ALASKA RAILBELT CLEAN ENERGY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE GROWTH CLUSTER

Lead Institution and Regional Competitiveness Officer

U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA)
FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Act Build Back Better Regional Challenge

Submitted by:

Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska

Mat-Su/Fairbanks Rail & Natural Gas Coalition Members:

1. LEAD INSTITUTION

Matanuska-Susitna Borough has been designated as the Lead Institution for the proposed Mat-Su/Fairbanks Rail & Natural Gas Coalition's Alaska Railbelt Clean Energy Transportation Infrastructure Project (the Project).

The Borough will facilitate communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the Coalition members and industry/project partners during both Phases of the Build Back Better Challenge. The Borough has completed the required forms for the technical assistance grant to develop the Coalition further and prepare the proposed component projects for the Phase 2 application.

The Borough is the operator of Port MacKenzie and co-manager of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project. By leading the Coalition, the Borough will make significant progress towards completion of the overall project and ensure that the Borough commitments to local native organizations are met.

2. REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS OFFICER

The Borough has identified a Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer to serve as the central coordinator for the Coalition. Rustin Krafft, the current Purchasing Director at Matanuska-Susitna Borough, will take on the role. Mr. Krafft has been involved in the development of the Coalition and is well-versed in all aspects of the proposed projects. He will be essential to completing the tasks required of the Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer, including but not limited to:

- Serving as the central coordinator of new and existing resources to the benefit of regional competitiveness;
- Convening public, private, academic, and civic leaders around bottom-up competitiveness;
- Establishing a coordinated line of communication between regional growth clusters and EDA that accelerates collaboration and support; and
- Ensuring technical assistance provided by EDA and any partners are absorbed effectively within communities.

If awarded Technical Assistance funding through Phase 1 of this application, the Coalition plans for Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Fairbanks North Star Borough to be co-applicants for the Phase 2 application. At that time, Brittany Smart, who has been instrumental in the development of this Concept Proposal as the Fairbanks Mayor's Special Assistant for Economic Development, will assist with the duties of the Coalition's Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer.