

# Meet Your Local Government Specialist (LGS)

Division of Community and Regional Affairs



**Trisha Sullivan, Local Government Specialist 4**

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LeGIT  
2/19/2026

**Nome**

103 Front St., Suite 220  
(907) 443-5457

**Fairbanks**

455 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Suite 140  
(907) 451-2716

**Bethel**

1490 State Hwy.  
(907) 543-3475

**Juneau**

333 Willoughby Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
(907) 465-5541

**Dillingham**

104 Main St., Suite 303  
(907) 842-5135

**Anchorage**

550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1650  
(907) 269-4501



# Division of Community and Regional Affairs

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Different Levels of Local Government Specialists

Field Staff

Local  
Government  
Specialists  
1, 2, & 3

Supervisory  
Staff

Local  
Government  
Specialist 4

Program  
Manager

Local  
Government  
Specialist 5



## Different Levels of LGS

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



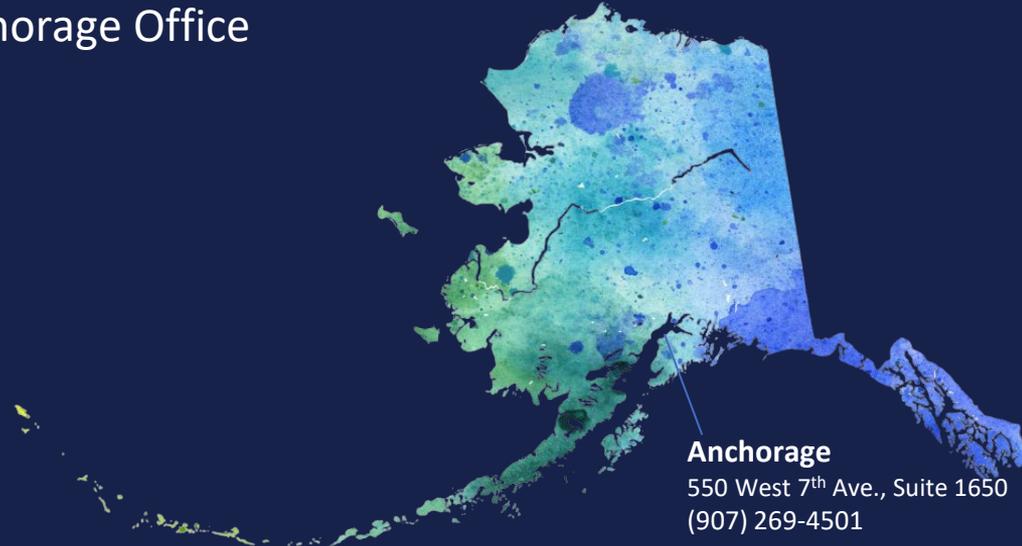
## Presentation Overview

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Anchorage Office

## 8 Total LGS/RUBA Staff in the Anchorage Office

- Lynn Kenealy, LGS 5
- Sonya Pevan, LGS 4
- Trisha Sullivan, LGS 4
- Lydia Mielke, LGS 3
- Trish Gilliland, LGS 3
- Gabriel Gonzales, LGS 3
- Breanna Armstrong, LGS 3
- Eric Bjelland, LGS 3



## Anchorage Office

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



- **Short Bio:** Worked for DCRA since 2011 as a Grants Administrator, LGS 2, LGS 3, LGS 4 for the Local Boundary Commission, then back to LGA/RUBA as the Resource Desk. Then became a supervisor, and finally the Manager. Background is in community based social work!
- **Currently Working On:** Dedicated to evidence-based work, so a lot of numbers crunching and analysis of what we do to make sure it's the best way to support our communities.
- **Weird Fact:** Gets bored at work easily, so I love LGA/RUBA because there's always something new to learn and dive into!



## Sonya Pevan – LGS 4

- **Short Bio:** An experienced master municipal clerk, elections administrator, records manager, and local government supervisor with more than 16 years work supporting Alaska communities. I have served as Vice President of ARMA, and has been a Mentoring Chair for the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks.
- **Currently Working On:** Records and information management, election and meeting procedure questions ,utility financial reviews, and more!
- **Weird Fact:** Can run a municipal election and correct a motion under Robert’s Rules before most people decide what they want for lunch.



### Anchorage Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



- **Short Bio:** Background in the legal field working as a law assistant with the Regulatory of Alaska, and then as a paralegal for the Office of Administrative Hearings. I joined DCRA in 2022 as a LGS 2, flexed up to a 3, and then became a supervisor as a LGS 4.
- **Currently Working On:** Updating training materials for the RUBA/RAFA courses, leading the LeGITs, and developing new standard operating procedures.
- **Weird Fact:** I have a weird fear of heights – what makes it weird is that I cannot look up at tall building.



## Anchorage Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Lydia Mielke – LGS 3

- **Short Bio:** A lifelong Alaskan with experience working in the legislature, tourism industry, and for DCRA. I mostly work with the Bulk Fuel Loan Program, but also get to do some Local Government Assistance work as well. Enjoys visiting favorite communities and helping them solve problems.
- **Currently Working On:** Bulk fuel loans, grant funding, creating accurate monthly financial reports.
- **Weird Facts:** Can't hum while holding my nose closed.



## Anchorage Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



- **Short Bio:** Has a background in early childhood development. In 2023, I shifted career focus and began working with the state. Joined DCRA in 2024 as a LGS (about to hit the 2 year mark!). I love the work, and challenging myself by doing things outside of my comfort zone – also learning new skills! I play rugby in Anchorage for the Arctic Foxes during the summer, I enjoy cooking and baking, and crafting during the winter.
- **Currently Working On:** Assisting in updating codes of varying complexity, a rate study, creating and adopting budgets, and assisting staff on their duties.
- **Weird Fact:** Enjoys seeing the world – standing 6 foot tall!



## Gabriel Gonzales – LGS 3

- **Short Bio:** A retired U.S. Army Master Sergeant and served for 22 years with two combat deployments; 14 years of my service was here in the State of Alaska. My wife Francesca and I recently celebrated our 30-year wedding anniversary, and we have two adult children. Our daughter is in a Graduate program in New York City, and our son serves in the Air Force as a C-130 crew chief. I've worked at all levels of government from municipal, to federal, and now State of Alaska.
- **Currently Working On:** My current community projects include leading the Bulk Fuel Administrative Capacity course, and soon to begin a water utility rate study for an underserved community.
- **Weird Facts:** I can play and sing the entire Willie Nelson catalog on guitar. I'm available for birthday parties, office parties, and bar mitzvahs



### Anchorage Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Breanna Armstrong– LGS 3



- **Short Bio** – Works with communities across the Aleutian Islands, all the way up into the Nome & Kotzebue region. I enjoy getting to meet new community members, traveling Alaska, and teaching the RUBA classes. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family and updating my home.
- **Currently Working On** – A rate study, and a sustainability plan.
- **A weird fact about you-** I play a frog in my weekly DND campaign, and one of my companions is constantly telling me how tasty Frog Legs are... should I be concerned?



### Anchorage Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Eric Bjelland – LGS 3

- **Short Bio:** One of the newest members of the team, I have worked as a LGS for over a year now. I started my working career in retail, moved into the medical field for a short time, and then worked as a Law Office Assistant for about a year with an Administrative Office. I joined DCRA as a LGS in 2024. I am currently in school to earn my Bachelor's degree in Social Work, with the hopes of effecting positive social change at a systemic level. I am an Eagle Scout, a black belt, and passionate about spending time outdoors with my dogs and protecting nature for others. I am privileged to be able to serve Alaskan communities, reaching far from my birthplace of Anchorage.
- **Currently Working On:** Providing training to new council members, assisting in a code update, helping with a collaboration between a city and tribe, and assisting a community with interpreting their code.
- **Weird Facts:** I have recently begun historical fencing, focusing on longsword, and soon to branch into more weapons like saber and spear.



## Anchorage Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Assigned Communities

## Breanna:

- Akhiok
- Chenega
- Chiniak
- Clark's Point
- Eyak
- Funny River
- Karluk
- King Cove
- Kobuk
- Levelock
- Manokotak
- Moose Pass
- Nelson Lagoon
- Nikolski
- Ninilchik
- Old Harbor
- Ouzinkie
- Petersburg
- Shaktoolik
- Slana
- Tolsona
- Wales
- Willow

## Eric:

- Bear Creek
- Chitina
- Cold Bay
- Egegik
- False Pass
- Igiugig
- Iliamna
- Kivalina
- McCarthy
- Meadow Lakes
- Nelchina
- Pedro Bay
- Perryville
- Platinum
- Port Alsworth
- Sand Point
- Silver Springs
- Togiak
- Tonsina
- Twin Hills
- Whittier

## Gabriel:

- Anchor Point
- Beluga
- Buffalo Soapstone
- Chignik
- Chignik Lagoon
- Chignik Lake
- Copper Center
- Gakona
- Kachemak
- Kachemak Selo
- Kokhanok
- Mendeltna
- Newhalen
- Nikolaevsk
- Port Heiden
- Saint George
- Saint Michael
- Saint Paul
- Seldovia
- Teller
- Ugashik
- Voznesenka
- White Mountain

## Lydia:

- Akutan
- Diomedea
- Ekuk
- Glennallen
- Hydaburg
- King Salmon
- Larsen Bay
- McGrath
- Naknek
- Nikolai
- Nondalton
- Trapper Creek

## Trisha:

- Anaktuvuk Pass
- Atkasuk
- Kaktovik
- North Slope Borough
- Nuiqsut
- Point Hope
- Point Lay
- Utqiagvik (Barrow)
- Wainwright

## Sonya:

- Aleutians East Borough
- Anchorage
- Anderson
- Bristol Bay Borough
- Cordova
- Deering
- Denali Borough
- Dillingham
- Fairbanks
- Fairbanks North Star Borough
- Haines Borough
- Homer
- Houston
- Juneau
- Kenai
- Kenai Peninsula Borough
- Ketchikan
- Ketchikan Gateway Borough
- Kodiak
- Kodiak Island Borough
- Kotzebue
- Lake and Peninsula Borough
- Matanuska-Susitna Borough
- Nome
- Northwest Arctic Borough
- Palmer
- Petersburg
- Savoonga
- Seward
- Shishmaref
- Sitka
- Skagway
- Soldotna
- Stebbins
- Unalakleet
- Unalaska
- Valdez
- Wasilla
- Wrangell



## Anchorage Assignments

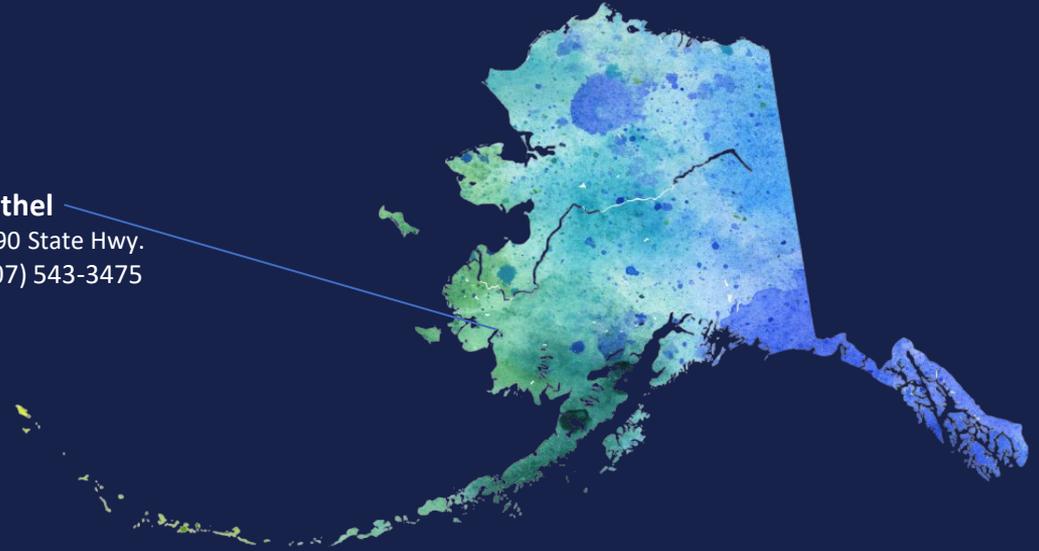
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Bethel Office

## 4 Total LGS/RUBA Staff in the Bethel Office

- Fred Broerman, LGS 4
- Nick Martinez, LGS 3
- David Gardiner, LGS 2
- (Vacancy)

**Bethel**  
1490 State Hwy.  
(907) 543-3475



## Bethel Office

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



- **Short Bio:** I worked as a federal wildlife biologist for 20 years for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM, and U.S. Forest Service in Alaska, California, Florida, and Mississippi focusing on wetlands management and avian/bird research. I've worked with DCRA as a local government specialist in the Bethel office since January 2010.
- **Currently Working On:** Supervising and mentoring local government specialist in field work and on-site visits. Fixing QuickBooks problems, and on-site visits to city and tribal governments to align their QuickBooks chart of accounts to their annual budget account and categories.
- **Weird Fact:** In 2008 and 2009, I went to flight schools in Louisiana and Idaho and earned a commercial helicopter pilot license.



## Bethel Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Nick Martinez – LGS 3

- **Short Bio:** I was born and raised in Colorado and have lived in Bethel for over six years now. I have been an LGS since the end of 2022 and have loved this position. In my free time I enjoy being outdoors and playing any sports.
- **Currently Working On:** Helping some communities gather documents for SAM.gov, update elections ordinances, and assist with FEMA projects
- **Weird Facts:** I am ambidextrous.



### Bethel Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# David Gardiner – LGS 2



- **Short Bio:** The newest LGS! I was born in Providence Lying-Inn Hospital in July 1971 to two loving and caring parents, Frank and Maria Gardiner, of Providence, RI. My father served in the US Army during the Vietnam War and worked as an Accountant/Bookkeeper. My mother worked as a secretary until I was born then she was a stay-at-home mom. From 1971 until 2024, I lived in the state of Rhode Island. From July 2024 until October 2025, lived in Florida. From Oct 2025 until present, I have lived in Bethel, Alaska. I have worked as in retail for over 20 years - a supermarket department head for eight years then a housewares sales representative for nine years. Since about 2018, I have worked as independent contractor customer service rep. for different companies.
- **Currently Working On:** Learning the position, getting to know the communities, and working towards becoming a strong LGS/RUBA team member.
- **Weird Fact:** For my first job, my starting salary was \$3.45!



## Bethel Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Assigned Communities

## Fred:

- Akiachak
- Anvik
- Cheforak
- Chuathbaluk
- Crooked Creek
- Grayling
- Kasigluk
- Kipnuk
- Kotlik
- Lower Kalskag
- Mekoryuk
- Napakiak
- Oscarville
- Shageluk
- Stony River
- Tuntutuliak
- Tununak
- Upper Kalskag

## Nick:

- Alakanuk
- Aniak
- Bethel
- Chevak
- Georgetown
- Kwethluk
- Kwigillingok
- Marshall
- Napaimute
- Napaskiak
- Nightmute
- Nunapitchuk
- Quinhagak
- Red Devil
- Russian Mission
- Scammon Bay
- Sleetmute
- Toksook Bay

## David:

- Akiak
- Andreefsky
- Atmautluak
- Eek
- Emmonak
- Goodnews Bay
- Holy Cross
- Hooper Bay
- Kongiganak
- Lime Village
- Mertarvik
- Mountain Village
- Newtok
- Nunam Iqua
- Pilot Station
- Pitkas Point
- Saint Mary's
- Tuluksak



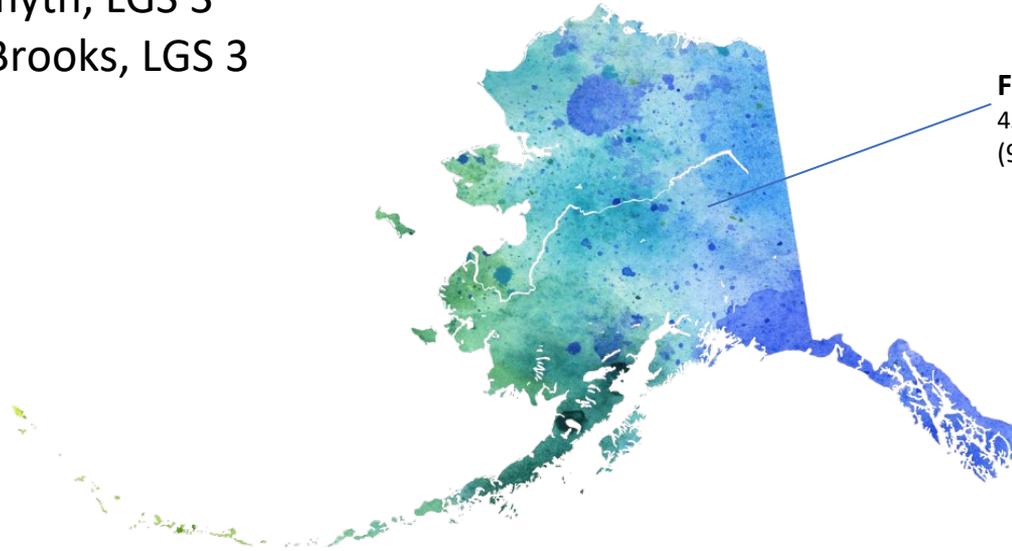
## Bethel Assignments

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Fairbanks Office

## 3 Total LGS/RUBA Staff in the Fairbanks Office

- Brendan Smyth, LGS 3
- Catherine Brooks, LGS 3
- (Vacancy)



### **Fairbanks**

455 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Suite 140  
(907) 451-2716

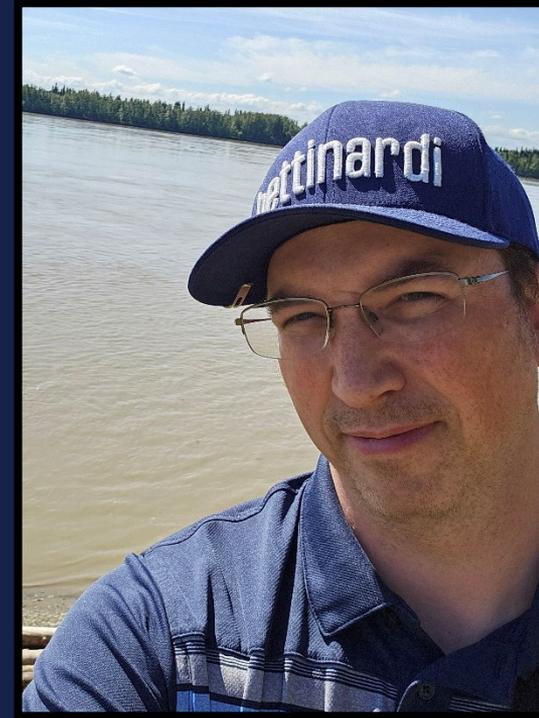


## Fairbanks Office

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Brendan Smyth – LGS 3

- **Short Bio:** Born and raised in Fairbanks, working with the state since 2009. Enjoy reading, board games, video games, hunting and fishing if I can find the time. Have an amazing wife and 2 kids age 4 and 6. Enjoy world traveling with them with a recent trip to Scotland.
- **Currently Working On:** A rate study and code book revamps with communities.
- **Weird Facts:** I enjoy random music genres!



### Fairbanks Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Catherine Brooks – LGS 3



- **Short Bio:** An Associate Professor Emeritus of Rural Development at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and currently serves as a Local Government Specialist in Fairbanks, Alaska. I hold a master’s degree in Agricultural and Extension Education from Penn State and has extensive experience in rural development, leadership training, and community engagement. I have taught and mentored students for over a decade, served as department co-chair, and led research projects focused on cultural resilience and Indigenous leadership. I am also co-owner of Write22 and author of *Sirens: Unpacking Painful Past Experiences to Lead to Better Relationships, Communication, and Healing*.
- **Currently Working On:** Updating codes; rate studies; council meetings and communication – including holding regular meetings and including water operator and financial reports; project reviews, and new clerk training
- **Weird Fact:** I have a metal plate in my wrist after falling and breaking it while changing a light bulb



## Fairbanks Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Assigned Communities

## Brendan:

- Alatna
- Allakaket
- Arctic Village
- Big Delta
- Birch Creek
- Brevig Mission
- Buckland
- Delta Junction
- Eagle City
- Eagle Village
- Elim
- Fort Greely
- Galena
- Golovin
- Healy
- Healy Lake
- Hughes
- Koyuk
- Koyukuk
- Nenana
- Noatak
- North Pole
- Nulato
- Tanacross
- Tanana

## Catherine:

- Ambler
- Beaver
- Bettles
- Cantwell
- Chalkyitsik
- Circle
- Deltana
- Dot Lake
- Dry Creek
- Evansville
- Fort Yukon
- Gambell
- Gold Sand Acres
- Huslia
- Kaltag
- Kiana
- Manley Hot Springs
- Minto
- Noorvik
- Northway Village
- Rampart
- Ruby
- Selawik
- Shungnak
- Stevens Village
- Tetlin
- Tok
- Venetie



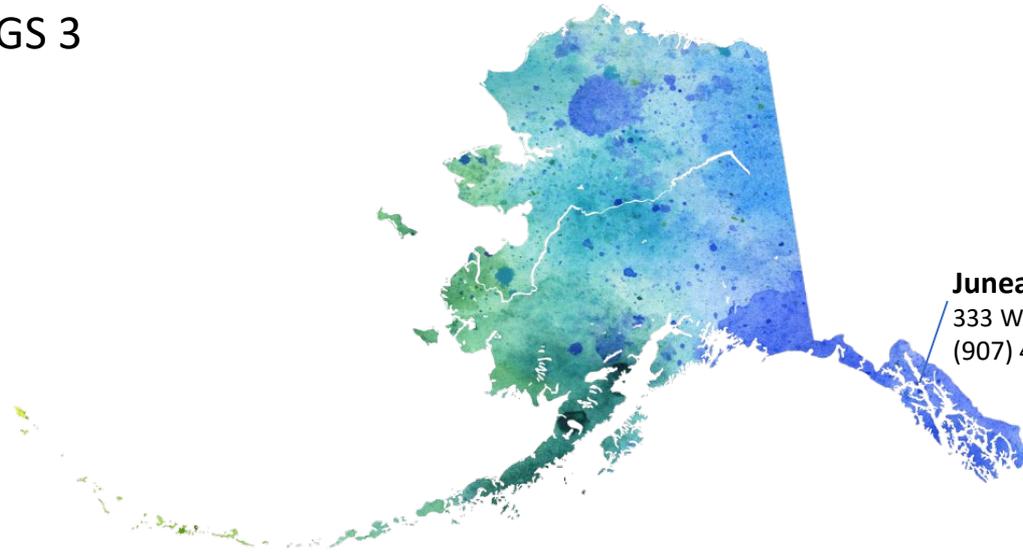
## Fairbanks Assignments

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Juneau Office

## 1 LGS/RUBA Staff in the Juneau Office

- Iura Leahu, LGS 3



### Juneau

333 Willoughby Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
(907) 465-5541



## Juneau Office

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Iura Leahu – LGS 3

- **Short Bio:** I was born in Moldova, in the former USSR. I immigrated to the United States in 1999. I earned a degree in Legal Studies and Alternative Dispute Resolution from the University of Wisconsin in 2004 and a Master of Public Administration from Ball State University in 2006. My professional career began in Washington, D.C., where I managed a housing immigration program. I moved to Alaska in 2007 and transitioned to the Division of Community and Regional Affairs in 2010.
- **Currently Working On:** Managing multiple rate studies, assisting communities with governance transitions, and am readily available to the communities I serve!
- **Weird Facts:** my son and I were both born on the 17th, so our birthdays always land on the same day of the week. Different *months, same calendar magic, every single year!*



Juneau Staff

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Assigned Communities

## Iura:

- Angoon
- Big Salt
- Coffman Cove
- Craig
- Edna Bay
- Ekwok
- Elfin Cove
- Gustavus
- Hollis
- Hoonah
- Hyder
- Kake
- Kasaan
- Klawock
- Klawock Lake
- Klukwan
- Kupreanof
- Metlakatla
- Naukati Bay
- New Stuyahok
- Pelican
- Pilot Point
- Point Baker
- Port Alexander
- Port Protection
- Portage Creek
- Saxman
- South Naknek
- Tenakee Springs
- Thorne Bay
- Whale Pass
- Yakutat



## Juneau Assignments

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Vacancies

## 5 Vacancies

- Fairbanks – 1 position
- Nome – 2 positions
- Bethel – 1 position
- Dillingham – 1 position

### Nome

103 Front St., Suite 220  
(907) 443-5457

### Bethel

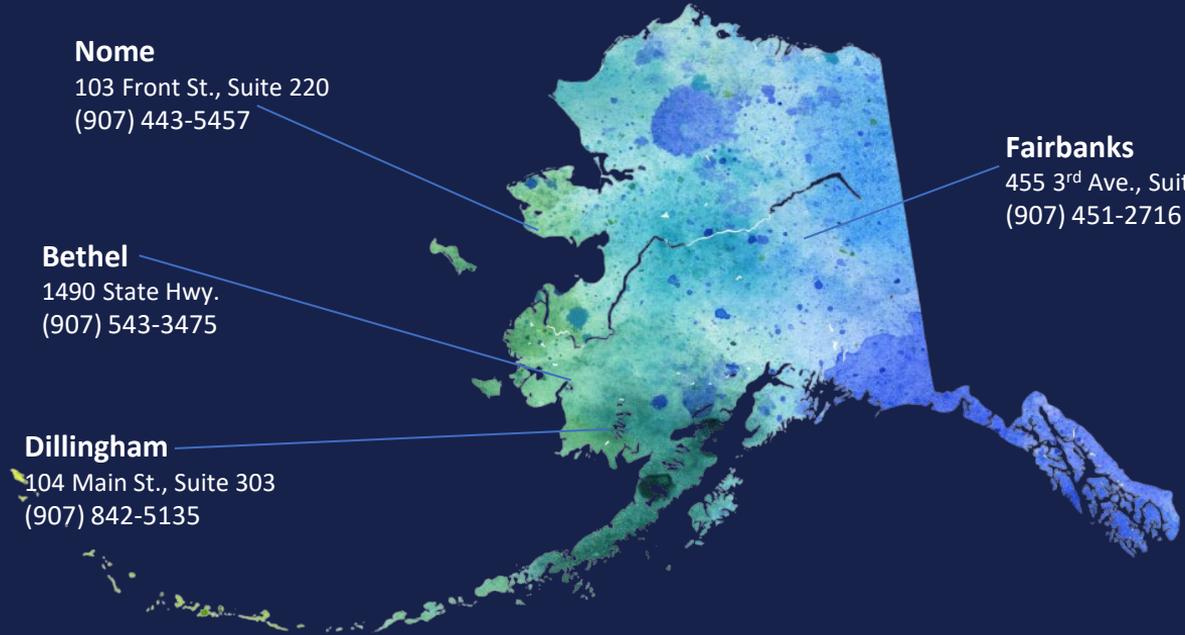
1490 State Hwy.  
(907) 543-3475

### Dillingham

104 Main St., Suite 303  
(907) 842-5135

### Fairbanks

455 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Suite 140  
(907) 451-2716



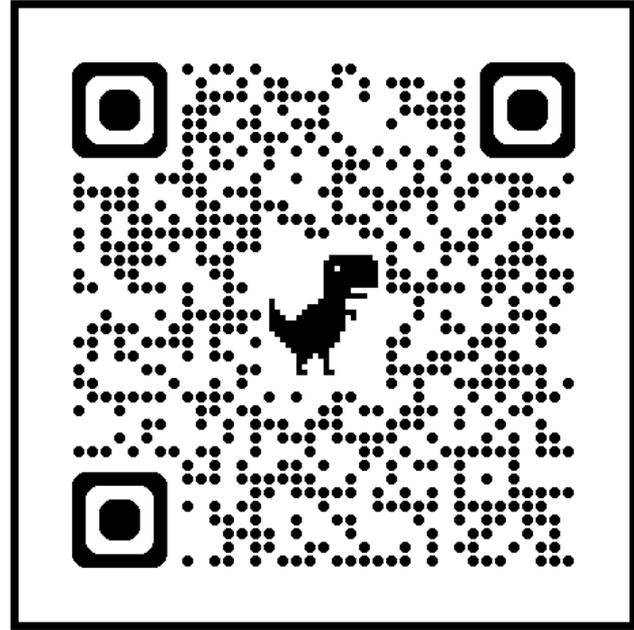
## Vacancies

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Want to Become a LGS?

As a Local Government Specialist, you'll be part of a supportive team, whether you're collaborating in-person or connecting remotely. You'll have freedom to work independently, take initiative, and thrive in a positive workplace. We're all about teamwork, but we trust you to lead yourself!

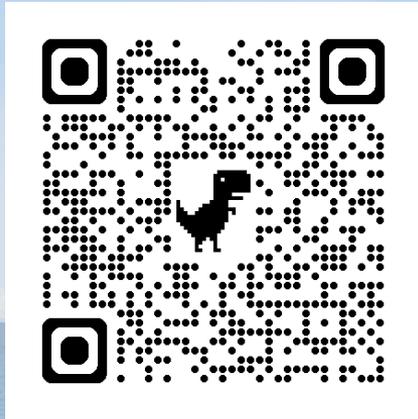
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/jobopenings>



## Become a LGS

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Find Your Local Government Specialist Here:



<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/31fa8f111aca4b5499167fb63762a3d9/>



Thank you!

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2/19/2026