

# MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

350 E Dahlia Ave., Palmer, Alaska 99645

## CHAIRPERSON

Mike Wood

## VICE CHAIR

Andy Couch

## MSB STAFF

Ted Eischeid



## BOARD MEMBERS

Howard Delo

Larry Engel

Tim Hale

Peter Probasco

Jesse Sumner

Kendra Zamzow

*Ex officio:* Jim Sykes

# FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

## MEETING PACKET – TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Regular Meeting

10/20/2022

### P---Item:

- 1 = Agenda
- 3 = Draft Minutes, 09/22/22 Regular FWC Meeting
- 9 = Staff Report
- 15 = 12/2021 ADF&G Special Fisheries Meeting AGENDA
- 17 = BOF 2024 Draft Planning Document
- 19 = MSB 2024 Leg Priorities: (approved 10/18/22);
- 33 = MSB 2023 Leg Priorities: (approved 12/2021)
- 57 = Draft 2023 FWC Meeting Schedule

Planning and Land Use Department - Planning Division

Cell Phone (907) 795-6281

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**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH**  
**MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission Agenda**

Edna DeVries, Mayor

Mike Wood – Chair  
Andy Couch – Vice Chair  
Howard Delo  
Larry Engel  
Tim Hale-Assembly D-1  
Peter Probasco  
Jesse Sumner-Assembly D-6  
Kendra Zamzow  
*Ex Officio – Jim Sykes*

Ted Eischeid - Staff



Michael Brown, Borough Manager

PLANNING & LAND USE DEPARTMENT  
Alex Strawn, Planning & Land Use Director  
Kim Sollien, Planning Services Manager  
Jason Ortiz, Development Services Manager  
Fred Wagner, Platting Officer

*Dorothy Swanda Jones Building  
350 E. Dahlia Avenue  
Palmer AK 99645*

**October 20, 2022**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

4:00 p.m.  
Lower Level Conference Room

IN PERSON: Lower Level Conference Room, DSJ Building, 350 Dahlia Avenue, Palmer

REMOTE:

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I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM/LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*We acknowledge that we are meeting on traditional lands of the Ahtna and Dena'ina people, and we are grateful for their stewardship of the land, fish, and wildlife throughout time immemorial.*

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- V. APPROVAL OF MIUTES
  - 1. September 22, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes
- VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*three minutes per person, for items not scheduled for public hearing*)
- VII. STAFF/AGENCY REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS
  - 1. Staff Report
- VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
  - 1. SOA Water Reservation System
- IX. NEW BUSINESS
  - 1. ADF&G Fisheries 2022 Season Summary Meeting Planning
  - 2. Board Of Fisheries 2024 Planning
  - 3. Legislative Priorities for Assembly/State
  - 4. Legislative Workshop
  - 5. FWC 2023 Meeting Schedule Draft
- X. MEMBER COMMENTS
- XI. NEXT MEETING DATE: November 17, 2022. 4 PM. LLCR-Fireweed Bldg, 533 E. Fireweed Ave, Palmer.
- XII. ADJOURNMENT

**Disabled persons needing reasonable accommodation in order to participate at a MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting should contact the borough ADA Coordinator at 861-8432 at least one week in advance of the meeting.**



**MSB FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION****Regular Meeting: September 22, 2022****Minutes**

DSJ Building, Lower Level Conference Room //TEAMS Remote Participation

*Minutes prepared by Ted Eischeid, Planner*

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I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 4:06 PM by chair Mike Wood.

II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM/LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Present:

Andy Couch (AC),  
Larry Engel (LE),  
Pete Probasco (PP),  
Jim Sykes,  
Mike Wood (MW).  
Howard Delo (HD)  
Jesse Sumner (arrived at 4:33 PM).

Absent:

Tim Hale

Notified Absence:

Kendra Zamzow

MW read the Land Acknowledgement:

*We acknowledge that we are meeting on traditional lands of the Ahtna and Dena'ina people, and we are grateful for their stewardship of the land, fish, and wildlife throughout time immemorial.*

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by PP, Second by LE.

Agenda approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. May 19, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes.

Moved by LE, Second by AC; Corrections: None.

Motion passed without objection.

b. June 2, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes.  
Moved by PP, Second by AC; Corrections: None.  
Motion passed without objection.

- VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*three minutes per person, for items not scheduled for public hearing*):
1. Becky Long, Talkeetna. Wants to learn about the DNR Talkeetna River instream flow review.
  2. Stephanie Nowers, Assemblyperson; next Susitna Basin Rec Rivers Board meeting will be Oct. 26 (August and September meetings were cancelled); participated in the Salmon Habitat Partnership's Deshka River tour in August, which was great.
  3. Angela Stephi, Rep. Kevin McCabe's staff.
  4. Jessica Speed, Salmon Habitat Partnership; discussed the Summer Site Tour held on August 23 that the SHP hosted. Will share a link. Will host the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Salmon Science Symposium on Nov. 14-15 at the Palmer Depot, and everyone is invited, and abstracts for presentations is due Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. AC is available to help on an instream flow presentation.
  5. Shannon Martin, KRSA.
  6. Bill Stoltze, MSB Lobbyist: Mike Brown requests that the FWC provide their priorities for legislation, capital priorities, BOF needs, etc., to the manager's office. Discussed providing education to political candidates in the fall elections, both Assembly and state legislative. Do this as a special FWC workshop; Bill can set this up as an October meeting if FWC so directs, to talk about FWC priorities.
  7. Maija Desalvo. MSB staff.
- VII. STAFF/AGENCY REPORTS
- A. Staff Report
- FWC Requested a status update on NPMFC for next meeting (Court decision update).
- VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- A. State of Alaska Water Reservation System
- LE: Should we formally request the information from DNR that we asked about at the June 2 special FWC meeting?
- HD: I wasn't at the June 2 meeting, so was the FWC happy with that meeting and DNR's response?
- AC: I wasn't there, and I would like to know as well. LE: DNR only has one staffer to work on these reservation applications, and they are grossly understaffed.
- MW: seems like DNR and ADFG staff working on this are understaffed, and they would like to have more support from MSB to assist them. Is this something the FWC pursues?
- J. Sykes: we learned some things we didn't know, but they have a citizen's program for taking pictures of streams; could make this program a priority discussion for legislators for additional funding.
- PP: the meeting was an information meeting; the ball is in our court, so now what do we want to do with this? We need a list of the streams, what's the review schedule so we can get a pre-notice so we can make comment.
- MW: Write a letter to DNR, or public records request?
- LE: Make a public records request.
- HD: If you make public records request, how do you do that?
- AC: I move we (Ted) make a public records request from June 6 packet, page 3 highlights, to DNR; HD seconded. (PP can help write request). Maybe Rep. McCable's office can help.
- Motion passes unanimously.

MW: Talkeetna River water reservation issue; getting a lot of attention; decision is being delayed.  
Becky Long: commissioner extended comment period from 2 weeks to a month.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fisheries Season 2022 Discussion

HD: Talked to ADFG/ “it was a good August”.

AC: It was a good August; Deshka Landing had a one word response regarding the Coho season = bad; Susitna Landing said they had very little fishing; Little Su had very low participation (high water, etc.); since the weirs are funded with license fees, and sport fishing is falling off, how can we get enough fisherman to fund weirs with falling license sales?; Deshka weir was pulled earlier; ADFG needs to make a priority in collecting return information on Coho.

MW: Hooligan was good, but only lasted a week; high water has been a problem; returns were late, but there were a lot of sockeye for set netters – good fish, lots of them, and extended later into the season; cohos were late, in poor numbers; the openers in lower CI- there were not many openers and less participation in lower CI; the dipnet fishery in the Kenai was good; saw more chums than normal; by the time we quit our set netting the fishing was still good; saw a lot of whales and seals this year; talking to guides they noted high water with cohos blasting through rapidly; lots of misidentification of pinks versus sockeye when they are fresh; had a lot of native villages asking for fish due to their failed fishery; lots of debris in the water from the flooding that affected netting gear; saw a lot of dead fish later during moose hunting along the river.

PP: This is the first year since 2001 that I haven’t fished the Mat-Su; the other fisheries like trout, grayling, and whitefish were good;

LE: Kenai king runs were poor so the East Side set netting was closed; the things we worked on, like the Conservation Corridor, helped pass whatever fish we got here through to the MSB; Some of our work in the past was helpful in returning some of the fish. The participation in drift fishing is falling dramatically;

AC: looked at the sockeye weir counts; Larsen, Judd, Fish Creek,

B. Genetics Science & Weirs in Cook Inlet

AC: coho are important, and we don’t have the weir support for inseason management; in the last 3 years we pulled out the Deshka weir so early we don’t know if we made the SEG; this should be a legislative priority to fully fund a full season of the Deshka weir since we have a goal on the Deshka, the only goal on the whole Susitna drainage.

MW: I agree with AC wholeheartedly, and it bothers me that state budgets have been cut and we aren’t getting the fishery support, especially with \$100 oil; Jim Creek, etc., all should be longer, including the offshore test fishery; I think this would benefit both sport and commercial fisheries; should restore historic funding levels, as we are losing science. Should also add on Lake Creek sonar for kings. ADFG should really get in control of this. The short term nature of the LTE employees for these positions makes it difficult to find staffing for this work.

Angela Stephl– McCabe’s Office: we put a request in to ADFG about funding, and during the legislative session the commissioner said they had all the funds they needed, so we are

waiting for more information from ADFG, and once we get this we will forward it on to the FWC.

LE: almost all sport fish is funded by sport fishing Dingell-Johnson funding that requires sport license match funding; as fisheries collapse, we are selling fewer sport fish licenses and don't have the license money match to get our full funding allotment.

PP: ran the state weir programs previously, need match funds and we need requests from the state; there is money there from the feds that we are leaving on the table; LE – we need that information before we go to the Legislature;

AC: a few years ago they increased license fees to help meet match, but then COVID hit and license fees collapsed; sales are coming back, but how do you fill the deficit? A supplemental appropriation from the state for match would allow us to get the full federal dollars; there is also the possibility of grants (NOAA's Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund?).

HD: ADFG having a hard time finding qualified people to apply and staffing due to lack of pension, etc. Cutting back constantly is hurting the system. Having a hard time getting qualified people to work in fisheries and wildlife management.

LE: Wildlife management funding is based on the same model as fisheries, but guided by the Pittman-Robertson Act.

MW: I added genetics because of the trawl bycatch issue – Rep. McCabe asked about it; we don't know how bycatch has affected MSB returns; we have talked previously about working with Duncan Fields and getting federal dollars to study blue ocean genetics in the Gulf of Alaska and how this relates to our inriver returns; there might also be climate change money to get more science for understanding our fisheries.

J. Sumner: any data on the bycatch? PP: Bering Sea fleet (bigger ships, each with observer) versus the Gulf of Alaska fleet (smaller vessels, only a percentage has observers) bycatch issues are totally different; one key is to have a better estimate of what the Gulf Of Alaska bycatch is.

Stephanie Nowers: I'm total agreeing that weirs are being taken out too early; good to work on legislative priorities for the Assembly.

Stephanie Nowers: Rec Rivers Board Update-

Public comment period has ended; comment summary being developed; then the recommended changes go before the public, with a comment period; for 2023 any proposed changes must come before Legislature for deliberation during the first 10 days of the session, otherwise it will have to wait for the next session.

LE: genetics is important for many management decisions; genetics can also show differences in stock productivity, which guides sustainable harvest decisions;

### C. BOF 2024 Planning

PP: Management plan or strategy plan?

HD: KRSA.

MW: Add this to the October Agenda.

Components of a plan

D. ADF&G 2022 Fishing Season Summary Logistics  
Dates? Dec. 14, Dec. 7 for fisheries summary.

HD: Hunting season summary? January 18.

X. MEMBER COMMENTS

1. HD: Its good to be back, and getting in better health.
2. PP: wild sheep population, Oct. 19, 1:30 PM ADFG will have a web conference on the sheep population. See BOG website.
3. LE: there is a web discussion regarding recent Seattle Court decision that might affect king salmon fishery in Alaska, regarding the endangered species act status of Beluga Whales and how king salmon are managed. LE will forward it to Ted for distribution.
4. AC: BOF work session, AC requests are coming from the East Side Setnetters; individual comments can be submitted.
5. Jesse Sumner: should get legislative priorities before Assembly before January state legislative session.
6. Ted Eischeid- NFHP Board update. Copy Maija in any communications with me since I have a part time schedule.
7. Jim Sykes; thanks the FWC for their expertise; we need more public outreach for the BOF.

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday, October 20, 4 PM, LLCR.

1. Leg. Workshop option for Oct. meeting.
2. Legislative priorities for Assembly/State.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by LE to adjourn, Second by Jesse Sumner.  
Motion passes unanimously.

*Meeting stands adjourned at 6:15 PM*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Wood, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ted Eischeid, Planner II Staff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated





# MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

## Planning and Land Use Department

### Planning Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7833

<http://www.matsugov.us> • [planning@matsugov.us](mailto:planning@matsugov.us)

**Date:** 20 October 2022

**Re:** FWC Staff Report

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### 1. Legislative Update

- a. Assembly Q3 FWC Report per Assembly RS 21-128 submitted:

### 2. Board Of Fisheries

- a. Work Session, Oct. 25-26, Eagan Center, Anchorage
- b. BOF 2024 Planning Doc Requested

### 3. ADF&G Special Meeting Preferences

- a. Questions
- b. Process
- c. Deadlines

### 4. Misc.

- a. FWC Meeting Schedule for 2023?
- b. NPFMC Update
- c. Other?

*Providing Outstanding Borough Services to the Matanuska-Susitna Community*

***Ted Eischeid, Planner II***

*Supporting Environmental Planning and the MSB Fish & Wildlife Commission.*

[Ted.eischeid@matsugov.us](mailto:Ted.eischeid@matsugov.us) Ph. 907.861-8606, Cell 795-6281





# Feds working on new plan for contentious Cook Inlet fishery

By **Sabine Poux, KDLL - Soldotna** - October 7, 2022



*A federal council voted to close a large swath of Cook Inlet to commercial salmon fishing in 2020. That decision was overturned earlier this year. (Sabine Poux/KDLL)*

Federal fisheries managers say they've started working on a new management plan for the Cook Inlet salmon fishery, months after a court said their plan to completely close the fishery was unjust.

At a meeting in Anchorage Thursday, Jon Furland with NOAA Fisheries told the North Pacific Fishery Management Council that time is of the essence to create a new plan and comply with the court.

"We can't wait, is the short answer," he said.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council manages fishing in Alaska's federal waters.

In 2020, following a lawsuit from the United Cook Inlet Drift Association over management of the drift fishery, the council voted to close a large swath of Cook Inlet to commercial salmon fishing. The closure applied to Cook Inlet's federal waters — which start three miles offshore, south of Kalgin Island. That area is where drift fishermen say they catch a **majority of their fish**.

The closure was controversial and UCIDA sued, once again, to overturn the decision. The court **sided with the group** in June and told the state to reopen the fishery for the 2022 season.

But that was just a temporary fix. Once again, UCIDA and the feds are at odds over what comes next.

In a Sept. 6 **legal brief**, UCIDA said the group would like to see the feds approve a new management plan — which would comply with **the Magnuson-Stevens Act** and govern the whole of the Cook Inlet salmon fishery — before the next fishing season starts. It said the feds should tap UCIDA to collaborate on that plan and if a new plan isn't possible by June, it would like to see an order that imposes temporary relief for the 2023 season.

But in a **response brief** filed Sept. 29, the feds say that deadline is unworkable. Kurland told the council he'll ask for the green light to get started on analysis for the new plan, which he said could be in place in two years.

"And as we've told the court in our filing, we think that can happen by the 2024 season," Kurland said. "It won't be easy to do it in that time frame but that's what we told the court and we think we can make that work."

In the meantime, NOAA said the fishery should continue under the management of the state of Alaska, as it has been for years. Dissatisfaction with that management was what prompted UCIDA to sue in the first place.

UCIDA will have another chance to reply with another remedy brief, later this month, before the court rules on a timeline.

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**Sabine Poux, KDLL - Soldotna**

Select Language ▼

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Board of Fisheries**

PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
(907) 465-4110  
[www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS OF THE  
ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES**

The Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) will meet for a two-day Work Session October 25-26, 2022, beginning at 8:30 a.m., at the Egan Civic and Convention Center, 555 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Anchorage, Alaska.

No regulatory action will be taken at this meeting. Agenda topics may include election of officers, agenda change requests, petitions, meeting organization and establishment of committees for the 2022/2023 meeting cycle, review of confirmed locations and dates for future meetings, informational reports, consideration of agenda change requests, creation of board generated proposals, review of the approved 2023/2024 call for proposals, and/or administrative issues that may come before the board. The board may choose to go into executive session. The board will also take up items under a miscellaneous business agenda.

Written comments, due by Wednesday, October 11, may be entered on the Board's webpage at [www.boardoffisheries.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.boardoffisheries.adfg.alaska.gov), mailed to: Boards Support Section, P.O. Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526, or faxed to: (907) 465-6094. Written comments can also be submitted during the meeting. A live video stream is intended to be available on the board's website at <http://www.boardoffisheries.adfg.alaska.gov/>.

The agenda and any other meeting documents, including agenda change requests, will be available prior to the meeting on the board's meeting information webpage at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.meetinginfo&date=10-25-2022&meeting=anchorage>.

If you are a person with a disability who needs a special accommodation to participate in these public meetings, please contact Art Nelson at (907) 267-2292 by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 21, 2022 to make any necessary arrangements.

For more information about the meeting, contact Art Nelson at (907) 267-2292.

Art Nelson, Executive Director  
ADF&G Boards Support Section

September 23, 2022  
Date



**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH**  
**MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission Agenda**

Edna DeVries, Mayor

Mike Wood – Chair  
Howard Delo – Vice Chair  
Andy Couch  
Larry Engel  
Tim Hale  
Peter Probasco  
Jesse Sumner  
Kendra Zamzow  
Jim Sykes-Ex officio

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Michael Brown, Borough Manager

PLANNING & LAND USE DEPARTMENT  
Alex Strawn, Planning & Land Use Director  
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Jason Ortiz, Development Services Manager  
Fred Wagner, Platting Officer

*Dorothy Swanda Jones Building  
350 E. Dahlia Avenue  
Palmer ak 99645*

**December 13, 2021**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**5:00 p.m.**

**Assembly Chambers**

**REMOTE PARTICIPATION OPTION:**

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I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL - DETERMINATION OF QUORUM/LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*"We acknowledge that we are meeting on traditional lands of the Dene people, and we are grateful for their continued stewardship of the land, fish, and wildlife throughout time immemorial."*

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- V. INTRODUCTIONS
- a. FWC/Opening Statement ~ 3 minutes
  - b. ADF&G/Opening Statement ~ 3 minutes
  - c. Audience Introductions/Participation (3 min./person, chair's discretion)
- VI. PRESENTATIONS
- a. Staff
  - b. ADF&G
    1. Commercial Fishing 2021 Notable Highlights & Observations ~ 5 minutes
    2. Sport Fishing Fishing 2021 Notable Highlights & Observations ~ 5 minutes
- VII. ITEMS OF BUSINESS
- a. FWC/ADF&G Dialogue On Mat-Su Fisheries/FWC Questions ~ 60 Minutes
- VIII. ADF&G/FWC MEMBER COMMENTS ~ 20 minutes
- IX. NEXT REGULAR MEETING – December 16, 2021, 4 PM, Lower Level Conference Room
- X. ADJOURNMENT

**Disabled persons needing reasonable accommodation in order to participate at a MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting should contact the borough ADA Coordinator at 861-8432 at least one week in advance of the meeting.**

**COVID-19 Guidelines**

- Social distance at least 6 feet.
- Use proper hand hygiene.
- Masks are optional.
- Stay home if feeling sick.



# MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

## Fish & Wildlife Commission

### Planning and Land Use Department

#### Planning Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7833 • Fax (907) 861-7876

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### Board Of Fisheries 2024 FWC Draft Planning Document:

### Task Table 1

Task	Target Date	Note 1	Note 2	Complete Date
Develop Initial FWC Goals	Nov. '22- Jan. '23			January 2023
FWC BOF Budget	Jan. '23	Currently: \$49,073.36. Submit budget request to MSB Planning.	Work to increase by \$10K - \$15K	Final request to MSB by 2/1/23
Identify Allied Groups	Dec. '22 – Feb. '24			Ongoing
Develop FWC BOF Proposals	Dec. '22 – March '23			Submit April '23
Extend BOF Project Funds	April – May '23	Current project expires 6/30/23.	Extend current project to 6/30/24.	6/1/23
BOF Member Education	Summer '23	Develop/offer field trips for BOF and stakeholders	Involve Salmon Habitat Partnership	August '23
FWC BOF Media Development	June '23 – Feb. '24	Booklet Website StoryMap		Final Booklet Printed Dec. '23

*Providing Outstanding Borough Services to the Matanuska-Susitna Community*

***Ted Fischeid, Planner II***

*Supporting [Environmental Planning](#) and the MSB [Fish & Wildlife Commission](#).*

*[Ted.Fischeid@matsugov.us](mailto:Ted.Fischeid@matsugov.us) Ph. 907.861-8606, MSB Cell 795-6281*

<b>Task</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Note 1</b>	<b>Note 2</b>	<b>Complete Date</b>
BOF Consultant Hired	July – Aug. '23	RFP developed, publicized, consultant hired.		August '23
BOF Outreach Plan	Develop June – Oct. '23; Deliver Nov. '23-Feb. '24	Identify key target groups; develop content messaging; deliver program.	Print Social media Presentations Workshops	Ongoing
ID Partners for sharing onsite resources	Summer '23	Onsite meeting room; printing resources.		May '23 FWC reso in support.
BOF Proposal Review & Recommendations	Fall '23	FWC Committee		Dec. '23
After Action Summary Report	March '24	Internal report	Community summary press releases	March '24
Strategy Reflection for BOF '27	April – May '24			May '24



Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 22-097**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY APPROVING  
STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.**

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**Borough Action Priorities:**

**A. SUPPORT FOR DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC  
FACILITIES ROAD PROJECTS -**

- **Seward Meridian Parkway Extension North, Phase 2 (Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Seldon Road) - \$57 Million**

The project will upgrade the borough's current two-lane road with no shoulder to a four-lane road with shoulders, a separated path, a bridge over Cottonwood Creek, and safety improvements at intersections. Phase 2 will extend from the Palmer-Wasilla Hwy. to Seldon Rd. and will positively impact school access for five area schools. Construction is expected to commence in 2023.

- **Community Transportation Program Mat-Su Borough (MSB) Projects (projects already underway) - \$32.9 Million**

- Hemmer Rd. Extension & Upgrade to Bogard Rd.
- Hermon Rd. Extension & Upgrade to Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.
- Seldon Rd. Extension, Ph.2 (Windy Bottom to Pittman Rd.)
- Trunk Rd. Extension South, Ph. III (Wasilla Ck. Bridge)

- **Knik-Goose Bay Road Reconstruction (Fairview Loop to Vine Road) - \$50 Million**

This segment is funded with federal dollars. Construction of the Fairview Loop to Vine Rd. segment (part of Phase 2) is anticipated to start in 2024. This effort will expand the corridor to a four-lane, divided roadway with a separated multi-use pathway on the north side.

- **Glenn Highway MP 34-42, Phase 2 (Parks Highway Interchange to South Inner Springer Road) - \$45 Million**

Reconstruct this segment of the Glenn Hwy. to four lanes with shoulders and separated pathway. Accommodate turning movements and add traffic and safety improvements as necessary. Right-of-way (ROW) acquisition and utility relocation underway; Construction will start in 2023.

- **Wasilla-Fishhook, Main Street Rehabilitation - \$47 Million**  
Construct a one-way couplet in downtown Wasilla bounded by Bogard Rd., KGB/Main Street, Yenlo/Talkeetna St. and the Palmer Wasilla Highway. Work will consist of new road construction, a new at-grade railroad crossing, lane reconfigurations, signals, new pavement, signing, striping, and sidewalks.
- **Highway Safety Improvement Projects - \$41.8 Million**
  - Bogard Rd./Engstrom Rd./Green Forest Dr. roundabout
  - Church Rd. & Spruce Ave. intersection flashing beacon
  - Palmer-Fishhook Rd. & Trunk Rd. roundabout
  - Pittman Rd. shoulder widening and slope flattening
  - Vine Rd. & Hollywood Rd. intersection improvements
  - Wasilla-Fishhook Rd. & Spruce Ave./Peck St. roundabout
- **Fairview Loop Rehabilitation - \$54.3 Million**  
The proposed scope will include rehabilitation of Fairview Loop pavement, widening of shoulders, and construction of a separated pathway from Top of the World Circle to Fern St. In addition, the project will also include spot safety improvements from Marble Way to South Bearing Tree Lane. Utility relocation and construction is anticipated to occur in the 2024-26 time period.
- **Vine Road Reconstruction, Knik-Goose Bay Road to Hollywood Road - \$12.8 Million**  
Project will reconstruct 0.6 miles of the existing two-lane rural road from KGB Rd. to Hollywood Rd. to address the increase in traffic volumes. Scope includes ROW acquisition, paving, signage, drainage improvements, intersection improvements, ADA improvements, utility relocation, and safety improvements as warranted. It may include associated 8 foot shoulders, turn lanes and pedestrian pathway. Construction is anticipated in 2027.
- **Parks Highway Alternative Corridor, Planning-Environmental Linkage Study - \$5.2 Million**  
Project will investigate options to improve mobility in the Wasilla area on or around the Parks Highway between its intersection with the Glenn Highway and MP 54 (approximately 2 miles beyond the Big Lake Road and Parks Highway intersection).

**B. FULL COMPLEMENT OF TROOPER STAFFING AND PRESENCE IN THE MAT-SU VALLEY EQUALING 71 SWORN OFFICERS - UAA Justice Center**

report of February 22, 2018 recommends a total of 71 sworn staff. We support this goal.

- C. CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE WEST SUSITNA ACCESS ROAD** - Design and construct an access road to open up vast acreage in the west side of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) to agriculture, commercial use, forestry, materials extraction, public recreation, resource management, and settlement. The road will help develop the area between the Little Susitna (Little Su) and Susitna (Big Su) Rivers, opening approximately 200,000 acres. The project also puts the State near the doorstep of 6 million acres of land on the other side of the Big Su with oil and gas, mineral, agricultural, timber, and many other resources.
- D. SUPPORT FOR STATE FORESTRY TO IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO HARVEST/REMOVE BEETLE KILLED SPRUCE TO REDUCE FIRE HAZARD** - The spruce bark beetle has killed thousands of acres of spruce trees within the MSB, causing residents to experience great economic, physical and emotional loss due to a number of devastating wildfires over the last several years. The MSB fully supports the State in seeking State and Federal funding for the harvesting/removing of these trees as quickly as possible to reduce the danger of fire to MSB residents and businesses.
- E. SUPPORT FOR USER-FRIENDLY TRANSPARENT HEALTHCARE PRICING INCLUDING ADOPTION OF A STATE ALL-PAYER CLAIMS DATABASE** - An All-Payer Claims Database (APCD) in Alaska, was introduced in the State Legislature in 2021. The Alaska Health Transformation Project identified the establishment of an APCD in Alaska as a critical step in helping understand health spending trends, utilization and pricing variation, and would require insurers and providers to submit non-identifying health data to be aggregated for policy analysis and cost trends. There have been attempts at the national level to make healthcare pricing more transparent, including the recently adopted Hospital Price Transparency Rule which took effect in January of 2021 and requires medical providers to make pricing information available publicly. However, to date, many providers are not disclosing information, or have done it in formats on their website that are time consuming and difficult to use and not easily comparable to other providers.
- F. SUPPORT FOR THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL** - The Borough Assembly adopted Resolution Serial No. 21-045 on May 18, 2021

supporting the proposed Fairbanks to Seward multi-use trail also known as the Alaska Long Trail. The Alaska Long Trail is an initiative sponsored by a coalition of partners and led by Alaska Trails that seeks to establish a 500-mile trail from Seward to Fairbanks.

- G. SUPPORT FOR THE JONESVILLE PUBLIC USE AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN AND AGREEMENT** - The Alaska State Legislature established the Jonesville Public Use Area. The Assembly supports the Alaska State Department of Natural Resources in creating and implementing a management plan for the Jonesville Public Use Area to include a management agreement with the Mat-Su Borough.
- H. SUPPORT FOR MODIFYING AS 34.08 - COMMON INTEREST OWNERSHIP ACT** - Support to require common interest communities to conform with local platting authority subdivision regulations. AS 34.08 allows for the subdivision of land into "units" and "common elements" without any oversight by local government. Units resemble lots and can ignore minimum sizes for the safe attenuation of septic generated. Common elements resemble roadways and often do not provide for interconnectivity and create unsafe conditions due to substandard widths and geometric design.
- I. SUPPORT FOR CORPORATE TAX HOLIDAY FOR PORT MACKENZIE DISTRICT** - The Borough Assembly supports incentivizing private investment into the Port MacKenzie District through tariff rates and local tax incentives and is also requesting State support for creating a State corporate tax holiday for up to 15 years for companies that choose to invest in Port MacKenzie.
- J. SUPPORT FOR ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES (ADOT&PF) MAINTENANCE FACILITY IN THE MAT-SU VALLEY** - The Borough supports the construction of a new ADOT&PF maintenance facility in the core area. The new shared Maintenance & Operations (M&O)/State Equipment Fleet facility (SEF) planned to be constructed on South Endeavor Street at approximately mile 3 of Knik-Goose Bay Road will significantly enhance the capabilities of the ADOT&PF M&O section by providing right-size vehicle equipment stalls, bays, storage rooms and shared common areas as well as a location more central to the Borough's population. The services provided by M&O and SEF have significantly outgrown the existing facility size, resulting in inefficiencies in operations. By constructing a new facility, current asset

maintenance technology systems will be incorporated providing for enhanced safety features as well as energy efficiency technologies allowing for significantly reduced costs per square foot for occupancy. With the largest increase in population forecasted in the State of Alaska occurring in the Mat-Su Valley, construction of this new facility will result in the optimum service level to fleet customers in the Mat-Su area and ensure the movement of goods and services throughout the valley.

- K. SUPPORT FOR ALASKA LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS (AKLNG) -** Alaska LNG will use clean, energy-efficient, and safe production methods to deliver a stable supply of natural gas for commercialization and for in-state distribution. The Borough Assembly supports this project, being developed by the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation. Alaskans need a long-term and affordable source of natural gas for home heating, power generation, and industrial needs.
- L. PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR -** The Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project was funded by direct grants from the Alaska Legislature from FY2008 through FY2015 totaling \$184 million. As the Borough continues to explore options to advance a transportation corridor, the Borough needs to pursue flexibility to explore using the corridor for an alternate mode of transportation. Subject to funding, the corridor can be completed and used as a rail. Alternatively, the corridor could be used in other ways such as a pathway, recreational trail, seasonal road, industrial road, or a public road. Alternate use could be temporary, pending rail completion, or could develop into a use that is more permanent in nature. This legislative priority will be to obtain the necessary changes to prior legislative grants to allow for multi-modal use of the corridor.
- M. KNIK ARM CROSSING - FUNDS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE ALASKA STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES -** The Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) will provide connectivity between the State's two largest population centers and their road networks, ports, airports, and rail corridors. The KAC will provide a more direct, alternate route from the Borough (Point MacKenzie and beyond) to Anchorage and stimulate growth in the southern portion of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB). Socioeconomic studies performed for the MSB indicate that this area will experience significant growth, and investment in infrastructure to support that



growth should begin now in order to avoid costly highway expansion as is currently being experienced on Knik-Goose Bay Road, Parks Highway, and Glenn Highway corridors.

- N. STATE LAND TRANSFERS TO THE MAT-SU BOROUGH** - The Borough continues to see major growth in the development of its land and natural resources. As part of the Alaska General Land Grant, the Borough was entitled to approximately 355,000 acres of land as part of its Municipal Entitlement. Borough lands are used for public facilities and schools as well as to generate revenue through land and resource sales, leases, and permits. Along with the population increases within the Borough, we have witnessed increasing demand for land to use for public facilities and schools, public/private partnerships for commercial lease sites, agricultural parcels, and residential and recreational subdivisions. Furthermore, there is a demand for resources, such as timber, rock, and gravel materials. As a result, the Borough has disposed of most of its developable acreage along the road system, primarily in core growth areas near and within the communities of Palmer, Wasilla, Houston, and Willow. As it currently stands, the vast majority of remaining Borough owned entitlement lands are located in remote inaccessible areas of the Borough that will likely never be developed due to the Alaska Department of Natural Resource's survey requirements, accessibility, and high construction costs. In an effort to meet demand and provide the public with opportunities for the development of Borough land, the Borough seeks acquisition of additional State owned land, namely developable properties on the road system that are located near infrastructure and utilities. With additional land entitlement, the Borough would be well-positioned to meet the needs of the public, address growth, and plan for the future. The Borough has been aggressive in actively managing its lands in terms of material resource sales, spruce bark beetle mitigation, and recreation area development. In addition, annual land sales programs have been booming in recent years. However, the Borough's land inventory of desirable lands has dwindled and obtaining additional State lands would create an opportunity for more development, benefitting both the Borough and the State of Alaska.

**Borough Funding Priorities:**

- 1. FULL FUNDING FOR SCHOOL BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT - \$17,252,568**  
The school bond ballot passed in 2011 permitted the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to construct a new secondary school in the

Knik community; a new alternative high school in Palmer; a new school in the Wasilla area to meet the needs of Special Education students; an addition to the Career and Technical High School; two new elementary schools in Wasilla and the Knik community; and address many deferred maintenance items. New school construction was necessary to address significant population growth. Due to this ballot measure, the Borough's debt service payments continue through 2035.

One of our greatest challenges to developing an economical budget that delivers the services our citizens' demand is the unpredictability in previous years for fully funding State school bond debt reimbursement. The Borough appreciates the State repayment of previous years this past fiscal year and requests continued support for fully funding this program. This represents \$17,252,568 for the Mat-Su this coming fiscal year.

**2. ARCTIC WINTER GAMES 2024 - \$2 MILLION**

The Arctic Winter Games is a biennial event shared among seven Arctic Nations that has taken place for the last five decades, with the State of Alaska being one of the founding contingents. The host community rotates on a set schedule amongst the permanent contingents, meaning, at most, an Alaskan community is chosen once every ten years. The Mat-Su 2024 Arctic Winter Games Host Society (AWGHS) is striving for excellence in hosting this event. The Borough Assembly is requesting the State contribute additional funds to support this world-class event. The State has already contributed \$2 million, which is the same amount historically given to Arctic Winter Games in previous decades. An additional \$2 million is necessary to accommodate for increased costs and staffing needs to build capacity for this event. In many cases, quotes for supplies and services are double what was budgeted for previous games.

**3. PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION PUBLIC ROAD UPGRADE - \$30 MILLION**

Project would extend from Millers Reach Road to Ayrshire Road and would consist of upgrading the existing rail embankment and bridges to be capable of carrying two lanes of vehicular traffic with signage and safety improvements. This would also provide short-term maintenance funding for the Borough and City of Houston and funding to re-negotiate a permanent easement along a portion of segment 5 of the project.

**4. METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION - \$1 MILLION**

The Borough is requesting funding from the Alaska Legislature in the amount of \$1,000,000 to initiate the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the short-term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

This funding would also be used to complete required plans including the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); hire an Executive Director to manage the organization in anticipation of receipt of annual federal planning funds; provide start-up membership fees for the State of Alaska ADOT&PF, and others, to become policy board members; provide the non-federal share for planning funds; and operate the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Our estimate for funding to complete planning and support the operations of the new MPO is based on costs from Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) and Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST). Without this funding, we will not meet the federal government's formation timeline, and the Mat-Su Borough MPO will not begin operations until Fiscal Year 2025. This is a one-time request to establish the organization whereby federal funding will be utilized to sustain operations.

**5. WILLOW FIRE/EMS STATION - \$5 MILLION**

Willow is in need of a joint public safety building in the core area of the community along the Parks Highway corridor. The current facility, Station 12-1, consists of antiquated apparatus bays and a small classroom building, which was recently condemned and deemed unsafe to use. This new facility would be a joint complex to house the Willow Fire Department, a full-time Willow based ambulance, and rescue services. This would also provide an area for law enforcement to utilize as needed. The Borough Assembly has appropriated \$3.5 million for this project. The Borough is requesting a State match to assist the Borough in completing this facility. Otherwise, funding is only adequate to address EMS needs.

The current facility is inadequate for our existing public safety needs and does not have the capacity to support services required for the projected growth of the area. At this time there is no EMS support facility in the Willow area and the fire station lacks support facilities for responders. There is no training room, common living spaces, dorm rooms or even adequate showering facilities to clean up following an incident. An important component of our cancer risk



reduction plan for our fire-rescue responders is immediate decontamination of personnel and equipment following fires and related responses. A key component to reducing response times to emergencies is having a facility that responders are residing in and able to respond from immediately. The proposed facilities would fulfill this need well into the future. Rather than building two separate buildings, a single combined facility will save taxpayer funding and improve efficiency.

The proposed location is on the current lot occupied by Fire Station 12-1. This is a 16-acre lot with Parks Highway frontage in the heart of Willow and is already owned by the MSB. Using this location represents savings as utilities and site work are already completed.

**6. EDUCATION SUPPORT:**

- **Increase Foundation Formula Funding by adjusting the Base Student Allocation (BSA) in successive years to support a multi-year funding plan. Increase the Base Student Allocation by \$120 in FY 2024. [AS 14.17.470]**

The State of Alaska's Foundation Formula Program represents the largest revenue source for the Mat-Su Borough School District. The BSA must be adjusted over time to ensure funding is protected against inflationary pressures. Alaska Consumer Price Index (CPI) is at a 30-year high and the BSA has not been increased in six years (since Fiscal Year 2017). The proposed adjustment represents a 2% increase.

- **New School Construction for Charter Schools (3 sites) American Charter School, Birchtree Charter School, and Academy Charter School**

With the suspension of the School Bond Debt Reimbursement Program, the Mat-Su Borough School District seeks State funding to support a portion of the new school construction for American Charter Academy, Birchtree Charter School, and Academy Charter School. The existing building and infrastructure are inadequate to accommodate the school population or plans for expansion. Current lease agreements have or are set to expire within the next few years and the Mat-Su Borough has designated land for each of the aforementioned projects.

**American Charter Academy - \$13.5 Million.** The new location is a 20-acre parcel, near the intersection of Church and Seldon Roads. The approved location allows for improved traffic circulation, student safety, and has adequate outdoor space to accommodate recreational needs. The

proposed building will be 24,000 SF, two-story, light commercial construction, and house an estimated 250 students and 20-25 staff members.

**Birchtree Charter School - \$24.3 Million.** The new location is a 68-acre parcel adjoining Shaw Elementary School. The location is in a large, wooded area that would allow for improved traffic flow and accommodate outdoor learning opportunities. The proposed building will be 45,000 SF, two-story, light commercial construction, and house approximately 400 students and 40-45 staff members.

**Academy Charter High School - \$24.5 Million.** In 2022, the MSBSD School Board and State Board of Education approved the expansion of Academy Charter School to include 9th-12th grade, with a proposed opening of August 2023. Academy's current classroom space is used for instruction of 258 Kindergarten through 8th grade students and 30 staff members. A new facility is needed to house the high school program. The proposed building will be 39,500 SF, light commercial construction, and house approximately 250 students and 25 staff members. The existing site is large enough to accommodate expansion of the high school and additional parking.

- **Adjust the per student funding for pupil transportation services on an annual basis.** The revenue adjustment factor should continue to be the Alaska Consumer Price Index (CPI) as compiled by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. [AS 14.09.010(a)] The State of Alaska has not adjusted per pupil funding since 2015. Most, if not all, pupil transportation contracts within the State of Alaska are adjusted annually based on Alaska CPI. When the State does not adjust per pupil funding accordingly, expenses outpace revenue. This revenue shortfall requires school districts to subsidize their pupil transportation program with operating funds previously allocated to the classroom.
- **Support for ending the School Bond Debt Reimbursement Moratorium** - The Borough Assembly passed Resolution Serial No. 22-046 on May 3, 2022 in support of ending the moratorium on school bond debt reimbursement that went into effect on January 1, 2015. Thereafter, the program moratorium was extended to July 1, 2025. Schools, including construction and major renovation of school buildings, comprises a major portion of local expenditures. Ending the moratorium and allowing local governments to once again engage in cost sharing with the State will return to the historical framework which was in place for decades, provide safe and efficient schools for children in Alaska,

and restore a portion of the Alaska Legislature's constitutionally mandated duty to provide for public schools.

**7. SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL - \$500,000**

Develop a comprehensive safety action plan in accordance with federal guidelines that leads to an eventual goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries as well as providing for eligibility to receive Federal implementation funding for safety projects over the next four years.

**8. 2022-2023 COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (CTP) - \$30 MILLION AND ALASKA TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (ATAP) - \$10 MILLION**

**9. FLOOD AND EROSION MITIGATION FOR SUSCEPTIBLE ROADS - \$3.5 MILLION**

There are roads within the borough which are susceptible to annual flooding and erosion which have been identified, but are too large a project to be improved using Road Service Area funds. These range from subdivision roads to large collector roads which provide vital transportation links to residents' homes and businesses. Funding for this project would allow for the flooding and erosion to be mitigated through road realignment, raising the road embankment, installing armoring, installing larger culverts and providing adequate ditches and drainage easements.

**10. TALKEETNA WATER AND SEWER LINE REPAIRS AND SYSTEM UPGRADES - \$4.75 MILLION**

The water and sewer lines in Talkeetna were installed in the 1980s and 1990s and some of the older lines leak, which can have significant negative financial impacts. Drinking water leaking from pipes is a waste of water and its associated treatment costs, while groundwater leaking into the sewer system can result in added wastewater volume and costs. This project will include investigation of the pipes and identification of leak locations, so that the appropriate repairs or replacements can be made. The project will consider other water line improvements, such as extending lines to create loops to improve system pressure and response to emergency fire demands. Additionally, the water treatment facility needs well and tank upgrades to improve production and increase storage capacity, as well as a modern alarm system. The facility also needs a separate chemical storage building to protect the water system metal components from on-going chemical corrosion.

**11. ALASKA RAILBELT CLEAN ENERGY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT - \$203.9 MILLION**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB), Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), Interior Gas Utility (IGU), and the Alaska Rail Road Corporation (ARRC) have partnered to extend the existing rail line from the Parks Highway to the Interior Gas Utility (IGU) Titan liquefaction plant (Titan plant) owned by FNSB. This project would complete the northern segments of the MSB Port MacKenzie Rail Extension (PMRE) project allowing for the transportation of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) via rail versus via the road system from the Titan plant to Fairbanks and North Pole storage facilities.

The Alaska Railbelt Clean Energy Transportation Infrastructure Project consists of three component projects that have been designed to enable lasting economic development opportunities and benefits throughout the region. This concept includes:

1. Expanding LNG capacity at the publicly owned Interior Gas Utility (IGU) Titan plant in Point MacKenzie from 50,000 gallons per day to 150,000 gallons per day. This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$75.9 million and has advanced to 65% design.

2. Completing 18 miles (of 33 total) of the PMRE, which will allow LNG to be shipped 346 miles by rail to Fairbanks and North Pole, Alaska versus 358 miles by truck, increasing fuel efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75-percent. This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$96.1 million and all State and Federal permits have been acquired, engineering design for the remaining rail work is nearly finished, and right-of-way acquisition is substantially complete.

3. Completing rail spur connections to the Titan plant and to IGU storage and vaporization facilities in Fairbanks (Peger Road) and North Pole (Laurance Road). This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$31.9 million.

The completed PMRE will bring \$184 million in State investment into production, creating jobs, reducing energy and transportation costs while also improving air quality. It is also expected to increase the efficiency of shipping bulk commodities and materials to and from Interior Alaska, and to provide direct rail access for LNG shipments from Cook Inlet

to Fairbanks and North Pole. Combined, the component projects will allow for natural gas to be transported more than 346 miles by rail versus (currently) 358 miles by truck to Fairbanks, North Pole and other communities across the rail belt. This project will increase the available supply of natural gas and will reduce energy costs for industry and residential customers in Interior Alaska communities. With increased natural gas supply, the region will realize additional opportunities for natural gas conversion, which will aid in achieving air quality attainment.

The three component projects are in varying stages of design, environmental studies, and permitting however, all State and Federal permits for the PMRE have been acquired, engineering design for the remaining rail work is nearly finished, and right-of-way acquisition is substantially complete.

**12. COMPLETION OF PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION (PMRE) - \$190 MILLION**

Project scope would include final design and construction of Segment 2 and final design, survey and construction of sub-ballast, rail, ties, ballast, and signal/communications installation for Segments 1-5. This rail extension from the Alaska Railroad mainline to Port MacKenzie will provide a shorter rail route from interior Alaska to tidewater, which in turn will substantially boost the export of Alaska's minerals and natural resources helping diversify the statewide economy.

The completed PMRE will bring \$184 million in State investment into production, creating jobs, reducing energy and transportation costs while also improving air quality. It is also expected to increase the efficiency of shipping bulk commodities and materials to and from Interior Alaska, and to provide direct rail access for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) shipments from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks and North Pole.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this - day  
of -, 2022.

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EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 22-098**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY APPROVING  
FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.**

**Borough Action Priorities:**

**A. SUPPORT FOR MARITIME ADMINISTRATION PORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PIDP) GRANT APPLICATION -**

On September 6, 2022 the Borough Assembly approved Resolution Serial No. 22-075 to pursue a federal grant opportunity for equipment to improve cargo handling capabilities at Port MacKenzie supporting business development efforts.

The Federal Infrastructure Bill provided funding to roughly 380 programs. PIDP grants, from the United States Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, is one of those existing programs. The next grant cycle will close May 2023.

The PIDP grant is one of the only port related grants that will allow for the purchase of equipment, and it requires the submittal of a benefit cost analysis, along with the grant application. Equipment such as a mobile harbor crane or travel lift would significantly improve cargo handling capabilities at Port MacKenzie. When utilized with a roll-on/roll-off ramp, this capability would include the ability to dry dock vessels.

**B. SUPPORT FOR WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION DUE TO BEETLE KILLED SPRUCE -** The spruce bark beetle has killed thousands of acres of spruce trees within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB), causing residents to experience great economic, physical and emotional loss due to a number of devastating wildfires over the last several years. The MSB fully supports seeking State and Federal funding for the harvesting/removing of these trees as quickly as possible to reduce the danger of fire to MSB residents and businesses.

**C. SUPPORT FOR THE FOLLOWING ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES (ADOT&PF) FEDERALLY FUNDED ROAD PROJECTS -**

- Seward Meridian Parkway Extension North, Phase 2 (Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Seldon Road) - \$57 Million



- **Community Transportation Program MSB Projects - \$32.9 Million (projects already underway)**
    - Hemmer Rd. Extension & Upgrade to Bogard Rd.
    - Hermon Rd. Extension & Upgrade to Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.
    - Seldon Rd. Extension, Ph.2 (Windy Bottom to Pittman Rd.)
    - Trunk Rd. Extension South, Ph. 3 (Wasilla Ck. Bridge)
  - **Knik-Goose Bay Road Reconstruction (Fairview Loop to Vine Road) - \$50 Million**
  - **Glenn Highway MP 34-42, Phase 2 (Parks Highway Interchange to South Inner Springer Road) - \$45 Million**
  - **Wasilla-Fishhook, Main Street Rehabilitation - \$47 Million**
  - **Highway Safety Improvement Projects - \$41.8 Million**
    - Bogard Rd./Engstrom Rd./Green Forest Dr. Roundabout
    - Church Rd. & Spruce Ave. Intersection Flashing Beacon
    - Palmer-Fishhook Rd. & Trunk Rd. Roundabout
    - Pittman Rd. Shoulder Widening and Slope Flattening
    - Vine Rd. & Hollywood Rd. Intersection Improvements
    - Wasilla-Fishhook Rd. & Spruce Ave./Peck St. Roundabout
  - **Fairview Loop Rehabilitation - \$54.3 Million**
  - **Vine Road Reconstruction, Knik-Goose Bay Road to Hollywood Road - \$12.8 Million**
  - **Parks Highway Alternative Corridor, Planning-Environmental Linkage Study - \$5.2 Million**
- D. KNIK ARM CROSSING - FUNDS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE ALASKA STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES** - The Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) would provide connectivity between the State's two largest population centers and their road networks, ports, airports, and rail corridors. The KAC will provide a more direct, alternate route from the Borough to Anchorage and stimulate growth in the southern portion of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB). Socioeconomic studies performed for the MSB indicate that this area will experience significant growth, and investment in infrastructure to support that growth should begin now in order to avoid costly highway expansion as is currently being experienced on Knik-Goose Bay Road, Parks Highway, and Glenn Highway corridors.



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**2. WILLOW FIRE/EMS STATION - \$5 MILLION**

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and related responses. A key component to reducing response times to emergencies is having a facility that responders are residing in and able to respond from immediately. The proposed facilities would fulfill this need well into the future. Rather than building two separate buildings, a single combined facility will save taxpayer funding and improve efficiency.

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substantially complete.

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The completed PMRE will bring \$184 million in State investment into production, creating jobs, reducing energy and transportation costs while also improving air quality. It is also expected to increase the efficiency of shipping bulk commodities and materials to and from Interior Alaska, and to provide direct rail access for LNG shipments from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks and North Pole. Combined, the component projects will allow for natural gas to be transported more than 346 miles by rail versus (currently) 358 miles by truck to Fairbanks, North Pole and other communities across the rail belt. This project will increase the available supply of natural gas and will reduce energy costs for industry and residential customers in Interior Alaska communities. With increased natural gas supply, the region will realize additional opportunities for natural gas conversion, which will aid in achieving air quality attainment.

The three component projects are in varying stages of design, environmental studies, and permitting however, all State and Federal permits for the PMRE have been acquired, engineering design for the remaining rail work is nearly finished, and right-of-way acquisition is substantially complete.

**4. COMPLETION OF PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION (PMRE) - \$190 MILLION**

Project scope would include final design and construction of Segment 2 and final design, survey and construction of sub-ballast, rail, ties, ballast, and signal/communications installation for Segments 1-5. This rail extension from the Alaska Railroad mainline to Port MacKenzie will provide a shorter rail route from Interior Alaska to tidewater, which in turn will substantially boost the export of Alaska's minerals and natural resources helping diversify the statewide economy.

The completed PMRE will bring \$184 million in State investment into production, creating jobs, reducing energy and transportation costs while also improving air quality. It is also expected to increase the efficiency of shipping bulk commodities and materials to and from Interior Alaska, and to

provide direct rail access for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) shipments from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks and North Pole.

**5. SUSITNA/TALKEETNA RIVER EROSION AND FLOOD CONTROL - \$10 MILLION**

Replace existing and/or enhance the current flood and erosion control infrastructure. This could include the construction of new revetments, dikes, floodwalls, etc., around the town.

**6. MSB SUBSTANDARD ROAD AND BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS - \$15 MILLION**

The MSB is the fastest growing borough in the State of Alaska. Many roads built decades ago were not built to MSB standards, have substandard gravel bases, lack sufficient right-of-way and sight distance, and are not designed or constructed for the amount of traffic on the roads. Improvements to these roads will ensure that the functionality and safety of the roads meet the proper classification and design standards. These roads are part of the community transportation plan and the MSB's Long Range Transportation Plan.

Numerous bridges on the Borough's road system have outlived their design life and require costly repairs or complete replacement. Several bridges received substandard sufficiency ratings on their most recent inspections. Work needed to bring the bridges into compliance with Federal standards range from riprap replacement to protect against the rivers and creeks that they cross, to full replacement of bridges that are settling or have reduced structural capacity. Several bridges have reduced weight limits because of substandard design and/or gradual deterioration, which limits the type of vehicle that can use the bridges hindering the operations and development of private properties that rely on the bridges for access. Some bridges, if not maintained, will not support the weight of our emergency response vehicles in the future. This project will make improvements to extend the life of multiple bridges for at least another 30 years.

**7. FLOOD MITIGATION FOR ACQUISITION OF HIGH HAZARD AREAS - \$2.5 MILLION**

Inventory all floodway properties, analyze, and prioritize the most at-risk areas to flooding and erosion. Offer a voluntary acquisition to maintain open space corridors and enhance flood risk reduction methods, including ice jam flooding, channel migration, and enhancement of fish habitat. There are estimated to be 100 homes with an estimated project cost of \$20 million. \$2.5 million represents our most critical needs and those homeowners expressing interest in buyouts.

**8. FLOOD AND EROSION MITIGATION FOR SUSCEPTIBLE ROADS - \$3.5 MILLION**

There are roads within the Borough which are susceptible to annual flooding and erosion which have been identified, but are too large a project to be improved using Road Service Area funds. These range from subdivision roads to large collector roads which provide vital transportation links to residents' homes and businesses. Funding for this project would allow for the flooding and erosion to be mitigated through road realignment, raising the road embankment, installing armoring, installing larger culverts and providing adequate ditches and drainage easements.

**9. TALKEETNA WATER AND SEWER LINE REPAIRS AND SYSTEM UPGRADES - \$4.75 MILLION**

The water and sewer lines in Talkeetna were installed in the 1980s and 1990s and some of the older lines leak, which can have significant negative financial impacts. Drinking water leaking from pipes wastes water and its associated treatment costs, while groundwater leaking into the sewer system can result in added wastewater volume and costs. This project will include investigation of the pipes and identification of leak locations, so that the appropriate repairs or replacements can be made. The project will consider other water line improvements, such as extending lines to create loops to improve system pressure and response to emergency fire demands. Additionally, the water treatment facility needs well and tank upgrades to improve production and increase storage capacity, as well as a modern alarm system. The facility also needs a separate chemical storage building to protect the water system metal components from on-going chemical corrosion.

**10. SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL - \$500,000**

Develop a comprehensive safety Action Plan that leads to an eventual goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries as well as providing for eligibility to receive Federal implementation funding for safety projects over the next four years.

**11. 2022-2023 COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (CTP) - \$30 MILLION AND ALASKA TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (ATAP) - \$10 MILLION**

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this - day

of -, 2022.

EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)



Amended: 12/07/21

Adopted: 12/07/21

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 21-124**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH (MSB) ASSEMBLY  
APPROVING STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023.**

**Borough Action Priorities:**

**A. SUPPORT FOR DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC  
FACILITIES ROAD PROJECTS -**

- **Knik-Goose Bay Road Reconstruction (Centaur Avenue to Vine Road - \$50 Million, and Vine Road to Settlers Bay Drive - \$25 Million**

Construction of the Centaur Avenue to Fairview Loop segment (Phase 1) is anticipated to start in 2022. Construction on the Fairview Loop to Settlers Bay Drive segment (Phase 2) is anticipated to start in 2024. This effort will expand the corridor to a four-lane, divided roadway with a separated multi-use pathway on the north side.

- **Bogard Road and Engstrom Road/Green Forest Drive Intersection Upgrade - \$10 Million**

This intersection has a number of issues including inadequate size, very limited traffic control (through signage), only one turn lane, extremely poor sight distance, and an offset with the Green Forest intersection. Project design is underway and construction is expected to start in summer 2023.

- **Seward Meridian Parkway Extension North, Phase 2 (Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Seldon Road) - \$49 Million**

The project will upgrade the current two-lane road with no shoulder to a four-lane road with shoulders, a separated path, a bridge over Cottonwood Creek, and safety improvements at intersections. Phase 1, Parks Highway to Palmer-Wasilla Highway is complete. Phase 2 will extend from the Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Seldon Road. Construction is expected to commence in 2022.

- **KNIK ARM CROSSING - Funds to be determined by Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities**

The Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) will provide connectivity between the State's two largest population centers and their road networks, ports, airports, and rail corridors. The KAC will provide a more direct, alternate route from the Borough (Point MacKenzie and beyond) to Anchorage and stimulate growth in the southern portion

of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB). Socioeconomic studies performed for the MSB indicate that this area will experience significant growth, and investment in infrastructure to support that growth should begin now in order to avoid costly highway expansion as is currently being experienced on Knik-Goose Bay Road, Parks Highway, and Glenn Highway corridors.

- B. **FULL COMPLEMENT OF TROOPER STAFFING AND PRESENCE IN THE MAT-SU VALLEY EQUALING 71 SWORN OFFICERS** - UAA Justice Center report of February 22, 2018 recommends an increase of 26 sworn staff, for a total of 71 sworn staff. We support this goal and request it be achieved within three years.
- C. **CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR WEST SUSITNA ACCESS ROAD** - Design and construct an access road to open up vast acreage in the west side of the MSB to agriculture, commercial use, forestry, materials extraction, public recreation, resource management, and settlement. The road will help develop the area between the Little Susitna (Little Su) and Susitna (Big Su) Rivers, opening approximately 200,000 acres. The project also puts the State near the doorstep of 6 million acres of land on the other side of the Big Su with oil and gas, mineral, agricultural, timber, and many other resources.
- D. **SUPPORT FOR STATE FORESTRY TO IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO HARVEST/REMOVE BEETLE KILLED SPRUCE TO REDUCE FIRE HAZARD** - The spruce bark beetle has killed thousands of acres of spruce trees within the MSB, causing residents to experience great economic, physical and emotional loss due to a number of devastating wildfires over the last several years. The MSB fully supports the State in seeking State and Federal funding for the harvesting/removing these trees as quickly as possible to reduce the danger of fire to MSB residents and businesses.
- E. **SUPPORT FOR USER-FRIENDLY TRANSPARENT HEALTHCARE PRICING INCLUDING ADOPTION OF A STATE ALL-PAYER CLAIMS DATABASE** - An All-Payer Claims Database (APCD) in Alaska, was introduced in the state legislature in 2021. The Alaska Health Transformation Project identified the establishment of an APCD in Alaska as a critical step in helping understand health spending trends, utilization and pricing variation, and would require insurers and providers to submit non-identifying health data to be aggregated for policy analysis and cost trends. There have been attempts at the national level to make healthcare pricing more transparent, including the



recently adopted Hospital Price Transparency Rule which took effect in January of 2021 and requires medical providers to make pricing information available publicly. However, to date, many providers are not disclosing information, or have done it in formats on their website that are time consuming and difficult to use and not easily comparable to other providers.

- F. **SUPPORT CHANGES TO STATE LAW TO ALLOW FOR MORE LOCAL CONTROL OVER ALCOHOL BEVERAGE LICENSING** - The MSB Assembly adopted Resolution Serial No. 21-017 on February 16, 2021 supporting changes to State law. Under Alaska Statute Title 4, the number and types of alcohol beverage licenses and permits allowed within a municipality is largely based upon population. The current structure does not provide any mechanism to allow municipalities to participate in determining the appropriate number and types of licenses and permits within their community. Delegating the power or providing municipalities a mechanism to determine the appropriate number and types of alcoholic beverage licenses and permits within their community, will provide more effective regulation of licenses and permits across the State.
- G. **SUPPORT FOR THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL** - The MSB Assembly adopted Resolution Serial No. 21-045 on May 18, 2021 supporting the proposed Fairbanks to Seward multi-use trail also known as the Alaska Long Trail. The Alaska Long Trail is an initiative sponsored by a coalition of partners and led by Alaska Trails that seeks to establish a 500-mile trail from Seward to Fairbanks.
- H. **JONESVILLE PUBLIC USE AREA** - Support for Jonesville Public Use Area. The Alaska State Legislature established the Jonesville Public Use Area as an unfunded mandate. Funds should be appropriated to allow the Alaska State Department of Natural Resources to draft and implement a management plan.

**Borough Funding Priorities:**

1. **2021 MSB TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE - \$61,135,000**  
The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) has realized a dramatic population increase in the past two decades. In the year 2000, there were approximately 60,000 residents in the Borough. Since then, approximately 48,000 additional people have come to call the MSB home. This population increase has resulted in an ever-increasing demand for new public infrastructure as

traffic congestion increases and serious accidents and fatalities rise. It is recognized that the overall network of transportation systems are vital to the well-being of the MSB to allow for efficient movement of people and goods. Over a six-month time span, MSB staff compiled a list of projects that were needed to increase highway traffic and pedestrian safety, decrease traffic congestion, and provide for more efficient traffic flow for freight and goods on the Borough's road network. The MSB Assembly then reviewed and prioritized those needed projects and on August 17, 2021, approved a package of 20 transportation infrastructure projects for voter consideration. MSB voters then approved these projects in a ballot proposition on November 2, 2021 by a nearly 2 to 1 margin.

The project list includes new roads, road upgrades and extensions, pedestrian/bicycle pathways, and transit facility development. Funding this MSB transportation infrastructure package will cover necessary planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocations, engineering, inspections and testing, administrative expenses, and construction for the following projects:

Trunk Road Connector/Katherine Drive; Smith Road Extension Upgrade and Pathway; Old Glenn Pathway Phase 2; 49th State Street Pathway; Hemmer Road Extension South; Lakes Boulevard Upgrade; Point MacKenzie Road Reconstruction MP 0-7; Lucille Street and Pathway Upgrade; Tex-Al Drive Extension Upgrade and Pathway; MSB School District Shaw Elementary Turn-Lane; Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Corridor; Edgerton Parks Road-Mtn. Trails Drive Upgrade and Pathway; Caswell Lakes Road/Bendapole Road/Passthebait Avenue Paving; Cheri Lake Drive/Karen Avenue/King Arthur Drive; Hidden Hills and Passthebait Avenue Reconstruction; Palmer-Fishhook Separated Pathway; Fern Street Upgrade and Pathway; Seward Meridian Parkway-Tambert Traffic Signal; MSB School District Pedestrian Projects, and the Multi-Modal Wasilla Depot.

**2. FULL FUNDING FOR SCHOOL BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT - \$17,257,374**

The school bond ballot passed in 2011 permitted the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to construct a new secondary school in the Knik community; a new alternative high school in Palmer; a new school in the Wasilla area to meet the needs of Special Education students; an addition to the Career and Technical High School; two new elementary schools in Wasilla and the Knik community; and address many deferred maintenance items. New school construction was necessary to address significant



population growth. Due to this ballot measure, the Borough's debt service payments continue through 2035.

The single greatest challenge to developing an economical budget that delivers the services our citizens' demand is the unpredictability of school bond debt reimbursement. State revenue for school bond debt reimbursement continues to be an annual uncertainty. It is unclear what the Borough must budget for until late in the fiscal year which affects the preparation of the budget, tax bills for our residents, and makes for a tenuous budget process.

School bond debt reimbursement was unfunded in FY2021, contributing to a steep decline from full funding of \$19 million in FY2019 and partial funding of \$8 million in FY2020. Please consider a sustainable strategy to address these large swings in revenue and the challenges this unpredictability places on the local government and our ability to provide essential services to our citizens.

The Borough requests full reimbursement of \$17,257,374.

**3. COMPLETION OF PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION (PMRE) - \$190 Million**

Project scope would include final design and construction of Segment 2 including the Rail Reserve, and for Segments 1-5 final design, survey and construction of sub-ballast, rail, ties, ballast, and signal/communications installation. Port MacKenzie is a deep-water port where one of the largest cargo vessels in the world has docked and been loaded. This rail extension from the Alaska Railroad mainline to Port MacKenzie will provide a shorter rail route from Interior Alaska to tidewater, which in turn will substantially boost the export of Alaska's minerals and natural resources helping diversify the statewide economy.

The completed PMRE will bring \$184 million in State investment into production, creating jobs, reducing energy and transportation costs while also improving air quality. It is also expected to increase the efficiency of shipping bulk commodities and materials to and from Interior Alaska, and to provide direct rail access for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) shipments from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks and North Pole.

A number of private companies have leased land at Port MacKenzie and will take advantage of the rail extension's quicker transport time to the Interior, including Central

Alaska Energy, who plans to import low sulfur fuel, store it, and transport it around the State.

4. **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN - \$650,000**

Based on Census data released in August 2021, it is anticipated that some portion of the MSB core area will be designated as Urbanized by the U.S. Census Bureau in April 2022. Once designation occurs, the region will have one year to develop its Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary and form a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MSB, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Central Region, and our regional partners intend to submit the MPO Operating Agreement to the Governor's office by September 1, 2022.

Assuming this timeline is achievable, the MSB MPO will be designated in March of 2023 and need to complete its four essential plans to be ready to operate the MPO in good standing with the Federal government and receive planning and operations funding on October 1, 2023.

The four plans the MPO must have to operate include:

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)- a planning document that identifies and describes the MPO's budget, planning activities, studies, and technical support expected to be undertaken in a one- or two-year period (23 CFR 450.104).

Public Participation Plan (PPP) - a guiding document that outlines the goals, strategies, and implementation plan for involvement of the public in the development of MPO plans, programs, and policies, including the MTP and TIP.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) - a multimodal transportation plan that addresses a 20-year planning horizon that the MPO develops, adopts, and updates every four years.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - a prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is developed, adopted, and implemented by the MPO in coordination with the MTP.

The MSB has made significant progress on completing the UPWP and the PPP, but we do not have the funding necessary to initiate and complete the MTP. Based on MTP and TIP development costs from Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) and Fairbanks Area Surface



Transportation (FAST), we anticipate needing \$650,000 and 1.5 years to complete the plan because it is the first time developing these documents.

This funding would allow us to complete the four required MPO planning documents, be eligible for project funding, and operate our MPO in good standing with the Federal government in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024. Without this funding, we will not meet the Federal government's formation timeline, and the MSB MPO will not begin operations until FY 2025.

**5. ALASKA RAILBELT CLEAN ENERGY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT - \$203,900,000**

The MSB, Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), Interior Gas Utility (IGU), and the Alaska Rail Road Corporation (ARRC) have partnered to extend the existing rail line from the Parks Highway to the Interior Gas Utility (IGU) Titan liquefaction plant (Titan plant) owned by FNSB. This project would complete the northern segments of the MSB Port MacKenzie Rail Extension (PMRE) project allowing for the transportation of LNG via rail versus via the road system from the Titan plant to Fairbanks and North Pole storage facilities.

The Alaska Railbelt Clean Energy Transportation Infrastructure Project consists of three component projects that have been designed to enable lasting economic development opportunities and benefits throughout the region. This concept includes:

1. Expanding Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) capacity at the publicly owned Interior Gas Utility (IGU) Titan plant in Point MacKenzie from 50,000 gallons per day to 150,000 gallons per day. This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$75.9 million and has advanced to 65% design.

2. Completing 18 miles (of 33 total) of the PMRE, which will allow LNG to be shipped 346 miles by rail to Fairbanks and North Pole, Alaska versus 358 miles by truck, increasing fuel efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75-percent. This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$96.1 million and all State and Federal permits have been acquired, engineering design for the remaining rail work is nearly finished, and right-of-way acquisition is substantially complete.

3. Completing rail spur connections to the Titan plant and to

IGU storage and vaporization facilities in Fairbanks (Peger Road) and North Pole (Laurance Road). This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$31.9 million.

The completed PMRE will bring \$184 million in State investment into production, creating jobs, reducing energy and transportation costs while also improving air quality. It is also expected to increase the efficiency of shipping bulk commodities and materials to and from Interior Alaska, and to provide direct rail access for LNG shipments from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks and North Pole. Combined, the component projects will allow for natural gas to be transported more than 346 miles by rail versus (currently) 358 miles by truck to Fairbanks, North Pole and other communities across the rail belt. This project will increase the available supply of natural gas and will reduce energy costs for industry and residential customers in Interior Alaska communities. With increased natural gas supply, the region will realize additional opportunities for natural gas conversion, which will aid in achieving air quality attainment.

The three component projects are in varying stages of design, environmental studies, and permitting however, all State and Federal permits for the PMRE have been acquired, engineering design for the remaining rail work is nearly finished, and right-of-way acquisition is substantially complete.

**6. ARCTIC WINTER GAMES 2024 - \$500,000**

The 2024 Games will be hosted in the MSB, a place that is quickly becoming Southcentral's destination of choice for outdoor winter recreation and competition. As the host community, we will provide all the food, lodging, local transportation, equipment, and facilities required by the athletes, their coaches, trainers, and managers.

The MSB has already appropriated \$250,000 along with \$50,000 in legacy funds being held by the Arctic Winter Games International Committee. The balance will come from private and corporate donations, merchandise sales, as well as in-kind contributions. With the initial \$1 million State appropriation in FY 2022, an additional \$500,000 will be requested from the State in FY 2023 and FY 2024.

**7. FISHERY PROTECTION - \$2.5 MILLION**

A Strategic Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Upper Cook Inlet (completed in 2015) identified several

informational gaps in local fisheries management. Many of identified gaps resulted in funded projects. This work illustrated the need for additional funding of genetic stock analysis, economic impact studies of sport fishing, fishery management weirs, and control of aquatic invasive species.

A segment of these monies will also help continue the MSB fish passage culvert replacement program that over the last 20 years has opened up significant habitat to anadromous fish.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this 7 day of December, 2021.

  
EDNA DEVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

  
LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)



PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: Hale, Nowers, McKee, Yundt, Tew, Sumner, and Bernier





Amended: 12/07/21

Adopted: 12/07/21

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 21-125**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH (MSB) ASSEMBLY  
APPROVING FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2023.**

**1. 2021 MSB TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE - \$61,135,000**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) has realized a dramatic population increase in the past two decades. In the year 2000, there were approximately 60,000 residents in the Borough. Since then, approximately 48,000 additional people have come to call the MSB home. This population increase has resulted in an ever-increasing demand for new public infrastructure as traffic congestion increases and serious accidents and fatalities rise. It is recognized that the overall network of transportation systems are vital to the well-being of the MSB to allow for efficient movement of people and goods. Over a six-month time span, MSB staff compiled a list of projects that were needed to increase highway traffic and pedestrian safety, decrease traffic congestion, and provide for more efficient traffic flow for freight and goods on the Borough's road network. The MSB Assembly then reviewed and prioritized those needed projects and on August 17, 2021, approved a package of 20 transportation infrastructure projects for voter consideration. MSB voters then approved these projects in a ballot proposition on November 2, 2021 by a nearly 2 to 1 margin.

The project list includes new roads, road upgrades and extensions, pedestrian/bicycle pathways, and transit facility development. Funding this MSB transportation infrastructure package will cover necessary planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocations, engineering, inspections and testing, administrative expenses, and construction for the following projects:

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Meridian Parkway-Tambert Traffic Signal; MSB School District Pedestrian Projects, and the Multi-Modal Wasilla Depot.

**2. KNIK-GOOSE BAY ROAD RECONSTRUCTION (CENTAUR AVENUE TO VINE ROAD)  
- \$50 Million**

This Federally funded project will expand Knik-Goose Bay Road to a four lane divided highway from Centaur Avenue near the City of Wasilla to Vine Road, a major north-south arterial that connects to the Parks Highway. The project also includes signalized intersections, drainage improvements and a reconstructed separated pathway. Design is currently at approximately 75 percent with right-of-way acquisition and utility coordination underway.

**3. ALASKA RAILBELT CLEAN ENERGY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT - \$203,900,000**

The MSB, Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), Interior Gas Utility (IGU), and the Alaska Rail Road Corporation (ARRC) have partnered to extend the existing rail line from the Parks Highway to the Interior Gas Utility (IGU) Titan liquefaction plant (Titan plant) owned by FNSB. This project would complete the northern segments of the MSB Port MacKenzie Rail Extension (PMRE) project allowing for the transportation of LNG via rail versus via the road system from the Titan plant to Fairbanks and North Pole storage facilities.

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2. Completing 18 miles (of 33 total) of the PMRE, which will allow LNG to be shipped 346 miles by rail to Fairbanks and North Pole, Alaska versus 358 miles by truck, increasing fuel efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75-percent. This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$96.1 million and all State and Federal permits have been acquired, engineering design for the remaining rail work is nearly finished, and right-of-way acquisition is substantially complete.



3. Completing rail spur connections to the Titan plant and to IGU storage and vaporization facilities in Fairbanks (Peger Road) and North Pole (Laurance Road). This segment of the project is estimated to cost \$31.9 million.

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The three component projects are in varying stages of design, environmental studies, and permitting however, all State and Federal permits for the PMRE have been acquired, engineering design for the remaining rail work is nearly finished, and right-of-way acquisition is substantially complete.

#### **4. COMPLETION OF PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION - \$190 Million**

Project scope would include final design and construction of Segment 2 including the Rail Reserve, and for Segments 1-5 final design, survey and construction of sub-ballast, rail, ties, ballast, and signal/communications installation. Port MacKenzie is a deep-water port where one of the largest cargo vessels in the world has docked and been loaded. This rail extension from the Alaska Railroad mainline to Port MacKenzie will provide a shorter rail route from Interior Alaska to tidewater, which in turn will substantially boost the export of Alaska's minerals and natural resources helping diversify the statewide economy.

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A number of private companies have leased land at Port MacKenzie and will take advantage of the rail extension's quicker transport time to the Interior, including Central Alaska Energy, who plans to import low sulfur fuel, store it, and transport it around the State.

**5. KNIK ARM CROSSING - FUNDS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE ALASKA STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES**

The Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) will provide connectivity between the State's two largest population centers and their road networks, ports, airports, and rail corridors. The KAC will provide a more direct, alternate route from the Borough (Point MacKenzie and beyond) to Anchorage and stimulate growth in the southern portion of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB). Socioeconomic studies performed for the MSB indicate that this area will experience significant growth, and investment in infrastructure to support that growth should begin now in order to avoid costly highway expansion as is currently being experienced on Knik-Goose Bay Road, Parks Highway, and Glenn Highway corridors.

**6. SEWARD MERIDIAN PARKWAY EXTENSION NORTH, PHASE 2 (PALMER-WASILLA HIGHWAY TO SELDON ROAD) - \$49 Million**

Seward Meridian Parkway is one of only two north-south arterial corridors in the MSB's transportation network. The project will upgrade the current two-lane road with no shoulder to a four-lane road with shoulders, a separated path, a bridge over Cottonwood Creek, and safety improvements at intersections. Phase 1, Parks Highway to Palmer-Wasilla Highway is complete. Phase 2 will extend from the Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Seldon Road. Heavy traffic generators along the Phase 2 corridor include numerous medical facilities and office complexes, Cottonwood Creek Elementary School, Fronteras Spanish Immersion Charter School, the Career and Technical High School, and Teeland Middle School. The existing two-lane facility and the poorly connected local street network are not sufficient to support the growing traffic volumes and needs of the surrounding community. Thousands of Borough residents will benefit from this project through increased efficiency of traffic flow (faster travel time, safer travel, lower levels of vehicle emissions, and improved access to businesses, schools, and emergency service facilities). Design is currently at 95 percent complete with right-of-way acquisition and permitting also nearing completion.

**7. MSB SUBSTANDARD ROAD IMPROVEMENTS - \$15 Million**

The MSB is the fastest growing borough in the State of Alaska. Many roads built decades ago were not built to MSB standards, have



substandard gravel bases, lack sufficient right-of-way and sight distance, and are not designed or constructed for the amount of traffic on the roads. Improvements to these roads will ensure that the functionality and safety of the roads meet the proper classification and design standards. These roads are part of the community transportation plan and the MSB's Long Range Transportation Plan.

#### **8. MSB SUBSTANDARD BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS - \$15 Million**

Numerous bridges on the MSB's road system have outlived their design life and require costly repairs or complete replacement. Several bridges received substandard sufficiency ratings on their most recent inspections by the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities Bridge Section. Work needed to bring the bridges into compliance with Federal standards range from riprap replacement to protect against the rivers and creeks that they cross, to full replacement of bridges that are settling or have reduced structural capacity. Several bridges have reduced weight limits because of substandard design and/or gradual deterioration, which limits the type of vehicle that can use the bridges hindering the operations and development of private properties that rely on the bridges for access. This project will improvements to extend the life of multiple bridges for at least another 30 years.

#### **9. FISHERY PROTECTION - \$4 Million**

This project will continue efforts to protect MSB's declining salmon populations by restoring fish habitat and passage, and providing critical resources for research, monitoring and evaluation projects to inform sound scientific policy recommendations for improved Upper Cook Inlet Fishery Management. Salmon populations are declining in the MSB as evidenced by the State designated stocks of concern, frequent sport fishing closures, and associated business losses. A Strategic Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Upper Cook Inlet (completed in 2015) identified significant gaps in data as a barrier to understanding the salmon population declines and the complex economic consequences. Actions proposed include: continuing successful initiatives aimed at quantifying the economic significance of Upper Cook Inlet sport fisheries, fish habitat restoration including the replacement of fish passage barriers, and installing fish counting tools on critical drainages to provide in-season fishery data. These efforts will apply more stock specific management strategies to ensure more consistent and abundant returns of salmon to the northern waters of the MSB.

**10. FLOOD MITIGATION FOR ACQUISITION OF HIGH HAZARD AREAS - \$2,500,000**

Inventory all floodway properties, analyze, and prioritize the most at-risk areas to flooding and erosion. Offer a voluntary acquisition to maintain open space corridors and enhance flood risk reduction methods, including ice jam flooding, channel migration, and enhancement of fish habitat. There are estimated to be 100 homes with an estimated project cost of \$20 Million. \$2,500,000 represents most critical needs and those homeowners expressing interest in buyouts.


**11. SUSITNA/TALKEETNA RIVER FLOOD CONTROL - \$10,000,000**

Replace existing and/or enhance the current flood and erosion control infrastructure. This could include the construction of new revetments, dikes, floodwalls, etc., around the town.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this 7 day of December, 2021.

  
EDNA DEVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

  
LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk  
(SEAL)

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: Hale, Nowers, McKee, Yundt, Tew, Sumner, and Bernier



# MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

## Planning and Land Use Department

### Planning Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7833

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#### 2023 Proposed FWC Meeting Schedule:

<u>Month/Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location – DSJ Bldg, 350 E. Dahlia Ave, Palmer</u>
January 19	4 PM	
February 16	4 PM	
March 16	4 PM	
April 20	4 PM	
May 18	4 PM	
<i>SUMMER BREAK</i>	<•)(((((<	<•)(((((< <•)(((((< <•)(((((< <•)(((((< <•)(((((<
September 28	4 PM	
October 19	4 PM	
November 16	4 PM	
December 21	4 PM	
TBD (Nov.- Jan.)	5-7 PM	Special Meetings: Annual ADFG Fishing Season and/or Hunting Season Summary

*Providing Outstanding Borough Services to the Matanuska-Susitna Community*

***Ted Eischeid, Planner II***

*Supporting Environmental Planning and the MSB Fish & Wildlife Commission.*

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