

CITY OF UNALASKA
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2019-52

A RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL IDENTIFYING THE CITY OF UNALASKA'S FEDERAL PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska is the number one fishing port in the United States and host to national and international shipping vessels; and

WHEREAS, the sand bar in the entrance to Unalaska Bay creates an impediment to container vessels entering the bay; and

WHEREAS, dredging the sand bar will contribute significantly to the navigational safety and security of vessels entering and leaving the port; and

WHEREAS, authorization and funding support is needed in order for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue moving forward with the project; and

WHEREAS, as marine transportation increases in our region, the Coast Guard's presence in our community is more valued than ever; and

WHEREAS, Unalaska encourages the Coast Guard to allow for Unalaska to become an accompanied duty station or stagger the rotation schedule of the Marine Safety Division to help maintain continuity and established synergies needed to best perform in Unalaska; and

WHEREAS, Captains Bay Road is heavily used by commercial traffic, and future growth and business activity is expected to occur along Captains Bay Road, requiring road improvements, water, sewer and electric utilities; and

WHEREAS, Unalaska's internet connection speeds thwart business growth, medical service, post-secondary education, and overall quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska will be impacted by oil exploration and drilling in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas because our port is the only port on the west coast of Alaska that is free of ice year round; and

WHEREAS, state and local sharing of the federal revenues generated by activities on the Outer Continental Shelf is important to Unalaska and other impacted communities serving as staging areas; and

WHEREAS, Unalaska has several sites that were subject to the Department of Defense's Formerly Utilized Defense Sites environmental program due to contamination which occurred during WWII activities, as well as WWII related contamination that is discovered during construction projects today; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a federal funding mechanism that would allow reimbursement to land owners who remediate contaminated sites or the identification of an accessible funding source to allow for a timely response to contamination sites that are holding up construction projects and negatively impact subsistence living would be of benefit to the community as a whole; and

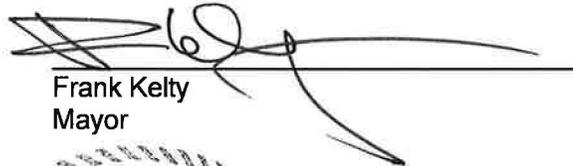
WHEREAS, the absence of adjoining electrical systems forces the City's Electric Utility to cover contingency planning and react to unplanned outages without relying on help from an expansive utility grid; and

WHEREAS, Unalaska continues to support reliable and cost effective alternate energy sources, including hydrothermal and wind.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Unalaska, Alaska, hereby identifies its top federal legislative priorities for Fiscal Year 2021:

- Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements Project, \$52 Million
- Environmental Remediation Support
- Unalaska Bay Entrance Channel Dredging Support
- OCS Revenue Sharing Support
- Reliable and High Speed Internet Support
- United States Coast Guard Presence
- Alternative Energy Support

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Unalaska City Council on September 10, 2019.



Frank Kelty
Mayor

ATTEST:



Marjie Veeder
City Clerk



MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Erin Reinders, City Manager
Date: September 10, 2019
Re: Resolution 2019-52: Identifying the City of Unalaska's Federal Priorities for Fiscal Year 2021

SUMMARY: Council reviewed and discussed priorities at the August 27, 2019 work session. This resolution was developed based on Council's feedback. Identified priorities are listed below. Staff recommends approval.

- Unalaska Bay Entrance Channel Dredging Support
- Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements Project, \$52 Million
- Reliable and High Speed Internet Support
- Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Revenue Sharing Support
- Environmental Remediation Support
- United States Coast Guard Presence
- Alternative Energy Support

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: This is a recurring council action to express our support initiatives and capital projects in preparation for the Washington D.C. lobbying efforts.

Previous Federal Priorities

- Council last identified Federal Priorities on January 9, 2018 in the approval of Resolution 2018-05. This included:
 - Unalaska Bay Entrance Channel Dredging Support
 - \$24 Million for Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements
 - High Speed Fiber Optic Connection Support
 - OCS Revenue Sharing Support
 - Environmental Remediation Support

City Council discussed priorities at the August 27, 2019 work session.

BACKGROUND: The Federal Lobbying trip is planned for the week of September 16, 2019. Having identified priorities will position us for more focused discussions.

DISCUSSION: Council discussed priorities on August 27, and Resolution 2019-52 has been developed as a result of that feedback. An overview is provided below.

- **Unalaska Bay Entrance Channel Dredging Support.** The City of Unalaska is a non-federal sponsor of the cost-shared feasibility study, led by the Army Corps of Engineers, evaluating the effects of the removal of a navigation restriction that currently severely impacts our ports. The removal of this navigational restriction helps us accommodate deep draft vessels, benefits commerce, and considers best practices of navigation and safety margins. If the study concludes there are not adverse effects the City will move forward with the Army Corps of Engineers on the project. This project is dependent upon the Army Corps of Engineers support and funding share.
- **\$52 Million for Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements.** Captains Bay Road is heavily used by commercial traffic, and future growth and business activity is expected to occur along Captains Bay Road, requiring road improvements as well as water, sewer, and electric utilities. The cost of this project is estimated at \$52 million. Staff is working to ensure that this project is included on the STIP on the state level for potential funding support. Our federal lobbyist has identified potential federal grant opportunities for this project as well and we will explore those options.
- **Reliable and High Speed Internet Support.** Unalaska's internet connection speeds impede business growth, medical service, post-secondary education, and overall quality of life. We are unable to fully utilize cloud-based systems to improve efficiencies and effectiveness in personnel, educational, medical, and business processes. Improving internet services has long been a priority, and the City supports programs and activities that help to bridge this digital divide.
- **OCS Revenue Sharing Support.** The City of Unalaska has made changes to our planning and zoning policies as well as our Comprehensive Plan to help the community mitigate some of the significant growing pains associated with any future Arctic oil and gas development. For years, the City of Unalaska has been following the Offshore Production and Energizing National Security Alaska Act ("OPENS Act"). "The Conservation of America's Shoreline Terrain and Aquatic Life Act" or the "COASTAL Act" has recently been introduced by Senator Cassidy of Louisiana and Senator Murkowski as lead sponsors and Senator Sullivan as a cosponsor. It includes "the significant staging area" language that would qualify Unalaska to receive a portion of the OCS revenue-sharing payments.
- **Environmental Remediation Support.** Unalaska has several sites that were subject to the Department of Defense's Formerly Utilized Defense Sites environmental program due to contamination which occurred during WWII activities, as well as WWII related contamination that is discovered during construction projects today. Assistance and support from the state and federal levels is critical to managing these contaminated areas.

- **U.S. Coast Guard Presence in Unalaska.** Unalaska appreciates the Coast Guard's long time presence in our community. As marine transportation increases in our region, this presence is more valued than ever. We encourage the USCG to allow for Unalaska to become an accompanied duty station. Short of that, USCG might also consider offsetting the rotation of the Marine Safety Detachment so that half the team rotates in summer and half the team rotates in winter. We believe this rotation will maintain continuity and established synergies needed to best perform in Unalaska.
- **Alternative Energy Funding and Support.** The absence of adjoining electrical systems forces the City of Unalaska to cover contingency planning and react to unplanned outages without relying on help from an adjoining utility grid. The City continues to look for support with reliable and cost effective alternate energy sources, including hydrothermal and wind. We have installed MET towers to monitor wind for 18-24 months. Scoping for a Wind Energy project will be updated when this information gathering phase is completed. Additionally, we support measurers that might encourage other alternate energy opportunities to become viable options for our community.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval.

PROPOSED MOTION: I move to approve Resolution 2019-52.

CITY MANAGERS COMMENTS: This resolution is based on Council's feedback.