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## **For Immediate Release: AML Board of Directors Acts to Maximize Infrastructure Opportunity**

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The Alaska Municipal League (AML) Board of Directors, on Friday, acted unanimously to commit resources to grant-writing support for local governments and call on the Legislature to assist with federal match requirements.

AML members had identified these two issues as the most significant barriers to taking full advantage of the opportunity presented by the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which will make available billions of dollars in competitive grants. Local officials have expressed concern about their capacity – and lack thereof – to navigate a complicated federal grant landscape and to respond effectively to grant opportunities. At the same time, federal match requirements can often be around 20% of a total projects costs, which makes it prohibitive for many local governments to respond.

AML's board approved the organization's investment that will build capacity within AML to support local government grant writing, including in partnership with a firm with national-level expertise. Essentially, AML will have a deep and expansive bench with which to meet the needs of Alaska communities, increasing their overall competitiveness and increasing the number of communities able to compete nationally. AML has committed \$100,000 in this investment and will be working to secure external resources to scale this effort up.

The majority of local governments lack the available revenue or capital to initiate a project, if on a reimbursable basis, or meet federal match requirements. AML's board calls on the Legislature to provide a minimum of \$100 million to help address this, so that Alaska can truly maximize benefits that come to the state. Spread out over the next five years and still requiring some level of local commitment, a State Local Match Fund can ensure that this once in a lifetime opportunity is not missed. There is a clear return on investment, with the potential billions in federal dollars that can fund projects over the next ten years.

This Fund can also provide a line of credit for communities that are successful in projects that are on a reimbursement basis. AML recommends that this Fund be structured on a sliding scale relative to local capacity, and such that the local commitment or reimbursement come back to the State to form a revolving loan or matching fund.

AML looks forward to working in partnership with the Governor and the Legislature to prioritize and pursue grant funding to advance transportation and infrastructure projects to benefit all Alaskans.