Presented by: The Manager
Presented: 12/16/2024
Drafted by: Law Department

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA

Serial No. 3081

A Resolution of the City and Borough of Juneau Supporting Full Funding ($5,740,408) for the State of Alaska Harbor Facility Grant Program in the Fiscal Year 2026 State Capital Budget.

WHEREAS, the majority of the public boat harbors in Alaska were constructed by the State in the early years of Statehood in the 1960s and 1970s; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's harbor facilities represent critical transportation links, are vital public infrastructure, and are essential hubs for waterfront commerce that supports beneficial economic activity in Alaskan coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, the harbor facilities in Alaskan coastal communities are ports of refuge for ocean-going vessels, and serve as the gateway for supplies, trade in goods and services, and connections to national and global markets for Alaskan exports and imports; and

WHEREAS, over the course of the past 30 years, the State of Alaska has transferred ownership of formerly State-owned harbors to local governments, allowing local control, but also significantly increasing the operational and maintenance costs that must be borne by local governments; and

WHEREAS, the majority of former State harbor facilities transferred to municipalities were at the time of transfer at or near the end of their serviceable lives; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's municipalities have strived to allocate the resources necessary to maintain and, when possible, improve harbor facilities transferred to them by the State of Alaska, but have faced increasing challenges in managing the significant financial burdens attendant on the harbor facilities formerly owned and maintained by the State; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and the Alaska Legislature recognized the magnitude of the problem with the fiscal burden placed on local governments by the transfer of State harbor facilities to local governments, and created the Harbor Facility Grant Program in 2006 with the passage of Senate Bill 291; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities utilizes a beneficial administrative process to review, score, and rank applicants to the Municipal Harbor Facility Grant Program, since state funds may be limited; and

WHEREAS, for each harbor facility grant application, these municipalities have committed to invest 100% of the design and permitting costs and 50% of the construction cost; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of Unalaska, Sitka, and Juneau have committed to contribute half of their project cost in local match funding for FY2026 towards harbor projects of significant importance locally as required in the Harbor Facility Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, completion of these harbor facility projects is dependent on the 50% match from the State of Alaska's Municipal Harbor Facility Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, during the last 15 years the Municipal Harbor Facility Grant Program has only been fully funded twice; and

WHEREAS, a survey done by the Alaska Municipal League of Alaska's ports and harbors found that from the respondents, the backlog of projects necessary to repair and replace former State-owned harbors has increased to at least $500,000,000; and

WHEREAS, given that Alaska is a maritime state and that our harbors are foundational to both our way of life and the economy of this great State, it is in the public's best interest to maintain this critical infrastructure by using State, Local, and Federal funds to recapitalize the crucial harbor moorage infrastructure statewide.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA:

Section 1. The Governor of Alaska and the Alaska Legislature are respectfully urged to fund the State of Alaska Harbor Facility Grant Program in the Fiscal Year 2026 State Capital Budget in the amount of $5,740,408 to enhance and elevate the safety, well-being, and economic prosperity of Alaskan coastal communities.

Section 2. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately after its adoption.

Adopted this 16th day of December, 2024.

Beth Weldon, Mayor

Attest:

Beth McEwen, Municipal Clerk