



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

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Manager's Quarterly Activity Report

July, August, September 2024

Community Development

Parks Recreation and Library Services

The seasonal teams have concluded summer operations and year-round staff are now transitioning to winter preparations. As of September 15, all maintained lake access points were closed, with Matanuska River Park and Campground and Talkeetna Campground closing on September 22.

Facilities and trails experienced significant use throughout the summer, and maintenance and repair work continued alongside efforts to develop new opportunities. Staff are compiling and analyzing summer data for inclusion in the Quarter 4 report. Initial findings indicate high usage at Jim Creek trailhead, which recorded more daily visits than any other trailhead combined weekly. The number of purchased Borough Annual Trail Passes has surpassed 4,000 and is projected to exceed 4,200 this year. Visits to West Butte Trail increased from 7,000 in 2017 to a projected 38,000 in 2024. Additionally, water usage for restroom facilities in Talkeetna rose by over 35% compared to 2023, with an estimated 1,000 people using these facilities daily.

The Parks Crew, in collaboration with the Lands and Resource Management team, completed the first phase of a new parking lot at Settler's Bay Coastal Park to support trail access in the northern section of the park. This project was funded by the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation and provides access to the 187-acre park extension. Fish Creek/Jay Nolfi Park also completed construction on a paved pedestrian pathway to the fish viewing platform and installed a new playground this fall.

The Trails Crew primarily focused on high-use areas in the core region and conducted a support operation in Talkeetna. Establishing a camp at the Northern Park Shop has enhanced support for the Northern Parks and Recreation staff.

In response to Assembly requests for increased weekly offerings at the Borough pools, staff efforts this summer focused on recruitment and retention, leading to full staffing of permanent positions for the first time in over two years. This has enabled the expansion of Learn to Swim classes and extended pool hours to six days a week at both locations. Repairs to the Wasilla Pool drain and backwash pit are scheduled to begin in January, requiring a temporary closure. Extended hours and additional days at Palmer Pool have been planned to accommodate the public during this period.

Fall hockey programs are underway at the Brett Memorial Ice Arena, with adult and youth leagues, skating programs, and open skate sessions in full swing. A new piece of equipment was added to the Zamboni, utilizing "Level Ice Cutting Technology" to achieve a consistently level ice surface.

Summer reading programs at all five libraries concluded at the start of the school year, with after-school reading programs now in session. During the third quarter, book reconsideration requests were filed at each library, and staff met with patrons to address these concerns. Where appropriate, materials were reshelved based on these discussions, while other requests have been referred to the Library Citizens' Advisory Committee for further review.

Land & Resource Management

ADL Land Purchase: In September, staff finalized an all-cash sale of a leased Alaska Department of Lands (ADL) parcel, leaving only one remaining ADL lease. Staff will contact the final lessee to assess their interest in purchasing the land rights before renegotiating new lease terms.

Farm Leases: Two farmhouses in Point MacKenzie are approaching the end of their lease terms on December 31, 2024. The tenants have been informed that the leases will not be renewed, and they are expected to vacate by the end of the year. Once vacant, the parcels will be listed for sale, likely in the spring. The current hay permit will either be reassigned or terminated at the time of sale.

Permits/Leases

- *Verizon Wireless Shampine @ Station 7-2*: This site is currently undergoing appraisal to determine the market lease rate for a telecom location. The appraisal is expected to be completed by December 2024, with legislation to be presented to the Assembly in the first quarter of 2025.
- *First Cingular Wireless/AT&T Snowgoose @ Colony Middle School*: This site is pending Borough approval for a telecom lease. The appraisal is complete, and a lease agreement is in negotiation. Planning is reviewing the site's proximity to the school and nearby homes.
- *Mahay's Jetboat Adventures*: The permit is up for renewal, and Mahay's has submitted a new application. The Borough is awaiting survey instructions from the State of Alaska to move forward. Once the land survey and appraisal are complete, Mahay's will be offered either a long-term permit (10+ years) or the option to purchase the property.

Agricultural Lands

- *Northern Lights Elk Ranch*: Two applications are under review: one for the construction of a second residence (a yurt) for a family member, and another for a re-plat to build a residence on a separate agricultural parcel.
- *Title 13 to Title 23 Ag Conversion*: Staff is working on an application to convert an agricultural parcel to fee simple ownership with agricultural covenants as outlined by code. Legislation is expected to be presented to the Assembly in October.
- *Agricultural Advisory Board*: During the September meeting, the Board decided to prepare a recommendation for the Assembly to consider revising the current Borough code to permit parcels smaller than 40 acres.

Competitive Land Sale: The Competitive Land Sale is scheduled to begin on November 4, 2024, with online bidding starting on November 18th and closing on December 3rd. A brochure will be available from November 4th through December 3rd on the Public Surplus website.

Platting: The lot line for the Stringfield Subdivision is being adjusted to resolve a setback issue on Borough-owned property. This adjustment pertains to the new Mat-Su Central School location. The adjustment was

approved by the Platting Officer in August, and staff is working with the surveyor to complete the conditions of approval. Staff continues to assist Windsong Subdivision owners in participating in the lot line elimination program, which combines Borough easement lots with private lots.

Municipal Entitlement Land (MEL): Staff initiated the process to survey approximately 1,923 acres of MEL land north of Talkeetna in the Chase area to obtain a patent from the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. This process is expected to take several years, with the land being transferred to the Borough upon completion of the survey.

Easement Requests

- *Big Lake Library Property*: Public Works requested a drainage easement to address area drainage issues. The easement was recorded in July.
- *Fronteras Charter School and Public Safety Building, Station 6-5*: Enstar Natural Gas requested utility easements to upgrade natural gas facilities as part of the Seward Meridian Road project. The easements were approved and recorded in August.
- *Matanuska Electric Association (MEA)*: MEA requested a public utility easement at Fire Station 6-2 Subdivision to bury power lines following damage to existing power lines from snow accumulation. This Borough project is currently in progress.

Land Requests

- *City of Houston*: The City of Houston has requested the conveyance of a Borough-owned property at the intersection of the Parks Highway and Zero Lake Road for a future train depot, to be transferred at less than fair market value for a public purpose. Legislation will be submitted to the Assembly this fall.
- *Louise/Susitna/Tyone Community Association*: The Association is seeking to acquire the Matthews Public Safety Building (Station 1-5) and five acres in the Lake Louise area. A Right-of-Entry was issued in August to assess the feasibility of repairing or replacing the compromised building structure.

Classification: The Department of Emergency Services has proposed classifying a portion of Borough-owned property on Bogard Road as reserved use for a future fire station. The plan is to consolidate and relocate Public Safety Buildings 5-2 and 6-5 (fire division only) into one facility.

Earth Materials: Several material sale contracts were issued for a total of 3,597 yards from the Alsop Pit and Beaver Pit to local contractors for development projects. The total commercial royalty value of these sales is \$11,472. The Alsop Pit was expanded to its full permitted capacity, providing access to an estimated 185,000 additional yards of Class A fill, which is expected to sustain local construction material needs for another seven years.

Timber: Three new timber sales were developed, covering 1,000 acres west of the Little Susitna River, 17 acres off Burma Road, and 28 acres off Carat Street near Big Lake. Active timber salvage operations are ongoing at multiple sites, including Susitna River, Baker Farm Road, Burma Road, Alsop A B, and Mule Creek. The Susitna River harvest is nearing completion, with only a few loads left for removal.

The Saw Crew built new slash piles at facilities with ongoing fuel reduction work, including Houston High and Su Valley High School. Staff is also identifying additional road-accessible timber harvests on Borough land.

Planning Department

Permit Center

Applications received by the Permit Center in the past 90 days:

- *Construction* – 16
- *Driveway* – 427
- *Encroachment* – 9
- *Utility* – 162
- *ROW Complaints* – 233

Code Compliance

Activity in the past 90 days:

Case Type	Number of Cases
Active	732
Closed	136
New Cases Opened	147

Current Planning

Applications received in the last 90 days:

- (1) Marijuana Retail Facility Permit
- (5) Multifamily Development Permits
- (2) Tall Structure Conditional Use Permit
- (12) Floodplain Development Permit

MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission: Although the Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) typically does not meet from June through August, the commissioners decided to continue meeting regularly throughout the summer due to several pending deadlines. This included a special meeting to discuss the West Susitna Access Road project, during which the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities project team was invited to attend the October meeting for a more in-depth discussion.

The FWC approved a revised Capital Projects Submission and Information System (CAPSIS) request, which aligns with the fishery protection priorities outlined in the FY25 State Legislative Priorities. The commission has also sought a Stock of Yield Concern status for Susitna king salmon following another year of poor returns. In addition, Mat-Su legislators submitted a Stock of Yield Concern request for Little Susitna coho salmon, which the FWC reviewed and supported. On October 1, the Mat-Su Borough Assembly passed a resolution supporting these requests, which will be considered at the Board of Fisheries work session on October 29-30 in Anchorage.

The FWC is actively monitoring the upcoming Prince William Sound and Upper Copper Board of Fish proposals, as these fisheries are also interesting to Mat-Su anglers. The commission is also reviewing newly released Central Region Board of Game proposals and preparing to host the annual Fishing Season Summary with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Sub-Area Solutions Studies: The draft Bogard/Seldon Corridor Access Management Plan (CAMP) has been completed and is scheduled for public release on October 9, 2024. An overview of the plan was presented to the

Transportation Advisory Board on September 20 and the North Lakes Community Council on September 26. Upcoming public engagement includes presentations to various committees, a joint meeting with the Planning Commission/Assembly, and an open house on November 6, 2024. The public comment period will run from October 9 to December 3, 2024.

The Planning and Public Works Departments are reviewing the draft Fishhook Triangle Sub-Area Study to identify borough-wide recommendations.

School Walking Routes: The School Walking Routes Committee completed updates to the Mat-Su Borough School District (MSBSD) elementary school route maps and delivered them to the district in August 2024. A new Mat-Su Borough website was created to host maps for all traditional public elementary schools. Each school now has a link to these maps through the "Find My School" feature on the MSB homepage. The MSBSD has not yet finalized how to share these maps with school communities. The maps can be accessed at: [MSB School Routes](#).

South Knik River Community Council: Staff developed a new website for the South Knik River (SKR) Community Council Special Use District (SpUD) project: sknikriverspud.matsugov.us. A new policy was introduced, outlining three levels of Borough assistance for Community Councils to create a Community Comprehensive Plan or SpUD. The Planning Commission adopted Resolution 24-21, recommending the Assembly implement the policy with Option 3, establishing an official MSB Board as the sole level of support. The Assembly approved a motion for staff to assist the South Knik River Community Council in drafting a SpUD.

South Lakes Community Council Reactivation Request: The Assembly adopted RS 24-067 on August 6, 2024 reactivating the South Lakes Community Council.

Planning Department Capital Improvement Program (CIP): Mat-Su Borough staff have updated the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) website and related resources to share the Scoring Committee's results. The site now includes a nomination form, instructions, and examples from FY26 for public review and submission of FY27 nominations. Submissions for the FY27 CIP cycle are due by August 1, 2025. Nominations received after this deadline will be considered in the following year's CIP cycle.

Fuller Lake, Lake Management Plan (LMP): Mat-Su Borough staff received a valid petition and majority ballot vote from shoreline parcel owners to initiate the Lake Management Plan (LMP) process. The next step is to hold a public meeting to discuss current lake issues and develop a draft management plan based on input from residents and the public. The first meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at the Wasilla Public Library.

Waterbody Setback Advisory Board: The Waterbody Setback Advisory Board convened six times this quarter and has received an extension until March 2025. The Board is working to finalize all proposed amendments to the original ordinance. Once approved, the updated ordinance will be distributed to the public and community councils for review, allowing for comments and suggested changes.

Port MacKenzie

Vessel Traffic: During July, August, and September, the barge dock and barge bow ramp berth experienced consistent vessel traffic. In July, the port supported the pile sleeve construction project, accommodating vessels associated with the project, including a heavy lift barge, tug, and dive boat.

August saw increased activity with four load-outs conducted for Western Construction & Equipment, which included transporting rock, equipment, and supplies for a large fish culvert project in Tyonek. Additionally, two load-outs were conducted for Alaska Crane to support a maintenance project for Fire Island Wind LLC.

In September, the port facilitated three more load-outs with Alaska Crane for the Fire Island project and coordinated with TC Construction and Boyer Marine to transport modular homes for a project in western Alaska.

Maintenance: In July and August, Western Marine Construction installed pile sleeves on 32 piles of the deep-draft dock and placed anodes on all 64 deep-draft dock piles as well as the barge dock's sheet pile face bulkhead to enhance cathodic protection. The contractor completed the work in late August, three weeks ahead of schedule, and began demobilizing gear and equipment from the port.

In July, the port received a draft "Barge Dock Condition Assessment" report from Moffit & Nichol, which outlined the current condition of the barge dock and provided recommendations for future improvements.

Conveyor: In September, Northern Gravel and Trucking, a port terminal operator, began reassembling a 500-foot section of conveyor on the trestle of the deep-draft dock. The operator also utilized two 125-foot sections of portable conveyor and a radial stacker to offload bulk salt from a cargo ship arriving from Mexico.

Grants: With the completion of the EDA-funded "Pile Sleeve Protection Project," the focus has shifted to meeting ongoing grant reporting requirements. In September, the port received an executed grant agreement from the Maritime Administration (MARAD) under the U.S. Marine Highway Program for the acquisition of a mobile harbor crane. Currently, there are pending grant applications for the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) and U.S. Marine Highway Program (MARAD), as well as port security funding through FEMA.

The Alaska Railroad has also applied to the Federal Railroad Administration for funding under the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program, with a decision expected in fall 2024.

Port Commission: The Port Commission Chair is Dane Crowley, and Vice Chair is Fred Elvsaa. The newest member is Christopher Gerteisen, CEO of Nova Minerals.

Barge Haul Out Ramp: The design, engineering, and permitting for the proposed barge haul-out ramp are being conducted by Moffat & Nichol. As of September, the project has reached 65% design completion.

Business Development and Marketing: The Borough is currently exploring the following opportunities:

- **Contractor Use of Port MacKenzie Docks** - Two major contractors have inquired about using the port long-term as a staging and laydown area for the upcoming Port of Alaska (Anchorage) modernization construction project.
- **Hydrogen Fuel Development** - Five companies, DG Fuels, Knik Energy LLC, Pacific H2, HIF Global, and BAC Global, have submitted applications for land use authorizations to conduct due diligence activities related to hydrogen-based fuel production and storage.
- **U.S. Department of Defense** - The Department of Defense has continued evaluating Port MacKenzie for potential use in training exercises and offloading ammunition and explosive ordinances. Site visits were conducted at the port in July, August, and September.

- **MARAD Grant** - In fall 2023, Port MacKenzie was awarded a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Marine Highway Program to purchase a 75-ton rough terrain crane to support freight and cargo handling activities. The grant agreement for acquiring a mobile harbor crane was finalized in September.
- **Website Update**
The Port MacKenzie website has been updated, including a new domain name:
<https://portmackenzie.matsugov.us>.

Public Works Department

Project Management Division

Port MacKenzie Pile Sleeve Pile Project: The EDA-funded project has been completed. The scope of work included installing sacrificial anodes on the barge dock and all 64 piles to provide cathodic protection for the in-water port assets. Additionally, prior to the installation of 32 pile sleeves on the deep draft dock piles, existing collar welds on several piles were cleaned and re-welded.

Welch Road Erosion Repairs, RSA 28: An emergency repair was conducted to address a slope failure of the road embankment adjacent to the Little Susitna River at Welch Road, where there is a nearly 40-foot vertical drop between the river and the road. The repair involved relocating utilities, constructing a temporary bypass road, and building a Mechanically Stabilized Earth Wall with a gabion basket facing and riprap scour protection. The project was designed and managed by Public Works staff, led by the Project Management Division, and executed by the road service area maintenance contractor under the new annual contract. The wall has been fully constructed, and the road is now open. The remaining work includes installing a guardrail along the wall.

Lakes Boulevard Upgrade TIP21: This project is part of the voter-approved Transportation Infrastructure Program from November 2021 (TIP21). Phase 1 involved upgrading the foundation and drainage for 9,500 feet of Lakes Boulevard, starting at Beaver Lake Road, and widening the road to include shoulders to enhance visibility, safety, and capacity. The construction contract was awarded to Ahtna Construction on April 16 for \$2,733,126. A pre-construction meeting was held on June 18. The road's structural section was placed on September 13, and mainline paving was finished on September 19. Remaining tasks include paving select driveways and approaches, striping, and shouldering work.

East Smith Road Extension Upgrade and Pathway TIP21: This project was part of the voter-approved TIP21. This project aimed to provide improved and safer residential and recreational trailhead access through the reconstruction of the existing road and the construction of a new pedestrian pathway. The project limits are from North Smith Road to the eastern termination at McRoberts Creek Trailhead and Matanuska Peak Trailhead. Improvements also included improved drainage, signage, striping, and utility relocations. A pre-construction meeting was held on June 3, and construction began shortly after. The contractor (Neeser Construction) completed paving on August 26, which was followed by striping and shouldering. The remaining work to be completed is the installation of the guardrail and handrail.

Tanya Court Improvements, RSA 09: The Tanya Court Improvement Project is included in the Road Service Area (RSA) 9 Midway 2023 and 2024 Road Improvement Project (RIP) lists. The scope of work involves upgrading drainage, installing driveway culverts, paving Tanya Court, and constructing a curb between the turn taper and the pathway. These improvements are designed to accommodate increased traffic from the new bus barn and enhance pedestrian safety along the Blue Lupin corridor. The project, contracted to Tutka for \$338,241.08, is now substantially complete.

Crocker Creek at Settlers Bay Drive Fish Passage Improvements: This fish passage improvement project, listed in the 2023 and 2024 Road Improvement Project (RIP) Lists, received funding through the 2021 Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Mat-Su Borough Fish Passage 2025 Grants. The project involved replacing the existing culvert and damaged fish ladder at the Crocker Creek and Settlers Bay Drive crossing, which previously hindered fish movement. Crocker Creek flows directly into Cook Inlet and provides critical spawning and rearing habitat for several salmon species and local fish populations. The project was awarded to Meier Excavation, LLC, at a contract price of \$488,470. It is now considered substantially complete, with ongoing monitoring of grass growth to finalize contract closure.

Knik Knack Mud Shack Road, RSA 17: The Knik Knack Mud Shack Road Improvement Project is part of the RSA 17 Knik 2023 and 2024 RIP Lists. This project upgrades drainage, installs culverts, adjusts the road's vertical alignment and paves it. These improvements aim to reduce fugitive dust from increased traffic to nearby schools. Utilities have completed their relocation efforts, and construction is under contract with Granite Construction for \$791,630, with the project now substantially complete.

Mat-Su Central School: Substantial completion of Mat-Su Central School is now expected in January 2025. Construction activities have progressed from framing and mechanical and electrical rough-ins to the installation of interior finishes. The building is on track to be weather-tight before winter. Additionally, completing a Mat-Su Borough connector road will provide vehicle access from Pioneer Peak Elementary to Katherine Drive, reducing daily congestion on Stringfield Road.



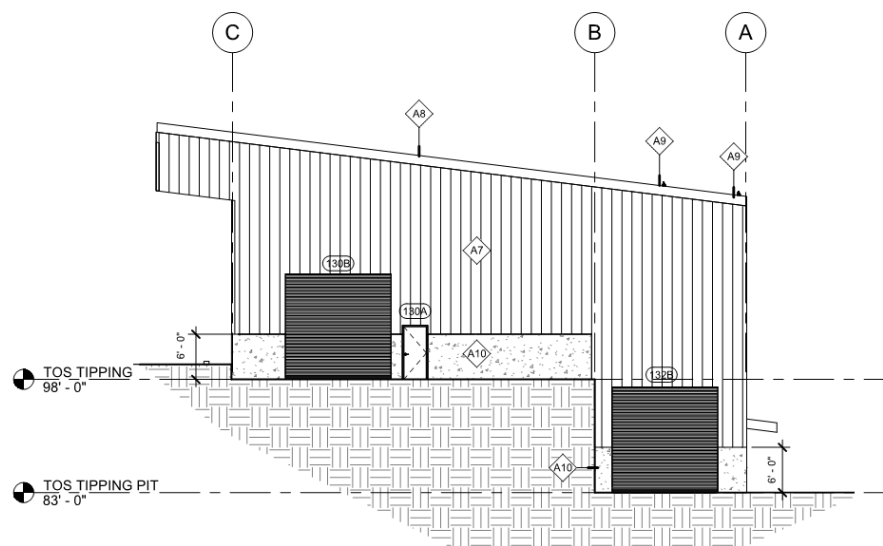
Above photo: Mat-Su Central School as of September 23, 2024

Animal Care Improvements: The Animal Care Facility Improvements Project includes exterior and interior improvements. The exterior improvements include a 1,975-square-foot addition on the south portion of the existing building, which will include a new foundation, slab, kennel cages, wood frame roof, dry fire sprinkler system, and polycarbonate windscreens. Construction of the exterior improvements is under contract and anticipated to be completed in 2024.

The interior improvements consist of mold remediation, new wall and floor finishes, HVAC replacement, lighting upgrades, plumbing upgrades, and alternates on the bid for kennel cage replacements and front counter replacement. Construction bidding for the interior improvements is complete, and the construction is underway.

Central Landfill Entrance Phase 1: The design has been finalized for a new scale house, four scales, and a new tipping floor building and office at the solid waste facility on North 49th State Street in Palmer, Alaska. The improvements, located approximately one mile from the Palmer-Wasilla Highway, enhance access and reduce customer turnaround times. Plans include an express lane for credit card transactions at the scales and a dedicated cash window at the scale house. The existing scales will be designated for commercial traffic only. The construction project is currently out for bid, with bids due by September 10. The new facility is expected to be operational by late 2025.

The updated entrance and facility layout position the landfill for long-term success by centralizing operations among future landfill cells and improving traffic safety by separating residential and commercial vehicles. This configuration will facilitate more efficient source separation of reusable materials, reduce landfill use, and create opportunities for a future reuse center. The project aims to optimize traffic flow, expand payment options, minimize customer wait times, and streamline operations by consolidating activities in a single location.



1 TIPPING FLOOR ELEVATION - EAST
 [1/A-201] Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"

Above drawing: Elevation of the Tipping Floor from the Preliminary Design

Station 3-9 Palmer: The Station 3-9 project design is 95% complete. The new facility will accommodate the Department of Emergency Services' fire, ambulance, rescue, and communications staff. The Mat-Su Borough Land Management team is working with the City of Palmer to secure approval for a private well. Funding for the project is still required and will be sourced from a combination of areawide, Fire Service Area, and grant funds.

Solid Waste Division

Quarterly Numbers	July - August - September	
Landfill Customers	69,878	Customers
Tonnage Accepted (Construction & Demolition, Medical Waste, Asbestos)	18,868	Tons
Motor Oil, Antifreeze, and Cooking Oil Diverted	10,083	Gallons
Household Hazardous Waste Diverted	18,940	Pounds
Recycling Diverted at Central Landfill	89	Tons

Recycling	July – August - September	
VCRS Recycling Customers	13,403	Customers
Recyclables Diverted from Landfill by VCRS	532	Tons

Environmental Services: The Semi-Annual Research and Development Report (RDD) was submitted, indicating that 2,208,600 gallons of leachate were recirculated. A new water monitoring well was drilled at Smith Ballfields. Additionally, 3.5 tons of electronic waste were diverted from the landfill through the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program.

Community Clean-Up: A total of 47 abandoned vehicles were removed from Borough roads. Additionally, 5 tons of trash were collected from 17 illegal dump sites across the Borough. Staff participated in the State Fair and Safety Expo, providing community members with waste reduction tips. Efforts are also underway to create a recycling-themed coloring book for children.

Information Technology

GIS Division

Safe Routes to School: Developed maps illustrating safe walking routes for all elementary schools in the district. These maps were submitted to the school district for distribution to parents.

Borough Land Sale: Created an updated and streamlined brochure template for Tax Sales, Over-the-Counter (OTC) Sales, and other land transactions. The new template automates most of the process, requiring only document export. Collaboration with L&RM facilitated integration with the new Public Surplus land sale system.

Appraiser Field Map Offline: Designed a lightweight application with offline capabilities to support Appraiser inspections. This application enables data collection in areas with low or no connectivity and synchronizes data once a stable connection is established.

New Development Service Workforce Project: Addressed inefficiencies in the previous Workforce project, which experienced significant delays, by developing a new Workforce project. All inspections were manually transferred from the old project to the new one to resolve the issue.

2024 Core Imagery Collection: The 2024 Aerial Imagery collection has been completed, except for the Hatcher Pass area due to weather and airspace restrictions. The project is currently in the processing and quality control (QC) phase with NV5, followed by Borough staff QC. Final delivery is anticipated in the fall.

Lidar Grant Application: Submitted a funding request to USGS through their Data Collaboration Portal, seeking \$1,000,000 in matching funds for a Lidar collection planned for 2025. Project selections and notifications are expected in late November to early December.

2024 Addressing/Cadastral Team: Since the beginning of 2024, 55 subdivisions have been recorded in the Mat-Su Borough, with 887 address additions or changes processed to date.

2024 Hubsite Updates: Developed new templates and knowledge base articles to enhance internal work processes. The templates enabled the rapid development of a Professional Growth site and a Proposal hubsite.

Ballot Proposition Site: Created a new website to provide information on Mat-Su Borough Ballot Propositions for the upcoming November 2024 regular election. The site offers citizens a comprehensive resource to learn about voter-decided items.

EOC Apps and Common Operating Picture Re-Release: Updated configurations for three EOC applications (QuickCapture, Survey123, Field Maps) and demonstrated them to Emergency Management staff and MSB Department Directors in September 2024. Additionally, an updated Common Operating Picture was launched on an Experience Builder platform, providing enhanced functionality.

IT Business Operations Division

Website Development: The Web team is developing a new Borough website to enhance navigation to Borough services, events, and public notices. The updated website will feature improved editing tools, enhanced search capabilities, and a more streamlined information update process. A new landing page has been created, a design model has been developed, and work is underway on building service-specific pages.

Tyler Enterprise Permitting and Licensing: The IT Department has made significant progress in configuring Tyler EP&L for permitting and licensing functions. This is a critical step toward transitioning from outdated software to the Tyler EP&L enterprise solution.

IT Infrastructure & Cybersecurity Operations Division

Server Infrastructure Upgrades: The Network/Systems team configures the disaster recovery infrastructure to enhance capabilities and improve service availability.

Network Infrastructure Upgrades: Installation of new wireless and routing infrastructure as part of the FY24 capital improvement project is ongoing. Equipment is being configured for deployment across the organization, providing enhanced connectivity and network availability. Installations have been completed at stations 5-2 and 6-4.

FY25 Capital Improvement: Quotes have been received, and legislation has been drafted to authorize purchases for the FY25 capital improvement project.

Central Video Management System: Licensing and hardware installations are ongoing throughout the organization. Existing camera systems have been integrated into the new Central Video Management System. Completed integrations include Animal Care, Jim Creek Recreational Area, Government Peak Recreational Area, Sutton and Big Lake Libraries, and Operations and Maintenance. Port MacKenzie and Animal Care are substantially complete but require the installation of three additional cameras at each location to finalize.

Network Upgrades and Configurations: The Network/Systems team is improving the core network, reducing cyber risk, increasing resiliency, and optimizing equipment to ensure critical connectivity for the MSB.

State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP): MSB was awarded a \$97,000 grant to fund a third-party cybersecurity assessment and provide end-user cybersecurity training. Implementation of the assessment and training software is underway. An additional \$79,000 grant request was submitted to support vulnerability management software and upgrade emergency services telecom infrastructure for enhanced security.

Telecom Collaboration: The Network/Systems team is collaborating with the Telecom team to reduce dependency on external contracted services and align operations with best practices and standards, thereby enhancing protection against potential outages and cyber threats.

Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR): MSB participates in the voluntary NCSR self-assessment survey to evaluate cybersecurity processes. This review, conducted in collaboration with the Center for Internet Security (CIS), is required to qualify for specific grant funding from FEMA and DHS.

Department of Emergency Services

Emergency Medical Services

Incident Summary:

- July: 928 incidents
- August: 936 incidents

Fire-Rescue Services

Incident Summary:

- July: 536 incidents
- August: 481 incidents

MSB area fire departments responded to over 1,017 calls, averaging 16.7 calls per day. DES on-call responders provided roughly 14,500 person-hours this reporting period.

Water Rescue Team

Team members responded alongside EMS and Talkeetna Rescue units to a report of a submerged vehicle in the Talkeetna River, which was determined to be unoccupied. The Water Rescue Team also assisted Operations & Maintenance (O&M) by conducting GPS and water depth mapping along the Talkeetna River revetment to support repair efforts.

During this period, the team onboarded four new members currently in initial training. Additionally, the team supported an oil spill response on Finger Lake and addressed several incidents related to high water levels caused by heavy rain. Seasonal rescue training and equipment maintenance for ice, rope, and boat operations were also completed. The dive team plans to assist Community Development with transportation needs for a project on the Deshka River.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management (EM) staff have submitted requests for over \$8 million in federal mitigation grants and are supporting the Mat-Su Borough School District with their applications. EM is also assisting the Department of Emergency Services with grants to install security cameras at emergency service facilities and add backup generators at locations lacking redundancy.

The 16th Annual Preparedness Expo was successfully held at the Menard Center. EM conducted ICS 300, 400, and EOC/ICS interface courses and continues to work on tsunami preparedness, flood risk monitoring, and disaster planning with utilities such as ENSTAR and MEA.

Telecommunications

The Telecom team focused on developing the Montana Mountain repeater site during the favorable summer weather. An emergency replacement of the main generator at the Grubstake repeater site was completed without service disruption, and a study for permanent power at the site was conducted, with funding now being pursued. The team tested a cellular-based phone application (Tango-Tango) for responder paging redundancy and supported the Montana Creek Fire with a portable repeater tower. Ongoing projects include TDMA upgrades for the AMLR radio system and preparations for an eastern repeater site near Eureka.

Special Projects

The Department of Emergency Services, led by the Central Mat-Su Fire Department, is hosting the 2024 State of Alaska Fire Conference in Wasilla from September 30 to October 4. Sponsored by the State Firefighters Association and the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association, the event will draw over 300 emergency responders across Alaska for a week of training and seminars. The conference will include a vendor show at the Menard Center featuring nearly 50 local and national exhibitors showcasing emergency services tools and equipment.



Above photo: West Lakes Firefighter at a Structure Fire

Animal Care and Regulation

During the third quarter of 2024, the Mat-Su Borough Animal Care and Regulation Department remained active and productive. Despite an approximately 11% decrease in animal intake compared to the second quarter, the department still managed 766 intakes, averaging 255 animals per month. The department's ongoing focus on maintaining its "Capacity for Care" enabled it to provide timely and appropriate outcomes for the animals, reducing average shelter stay times to 12 days.

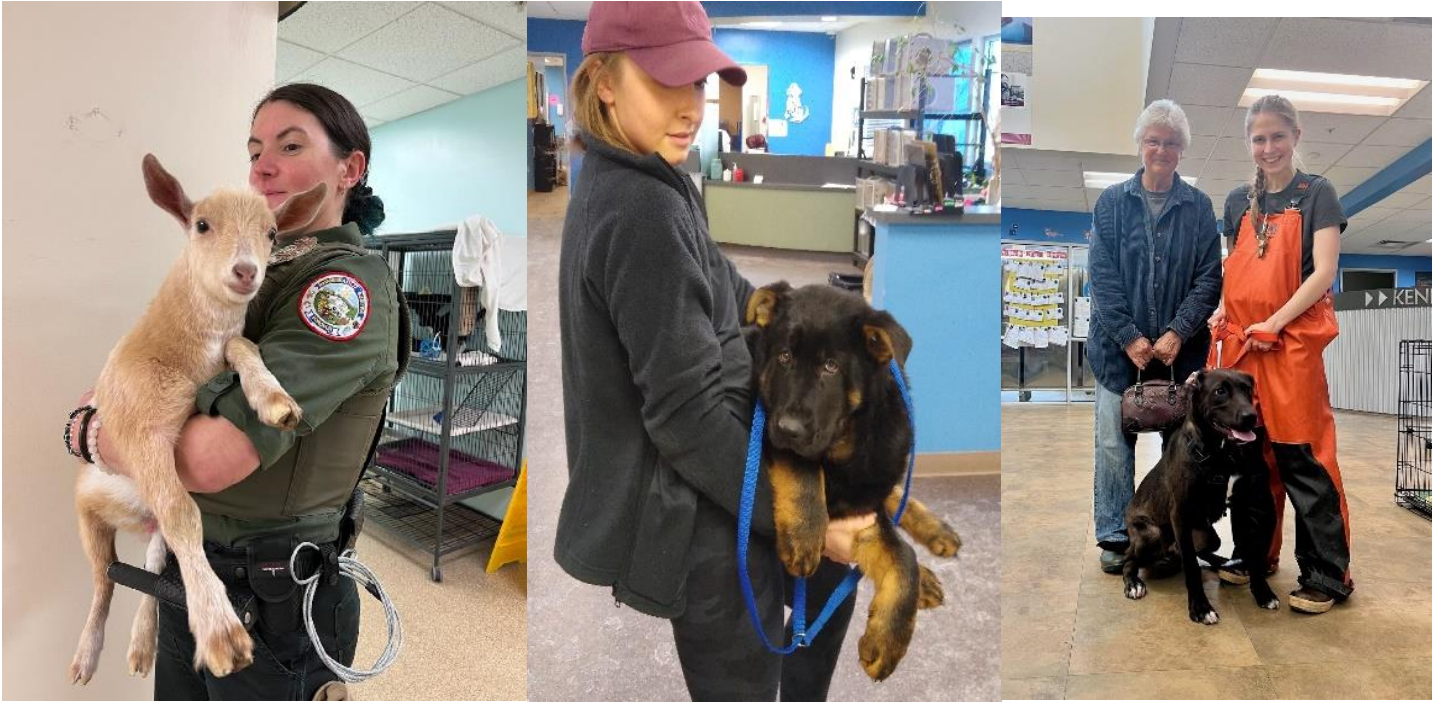
The department's collaboration with community rescue partners and other animal care agencies is a key component in achieving this capacity. In the third quarter alone, 119 animals were transferred to these partners and agencies, further supporting the department's effective management of shelter capacity.

The shelter operations, veterinary operations, and enforcement operations divisions continued to collaborate seamlessly to address the unique challenges of their roles. Their commitment and dedication exemplify the department's mission as "Animal Advocates and Community Servants."

Shelter Operations

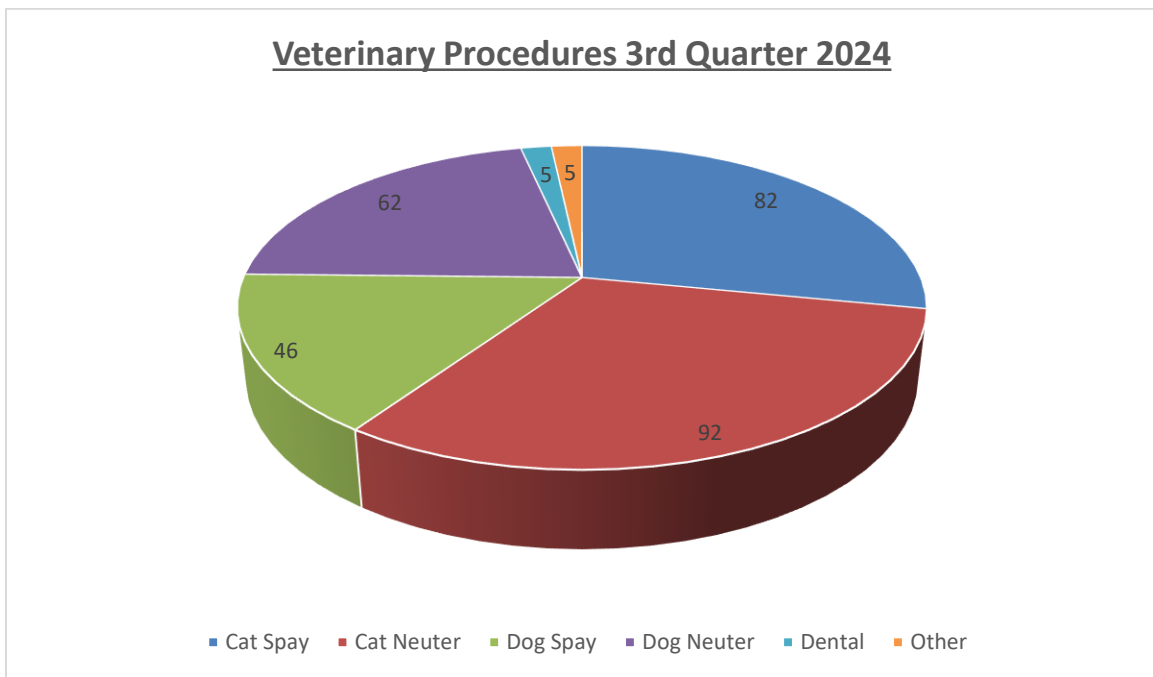
The shelter operations team continues to deliver consistent care for all animals seven days a week. Their responsibilities include facilitating adoptions, reuniting stray animals with their owners, providing pet food assistance to those in need, and coordinating with local rescue partners. In the third quarter of 2024, the team successfully adopted 306 animals and reunited 154 stray animals with their owners. Additionally, through the

community food pantry program, the department provided pet food assistance to 20 households within the community.



Veterinary Operations

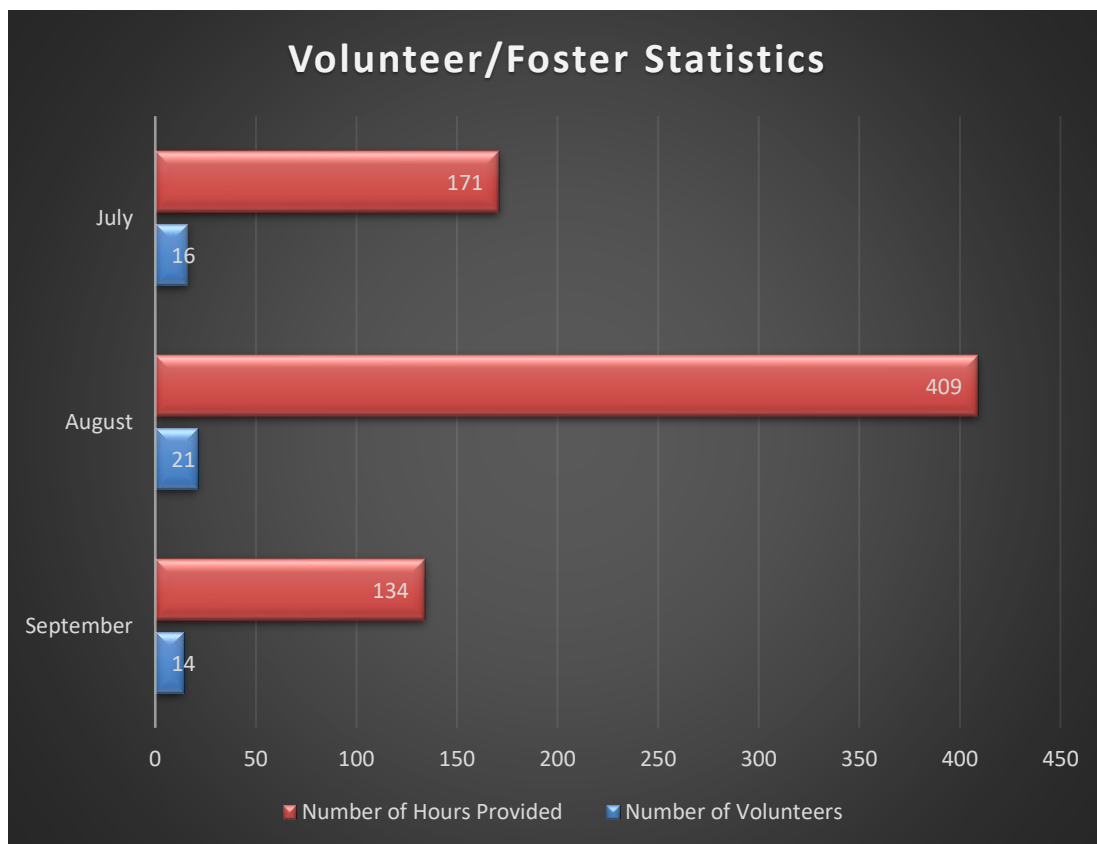
The veterinary clinic team, which consists of a staff veterinarian, full-time veterinary technician and assistant, on-call technician, and relief veterinarians, continues to address the medical needs of the animals in its care. Services provided include daily veterinary checks, preventive medicine, spay and neuter surgeries, and emergency care. This internal veterinary clinic, staffed by full-time personnel, supports the shelter animals' health and public health within the community. The department is the only municipal animal care agency in Alaska with an in-house veterinary clinic staffed by full-time professionals.



Volunteers

In-shelter and foster volunteers remain essential to the Animal Care and Regulation Department's operations. Under the guidance of the new Volunteer/Foster and Rescue Partner Program Coordinators, the department has made significant advancements in safety, training, accountability, and overall efficiency within its volunteer and rescue partner programs. Additionally, site visits to community assisted living and nursing facilities are now primarily managed by volunteers, reflecting their active involvement and support.

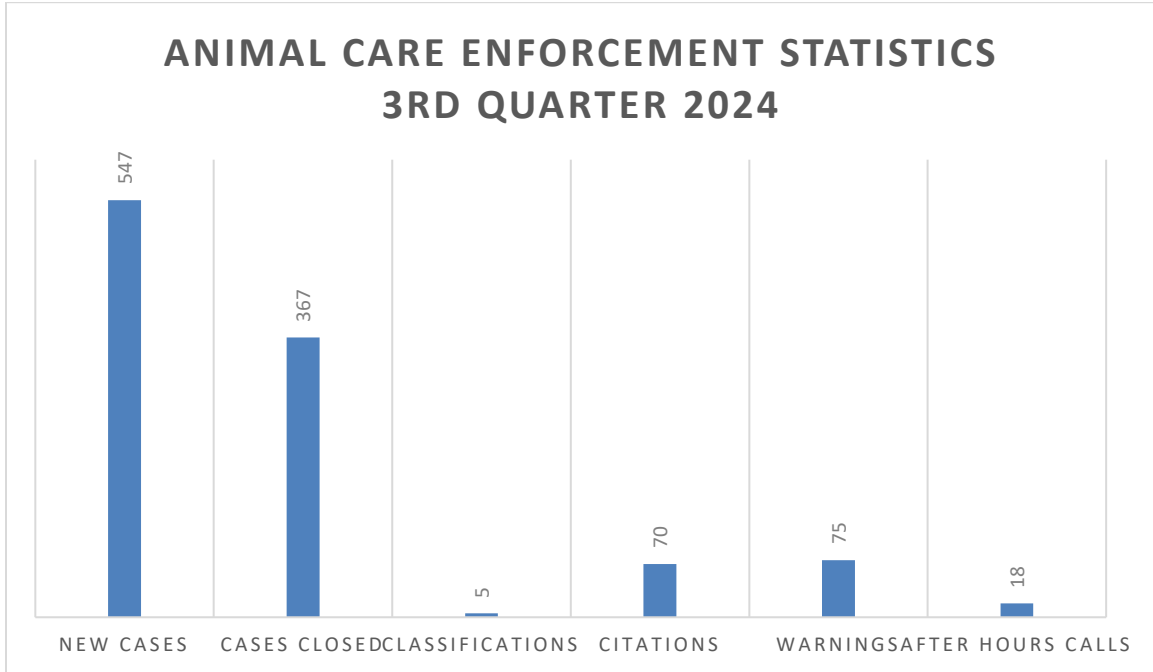
The Faces of our Miles and Mutts Program



Enforcement Operations

The Enforcement Division is currently operating at full capacity, providing 24/7 response coverage throughout the Mat-Su Borough. Enforcement cases vary from routine barking complaints to emergency callouts supporting all Mat-Su Borough public safety agencies, including EMS, Fire, and Law Enforcement. In the third quarter of 2024, the division received 296 cases through the MSB Problem Reporter program. The division also managed

a total of 547 new cases this quarter and responded to 18 emergency callouts. The detailed enforcement statistics are as follows:



Community, Educational, and other Notable Events

- AC&R Emergency Preparedness Meetings – July 11, 12
- Maple Springs site visits – July 9, Aug 12
- Half Price Weekend Adoption Event – July 13/14
- New volunteer/foster program orientations – July 27, Aug 3, Aug 24
- Ales for Tails Event at the Alaska State Fair – Aug 30
- Title 24 Updates Completed and Approved by the Assembly – Aug 20
- Attended Reptile Expo at Menard Center – Aug 10
- Name Your Price Weekend Adoption Event – Aug 24/25
- Community Spay/Neuter Clinic at Martin Buser’s w/ SPCA – Aug 26
- Pioneer Home site visit – Sept 13
- Interior Dog Hall Renovation Project Phase 1 Initiated - Sept 16
- Feline Frenzy at the Alaska Zoo – Sept 28
- MSB Emergency Preparedness Expo – September 28