

Presented By:
Port Director
Action Taken:
Yes 4
No 0
Abstain 0

CITY OF NOME, ALASKA

RESOLUTION NO. R-24-02-06

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF NOME TO APPLY FOR AND PARTICIPATE IN THE USDOT RAISE DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE FUNDING OF THE SNAKE RIVER MOORAGE FACILITY PROJECT

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) administers the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability & Equity (RAISE) Grant Program, which supports surface transportation projects necessary to facilitate direct intermodal, transfer or access into or out of a facility that will improve commodity movement throughout a region or freight network; and

WHEREAS, the City of Nome owns the Port & Harbor, which serves as the regional maritime hub facility for over fifty (50) western Alaska communities, transshipping fuel, cargo and gravel throughout the region during the ice-free season, serving as the critical transportation network link that enables equipment, fuel, household goods, and basic life-sustaining necessities to be delivered to the regional rural network; and

WHEREAS, Nome's Inner Harbor has experienced an escalation in vessel congestion in the last ten (10) years, which has created numerous vessel incidents and significant delays in the transshipment of goods and services across the region and caused vessel overcrowding that has impacted subsistence activities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Nome identified the Snake River Moorage Facility as a priority projects in the Port of Nome Strategic Development Plan in an effort to increase shipping efficiencies deemed critical in the limited ice-free maritime window; and

WHEREAS, barge operators and the fishing industry have routinely demonstrated written project support in an effort to reduce risks of conflicts with smaller vessels that result in damage and potential crew injury, as well as exponentially increase shipping inefficiencies that cause delays in the delivery of equipment, materials and supplies that are on tight construction deadlines in the short ice-free season; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Nome Common Council supports application to the USDOT RAISE Grant Program with a match of up to twenty (20%) for development of the Snake River Moorage Facility Project, and agrees, subject to selection by USDOT, to enter into a grant agreement with USDOT for a RAISE Discretionary Grant.

APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 26th day of February, 2024.


JOHN K. HANDELND, Mayor

ATTEST:


JEREMY JACOBSON, Deputy Clerk

Memo

TO: Mayor John Handeland & Nome Common Council
FROM: Jim West, Chairman – Nome Port Commission *JW2*
THRU: Glenn Steckman - City Manager
DATE: 02/21/2024
RE: 2024 USDOT RAISE Grant Program – Snake River Moorage Design & Construction

The following motion was passed by the Nome Port Commission at their Regular Meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024.

1. Moved by C. McLarty and seconded by C. Sheffield, that the following motion be approved:
 - **MOTION:** Recommend the Nome Common Council authorize making application to the 2024 USDOT RAISE Grant Program for funds to complete design and construction of the Snake River Moorage Facility.

AT THE ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Sheffield, McLarty, Smithhisler, West, McCann, Lean
Nays:
Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

Discussion on this motion is reflected in the minutes of the February 15, 2024 Regular Meeting.

**PORT OF NOME
SNAKE RIVER MOORAGE FACILITY
GRANT FUNDING STRATEGY**

AGENCY	U.S. Department of Transportation
PROGRAM	RAISE Grants (Rebuilding American Infrastructure w/Sustainability & Equity)
DESCRIPTION	Funding Surface Transportation Projects having Significant Local/Regional Impact
FUNDING	\$1.5B Total – 50% to Rural Projects (Project Awards of \$1M Min/\$25M Max)
ELIGIBILITY	State, local & tribal governments (port infrastructure investment)
FED SHARE	Min 80% (Secretary may elect go fund up to 100% for rural projects)
DEADLINE	February 28, 2024 – 11:59 PM (Eastern)
PROJECT	PORT OF NOME – SNAKE RIVER MOORAGE FACILITY
APPLICANT	CITY OF NOME (up to 20% cost-share or \$3.3M)
\$\$ REQUEST	\$13.2M (Rural Projects can be funded up to 100% which is \$16.5M)

Primary Selection Criteria:

Safety
Environmental Sustainability
Quality of Life
Mobility and Community Connectivity

Secondary Selection Criteria:

Economic Competitiveness
State of Good Repair
Partnerships and Collaboration
Innovation

Program Requirements:

Climate Change and Environmental Justice Impact Consideration
Racial Equity and Barriers to Opportunity

PROJECT PURPOSE:

As regional and international vessel traffic in the Bering Strait and Arctic Regions continues to increase, congestion in the Inner Harbor drives elevated safety concern for users and the Port, requiring constant coordination to ensure vessel and crew safety, minimize shipping delays and address vessel conflicts timely. Extensive efforts are undertaken to ensure a wide variety of fleet types ranging from 200-foot cargo barges to 40-foot fiberglass sailboats and 20-foot subsistence skiffs; all competing for operational space in the congestion.

As the only maritime coastal shipping hub in Western Alaska, delays in and out of the facility, caused by minimally available dock access frequently result in significant shipping delays. These delays impact delivery of fuel, equipment, building materials, household goods and basic life-sustaining necessities that must be delivered to the regional rural network during the ice-free shipping season. As Nome continues to struggle with vessel congestion and overcrowding, the region’s critical transportation network link experiences reduced capacity and ability to serve the region. This escalates costs and risks for the population in Nome and across the region.

As the only protected harbor of refuge in the Bering Strait and Arctic Regions, it is very common to have a large number of vessels set course for Nome to evade an impending and often brutal Bering Sea storm. It is during

this time that the Port of Nome makes every effort to accommodate as many vessels as physically and safely possible into the protected harbor to keep mariners out of harm's way. However, in order to continue serving this role, a secondary moorage space must be established to meet the increasing demand of the maritime industry relying on Nome's protection and services.

The pressure of this significant operating congestion and overwhelming storm level occupancy can be relieved through the development of the Snake River basin. This location will contain sufficient shore-side infrastructure to support small dredges, subsistence vessels and sailboats with drafts less than 8 feet, and eliminate the need for accessing the Small Boat Harbor. This would allow for increased capacity for larger cargo, gravel and mining vessels to maneuver to/from the sheet pile docks and loading ramps, thereby significantly reducing the risks vessel or dock damage, crew injury, or shipping delays resulting from limited dock access and maneuverability.

PROJECT BUDGET:

Total ROM Estimated Snake River Moorage	\$16,500,000
Federal Funding Requested	13,200,000
City Contribution (Cash Match)	2,550,000
Potential Other Contribution	750,000
Total Funds	\$16,500,000

REQUEST:

Support is requested from the Nome Common Council for the Port to submit an application to the USDOT RAISE grant program to fund a minimum of 80%* of costs to complete the Snake River Moorage Facility to expand critically needed moorage space within the inner harbor.

*Secretary can choose to fund up to 100% for rural project costs.