



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

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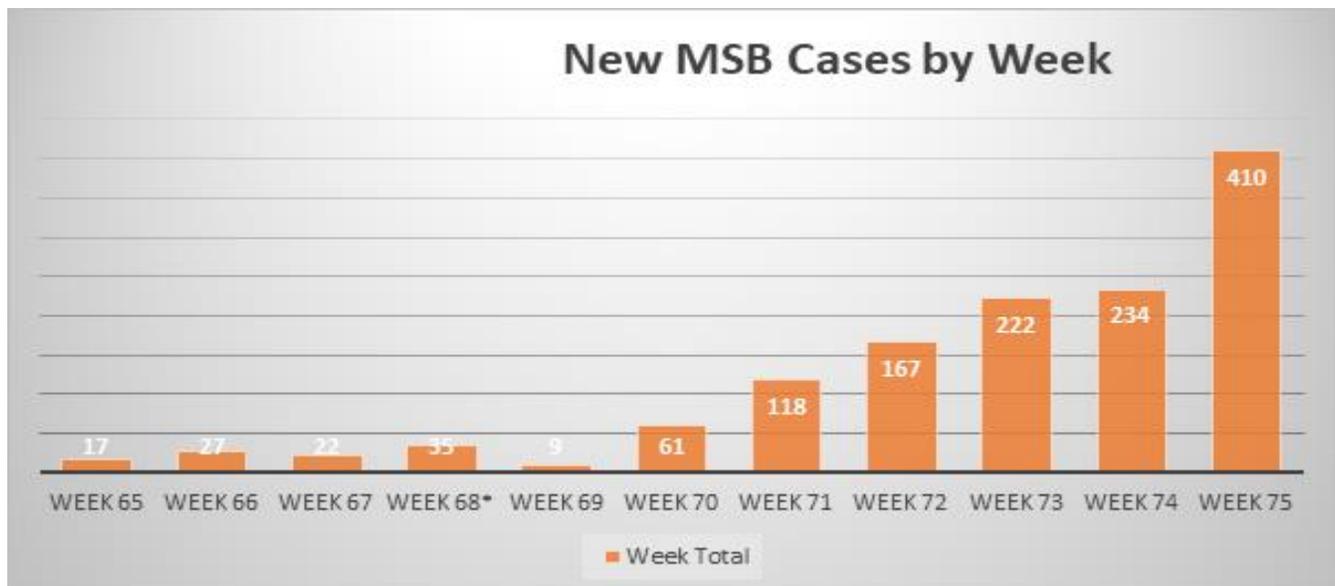
Mike.Brown@matsugov.us

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 24, 2021
TO: Mayor and Assembly
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

September Assembly Meetings: In addition to the two regular meetings in September, there is a Joint Assembly / School Board meeting on September 14, 2021. The Joint meeting will provide updates on enrollment, District capital/construction plan, and school site selection. At the September 21 regular meeting, proposed changes to the Borough's timber regulations will be introduced for public hearing on October 5. Additionally, we are tentatively planning for an update on the West Susitna Access Road project at the September 21 meeting.

COVID-19 Update: COVID-19 cases in the valley continue to increase. Our Department of Emergency Services have increased their preventative measures for first responders to protect the workforce and their families and to ensure we are able to maintain operations.



State Redistricting: State Redistricting efforts are underway with the recent release of census data. The State Redistricting Board will treat August 12, 2021 as the starting point for its 90-day process to adopt a redistricting plan. The Board anticipates publishing one or more proposed plans no later than September 11, 2021, and will adopt its final proclamation plan no later than November 10, 2021.

A draft MSB plan will be presented to the Assembly for consideration at the September 7, 2021 regular meeting as a resolution. This will allow the Assembly to produce a plan to inform the State process. A link to the State Redistricting population update is available at <https://www.akredistrict.org/alaska-population/>. Additionally a public mapping tool is available to provide the public a user-friendly way to start drawing their own maps using the same geographic and population information as the Board. The tool uses a “paint brush” approach to color in census blocks with real time updates of the population of each proposed district showing how it compares to the “ideal” district population of 18,335. You can also add “data layers” to see existing boundaries such as current legislative districts, school districts and municipalities. The tool is available at www.akredistrict.org/create.

September is National Preparedness Month: The 13th Annual Emergency Preparedness Expo will be held on September 25, 2021, from 10am to 3pm at the Menard Sports Complex. It is a free safety fair sponsored by the Mat-Su Borough, AARP Alaska, The American Red Cross, Mat-Su Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and the City of Wasilla. This allows the public to interact with a wide variety of emergency preparedness, response and recovery agencies and organizations. The public is encouraged to come get ‘Mat-Su Ready’ in person at the expo or online at <https://ready.matsugov.us/>. This 2021 National Preparedness Month theme is “Prepare to Protect. Preparing for disasters is protecting everyone you love.” This free, family-friendly event will feature:

- Interactive games and activities
- Disaster preparedness kit demos
- Disaster services displays
- Informative presentations
- Direct to consumer sales
- Youth Poster Contest
- Door Prizes
- First 100 adults through the door will receive free giveaway bags

Highlights this year will also include a LifeMed Helicopter touching down, demos by several fire departments, hands only CPR tutorials and food trucks!

Anchorage Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) Economic Outlook: Below are a few highlights from the recent AEDC 2021 three-year economic outlook report released on August 4, 2021. The full report is available at <https://aedcweb.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AEDC-2021-3-Year-Outlook-Report.pdf>.

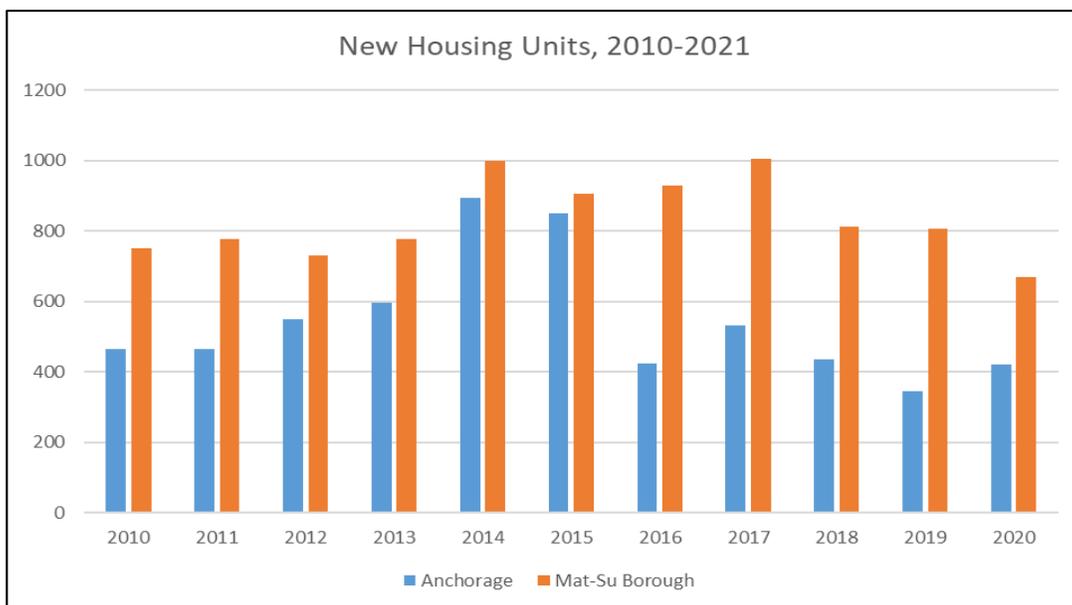
Anchorage entered 2020 with an expectation that the four-year slide in employment, totaling 6,000 lost jobs, would finally come to an end. COVID-19 laid waste to the modest hope that the Anchorage

economy would be stable (or even grow) in 2020. Anchorage lost 8.2% of its employment base in 2020, on an average monthly basis, or 12,292 jobs. The latest available monthly employment estimates, for June 2021, show employment up 7,700 jobs from June 2020 but still 10,000 jobs below June 2019.

AEDC expects the Anchorage economy to add 3,200 jobs in 2022, another 2,800 jobs in 2023, then another 2,300 jobs in 2024. The 2024 forecast of 149,800 jobs leaves total employment about 300 jobs below the 2019 pre-pandemic job count. Strongest growth expected is in the transportation sector, related mainly to new employment at ANC. The leisure and hospitality sector will also see strong growth as visitor traffic gradually returns to pre-pandemic levels.

The number of unemployed individuals in Anchorage peaked at 21,231 in May 2020. In 2020, unemployment insurance (UI) benefits paid to Anchorage claimants (including regular and federally funded extended benefits), totaled \$307 million, a massive increase from \$22 million in 2019. At the peak of UI claims, in May 2020, unemployment benefits replaced about 68% of earnings for recipients. By April 2021, claims had declined to about one-third of May 2020 levels. In June 2021, Alaska ended its participation in the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, which paid a weekly \$300 supplemental benefit to unemployment claimants.

AEDC anticipates Anchorage will add about 400 housing units in 2021. With about 117,000 housing units in the current inventory, the annual rate of housing construction has hovered around 0.3% for the last several years and multi-family units have accounted for about half of all new units. In 2020, Anchorage added 420 housing units, about 75 units more than in 2019. The rate of new units added is still well below the pre-recession high of 894 in 2014. Multi-family projects accounted for 197 new units, while 210 single-family homes were added in 2021. The number of housing units added in Mat-Su fell for a third consecutive year from a high of 1,005 in 2017 to 668 units in 2020 but remained above those added in Anchorage. Single-family homes continue to represent a higher share of construction in Mat-Su (89%) compared to Anchorage (50%).



Alaska North Slope (ANS) crude oil prices have recovered from historic lows seen in 2020. Through the first half of 2021, ANS market prices averaged \$65 per barrel with further recovery expected, bringing the expected average price to \$69 per barrel by December. Over the next several years, increased oil production is expected to outpace global demand, exerting downward pressure on prices. Given this trajectory, ANS crude is projected to sell for \$70, \$66, and \$63 per barrel in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively.

After experiencing oil price driven production cuts during the pandemic, ANS production has increased in 2021 for the first time in four years. Average ANS production is forecasted at 482,000 bpd for 2021, an increase of 2.2% from 2020. In 2022, oil production is expected to drop to 459,700 bpd and then rise to 476,600 and 502,400 in 2023 and 2024, respectively. These projections assume companies will continue to invest in developments on the North Slope, and that production in key units, including National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) and Point Thompson, will increase.

The recent Anchorage Consumer Optimism Index survey for the second quarter of 2021 of 600 Anchorage citizens produced a score of 54.4 on a scale of 100 trending toward optimistic. This is up 5.4 points from last quarter and is the highest score since the fourth quarter of 2019.

The mismatch between labor supply and demand is a key challenge. This has been an underlying issue in Anchorage for many years, though the challenge was mainly in professional services and highly skilled trade occupations. Today the challenge is spread across most sectors of the economy. We expect to see more people returning to work as the need for wage income returns. But it may take years for labor supply and demand to return to a pre-pandemic balance. Importantly, we need to turn the ebbing tide of population. The more attractive we can make Anchorage as a place to live, work, and eventually retire, the better off we will be.

Public Affairs Media Flyover:

Schools

[*Bus routes suspended at numerous **Mat-Su** schools as coronavirus spread causes driver shortage*](#)

[***Mat-Su** is state's only large school **district** on the Railbelt bucking federal requirement for ...*](#)

Assembly

[*Assembly passes road bond | Local News Stories | **frontiersman.com***](#)

Covid

[***Mat-Su** Regional becomes latest in Alaska to fill with COVID-19 Patients*](#)

[***Mat-Su** shows highest single-day COVID-19 case count since March - **KTNA 88.9 FM***](#)

Economic Development

[*Census data show population growth throughout Susitna **Valley** - **KTNA 88.9 FM***](#)

[***Idita-Wash** welcomed into the community with ribbon-cutting ceremony | **Business** | **frontiersman.com***](#)

[*A new era in Palmer*](#)

Federal Government

[*Alaska gets a much-needed win with federal infrastructure bill*](#)

Borough Facebook Posts

[*Trapper Creek Watering Point Ribbon Cutting*](#) – 6k reached

[*New Denali View Walking Trail nears completion in Talkeetna*](#)- 16k reached

[*Lake Louise Recreational Site Ribbon Cutting*](#)- 13.5k reached



FREE Emergency Preparedness Expo

Saturday, September 25th, 2021 - 10 am - 3 pm
Menard Sports Center
1001 S. Clapp St, Wasilla

Are You Mat-Su Ready?



- More than 50 indoor/outdoor exhibits
- Emergency preparedness supplies
- Poster contest - Games - Prizes
- Earthquake Simulator
- Food trucks on site
- Door prizes and MORE



Watch live demonstrations
by First Responders, LifeMed Helicopter &
Hands only CPR

ready.matsugov.us

