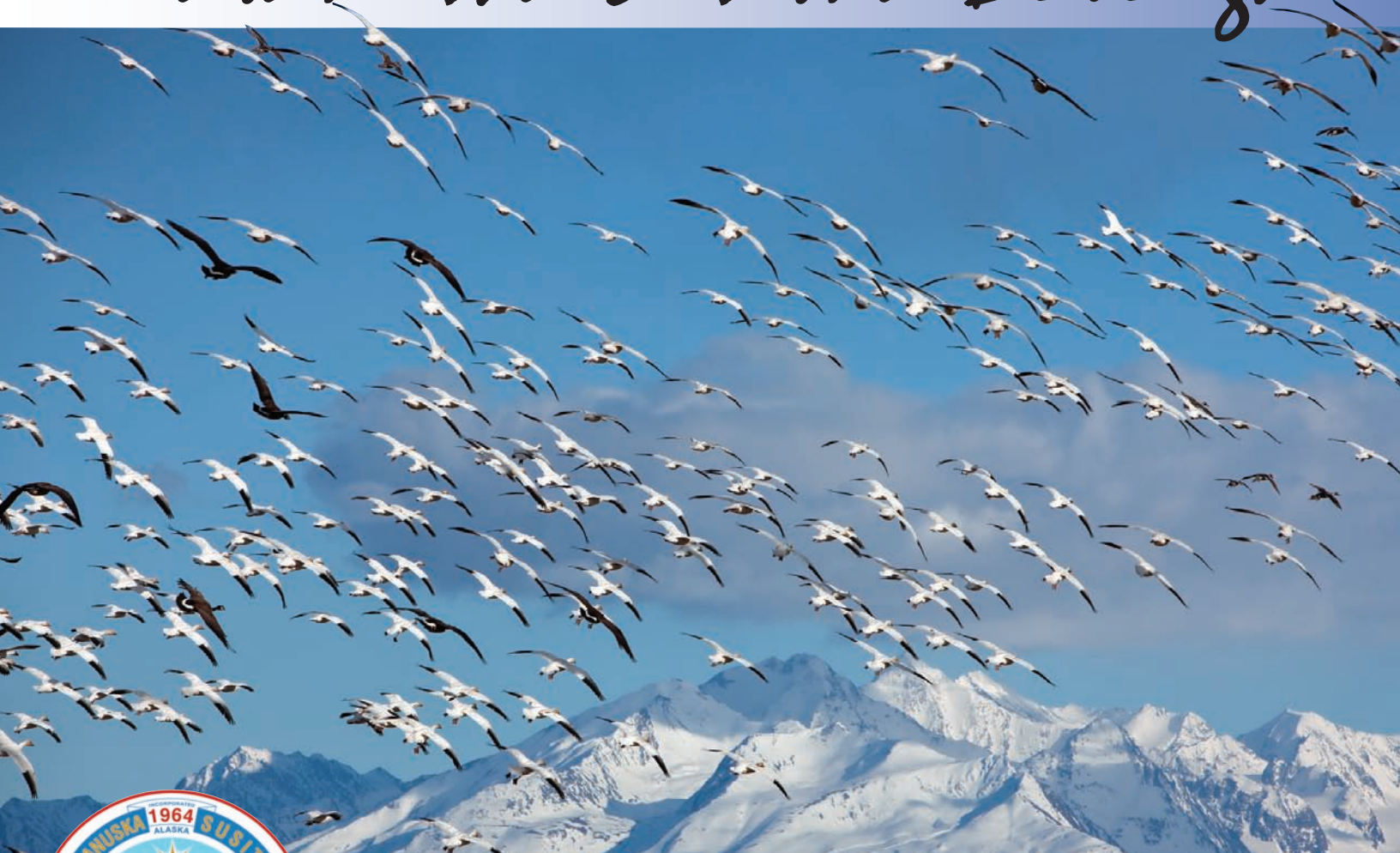


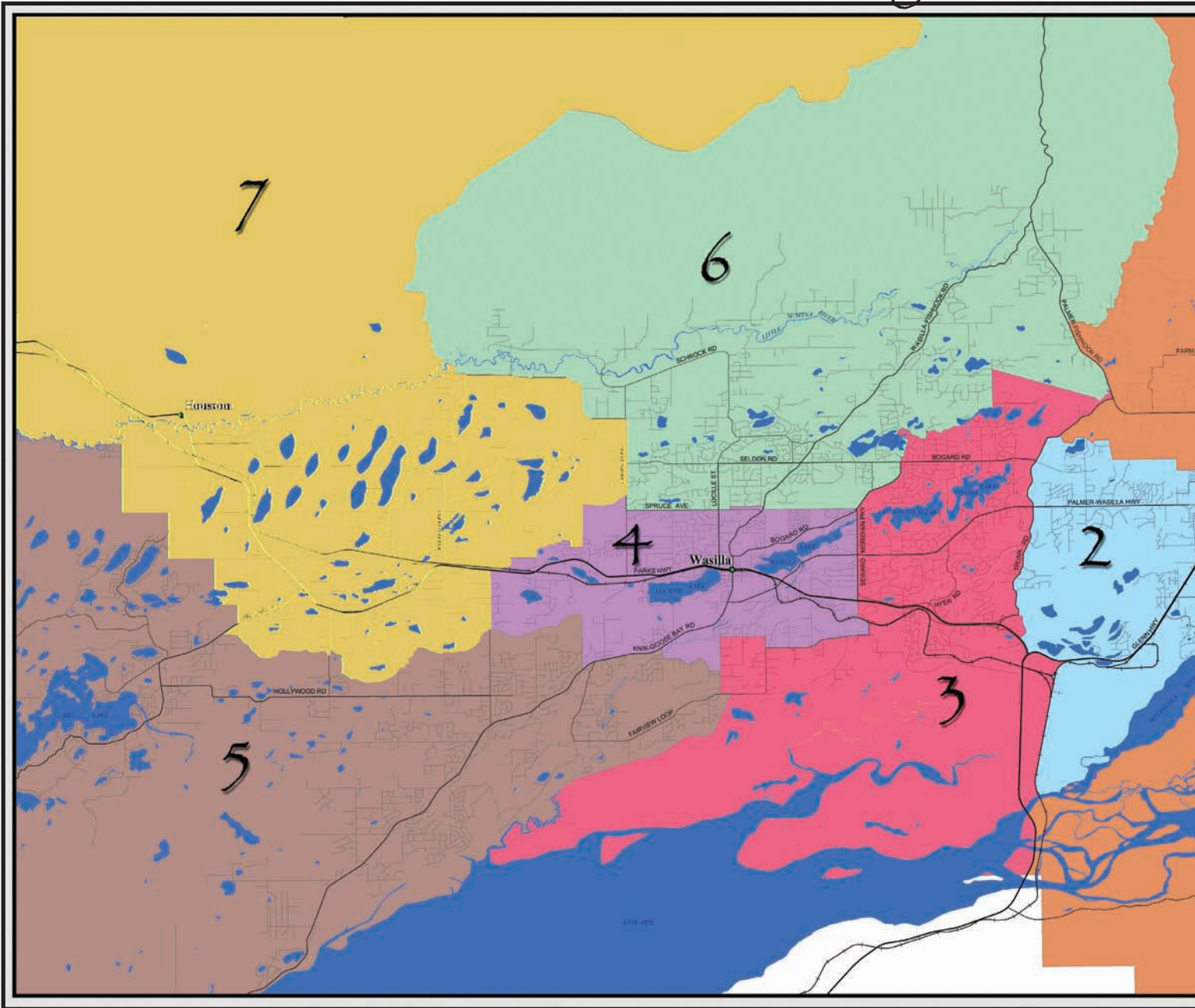
Matanuska-Susitna Borough



Where the frontier takes flight
Annual Report 2011



Meet the Assembly



Borough Mayor



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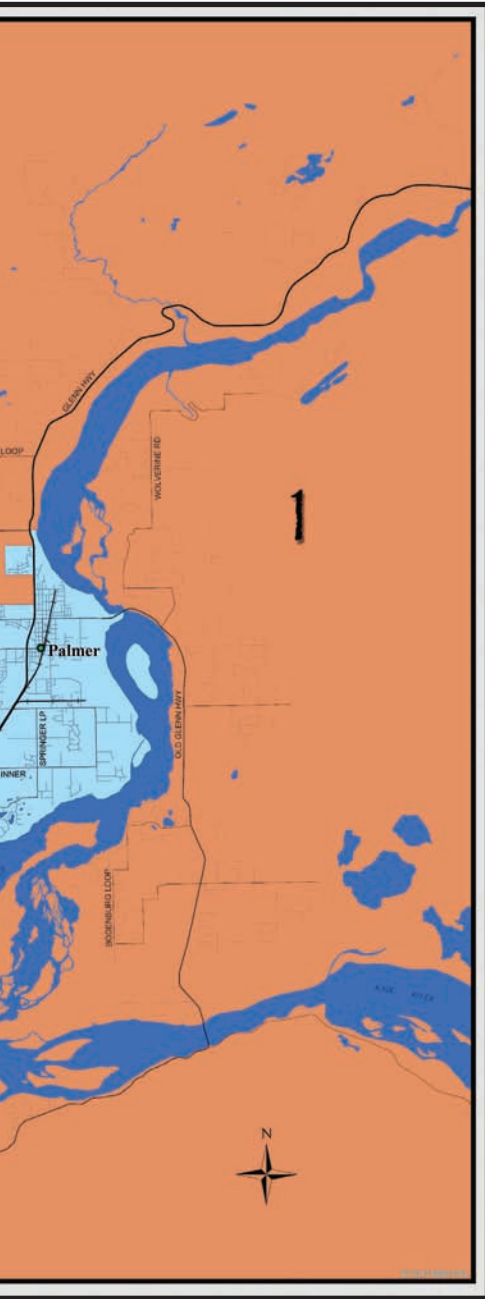
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*"The Valley continues to eclipse the rest of the state."
-Neal Fried, State Economist*



The population of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough grew by 50 percent in the past decade. The 2010 Mat-Su population: 88,995.

Mat-Su has been the fastest growing region of Alaska for more than 15 years. Over the last decade, Mat-Su grew at an average annual rate of 5 percent, while Anchorage grew at 1.2 percent.

The Mat-Su Borough, almost as big as Scotland!

What do you think of the annual report? Visit us online and fill out a short survey at www.matsugov.us/PublicAffairs

See our past annual reports at www.matsugov.us/PublicAffairs/AnnualReports

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Welcome



Welcome to the breadbasket of Alaska. The Mat-Su Borough's unique combination of light, water, and glacial till—with its micro mineralization—makes this the home of some of the world's largest vegetables. Where else are you going to find cabbages that even come close to a hundred pounds or an 18.98 pound carrot that breaks the Guinness World record. These vegetables are not just monsters but are the best tasting. Whether you are on the roads or in our wilderness you will be intrigued by the variety and vastness of opportunity. It is a land nearly the size of Scotland but with the time footprint of only about a hundred years. Our resources are, for the most part, as untouched as the day God made them. The secret is out though. We are one of the fastest growing areas of the USA and were documented in the 2010 census as the fastest growing area of the State. We have a capacity to outgrow even Anchorage. If you want to be part of Alaska's future, you want to be in the Mat-Su Borough. Our new rail project to our port development, and potential State hydro development is going to make this the place to be for jobs and dreams fulfilled.

Larry DeVilbiss
Mayor, Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Elizabeth Gray filled the shoes as Acting Borough Manager for nearly a year. Big projects remained on schedule and within budget: Port MacKenzie Rail, Goose Creek Correctional Center, the barge dock expansion, two new fire stations, a heated ambulance garage at Lake Louise, and more. Gray gave presentations to bond rating agencies in San Francisco, to the Alaska Senate Finance Committee in Juneau, and our federal delegation in D.C. In December, Gray accepted an award in New Orleans from The International WorkBoat Show for the Susitna Ferry as one the ten most significant ships of the year. In May, Gray handed the reins over to our new Manager, John Moosey. "I'm pleased to work with Manager John Moosey to continue providing excellent services in this great Borough of ours."

Elizabeth Gray
Assistant Borough Manager



The big projects happening in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are among the reasons I picked up my life in Chisago County, Minnesota, and moved to this great place. The Port MacKenzie Rail Extension will transform the Port with new industry and jobs, and for Alaska it will help diversify our oil-driven economy. The rail link will create a shorter distance for bulk resources to travel to tidewater, making development possible. As a result, the value of mineral production is projected to be nearly \$1 billion a year over 100 years. Last year 70 new jobs were created from this rail project and the barge dock expansion at Port MacKenzie. Another big project: the Goose Creek Correctional Center will be completed this fall, on budget and ahead of schedule. The facility at Point MacKenzie will help return Alaska's 1,000 inmates from Colorado. The Susitna Ferry is another successfully completed project. The ship is performing its sea trials beautifully outside Ketchikan. This Navy prototype will be put to use by Cook Inlet residents rather than on the scrap heap where prototypes always wind up. The Mat-Su Borough gains an \$80 million asset. The extraordinary ship will help connect the regional economy of Upper Cook Inlet. A new LiDAR project will effectively move the Borough's mapping technology into the 21st Century. Highly detailed information across 3,680 square miles of the Borough will be available for governments, businesses and citizens. These projects and the coming Nordic Ski Area at Hatcher Pass, the South Denali Visitor Center, and our award-winning schools make the Mat-Su a stand-out community.

John Moosey
Borough Manager

EMERGENCY RESPONSE BLDG

The Lake Louise community in the outer reaches of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough is celebrating having a heated garage for emergency vehicles. "It's a godsend for us to have an ambulance now with I-V bags and humidified oxygen that's not frozen solid, and all the fringe benefits that go along with that," said Corky Matthews, the fire chief, the ambulance chief and one of the chief proponents for the shelter. The garage is 40 foot by 40 foot with a 12 foot overhang for parking, a small office and a 1,000 gallon water tank for firefighting equipment. To keep it powered, the facility has a diesel generator and solar panels that also charge a pack of 12 batteries as a backup.



Former Assembly Member Lynn Woods with Bev and Corky Matthews at the ceremonial ribbon cutting.



The facility was funded by an \$850,000 Community Development Block Grant, with a match by the Borough Assembly for \$125,000.

Project work by, Architects Alaska, Collins Construction and Jeff Walden Borough Public Works project manager.

Two new fire stations for second busiest district in State



"It saved me \$480 a year on home insurance premiums. That is awesome." Said resident Denise Gilbert who lives within five miles of the new fire station 66.

Station 66 Location:
Fairview Loop
Cost: \$1.5 million

Station 63 Location:
West Horizon Drive off Knik-Goose Bay Road
Cost: \$2.5 million

Project manager John Harris

The stars aligned

"EMS, in a well-organized, well-staffed model, is so, so important. It makes a difference in life and death."
- Glenn Stevens

Glenn Stevens, Borough EMS Quality Assurance Manager, was on his way home from an EMS conference in Anchorage when he heard an emergency page out in Palmer to an accident one mile from the Glenn Highway on Soapstone Road. When Stevens arrived he saw a truck and snowmobile impacted together, the mother kneeling in the snow, and an 8-year-old boy pinned under the truck with a tire on his chest. "He was as blue as blue gets. No pulse, no respiration," Stevens recalled. The boy's father lifted the truck with a tow truck. With help from other responders, Stevens put his 25 years of paramedic skills to work in what would demand aggressive action and confidence. The boy, Christian Aldrich, was in cardiac arrest. Meds were injected. An IV was placed. CPR was given for 40 minutes. The boy's pulse returned.



Robert DeBerry/Frontiersman

-Glenn Stevens, Emergency Medical Services Quality Assurance Manager pictured with Christian Aldrich

"If I could borrow a phrase from Christian directly, he used to view characters such as Spider-Man and Superman as super heroes. Now he looks at EMS workers as his new super heroes. They get their super powers from the heart."

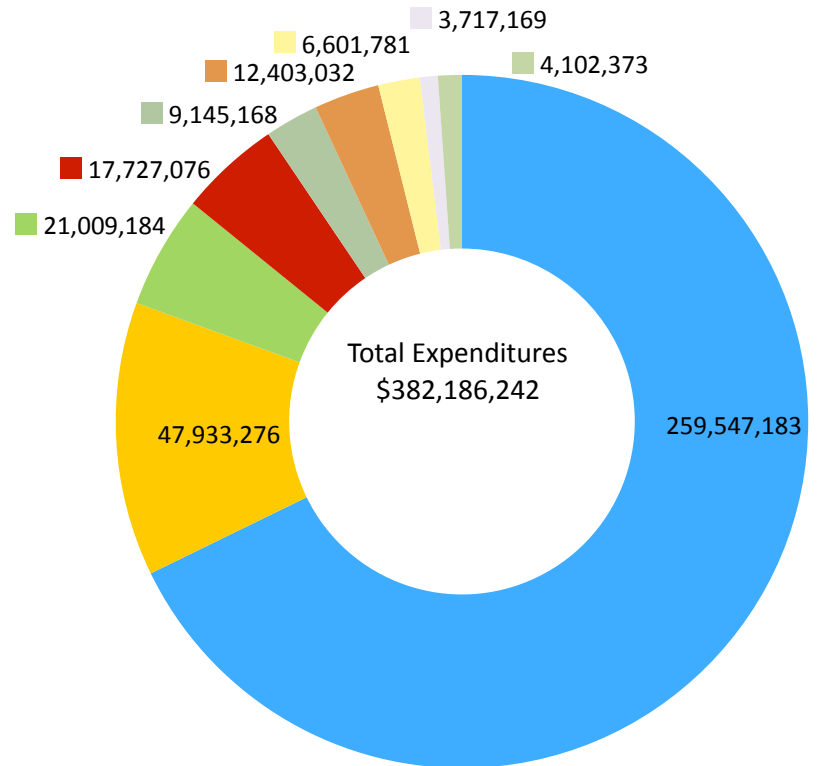
- Amber Aldrich, Mom

"We did everything right, but I can tell you right now in my 25 years of doing this, I've never seen someone survive that. To be in cardiac arrest that long is very, very unusual." Stevens said. Brain death can occur in four to six minutes. "Yet this kid's walking and talking," Stevens said. "It's a pinnacle moment in my career. One I'll never forget, without a doubt."

Comprehensive Borough Budget

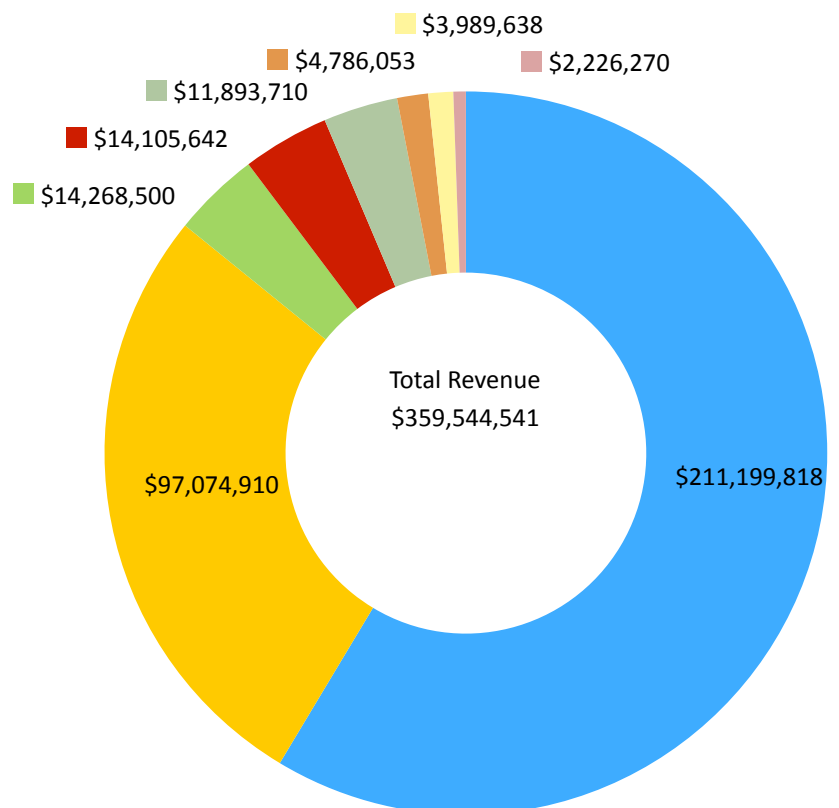
FY 2012 Expenditures

68%	Education Operating
13%	Areawide Services in Borough and cities: Emergency Services/Public Works/ Planning/Community Development/ General Government
6%	Education Debt Service for bonds on new infrastructure
4%	Capital, Roads, Fire, Landfill, Block Grants
2%	Road Service Operations
3%	Port MacKenzie, Solid Waste, MV Susitna
2%	Fire Service Equipment/Maintenance
1%	Other
1%	Non-Areawide Services outside cities: Animal Care/Libraries/Economic Development



FY 2012 Revenues

59%	Education Operating: State and Federal annual education operating funds
27%	Areawide Property Taxes
4%	Road Service Area Taxes
4%	Education Debt Service: State annual schools capital debt payment
3%	Fire Service Area Taxes
1%	Enterprise funds: Landfill fees/Port dockage wharfage
1%	Non-Areawide Taxes collected outside cities
1%	Other Funds



Financial Highlights

Fund 100 General Government

Expenditure Area	2009-10 Actual	2010-11 Budgeted
Education	43,964,884	48,347,365
Education/Infrastructure Debt	17,427,000	18,947,000
Assembly, Admin, Law, HR, Clerk, Mayor, Boards	4,375,991	5,220,652
GIS, IT	3,420,990	3,940,099
Finance	6,530,201	7,675,323
Planning	3,388,124	4,533,731
Public Works	3,943,566	4,117,059
Emergency Service	6,229,893	9,355,064
Community Dev. & Rec.	2,851,997	3,741,265
Common Contractual	1,341,824	2,071,500
MSCVB, City Grants, Roads, Capital Projects	8,992,662	8,826,411
Total	102,467,132	116,775,469

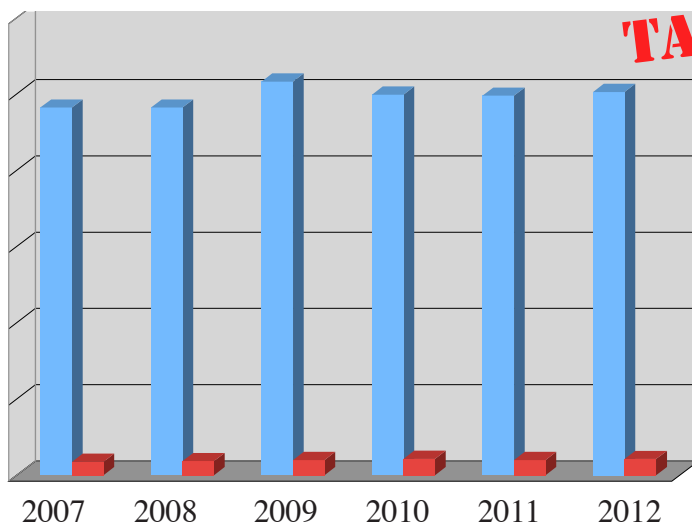
Revenues	2009-10	2010-11
Property Taxes	78,276,309	76,821,080
Excise Taxes	4,901,735	4,559,500
Federal Payments	3,263,424	2,090,000
State Grants & Shared Revenues	15,764,873	16,087,960
Fees	3,810,141	3,552,450
Transient Accommodations Tax (Bed Tax)	969,946	908,000
Interest Earnings	637,258	325,000
Recoveries & Transfers	1,857,145	2,827,459
Other	26,364	15,000
Totals	109,507,195	107,186,449

DID YOU KNOW:

\$356,439 – The approximate cost for salted sand materials for icy Borough roads. Paid for by road service area taxes.

Six full-time paramedic positions were added for 2012.

Mill Levies



TAX REBATE!

Equal to 1.06 Mills
That's tax relief of \$221
for an average assessed
home of \$208,887!

Taxes **dropped** from
last year **\$117** on
the average assessed
home.

Bond ratings upgraded

In 2011 the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's bond rating was upgraded to AA+ by Standard & Poors and to AA by Fitch Ratings. Additionally, Moody's Investor Service maintained a rating of Aa2. The higher bond ratings resulted in lower debt service payments, which translated into savings for Borough taxpayers. "The Borough benefits from sound fiscal policies, ample reserves, and low debt levels..." according to a news release from Fitch Ratings. The Aa2 rating by Moody signals a very strong credit worthiness relative to other U.S. municipal issuers of bonds. Tammy Clayton is the Borough Finance Director.

Where the frontier takes flight



70 New jobs at the port last summer, just the beginning...

Patty Sullivan/MSB

FUTURE:

3,000 jobs spurred by construction
2,000 annual mining jobs

Barge dock expansion



©Alaska Aerial Technologies



©Alaska Aerial Technologies

The Port MacKenzie Rail Extension will bring tremendous economic benefit to Alaska through economic diversification and state revenues. Closer to home, the rail project will transform the Port with new industry and jobs.

This rail link will shorten the distance for bulk resources from the Interior to travel to tidewater, making development feasible. As a result, the value of mineral production is projected to be nearly \$1 billion a year over the next 100 years. Other big projects will benefit from the lower transportation costs. The Alaska Pipeline project will save \$100 million in transport savings by shipping heavy pipe north through Port MacKenzie.

The \$4.75 million barge dock will be complete this summer. The barge dock has expanded from eight to nearly 16 acres, making it an ideal staging area

for large industrial projects such as the fabrication of sealift modules or the laydown area for pipe for the natural gas pipeline. Funding came from a \$3 million Economic Development Administration Stimulus grant with a \$1 million in-kind match in gravel from the Borough and a \$750,000 legislative grant from the Alaska Legislature. Borough Project Manager Robert Scott

* Based on studies by Northern Economics, Inc., Dr. Paul A. Metz, and the Institute of Social and Economic Research.



The third cement ship to Port MacKenzie successfully offloaded 12,120 metric tons of bagged cement over a weekend in August 2010. This was the maiden voyage for the Panamax size vessel "Peace Lucky." The vessel originated from Zhangjiagang Port in China. Dane Crowley, with NPI, shakes hands with a crewman from China. NPI is a tenant at Port MacKenzie. Klondike Concrete imported the cement. Photos: Patty Sullivan/MSB

Goose Creek Correctional Center



Patty Sullivan/MSB



©Ken Graham Photography



A rigorous site selection process chose Point MacKenzie as the number one site for the State prison out of 16 possibilities. The completion of Goose Creek Correctional

**AHEAD OF SCHEDULE
AND ON BUDGET:
\$240 MILLION**

Center marks a milestone. We will not only be bringing our prisoners home, we will also be bringing our tax dollars home and investing in our state's economy.

Goose Creek Correctional Center will help return Alaska's 1,000 inmates from Colorado. Housing Alaska inmates in state helps with rehabilitation. This ultimately saves us repeat prisoner costs. Goose

Creek will also create 345 permanent well-paying Corrections jobs with benefits.

Already, Goose Creek has generated hundreds of construction jobs and produced over \$100 million in direct payroll, at a time when communities nationwide were facing record unemployment. The Borough will turn over the prison to the Alaska Department of Corrections in September. A small group of inmates, up to 60, will be housed in the facility initially by March 2012. Goose Creek will be fully operational by fall 2012.



©Ken Graham Photography

M/V Susitna performs

The Susitna Ferry is performing its sea trials beautifully outside of Ketchikan. In February, one crewmember said the ship handles rough seas as smoothly as a 1,000-foot aircraft carrier. When ownership of the vessel is turned over to the Mat-Su Borough it gains an \$80 million asset. The extraordinary ship will help connect the regional economy of Upper Cook Inlet, where only a single congested highway presently connects Alaska's financial center of Anchorage with

the fastest growing community of the Mat-Su Borough. Interest in ridership for the vessel is building. Communities such as the City of Kenai have passed resolutions seeking ferry service and the Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority. Tyonek Native Corporation has renewed its memorandum of understanding with the Borough for service as it anticipates a spike in growth for coming energy projects. The Borough is working on a ferry landing for passengers at Port MacKenzie and Anchorage.



©Charley Starr

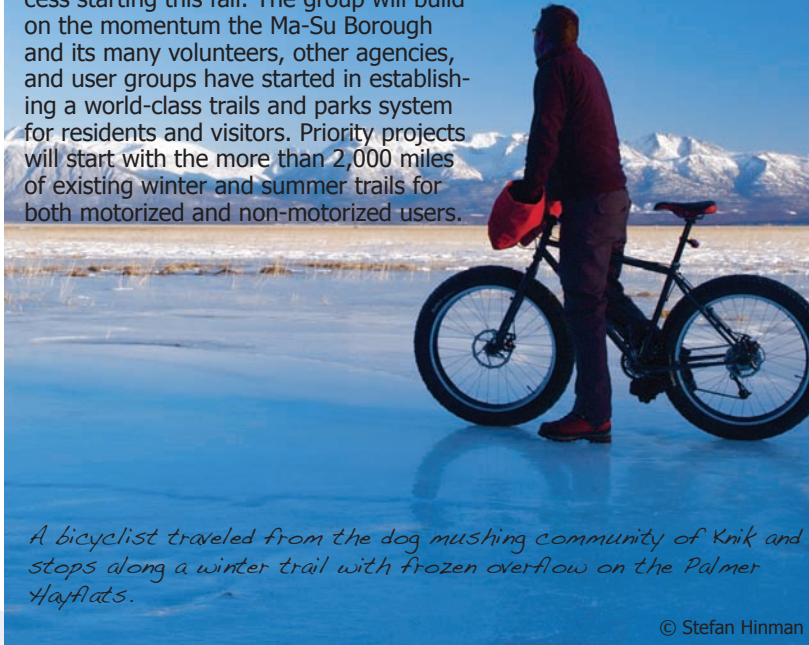


©Charley Starr

Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation off and running

A unique new organization called the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation was created last spring. Assemblymember Cindy Bettine said the creation of the trails foundation was one of the most exciting days as an Assemblymember in her five plus years of service. Within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough there is an incredible network of trails. The Foundation recognizes the exciting potential for new trails as well as the need for major improvements to the existing network. The foundation is dedicated to raising money and increasing the quality of our trails for all user groups.

The Mat-Su Borough has contributed funding to the organization, which has pledged to raise two dollars for every one dollar the Borough provided. Projects will begin as soon as this summer, with a trail planning process starting this fall. The group will build on the momentum the Ma-Su Borough and its many volunteers, other agencies, and user groups have started in establishing a world-class trails and parks system for residents and visitors. Priority projects will start with the more than 2,000 miles of existing winter and summer trails for both motorized and non-motorized users.

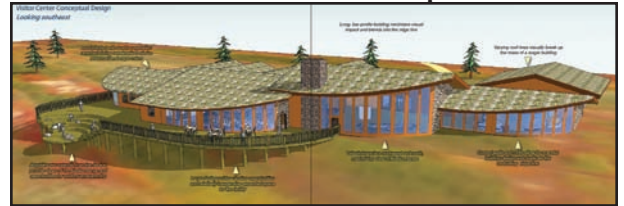


A bicyclist traveled from the dog mushing community of Knik and stops along a winter trail with frozen overflow on the Palmer Hayflats.

© Stefan Hinman

South Denali Visitor Center

\$18 million in visitor spending



The South Denali Visitor Center has secured \$13 million of a \$39.8 million project. The proposed visitor center atop Curry Ridge near milepost 135 of the Parks Highway creates access to the other face of Denali, the south side. The access road will remain open even when snow begins to fly. Revenues from visitors are projected to initially exceed operating costs by \$1.2 million, the State recently announced, based on a feasibility study by the University of Alaska Center for Economic Development. "Alaskans will be among the frequent visitors to this closer, premier destination. And the Mat-Su Borough will enjoy the benefits of new jobs and tourism spending," said Eileen Probasco, Planning Chief, Mat-Su Borough. The Economic Development Center also completed an economic impact analysis, which forecasts visitor-related direct spending to exceed \$18.4 million annually and indirect spending to reach \$30 million annually. The project is a partnership between the State of Alaska, the National Park Service, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

Sportsmen's Committee reels in the goals



©Calvin Hall

The group of seven men on the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Sportsmen's Committee produced such a compelling case for conservation of salmon for the Northern District that the regulatory body, the Alaska Board of Fisheries, took major actions. The Alaska Journal of Commerce described the actions as "radically altering salmon management within the most hotly contested fishery in the state."

A conservation corridor was created in Cook Inlet to allow sockeye to swim into the northern rivers by limiting the commercial drift net fleet during restricted July openings. Other achieved goals include: restoration of sport priority for chinook and coho salmon destined for the Northern district, conservation actions for Northern District Chinook salmon, and maintenance of personal use fishing opportunities of the Northern District for Alaskans who harvest with net gear.

In 2007, a study by the Institute of Social and Economic Research showed that sportfishing contributed \$100 million to the Mat-Su economy. Those dollars are lower today given the lower fish returns and closures. But the change in state regulations should support stronger fish returns in the future.

The Mat-Su Borough Assembly supported the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee by funding consultant work that showed science supporting the concerns about fisheries identified by the committee in an 80 page booklet.

Committee members are: Chair Bruce Knowles, Vice Chair Jim Colver (Assemblymember), Larry Engel, Howard Delo, Ben Allen, Andrew Couch, Brian Winnestaffer. MSB Planner Frankie Barker assists the Committee.

We have the heart Now we need to build the space



Sutton Library & Resource Center

The new 6,250 square foot Sutton Library and Resource Center at mile 61 on the Glenn Highway will be built after years of community effort. Locals raised \$30,000 from their own pockets. Friends of the Sutton Library attracted grants from foundations and from the State. The Borough put in the necessary \$300,000 supplemental funding for the \$2.4 million project to break ground. The present Sutton Library, built in 1980, has outlasted its time. The building is overcrowded and falling apart. Many in the highway community, from north of Palmer to Nelchina, view the Sutton library as the heart of their community. Among its features, the new facility will offer a large meeting space with internet connectivity. The Mat-Su Health Foundation and the Rasmuson Foundation are among project supporters.

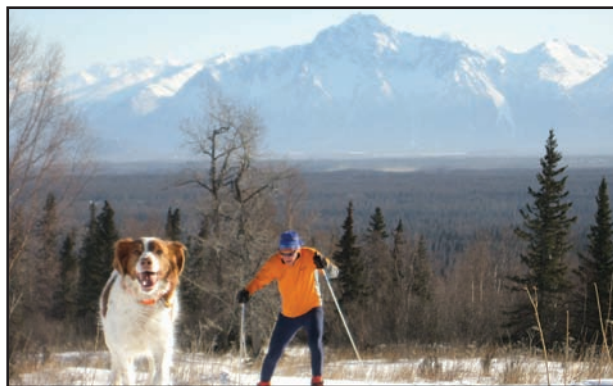
New businesses taking off

Along with the steady population growth comes a consistent stream of new businesses. 1,119: total new business licenses issued in the Mat-Su in 2010. Here's some of the newcomers or new facilities: Kahiltna Birchworks factory in Talkeetna; a Red Robin in Wasilla; Valley Cinema, a 12-screen, 40,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art theater near Wal-Mart; a \$50 million medical clinic, Valley Native Primary Care Center, for Southcentral Foundation; NANA Construction's Fabrication Facility on 20 acres in Big Lake. A new Carrs/Safeway store in Palmer. PacArctic Logistics, a transportation and logistics company, is among the new tenants at Port MacKenzie. "When the Rail goes in, there will be a land rush at Port MacKenzie," said King Hufford Vice President of PacArctic.

Green light to build Hatcher Ski area

Mat-Su Ski Club members will begin tree and brush clearing this summer to build five kilometers of Nordic ski trails on the southern side of Government Peak at Hatcher Pass. Skiers could be gliding on tracks by November in an early phase of the Borough's new Nordic ski area.

Trail building can begin because a final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision were both issued in



Mark Stigar/Mat-Su Ski Club

January by the Federal Transit Administration. Approved infrastructure will allow people to access future Alpine and Nordic recreation areas. Such infrastructure includes:

Nordic Area—a one-mile road off Edgerton Parks Road into the Nordic Ski Area; a parking lot that holds 210 vehicles, six transit buses, a transit facility and restrooms.

Alpine Area—the realignment and upgrade of an existing road to the future downhill ski area, an improved parking area and a transit facility.

The FTA funded \$4 million to complete as much of the Nordic area infrastructure as funding allows. The Borough's plan for ski area development, "A New Beginning," provides for improvements in phases as funding is available.

"It's a great day for residents of the Borough," said Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assemblymember Jim Colver. "After many

years of waiting, we finally have the green light to build a new access road and world-class Nordic ski trails!"

Assemblymember Vern Halter sees the significant boost from indirect spending. "In a single year, visitors spend \$101 million in the Mat-Su. This new recreational attraction will keep pushing those dollars up," Halter said. The ski area will draw 100s of skiers in regional and state high school competitions, as well as their families and booster clubs. The trails will ultimately attract interna-

tional competitions and the hundreds of team supporters who attend such events. Such visitors will spend money at local businesses. Designed by Olympian and engineer Bill Spencer, the Nordic trails will take all levels of skiers through spruce to towering mountain views.



The Mat-Su is the Stillwater Capital of Alaska. Rainbow trout, arctic char, grayling and land-locked coho await in some 80 lakes, all within an hour's drive.

www.alaskastillwatercapital.com

Deep Water Rescue



From left, Life guards Levi McAuliff, Sandra Ault and Eddie Nutter assisted Eddie in the rescue. Photo Patty Sullivan

Eddie Nutter blew a whistle, stepped off his lifeguard chair, and dived 13 feet down to the bottom of the Palmer Pool to bring an unconscious 17-year-old to the surface. In his nearly 22 years of vigilant poolside watch, Nutter has never had to perform what's called an unconscious deepwater rescue. It wasn't even his shift. He was called in to sub for someone else. Yet experience and training were on his side.

"I am really glad that we train as often as we do," said Nutter, a Water Safety Instructor II for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. "I dived down holding the rescue tube, grabbed him, yanked on the tube strap, and up we came. Everything clicked," Nutter said.

The teenager returned to the pool the next day to swim. His mom, Diane Warta, witnessed the rescue and said the pool staff was "very professional, very aware of what was going on in the pool."

New West Lakes FSA rating saving homeowners money

Just a few years after Big Lake and Meadow Lakes fire and ambulance services consolidated into the new West Lakes Fire Service Area, the new entity is saving home-owners money because of an improved fire protection rating.

West Lakes Fire Service Area is about 92 square miles. It begins north east of Schrock Road and Lucille Street and extends west

on both sides of Big Lake.

"The real story here is about what can be accomplished when a group of people share a vision and implement a plan to make it happen," said District 2 Chief Bill Gamble. "Everyone is focused on quality, responsive, and cost effective emergency service. This is what we are all about."

Resident Joan Truett: "My insurance premium went down 50 percent and I get a rebate for a few months. I'm glad, because I'm a senior and every little bit helps."



Chief Bill Gamble in front of a West Lakes fire engine.

Plan balances uses for Borough natural resources

This fiscal year, the Assembly adopted the Asset Management Plan: Natural Resource Management Units. This 750-page document provides for the multiple-use management of natural resources on 167,000 acres, which is nearly half of the land owned by the Borough.

Three years in the making, the plan includes a thorough scientific and technical inventory of Borough-owned land. The natural resources and uses identified include: timber, fish & wildlife habitat, transportation, public recreation, tourism, water resources, rock, sand & gravel, among others.

"This Plan will ensure that the uses of the land and natural resources occur in a responsible manner, reflecting interests of both present and future users," said Consultant Ron Swanson, who worked on the plan with Natural Resource Specialists Bish Buckle and Debby Broneske, Sanders Forestry Consulting, and Cal Kerr with Northern Economics Inc. Extensive feedback from the public, state agencies, local boards and councils is incorporated into the plan.



Michieal Abe, Bill Mackreth, Sarah Sanderlin, Joe Sylvia and Bea Adler. Photo Mike Gibson

CERT in National spotlight

Inmates could play a recovery role if a disaster strikes. The Mat-Su CERT instructors were highlighted in a national CERT newsletter alongside peers who are preparing for tsunami on Hawaii, coping with flooding in New Jersey, and mobilizing in the aftermath of earthquake in Haiti. CERT is Community Emergency Response Team. In 2009 Mat-Su CERT became the first CERT in the country to offer disaster response training to inmates. CERT instructors taught basic training to 53 inmates at the Palmer Correctional Center.

Excellent Delivery of Services

VOTE HERE

It's election day, Jan. 11, 2011, three in the Clerks Office each head out alone to put up large plastic "VOTE HERE" signs, that act like windsails in the 70 mph gusts. More than 1,200 Palmer area residents lost power. Forty or more signs must go up to engage voters from the roadways. "We want to make sure we have the highest possible voter turnout," said Borough Clerk Lonnie McKechnie. Assistant Borough Clerk Cheryl Marino goes out equipped, as the others are, with mechanics wire and wire cutters. "I wrapped the wire around trees or anything I could," Marino said. One sign escaped on Lazy Mountain into the "bush." The wind plucked the glasses off Clerk Secretary Brenda Henry's face and tossed them in an icy ditch. With blurry vision, Henry went



Borough Clerk Lonnie McKechnie



Neither howling wind nor broken glasses hold down a clerk on election day

into the wind vortex of the gravel hole, her knuckles scraping frozen rock for the frames. She crawled to the howling surface—glasses in hand—impressed more than ever with her job at the Borough. The special mayoral election was the second election in just three months for the Clerk's Office in which they managed 34 precincts, while also performing regular duties. Clerks often prepare 600-700 page packets for Assemblymembers for meetings that stretch until midnight. A search for a new Borough manager added to the rigorous office pace. Also contributing to the election effort in the Clerks Office: Joell Church, Sharon Huckins, Debra Wetherhorn, Holly Dubose and Kathy Tyson.

New Permit Center delivers Saves \$190,295 in labor



Photo Patty Sullivan/MSB

Pictured front Amy Hina-Office Assistant, Michelle Croswhite-Permit Technician, Vickielee Fenster-Permit Technician, Andy Dean-Right-of-Way Coordinator. Not pictured: Wendy Bergstrand, office assistant.

An efficient new Permit Center created last July at the Borough has saved \$190,295.00 in staff time over the past year. Residents and business owners need only go to one counter where all their Borough planning and development permits can be handled. For the mandatory land use permit alone, the changes have cut the processing time in half and have saved about \$41 per permit in labor cost. Applicants were previously receiving their permit in 20 days, now it's seven. Among the customer feedback, resident Ken Mattingly wrote: "Friendly, helpful, get it done, not 3 months from now!" Another resident gave a top grade of 10 to "Helpfulness in suggesting solutions." The new counter is run by employees who are cross-trained to handle multiple permits: Vickielee Fenster, Michelle Croswhite and Andy Dean. Fenster and the Govern Team helped streamline the processing of the Borough's top three permits. Driveway and utility permits that might have taken three months in the past are now completed in two weeks or less. The inter-departmental teamwork and the efficiencies created are an example of the Borough acting as a High Performance Organization. "The Permit Center was put together with the customer in mind as our first priority," said Borough Planning Director Christine Nelson.

Award-winning Su Valley



©Kevin G. Smith

The Su Valley Junior/Senior High School was recognized by the Pacific Northwest Region of the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) for the 2011 Pinnacle Award in honor of excellence in planning, design, and construction of school facilities. McCool Carlson Green Architects. Collins Construction. Its extraordinary lighting design has received a National Illuminating Engineering Society Award of Merit. This award winning facility successfully incorporates energy efficiency, creativity, and the independent spirit of the community. AMC Engineers.

TEELAND'S SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE DESIGN TEAM



Kali McCafferty, Nick Harrison, Ariel Hasse, John Goudey were the presenters of their award winning design. © Mike Olliver

The design of a "school of the future" by 13 students at Teeland Middle School earned \$2,000 and an award of excellence at the International CEFPI (Council of Educational Facility Planners International) competition in Washington, D.C. Four team members presented to a panel of 20 judges. Students created a model of the school. The team implemented green technologies such as a hydroponic garden, solar-paneled glass domed roofs, geothermal heating and cooling, vertical axis windmills and featured exterior school walls covered in vegetation. The jury applauded their highly professional and passionate presentation.

Teeland Librarian Mary Cochran was team advisor. Anna Lee and David Moore with Architects Alaska and Jason Gamache with McCool Carlson Green Architects worked with the students and high school mentor, Zac Neubauer.

Other Team Members: M.E. Meyerhoffer, Sophie Miller, Isaac Mitchell, Jamie Schwantes, Ally Neubauer, Aubrey Mitchell, Kea Bekkedahl, Anna Blyshchyk, Alyssa Bolog



The new Valley Community Recycling Center opened in winter with a ribbon-cutting celebration. Event speaker Pete Grogan, with International Paper, said the Center allows this community to participate in the global economy. The local recycling center is among the world-wide contributors that sell 4 million tons of recovered paper annually to International Paper.

"The market for paper and recycled paper is on fire. This will affect us nationally because paper by volume is the number one export of the United States," said Dave Hanson, Borough Economic Development Director. VCRS aims to divert 25 percent, or 60,000 tons of waste from the landfill by recycling. Spin-off jobs will be created from recycling. The LEED-certified building itself was constructed with 35 percent recycled content including 16" wall insulation made from recycled paper constructed by the local company Thermo-Kool. The new center is off 49th State Street at 9465 E. Chanlyut Circle. The Mat-Su Borough owns the building and the land. The non-profit, VCRS, will operate the facility. The \$3.8 million project was paid for by a funding partnership between the Borough, the State, the Federal government and private foundations. 55 percent was funded by the federal Economic Development Administration.



Jeff Walden/MSB



Left: Mollie Boyer, Executive Director VCRS, snips the plastic ribbon with over-sized scissors. Left to right, Elizabeth Ripley-Mat-Su Health Foundation; Pete Grogan-International Paper; Talis Colber-Mat-Su College; Dave Hanson-Mat-Su Borough; Kevin Brown-VCRS; Assemblymember Warren Keogh. Photo Patty Sullivan/MSB.

Upswell of dog-lovin'-support in husky abuse case



On Jan. 10, 2011, the Borough—with Animal Care Manager Richard Stockdale just five days on the job—took in an unprecedented number of dogs due to an abuse case at a breeding lot. Animal Care staff and volunteers worked through the night as 157 dogs were brought into the shelter. Their 19-hour days eventually shortened to 10-hour days. Veterinarian Katrina Zwolinski gave vaccines, administered IV fluids, performed surgeries, monitored the progress of 30 puppies. TV crews descended upon Animal Care. Fans on Borough Facebook climbed each week by the 100s, wanting to help, wanting to know if the dogs were improving. Some previously starving dogs gained progress in ounces. Members of the public far and wide—Fairbanks, Mat-Su, Anchorage, and Kenai—dug into their pockets



Shelter assistant Andy Jennings takes a look at one of the rescued puppies.

and gave money in the generous amount of \$121,318. The funds helped restock diminished supplies, equipment, and medicine. Alaska Job Corps built 80 dog houses. Alaska Dog News and Alaska Dog & Puppy Rescue organized a relief fund. Countless businesses and people donated supplies and food. Many of the dogs have been socialized and have found homes. Rescue groups took in large numbers in Arizona, Texas, Idaho, Montana and Washington. Delta Airlines donated airfare. Eleven remain. To see who needs a home, visit petharbor.com. And thank you for caring so much.

911 locates wireless telephone calls



A recent "next generation" technology upgrade gives the Mat-Su 911 Center cutting-edge capabilities "Called wireless Phase II, this is a big step. It allows us to locate a wireless caller. Before, it was 'where are you?' Answer: 'I don't know. It's dark, and my car's upside down.' Now, we can find cell phone callers, not 100 percent of the time, but pretty good odds.

Dispatch centers nationwide are adapting to emerging communication paths, and we're positioning ourselves to be ready as well."

—Carl Hereford,
Telecommunications Technology
Manager



Mat-Su moves into 21st century with LiDAR technology

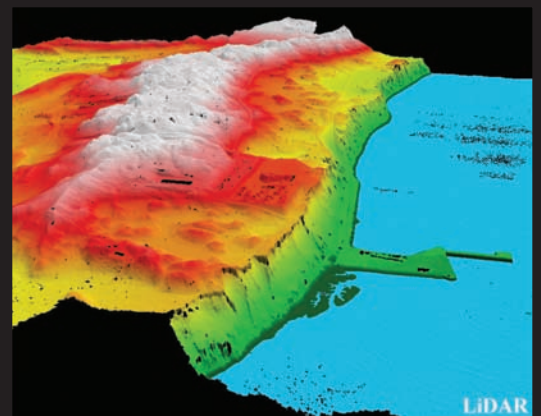
Already underway, is a multi-agency, \$2.1 million project that puts planes in the air and provides high accuracy mapping across 3,680 square miles of the Borough.

LiDAR is high resolution Light Detection and Ranging .

This technology will bring the Borough into the 21st century

with highly detailed information that governments, businesses and citizens will use to make decision for years to come. The new information is scheduled to be available in the public domain by early 2012.

"LiDAR provides elevation information. The most widespread elevation data we currently have is from 1986 and is still being used to make decisions," said Shannon Post, Borough Chief Information Officer of the IT Department. "LiDAR data is collected by sending signals from an airplane to the surface of the earth. When those signals bounce back up to the plane they provide detailed elevation information. Meanwhile other airplanes collect images of the earth's surface. You can then take those two products and drape the imagery over the elevation to provide a detailed 3D model. Each product can be used on its own or combined together for problem solving and decision making." More than 90 percent of the funding comes from a multi-agency partnership of Federal, State and non-profit sources.



Port MacKenzie

Matanuska-Susitna Borough



Where the frontier takes flight

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