



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 12, 2021
TO: Mayor and Assembly
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

Borough/School District Health Plan Comparison: The infographic in the attachments compares healthcare plan costs for the Borough and School District. The graphic provides an overview of current premiums with the portion paid by employees as well as projected plan costs and a six-year lookback. The main difference is that the Borough is self-insured and administers its own plan through a broker and third party administrator whereas; the School District participates in the Public Education Health Trust. A question was previously asked by an Assembly member about the District's access to aggregate claim data. The School District does not have access to aggregate claim data, which would allow for a detailed evaluation of potential savings garnered by self-insuring.

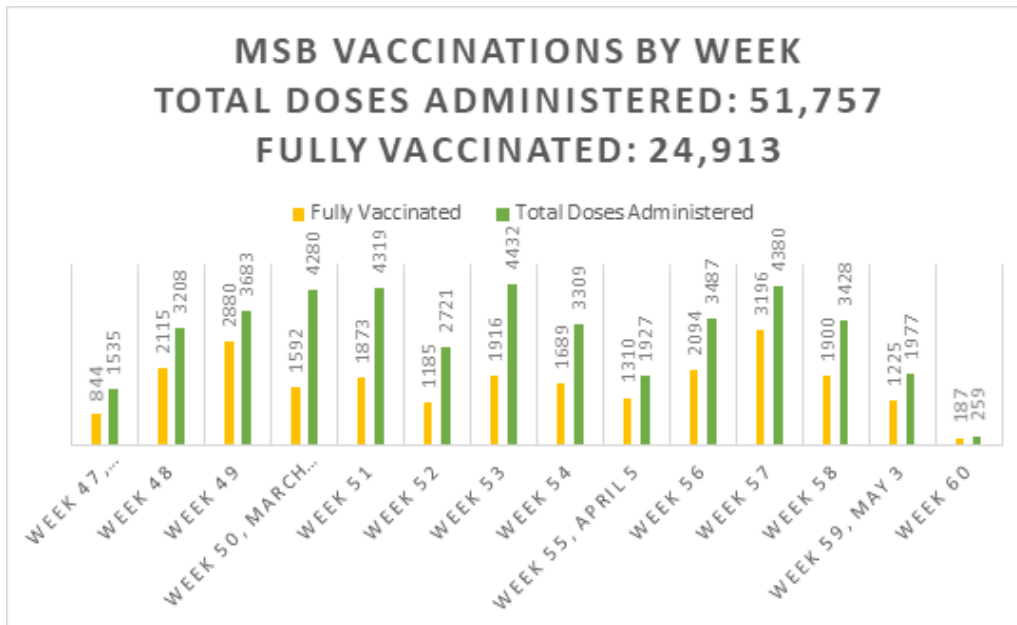
Transportation Infrastructure Package: As previously discussed at the April 27, 2021 budget hearing, Administration is preparing a transportation infrastructure package for Assembly consideration at the June 22, 2021 Assembly Special Meeting. At the June 22 meeting, Borough staff will provide a list of transportation projects for Assembly consideration. If the Assembly elects, we anticipate introduction of the package at the July 20, 2021 meeting and have the package up for public hearing at August 3, 2021 for the fall ballot. Staff will be working over the coming weeks to share a DRAFT of the list with various advisory boards and the Planning Commission. A draft timeline is as follows: 1) Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) week of May 24, 2021; 2) Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board May 24, 2021; 3) Local RSA Advisory Board June 17, 2021; and 4) Planning Commission introduction June 7, 2021 with public hearing June 21, 2021.

A DRAFT of the project list is in the attachments for Assembly member awareness and in the event, an Assembly member may have any project nominations they might like to bring forward to staff. Please keep in mind this list is a draft and will likely change over the coming weeks. Staff will also be preparing a number of data points for each project such as average daily traffic count, the number of miles covered in the project, etc. as the list is advanced. Options for how to fund this package will be presented at the June 22, 2021 Assembly Meeting. Funding options will not be presented to the various Boards and Commission.

Alaska Division of Forestry and Borough Fire Department Fire Training: See the attached flyer describing prescribed burning that will be happening through May 14, 2021 in the areas of W. Schrock Road and Sitze Road; between the Schrock Bridge and the N. Sushana Bridge; and near the Maud Road Shooting Range in the Butte.

Parking Violations at Trail Heads: See the attached announcement of enforcement actions that begin on June 1, 2021 for parking violations at trailheads.

Vaccination Weekly Update:



Public Affairs Media Flyover:

State

- [Bill passed to name Vietnam Helicopter Pilot's Memorial Bridge over Matanuska River](#)

Assembly

- [Borough Assembly vote to increase Mayor 's pay](#)
- [Assembly meets at Su-Valley High for budget and recognized the Girls Basketball Team](#)
- [Recognition Award given to three firefighters during Assembly Special Meeting](#)

Fisheries

- [Alaska sport fisheries receive a boost](#)
- [Alaska's cowboys of the seas appear destined to be penned in by the world's farmers in a replay of the story of cattle in the American West – Craig Medred](#)

Providing Outstanding Borough Services to the Matanuska-Susitna Community

- [Mat-Su boat launch fishing sites - MSB Fish Commissioner, Andy Couch](#)

COVID-19

- [Survey: Family and friends most trusted among vaccine hesitant](#)

Agriculture

- [ADF&G demonstrate how to keep livestock safe from bears with electric fencing](#)

Schools

- [Many families choosing home school during pandemic](#)

Roads

- [Open house: Fishhook to Pittman power improvement study](#)

Trails

- [Parking fees enforced June 1, 2021 \(Facebook\)](#)
- [Trail fees and more discussed on Radio Free Palmer, Tuesday May 11, 2021](#)

Local Events

- [Great Alaska Aviation Gathering](#)

Emergency Response

- [Helicopter crashes near fairgrounds](#)

Wildfire Preparedness

- [MSB Fire conducting fire training exercises in conjunction with Alaska Department of Forestry](#)
- [Wildfire Preparedness Demonstration Day \(Video\)](#)

Future Events:

- Mayor Halter and I will present a Borough update to the Wasilla Chamber on Tuesday, May 18, 2021, and Palmer Chamber on Wednesday, May 26, 2021.

ATTACHMENTS

HEALTHCARE COST COMPARISON



Mat-Su Borough



**Mat-Su Borough
School District**



**CURRENT
PREMIUMS**

**Monthly premium payment:
\$2,107.33**

**Employee portion:
\$321.75 (15%)**

**Average monthly premium
payment: 2,076.48**

**Average employee portion:
\$284.24 (14%)
(% of total varies by
employee group and plan
selection)**



**PROJECTED
2021-2022 PLAN
COSTS PER
EMPLOYEE PER
MONTH**

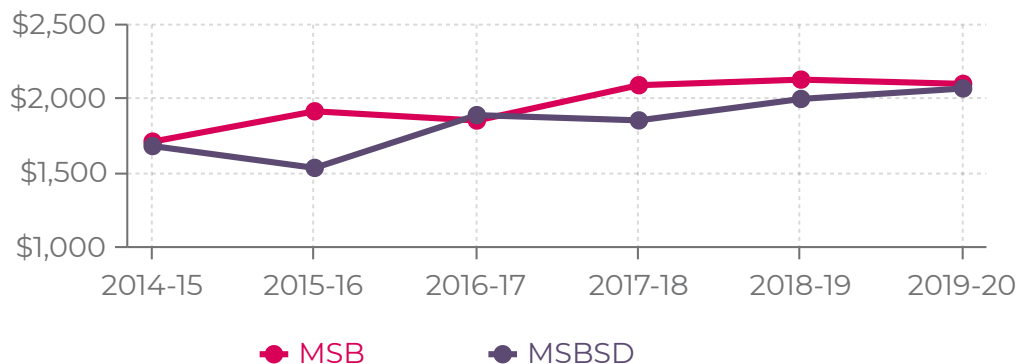
**Plan cost:
\$2,138.64**

**Average plan cost to similar
MSB coverage:
\$2,363.08
(if eliminating lower plan
coverage options)**



**HISTORICAL
COSTS PER
EMPLOYEE PER
MONTH**

Per Employee Per Month Premium Costs



This **DRAFT** list is a compilation of transportation projects for consideration for potential bonding - PAGE 1 of 2

Proposed Project	Description	Assembly District	Cost Estimate (need to update)	Design
MSB School District 2018 Pedestrian Projects	Safe Routes to Schools Implementation	All?	\$ 2,000,000	
Trunk Road Connector/Katherine Drive	Stringfield to Trunk and Trunk to Katherine	1	\$ 2,200,000	95%
Smith Road Extension Upgrade and Paved Pathway	MSB owned segment to be upgraded. Residential and Recreational Trailhead access.	1	\$ 1,500,000	
Old Glenn Pathway Phase 2	Project would extend the pathway from Sodak Circle to Knik River	1	\$ 1,500,000	65% (ROW acquisition also underway)
Hemmer Road Extension South	This project will improve access to the Valley Pathways School and a large residential subdivision by extending Hemmer Road south of the Palmer Wasilla Highway.	2	\$ 4,500,000	
Irwin Loop Road Upgrade & Pathway	Upgrade this access and provide pedestrian/bike path for several large subdivisions	2	\$ 2,000,000	
Nelson Road Extension North	This project would provide major collector road access from Nelson Road/Withers intersection to Fairview Loop.	3	\$ 5,000,000	
Point MacKenzie Road Reconstruction MP 0-7	This project would add shoulders, reconstruct the embankment and pave from KGB Road to Ayrshire Road	5	\$ 13,000,000	Geotech Complete
Burma Road Reconstruction	Reconstruct this road to a borough collector level from Ayrshire Road to Purinton Parkway.	5	\$ 6,000,000	35%
Aspen Ridge Rd. Extension East	Extend Aspen Ridge Road to Palmer Fishhook Road providing another outlet for traffic currently confined to Engstrom Road.	6	\$ 5,500,000	
Charlie Drive-Caribou Street Upgrade	Project would widen and upgrade this corridor to a borough collector level.	6	?	
Edgerton Road-Mtn. Trails Drive Upgrade & Pathway	Project would extend from Palmer Fishhook Road to Mountain Trails Drive with pathway extending to GPRA Parking Lot.	6	\$ 2,500,000	35%
Engstrom Road Extension to Trunk Road	Project would provide connection from Engstrom to Trunk Road connecting to a segment of the old Trunk Road north of the Trunk-Bogard roundabout.	6	?	
Lucille Street and Pathway Upgrade	Project would upgrade Lucille Street and pathway from Spruce Street to Seldon Road	6	\$ 3,500,000	65%
Tex-Al Drive Upgrade and Extension	Connect East & West Segments and Upgrade the rest of the corridor.	6	\$ 5,500,000	25%
Seldon Road Upgrade - Scrock Rd. to Snowgoose Dr.	Project would upgrade Seldon Road between Schrock Road and Snowgoose Drive to Arterial level road with pathway. Carries a lot of traffic.	6	\$ 10,000,000	
Cheri Lake Drive/Karen Avenue/King Arthur Drive	Corridor upgrade/improvements - City of Houston nomination.	7	\$ 7,000,000	35%
Oilwell Road Upgrade MP 0-6	Petersville Road to Kroto Creek Bridge -Upgrade to Borough Collector level standards	7	\$ 6,000,000	
Yoder Road Upgrade MP 0-4	Pave from Talkeetna Spur to Montana Creek Bridge	7	\$ 3,000,000	
Museum Drive Extension West	This project extends Museum Drive from the Museum Place (Parks Hwy. MP 47.5) to Silvan Road creating access for a large commercial district.	7	\$ 4,000,000	100%
Gunflint Trail (Road)	Project would upgrade Gunflint from King Arthur Road to Powder Drive.	7	\$ 650,000	95%
Alternate Egress Route for Hidden Hills Sub.	This project would provide an alternate emergency access for 2,000 lots in the Hidden Hills Subdivision.	7	\$ 5,000,000	
Caswell Lakes/Hidden Hills Paving	Pave loop from Caswell Lakes Road to Hidden Hills Road and reconstruct Hidden Hills	7	\$ 4,000,000	

This **DRAFT** list is a compilation of transportation projects for consideration for potential bonding - PAGE 2 of 2

Proposed Project	Description	Assembly District	Cost Estimate (need to update)	Design
Engstrom Road Extension North	provide a collector road for access for residents on the north end of Engstrom who currently use residential subdivision roads as well as a more	1,3	\$ 2,500,000	35%
Green Forest Drive Upgrade	This project will upgrade Green Forest Drive to Borough collector level standards.	1,3	\$ 800,000	
Boyd Road to Hermann Avenue	Project would provide a collector level road connection from Palmer Fishhook to the Glenn Highway via a connection to Soapstone Road.	1,6	\$ 2,000,000	
Fern Street Upgrade & Pathway	collector level road standards and include a paved	3,4	\$ 6,000,000	
Seward Meridian Parkway-Tambert Traffic Signal	Project would provide safe crossing of Seward Meridian Parkway for students and pedestrians living to the east.	3,6	\$ 1,500,000	
Foothills Boulevard Upgrade	This project would upgrade Foothills Blvd. to collector standards from KGB Road to Museum Drive.	4,5	\$ 1,700,000	
Johnson Road Upgrade	This project would upgrade Johnson Road between Hollywood Road and the Parks Highway	5,7	\$ 2,500,000	
Right-of-way Acquisition	Project will purchase ROW for road extensions or roads that need upgraded to collector level standards	1-7	\$ 2,500,000	
Collector Road Pavement Replacement COP & COW	Repave roads in partnership with COP & COW	1,2,3,4	\$ 5,000,000	
Repaving Package	Repave \$1M worth of roads in each district	1-7	\$ 7,000,000	
PATHWAY PROJECTS (within State Hwy. ROWs)				
Sutton to Palmer Pathway along Glenn Hwy.	This project would provide a pathway connection between Eska Street in Sutton to Auklet Avenue in Palmer	1		
Palmer Fishhook Separated Pathway	Glenn Hwy. to Jct. with Wasilla Fishhook	1,6		
Wasilla Fishhook Separated Pathway	Palmer Fishhook Road to Seldon Road	6		
Cope Industrial Way Island Pathway	Evergreen Avenue to Inner Springer Loop	2		
Knik Goose Bay Rd. Connectivity NW	From KGB along Vine Road to Parks Highway	4,5,7		
Bogard Road Island Pathway	Adjacent to Main Street & Bogard Rd. to S.M.P	4		
Parks Hwy. Pathway	Talkeetna Spur to Willow Fishhook Rd.	7		
Clark-Wolverine Road Pathway	Glenn Hwy. to Wolverine Lake	1		
Pittman Road Pathway	Seldon Road to Parks Highway	7		
Church Road Pathway	Seldon Road to Spruce Avenue	4,6,7		
TRANSIT PROJECTS - that help address the traffic congestion issue in and around Wasilla				
Multi-modal Wasilla Depot	This project would provide a new transit facility which would act as a commuter, bus & passenger	1-7		10%
Pittman Rd. & Parks Hwy. Park and Ride Facility	Commuter vehicle parking and bus drop-off/pick-up facility to reduce traffic congestion	7	\$ 3,000,000	
Big Lake Rd. & Parks Hwy. Park and Ride Facility	Commuter vehicle parking and bus drop-off/pick-up facility to reduce traffic congestion	(5) & 7	\$ 3,000,000	
Share-A-Ride Program Support	Provide funding for 6 Share-A-Ride Vans to reduce traffic congestion. The majority use of this program is from Mat-Su residents that commute to Anchorage or the military bases.	1-6	\$ 525,000	



UPCOMING FIRE TRAININGS

May 10 - 14

West Lakes Fire Department:

- Trainings begin Monday May 10, and continues Tuesday May 11, and Friday May 14
- Monday, May 10, crews will be prepping the area; building lines and clearing a helicopter landing area
- Fires will be near W. Schrock Road and Sitze Road; between the Schrock Bridge and the N. Sushana Bridge
- Firefighters, helicopters and smoke will be in the area on Tuesday and Friday.
- Department of Forestry Pioneer Peak, Hot Shot Crew as well as neighboring fire departments will be participating in this valuable fuel reduction and joint training

Citizens using the Baldy Trailhead and associated trails might encounter smoke and firefighters.

The forestry helicopter will also be in the area.

All operations are being done on private land utilizing an approved SOA DOF Class B Burn Permit.

Butte Fire Department:

- Prescribed burning with the Alaska Division of Forestry will be at the Maud Rd Shooting Range in Butte
- Training will be conducted on Wednesday May 12th, 2021 from 0900 hrs until concluded
- Citizens need to be aware of smoke and firefighting activity in the area

These burns offer a great opportunity for firefighters to hone their skills and practice working together in a controlled environment.

This also helps reduce available fuels in some areas reducing the risk of a wildfire later in the summer.


Parking Fees will be enforced beginning June 1, 2021

Hard work goes into maintaining our trails!

By purchasing a yearly permit or your daily parking fee, you help keep trails and facilities clean and maintained. Please be aware that the State parking permit does not cover the same trails as the Borough parking permit and you may be fined if you do not have the correct permit.



Trail Crew member bushing the Lazy Moose Trail on Lady Mountain



PARKING VIOLATION NOTICE

Your vehicle is in violation of MSB Ordinance 2.85.016

On June 1, 2021 the Matanuska-Susitna Borough will begin enforcing fines on users who fail to purchase a daily trail-head permit or incorrectly display an annual permit. The fine is \$40.00 and can be used towards the purchase of a trail permit through December 31, 2021.

To receive the annual trail pass, bring the ticket into either:
Community Development Office, 350 East Dahlia Street, Palmer, AK
Talkeetna Library, 24645 Talkeetna Spur Rd., Talkeetna, AK
Mat-Su Borough Parks Shop, 17704 E. Sullivan Ave, Palmer, AK

The violator has 5 days from the date of the ticket to visit one of our offices, pay the \$40.00 and receive their annual trail pass. Failure to do so will result in the fine being assessed without receiving an annual trail pass.



Installing split rail fence on West Butte Trail



Preparing a GeoBlock Accessible Path at Nolvi Park @ Fish Creek



Inspecting a timber bridge on the Caribou Wagon Trail near Government Peak



Free Blocking trail at Crevasse Moraine



West Butte stair repair