

City Manager
Glenn Steckman

Port Director
Joy Baker

Harbormaster
Lucas Stotts



Nome Port Commission
Jim West, Jr., Chairman
Charlie Lean, Vice Chairman
Derek McLarty
Shane Smithisler
Russell Rowe
Gay Sheffield
Drew McCann

102 Division St. • P.O. Box 281
Nome, Alaska 99762
(907) 443-6619
Fax (907) 443-5473

**NOME PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
THURSDAY JUNE 22, 2023 - 5:30PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

REGULAR MEETING – 5:30PM:

- I. ROLL CALL**
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 23-03-23 Regular Meeting Minutes
- IV. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**
- V. COMMUNICATIONS**
 - 23-04-24 USACE to City of Nome – Ops/Maint. Bridge Work
 - 23-05-08 USACE to City – Nome Ops/Maint. Dredging
 - 23-05-26 Nome Coordinated Research Consortium – 4 projects
 - 23-06-18 First U.S. Arctic deep water port to host cruise ships-military (AP)
- VI. COMMISSIONER UPDATES**
- VII. HARBORMASTER REPORT**
 - Operations & Maintenance
- VIII. PORT DIRECTOR REPORT/PROJECTS UPDATE**
 - 23-05-05 & 23-06-09 Port Director/Projects Status Reports
 - Port Expansion Update – Public Meeting Slideshow
- IX. OLD BUSINESS – None**
- X. NEW BUSINESS**
 - Strategic Development Plan Update – Draft SOW
 - Rate Study, Analysis & Projections – Draft SOW
- XI. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**
- XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**
- XIII. NEXT REGULAR MEETING**
 - July 20, 2023 – 5:30pm
- XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

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**NOME PORT COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 23th 2023 @ 5:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS CITY HALL**

The Regular Meeting of the Nome Port Commission was called to order at 5:36 pm by Chairman West at the City Hall Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Smithhisler, Lean, West, McCann, McLarty

Absent: Rowe, Sheffield

Also Present: Joy Baker (virtual), Glenn Steckman

In the audience: Megan Gannon – Nome Nugget; Howard Farley; Greg Knight – KNOM;

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman West asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion to approve made by Smithhisler, seconded by McCann
At the Roll Call:

Ayes: Lean; West; McCann; McLarty; Smithhisler

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

Discussion: none

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 15nd, 2023 Motion made by Lean, seconded by McCann to approve minutes;

Discussion:

- None

At the Roll Call:

Ayes: West; McCann; McLarty; Smithhisler; Lean

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- Howard Farley

COMMUNICATIONS

- 23-03-13 AK Headlamp Graphite One Update
- 23-03-17 USACE Request for Additional Design Funds

Discussion:

- None

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATES

- None

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT

- Floating Docks – Spring Maintenance Project
- F23 Cruise Passenger Vessel (CPV) Funds \$6465 – Potential Projects
- 2020-2022 Facility Garbage Expense vs User Revenue (handout)

Discussion:

- PD Baker detailed maintenance for Floating Docks – 2 pieces of equipment that will be shared with the Public Works team – Sandblasting Machine and a Paint Stripper
 - One set of floats this spring, and other one next spring
- PD Baker stated the F23 Cruise Passenger Vessel (CPV) is part of the State funds, not what the City collects. The City gets \$5/head from the CPV funds for each passenger on vessels which call on Nome within the first 7 ports of call on their voyage.
- PD Baker stated the facility garbage expenses are being reconciled due to some incorrect billings, and once resolved, will be shared at an upcoming meeting.
 - Commissioner McCann asked if there was any wiggle room in the budget
 - PD Baker advised more info will be in the next meeting, but some is built in
 - Howard Farley stated Farley Marine assists with Garbage being brought in from Cruise ships.
 - PD Baker stated fees should be charged for use of the harbor dumpsters
 - PD Baker clarified the garbage dumpsters are included with the Docking Permits, but that does not include the commercial usage of said dumpsters.
 - Chairman West stated the garbage contractor should be separate from the utilities to ease disputes process.
 - PD Baker stated there are regulations the apply to garbage coming off foreign-flagged vessels. Farley agreed this is an important discussion prior to the season start.

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- 23-03-20 Port Director/Projects Status Report
 - 2022 ANC CPI-Urban (5-year average)
 - 2015-2023 Tariff Rate History Report
 - USDOT RAISE Grant Strategy – Ongoing Design Costs

Discussion:

- PD Baker stated things are progressing along with the Corps.
- City's Design elements are on track with the Corps, in providing LSF details.
- The Corps is planning to complete the causeway bridge repairs, but work is scheduled for 2024.
- Alaska Marine Excavation is on the last year of their 3-year contract – Corps will solicit in winter.
- Commissioner Lean inquired whether the match has been finalized at 90/10
 - PD Baker stated it has become law, but Corps HQ is moving slow to execute the change.
- Commissioner Lean shared the difference between Sea Ice and Freshwater Ice in terms of proceeding through the design steps.
- Commissioner McCann inquired about further delays with the construction/agreement

- PD Baker stated there can be no further significant delays based on high visibility
- PD Baker discussed the increase in tariff rates due to CPI Increase, shared in the packet, changes will be incorporated into the tariff, which will be labeled as #16.3 and distributed to the public.
- Commissioner McLarty stated increasing beyond the 6.18% CPI would make costs harder/impactful
 - Commissioner Lean and McLarty inquired on the specifics of the 5-year average of the CPI
- PD Baker stated the RAISE grant was submitted on 28 Feb 2023

OLD BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- USDOT PIDP Grant Strategy – Utilities Expansion Construction Funds
 - PD Baker stated intention to use SOA Funds which are eligible for match to Federal Funds \$11.25M for the Small Projects at Small Ports Program.
 - This would cover all the costs of utilities in Phase 1; adding to state funds as an additional and helpful source of funding.
 - There is little financial risk, due to the matching funds already being available.

Motion made by McLarty, seconded by McCann, to show support for the USDOT PIDP Grant Application

At the Roll Call:

Ayes: McCann; McLarty; Smithhisler; Lean; West

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED.**

Discussion:

- Chairman West inquired why the hesitation in decision of the Port Commission in regards to the USDOT PIDP Grant Strategy.
 - Commissioner Smithhisler inquired if no success with this Grant, what options will be left
 - PD Baker stated there are more options, not putting all eggs in one basket, this was the best first opportunity
 - PD Baker stated it is a good opportunity due to the matching benefit

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- None

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

- McCann – No Comment
- McLarty – No Comment
- Lean asked for emails not to be sent to his work email, as he is retired and does not check that email often. Office of Subsistence of Land Management is being absorbed by Bureau of Indian Affairs from Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Smithhisler – Should have mentioned for commissioner comments, a transportation committee meeting on Tuesday, Sitnasuak is contracting with Bristol to update the inventory, attempting to get the Port Facility into the inventory, progress is happening after two- or three-years of collaboration.
 - CM Steckman inquired if Nome Eskimo Community had hired an Executive Director yet.
 - Commissioner Smithhisler stated NEC filled the position to address various projects that have been in queue.
- West – Nice to see the guys out drilling and sampling as part of the Corps/Construction project; Hopefully they will be able to get their work complete as it is more expensive when they have to cease work before they are done, then remobilize.

- CM Steckman stated there is a Council Work Session on Monday, to get an update from Jay Sterne, our federal lobbyist, and will also include our state lobbyist Wendy Chamberlain, along with Senator Donny Olson and Representative Neal Foster.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by for adjournment at 6:40 pm.

APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 18th day of May 2023.

Jim West, Chairman

ATTEST:

Joy Baker, Port Director



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

April 24, 2023

CEPOA-PMC-E

John Handeland
Mayor
City of Nome
P.O. Box 281
Nome, AK 99762

Dear Mayor Handeland:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Alaska District Operations Branch is planning to repair the Nome Harbor Causeway Breach Bridge in Nome, Alaska. In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 [36 CFR § 800.2(a)(4)], the purpose of this letter is to notify your organization of a Federal undertaking and to invite consultation on an assessment of effect.

You are receiving this letter because the City of Nome operates the Port of Nome and may have an interest in cultural resources in the general project area. A letter addressed to the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), which assesses the proposed undertaking, is enclosed. It describes the known cultural resources in the project area and evaluates the impact that the proposed undertaking may have on those resources. Per Section 101(b)(3) of the NHPA, the SHPO advises and assists Federal agencies in carrying out their Section 106 responsibilities. The SHPO cooperates with agencies, local governments, organizations, and individuals to ensure that historic properties in Alaska are taken into consideration at all levels of Federal planning and development. Per 36 CFR § 800.3(c)(4), the SHPO has 30 days to respond to the USACE's notification; within this time period, we invite you to bring any cultural resources concerns or information to our attention.

If you have questions or concerns about this project, or would like to share information with us, please email me at kelly.a.eldridge@usace.army.mil or call at 907-753-2672.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly A. Eldridge".

Kelly A. Eldridge
Archaeologist
Environmental Resources Section

cc:

Joy Baker, Port Director, Port of Nome



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

April 24, 2023

CEPOA-PMC-E

Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of History and Archaeology
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565

Dear Ms. Bittner:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Alaska District, Civil Works Operations and Maintenance Program, is planning to repair the Nome Harbor Causeway Breach Bridge in Nome, Alaska, in response to damages sustained during Typhoon Merbok (Section 26, T11S, R34W, Kateel River Meridian, USGS Quad Nome C-1; Figure 1). In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the purpose of this letter is to notify you of a Federal undertaking [36 CFR § 800.3(c)(3)] and to seek your concurrence on an assessment of effect [36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1)].

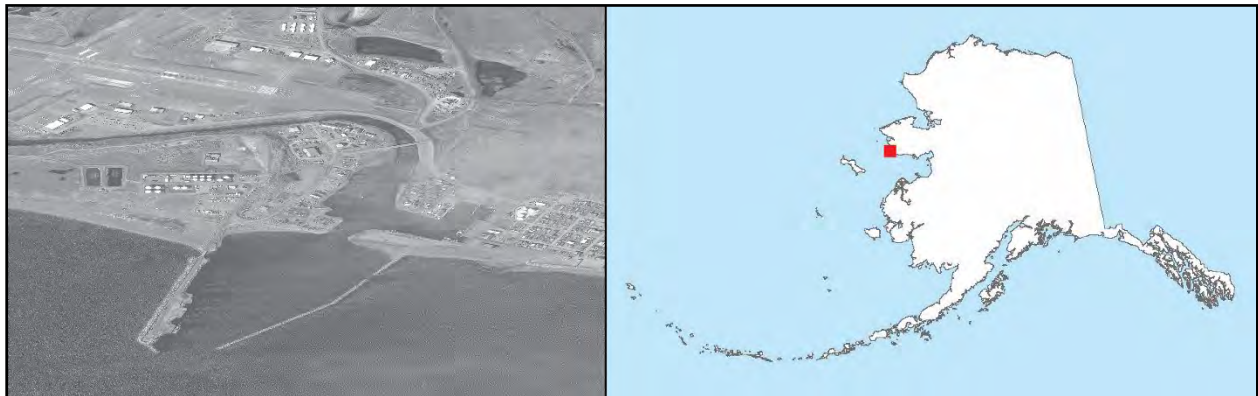


Figure 1. General project location in Nome, Alaska.

Historical Background

The City of Nome is located at the northern edge of Norton Sound, which forms the southern boundary of the Seward Peninsula. Norton Sound is the geographic break between two Indigenous peoples: the Iñupiaq to the north and the Yup'ik to the south. The Seward Peninsula has been occupied for more than 12,000 years (Goebel et al.

2013); Norton Sound has been occupied for at least 5,000 years, as demonstrated by the Iyatayet site at Cape Denbigh (Tremayne et al. 2018). Previous archaeological research conducted in the general vicinity of Nome is identified in Table 1.

Table 1. Previous archaeological investigations in the general vicinity of Nome.

Date	Principal Investigator	Location	Reference
1926	Aleš Hrdlička	Safety Sound	Hrdlička 1930
1950	Larsen Rainey	Cape Nome	Bockstoce & Rainey 1970
1951	David Hopkins	Cape Nome	Bockstoce & Rainey 1970
1960	Frederick Hadleigh-West	Cape Nome	Bockstoce & Rainey 1970
1969	Joan Townsend	Cape Nome	Townsend 1969
1972	John Bockstoce	Cape Nome	Bockstoce 1979
1977	George Smith	Cape Nome	Smith 1985
2005	Mark Pipkin	Snake River Sandspit	USACE 2005
2006	Margan Grover	Snake River Sandspit	USACE 2012
2015	Richard Stern	Nome Airport Pit	NLUR 2015

The mouth of the Snake River at Nome was the site of a permanent Indigenous village, now known as the Snake River Sandspit Site. Excavated features of this site were radiocarbon-dated to approximately 200 years old (Eldridge 2014). Outsiders began impacting the Norton Sound region in the nineteenth century with the establishment of the Saint Michael Redoubt in 1833 (Black 2004). In 1848, Captain Thomas Roys entered the Bering Strait on the whaling ship *Superior* and encountered massive numbers of whales (Bockstoce 1986). This event resulted in a significant increase in commercial whaling activity in the region. Between 1848 and 1854, regular foreign incursions into the Bering Strait region occurred as part of the search for the missing British Arctic expedition of Sir John Franklin (Bockstoce 1979), and in the 1860s members of the Western Union Telegraph Expedition surveyed the Bering Strait and Norton Sound in an effort toward establishing a telegraph link between North America and Europe (Sherwood 1965).

In 1897, gold was discovered on the Seward Peninsula during an expedition led by Daniel Libby. Additional discoveries just a few miles from the current location of Nome in 1898 resulted in a major influx of wealth seekers to the area; in 1900 the population had increased from approximately 12,000 to 20,000 residents in less than 6 months. Although the early mining settlement was first known as Anvil City, the name of the community was changed to Nome in 1899. In April of 1901, the City of Nome was officially incorporated; soon after the town possessed electric lights, piped water, a public library, three churches, and a 50-bed hospital. However, the original platting of the town was problematic in terms of its confined layout and proximity to the Bering Sea. Devastating fires in 1901, 1905, and 1934, and severe Bering Sea storms in 1902 and 1913, resulted in the decision to redraw the city plat further inland (Phillips-Chan 2019).

During World War II, Nome was the final stop for airplanes flying from the United States to the Soviet Union for the Lend-Lease Program. The Lend-Lease policy was enacted on March 11, 1941, to distribute food, oil, warships, warplanes, and other

weaponry to Allied nations. One of the Lend-Lease routes, the Alaska-Siberia (ALSIB) route, was approved by the United States and the Soviet Union in September 1942. Between September 1942 and September 1945, the Soviets accepted 7,924 fighters, bombers, and transports at Ladd Field in Fairbanks, then ferried them through Nome on their way to Siberia (Hays 1996).

During the Cold War, the White Alice Communications System (WACS) was constructed across Alaska. A WACS tropospheric station linking Granite Mountain and Northeast Cape was built on Anvil Mountain at Nome. Construction began on the facility in 1957; the Anvil Mountain WACS was in operation from 1958 to 1978 (USACE 1994). The WACS antennas dominate the city skyline today, serving as an important historical marker and navigational aid.

Nome Harbor

In 1904, a private company was granted permission to dredge the mouth of the Snake River out to the open beach and to protect the resulting channel with jetties; however, after a year's preliminary work, the project was dropped. In 1915 and 1916, the USACE studied the community's navigation problem. The U.S. Congress passed the River and Harbor Act of 1917 which authorized completion of navigation improvements for Nome. Construction of jetties at the mouth of the Snake River, revetments along the river banks, and dredging of a navigation channel and turning basin began in 1919 and was completed in 1923. Maintenance dredging of Nome Harbor has occurred on an annual basis since 1924 (USACE 1976).

Between 1985 and 1987, the City of Nome constructed the Nome Harbor Causeway in order to relieve some of the difficulties and safety hazards experienced by larger vessels that were required to lighter their goods or passengers to shore (Figures 2 and 3). A breach was left in the causeway to facilitate fish and marine mammal passage. The breach was established at 7 feet below mean lower low water (MLLW) and bridged to allow cargo transfer.

Authorization for additional navigation improvements at Nome Harbor was received when Congress passed the Water Resources Development Act of 1999. This resulted in the reconfiguration of the Nome Harbor entrance channel, the construction of a spur breakwater along the causeway and an east breakwater, and dredging of sediment traps on either side of the causeway. Construction occurred between 2004 and 2006; in 2005, the USACE widened the causeway breach and reconstructed the Breach Bridge in order to better manage the longshore sediment transport (Figure 4). Today, the Breach Bridge is approximately 128 feet long and 33 feet wide. The spans are comprised of composite steel girders with a concrete deck supported by steel sheet pile abutments.



Figure 2. Aerial view of the Nome Causeway Breach Bridge in 1988.



Figure 3. Aerial view of Nome Causeway Breach Bridge in 2003.



Figure 4. Oblique view of temporary groin and road during bridge reconstruction in 2005 (Photo courtesy of City of Nome).



Figure 5. Oblique view of the Nome Causeway Breach Bridge in 2015 (Photo courtesy City of Nome).

Project Description

USACE has been responsible for maintaining the Nome Harbor Causeway Breach Bridge since it was reconstructed in 2005. The Breach Bridge was damaged during Typhoon Merbok in September 2022. A site inspection following the historic storm identified the need for:

- adding, replacing, and reworking the rip-rap erosion protection at the four corners of the abutments;
- realigning the jersey barriers at both ends and sides of the bridge approach;
- spot repairs of the bridge girder protective steel coatings;
- sealing gaps between the sheetpile abutment and the bridge girders, deck, and end wall;
- repair of the grout pad under the steel cap beam at the bridge corners (see Figure 6).

In order to better access parts of the bridge, the breach may be temporarily filled with clean sands and gravels from the adjacent beach to an elevation and width that would afford a stable work platform beneath the bridge during the proposed undertaking. Upon conclusion of bridge repair and maintenance activities the clean fill material would be removed.

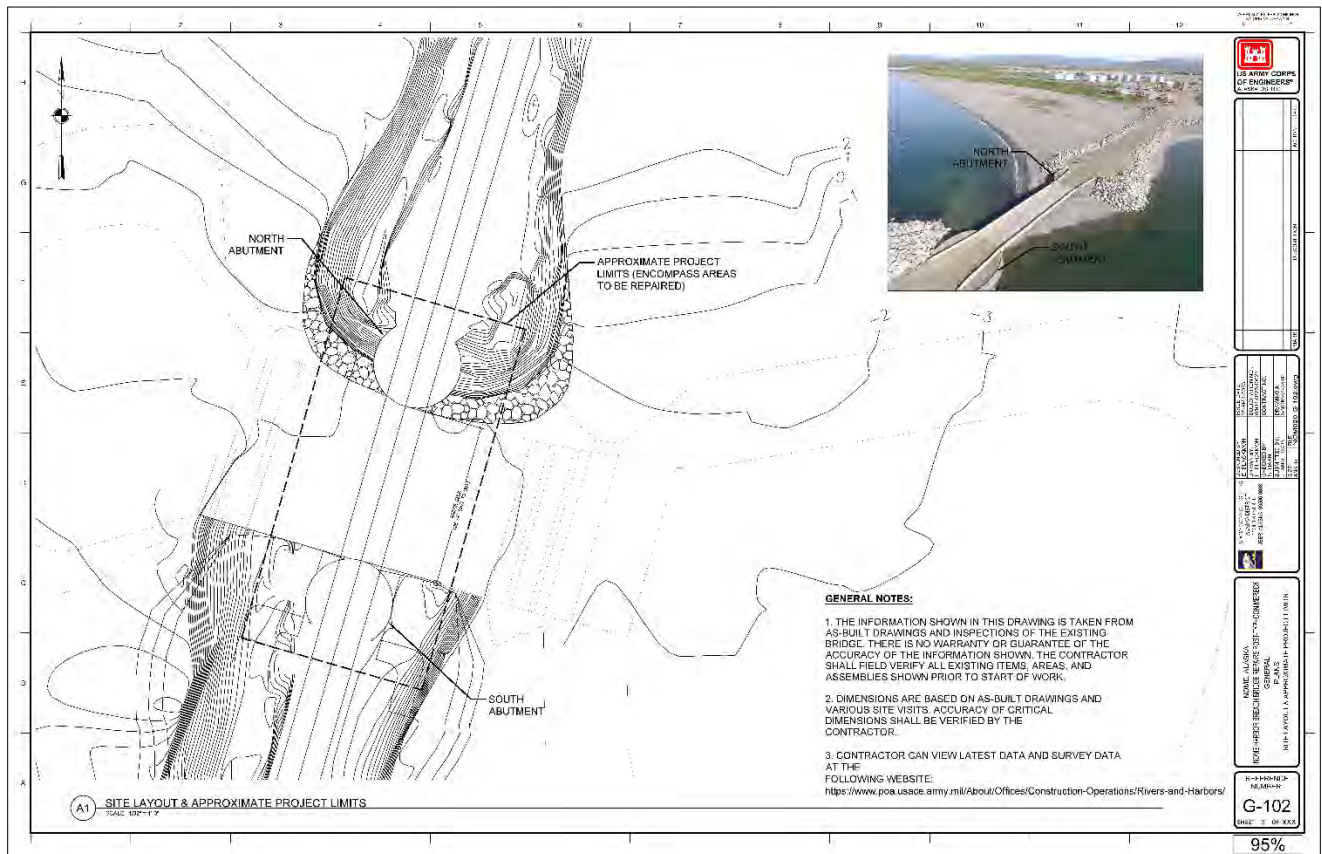


Figure 6. 95% Drawings for proposed project at Nome Harbor Causeway Breach Bridge.

Assessment of Effect

The proposed project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) includes the Nome Harbor Causeway Breach Bridge and the area immediately surrounding it (Figure 7). Both the Causeway and the Breach Bridge were initially built in the 1980s and then partially reconstructed in 2005. The sandy beach on the northwestern edge of the bridge abutment is accreted seasonally through longshore drift. The APE will be accessed via commercial roads, including Jetty Road and Port Road. There are 21 known cultural resources in the vicinity of the proposed project's APE (Table 2); however, none of them exist within it. The closest known cultural resources include the Nome Subsurface Historic District (NOM-00158) and the Sitnasuanmiut Qunuwit Cemetery (NOM-00264).

The proposed project's APE is limited to non-historical structures constructed in the littoral zone. The area will be accessed via commercial roads or the adjacent beach located both east and west of the APE. The proposed project involves repair to the Nome Causeway Breach Bridge and the replacement of placed backfill materials near the jersey barriers and sheetpile abutments with new materials that will be obtained from a commercial quarry. There are no known historic properties within the APE and, because the location is in an active industrial area where maintenance happens at least annually, it is highly unlikely that any unknown cultural resources will be encountered during the undertaking.



Figure 7. Aerial view of Nome Causeway Breach Bridge in June 2009; Area of Potential Effect outlined in red.

Table 2. Known cultural resources in the vicinity of the APE (AHRs 2022).

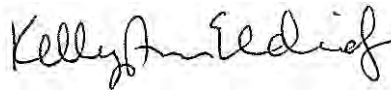
AHRs #	Site Name	NRHP Status	In APE
NOM-00025	Sitnasuak	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00040	Old St. Joseph's Catholic Church	Listed	No
NOM-00083	Fort Davis Guardhouse	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00146	Snake River Sandspit Site	Eligible	No
NOM-00158	Nome Subsurface Historic District	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00167	Nome Historic District	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00176	Belmont Cemetery	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00178	Cowin Hut – South Example	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00225	1003 Seppala Drive	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00226	Garage on Seppala Drive	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00227	Blue-Green House on Belmont Street	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00228	308 Belmont Street	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00229	312 Belmont Street	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00230	Belmont Apartments	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00231	315 McLain Lane	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00244	Samuelson Trail	Eligible	No
NOM-00264	Sitnasuanmiut Qunjuwit Cemetery	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00286	Small House 1	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00287	Small House 2	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00291	710 Seppala Drive	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00307	Single-story Building	Unevaluated	No

NOTE: Cultural resources listed in the AHRs but identified as destroyed are not included.

Conclusion

There are no known cultural resources within the Area of Potential Effect for the proposed undertaking at the Nome Harbor Causeway Breach Bridge. Additionally, the likelihood of identifying previously-unknown cultural resources is low due to the relatively recent construction of the structures to be repaired and their location in the littoral zone. As such, USACE requests your concurrence on the determination that the proposed undertaking will result in **no historic properties affected** in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1). If you have any questions about this project, please contact me by phone at 907-753-2672 or email at kelly.a.eldridge@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Kelly A. Eldridge
Archaeologist
Environmental Resources Section

cc:

Marie Tozier, Executive Director, Nome Eskimo Community
Heather Payenna, President, King Island Native Community
Charles Fagerstrom, CEO, Sitnasuak Native Corporation

Charles Ellanna, Land & Resources Administrator, Sitnasuak Native Corporation
Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, Social Science Program Director, Kawerak, Inc.
Brandon Ahmasuk, Vice President, Natural Resources, Kawerak, Inc.
Larry Pederson, Vice President of Nome Operations, Bering Straits Native Corporation
Kevin Bahnke, Lands and Resources Department, Bering Straits Native Corporation
John Handeland, Mayor, City of Nome
Joy Baker, Port Director, City of Nome

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

1976. *History of the Alaska District, United States Army Corps of Engineers, 1946–1974*. Alaska District, Elmendorf Air Force Base.

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2012. Archaeological Data Recovery at the Snake River Sandspit Site in Nome, Alaska. Final Report of Investigations. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District. August.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

May 8, 2023

CEPOA-PMC-E

John Handeland
Mayor
City of Nome
P.O. Box 281
Nome, AK 99762

Dear Mayor Handeland:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Alaska District Operations Branch is planning to conduct sediment sampling and maintenance dredging at Nome Harbor in Nome, Alaska. In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 [36 CFR § 800.2(a)(4)], the purpose of this letter is to notify your organization of a Federal undertaking and to invite consultation on an assessment of effect.

You are receiving this letter because the City of Nome operates the Port of Nome and may have an interest in cultural resources in the general project area. A letter addressed to the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), which assesses the proposed undertaking, is enclosed. It describes the known cultural resources in the project area and evaluates the impact that the proposed undertaking may have on those resources. Per Section 101(b)(3) of the NHPA, the SHPO advises and assists Federal agencies in carrying out their Section 106 responsibilities. The SHPO cooperates with agencies, local governments, organizations, and individuals to ensure that historic properties in Alaska are taken into consideration at all levels of Federal planning and development. Per 36 CFR § 800.3(c)(4), the SHPO has 30 days to respond to the USACE's notification; within this time period, we invite you to bring any cultural resources concerns or information to our attention.

If you have questions or concerns about this project, or would like to share information with us, please email me at kelly.a.eldridge@usace.army.mil or call at 907-753-2672.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly A. Eldridge", is positioned above the typed name.

Kelly A. Eldridge
Archaeologist
Environmental Resources Section

cc:
Joy Baker, Port Director, Port of Nome



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

May 8, 2023

CEPOA-PMC-E

Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of History and Archaeology
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565

Dear Ms. Bittner:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Alaska District, Civil Works Operations and Maintenance Program, is planning to conduct sediment sampling and maintenance dredging at Nome Harbor, Nome, Alaska (Section 26, T11S, R34W, Kateel River Meridian, USGS Quad Nome C-1; Figure 1). In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the purpose of this letter is to notify you of a Federal undertaking [36 CFR § 800.3(c)(3)] and to seek your concurrence on an assessment of effect [36 CFR § 800.5(b)].



Figure 1. General project location in Nome, Alaska.

Historical Background

The City of Nome is located at the northern edge of Norton Sound, which forms the southern boundary of the Seward Peninsula. Norton Sound is the geographic break between two Indigenous peoples: the Iñupiaq to the north and the Yup'ik to the south. The Seward Peninsula has been occupied for more than 12,000 years (Goebel et al. 2013); Norton Sound has been occupied for at least 5,000 years, as demonstrated by the Iyatayet site at Cape Denbigh (Tremayne et al. 2018). Previous archaeological

research conducted in the general vicinity of Nome is identified in Table 1.

Table 1. Previous archaeological investigations in the general vicinity of Nome.

Date	Principal Investigator	Location	Reference
1926	Aleš Hrdlička	Safety Sound	Hrdlička 1930
1950	Larsen Rainey	Cape Nome	Bockstoce & Rainey 1970
1951	David Hopkins	Cape Nome	Bockstoce & Rainey 1970
1960	Frederick Hadleigh-West	Cape Nome	Bockstoce & Rainey 1970
1969	Joan Townsend	Cape Nome	Townsend 1969
1972	John Bockstoce	Cape Nome	Bockstoce 1979
1977	George Smith	Cape Nome	Smith 1985
2005	Mark Pipkin	Snake River Sandspit	USACE 2005
2006	Margan Grover	Snake River Sandspit	USACE 2012
2015	Richard Stern	Nome Airport Pit	NLUR 2015

The mouth of the Snake River at Nome was the site of a permanent Indigenous village, now known as the Snake River Sandspit Site. Excavated features of this site were radiocarbon-dated to approximately 200 years old (Eldridge 2014). Outsiders began impacting the Norton Sound region in the nineteenth century with the establishment of the Saint Michael Redoubt in 1833 (Black 2004). In 1848, Captain Thomas Roys entered the Bering Strait on the whaling ship *Superior* and encountered massive numbers of whales (Bockstoce 1986). This event resulted in a significant increase in commercial whaling activity in the region. Between 1848 and 1854, regular foreign incursions into the Bering Strait region occurred as part of the search for the missing British Arctic expedition of Sir John Franklin (Bockstoce 1979), and in the 1860s members of the Western Union Telegraph Expedition surveyed the Bering Strait and Norton Sound in an effort toward establishing a telegraph link between North America and Europe (Sherwood 1965).

In 1897, gold was discovered on the Seward Peninsula during an expedition led by Daniel Libby. Additional discoveries just a few miles from the current location of Nome in 1898 resulted in a major influx of wealth seekers to the area; in 1900 the population had increased from approximately 12,000 to 20,000 residents in less than 6 months. Although the early mining settlement was first known as Anvil City, the name of the community was changed to Nome in 1899. In April of 1901, the City of Nome was officially incorporated; soon after the town possessed electric lights, piped water, a public library, three churches, and a 50-bed hospital. However, the original platting of the town was problematic in terms of its confined layout and proximity to the Bering Sea. Devastating fires in 1901, 1905, and 1934 and severe Bering Sea storms in 1902 and 1913, resulted in the decision to redraw the city plat further inland (Phillips-Chan 2019).

During World War II, Nome was the final stop for airplanes flying from the United States to the Soviet Union for the Lend-Lease Program. The Lend-Lease policy was enacted on March 11, 1941, to distribute food, oil, warships, warplanes, and other weaponry to Allied nations. One of the Lend-Lease routes, the Alaska-Siberia (ALSIB) route, was approved by the United States and the Soviet Union in September 1942.

Between September 1942 and September 1945, the Soviets accepted 7,924 fighters, bombers, and transports at Ladd Field in Fairbanks, then ferried them through Nome on their way to Siberia (Hays 1996).

During the Cold War, the White Alice Communications System (WACS) was constructed across Alaska. A WACS tropospheric station linking Granite Mountain and Northeast Cape was built on Anvil Mountain at Nome. Construction began on the facility in 1957; the Anvil Mountain WACS was in operation from 1958 to 1978 (USACE 1994). The WACS antennas dominate the city skyline today, serving as an important historical marker and navigational aid.

Nome Harbor

In 1904, a private company was granted permission to dredge the mouth of the Snake River out to the open beach and to protect the resulting channel with jetties; however, after a year's preliminary work, the project was dropped. In 1915 and 1916, the USACE studied the community's navigation problem. The U.S. Congress passed the River and Harbor Act of 1917 which authorized completion of navigation improvements for Nome. Construction of jetties at the mouth of the Snake River, revetments along the river banks, and dredging of a 75 ft-wide navigation channel and turning basin to a depth of -8 ft mean lower low water (MLLW) began in 1919 and was completed in 1923. Maintenance dredging of Nome Harbor has occurred on an annual basis since 1924 (USACE 1976).

The modern configuration of Nome Harbor was authorized by Congress under Section 101(a)(1) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999. Navigation improvements included closing off and filling the old navigation channel (the stabilized mouth of the Snake River), constructing a new navigation channel through the sandspit and dredging it to depths varying from -22 to -8 ft MLLW, dredging sediment traps to the west and east of the Causeway Breach Bridge, and constructing a new, eastern breakwater. Construction began in 2004 and was completed in 2006. The City of Nome has also conducted dredging within Nome Harbor, outside of the Federal navigation features.

Project Description

USACE is responsible for maintaining approximately 3,950 linear feet of Federal navigation channel, turning basins, and sediment traps at Nome Harbor, with authorized depths ranging from -22 to -8 feet MLLW (Figure 2). Littoral transport and storms deposit large quantities of marine sediment, primarily sand, at these locations, and riverine transport deposits small quantities of sediments from the Snake River. In order to maintain the authorized project depths, the USACE has been conducting annual maintenance dredging of Nome Harbor since 1924. Annual maintenance dredging of the current configuration of Federal navigation features has been conducted since 2007.



Figure 2. Authorized Federal maintenance dredging locations and material placement areas.

Sediments are typically dredged from the the Federal maintenance dredging locations with a cutterhead suction pipeline dredge (Figure 3). The temporary pipeline, which can be floating or submerged, is connected to the dredge and then runs along the beach until it reaches the approved beach nourishment location where the dredged materials are deposited in nearshore waters just east of the eastern breakwater (Figure 4).

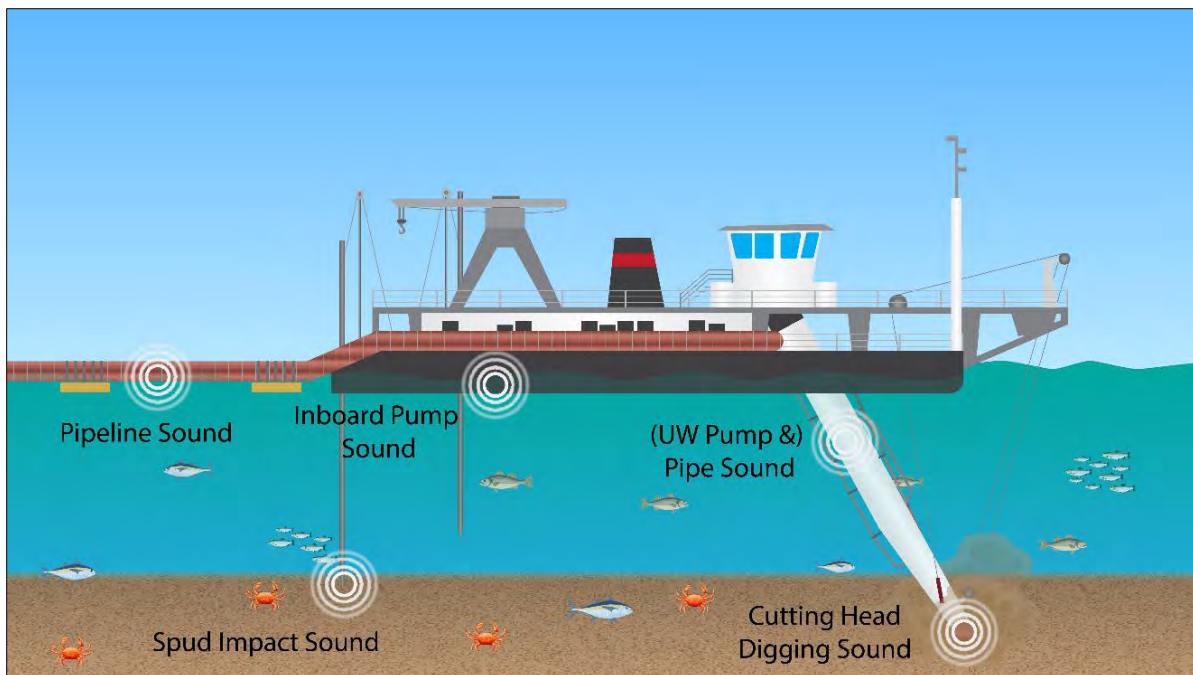


Figure 3. Sideview of a hydraulic cutterhead suction dredge (from McQueen et al. 2019).



Figure 4. Dredged materials are deposited via temporary pipeline in nearshore waters just east of the eastern breakwater to nourish the beaches in front of town.

The USACE also proposes to restore the sediment bypass mechanism by dredging the breach under the causeway bridge and the beach immediately west of the causeway (Figure 5). This work was previously proposed in our assessment of effect correspondence dated 28 July 2020 and captured in a 2020 Environmental Assessment, but has not been completed to date. At least one dredging event is proposed with a combined estimated volume of 50,000 cubic yards of accreted marine sediment to be removed via mechanical dredging with land-based equipment. The dredging along the western beach is intended to create a new sediment trap that will reduce the amount of material that builds up under the causeway bridge. Materials dredged from the western beach and causeway breach are anticipated to be stockpiled on the upper western beach, just north of the dredged area. This stockpiled material would be available to the landowners for their beneficial use.



Figure 5. Proposed dredging within causeway breach and the west sediment trap (in blue), with dredged material placement on the upper reaches of the beach (in yellow).



Figure 6. Barrel sampler.

Prior to dredging, sediment sampling must be conducted to determine if material dredged from Nome Harbor is suitable for placement at the proposed locations. Previous sediment sampling efforts in support of the USACE maintenance dredging activities occurred in 1989, 1990, 1993, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2013, 2017, 2018, and 2020; no cultural resources were identified during those undertakings. The proposed sampling effort will primarily use a barrel sampler (Figure 6), drawn from a small vessel through the top 6–24 inches of accumulated sediment, to collect samples for chemical and physical testing. In shallow locations or upland areas, a hand auger may be used instead. Up to 33 samples in total will be collected from within the Federal navigation channels, turning basins, and sediment traps (USACE 2023).

Assessment of Effect

The proposed project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) includes both the original maintenance dredging locations and the new dredging locations at the western beach and causeway breach that were proposed during consultation in 2020 (Figure 7). The APE will be accessed via existing commercial roads, docks, and boat ramps in addition to the unimproved trail between the Nome Harbor causeway and the western beach that is used by the community for beach access.



Figure 7. Aerial view of Nome Harbor in September 2020; APE outlined in red.

There are 21 known cultural resources in the vicinity of the proposed project's APE (Table 2); however, only the seasonal portion of the Samuelson Trail (NOM-00244), which runs across the frozen inner harbor during winter, exists within the APE. The Nome Subsurface Historic District (NOM-00158) may also extend into the APE. The eastern boundary for the proposed upland dredged materials disposal area on the western beach corresponds with the western boundary of the subsurface historic district. As the boundaries of the Nome Subsurface Historic District are approximate and have not yet been verified, it is unknown whether the district falls within the APE. The second-closest known cultural resource is the Sitnasuanmiut Qunjuwit Cemetery (NOM-00264); the southern boundary of the cemetery is located approximately 30 meters north of the boundary of the upland disposal area on the western beach.

Table 2. Known cultural resources in the vicinity of the APE (AHRs 2022).

AHRS #	Site Name	NRHP Status	In APE
NOM-00025	Sitnasuak	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00040	Old St. Joseph's Catholic Church	Listed	No
NOM-00083	Fort Davis Guardhouse	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00146	Snake River Sandspit Site	Eligible	No

NOM-00158	Nome Subsurface Historic District	Unevaluated	YES
NOM-00167	Nome Historic District	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00176	Belmont Cemetery	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00178	Cowin Hut – South Example	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00225	1003 Seppala Drive	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00226	Garage on Seppala Drive	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00227	Blue-Green House on Belmont Street	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00228	308 Belmont Street	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00229	312 Belmont Street	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00230	Belmont Apartments	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00231	315 McLain Lane	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00244	Samuelson Trail	Eligible	YES
NOM-00264	Sitnasuanmiut Qunjuwit Cemetery	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00286	Small House 1	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00287	Small House 2	Not Eligible	No
NOM-00291	710 Seppala Drive	Unevaluated	No
NOM-00307	Single-story Building	Unevaluated	No

NOTE: Cultural resources listed in the AHRs but identified as destroyed are not included.

The proposed sediment sampling, dredging of recently deposited sediments, and placement of dredged materials both east and west of the harbor for beneficial use will not affect any known cultural resources. The seasonal portion of the Samuelson Trail (NOM-00244) will not be impacted by the proposed summer-time dredging in the inner harbor. If the Nome Subsurface Historic District (NOM-00158) does extend into the upland dredged materials disposal area on the western beach, the proposed action – adding local materials (e.g., sands, gravels) to the beach surface – is unlikely to have an adverse effect on any potential subsurface historical materials associated with the historic district.

Conclusion

The proposed dredging at Nome Harbor is not expected to impact any known historic properties or cultural resources, and the likelihood of identifying previously-unknown cultural resources is low. USACE requests your concurrence on the determination that the proposed undertaking will result in **no adverse effect** in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.5(b). If you have any questions about this project, please contact me by phone at 907-753-2672 or email at kelly.a.eldridge@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Kelly A. Eldridge
Archaeologist
Environmental Resources Section

CC:

Maria Tozier, Executive Director, Nome Eskimo Community
Heather Payenna, President, King Island Native Community
Charles Fagerstrom, CEO, Sitnasuak Native Corporation
Charles Ellanna, Land & Resources Administrator, Sitnasuak Native Corporation
Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, Social Science Program Director, Kawerak, Inc.
Brandon Ahmasuk, Vice President, Natural Resources, Kawerak, Inc.
Larry Pederson, Vice President of Nome Operations, Bering Straits Native Corporation
Kevin Bahnke, Lands and Resources Department, Bering Straits Native Corporation
John Handeland, Mayor, City of Nome
Joy Baker, Port Director, City of Nome

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Nome Coordinated Research Consortium

2023 Field Coordination

Introduction

Our four projects, representing five universities, organized the Nome Research Consortium (NRC) to coordinate field work and minimize community fatigue. This coordination enables us to co-design and co-produce field work in Nome, Alaska during 2023 and beyond. We seek to gather and provide information and data for the community of Nome about community impacts from cruise ship tourism, infrastructure, and shipping. We invite Nome residents to participate in our studies; without local and traditional knowledge we cannot be successful. Below is a short description of the projects with contact information. The Northwest Campus, University of Fairbank has offered assistance in coordinating our field work.

Four Projects

Arctic Cruise Tourism (ACT). ACT is an international National Science Foundation (NSF) grant for studying challenges in the Arctic by systematically analyzing the impacts of the rapidly growing regional tourism industry. We study the economic benefits to the destinations visited including seasonal employment, private sector investments, and increased tax revenue. Other impacts may include; air, water, and noise pollution, environmental degradation, and cultural effects such as overcrowding of ports and adjacent areas. A sustainability holistic framework will be used to create indicators for cruise impacts and study of the interdependencies of the social, natural, and built systems of these communities as they respond to changing environmental, economic, and social conditions. Sean Asikluk Topkok (UAF), 907-460-6980, Jim Powell (UAS), 907-209-5676, and Bob Orttung 703-989-4786 (George Washington U.).

Telecoupling. *Effects of shipping, tourism, and resource extraction on the Bering Strait Region.* This NSF funded project's goal is to understand the complex effects of multiple telecouplings (natural or human processes in one part of the globe have an effect on a distant part of the world) on arctic Alaska, with a focus on the Bering Strait region. We will develop different scenarios of tourism, marine shipping, and natural resource development to understand their effects on the habitat of marine mammal species crucial to subsistence economies and cultures, and on community economies and well-being. Jen Schmidt (UAA) 907-750-3750.

InfraNorth. *Building Arctic Futures: Transport Infrastructures and Sustainable Northern Communities* (Funded by the European Research Council and conducted at the University of Vienna). InfraNorth focuses on the impacts of transport infrastructures on Arctic communities. We are interested in how local residents engage with these infrastructures, studying expectations, concerns, and forms of involvement in planning, construction, maintenance, and use of transport infrastructures of coastal Arctic communities. Our fieldwork includes observation of life in local communities and interviews with residents and experts. A survey and different kinds of data will be used to co-design future scenarios of community development with local residents. We come to Nome to get an understanding of how existing or planned transportation infrastructures might impact you and your community now and in the future. Peter Schweitzer: peter.schweitzer@univie.ac.at, +43-1-4277-49537, Olga Povoroznyuk: olga.povoroznyuk@univie.ac.at, +43-1-4277-49580

Current and future Arctic community vulnerabilities to sea-ice change. This NSF funded project aims to know how Arctic communities perceive and respond to the impacts of climate change and economic development. Another goal is to have community insights on the products of Western science that can improve the responses to these impacts. We will combine participant observation, focus groups, and interviews with residents and knowledge holders. Julio Postigo: jpostigo@iu.edu, +1-773-934-9734



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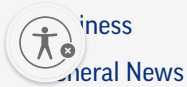
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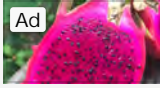


Cruising to Nome: The first U.S. deep water port for the Arctic to host cruise ships, military




By MARK THIESSEN June 18, 2023



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ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The cruise ship with about 1,000 passengers anchored off Nome, too big to squeeze into into the tundra city's tiny port. Its well-heeled tourists had to shimmy into small boats for another ride to shore.

It was 2016, and at the time, the [cruise ship Serenity](#) was the largest vessel ever to sail through the Northwest Passage.

But as the Arctic sea ice relents under the pressures of global warming and opens shipping lanes across the top of the world, more tourists are venturing to Nome — a northwest Alaska destination known better for the [Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race](#) and its 1898 gold rush than luxury travel.

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

Himalayan glaciers could lose 80% of their volume if global warming not controlled, study finds **1 dead, nearly 2 dozen injured after multiple tornadoes sweep through Mississippi**

Montana officials downplay first-of-its-kind climate trial **Verdict in Oregon wildfires case highlights risks utilities face amid climate change**

The problem remains: There's no place to park the big boats. While smaller cruise ships are able to dock, officials say that of the dozen arriving this year, half will anchor offshore.

That's expected to change as a \$600 million-plus expansion makes Nome, population 3,500, the nation's first deep-water Arctic port. The expansion, expected to be operational by the end of the decade, will accommodate not just larger cruise ships of up to

4,000 passengers, but cargo ships to deliver additional goods for the 60 Alaska Native villages in the region, and military vessels to counter the presence of Russian and Chinese ships in the Arctic.

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It's a prospect that excites business owners and officials in Nome, but concerns others who worry about the impact of additional tourists and vessel traffic on the environment and animals Alaska Natives depend on for subsistence.

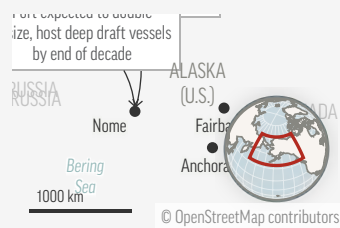
The expansion will "support our local economy and the local artists here, the Indigenous artists having access to the visitors and teaching and sharing our culture and our language

and how we how we make our beautiful art,” said Alice Bioff, an Inupiaq resident of Nome.

Bioff was a tour guide who greeted the Serenity’s passengers when they arrived in 2016. One of the guests admired her cloth kuspuk, a traditional Alaska Native garment similar to a smock, and wanted to know if it was water resistant.

Nome digs deeper port

A warming climate and increased commercial and military activity in the Arctic is helping drive the expansion of the seaport in Nome, Alaska, to serve cruise ships, warships, tankers and other marine traffic.



Source: AP reports



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It wasn't, but the interaction inspired Bioff to create her own line of waterproof jackets styled like kuspuks. She now sells to tourists and locals alike from her own Naataq Gear gift store, a retail spot in the post office building, where about 20 Alaska Native artists offer ivory carvings, beadwork or paintings through consignment.

Studies show that cruise ship passengers typically spend about \$100 per day in Nome, city manager Glenn Steckman said.

With the expansion, he's hoping guests on larger cruise ships will extend their stays to experience more of Nome and the tundra, to view wild musk ox, or to sip a drink at the 123-year-old Board of Trade Saloon.

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[Climate change](#) is making

this all possible.

Nome, founded after gold was discovered in 1898, has seen six of its 10 warmest winters on record just in this century. The Bering Strait shipping lanes have gotten only busier since 2009, going from 262 transits that year to 509 in 2022.

“We’re going to be the first deep-draft Arctic port but probably not going to be the last,” Nome Mayor John Handeland said.

The Bering Sea ice on average reaches Nome in late November or December, about two or three weeks later than it did 50 years ago, said Rick Thoman, a climate specialist at the International Arctic Research Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

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In 2019, mushers in the

Iditarod, who normally drive their dog teams on the Bering Sea ice to the finish line in Nome, were forced onto the beach because of open water. The ice season will only get shorter, Thoman said.

The existing port causeway was completed in the mid-1980s. The expansion will be completed in three phases and effectively double its size. The first part of the project is funded by \$250 million in federal infrastructure money with another \$175 million from the Alaska Legislature. Field work is expected to begin next year.

Currently three ships can dock at once; the expanded dock will accommodate seven to 10.

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Workers will dredge a new basin 40 feet (12.2 meters) deep, allowing large

cruises ships, cargo vessels, and every U.S. military ship except aircraft carriers to dock, Port Director Joy Baker said.

U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan, an Alaska Republican, said the expanded port will become the centerpiece of U.S. strategic infrastructure in the Arctic. The military is building up resources in Alaska, placing fighter jets at bases in Anchorage and Fairbanks, establishing a new Army airborne division in Alaska, [training soldiers for future cold-weather conflicts](#) and has missile defense capabilities.

“The way you have a presence in the Arctic is to be able to have military assets and the infrastructure that supports those assets,” Sullivan said.

The northern seas near Alaska are getting more crowded. A U.S. Coast Guard patrol board encountered seven [Chinese and Russian naval vessels](#) cooperating in an exercise last year about 86 miles (138 kilometers) north of Alaska’s Kiska

Island.

Coast guard vessels in 2021 also encountered Chinese ships 50 miles (80 km) off Alaska's Aleutian Islands.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg last year [warned that Russia and China have pledged to cooperate](#) in the Arctic, “a deepening strategic partnership that challenges our values and interests.”

Still, the prospect of Nome welcoming more tourists and a greater military presence bothers some residents. Austin Ahmasuk, an Inupiaq native, said the port's original construction displaced an area traditionally used for subsistence hunting or fishing, and the expansion won't help.

“The Port of Nome is development purely for the sake of development,” Ahmasuk said.

This story corrects that Sullivan is a senator, not a representative.



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Memo

To: Glenn Steckman – City Manager
From: Joy L. Baker – Port Director JLB
CC: Mayor Handeland & Common Council; Port Commission
Date: May 5, 2023
Re: Monthly PD Report/Capital Projects Update – May 2023

Administrative:

The Port successfully hired Carolyn Ahkvaluk on 1 May 2023, as the full-time Purchasing/Office Manager, who will be shared with Public Works. Training began immediately, and will continue over the next couple of weeks with additional accounting staff in Nome. Planning, scheduling, compliance training and budgeting for 2023 currently occupy our days. We have had numerous discussions with Public Works to confirm schedules for required maintenance/repairs and purchasing of materials.

Causeway:

Arctic Deep Draft Port – Nome Modifications Pre-Construction Engineering & Design (PED):

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) released the project's Incidental Hazard Authorization (IHA) for public comment on 1 May 2023, with responses due back by 1 June 2023. Anticipated approval of this required permit is now pushed back to June or July 2023. Until then, the City and Corps permitting leads will continue to coordinate with agency personnel, and design teams continue moving forward.

One of the impacts of this extended timeline pushes execution of the Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) until July, which is also the document that makes the official adjustment to the cost-share modification from 75/25 to 90/10%. As stated prior, the Alaska District has given assurances that all funds in excess of the 10% obligation will be returned to the City upon execution of the PPA.

Higher-level decisions have required adjustments to the final 95% design drawings and specs, with the Corps needing an additional 3 weeks to return the information to the City's designers for making changes to the LSF components. It is expected the City teams will have an equal 3 weeks to reciprocate with the final tweaks to the 95%, before moving on to 100% design.

The Corps and City will host another public meeting on the project at the Mini Convention Center (MCC) in Nome, on Tuesday 16 May 2023, from 5:30p-7:30p. A presentation will be given by members of the project team, followed by a Q&A session. Meeting information will be shared with Nome media and an add will be placed in the upcoming paper.

Local Service Facilities (LSF) Design Integration:

As stated above, the City's designers will be making changes to the existing 95% design, once modified drawings are received from the Corps on 16 May 2023, which pushes the 100% deadline into June 2023. More information will be shared as it comes available.

Causeway Bridge Repairs and Sediment Under Bridge:

The Corps is still preparing a contract solicitation to be released in the summer of 2023, with work now pushed out to the summer of 2024. Sediment that has accumulated under and west of the bridge is being folded into the new Maintenance Dredging solicitation in Fall 2023 for the 2024-2026 contract.

Arctic Port Reception Facility – Solid Waste Disposal (Incinerator):

New funding opportunities are being evaluated for this project.

Harbor:

Inner Harbor CAP 107 Study (Deepen/Widen the Inner Basin):

The City continues to make monthly inquiries on the status of this project, with District reporting they are awaiting direction from Corps HQ and their Division office.

Port Industrial Pad:

West Nome Tank Farm (Property Conveyance):

The City has made regular inquiries with the USAF, and has learned that a new project lead has been identified for this property transfer, and the AF is working to get up to speed on this significantly delayed issue. (Both email and voicemail left this week.)

Thornbush Laydown Site Development (TBS):

Dredge spoils from the port expansion and inner harbor project have been given clearance by two ADEC programs (Solid Waste and Contaminated Sites), to be disposed of in the undeveloped 9-acre portion of this property. The spoils will require dewatering before serving as a hardened base layer to the specified fill and surfacing to complete development of the 18-acre parcel.

Port Rd. Improvements (ADOT Project cost-shared with City/Port):

This state STIP project has been postponed to 2026/27 to avoid road construction conflicting with the heavier truck traffic during the port expansion. There is ongoing discussion regarding maintenance work in 2023.

Italics reflects no change in project information from previous report.

Additional details available upon request.



Memo

To: Glenn Steckman – City Manager
From: Joy L. Baker – Port Director *JLB*
CC: Mayor Handeland & Common Council; Port Commission
Date: June 9, 2023
Re: Monthly PD Report/Capital Projects Update – June 2023

Administrative:

Port staff have undergone necessary training and/or refreshing for the 2023 seasonal operations. Vessel operations have begun, with office staff updating customer files, notification preferences, and routine expectations. Field staff are coordinating with Public Works for installation of removable infrastructure, and maintenance, and with users on best practices for operating in-water and onshore to prevent drips and spills, prevent incidents and enhance safety. All field staff are now properly equipped with the required Transportation Worker’s Identification Credential (TWIC) to manage and control secure and restricted areas as part of the Marine Transportation Security Act (MTSA), facilitated by the USCG.

Causeway:

Arctic Deep Draft Port – Nome Modifications Pre-Construction Engineering & Design (PED):

The comment period for NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Incidental Hazard Authorization (IHA) permit for the project, ended on 1 June 2023. Some comments received, questioned the thoroughness of the Corps’ tribal consultation and notification efforts, one requesting a specific meeting for gathering subsistence input, and ideas on more permit stipulations that will address and protect marine mammals beyond the standard NMFS requirements during construction. Although the Corps and City still anticipate approval of this required permit sometime in August 2023, the current focus is for the Corps/City to continue working with the agency to address concerns raised during the comment period, which are essentially beyond those in which NMFS will provide responses direct to the commenters.

Execution of the Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) is extended until the IHA permit has been approved by NMFS. In the meantime, the City has received the draft document, and it is currently under review by City Administration and legal. To reiterate, the PPA does in fact reflect a cost-share modification to 90/10% as required by law.

The Corps intends to schedule another meeting in Nome on the project, which may occur in Aug or Sep 2023, but the actual schedule has not yet been determined. Once info is available, the City will share with Nome media and an ad will be placed in the newspaper.

Local Service Facilities (LSF) Design Integration:

The City’s designers have finished addressing Corps reviewer comments on the 95% LSF drawings and specs, but will now take another 2-3 weeks to incorporate construction options assigned by the Corps. Once modified drawings are reviewed by the Corps, the entire project team will move toward 100% completion of design and specs, which will then be compiled into a bid package, presently scheduled to be released in October 2023

Causeway Bridge Repairs and Sediment Under Bridge:

The Corps is still preparing a contract solicitation to be released in the summer of 2023, with work now pushed out to the summer of 2024. Sediment that has accumulated under and west of the bridge is being folded into the new Maintenance Dredging solicitation in Fall 2023 for the 2024-2026 contract.

Arctic Port Reception Facility – Solid Waste Disposal (Incinerator):

New funding opportunities are being evaluated for this project.

Harbor:

Inner Harbor CAP 107 Study (Deepen/Widen the Inner Basin):

The City continues to make monthly inquiries on the status of this project, with District reporting they are awaiting direction from Corps HQ on how to proceed.

Port Industrial Pad:

West Nome Tank Farm (WNTF) - Property Conveyance:

Delays in the USAF's process of conveying the WNTF property to the City continue. Therefore, this issue has, once again, been brought to the attention of the Alaska Congressional Delegation, who share this City's disappointment and frustration in the amount of time that has elapsed since NDAA 2015 passed into law, authorizing conveyance of the property to the City. We hope to see movement in the coming weeks, based on CODEL efforts.

Thornbush Laydown Site Development (TBS):

Dredge spoils from the port expansion and inner harbor project have been given clearance by two ADEC programs (Solid Waste and Contaminated Sites), to be disposed of in the undeveloped 9-acre portion of this property. The spoils will require dewatering before serving as a hardened base layer to the specified fill and surfacing to complete development of the 18-acre parcel.

Dredge spoils currently on site, and excavated from previous Snake River development, are scheduled to be spread by Public Works in June. This will form a base layer in a portion of the adjacent unfilled area on the TBS pad. Material received from the state's ex work on Bering Street last year, will be utilized as needed for surfacing new areas, as well as address depressions in the previously built pad due to subsidence.

Port Rd. Improvements (ADOT Project cost-shared with City/Port):

This state STIP project has been postponed to 2026/27 to avoid road construction conflicting with the heavier truck traffic during the port expansion. There is ongoing discussion regarding maintenance work in 2023.

Italics reflects no change in project information from previous report.

Additional details available upon request.

PORT OF NOME

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

1. SCOPE OF WORK

In 2016, the City of Nome commissioned a Strategic Development Plan for the Port & Harbor. That plan discussed existing facilities, planned maintenance projects and recommendations for improvements based on current level of use, conditions and assessments of anticipated needs. This solicitation will source professional consultants to identify future development needs, economic feasibility, funding alternatives, conceptual plans, cost estimating, and other related professional services to update the current Port of Nome Strategic Development Plan.

Areas of focus and detail will include but are not limited to:

- Replacement of aging floats in the Small Boat Harbor.
- Completion of moorage and haul out facility in the Snake River.
- Determine capacity for onboard vessel repairs and mid-size ship haul out
- Improved parking and locations for marine service businesses at Small Boat Harbor.
- Enhanced cruise ship reception areas, connectivity and access to downtown area.
- Expansion of facility surveillance system
- Developing small boat facilities east/west of inner harbor entrance
- Shoreside facilities
- Small Boat Harbor power pedestals and waste oil/fueling station
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Knowing there are often-times competing interests between industry, and tourism or between long-time residents, newcomers, and tourists, there is need to balance all interests for the betterment and long-term viability of the community.

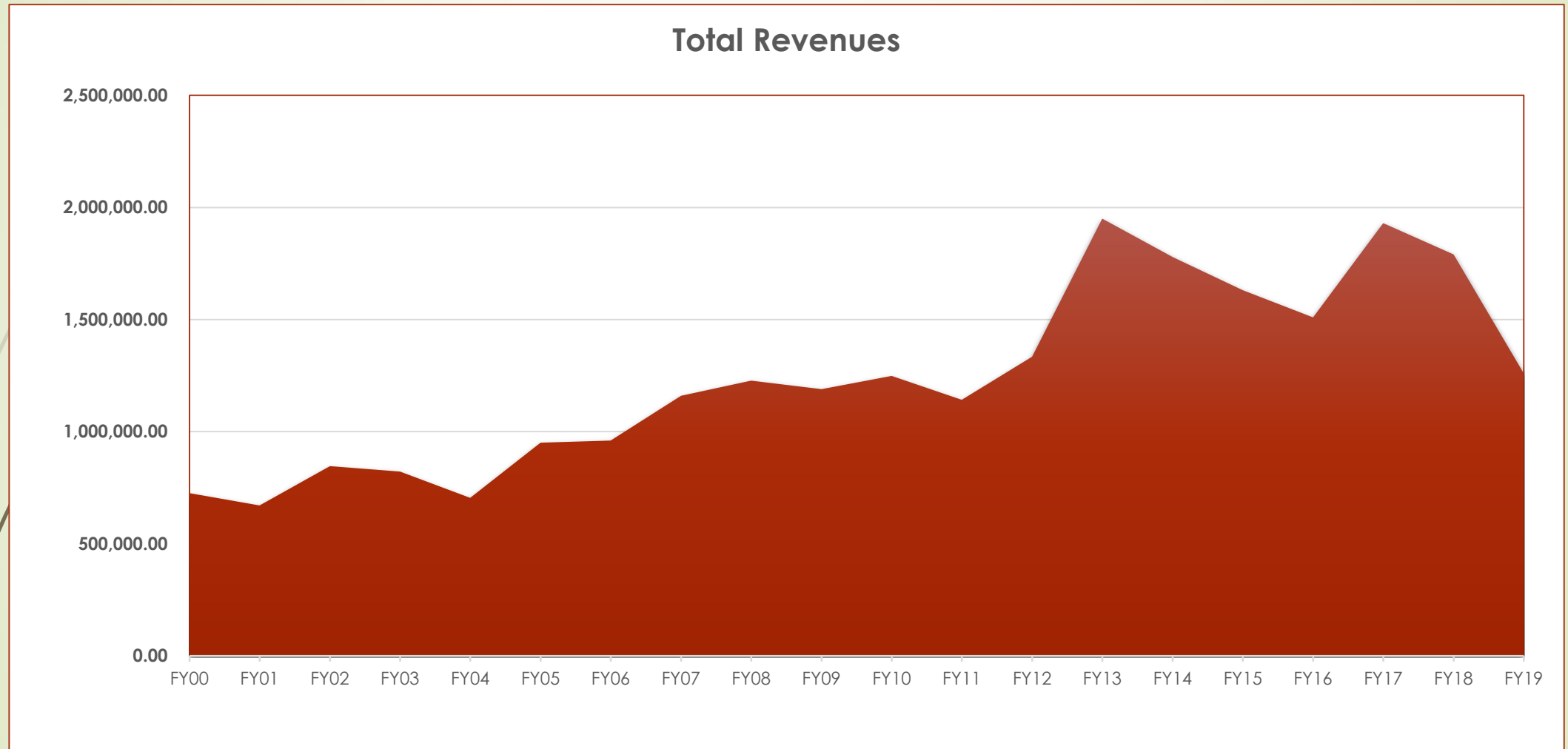
The City seeks to identify opportunities to improve commercial fisheries and other water-dependent use so industries that currently exist within the Nome Port & Harbor may continue and expand into the future.

Revenues

Revenue Category	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
Dockage	53,807.00	62,765.50	68,155.00	87,094	75,296	68,249	98,213	106,647	95,942	126,503	162,469	174,162	98,768
Dock permits	19,008.85	21,342.90	20,863.00	46,841	47,747	66,957	117,485	118,167	133,967	119,163	109,447	125,371	75,036
Fuel Whfg	396,912.42	448,747.78	404,531.88	302,304	244,876	375,836	302,944	443,231	319,647	259,306	321,187	364,891	249,080
Cargo Whfg	263,030.87	296,566.53	263,771.09	277,346	280,540	353,312	407,008	374,843	277,249	252,243	232,950	288,245	193,547
Gravel Whfg	25,301.51	31,962.00	125,035.48	231,658	123,020	93,104	60,390	68,341	70,067	75,956	241,752	111,772	63,213
Storage Rental	52,840.37	74,547.81	82,220.51	92,236	135,378	139,270	173,522	246,946	227,463	227,990	246,984	282,836	282,148
Land leases	173,071.39	152,114.73	158,055.40	140,047	153,398	152,046	210,761	250,038	244,472	237,725	238,203	204,620	214,272
Utility Sales	12,668.00	14,165.05	17,197.50	25,721	19,912	15,282	27,840	26,471	16,533	20,288	49,890	31,833	16,358
Misc revenue	6,500.00	16,595.00	27,110.00	25,795	36,877	36,570	511,540	84,944	81,038	144,011	267,872	79,405	48,217
Interest earnings	156,714.38	109,041.71	22,234.51	7,615	7,542	5,873	11,217	7,609	7,311	17,126	21,152	30,474	19,436
STAK PERS reimbursement				11,709	17,268	27,835	28,920	52,126	157,214	28,730	38,133	96,944	0
Total revenues	1,159,854.79	1,227,849.01	1,189,174.37	1,248,365	1,141,853	1,334,332	1,949,839	1,779,364	1,630,903	1,509,042	1,930,039	1,790,553	1,260,073

Note: FY19 is preliminary through 3/31/19

Total Revenues - Historical



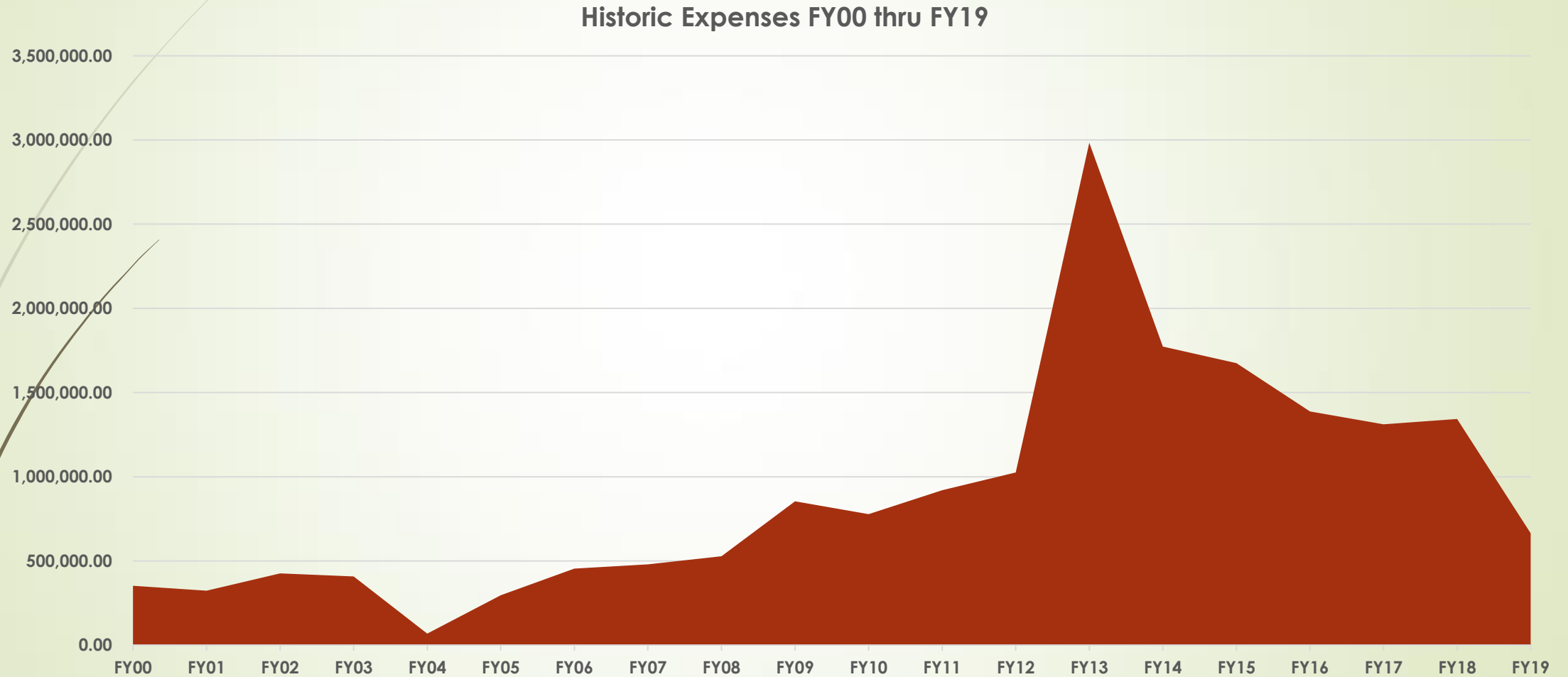
Note: FY19 is preliminary through 3/31/19

Expenses

Expense Category	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
Labor and benefits	279,443	355,543	416,653	479,776	610,871	697,789	601,089	676,356	663,942	284,013
Utilities	21,451	31,926	24,026	23,750	29,307	33,452	38,349	50,823	50,679	25,470
Supplies	38,501	23,757	52,305	69,847	42,074	42,672	36,582	42,922	31,441	23,267
Insurance	19,100	28,626	28,526	28,624	42,473	43,143	46,329	54,000	53,069	52,951
Professional services	74,767	116,115	144,596	511,551	572,392	327,732	269,423	248,013	263,786	117,612
Repairs and Maintenance	45,260	37,750	22,350	1,574,678	209,283	197,553	161,718	41,989	38,335	24,241
Equipment rental	350	335	585	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bad debt expense	(3,787)	(1,905)	(3,127)	90,197	37,595	88,973	3,077	(28,013)	8,745	8,601
Principal/Interest expense	283,812	284,184	151,636	147,612	159,998	164,064	159,526	157,798	149,883	102,280
Other/Misc expense	3,406	23,241	157,629	24,165	34,493	42,201	37,737	34,654	27,482	26,055
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)	15,479	20,323	30,244	33,268	34,606	37,032	33,947	32,834	55,625	0
Subtotal	777,782	919,894	1,025,422	2,983,467	1,773,091	1,674,610	1,387,776	1,311,376	1,342,988	664,490

Note: FY19 is preliminary through 3/31/19

Historic Expenses



Note: FY19 is preliminary through 3/31/19

Recommendations for Consideration

➤ 1. Add capital replacement fee

- The City currently takes depreciation on its infrastructure investment. However, once the infrastructure is fully depreciated, the City would need to borrow funds or receive grants to be in a position to replace these items.
- Consider current and future capital improvement needs. Not all infrastructure will require replacing so an itemized list should be developed with goals toward fund balances.
- These funds would be set aside for the specific purpose of infrastructure replacement.
- Seward charges:

Capital renewal and replacement fee		
Vessels up to 21-ft LOA	5.00	per month
Vessels 22-ft to 44-ft	10.00	per month
Vessels 45-ft to 79-ft	15.00	per month
Vessels 80-ft or greater	20.00	per month

Recommendations (Continued)

➤ 2. **Add Cruiseship passenger fee**

- As global climate change continues to make the Arctic more accessible, the City of Nome can expect to have more passengers visiting the City for brief periods of time. Initiating this fee would allow the City to recoup expenses associated with police, fire, transportation, and other services provided. Doing so now will allow Cruiseship operators to anticipate this charge.
- Seward, Cordova, and Valdez charge \$3.50, \$2.00, and \$1.00 per passenger respectively.

Recommendations (Continued)

- ▶ **3. Change security, line handling, and other harbor staff assist rates to a minimum and a cost-plus structure for more complicated operations**
 - ▶ A minimum charge assures ease of billing for most operations. Keep line handling for vessels under 300' at \$700 per visit.
 - ▶ For vessels in the Over 300' category, a cost-plus structure allows the City to capture changes in personnel and equipment costs in future years without having to repeatedly revisit the tariff.
 - ▶ If time and day of the call puts the Port into overtime or holiday pay status, the rate structure should reflect actual costs plus a premium.

Recommendations (Continued)

▶ 4. Consider increasing upland storage rates.

▶ This will be particularly important as the Port expands operations and uplands become more scarce and in demand for other activity.

▶ Homer charges:

Upland storage fishing gear unsecured	0.12sq ft/per month
Upland storage non-fishing gear unsecured	0.17sq ft/per month
Upland storage secured	0.22sq ft/per month

▶ Seward charges \$0.26 per square foot per month

▶ Valdez charges \$0.30 per square foot per month

Recommendations (Continued)

- ▶ **5. Allow dockage, wharfage, and storage rates to automatically increase based on Anchorage CPI**

- ▶ Regular small increases are going to be much more palatable to the Port's customers and will allow the City to recoup the ever-increasing operations at the Port. Absent Nome Census Area specific information, the Anchorage Consumer Price Index is generally accepted as representing price increases statewide.

- ▶ Seward uses the following language in its tariff:

Automatic Annual Adjustment in Moorage Rates. All moorage rates shall be adjusted annually so as to be effective as of January 1st, to reflect the five previous published years' average increase in the Consumer Price Index, All Items, 1982-84=100 for all Urban Consumers, Anchorage, Alaska ("CPI") as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bills sent out prior to January 1st will reflect the upcoming January 1st adjusted rates. (For example, 2017 rates reflect an increase based on the average CPI for 2010-2014).