

Introduced by: Acting City Manager Arnold
Date: February 13, 2024
Action: Passed
Vote: 6-0

CITY OF BETHEL

Resolution # 24-03

CITY OF BETHEL PRIORITIES FOR THE SFY 2025 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, and the University of Alaska to work collaboratively to meet resident and visitor needs;

WHEREAS, Bethel City government relies on various taxes fees, and interest, charges for services, and licenses/permits to pay for major operational, maintenance, and replacement needs;

WHEREAS, as a hub community for over 25,000 people living in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region, the City of Bethel often supports projects and expenditures that benefit tens of thousands of Alaskans that call this interconnected system of communities home;

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, a summary of the City of Bethel's priorities and requested funding amounts are listed in the following table:

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City of Bethel Priorities	Request
1. New Public Works Building	\$38,000,000
2. Yukon Kuskokwim Community Center Expansion	\$8,500,000
3. Water Main Extension and Water Distribution Center	\$15,548,000
4. Dust Control Road Stabilization Measures	\$2,450,000
TOTAL	\$64,498,000

#1	New Public Works Building	\$38,000,000
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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;

#3	Yukon Kuskokwim Community Center Expansion	\$8,500,000
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WHEREAS, the City of Bethel has applied for and expects to receive a \$9 Million Coronavirus Capital Project Grant to amplify the services offered at the Yukon Kuskokwim Fitness Center (YKFC) which will grow to be the Yukon Kuskokwim Community Center;

WHEREAS, in an effort to revitalize our community through social networking, skill development education, and improved physical and mental health, the expansion will offer:

- Internet, computers, printers, and quiet spaces for work, education, and health monitoring;
- Secure office space for one-on-one screening with health professionals, telehealth appointments, meetings, and interviews;
- Common areas with tables and chairs to accommodate work, studying, meetings, social interactions, etc.;
- Gym space for recreational activities and large community events/gatherings/trainings;

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- Walking track;

Which is in addition to the current opportunities:

- Free internet access;
- Weight room;
- Workout room;
- Competition size pool with baby pool;
- Water slide;
- Hot tub;
- Concessions;
- Small public seating area;

WHEREAS, for many residents in the YK Delta, access to reliable internet service is a luxury, not only because of the hefty monthly price tag but also, the additional cost for components needed to access the internet;

WHEREAS, in addition to the cost of internet and equipment, Bethel has some of the highest household crowding in the nation which limits residents' from effectively accessing necessary online solutions and services such as, online interviews, job solicitation through online applications, work on resumes, be provided telehealth care, study or take online classes, or hold meetings with employers;

WHEREAS, the Community Center would provide 16 hours a day, six day a week access to tools, services and space to help residents overcome these barriers and in turn, gain access to online education and career development opportunities to further grow the region's workforce, reduce outward migration, and reduce labor shortages;

WHEREAS, the University of Alaska owns and operates the Consortium Library, through financial partnership between the City and the University; the facility is open to the public; however, the hours, space, and services, don't fully meet the needs of the residents;

WHEREAS, Bethel has no public gym or indoor recreational space aside from the pool at the YK Fitness Center;

WHEREAS, the Lower Kuskowkim School District provides public access to their facilities; however, school sports, club events and practices are prioritized, significantly limiting public use to a few times a year;

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WHEREAS, with the addition of a community gym, the residents and our community neighbors will have year-round access to various types of physical activities for all ages, proven to improve mental health, cardiovascular health, respiratory function, weight management, sleep quality, and social interactions;

WHEREAS, the gym would also be used for large social gatherings like job and health fairs, trainings, meetings, conferences, and act as a much needed disaster relief option for the region;

WHEREAS, in addition to the computer lab and gym space, the facility will provide additional flexible community spaces to support various activities such as cultural preservation classes and events, art classes, and game nights, creating a year-round inclusive environment to mentor youth, and enable peer support networks;

WHEREAS, the City is seeking additional funding for the development of this facility to ensure the size adequately meets the needs of our community, now and into the future; if additional funding is not secured, the city will release a design build request for proposal from contractors with a maximum of \$9 million in funds available;

WHEREAS, in 2022 the City worked with our engineers to produce a feasibility study on the expansion of the facility; although the facility concept has changed significantly since the initial scope, the costs of the initial design was \$17.5 Million, the \$9 Million in funding will result in a much smaller facility than what the community needs;

WHEREAS, by creating a year-round safe and inclusive environment for residents of all ages and providing a space for healthy activities, we will revitalize our community through social networking, skill development, education, and improved physical and mental health which will improve the quality of life for every resident either directly or indirectly;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Bethel City Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska provide \$10,500,000 in its FY 2025 Capital Budget to fund a new gymnasium with a running track for the community of Bethel;

#4	Water Main Extension and Water Distribution Center	\$15,548,000
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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 Plan 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 one truck at a time at City Subdivision Water Plant, the cost of diesel fuel for each vehicle, the cost of wear and tear on each vehicle, and personnel costs;
- 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;

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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;

#5	Dust Control Road Stabilization Measures	\$2,450,000
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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;

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;

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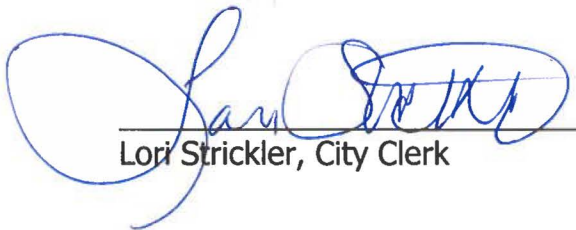
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Bethel City Council hereby requests that the State of Alaska provide \$2,450,000 in its FY 2024 Capital Budget to fund the Dust Control Measures project;

ENACTED THIS 13 DAY OF FEBRUARY 2024 BY A VOTE OF 6 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.



Mark Springer, Mayor

ATTEST:



Lori Strickler, City Clerk