

**Presented By:**  
Asst. City Manager

**Action Taken:**  
Yes ✓  
No \_\_\_\_\_  
Abstain \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY OF NOME, ALASKA**

**RESOLUTION NO. R-25-01-08**

**A RESOLUTION ENDORSING PROJECTS FOR THE CITY OF NOME'S 2025  
STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

**WHEREAS**, the following prioritized projects are considered worthy of advocacy to State of Alaska, the Alaska State Legislature, the United States Government and the United States Congress:

Priority 1) Port of Nome: United States Arctic Deep Draft Port Construction Funds (\$200 million).

Priority 2) 18-unit housing complex for teachers and public safety officers in Nome (\$14 million).

Priority 3) Water and Wastewater Improvements (\$76 million).

Priority 4) Murkowski Heavy Equipment Appropriations Request: Landfill compactor (\$1 million).

Priority 5) Alaska Court System staffing investments to address the backlog of cases in the second judicial district.

Priority 6) Staffing support for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault victim advocacy services at the Nome Police Department.

Priority 7) Covered Multi-Use Recreational Structure (\$1.4 million)

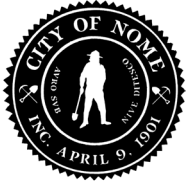
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Nome City Council endorses the aforementioned items for inclusion in the City of Nome 2025 State and Federal Legislative Priorities Package.

**APPROVED and SIGNED** this 27<sup>th</sup> day of January 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**JOHN HANDELAND**  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**DAN GRIMMER**  
City Clerk



## **Port of Nome: United States Arctic Deep-Draft Port Construction Request: \$200 million**

---

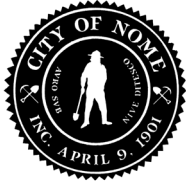
The City of Nome is requesting **\$200 million** in National defense or transportation funds to construct the nation's first Arctic Deep Draft Port. The United States is an Arctic Nation. Investment in the Port of Nome is investment in the future of global commerce, national security and access to Alaska's natural resources. The Port of Nome is of national significance as the nation's first deep-draft port in the Arctic.

The 2024 construction solicitation was cancelled due to bids exceeding statutory cost limitations, as well as insufficient funds on hand. Inflationary market conditions for critical materials and labor contribute to high costs of construction. *Identifying regulations and policies that increase the costs of construction should be considered to help move this project forward.* A 2<sup>nd</sup> solicitation for construction is scheduled for release in late-Feb 2025, with a potential award in Sep 2025, and construction targeted for 2026-2029. Construction costs across the nation have increased exponentially in recent years, while costs for construction in the Arctic have exploded.

In 2022, the Alaska Congressional Delegation facilitated federal funding through the Army Corps Civil Works Program, and the Alaska Legislature reciprocated through the City with a grant for local cost-share funds. These funding allocations represents huge milestones. **The City of Nome would like to express our gratitude for the exceptional efforts of the Alaska Congressional Delegation and the Alaska State Legislature.** Since 2011, the Alaska Congressional Delegation, the State of Alaska Legislature (State), the City of Nome (City), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), have extensively collaborated to achieve progress toward developing the Nation's first Arctic Deep Draft Port.

The forward momentum of the Alaska Congressional Delegation, the State of Alaska and the City of Nome is a strong foundation to face the shifting geopolitical security issues on the northwest flank of NATO, which remains exposed when compared to the rest of the U.S. coastline. Now is a critical time to put in place the federal funding commitment necessary to construct the first U.S. Arctic Deep Draft Port, at Nome, which is vital to supporting the U.S. national security fleet to serve and protect our nation's waters, and support a consistent regional presence of Oil Spill Response and Search and Rescue assets. These resources are an essential part of maritime support that must be in closer proximity to the Arctic.

This national infrastructure project will serve as the resupply support facility in the Arctic, expanding on the support of commercial shipping, fishing and tourism industries, driving economic development across the region with sustainable jobs, enhanced domain awareness and preparedness, and do so without harming the natural environment through maritime presence and enforcement. This increased presence at a deep-water port in Nome will effectively increase food security by maintaining a balance between commercial industries and protecting Alaska Native marine mammal hunters utilizing the Port of Nome.



## **New Teacher and Public Safety Housing Request: \$8 million**

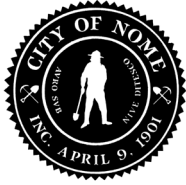
---

The City of Nome is facing a housing crisis, with a shortage of housing for its general population. The short supply and high costs of construction in rural and remote Alaska communities, such as Nome, makes housing for public sector employees unaffordable, if not unavailable. The lack of professional housing is leading to critical shortages of teachers and police officers. The Nome School District (NSD) and the City of Nome are partnering to construct an 18-unit housing complex for teachers and public safety officers. The housing complex will feature both two- and three-bedroom units, and will be located on City property. One American Disability Act compliant unit will be available on each floor. The 18 plex will be within walking distance of the Nome Elementary School and the Nome Public Safety Building.

Inflation has increased the estimated costs from \$7 million to \$14.9 million. The apartments for rent would be below market rate but would also involve a maintenance fund. The project is envisioned to use grant funds (\$8 million) and a (\$6 million) revenue bond. Rental revenue will partially cover the bond payments each month. The Denali Commission has provided a \$500,000 design grant and the City of Nome has provided \$400,000 in land for a total project costs of \$14.9 million. The housing development is at a 95% design level. The City of Nome requests \$8 million for this project.

Potential employees state the lack of interest to work in Nome is because of the lack of good quality housing for professionals. Both the NSD and the NPD are experiencing similar challenges in attracting experienced personnel to serve as educators and police officers in our off-road community.





## Water and Wastewater Improvements Request: City of Nome Eligibility

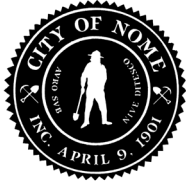
Nome has invested in significant upgrades and improvements over the years to keep its water-sewer systems functional, however the City of Nome and Nome Joint Utility System is not able to meet current water and sewer replacement needs, nor meet the growth needs of the community. Total replacement needs to keep the system functioning total \$75 million, yet Nome remains ineligible for programs available to Alaska Native communities. Eighty-two percent of Nome's population is Alaska Native.

Nome (and a handful of other First-Class cities with populations over 1,000) are not eligible for Village Safe Water funds, and the State discontinued the DEC Municipal Matching Grant Program, which was a vital program for water-sewer maintenance/development. **The City of Nome requests amending Alaska Statute, Title 46, Chapter 7 to allow for remote first-class cities to be eligible for participation in the State of Alaska Village Safe Water program.**

Water and wastewater mains that are failing in Nome due to stress induced cracking caused by material fatigue and differential settlement as pockets of ice-rich permafrost under the pipes melt. Projects under this program will reduce the loss of drinking water due to leaks (estimated at 50% of produced water) and reduce risks to its quality as Nome's first generation (now leaking) arctic-pipe projects that installed the water and sewer mains alongside each other in the same trench (ADEC now requires 10' of separation). There is one expansion project on the list – to extend water main to service the Lester Bench area, whose arsenic / iron laden groundwater is unsuitable for human consumption.

Community rate payers cannot afford loan repayments from the Alaska's State Revolving Fund guidelines; without a significant subsidy. This program is scalable by its project components:

Project Name	Est. Cost
Seppala Avenue Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 3,500,000
East King Place Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 13,000,000
Belmont Point Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 12,000,000
West King Place Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 9,000,000
West Front Street Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 6,000,000
Steadman & 6th Avenue Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 10,000,000
West E Street Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 10,500,000
Carsten's Way Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 2,000,000
West Front Street Water and Sewer Improvements	\$ 6,000,000
Lester Bench Water Extension	\$ 4,000,000
TOTAL	\$ 76,000,000



## Water and Wastewater Improvements Request: City of Nome Eligibility

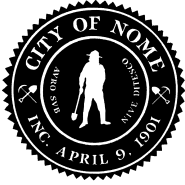
Nome has invested in significant upgrades and improvements over the years to keep its water-sewer systems functional, however the City of Nome and Nome Joint Utility System is not able to meet current water and sewer replacement needs, nor meet the growth needs of the community. Total replacement needs to keep the system functioning total \$75 million, yet Nome remains ineligible for programs available to Alaska Native communities. Eighty-two percent of Nome's population is Alaska Native.

Nome (and a handful of other First-Class cities with populations over 1,000) are not eligible for Village Safe Water funds, and the State discontinued the DEC Municipal Matching Grant Program, which was a vital program for water-sewer maintenance/development. **The City of Nome requests amending the EPA appropriations language for the Rural and Alaska Native Villages drinking water and waste water program to allow for our rural first-class cities to be eligible for participation in the State of Alaska Village Safe Water program.**

Water and wastewater mains that are failing in Nome due to stress induced cracking caused by material fatigue and differential settlement as pockets of ice-rich permafrost under the pipes melt. Projects under this program will reduce the loss of drinking water due to leaks (estimated at 50% of produced water) and reduce risks to its quality as Nome's first generation (now leaking) arctic-pipe projects that installed the water and sewer mains alongside each other in the same trench (ADEC now requires 10' of separation). There is one expansion project on the list – to extend water main to service the Lester Bench area, whose arsenic / iron laden groundwater is unsuitable for human consumption.

Community rate payers cannot afford loan repayments from the Alaska's State Revolving Fund guidelines; without a significant subsidy. This program is scalable by its project components:

Project Name	Est. Cost
Seppala Avenue Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 3,500,000
East King Place Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 13,000,000
Belmont Point Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 12,000,000
West King Place Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 9,000,000
West Front Street Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 6,000,000
Steadman & 6th Avenue Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 10,000,000
West E Street Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 10,500,000
Carsten's Way Water and Sewer Replacement	\$ 2,000,000
West Front Street Water and Sewer Improvements	\$ 6,000,000
Lester Bench Water Extension	\$ 4,000,000
TOTAL	\$ 76,000,000



## Heavy Equipment Request: Landfill Compactor Request: \$1 million

---

The City of Nome does not have adequate equipment for the compacting of waste at the landfill. The City of Nome Public Works department manages the Nome landfill and monofill, also supporting a robust recycling program in partnership with Kawerak Inc. The City of Nome requests a landfill compactor to maximize use of landfill space. This essential equipment will maximize the life span of Nome's landfill, as well as prepare Nome for its anticipated growth. A landfill compactor will also boost the financial performance of the landfill, as compacted trash will allow the landfill space to be used for a longer period of time. Current equipment is insufficient and inadequate as trash ends up in the internal engine and wheel shaft areas; and decreases optimal performance of current equipment.

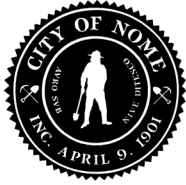
**ESTIMATED COST: \$1 million**



Photo Credit: Waste Advantage Magazine<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [The Impact of Landfill Compactor Machines on the Waste Management Industry - Waste Advantage Magazine](#)

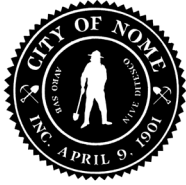


## **Alaska Court System Staffing Request: \$1.5 million**

---

The City of Nome respectfully requests the State of Alaska to double the staff of the Alaska Court System in Nome to include additional judges, district attorneys, public defenders and support staff to address the back log of court cases in Nome and the second judicial district. The City of Nome appreciates and supports Governor Dunleavy's study increases since FY2024 for the second judicial district, Department of Law's Criminal Division, from \$2.6 million for the Criminal Division in 2024 to \$3.8 million proposed for FY2026. The current budget supports 15 authorized positions between Nome, Kotzebue, Utqiagvik, and Fairbanks, with 7 designated in Nome.

The shutdown of the court system since the Covid-19 pandemic has created a statewide bag log of cases. In January 2024, the Alaska Court System had 6,440 pending felony cases, and 9,312 pending misdemeanors. This backlog in cases impacts victims, defendants, witnesses and contributes to a perception there is no justice, with further impacts to local police departments, who are responding to incidents, and investigating evidence for prosecutors. The lack of prosecution of crimes, leaves the public to in some cases blame the local police for a lack of justice.



## **Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Staffing Support Request: \$340,000/year or \$1.7 million/5 years**

---

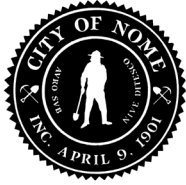
Residents of Nome, and those that receive justice services in Nome experience high rates of domestic violence and sexual assault (“DV/SA”). The DV/SA Advocate program has been in existence for the last three years at the Nome Police Department. The NPD has witnessed a reduction of DV/SA rates, due to the ability to work with victims through an advocate and thoroughly examine and investigate every case. The City of Nome use to average 120-150 sexual assaults per year. For 2024 there were 29 sexual assaults.

The City of Nome would like to continue providing services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, with two DV/SA Advocates at the Nome Police Department. DV/SA Advocates help navigate the complex laws, statutes, ordinances, regulations and policies. Helping victims through the criminal, court, and prosecutor processes is an essential service for those whose sense of personal safety has been violated. The DV/SA coordinates with investigating officers to track status updates on behalf of the victim.

DV/SA Advocates at the City of Nome Police Department review facts for each case, chronologically document all activities, generate and maintain a data log of activities, update records, victim files and in some cases drive the victim to court dates, and provide services in support and with trust. The DV/SA advocate also helps the victim with referral resources including DV/SA protective orders, Victims Crime Compensation Board, Office of Victims Rights OVR, Bering Sea Women’s Shelter, Behavior Health Services, and Alaska Legal Services. DV/SA advocates also ensure the rights of victims are upheld in court cases, and during arrest and release dates of offenders; as well as providing follow up services to ensure victims are receiving the emotional and justice support.

The City of Nome requests Alaska Department of Public Safety or United States Department of Justice funding for this important service to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.





## **Covered Multi-Use Recreational Structure**

### **Request: \$1.4 million**

---

The City of Nome requests \$1.4 million to construct a covered multi-use recreation and sports facility to serve residents, youth and elders. The facility is designed to be non-heated to reduce energy and construction expenses. A covered recreation and sports facility will protect citizens from harsh winds, rain or snow that come with living in the sub-Arctic. This facility will support community health and wellness by promoting physical activity and team sports. This space will serve as an ice skating/hockey rink (October through April); and basketball/soccer space during the summer months. This facility will be constructed next to the Nome Recreation Center to take advantage of bathroom and locker room amenities provided to the public.

As the hub city for surrounding villages, regional residents frequently travel to Nome for a variety of sporting events, conferences and other purposes. The City envisions local and regional residents utilizing the ice rink and the community could benefit economically from hosted tournaments, camps and other programs due to its uniqueness (this would be the only covered ice surface within 500 miles).

In addition, during summer months a covered multi-use facility would allow for the expansion of our award-winning Summercise Program - a program offered jointly with Norton Sound Health Corporation that promotes exercise with a variety of physical and sports offerings and teaches regional youths healthy eating and lifestyle choices. Since its inception 24 years ago Summercise has expanded to the point where it can no longer grow or accommodate the demand for indoor recreational space that would shelter participants during the rainy parts of our summers.

