

Introduced by: Pete Williams, City Manager  
Date: January 10, 2023  
Action: Passed  
Vote: 7-0

# CITY OF BETHEL

## Resolution # 23-01

### CITY OF BETHEL PRIORITIES FOR THE SFY 2024 STATE OF ALASKA CAPITAL BUDGET

- WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel is proactively pursuing funds from Federal and State agencies, as well as private funding sources;
- WHEREAS,** the City partners with other entities, such as the local tribe, Orutsararmiut Native Council, to work collaboratively to meet resident and visitor needs;
- WHEREAS,** Bethel City government relies on various taxes and interest, charges for services, and licenses/permit fees to pay for major maintenance needs;
- WHEREAS,** City of Bethel water and sewer systems have been in the black for eight years due to the annual 3% rate increase required by ordinance, water and sewer subscription rate fee collections, and short-lived asset funds set aside for repairs;
- WHEREAS,** as a hub community for 30,000 people living in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region, the City of Bethel often supports projects and expenditures that benefit tens of thousands of Alaskans who do not reside in Bethel City limits;
- WHEREAS,** the Bethel City Council is a seven-member body elected by resident voters of Bethel to act in the best interest of the community and intends to exhibit transparency, oversight, and accountability for all funds awarded through this request;
- WHEREAS,** the priorities established herein are rank-ordered and vital to the well-being of the community and municipality of Bethel;
- WHEREAS,** a summary of the City of Bethel's priorities and requested funding amounts are listed in the following table:

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<b>City of Bethel Priorities</b>	<b>Request</b>
1. New Public Works Building	\$38,000,000
2. Public Safety Communication Tower	\$500,000
3. Yukon Kuskokwim Fitness Center Gym and Track	\$10,500,000
4. Water Main Extension and Water Distribution Center	\$15,548,000
5. Dust Control Road Stabilization Measures	\$2,450,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$66,998,000</b>

<b>#1</b>	<b>New Public Works Building</b>	<b>\$38,000,000</b>
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**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel relies on its 29,000 square foot Public Works Building to house 12 water and sewer haul trucks, provide a full-service mechanic shop for the repair of gasoline and diesel vehicles (heavy equipment), storage and mechanic space for the Streets and Roads Division, a Property Maintenance Shop and storage area, and administrative offices;

**WHEREAS,** the Public Works Building was constructed in 1982 on creosote-soaked wood pilings and has exceeded its 30-year life expectancy;

**WHEREAS,** the 29,000 square foot building was constructed for a community of Bethel that contained 3,595 people living in 1,000 households on 15 miles of road;

**WHEREAS,** today, the City serves 6,362 people living in 1,920 households on 36 miles of roads--almost double the conditions found in 1983;

**WHEREAS,** BBFM Engineers, Inc. performed a structural and condition assessment on the Public Works Building in July 2019 and determined that some of the beam-to-girder connectors under the building have failed and "can no longer be relied upon to safely support vehicle loads;"

**WHEREAS,** after the glulam beams and girders supporting the floor were tested for rot and decay, BBFM engineers Troy Feller and Greg Latreille, concluded that 120 metal hangers, 12 glulam beams, and 5 girders should be repaired, replaced, or reinforced in the next 1-2 years;

**WHEREAS,** the cost of the fixes recommended in the BBFM report could be as high as \$7 million and not fix everything long-term;

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**WHEREAS,** the City has poured a vast amount of funding into the building over the last ten years, including a \$1.5 million floor repair, a \$1 million boiler purchase and installation, and \$1.2 million in summer 2021 to purchase and install a new backup generator and performed the immediate fixes recommended in the BBFM report;

**WHEREAS,** City municipal engineer Chase Nelson recommends in a memorandum dated October 4, 2019, that the City go forward with its plans to spend \$1.5 million to replace the failed connectors, glulam beams, and girders, but points out that "the City eventually will need to replace the full facility, and needs to consider this as a long-term priority;"

**WHEREAS,** the City needs a new 52,000 square foot Public Works Building to effectively and efficiently deliver hauled water and sewer services to a growing population, maintain its water and sewer piped infrastructure that serves 420 properties, maintain and repair 18 miles of gravel road, maintain its 28 City-owned buildings, and repair/maintain its fleet of heavy equipment, SUVs, and pickup trucks;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the Bethel City Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska provide \$38,000,000 in its FY 2024 Capital Budget to fund a new Public Works Building for the City of Bethel;

<b>#2</b>	<b>Public Safety Communication Tower</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>
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**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel rents tower space from the KYUK radio station for its public safety radio communication antennas attached to the KYUK Radio Station tower and houses its base station equipment inside a GCI communication shack at the base of the tower;

**WHEREAS,** the City pays \$1,700 a month to KYUK Radio Station for tower space and over \$400 a month to GCI to provide power and store its base station equipment in a heated shack;

**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel believes that constructing a new communication tower on city police station property is the preferred option in order to be able to control, protect, and fully utilize the tower strictly for public safety communications;

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**WHEREAS,** in 2017, the City paid DOWL engineer firm to determine the best location for a communication tower on Bethel Police Station property and to design it;

**WHEREAS,** DOWL has since completed the design for a 90-foot-tall lattice tower supported by three pilings, as they recommended, and this design is ready for construction;

**WHEREAS,** the expected cost of constructing a new communication tower on police station property is estimated to be \$500,000;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the Bethel City Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska provide \$500,000 in its FY 2024 Capital Budget to fund a new Public Works Building for the City of Bethel;

<b>#3</b>	<b>Yukon Kuskokwim Fitness Center Gym and Track</b>	<b>\$10,500,000</b>
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**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel Multi-Use Recreation Facility Plan completed in 2005 identified a pool and full size gymnasium as the first and second most popular functions desired in a planned recreation facility;

**WHEREAS,** the City obtained Alaska State legislative capital funding in FY 2012 and constructed the Yukon Kuskokwim Fitness Center, a multipurpose recreational and training facility with a six-lane swimming pool, kiddie pool and slide, fitness center, exercise room, locker rooms, and concession area;

**WHEREAS,** the citizens of Bethel voted to increase sales taxes by one-half percent to generate approximately \$500,000 and recommended that the City use the money to operate and maintain the facility, which it has done since inception;

**WHEREAS,** the YK Fitness Center was constructed with boilers, air handling system, and other features conducive to the addition of a gymnasium;

**WHEREAS,** the gymnasiums in the high school and Gladys Jung Elementary school are used almost exclusively for student activities, leaving no gym time for adults, children, and families in the community;

**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel paid DOWL to develop the YK Fitness Center Expansion Feasibility Study, which they completed in July 2022;

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**WHEREAS,** the feasibility study describes a competition size gymnasium with a running track on the second floor, sauna, two weight/game rooms, utility rooms, offices, and bathrooms at a cost of \$17.5 million;

**WHEREAS,** in light of the recent inflationary environment, DOWL engineer firm raised the estimated cost of the facility in 2025 dollars to \$20.5 million;

**WHEREAS,** in summer 2022, the City assisted the State of Alaska, Office of Management and Budget, to prepare a federal coronavirus infrastructure grant application that requested \$10 million for design and construction of the gymnasium expansion;

**WHEREAS,** the people of Bethel desperately need a gymnasium the whole community can use to play indoor sports like basketball, volleyball, soccer, field hockey, and ultimate frisbee and use the running track and rock climbing walls for fitness, recreation, and family fun time;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the Bethel City Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska provide \$10,500,000 in its FY 2024 Capital Budget to fund a new gymnasium with a running track for the community of Bethel;

<b>#4</b>	<b>Water Main Extension and Water Distribution Center</b>	<b>\$15,548,000</b>
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**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel truck drivers use six water haul trucks and six sewer haul trucks to carry water and evacuate sewage for 1,600 residential, commercial, and organizational facilities in Bethel six days a week;

**WHEREAS,** the City must fill its water haul trucks at one of two fill stations: Bethel Heights Water Treatment Plant or City Subdivision Water Treatment Plant;

**WHEREAS,** the City's two water treatment plants are located within a mile of each other, which makes the service less expensive to nearby subdivisions (City Subdivision, Hoffman Subdivision, Bethel Heights, and The Avenues), but exorbitant to serve far away subdivisions like Kasayuli, Larsen, Tundra Ridge, Ouivaq, and Ptarmigan Street;

**WHEREAS,** the cost to deliver water in Bethel is very high at \$29/1,000 gallons/mile;

**WHEREAS,** the high cost for water delivery is due to the limited amount of water that trucks can carry, the number of miles the trucks need to traverse to make deliveries and return to the water plant to refill, the time it takes for filling

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one truck at a time at City Subdivision Water Plant, the cost of diesel fuel for each vehicle, and the cost of wear and tear on each vehicle;

**WHEREAS,** on November 21, 2022, DOWL engineer firm completed a 90% preliminary engineering report (PER) to provide a community-wide piped water and wastewater system that would pipe the 1,600 households;

**Whereas,** "Transitioning customers from haul to pipe services will enhance water and sanitation availability and reduce customer service fees and City maintenance costs" (90% complete PER, Page 1);

**WHEREAS,** Phase 1 described in the PER is the development of a water distribution center (tank) along Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway near the State Public Health building to create storage, pressure, and heat necessary to provide piped water to the Ciullkulek Subdivision in Phase 2, and to serve as a water truck fill center to reduce round-trip delivery distance to the western subdivisions;

**WHEREAS,** the site to be developed will include a 500,000 gallon water tank and a 2,000 square foot building containing pumps, filling equipment, and a boiler system;

**WHEREAS,** this project includes a 4,350 linear foot extension of the water main from the city's institutional corridor water line that is fed by the City Subdivision Water Treatment Plant;

**WHEREAS,** this project is a crucial primary step to provide residents of Bethel clean, unlimited water at a reduced monthly rate and at the same time, saving the city money in hauled water delivery and system maintenance costs;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the Bethel City Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska provide \$15,548,000 in its FY 2024 Capital Budget to fund the Water Main Extension and Water Distribution Center project;

<b>#5</b>	<b>Dust Control Road Stabilization Measures</b>	<b>\$2,450,000</b>
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**WHEREAS,** the community of Bethel is plagued by airborne dust from its gravel roads, which cause harm to individuals through inhalation, ingestion, and contact with eyes, ears, and skin;

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**WHEREAS,** purchasing and applying several inches of D1 sharp-edged gravel to roads in Bethel helps compact dust and provide a conducive surface for motor vehicles;

**WHEREAS,** applications of calcium chloride and water to gravel roadways have proven to be effective dust control measures for Bethel, Alaska;

**WHEREAS,** the City wishes to purchase one new water spray truck to apply water to the dusty streets throughout the summer;

**WHEREAS,** the City must purchase and apply gravel and other emulsifiers in bulk quantities on its subdivision roads, which are currently underserved because the City has had to focus on its thoroughfares;



**WHEREAS,** the City has the heavy equipment, trained personnel, and operating costs in its budget to apply gravel, calcium chloride and other emulsifiers, and water to the City's roads, as needed;

**WHEREAS,** this project requires the purchase of \$2,000,000 of gravel, a \$190,000 water spray truck, \$150,000 to purchase several emulsifiers as part of a demonstration project, and \$100,000 worth of calcium chloride;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the Bethel City Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska provide \$2,450,000 in its FY 2024 Capital Budget to fund the Dust Control Measures project;

**ENACTED THIS 10th DAY OF JANUARY 2023 BY A VOTE OF 7 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.**

ATTEST:  
  
Lori Strickler, City Clerk

  
  
Rose Henderson, Mayor