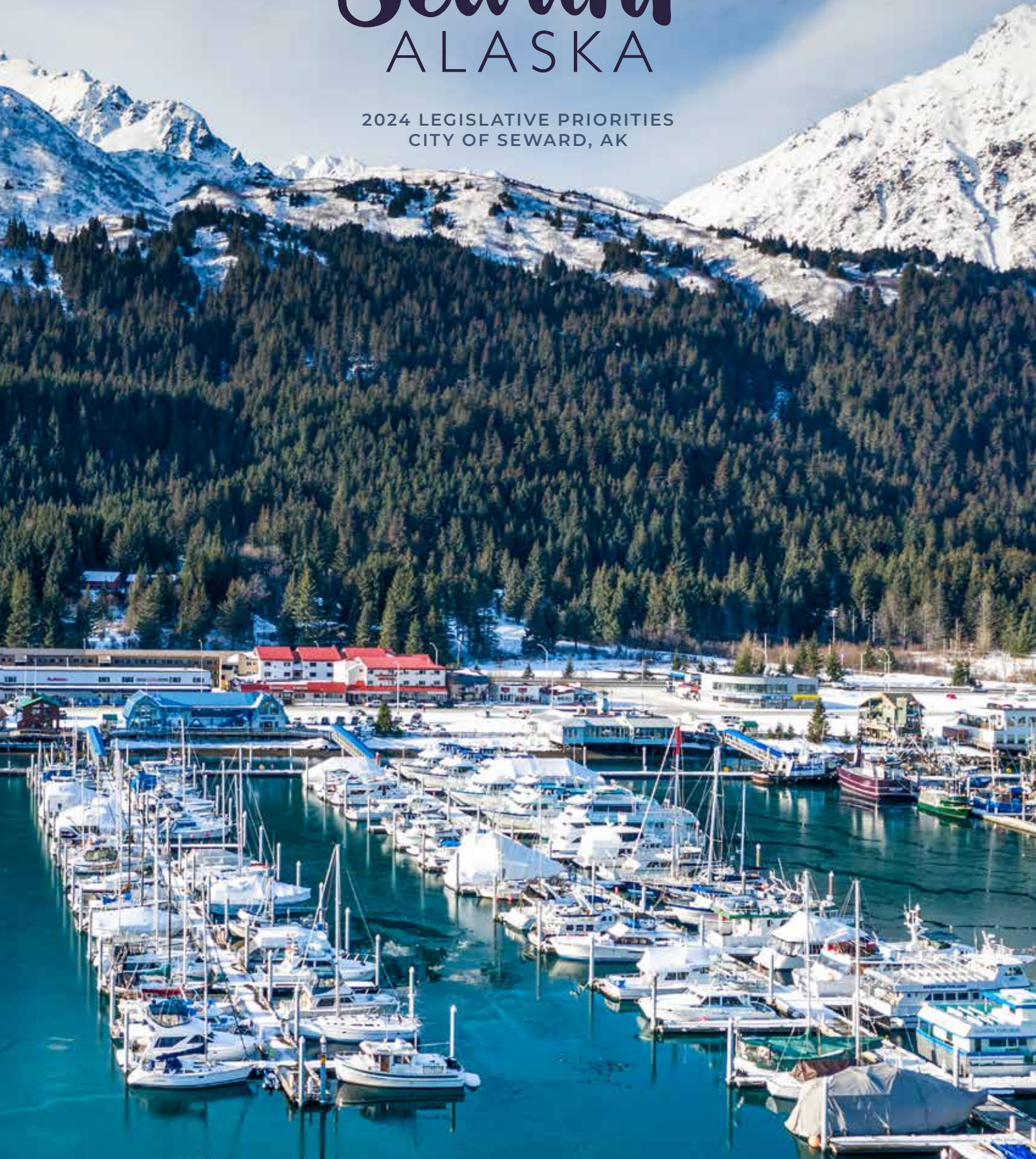


# Seward

## ALASKA

2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES  
CITY OF SEWARD, AK



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LOWELL TUNNEL OUTFALL — *\$185M Funded*

— 05 —

PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY — *\$22,000,000*

— 06 —

INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION — *\$4,700,000*

— 07 —

SEWARD COMMUNITY JAIL — *Full Funding*

— 07 —

WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT — *\$4,000,000*

— 08 —

FIRE STATION — *\$25,000,000*

— 10 —

POLICE STATION — *\$15,000,000*

— 11 —

SMIC INFRASTRUCTURE — *\$3,685,000*

— 12 —

SEWARD BOAT HARBOR Z-FLOAT — *\$8,000,000*

— 14 —

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS — *\$2,500,000*

— 15 —

HEAT LOOP — *\$3,850,000*

— 16 —

SEWARD HARBORMASTER'S OFFICE — *\$10,000,000*

— 17 —

WASTEWATER FACILITY — *\$33,000,000*

— 18 —

AREA MAPS

— 19 —



### LOCATED AT THE NORTHERN TIP OF RESURRECTION BAY, SEWARD HAS LONG BEEN AN IMPORTANT DESTINATION.

In the Alutiiq language, Seward is known as Qutekcak, meaning 'big beach', and served the Alutiiq, Sugpiaq, and other Alaska Native peoples as a meeting area.

A deep-water, ice-free port with rail, highway, and air transportation, Seward is easily accessible from Alaska's major hubs and the Lower 48. The wild and stunning natural landscapes attract adventurers from around the world to enjoy the beautiful vistas, hike the stunning trails, experience the diverse wildlife, paddle and fish the rich waters, and explore our historic community.

Today, Seward is home to a vibrant community with a deep appreciation for the natural environment and local history and culture, with hundreds of thriving small businesses, robust maritime and tourism industries, as well as valuable educational and research opportunities.

We welcome you to join us in Seward and learn why we say *Alaska Starts Here*.



*Incorporated in 1912, Seward, Alaska is a home-rule city in the Kenai Peninsula Borough.*

*Seward has a population of 2,600, with approximately 3,000 additional people residing in surrounding communities just outside of city boundaries.*



## BOROUGH GOVERNMENT

Seward is located within the **Kenai Peninsula Borough** - incorporated in 1964 as a second-class borough.

An elected **Borough Mayor** serves as the chief administrator who works with an elected 9-member legislative assembly, on which Seward has one seat.

The Borough is responsible for area-wide education, solid-waste management, planning and zoning, taxation and assessment.

Local service area boards provide hospital, fire, and emergency services.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Seward is a city manager form of government, governed by a **Mayor** and **City Council** who are elected by the people of the City. The **City Manager** is appointed by the elected 7-person City Council, along with a **City Attorney** and **City Clerk**.

The Mayor and City Council act together as the **Governing Body**. The Governing Body, being the elected representative of the people, adopts all ordinances and resolutions and determines the general goals and policies of the city.

## TAXATION

The city, along with the state of Alaska has no personal income tax. Real/personal property tax within the city is at a low 3.84 mils. The real/personal property tax outside the city but within the borough is at 4.5 mils with an additional .5 mils for the Seward/ Bear Creek Area Flood Service Board.

The sales tax for Seward is 4%. The sales tax for the Borough is 3%. Seward also has a 4% bed tax.



*Employing around 90 year-round employees, the City of Seward provides and supports a wide range of services including a 24-hr police department, fire department, library, hospital, youth center, boat harbor, community development, building and engineering, public works, parks and recreation, water/wastewater and electric utilities.*

## CITY MANAGER

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**Jason Bickling, Assistant City Manager**

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Cell: 907-491-0803

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PO Box 167

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## 2024 GOVERNING BODY

**Sue McClure, Mayor**

*Term expires October 2025*

**John Osenga, Vice Mayor**

*Term expires October 2024*

**Mike Calhoon**

*Term expires October 2024*

**Randy Wells**

*Term expires October 2025*

**Kevin Finch**

*Term expires October 2025*

**Bob Barnwell**

*Term expires October 2026*

**Julie Crites**

*Term expires October 2026*

CONTINUED FULL FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS LOWELL TUNNEL OUTFALL DIVERSION STRUCTURE. (FEDERAL)

**JANUARY 2022: CONSTRUCTION FULLY FUNDED THROUGH THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND JOBS ACT WITH \$185 MILLION.**

The district aims to construct a new flood diversion system for Lowell Creek in Seward, Alaska. Upgrades include a new 18-foot diameter tunnel and diversion dam upstream from the current; refurbishment to the current existing tunnel; extension of the outfall by 150 feet to carry creek flow and debris over Lowell Point Road; and a canopy to protect the tunnel inlet from landslides. The plan also calls for the removal of trees that could block the tunnel if swept up in a flood event.

*Now that this project is funded, USACE is in the process of engineering and designing the new tunnel.*



**FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY AT A MORE APPROPRIATE SITE. THIS MOVE WILL FREE UP SIGNIFICANT LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE CURRENT PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY SITE. (STATE & FEDERAL)**

The Seward Public Works Facility was built in 1965 after the '64 earthquake. Relocating this facility from downtown has been a desire of this community for over 40 years. The relocation of the facility to a more commercial area with adequate acreage for a new equipment warm storage building, a maintenance repair shop, and other public works function are needed.

The current building is worn out and doesn't fit well in the more residential use district. It is too small, very inefficient, and critically inadequate for today's operations and staff. A site has been selected and the engineering and design process will be completed in March of 2024.

*This project is high on the City's priority list for funding. Completing this project ASAP will also free up 32 small downtown residential lots to the public and will greatly help with the housing shortage in Seward. Estimated cost is \$22,000,000.*

**SEWARD PUBLIC WORKS**

Responsible for operations of the Water and Wastewater utilities, the Street Department, the City Shop, and limited Municipal Building maintenance. It is our mission to provide the City of Seward residents with prompt service and maintenance in a cost effective manner. The majority of our work consists of maintenance, repairs, and improvements of the City's streets, utilities, and equipment.

**SERVICES**

- Maintaining approximately 31 miles of paved and unpaved roads.
- Maintenance of 28+ miles of both water distribution and wastewater collection main lines.
- Maintaining the City's vehicle fleet.
- Providing snow removal and sanding for safe roads in the winter.



*Current Public Works facility.*



*Conceptual example of new Public Works Department facility.*



## EXPANSION OF WATER/SEWER AND ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH WILL INCREASE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGHOUT CITY LIMITS. (STATE AND FEDERAL)

There are two strategic areas that have been identified for utility expansion that would open the door to residential development. Afognak / Forest Acres is an area on the northwest portion of town that has over 25 residential lots. There are 150 acres of private and public land to the north of the Seward Marine Industrial Complex that can be opened up for development with the expansion of sewer lines.



### Afognak Acres

- Water, sewer, electric: \$2,511,000
- Roadway: \$958,000

### SMIC

- Sewer: \$1,090,000
- Lift Station: \$100,000

*Residential housing has been an ongoing issue in Seward and this project will add lots for immediate construction of much needed housing.*

## FULL FUNDING OF THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS IN ORDER TO RETURN TO 100% FUNDING OF THE OPERATIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH OPERATING THE SEWARD COMMUNITY JAIL.

In 2013, the City of Seward entered into a 5-year contract with the State of Alaska to run the community jail in Seward. The amount of the contract at that time was \$655,470.00 with the guarantee of an inflation adjustment annually not to exceed 2%. In 2015, the state amended the contract on the basis of budget cuts and voided the CPI increase language. The value of the contract dropped to \$368,952.00 where it remained until FY2023, when it was increased to \$564,810. This is an improvement, but the jail is still operating at a deficit. The state has never addressed employee wage changes, increases to benefit package costs, or increases in the costs of operation (CPI) from the original 2013 contract cost.

The Seward Jail is currently shut down due to lack of staffing. While it remains closed, adult males are being housed at the Spring Creek Correctional Facility while females and juveniles are being transported to Wildwood in Kenai.

A major contributor to the lack of staff is that the City of Seward is competing with the DOC for employees at the Spring Creek Correctional Facility, who, for the same work

have a higher pay base, have the opportunity for double pay on overtime, and signing bonuses.

Collectively, the community jail Chiefs of Police are working along with their respective City Managers, Mayors and Councils, and AML/JIA to discuss our collective issues and find solutions so these jails can stay in operation.



## REPLACEMENT OF OLD PIPING WITH NEW DUCTILE IRON PIPING THROUGHOUT SEWARD. (STATE & FEDERAL)

The City of Seward needs funding to replace existing galvanized and transite (AC – asbestos-cement) water mains. These problem mains are nearly 60 years old and well past their lifespan. The new ductile iron mains will replace and thus prevent the inevitable collapse and failure of the old water mains.

*With available funding we will replace up to 1000 feet per year to keep safe drinking water for the community. Estimated cost is \$4,000,000.*





## CONSTRUCTION OF NEW PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY(IES) INCLUDING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND POLICE DEPARTMENT (STATE & FEDERAL)

Most of the City of Seward's Public Facilities were built following the 1964 Earthquake, including City Hall where the Police Department is currently housed. The current Seward Fire Department is one of the buildings that was constructed before, in 1963. Both facilities are roughly 60 years old. Since that time the population has grown significantly, as have the numbers of required personnel, numbers and size of equipment, the technology required to do the job effectively, the number of calls, and safety standards.

In January 2023, the City of Seward requested R&M Consultants to develop a Public Safety Building Needs Assessment, Site Selection, and Conceptual Design for new facilities to accommodate the Police Department, Jail, Department of Motor Vehicles, and Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, and Building Department. R&M Consultants teamed with KPB Architects and Integrus Architecture for architectural and public safety design expertise. The assessment included a review of the existing facilities for all departments, understanding the existing space limitations, and developing a list of space requirements for future facilities.

*Projecting out 20 years based on the City's expected growth, the fire and police departments will need new facilities to adequately and safely serve the City of Seward's needs.*



## FIRE DEPARTMENT

The study determined that the current Fire Department facilities are one-third of the size that is required and do not meet National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) safety standards. The existing facilities are 9,432 square feet. Their current need is 25,979 square feet and the need for the future (20 years from now) is 27,869 square feet. Many deficiencies were found that are health and safety risks to the staff and volunteers and inhibit the ability to provide emergency services effectively.

- The apparatus bays and gear rooms do not meet NFPA guidelines
- The bays do not fit all fire vehicles appropriately. When in the bay, there is no room to maneuver or work on vehicles and the ladder truck is stored off site.
- There is inadequate ventilation, HVAC, and electrical, and known asbestos
- There is no ADA access to the building and no lobby
- There are no spaces to house or train staff and volunteers. The bunkroom doesn't meet current building codes and is too small.

*Funding is needed to provide the design/engineering and construction. More precise costs will be determined soon but we know that similar facilities cost \$25,000,000.*



Current Fire Department building.



Ketchikan Fire Department building.

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Seward Police Department currently inhabits a very small office within the City Hall facility that has been identified as severely undersized. In addition to police services, the Seward Police Department also houses the area dispatch center, DMV, and jail. The existing facilities are 4,964 square feet. Their current need is 19,649 square feet and the need for the future is 19,865 square feet.

The facility itself lacks the space and infrastructure to meet modern policing standards for internal and external operations, and to provide safety of staff and the public and housed offenders. Its public-facing services within the building are very limited and not welcoming as well as not providing current accessibility standards for visitors or staff.



***Funding is needed to provide the design/engineering and construction.***

***More precise costs are coming soon but we know that similar facilities cost \$15,000,000.***

Issues include but are not limited to:

- Building past useful life: Plumbing, Electrical, and HVAC Issues as well as known asbestos building materials.
- Lack of ADA Accessibility.
- In general, almost every space does not meet requirements for proper and safe storage of materials.
- Security is highly deficient in the existing facility. There is no separation of public and police staff zones. There is no control over the public accessing private office space upon entry, and if the admin personnel need to step away for a moment, the public can access the "secure zone" without permission.
  - The Police Chiefs office space is too small and does not provide meeting space within the office.
  - Patrol is currently sized for 1-2 officers, but up to 4 officers may use the office at one time. Room for files, and equipment storage is inadequate or does not exist.
  - Locker rooms and staff training areas are nonexistent or inadequate.
  - Evidence receiving, processing and storage does not have a secure transfer process.
  - Storage is inadequate and not designed to current police standards.
  - Funding is needed to provide the design/ engineering and construction



## SEWARD MARINE INDUSTRIAL CENTER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Seward Marine Industrial Center (SMIC) has seen a significant increase in demand over the last few years since the grand reopening and with the resident lease taken over by JAG Industrial and Marine Services. Every fall the boat yard is completely full with many additional requests for space and amenities that aren't currently available. The US Coast Guard Fast Response Cutter and support will be located there starting in 2026.

*To allow the industry to continue to grow and flourish, there are a number of infrastructure upgrades needed.*

### 20 ACRE LAND EXPANSION (1):

There is approximately 20 undeveloped acres to the north of the current boat yard and syncrolift area (boundary bounded by Olga, Sorrel, Delphin, and Jellison). The city already has had a number of requests for use of that land for leases for marine work by companies both currently operating and new businesses interested in operating out of SMIC.

#### Costs:

- *Brush, fill, top, and grade: \$500,000*
- *500 Foot Road Extensions of Mustang Ave and Morris Ave. with Pipe Culverts to Support 330-ton travel lift: \$225,000*

### SHIP YARD: FILL AND REGRADE (2):

The main boat yard area (approximately 20 acres) needs to be slightly lifted and regraded for drainage during the rainy season and break up so that the boat moving and repair business can continue with minimal disruption:

#### Costs:

- *Regrading: \$100,000*

### LINE EXTENSIONS AND POWER PEDESTALS IN MAIN SHIP YARD (3):

There is an increasing demand for power in more areas of the yard. This would fund line extensions and 20 additional power pedestals in main yard which would allow more work to be done concurrently.

#### Costs:

- *Pedestals (20 x \$8,000ea): \$160,000*
- *Line Installation: \$150,000*



**WATER SERVICE AND FIRE HYDRANTS (4):**

With the boat yard expansion and growth, the need for water extensions and fire hydrants has increased.

**Costs:**

- *Water Line (6900LF x \$225/LF): \$1,500,000*
- *Fire Hydrants (15 x \$5000ea): \$150,000*

**PUBLIC RESTROOMS (5):**

There is only one, small public restroom located at SMIC which covers over 90 acres and provides space for over a hundred large vessels. An additional, large public restroom with shower facilities is needed to service the area for current use and continued growth.

**Costs:**

- *Lift Station Cost and Install: \$100,000*
- *Extension Lines : \$100,000*
- *Building and Facilities: \$350,000*

**SECURITY (6):**

With the increasing boat work going on and the presence of equipment and tools, the area needs security upgrades to help keep theft down and business moving without delays.

**Costs:**

- *Fencing: \$250,000*
- *Security Camera System (20 Cameras and installation on light poles): \$100,000*

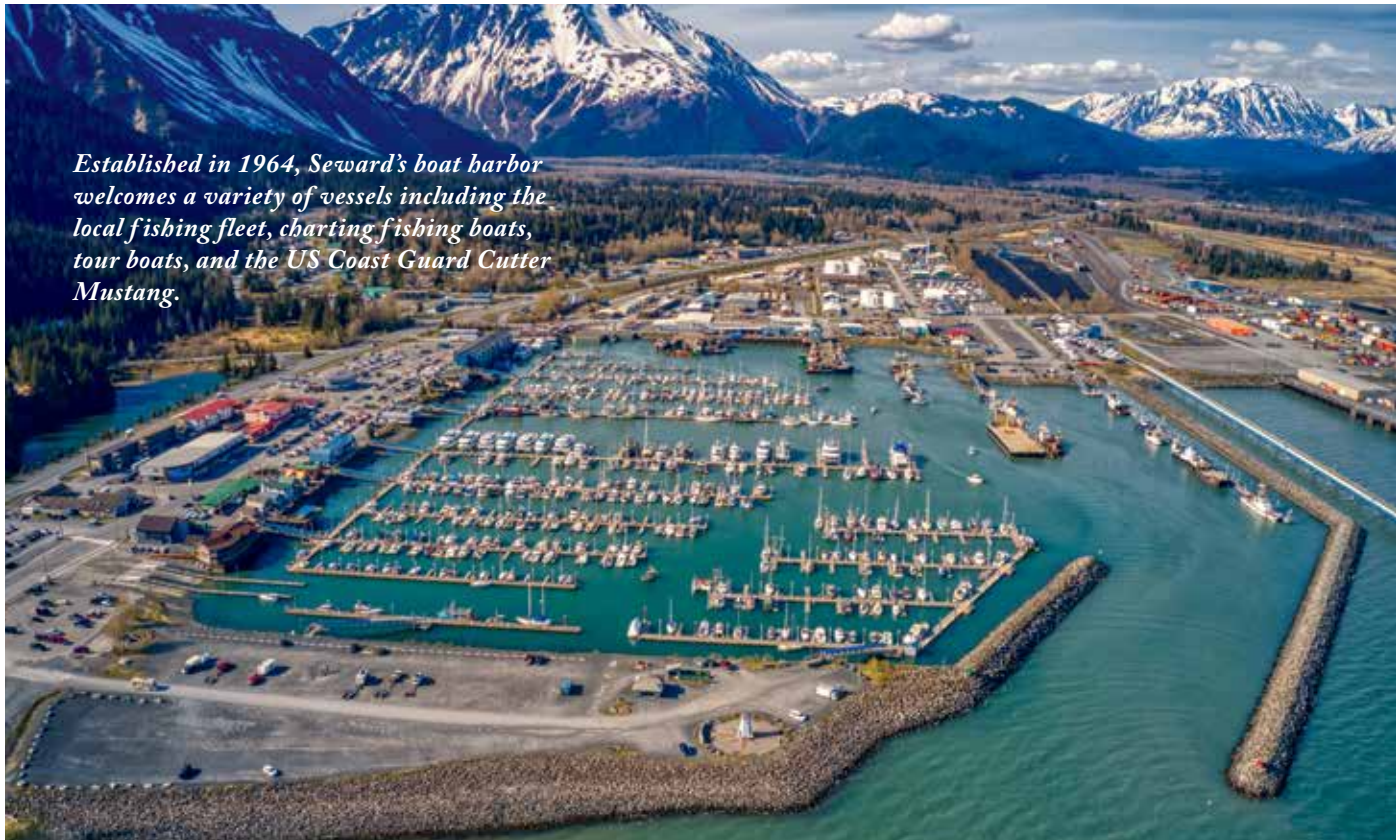


# FLOAT EXTENSION PROJECT IN THE HARBOR FOR Z FLOAT. (STATE & FEDERAL)

There is currently an extensive waitlist for vessels in the Seward Harbor. The waitlist is a barrier for businesses and economic growth with charter vessels, tugs, barges, personal vessels, and commercial transient vessels not having the places they need to operate.

*The current waitlist has existed for over 10 years, when this was initially placed on the Capital Improvements List. There has been movement on this list but the overall list (of over 200) has not changed significantly with the oldest request currently still waiting since 2014.*

*Estimated cost is \$8,000,000.*



*Established in 1964, Seward's boat harbor welcomes a variety of vessels including the local fishing fleet, charter fishing boats, tour boats, and the US Coast Guard Cutter Mustang.*

**SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT AND  
REFURBISHMENT THROUGHOUT  
THE CITY OF SEWARD.  
(STATE & FEDERAL)**

Pedestrian Safety is a high priority in Seward as our visitors increase and our sidewalks continue to deteriorate. We have multiple sidewalks needing attention throughout Seward.

*Securing grant and ADA funds for sidewalk replacement and refurbishment allows us to address ADA access issues for ramps, parking, and dangerous large cracks and broken concrete areas with high pedestrian traffic. Estimated cost is \$2,500,000.*



## COMPLETION OF THE HEAT LOOP PROJECT (STATE & FEDERAL)

This innovative Tidal Source Heat Pump project will provide more than 90% of the annual space and domestic hot water heating for four existing City buildings (Library, City Hall, Annex, and Fire Hall); the remaining supplemental heating will be provided by existing oil and electric boilers during extreme cold events. The project will provide approximately 80% of the space cooling for the library; the remaining 20% of cooling will remain natural cooling via existing operable windows.

The project will reduce energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions brought on by fossil fuel dependence. There is currently no natural gas supply or distribution system, and the community is solely reliant on the purchase of heating oil from a single supplier in Seward (Shoreside Petroleum). With prices regularly over \$5.00 per gallon for heating oil in Seward, this project will deliver heat to City buildings for a significantly lower cost.

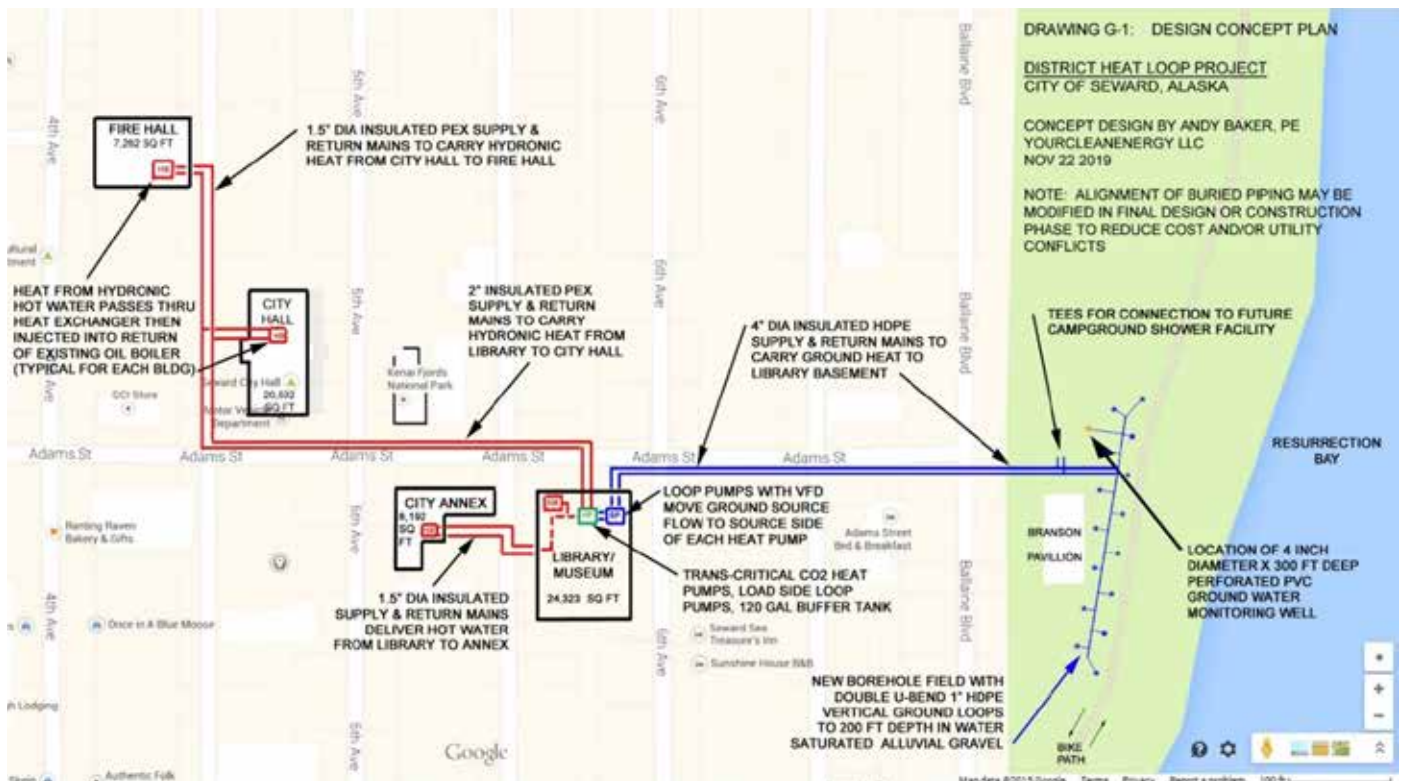
Geothermal heat pump systems are still relatively new to cold climates like Alaska, but they have a great deal of potential, especially in district heating situations. A successful demonstration project will help prove out that the technology is viable in cold climates. It will also support workforce development, which will help to sustainably expand the technology in Alaska.

*The project is being managed by Seward Heat Loop Coalition consisting of the City of Seward, the Port and Commerce Advisory Board (PACAB) Ad hoc Committee, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) and Your Clean Energy, LLC (YCE).*

*Currently, Phase 1 of the project has received \$314,890 in funding that will allow further design and engineering.*

*An additional \$3,850,00 is still needed to fully fund Phase 2 (Construction) of this project.*

*Estimated cost: \$3,850,000.*





## CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW HARBORMASTER'S OFFICE. (STATE & FEDERAL)

Narrative: The Seward Harbormaster's Office was originally constructed in 1968 as part of the 1965 Harbor reconstruction project in the aftermath of the 1964 earthquake. The Seward Boat Harbor has grown significantly since that time with multiple expansions.

The building has had a couple of remodels and major repairs but is far past its useful life span and has many challenges including a lack of space for personnel and equipment, the inability to see the harbor from the building, and the lack of nearby parking for people who want to do harbor business.

The Port and Commerce Advisory Board, within the Seward Boat Harbor Master Plan, has recommended that the facility be moved to the South Harbor Uplands where there is space for a larger footprint. This location would also allow for a direct view of the harbor itself, the entrance to the harbor, and Resurrection Bay.

*Estimated cost: \$10,000,000.*



## CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY. (STATE & FEDERAL)

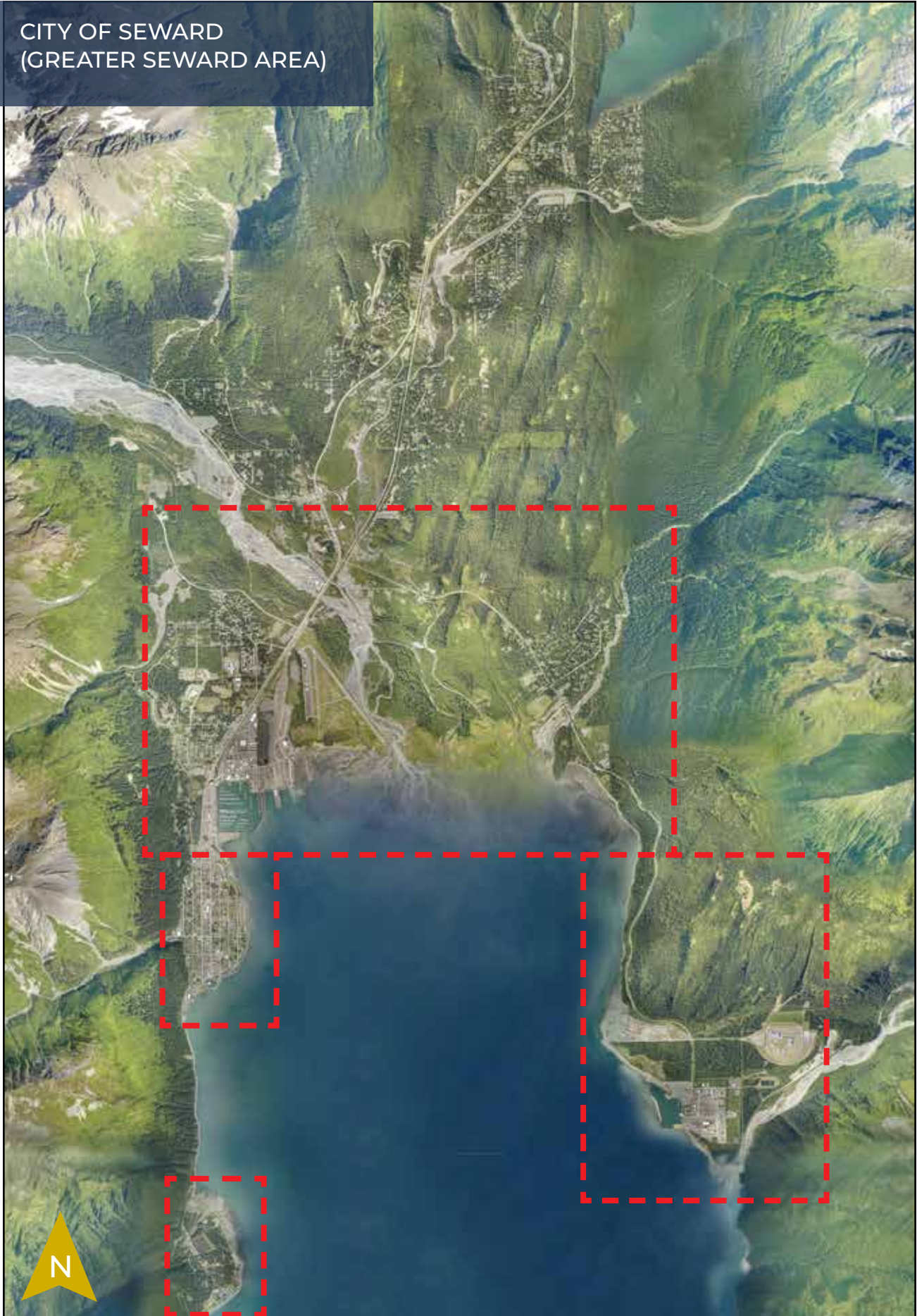
A new wastewater treatment plant would eliminate the current sewage lagoon. The lagoon is located 2 miles away from Seward at Lowell Point in an area accessed via a mountainside road with yearly avalanches, rockslides, and, recently, a massive landslide that closed the road access for 6 weeks.

This new facility would significantly upgrade the treatment quality of Seward wastewater. The plant would include both primary and secondary processes to dispose of solids and disinfect effluents. Odor control systems would also be put in place. The facility would have a significantly smaller footprint than a lagoon.

*Estimated cost is \$33,000,000.*



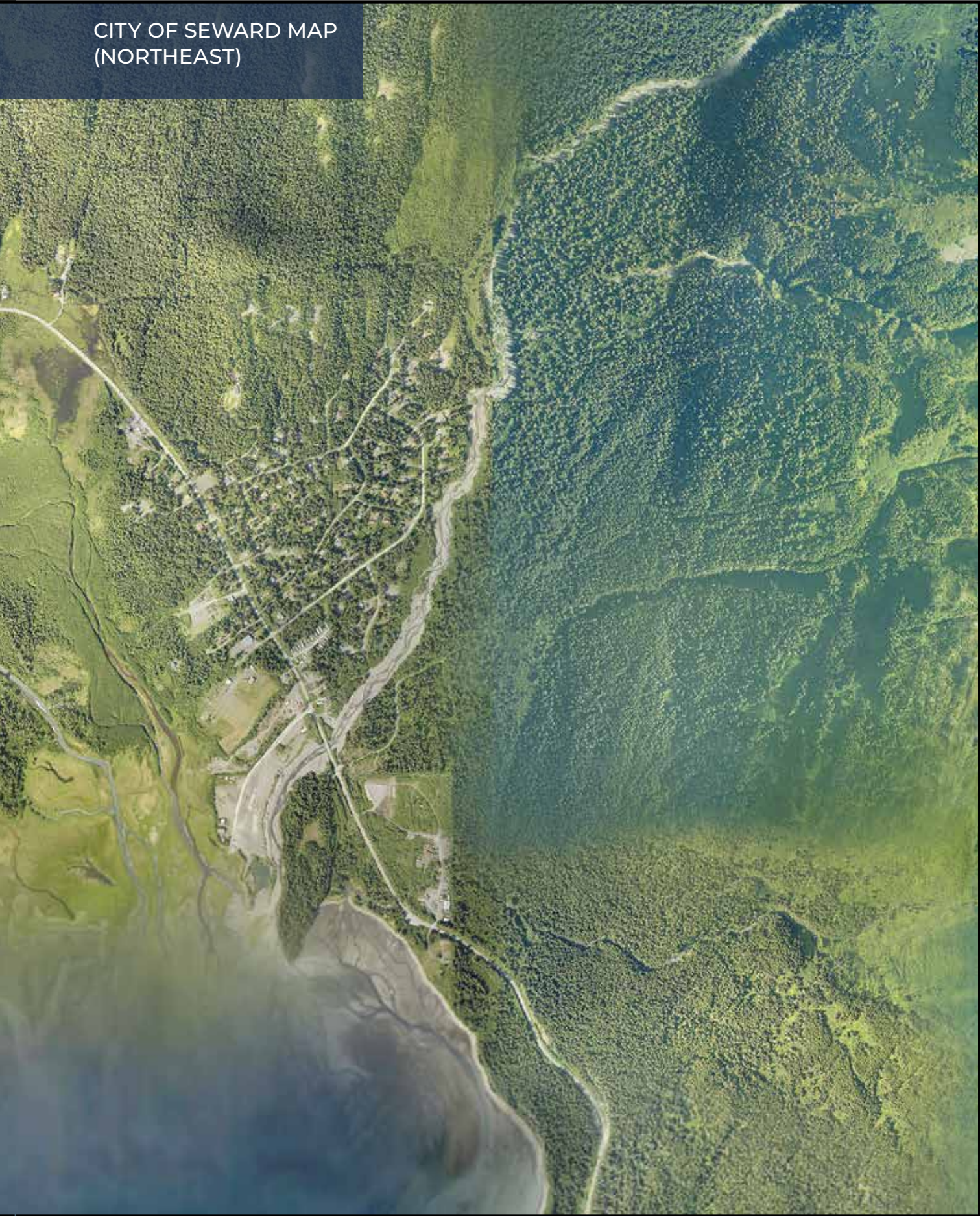
CITY OF SEWARD  
(GREATER SEWARD AREA)



CITY OF SEWARD MAP  
(NORTHWEST)



CITY OF SEWARD MAP  
(NORTHEAST)



CITY OF SEWARD MAP  
(SOUTH)



LOWELL POINT  
MAP INSET

CITY OF SEWARD MAP  
(SMIC AREA)





*City of Seward © 2024*

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*The City of Seward would like to acknowledge the Seward Chamber of Commerce & CVB for their invaluable partnership in economic development and destination marketing and management. Their work is supported by the thousands of annual visitors to Seward through a portion of the 4% bed tax collected by Seward's esteemed lodging providers, as voted by the citizens of Seward in the 1995 general October election via Initiative Ord. 95-001z, which took effect in November 1995, and was implemented January of 1996.*

*Branding, design, and photography elements for the 2024 City of Seward Legislative Priorities Report have been provided by the Seward Chamber of Commerce & CVB, as it continues to strive to fulfill its mission to keep Seward the best place in the world to live, work and play.*

**Seward**  
CHAMBER

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