



NATIVE VILLAGE OF KOTZEBUE

PO Box 296, Kotzebue, Alaska 99752
(907) 442-3467 • www.kotzebueira.org

Tribal Government serving the Iñupiaq people of Qikiqtaġruk.

“FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE”

Contact:

Chad Nordlum, Energy Project Manager
Native Village of Kotzebue
907-442-3467

Department Of Energy Grants

Native Village of Kotzebue \$3 Million For Renewable Energy Project

Kotzebue, Alaska – Sept. 17, 2024 – The Native Village of Kotzebue has been awarded a \$3,350,000 grant from the Department of Energy for a critical future infrastructure project: Advancing Self-Determination through Tribal Solar in Northern Alaska. Funded through the DOE’s Communities Sparking Investments in Transformative Energy and new [Local Government Energy Program](#), C-SITE supports the implementation of high-impact clean energy projects in disadvantaged communities, [energy communities](#), and small- and medium-sized jurisdictions. Through LGEP, local governments including federally recognized Tribal Governments are developing programs that provide direct community benefits, spark additional investments, meet community-identified priorities, and build local capacity.

“It’s fantastic to see our little tribe above the Arctic Circle getting this kind of national recognition from the Department of Energy – it is a big step forward and just the beginning of some exciting developments,” says Christina Hensley, Executive Director, Native Village of Kotzebue.

“This opportunity will assist our Elders and residents within the Kotzebue community with energy conservation and electrification improvements that in the long run will reduce energy costs, improve health outcomes, and potentially help to offset future energy cost increases,” added Hensley.

NVOK, in collaboration with Kotzebue Electric Association and other local partners, will invest in local, tribally produced renewable solar energy to improve resilience and reduce local energy costs. The 2-year construction plan anticipated to begin Spring of 2025.

— More —

Part of a \$31 million allocation by the Biden-Harris administration aligned with its [investing in America](#) agenda, the program supports transformative clean energy projects led by Tribal and local governments. NVOK is one of [12 Tribal](#) government entities across the nation receiving grants within the first round of funding.

“Because of the high cost of energy in rural Alaska, we have been looking at renewable energy options for the Tribe for the last two years and this utility scale project, designed specifically for rural and disadvantaged communities, is a perfect fit,” says Chad Nordlum, Energy Project Manager, Native Village of Kotzebue.

The grant supports a solar array of 700 KW, anticipated to provide renewable energy production for more than 30 years. The grant also allows the engagement of a DOE-sponsored [Community Energy Fellow](#), who will provide technical assistance and project implementation. The clean energy professional, located in Kotzebue for 18 months, will help build capacity and support the project with expertise that will enhance the skill sets and knowledge of the NVOK team.

“Solar panels fit together somewhat like Lego pieces so enhancing capacity is an achievable future goal and part of our sustainability planning. We are also exploring additional renewable energy options such as battery storage at individual homes, which would add important resiliency and increase energy security,” adds Nordlum.

C-SITE was launched with a goal to fund projects that spark additional investments in communities and deliver direct benefits to workers and residents, such as workforce agreements and protections, reduced energy costs, improved air quality, and improved quality of life.

“The Biden-Harris administration is committed to ensuring that every community in the country is able to take advantage of the benefits of the clean energy economy,” said U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer M. Granholm.

“By investing in energy projects in smaller, disadvantaged, and energy transition communities, these grants will reduce energy costs, increase resilience and create jobs and economic opportunity in places that have historically been left behind by federal programs.”

In addition to the grant awarded to the NVOK, the remaining 11 C-Site [selectees include](#) City of Chattanooga, TN, Town of Greenville, FL, Hennepin County, MN, City of Highland Park, MI, Hopi Utilities Corporation in Arizona, City of Milwaukee, WI, City of New Orleans, LA, Orick Community Services District, CA, Raton Public Service Company in Raton, NM, Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians in Minnesota, and Region Five Development Commission, MN.

For more details, visit the [Local Government Energy Program website](#).

###

