

CITY OF UNALASKA
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2020-10

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

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Transportation, US Department of Transportation, and Federal Aviation Administration are responsible for supporting safe and efficient transportation systems and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Tom Madsen Airport in Unalaska, Alaska is owned and managed by the Alaska Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the grounding of the Saab 2000 for the DUT-ANC route in the aftermath of the crash of Flight 3296, highlighted the risk of having only one airline with one commercial aircraft authorized to fly passengers between Anchorage and Unalaska; and

WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska calls upon federal delegations and agencies to assist in creating an environment that allows for redundancy in aircraft in order to meet the transportation needs of our island community; and

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 to 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 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 geothermal and wind.

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

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Unalaska hereby identifies its number one legislative priority initiative for Fiscal Year 2021 is the support for the stabilization of commercial flights at Tom Madsen Airport.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Unalaska hereby identifies its number one legislative project funding priority for Fiscal Year 2021 is the Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvement Project.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Unalaska City Council on February 11, 2020.


Vincent M. Tutiakoff, Sr.
Mayor

ATTEST:


Marjie Veeder, CMC
City Clerk



MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

To: Mayor and City Council Members
 From: Erin Reinders, City Manager
 Date: February 11, 2020
 Re: Resolution 2020-09 with Updated State Priorities
 Resolution 2020-10 with Updated Federal Priorities

SUMMARY: City Council has previously identified State and Federal legislative priorities. Tonight, Council is considering resolutions that update these priority listings to highlight the number one priority initiative of the Stabilization of Commercial Flights at Tom Madsen Airport. Specifically, this number one priority initiative is a call for the State of Alaska to update their Airport Master Plan for Unalaska to address runway improvement. Also highlighted will be the number one project funding priority of Captains Bay Road. Current Council legislative priorities are listed below. Priorities identified as both a State and Federal priority are noted once and in bold. Staff recommends approval.

STATE PRIORITIES	FEDERAL PRIORITIES
Stabilization of Commercial Flight at Tom Madsen Airport	
Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements Project - \$52 Million	
Environmental Remediation Support	
Broadband Internet Support / Reliable and High Speed Internet Support	
Habitat Restoration for Salmon Stock Improvement Support	Unalaska Bay Entrance Channel Dredging Support
State Ferry System Support	Alternative Energy Support
Community Assistance Program and Shared Fisheries Tax Program Support	United States Coast Guard Presence
Robert Storrs Boat Harbor Improvements \$9.5 Million	Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Revenue Sharing Support

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: Identifying State and Federal priorities is a recurring Council action to express our support for certain initiatives, seek support for capital projects, and in preparation for Lobbying Trips. City Council discussed both State and Federal priorities at the August 27, 2019 work session. Council then approved Resolution 2019-52 identifying Federal priorities on September 10, 2019. After further discussion, Council approved Resolution 2019-51 identifying State priorities on September 24, 2019.

Additionally, on April 9, 2019, City Council approved Resolution 2019-15 identifying the Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvement Project as the City's number one State funding priority.

Council approved Resolution 2019-59 on November 12, 2019 amending the previously established State and Federal Priorities. Priorities now include the stabilization of commercial flights between Dutch Harbor (DUT) and Anchorage (ANC) at the Tom Madsen Airport.

On January 14, 2020, at the Mayor's request, Council reviewed their priority statements and considered necessary adjustments.

BACKGROUND: Council reviewed the previously approved priorities in January. Updates to the legislative priority resolutions allows for council to highlight that the number one priority initiative is related to the flight stabilization, and to call upon the State of Alaska to update their Airport Master Plan to address critical runway improvements. Also included is the clear identification that Captains Bay Road is the number one project funding priority.

DISCUSSION: Current legislative priorities are listed below and divided in three sections. The first section included those priorities that have been identified on both the state and federal level. The second section lists additional state priorities, and the third lists additional federal priorities. The only change is clarification that Stabilization of Commercial Flights at Tom Madsen Airport is Council's number one priority initiative and that the Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements is Council's number one project funding priority.

Both State and Federal Legislative Priorities

1. **Stabilization of Commercial Flights at Tom Madsen Airport.** This item is City Council's number one priority initiative. The airport and runway are owned and managed by the Alaska Department of Transportation. Furthermore, the Alaska Department of Transportation, US Department of Transportation, and the Federal Aviation Administration are responsible for supporting safe and efficient transportation systems and infrastructure. The grounding of the Saab 2000 for the DUT-ANC route, in the aftermath of the crash of Flight 3296, highlighted the risk of having only one airline with one commercial aircraft authorized to fly passengers directly between Anchorage and Unalaska. We call upon state and federal delegations and agencies to assist in creating an environment that allows for redundancy in aircraft in order to meet the transportation needs of our island community. Specifically, we call upon the State of Alaska to update their Airport Master Plan for the Tom Madsen Airport to address runway improvements.
2. **\$52 Million for Captains Bay Road and Utility Improvements.** This item is City Council's number one project funding priority. Captains Bay Road is heavily used by commercial traffic. Future growth and business activity is expected to occur along Captains Bay Road, requiring road improvements as well as water, sewer, and electric utilities. Staff is working to ensure that this project in on the STIP on the state level for potential funding support. We are exploring potential federal funding opportunities as well.
3. **Environmental Remediation Support.** Unalaska has several sites that are 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.
4. **Broadband Internet Support.** Unalaska's internet connection speeds impede business growth, medical service, post-secondary education, and overall quality of life. Unalaskans are unable to fully utilize cloud-based systems to improve efficiencies and effectiveness in personal, 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.

Additional State Legislative Priorities

1. **\$9.5 Million for Robert Storrs Boat Harbor Improvements.** The Robert Storrs Boat Harbor was inherited by the City of Unalaska from the State of Alaska. It has served the community well for over 30 years and in order to ensure the safety of those who use the dock and the vessels that moor at the Storrs Boat Harbor, the floats must be replaced and the dock redesigned. This is an existing Capital Project for the City of Unalaska. This project qualifies to be a part of State of Alaska's Harbor Facility Grant Program for funding support. This is a program that the City of Unalaska has long supported.
2. **Habitat Restoration for Salmon Stock Improvement Support.** Habitat restoration on the local road system for Summer Bay Lake and Watershed, Morris Cove Lake and Watershed, and Unalaska Lake and Watershed will help to improve depressed salmon stocks.
3. **Ferry System Support.** Ferry service is identified in the City's Comprehensive plan as a community priority, stressing the importance of advocating for an increase of service so that the needs of residents, businesses and visitors are addressed. Regular ferry service helps to meet the needs for our remote island with limited and costly transportation and shipping options.
4. **Community Assistance Program and Shared Fisheries Tax Program Support.** The City of Unalaska works to fulfill the obligations of a local government. Our ability to do so is limited by statute, public interest and available resources. Traditionally those resources have included State and Federal funding, which offset the burdens that might otherwise be felt by a local tax base.

Additional Federal Legislative Priorities

1. **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.
2. **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 geothermal and wind. The City has 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 complete. Additionally, we support measurers that might encourage other alternate energy opportunities to become viable options for our community.
3. **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 valued more 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.

- 4. 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” includes “the significant staging area” language that would qualify Unalaska to receive a portion of the OCS revenue-sharing payments.

ALTERNATIVES: Council may choose to edit, add or remove the priorities outlined in these resolutions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: No direct financial impact is associated with the discussion.

LEGAL: None needed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval.

PROPOSED MOTION: I move to approve Resolution 2020-09 (State Priorities). I move to approve Resolution 2020-10 (Federal Priorities).

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS: These resolutions are based on Council's feedback and ongoing discussions.