



2025

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

PRESENTED BY MAYOR LAFRANCE
& THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCTION

The Municipality of Anchorage has three top priorities for the 2025 Legislative Session:

1

ADEQUATELY FUND SNOW REMOVAL ON STATE ROADS.

Many major roads in the Municipality are managed by the State. Keeping the system navigable year-round is a critical shared responsibility to support public safety, education, and our economy.

2

ENACT REFORMS TO STRENGTHEN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The behavioral health crisis is a statewide problem that needs state level solutions. The Municipality supports a set of state reforms that will strengthen and stabilize behavioral health crisis services.

3

RAISE THE BSA AND STABILIZE FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Strengthening our education system is our most valuable tool to build a future with a strong economy, developed workforce, and high quality of life.

Mayor LaFrance and the Anchorage Assembly appreciate your support.

Suzanne LaFrance
Mayor

Christopher Constant
Assembly Chair

Meg Zaletel
Assembly Vice Chair

Anna Brawley | District 3, West Anchorage

Karen Bronga | District 5, East Anchorage

Zac Johnson | District 6, South Anchorage

Mark Littlefield | District 2, Chugiak / Eagle River

George Martinez | District 5, East Anchorage

Scott Myers | District 2, Chugiak / Eagle River

Kameron Perez-Verdia | District 3, West Anchorage

Felix Rivera | District 4, Midtown Anchorage

Randy Sulte | District 6, South Anchorage

Daniel Volland | District 1, North Anchorage

CONTACTS

Nolan Klouda | Policy Director, Mayor's Office
907-233-7924 nolan.klouda@anchorageak.gov

Jennifer Veneklasen | Legislative & Policy Analyst, Anchorage Assembly
907-229-7398 jennifer.veneklasen@anchorageak.gov

More information about the Municipality's legislative priorities is available at www.muni.org/akleg.



IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY & SNOW REMOVAL

Transportation infrastructure in Anchorage is a patchwork of state and municipal ownership and responsibility. Our priorities reflect the need to ensure roads are safe and functional year-round for all types of users.

TOP PRIORITY #1

Adequately fund snow removal on state roads and sidewalks within the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' (DOT&PF) Central Region, which includes the Municipality. Reduce turnaround timelines for plow outs by adding equipment and increasing staff capacity.



OTHER BUDGET REQUESTS

Fully fund and staff the DOT&PF Central Region to allow critical transportation priorities to move forward:

- **Road safety:** Support the implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries.
- **Pavement preservation:** Repairing the surfaces of roads and sidewalks.

Improve wildfire safety in partnership with the Anchorage Fire Department by funding fuel breaks along egress routes, establishing/improving connections to accessible areas, and allocating UAS (unmanned aerial systems) funding to build a comprehensive all-risk support program.

STATUTORY CHANGE

Allow the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to grant municipalities a right-of-way, or public use easement, permitting the Municipality to **bond for capital projects in state park units**.

STRENGTHEN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & FIRST RESPONDER CONNECTIONS

Too often, behavioral health crises result in a law enforcement response. We join our partners in behavioral health in asking the State to enact a set of reforms that will strengthen and stabilize behavioral health crisis services. This will reduce the use of limited Police and Fire resources and produce better outcomes.

TOP PRIORITY #2

Support the Crisis Now Key Legislative Priorities, to strengthen behavioral health crisis services and offset the use of costly and less suitable public safety response. These include:

- Enact a 988 telecommunications fee to provide a sustainable revenue stream.
- Require private health insurance to cover crisis behavioral health services.

OTHER STATUTORY CHANGE

Inflation adjust the E911 surcharge, expand the allowable uses of the surcharge, and amend the statute so that the charge applies to voice over IP (VOIP) systems.

SUPPORT EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Providing a strong education system is one of the core functions of government, from kindergarten through university and vocational training. Our economic success depends on a well-trained and prepared workforce that can meet their education and career goals without leaving the state.

TOP PRIORITY #3

Increase the Base Student Allocation for public schools and adjust the statutory formula to account for inflation.

OTHER BUDGET REQUEST

Fund the University of Alaska System to enable the continuation and reinstatement of all academic and vocational-technical programs.



SECURE OUR ENERGY FUTURE

Declining natural gas production in Cook Inlet raises serious challenges for Anchorage and the Railbelt. We stand with communities throughout the state in pursuit of affordable and resilient energy.

BUDGET REQUESTS

Fund Railbelt transmission upgrades in the state capital budget to match federal funds, eliminating bottlenecks and enabling the deployment of new sources of generation.

Expand hydroelectric power generation, starting with the Dixon Diversion Project in the state capital budget to offset natural gas usage with renewable power.

Fund weatherization, energy efficiency, and electrification programs through state entities like Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) and Alaska Energy Authority (AEA).

STATUTORY CHANGE

Incentivize increased natural gas production in Cook Inlet through the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) in the form of equity investment or lending. Ensure that incentives are evaluated accurately for their efficacy in increasing production.

INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY & ADDRESS AFFORDABILITY

Like most of the state, Anchorage needs more housing of all forms. While we pursue a range of solutions locally to cut red tape to get more housing built, especially workforce housing, the state can also play an important role by equipping communities with resources and tools.

BUDGET REQUESTS

Increase resources available to improve housing affordability statewide through AHFC and Alaska Mental Health Trust programs such as the Special Needs Housing Grant.

Increase funding available to build infrastructure that supports new housing development through DOT&PF and AHFC's Supplemental Housing Program.

STATUTORY CHANGES

Develop new mechanisms through AIDEA, AHFC and HAPPP to **provide gap financing, funding and patient capital** for housing development. Allow the AIDEA Loan Participation Program to be used for financing multifamily housing development.

Allow local governments to **designate and tax dilapidated properties** at a higher mill rate.



PROMOTE GOOD GOVERNMENT

Good government means delivering the high-quality services citizens expect, accountably and efficiently. This requires adequate funding for public schools, competitive compensation for public employees, and the resilience of the local government tax base.

BUDGET REQUESTS

Fund the Community Assistance Program: Make a full contribution for 2025 and fully recapitalize the Community Assistance Fund.

Restore defined benefit pensions for public employees: Create and fund a defined benefit option for public employee retirement.

STATUTORY CHANGES

Pass an election reform bill to clean up voter rolls. In 2024, Alaska has 557,899 residents in the Census who are at least 18 years old. As of the primary election, the state had 605,482 registered voters, or more than 108% of its voting-age population. The Municipality asks the State to enact AS Title 15 amendments to clean up voter rolls and utilize address-updating programs to initiate the cancelation of voter registration when a voter registers in another state.

Refrain from expanding mandatory property tax exemptions which would result in a net decrease in the local government tax base.

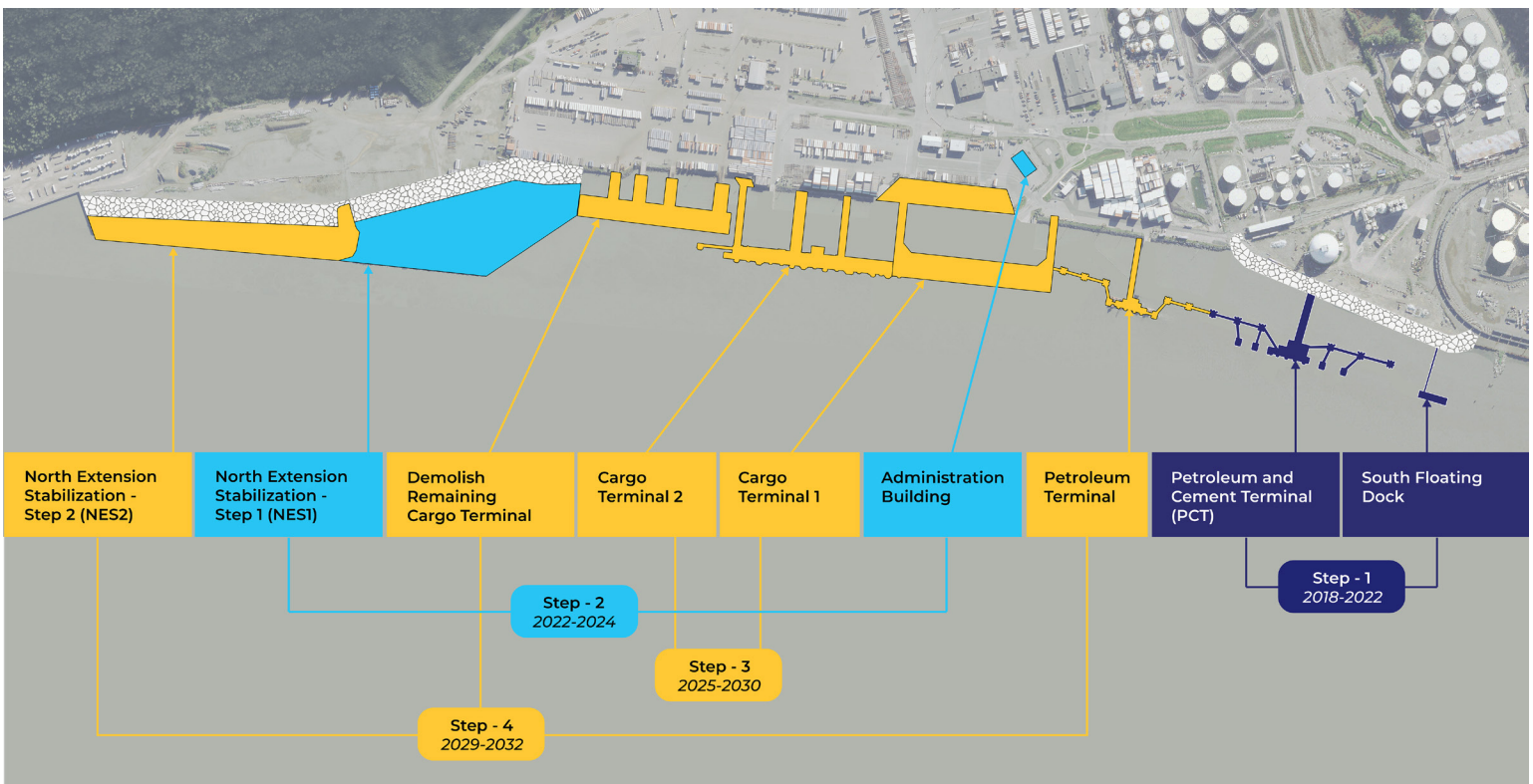
Allow senior and residential exemptions for individual units of a “cooperative property.”

PORT MODERNIZATION PROJECT UPDATE

The Municipality remains grateful for the State of Alaska’s prior FY23 support. Those funds were used as a local match to secure \$73.7 million of federal funds awarded to the Don Young Port of Alaska to complete phase one of the “Northern Extension” remediation project, as well as construction of a new administrative building. The Port was recently awarded another federal grant to fund a portion of the first new cargo dock; once that grant is received, the balance of money that the State appropriated to Port in FY23 will be wholly drawn down and obligated.

The Municipality updated its comprehensive Port of Alaska Modernization Project (PAMP) Plan of Finance and is issuing \$180 million in revenue bonds. These bonds require surcharges on cargo, cement, and petroleum which raise the cost of goods throughout the state.

Our primary ask for the Port is your continued partnership in financially supporting the PAMP to reduce the negative impact of surcharges statewide.



KEY FACTS

- The Port of Alaska directly serves 90% of the state’s population, including handling 75% of all non-petroleum in-bound marine cargo, and almost 40% of all refined petroleum products used in the state.
- The Port is one of 18 Department of Defense designated commercial strategic ports (the only in Alaska), supporting critical military operations across Alaska, the Arctic, and around the world.
- The total cost of all phases of the PAMP is \$1.9 billion, paid for through a mix of past state capital funds, federal grants, federal loans, and revenue bonds back by surcharges. State and federal funds reduce the impact of surcharges, which directly impact the cost of consumer goods throughout the state.

DISTRICT PRIORITIES

DISTRICT 1: NORTH ANCHORAGE

- Peratrovich Park Pedestrian Plaza and Landscape Upgrades, \$200K **17-I**
- Tract J Park Master Plan, \$100K **18-I**
- Alley Paving for Mountain View and Fairview, \$2M **17-I and 19-J**
- Public boat launch and boathouse at Westchester Lagoon for future boat rentals, \$15K **17-I**

DISTRICT 2: JBER, CHUGIAK AND EAGLE RIVER

- AK DOT upgrade or remove Old Glenn Highway Railing **23-L and 24-L**
- Snow Disposal Site – Purchase and Construct, \$2M **23-L and 24-L**
- Loretta French Astro Turf Installation, Fields 1 & 2, \$1-2M **24-L**
- CBERRRSA Road and Drainage Rehab, \$1.4M **23-L and 24-L**

DISTRICT 3: WEST ANCHORAGE

- Bluff Erosion impacting Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (TSAIA) facilities, Tony Knowles Coastal Trail, and Point Woronzof on State of Alaska-owned land **16-H**
- West Anchorage Area Pavement Rehabilitation, \$3M **SD E, G, H and I**
- 88th Avenue Upgrade – Jewel Lake Park to Jewel Lake Road, \$8M **15-H**
- Country Woods Subdivision Area Road Reconstruction, \$3M **13-G**
- Dempsey Anderson Ice Arena Upgrades, \$1M **17-I**

DISTRICT 4: MIDTOWN

- 42nd Ave Upgrade – Piper Street to Florina Street, \$3M **20-J**
- 41st Ave Upgrade Phase 2 – Piper Street to Dale Street, \$3M **20-J**
- Sound Barrier Fence Project on Northern Lights, \$2M **14-G**
- Midtown Chalet, \$250K **14-G**
- Coventry Drive Drainage Project Planning and Design, \$250K **13-G and 12-F**

DISTRICT 5: EAST ANCHORAGE

- Northeast Mixed-Use Transit/Community Hub, \$10M **20-J and 21-K**
- Tudor/Muldoon Traffic Calming, \$10M with \$6M on hand **20-J, 21-K and 22-K**
- Campbell Airstrip Road upgrade with separated trail extension from Campbell Airstrip Trailhead to Bivouac Trailheads, \$2M for design **9-E, 12-F, 20-J, 21-K and 22-K**
- Northern Lights Boulevard at Bragaw Street – Pedestrian Crossing Improvements, \$500K **19-J and 20-J**
- Centennial Park Upgrades, \$1M to improve electrical systems and restrooms; \$9M for park facility improvements **18-I, 22-K and 23-L**
- AK DOT upgrade of 36th Avenue between Patterson and Muldoon including Muldoon Overpass, Moose Loop East Connection, \$8M **9-E, 12-F, 20-J, 21-K and 22-K**

DISTRICT 6: SOUTH ANCHORAGE, TURNAGAIN ARM AND GIRDWOOD

- Child, Pedestrian Safety Measures at O'Malley Road & Rockridge Drive, \$5M **11-F**
- Reconstruct Upper De Armoun Road, \$2.3M **9-E**
- AK DOT Birch Road Upgrade between O'Malley and Huffman Road **11-F**
- Ellen Avenue Area Storm Drainage **10-E**
- Abbott Road Signalization at Ruth Arcand Park Entrance, \$2M **11-F**
- AK DOT Reconstruct Old Seward Highway between Rabbit Creek Road and Potter Valley Road **9-E**