



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 10, 2025
TO: Mayor and Assembly
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

Transit Match Funding, AM 25-121: An Advisory Memorandum (AM) for transit services is on the September 16 Regular Assembly meeting agenda. The Assembly approved \$750,000 in the FY26 budget for transit services with a 50/50 match for urban transit services. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) allows for capital expenses using an 80/20 match (FTA 80%, Borough 20%). Additionally, FTA allows an in-kind match for Borough staff time, and the Borough intends to apply a 15% indirect fee that does not require a match. With these adjustments, the total contract value will be more than the projected \$1.5 million that a straight 50/50 match would allow. This will allow the Borough to add value to the contract for transit services without increasing our local cash match amount.

School Site Selection Process: At the September 2 Assembly meeting, an Assembly member asked for a summary of what code requires regarding the school site selection process and transportation considerations.

A Borough Area Schools Site Selection Committee is established under MSB 4.27. This committee's role is to report and make recommendations to the Assembly regarding the location of school buildings. The Borough Assembly has final authority over determining school locations. The Mayor, with Assembly approval, appoints the site selection committee.

The committee must obtain a joint report from the Planning and Land Use Director and the School Superintendent, evaluating proposed locations across several criteria: population, enrollment trends, transportation, relationship to community facilities, multi-use potential, and other relevant factors. The committee may hold public hearings to gather community input on site options. After reviewing, the committee makes formal recommendations to the Planning Commission, School Board, and Assembly.

In MSB 19.08, Locations of School Buildings, transportation forms a key criterion in school site evaluations. In a joint report, transportation is explicitly listed among the core evaluation factors alongside population, enrollment, community facility relations, and multi-use potential.

HDL Engineering Consultants updated a 2018 report in 2021 for Birchtree Charter School on the parcel where Shaw Elementary School is located. The report also studied the parcel where Pioneer Peak Elementary School is located. The report detailed the following considerations: access, utilities, soils, topography, environmental, zoning, setbacks, and the surrounding area. The report identified the need for intersection improvements to Wasilla-Fishhook and Paradise Lane in the form of turn lanes, signalization, or a roundabout. This information

led to the first project nomination for a project in TIP 21, which subsequently led to a follow-on larger project in TIP 24.

Procurement Clarification: The Borough acquires goods, services, and construction through two distinct competitive processes. These processes are governed by Borough Code, State law, and Federal regulations.

For the purchase of goods and services, other than “professional services,” the competitive process is based on the lowest quote or bid, awarded to a qualified and responsive bidder. These goods and services are solicited through either a Request for Quote (RFQ) or Invitation to Bid (ITB). The award is given to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

For professional services, i.e., engineering, architecture, survey, etc., an award is made to the most qualified for a negotiated price. This process is referred to as Request for Proposal (RFP). RFPs are “qualification-based selection” and are required under all three levels of government. Price may be a factor in the selection under certain funding sources, but only for what is determined to be “repetitive in nature” and easily quantified.

In a typical construction project, there are two solicitations: designer selection and a bid. An RFP is issued, with the resulting contract established based on a negotiated fee. The second is for construction through competitive bids, resulting in a contract with a firm price. If you have any questions as to why a particular process is used or needed, please feel free to contact Purchasing Director, Russ Krafft, at (907) 861-8639.

Public Affairs Media Flyover:

Natural Resources

- **Donlin Gold project has fresh momentum: Mat-Su to be staging point for 315 mile gas pipeline**
Frontiersman

Community

- **Borough officials hope a massive clean-up project can turn a Wasilla neighborhood around**
Mat-Su Sentinel
- **Mat-Su to present case for gas tax at open house events**
Mat-Su Sentinel
- **Borough to hold open houses on proposed gas tax**
Frontiersman
- **Mat-Su Borough launches property clean-up in Wasilla’s Williwaw subdivision**
Your Alaska Link

Assembly

- **Assembly questions high cost of traffic access redesign in school zones, approves naming of Big Lake Rec Center**
Frontiersman

Port MacKenzie

- **Northcom Wraps Up Arctic Edge 25**
Eurasiareview.com

Flooding

- **Mat-Su declares Disaster Emergency as flooding worsens in Upper Susitna**
Alaska’s News Source
- **Mat-Su Borough declares disaster emergency due to flooding and heavy rains**
Your Alaska Link
- **Matanuska-Susitna Borough Declares disaster emergency**
Frontiersman
- **Residents remain stranded in Petersville area**
KTNA

Providing Outstanding Borough Services to the Matanuska-Susitna Community

M/V Susitna

- **Mat-Su Borough ordered to repay \$5.8 million in federal grants used for failed ferry project**
Mat-Su Sentinel

Education

- **Mat-Su's education leader named Alaska Superintendent of the Year**
Frontiersman
- **MSBSD Superintendent named Alaska Superintendent of the Year**
Alaska's News Source
- **School board approves FY26 priorities for funding**
Frontiersman
- **District hosts groundbreaking for American Charter Academy**
Frontiersman
- **Driver shortage: Dozens of school bus route cancelations hit Mat-Su**
Alaska's News Source

Animal Care

- **Wasilla man charged after 16 animals found dead on property**
Alaska's News Source
- **Wasilla man charged after more than a dozen animals found dead**
ADN
- **Wasilla Man arrested after 16 decomposing animals found in home**
Alaska Public Media

Economy

- **Rents rose rapidly Statewide in 2024, continuing trend**
ADN

Fishing/Hunting

- **Proposals sought for 2026 Mat-Su Valley Habitat Rehabilitation and Protection Program**
Alaska Sporting Journal
- **ADFG will close Fortymile Caribou Zone 2 hunt on Friday**
Alaska Sporting Journal
- **Some pleasant memories**
Frontiersman
- **Deshka River and Little Susitna River weirs flood**
Frontiersman
- **State files lawsuit against Wasilla hunting guide**
Frontiersman

Future Events:

- Big Lake Recreation Center Open House, Fri., Sept. 12 from 3pm to 7pm, 2942 Lions Circle, Big Lake, AK 99652
- Mat-Su Emergency Preparedness Expo, Menard Center, Sat., Sept. 20 from 10am to 3pm
- Motor Fuel Excise Tax Informational Open Houses at 6pm:
 - Wed., Sept 17 @6pm – Butte Elementary School Gym
 - Tues., Sept 23 @6pm – Willow Area Community Organization Center
 - Mon., Oct 6 @6pm – Meadow Lakes Elementary Gym
 - Mon., Oct 13 @6pm – Knik Elementary Gym
 - Wed., Oct. 22 @6pm – Mat-Su Central School
 - Thurs., Oct. 23 @6pm – Upper Susitna Community & Senior Center, Talkeetna