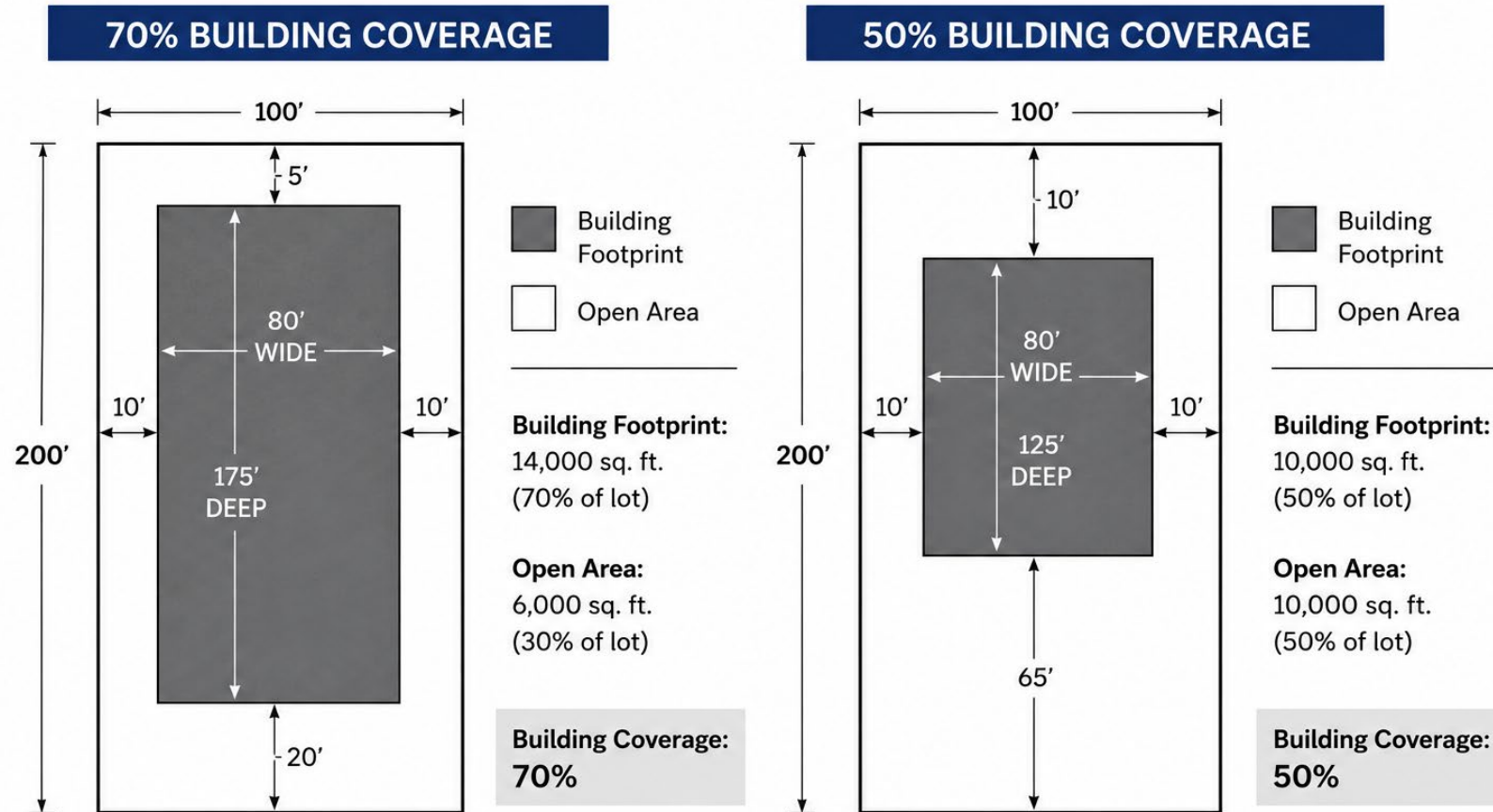
Building coverage maximums are established for all districts (NEW), ranging from 30% in Rural Residential and Light Industrial Mixed Use to 70% in Downtown Mixed Use.

Sentiment: Nearly all commenters expressed opposition to increased thresholds for large building review and the 70% maximum building coverage in DMU.

Sample Illustration: Building Coverage

BUILDING COVERAGE STANDARDS – DOWNTOWN

Typical Lot Size: 100 ft x 200 ft (20,000 sq. ft.)



Note: Diagrams are illustrative. Other requirements not shown.

Change Highlights - Coverage

District`	Current	Proposed
RR	Building: not regulated Impervious: not regulated	Building: 30% Impervious: 50%
UR	Building: not regulated Impervious: not regulated	Building: 50% Impervious: 80%
M	Building: 8,000 sf. or 30% Impervious: not regulated	Building: 30% Impervious: not regulated
DMU (current CBD, Town Center)	Building: 8,000 sf. or 30% Impervious: not regulated	Building: 70% 50% Impervious: 80%
GBD	Building: 8,000 sf. or 30% Impervious: not regulated	Building: 50% Impervious: 70%
LIMU (current GC-1, GC-2, EEMU)	Building: 8,000 sf. or 30% (GC-1) Building: 75,000 sf. (GC-2 and LIMU) Impervious: not regulated	Building: 50% 30% Impervious: 70%
MI	Building: 25,000 sf. Impervious: not regulated	Building: not regulated Impervious: 70%

Topic: Large Format Development

Team Assessment: Reflecting sentiment from the Planning Commission and the public, building coverage limits should be reduced in the DMU and the threshold for large format development should be lowered.

Team Recommendation:

1. Reduce the maximum building coverage in DMU to 50% (from the proposed 70%)
2. Reduce the maximum building coverage in LIMU to 30% (from the proposed 50%)
3. Reduce the threshold for Large Format Development back to the original 15,000 sf. (from the proposed 30,000)
4. For clarity, change the title of Large Format Development back to Large Retail and Wholesale Stores.

Conditional Use Permits

Topic: CUPs for Buildings Larger than 8,000 sf.

What the Public Review Draft Says:

The PRD eliminates the CUP requirement for all buildings larger than 8,000 sf.

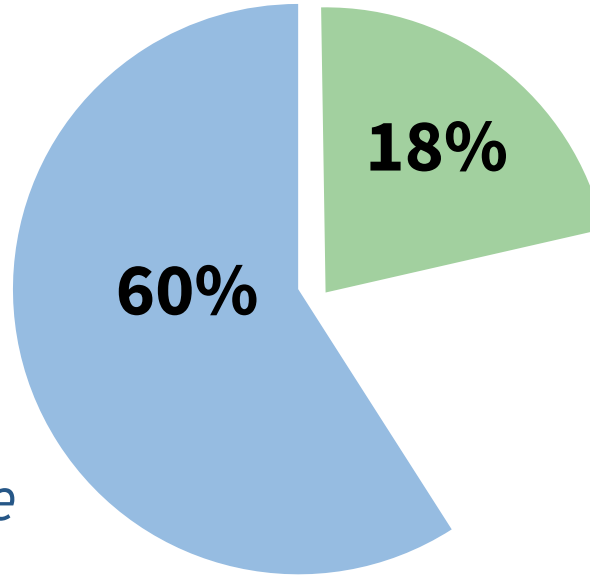
Typical approval conditions are incorporated into screening and outdoor lighting sections.

Sentiment: Nearly all commenters expressed opposition to removing the CUP trigger.

Context: Homer's CUPs 2020-2024

60% of CUPs were for more than one principal structure on a lot. Out of 30, all but one was approved.

Conditions of approval typically included outdoor lighting (must be downlit) and dumpster screening.



18% of CUPs were for building coverage over 30% or building area over 8,000 sf. All were approved.

Conditions of approval typically included screening, outdoor lighting, and conformance with setbacks.

Why change? Nearly universal approval of these requests and similar conditions of approval suggest that both triggers for CUPs could be eliminated, and special standards for approval could include outdoor lighting, screening, and setback conformance. Those standards can be reviewed by staff.

Topic: CUPs for Buildings Larger than 8,000 sf.

Team Assessment: The CUP process is a significant deterrent to new development. If all CUP requests are approved (as they have been in the last 5 years), typical conditions should be made requirements in the code.

Team Recommendation: Remove the 8,000 sf building size trigger for a CUP. Any project that exceeds zoning district building coverage requirements or the large format development threshold will still have to get a CUP or variance.

Building Height

Topic: Building Height

What the Public Review Draft Says: Maximum building height increased to 40 ft. in DMU, 50 ft. in GBD, and 55 ft. in LIMU.

Standard	District	Current	Proposed
Building Height	DMU	Max: 35 feet	Min: 20 feet, Max: 40 feet*
	GBD (Gateway Bus.)	Max: 35 feet	Max: 50 35 feet
	LIMU	Max: 35 feet	Max: 55 40 feet (up to 75 feet for boat storage or construction)

Sentiment: Nearly all commenters expressed opposition to increased building heights, particularly in the DMU and GBD.

Topic: Building Height

Team Assessment: Reflecting sentiment, some changes to building heights are warranted. Downtown Mixed Use should remain at 40 ft. to allow most 3-story buildings. Given the location and significant views in the Gateway Business District, height could reasonably be reduced there.

Team Recommendation:

1. Maintain 40 ft. maximum height (from 35 ft.) in DMU
2. Reduce maximum height in GBD to 35 ft.
3. Reduce maximum height in LIMU to 40 ft (leave exception for boat storage or construction).

Administrative Adjustments

Topic: Administrative Adjustments

What the Public Review Draft Says:

- Allows administrative adjustments for up to two feet of encroachment into required setbacks.
- Within chapter 21.55 (Parking and Loading): Administrative reductions in required off-street parking based on age-restricted residential use, joint parking, availability of on-street parking, a parking study, change in use of an existing site, or mixed use.
- Within chapter 21.56 (Landscaping): Flexibility for landscaping based on site design, unique topography, unique relationships to adjacent properties and existing utilities.

Sentiment: Nearly all commenters expressed opposition to allowing administrative adjustments. Many referred to types of adjustments discussed in a draft for Planning Commission discussion but are not included in the PRD.

Topic: Administrative Adjustments

Team Assessment: Minor administrative adjustments will reduce the need for variances where certain specific criteria are met. For setback adjustments, the criteria are the same as the variance criteria, but they are reviewed by staff only.

Team Recommendation: Retain the three areas of administrative adjustments: up to 2-foot setback encroachments, certain parking reductions, landscaping flexibility.

To deal with existing nonconforming buildings that sit within required setbacks, add Encroachment Permits. Reviewed by the Planning Commission unless the encroachment is 2 feet or less. Encroachments must not be in an easement or across a property line.

Wetlands & Steep Slopes

Topic: Wetlands and Environment

What the Public Review Draft Says: The PRD does not include significant revisions to existing regulations for wetlands and no new regulations on other natural features.

Sentiment: All commenters are in favor of stronger wetlands protection. Commenters expressed:

- Support for buffer requirements
- Criticism of relying on the Army Corps of Engineers for regulation
- Environmental concerns including flooding, erosion, water quality, habitat loss and stormwater management

Topic – Wetlands and Environment

Chapter 21.34, Slopes and Coastal Development

This is chapter regulates development activity and structures in areas affected by *slopes, bluffs, ravines, and the coastal edge*.

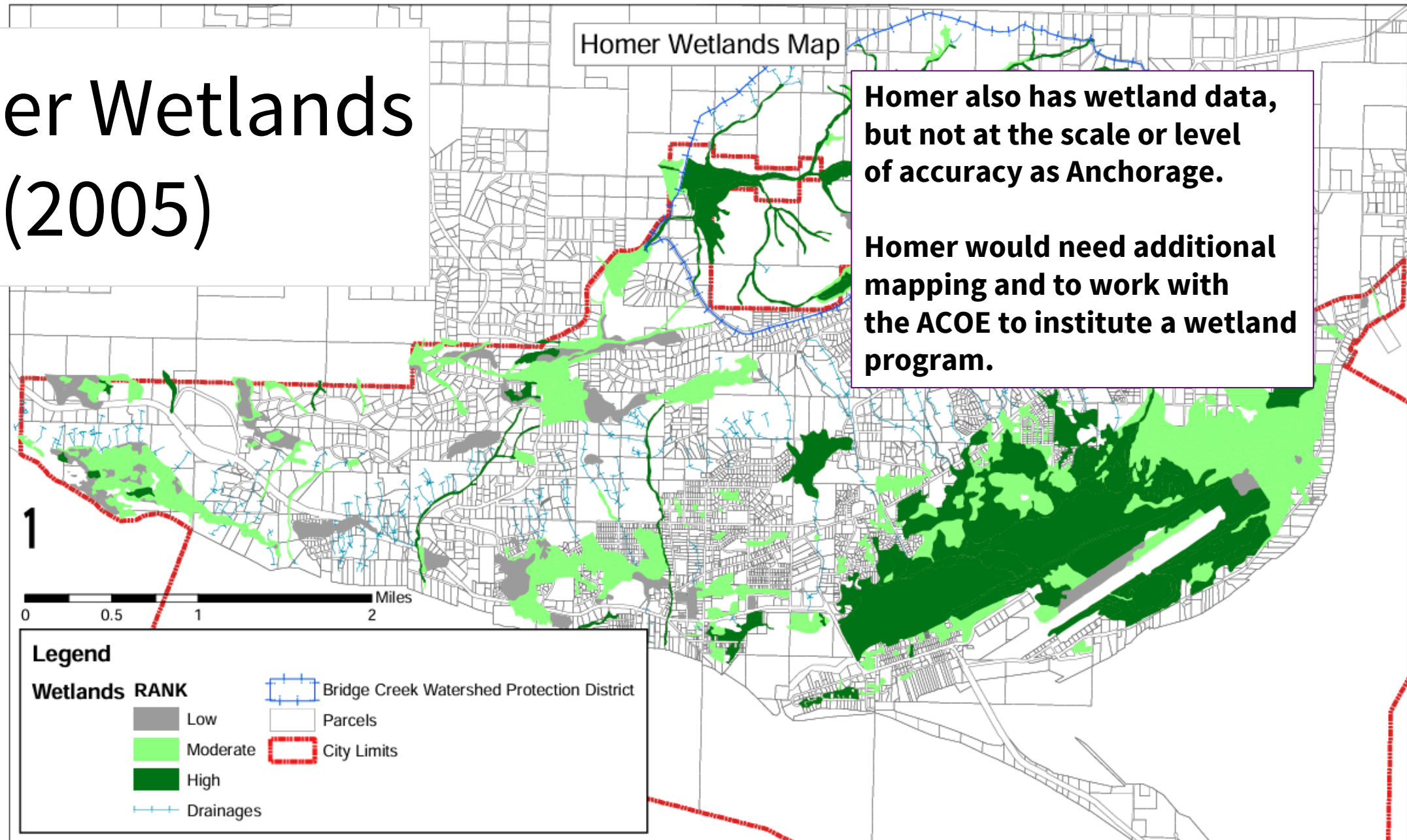
There are **currently no Title 21 requirements** for development setbacks/non-buildable area **on or around wetlands** except for Bridge Creek Watershed District.

Wetlands **are** subject to **non-municipal regulations in Title 21**.

Wetland development/fill requests are evaluated by the Army Corps of Engineers as a requirement of city approval.



Homer Wetlands Map (2005)



Topic: Steep Slopes

What the Public Review Draft Says: The PRD maintains existing regulations regarding slopes and removes the option of a CUP to encroach into required setbacks (variance required instead). Regulations apply to lots with average slopes of 15% or greater, bluffs, coastal edges and ravines. Requires level 2 drainage and erosion control standards and a stormwater management plan.

Sentiment: Most comments favor strengthening regulations for development on steep slopes. Commenters expressed:

- Support for strengthening steep slope protections
- Concerns about erosion, landslides, and safety
- Impacts on downstream wetlands and stormwater management

Homer & Steep Slopes:

Key Takeaways from Comparisons Cities

- Homer has strict definitions of steep slopes and more restrictions on developable area compared to other municipalities with similar features.
- There are communities in the Lower 48 with more strict slope regulations.
- **However, Homer has unique soil conditions and geology that require a more nuanced approach to regulating steep slope development.**

Topic: Wetlands and Steep Slopes

*See Chapters 21.34
and 21.35
of the draft code*

Assessment: This is a complex issue requiring policy direction by members of the City Council and Planning Commission. Additional regulations would require additional staff, data and mapping, and partnership (e.g. with engineers and other agencies) to implement.

Recommendation: Conduct PC Work Sessions during the adoption process on this to discuss data sources and accuracy, previous work on these topics, and create a framework for implementation.

Short Term Rentals

Topic: Short-term Rentals

*See Chapter 21.50
of the draft code*

What the Public Review Draft Says: The PRD creates a permit requirement for short-term rentals (STRs). This is essentially a “placeholder” that can be modified based on future study. It requires owner/caretaker registration.

It does not limit the number of short-term rentals, nor contain any regulations on them.

Sentiment: About 35% of comments were related to STRs, most opposed to regulating short term rentals, although a significant number commented on potential restrictions on STRs that are not proposed in the PRD. Reasons include:

- Regulation is premature given the current EDC study.
- Lack of evidence that STRs cause housing problems.
- Hurts local residents who depend on STRs for income.

Those in favor of STR regulations cite wanting owner-occupancy requirements for STRs and protecting neighborhood character as reasons.

Topic: Short-term Rentals

*See Chapter 21.50
of the draft code*

Assessment: This is a complex issue requiring policy direction by members of the City Council and Planning Commission. The Economic Development Advisory Commission is currently studying the issue.

Recommendation: Maintain proposed permit process as a placeholder and defer additional short-term rental regulations until the conclusion of EDAC process.

Definitions

Topic: Definitions

See Section
21.02.040
of the draft code

There were many comments related to various definitions within the PRD.

Some related to proposed revisions to existing definitions, and others suggested new definitions.

Generally, suggestions for **new definitions** were **not recommended** for inclusion in the Public Hearing Draft because the terms are not yet used in the code.

Many revisions to **existing definitions are recommended for change**.

Next Steps

Path to Public Hearing Draft & Adoption



We are here

**Public Review
Draft**

**Comment
Synthesis**

**Planning
Commission &
City Council
Review**

**Public Hearing
Draft**

**Adopted
Code**

Thank you!

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