



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 13, 2022
TO: Mayor and Assembly
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

Upcoming Topics: Over the next couple of months the following topics are planned for discussion:

1. Arctic Winter Games update: July 19, 2022 Regular Assembly meeting
2. Central Landfill roadmap, septage update, and review of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding: August 2, 2022 Special Assembly meeting
3. Mat-Su Central School bond legislation: August 2 and 16, 2022 Regular Assembly meetings
4. Port MacKenzie update: August 16, 2022 Regular Assembly meeting
5. Employee Healthcare update: September 20, 2022 Regular Assembly meeting
6. Gateway Visitor Center EDA grant: September 2022 (dependent upon EDA grant award notification)

Insurance Renewal: The Borough and School District just completed the insurance renewal process. Thanks to a strong marketing process and the diligent work of our brokers, the Borough and School District saw an increase of the property premiums of only 14% and an increase of the Public Entity Liability premiums of only 11% from the prior fiscal year. Overall the Borough saw a total increase in premiums of 11% when the combined and Borough only premiums are considered.

Matanuska Townsite, ORD 22-068 Follow-Up: In response to Assembly members' questions at the June 21, 2022 Assembly Meeting, see the attached documentation below from Land Management and Code Compliance.

Jonesville Public Use Area Management Plan and Matanuska Valley Moose Range Management Plan: On Wednesday, July 6, 2022, Land & Resource Management (LRM) Staff met with DNR Project Coordinator Don Perrin in the Jonesville Public Use Area (JPUA). The purpose of the meeting was to show the Project Coordinator around the JPUA and discuss the State process moving forward. Chris Spitzer from the Sutton Community Council also attended.

The day was spent driving around the JPUA in off-road vehicles showing the Project Coordinator the general layout of the JPUA and stopping at certain points of interest to further inspect and discuss. The Project Coordinator was quickly able to see the challenges Jonesville currently faces, but also the potential the area holds. He intends to get all of the key State players and agencies out to the JPUA in the near future so everyone can get firsthand experience of what Jonesville is really like and the need for action.

Borough staff conveyed to the DNR Project Coordinator the necessity for the JPUA Plan to continue to move forward in a timely manner and that establishing trust and a positive relationship with the Sutton Community Council is vital to the success of the plan. Staff also clearly outlined the Borough's concern with combining an update to the Moose Range Plan (MRP) (written in 1986) with the JPUA management plan. Specifically, staff conveyed the Borough's concern that combining the two plans will add substantial time to the planning process and could significantly impact the passage of the JPUA plan.

The Project Coordinator indicated that while the initial State planning process will combine the MRP and the JPUA Management Plan, he foresees the end result being two separate plans. Both the Moose Range and the JPUA have been legislatively designated, but the JPUA falls entirely within the designation area for the Moose Range. Because of this, he envisions the JPUA being a sub-unit of the MRP, but having its own separate management plan. While the Request for Proposals DNR currently has out to hire a contractor indicates "the DNR envisions one public process and one document to address both areas," the Project Coordinator indicated the way the RFP is worded would allow for the JPUA to be a sub-unit of the Moose Range and have its own separate plan.

Contractor proposals are due by July 21, 2022. DNR believes they should have the contractor hired not long after. Once the contractor is hired, the first step in the DNR process is a public scoping meeting or meetings. After the scoping meetings, the drafting of the management plan or plans will begin. The Project Coordinator intends to prepare some talking points on the State process and will look to define a more definitive timeline once the contractor has been hired.

LRM staff and the DNR Project Coordinator both agree it would be beneficial for the Mayor to engage the new DNR Commissioner and convey the Borough's apprehension of combining the MRP and the JPUA into one process and one document. The Mayor has reached out to the DNR Commissioner's Office to discuss further. It is not uncommon for DNR plans to take several years to come to fruition. Concerned citizens and the Sutton Community Council have been working to improve the Jonesville area for nearly 10 years. The current JPUA plan that was passed by the MSB Assembly has undergone an extensive and exhaustive planning process and has buy-in and support from community members and the Sutton Community Council. If the MRP and the JPUA plan are combined into one process and one plan, it is a very real possibility we will be looking at years before the process is complete. Based on past experiences with DNR, the Sutton Community Council and residents in the area are very skeptical of commitments made by DNR and a prolonged planning process will likely only add to this. Throughout this process, the Borough has been committed and remains committed to improving the Jonesville area. While

the JPUA falls within the MRP, the Borough's commitment and involvement has been to the JPUA, not the entire MRP. There was never an indication given by DNR prior to the passage of the JPUA Management Plan by the Borough Assembly that the MRP would also need to be updated as part of the JPUA process.

The former DNR Commissioner in February 2022 indicated she believed a 9-month timetable on getting the JPUA plan turned around was achievable. So far over 5 months have elapsed and DNR has yet to hire a contractor to begin the planning process. It is highly unlikely that DNR will have the plan turned around by November of 2022.

Fish & Wildlife Commission 2nd Quarter Report: The Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC) held three meetings during the second quarter of 2022, two regular meetings and a special meeting in June that dealt with the SOA water reservation system. The FWC agenda item that dealt with MSB wildlife issues occurred during the April meeting and considered the possible impacts of the new MEA Fishhook to Pittman Transmission Line on MSB game and wildlife species. FWC Resolution 22-02 can be found here: <https://www.matsugov.us/boards/fishcommission/resolutions>.

Public Affairs Media Flyover:

Tourism

- [Denali National Park Reinstates Mask Mandate - Unofficial Networks](#)

Fires

- [The week ahead brings more rain to alleviate drought and wildfire issues \(alaskasnewssource.com\)](#)
- [Officials thank residents for adhering to burn rules, suspensions and closures remain in effect – Alaska News Source](#)

Community

- [Downtown tennis courts reopen in Palmer - Alaska's News Source](#)
- [Community gathers for grand reopening of Bill Herman Tennis Courts - Frontiersman](#)

Fisheries

- [In victory for commercial fishermen, court orders Cook Inlet fishery to reopen-KTOO](#)

Special Election

- [Special Election for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough held Tuesday-Alaska News Source](#)

Earthquake

- [Pair of earthquakes rattle Southcentral Alaska residents – Alaska News Source](#)

COVID

- [Testing and treatment options narrow as Alaska begins 'privatizing COVID' - KTOO](#)

ATTACHMENTS

DATE: June 28, 2022

FROM: Community Development, Land Management Division

RE: Summary regarding Matanuska Townsite, Ordinance Serial No. 22-068, IM No. 22-126

Lot 4 and Lot 5, Block 4 Matanuska Townsite are each .11 acre in size. The Matanuska Townsite was platted in 1916 prior to Borough regulations. The Borough received these properties in 1976 through tax foreclosure. In 1984 the properties were retained and classified as “public purpose” due to the sub-standard size. The Borough has never developed or otherwise carried out the public purpose. The lots have sat vacant for 46 years. The Borough code allows for adjacent property owners to apply to purchase adjacent Borough land when there is a substandard lot size.

Wetlands / High-water Table

Lot 4 and Lot 5, Block 4 Matanuska Townsite has some dry land and some wet areas. If Lots 3, 4 and 5, Block 4 were combine there would be approximately 10,000 sq. feet of usable dry area based on the Borough hill shade imagery and topography maps. It appears there is a high water table on these lots but test holes have not been dug on the Borough owned Lots 4 and 5, Block 4 to determine how many feet it is to the water table. Staff walked across the lots in the high areas and the ground was not wet.

If the wet areas are going to be filled or dredged a Jurisdictional Wetland Determination would need to be done by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. If it is determined they are wetlands of the United States then a permit would be required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge or fill the wetlands. The Corps defines wetlands as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers application would require a description of the proposed project, drawings, illustrations, location and maps.

A permit to develop the dry land is not required by the Borough.

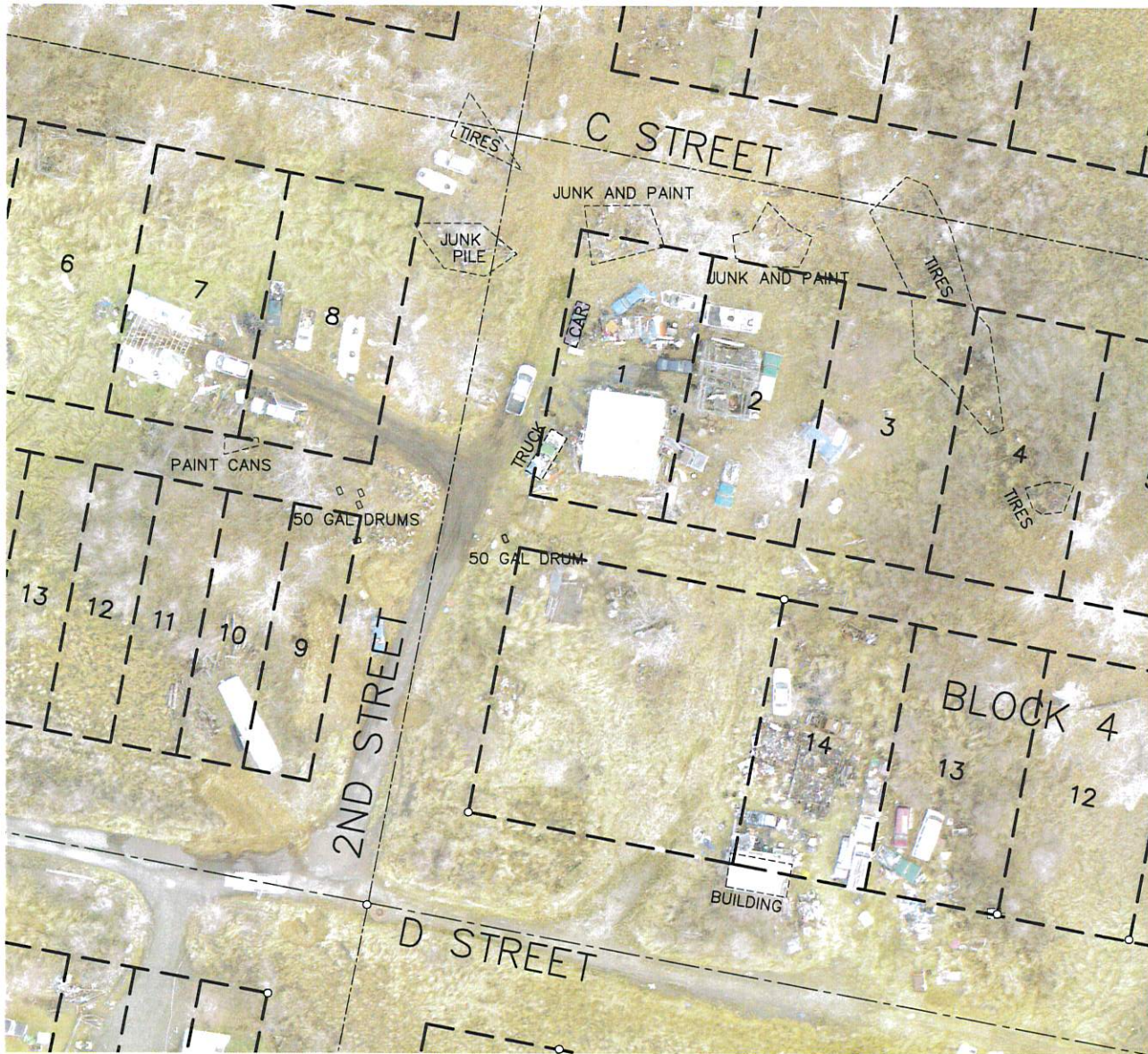
Code Compliance Violations

Alex Strawn will address any violation with a memorandum.

Woodchips

Land Management staff and Code Compliance staff did a site visit on June 24, 2022. A thin layer of woodchips is on the driving surface of 2nd street and at the intersection of D Street and 2nd street. The Borough does not maintain these roads. There are also woodchip piles within the right-of-way of D Street and 2nd Street, the piles are not on the driving surface.

Lot 4 and Lot 5, Block 4 is located on C Street and the road is not constructed. There are no woodchips on these lots or on C Street.



NOTES

1. LOTS ARE RECORDED PER U.S. 1159.
2. UTILITIES OTHER THAN THOSE SHOWN MAY EXIST.
3. IMAGERY FLOWN VIA DRONE ON OCTOBER 20, 2021.



2/17/22

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I HAVE PERFORMED A SURVEY OF
 BLOCK 3-4, MATANUSKA TOWNSITE, U.S. SURVEY NUMBER 1159, SECTION 32, TOWNSHIP 17 NORTH, RANGE 1 EAST, PALMER RECORDING DISTRICT DENWARD MERIDIAN, ALASKA.
 AND THAT THE IMPROVEMENTS AS SHOWN HEREON EXIST AS SHOWN IN RELATION TO THE PROPERTY LINES, EASEMENTS OR RECORDS OTHER THAN THOSE SHOWN ON U.S. 1159 ARE NOT SHOWN HEREON UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
 CODE COMPLIANCE**

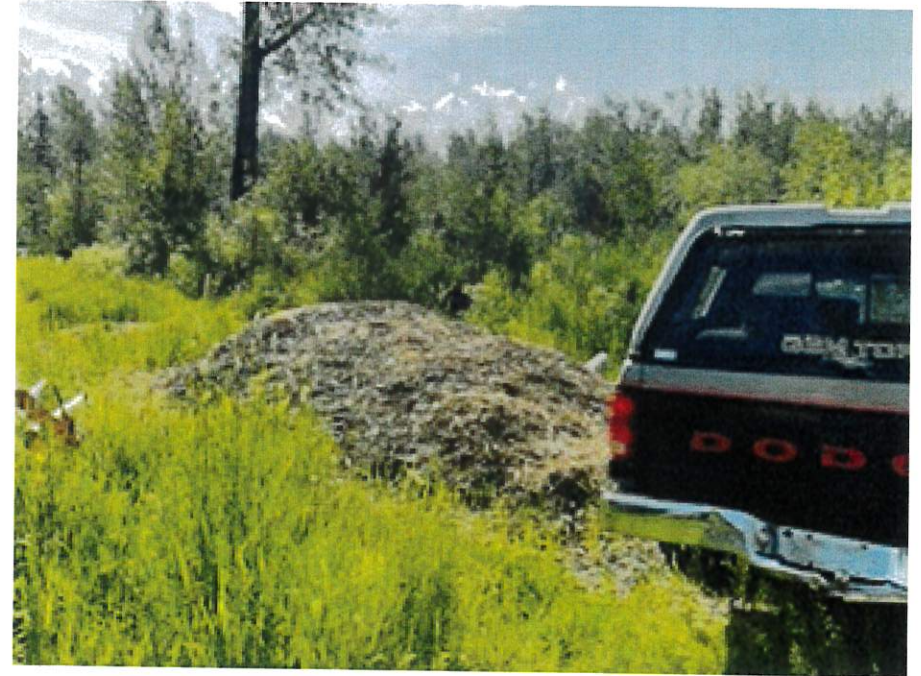
ASSULT SURVEY FOR:
**MATANUSKA TOWNSITE
 BLOCKS 2 & 4**
 PER U.S. 1159, PALMER RECORDING DISTRICT

DRAWN BY: DMR	TAX MAP: WA18	PARCEL ID: MULTIPLE
CHECKED BY: KJ	TIR: 17N01E23&26	SCALE: 1" = 20'
DATE: 2/11/2022	FIELD BKG: 2019-1 PG. 23-26	DWG: 19-03048-21.dwg

Woodchip piles in the right-of-way on 2nd Street.



Woodchip piles in the right-of-way on 2nd Street.



Intersection of D Street and 2nd Street
Woodchips on driving surface.



2nd Street, looking north, woodchips on driving surface.

Lot 5, Block 4 Matanuska Townsite



Woodchip pile in the right-of-way on D Street.



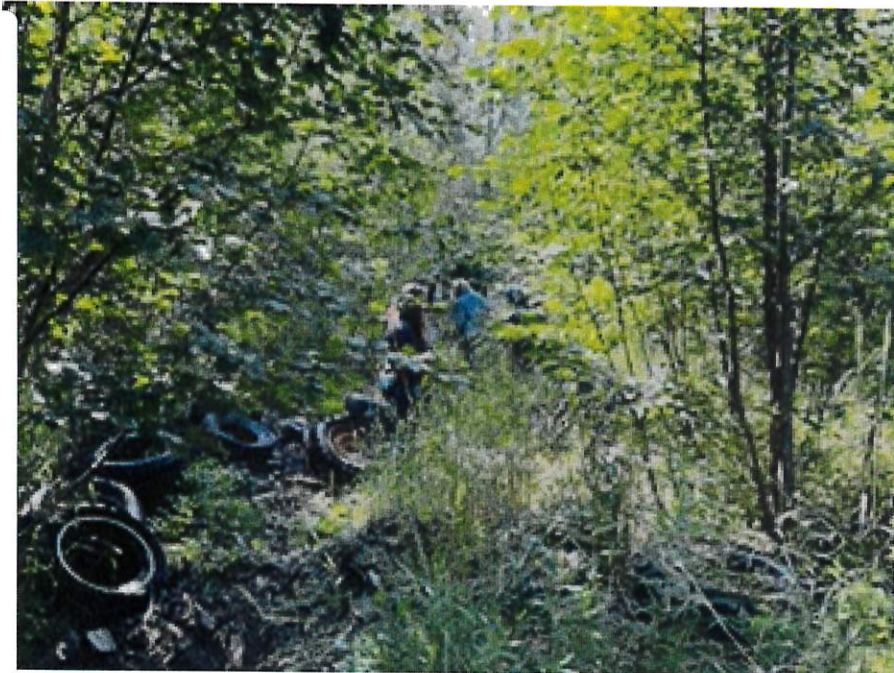
Matanuska Townsite 6/24/22 Ord. 22-068



Lot 4, Block 4 Matanuska Townsite

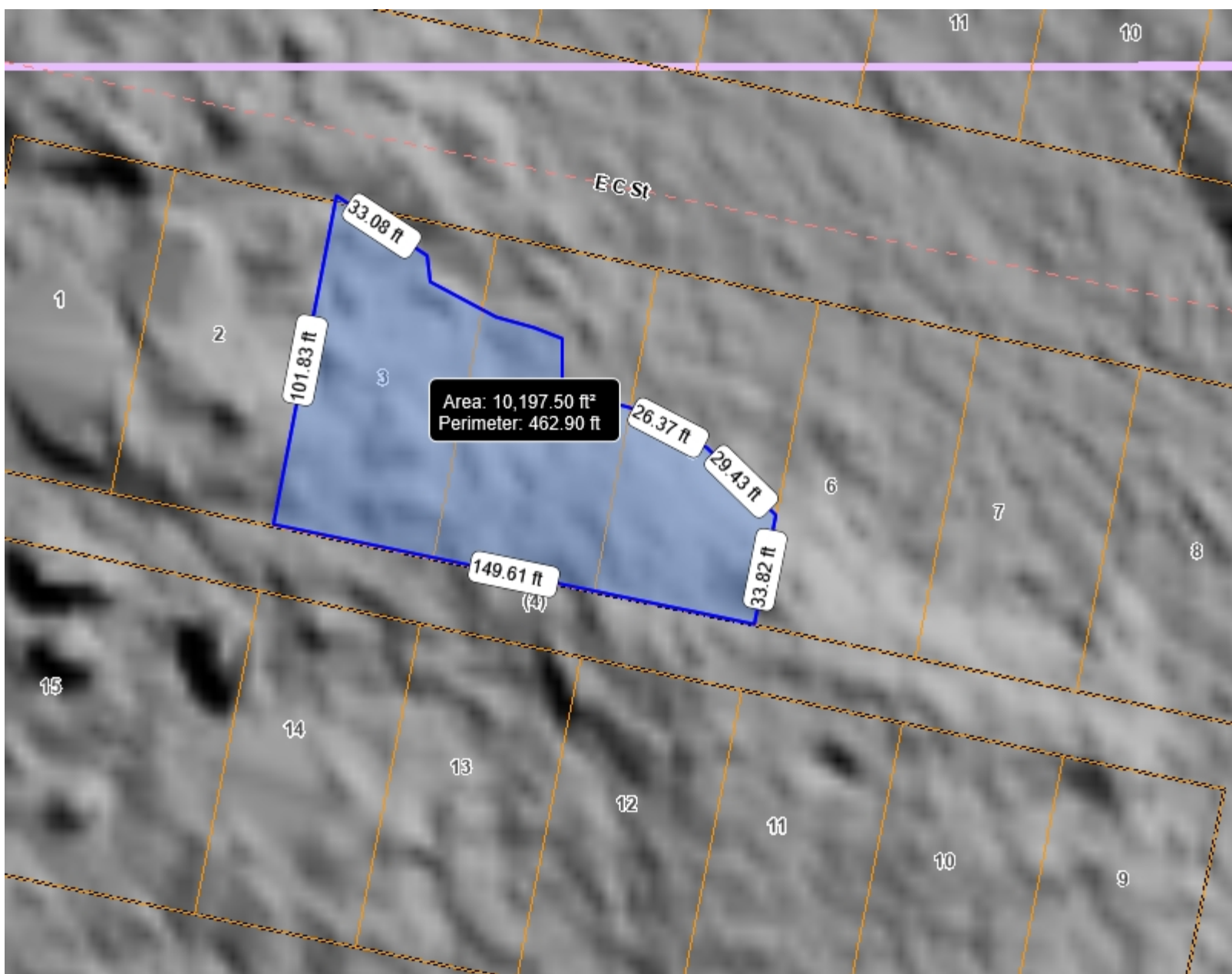
Lot 3, Block 4 Matanuska Townsite

Lot 4, Block 4 Matanuska Townsite





Matanuska-Susitna Borough



Legend

- Road Mileposts
- Roads**
 - Highway
 - Major Road
 - Medium Road
 - Minor Road
 - Ramp
 - - Primitive Road
 - - Private Road
 - - Not Constructed
- + Alaska Railroad
- ▭ Mat-Su Borough Boundary
- ▭ Incorporated Cities
- ▭ Parcels
- - Government Lot Lines
- ROW and Easements**
 - - ROW Road
 - - ROW RR
 - - ROW Easement
 - - Section line easement
- 100 year Flood Zone
- ▭ Section Lines

1: 1,128

0.0 0 0.02 0.04 Miles
 WGS_1984_Web_Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere
 © Matanuska-Susitna Borough
 Reported on 06/23/2022 11:56 AM

THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION
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Notes
 This map was automatically generated using Geocortex Essentials.



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Planning and Land Use Department

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 29, 2022

TO: Mike Brown, Borough Manager

FROM: Alex Strawn, Planning & Land Use Director 

RE: Matanuska Townsite Ordinance 22-068

On June 24, 2022 members of the Planning Department conducted a site visit at the Matanuska Townsite. Staff walked down East C Street to block 4, lot 3 (property owned by Kenneth & Myra Olson) and continued further on to lots 4 and 5 (Borough-owned). All three lots had small amounts of junk and trash that had been deposited some time ago. The amount, character, and disposition of the trash did not constitute a violation of Borough code. Additionally, research did not reveal any history of violations of borough code on any of the three sites.

Piles of wood chips were observed within the right-of-way and on the driving surface of East D Street. Conversation with Myra Olson and Land Management Staff revealed that the wood chips were placed by Mr. Olson with the purpose of absorbing contaminants within the soil. Placement of materials such as wood chips onto Borough rights-of-way is prohibited without first obtaining a permit. However, roads within the Matanuska Townsite are not maintained by the Borough, nor has the Borough asserted jurisdiction over these rights-of-way created by the Government Land Office (now Bureau of Land Management) through the filing of the Matanuska Townsite in 1916.