

AP/AL: Appropriation **Project Type:** Research / Studies / Planning
Category: To be determined **Recipient:** Alaska Municipal League
Location: Statewide **House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)
Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1-40) **Contact:** Micaela Fowler
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2021 - 06/30/2026 **Contact Phone:** (907)465-2506

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

Communities across Alaska have planned infrastructure projects that could provide substantial benefits to communities and the economy but are held back by gaps in funding. With the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in November 2021, Alaska has the chance to compete for significant funds to address local infrastructure needs. Funds in the infrastructure bill offer more than \$18 billion in grant-funding opportunities in federal fiscal year 2022 alone. This increase has heightened competition for funding. Further, new and revised grant criteria have been developed, and many grant programs require submission at similar times of the year, straining the limited resources of communities.

Funding:	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	Total
1004 Gen Fund	\$1,500,000						\$1,500,000
Total:	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,500,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

SCS2 increased funding

Project Description/Justification:

Grant Informational Support

In partnership with many others, AML hosts a clearinghouse of information at <https://akfederalfunding.org/>. This Alaska-focused website provides resources tailored for local and Tribal governments, nonprofits, utilities, and other potential beneficiaries. The website features:

- The latest Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) identified on Grants.gov
- Grant writing hotline information and pool from which applicants can choose from
- Upcoming webinars and calls that provide additional information about grants
- Notice of awards and press releases announcing funding
- ARPA and BIL tracking spreadsheets that identify funds coming by formula to Alaska and others that will be competitive nationally
- Resources for CARES Act and ARPA compliance and reporting, and Infrastructure project development

AML and partners host regular calls that review compliance and reporting needs and grant opportunities. More than 300 Alaskans have signed up to receive e-newsletters with information about ARPA and BIL opportunities, and communications go out at least every other week.

Onboarding for Assistance

- Contact AML at membersupport@akml.org or 907-586-1325 to indicate interest
- AML staff will document name, affiliation, contact information, and a short statement of need
- AML staff will share that information with our contracted hotline operator, who is a grant writing professional, and/or direct members to advanced technical assistance for support as appropriate

Grant Hotline – General Grant Preparation Assistance

The grant writing hotline is an opportunity for local and Tribal governments to talk through with an experienced grant writer their interest, eligibility, and process for upcoming federal grant opportunities. If there is general interest in grant writing, with a need but no identified grant, officials should review www.akfederalfunding.org for potential opportunities or join regular calls that review new or active Notice of Funding Opportunities. The hotline operators will:

- Discuss needs of the community, and history of what has been accomplished to meet the need
- Offer options for grant opportunities that might be a ‘good fit’ or other resources to pursue
- Discuss budgets, audits, and other requirements commonly needed with grant applications
- Share the 80/20 principle for writing a grant application, that about 80% of the time spent on a successful grant is used prior to the NOFO release on the following activities:
 - Create a schedule, gather resources and identify your ‘team’
 - Conduct research data for demographics
 - Coordinate signatures for forms, job descriptions, resumes, letters of support, etc.
 - Conduct meetings with leadership to develop the vision and the workplan
 - Gain approvals, prepare resolutions, and work to complete other required documents such as engineering plans, environmental documents, and economic analyses
- Explain requirements of registration in SAM.gov and ensure they are active
- Registration in Grants.gov and ensure they are active
- Look up grants awarded to caller, including USASpending.gov, and help caller navigate to this site.
- Check on the Alaska State Lien Watch website to see if there’s any outstanding debt

At the conclusion of the call, and in general, if there is sufficient interest and eligibility to consider moving forward, the local or Tribal government may choose an experienced grant writer from the grant writing pool that is available.

Technical Assistance for Infrastructure Projects

AML has partnered with HDR to deepen Alaska’s bench and provide local and Tribal governments access to the capacity they need to effectively pursue competitive grant opportunities specific to infrastructure development. HDR is positioned to help AML members and partners increase their potential success rate and maximize this opportunity. Areas of HDR expertise and previous funding successes include transportation, energy, water, resiliency, and broadband.

HDR will:

- Provide grant strategic planning support that can include informational webinars about specific grant opportunities and briefing papers to support AML’s client municipalities
- Support project prioritization for AML’s clients by reviewing project lists and developing a brief plan for leveraging IJJA grants and matching critical projects to potential funding
- Support developing a grant action plan for a specific project by producing a short technical memo that specifies a target grant program, includes a proposed submission schedule, determines need for a BCA, and provides next steps to build political consensus around each project

- Provide applicants with initial feedback on the following grant application components or guidance on steps to produce them:
 - A detailed description of the project: goals, purpose and need, and how it will be implemented.
 - Clear alignment with most of the grant program’s Merit Criteria.
 - A well-articulated Statement of Work with specific scope, schedule, and budget.
 - A clear, concise, and complete narrative that answers all grant evaluation metrics.
 - A BCA demonstrating positive public economic outcomes.
 - A plan for state, local, or private contributions (not expense-in-kind contributions) that exceed the proposed federal grant, and preferably matches that include private-sector contributions.
 - Expressed, strong, and specific support for the project, among the various projects in the state for which applications might be submitted, by one or more Senators or Congressional Representatives, and from the Governor’s office
 - Support the development of a Benefit Cost Analysis - quantifying public benefits expected from the project and measure them against the project’s full costs, summarizing its cost-effectiveness with a benefit-cost ratio and an estimate of net benefit that would arise from it
- HDR can also offer full preapplication support and grant writing and production services as a separately contracted service if requested