



2023 Performance Report



*Dedicated to being the greatest community in
Alaska to live, work and play*



STRATEGIC FOCUS

ECONOMIC
GROWTH AND
DIVERSIFICATION

DELIVERING HIGH
QUALITY SERVICES

MANAGING
GROWTH



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Meet the Mayor and Assembly



Edna DeVries
Borough Mayor



Rob Yundt
District 4



Tim Hale
District 1



Bill Gamble
District 5



**Stephanie
Nowers**
District 2



Dimitri Fonov
District 6



Dee McKee
District 3



Ron Bernier
District 7



Economic Growth

Supporting economic development opportunities and evaluating barriers to growth



2024 Arctic Winter Games



The Mat-Su 2024 Arctic Winter Games will be held this coming year from March 10-16, 2024. The Games are the only week long multi-sport and culture event for Arctic youth. The Mat-Su will be welcoming 2,000 participants and 5,000+ additional visitors. One of the best ways locals are getting involved is to volunteer. From sporting officials, to parking attendants, artists and transportation staff, these are just a few of the ways local residents are helping to make the Games a success.

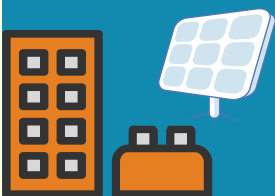
The American Rescue Plan Act

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided Federal funding to municipalities across the country. The Assembly appropriated funding for the following projects in 2023:

- Palmer-Wasilla Water System Interconnect \$1,865,332
- Bogard Road Booster Station Construction \$2,461,261
- Old Matanuska Road Booster and PVR Station Construction \$2,142,045
- Water Line Extension to Colony Schools from the Bogard Booster Station \$200,000
- Revenue Replacement to various Road Service Areas, Areawide Bed Tax and Talkeetna Flood Service Area to facilitate specific projects.

C-PACER

In 2023, the Borough launched the Mat-Su C-PACER website for the program that was adopted September 27, 2022, by the Borough Assembly. The Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy & Resilience (CPACER) program provides innovative financing that enables owners of commercial and industrial properties to obtain low-cost, long-term financing for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and resilience projects and then pay the costs back over time through a voluntary assessment of the property. The MSB is the second municipality in Alaska to adopt this program.



The website includes all of the necessary forms to participate in the program. More information can be found at the statewide C-PACER website or the Borough's website: <https://www.akenergyauthority.org/What-We-Do/Grants-Loans/Alaska-C-PACE> or <https://cpacer.matsugov.us/>.

Economic Growth & Diversification



Port MacKenzie

Port MacKenzie and the surrounding Borough owned "Port District" lands, continue to attract interest from a wide variety of local, state, and federal agencies, as well as the regional maritime industry operating in Cook Inlet. The Port is generating significant interest from national and international energy companies focused on alternative and low-carbon fuel production and fuel storage. To date, the Borough has met with over 20 companies that are evaluating whether the Port and Port District lands are suitable for investment and development as a sustainable energy hub.

The strategic location of the Port and the access it provides has received recent attention from the US Department of Defense for training exercises, and for use of importing munitions and sensitive cargo used by the military. In May 2023, the US Marines used the Port for training exercises and have indicated plans for additional training exercises in the future. In total, the US military visited the Port nine times as part of their evaluation measures.



A first for the port this year was a salt shipment. The docking of the salt ship, a 600' long deep-draft vessel, was done as part of a five-year State contract for road maintenance. The shipper in charge of the operation, Northern Gravel & Trucking, a locally owned and operated business, brought in 36,000 tons of salt, which was trucked and barged to State maintenance facilities.

The Borough applied for two Port infrastructure grants with the Federal Maritime Administration, and as a result was successfully

awarded a \$1M grant to purchase a mobile harbor crane. The crane will provide the Port with the ability to safely and efficiently handle cargo on both the deep-draft and barge docks. Additionally, another Federally funded grant allowed the Borough to complete designs for the pile sleeve protection project, which will extend the life of the deep-draft dock; and funds were appropriated by the Borough Assembly to move forward with design of a roll-on/roll-off barge ramp facility, which will create new business opportunities by allowing operators to haul-out and launch barges for purposes associated with maintenance, inspections, repairs, and storage.



40,961 Tonnage

15 # of Vessels

\$70,000 Wharfage

\$27,500 Dockage

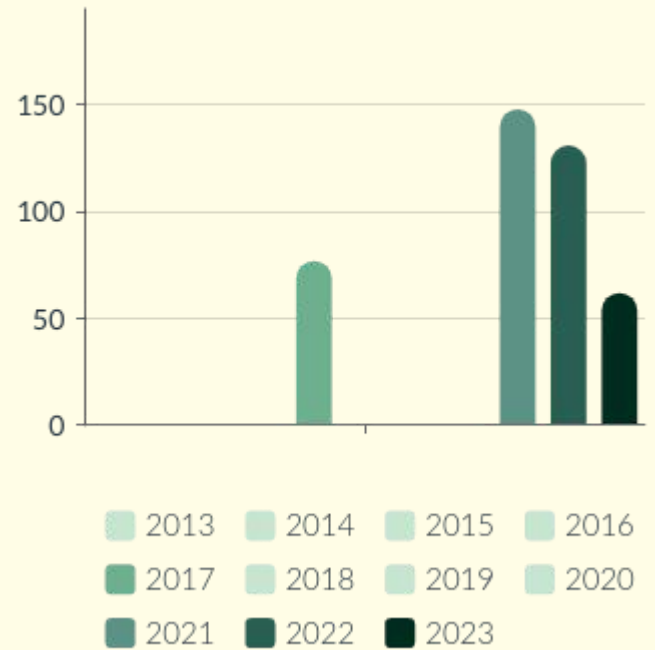
\$230,000 Leases/Permits

Economic Growth & Diversification



Borough timber harvest over the last ten years includes a single harvest occurring in 2017 of 77 acres. In late 2021, a steady increase in timber harvest contracts began due to a code change allowing for salvage harvests. Eight timber harvest contracts have been awarded for a total of 905 acres since the fall of 2021. Two additional contracts for 80 acres are pending. One new sale for 125 acres for 2024 is in the works.

MSB Timber Harvest 2013-2023



3 Borough facilities completed fuel reduction work. Work is ongoing and is expected to be completed over the winter, which consists mostly of slash pile burning.

281 cords of personal-use firewood was permitted for harvest.

707 acres of timber sold for commercial harvest

805 acres currently under contract for harvest

22,574 cubic yards of gravel sold for commercial use

\$1,577,450 in property returned to the tax rolls by sale



On August 29, 2023, the Houston Solar Farm held a ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of Alaska's largest solar farm. The 8.5-megawatt solar farm will provide enough power for approximately 1,400 homes and provided more than 30 local construction jobs. The solar farm is located on Borough-owned property leased to Renewable IPP. Renewable IPP has a 25-year agreement with MEA and sells the energy produced to them.



Economic Growth

Supporting the development of Hatcher Pass & tourism opportunities



From October 2022 to October 2023 GPRA experienced nearly 150,000 users

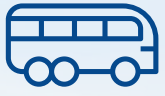
The Government Peak Recreational Area (GPRA) and Skeetawk have quickly become a destination draw for Borough residents and visitors alike. With the assistance of volunteer organizations, the Mat-Su Borough continues to maintain and develop recreational opportunities in GPRA.,

GPRA features over 10.5 miles of groomed Nordic ski trails, 9 miles of mountain bike trails, 10 miles of pedestrian trails, 2.5 miles of pack and saddle trails and a chalet.

The MSB continues to support the efforts of Hatcher Alpine Xperience, the not-for-profit organization that manages Skeetawk, a skiing, snowboarding and alpine recreation facility in Hatcher Pass. In 2023, the MSB provided a \$170,000 grant to support the ongoing development efforts at Skeetawk. Skeetawk has added lighting for nighttime skiing and snowboarding, and completed construction on a bathroom facility. In addition to winter activities, Skeetawk has constructed hiking and mountain biking trails with plans for expansion. Usage is steadily increasing!



Skeetawk
HATCHER PASS, ALASKA



Economic Growth & Tourism

The transient accommodations tax (bed tax) is 5%, generating revenue from non-residents. In fiscal year 2023, the Mat-Su Borough collected \$1.726 million, a 19% increase from the previous all-time high.

Visitor spending brings money from outside the Borough and circulates throughout our community across all economic sectors. Visitor spending is important in helping fund infrastructure projects that benefit our residents and communities.



Short-term rentals continue to increase in demand

22.5%

Increase in booked listings in the Mat-Su from 2022

18%

Increase in overall revenue

\$19.657 Million

Short-term rental overall revenue

Marketing the Mat-Su Borough to Visitors

The Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau (MSCVB) has been the Mat-Su Borough’s destination marketing partner for almost 40 years. MSCVB markets the Borough to reach potential visitors and influence their travel decisions, leading to economic development and employment opportunities for Borough residents.

Visitor Guide In 2023, 100,000 copies of the Mat-Su Visitor Guide were printed and distributed around the world. The guide is packed with trip planning information, suggested itineraries, stunning photography and tourism business listings. In addition to online visitor information and trip planning advice, AlaskaVisit.com is a resource for Mat-Su Borough residents with weekly blog posts, a robust calendar of events and business listings.

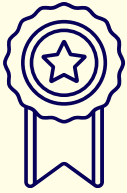
In 2023, MSCVB met with more than 50 travel journalists and hosted ten national writers in the market. This led to positive coverage of the Mat-Su Valley as a premier visitor destination in publications such as Northwest Travel and Life, Travel Weekly, CNN Travel, National Geographic, and even the cover of Conde Nast Traveler, with a circulation of 3.9 million.

Gateway Visitor Center

The Gateway Visitor Center is planned to start construction in 2024 with funding from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). The center will serve as a visitor hub and provide opportunities for economic development within the Borough.



Service Statistics



Our Finance Department continues to receive annual awards from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The Borough received the GFOA Distinguished Budget Award for Fiscal Year 2024 and the Certificate for Excellence for the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for Fiscal Year 2022.

Recreational Usage

3,376 Annual trail passes sold

\$128,345 Trail pass revenue

10,807 Core Area daily passes sold

\$229,730 Total Core revenue

2,336 Northern Region daily passes sold

\$11,680 Northern Region revenue

\$47,350 Jim Creek Passes

5,467 Campground transactions



313 Campground visitors Talkeetna

3,651 Campground visitors Mat River Park



54,471 Palmer pool total attendance

Revenue **\$291,796**

54,780 Wasilla pool total attendance

Revenue **\$284,920**



Brett Memorial Ice Rink: **108,000** people

\$620,179 in revenue

Library Patronage

Sutton: 20,223

Willow: 17,109

Big Lake: 31,959

Trapper Creek: 4,258

Talkeetna: 31,202





Delivering Quality Services

MSB



Problem Reporter

Problem Reporter App

The Mat-Su Problem Reporter app allows citizens to report on five types of issues: abandoned vehicles, animal care, road maintenance, right-of-way complaints, and trash in the right-of-way. The Mat-Su Problem Reporter makes reporting easy and allows individuals to stay informed about issue resolutions in their area. The Problem Reporter, for road maintenance, allowed 2,375 citizens to report, a total 6,118 reports in 2023.

<https://problemreporter.matsugov.us>

What kind of problems?



Trash in the Right-of-Way



Abandoned Vehicle



Road Maintenance

Find answers to the Borough's most frequently asked questions about road maintenance, snow removal, abandoned vehicles, and trash in the right-of-way



Technology Improvements

MSB is modernizing external processes for citizens, increasing efficiencies for internal workflows, and consolidating software. Many projects assisted us in that effort in 2023. We moved the organization to Microsoft 365, allowing employees easier access to their email, documents, and work. The Borough signed contracts to upgrade our eCommerce system, is implementing integrated timekeeping and workforce scheduling software for employees, and has started to bring on a more robust and transparent permitting, licensing, fire plan review software, and a project to migrate to a new assessment and taxation software. Cyber security continues to be an important facet of the organization. Emergency Services is also moving its fleet management into an improved asset management platform.

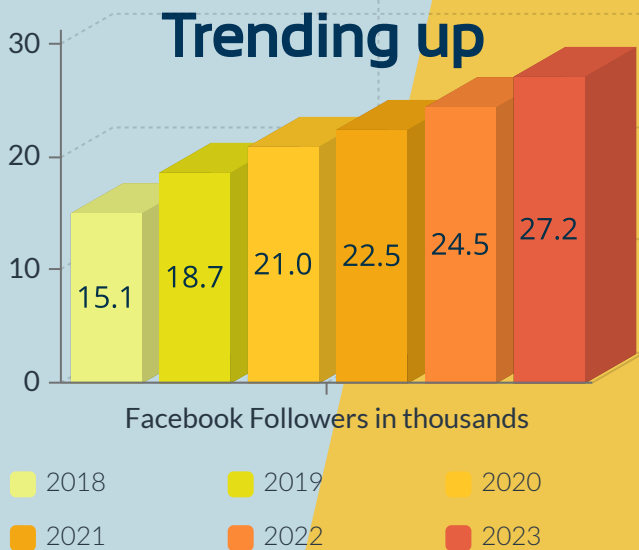
MSB is modernizing external processes for citizens, increasing efficiencies for internal



Delivering Quality Services

External Communication

Effective communication with the public is key to an effective organization. Keeping the public informed develops trust that leads to improved public involvement. The main MSB webpage (matsugov.us) plays a major role in this and acts as the communications hub for the Borough. Social media links people to this resource, such as e-commerce, the parcel viewer, land sale info, public meeting schedules, agendas, public notices, and the problem reporter application.



In past years, it took an emergency event, such as a fire or flood, to spike social media followers beyond the normal expected gains. However, 2023 was different. There was a 30% increase in new followers above the previous year without a crisis to boost the numbers.

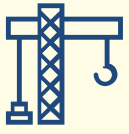
Live Streaming Expansion

The Platting Board has been added to our regular live-streaming list in an effort to increase public engagement. New tools have enabled the MSB to add a third option on VIMEO for live meetings. Having that third option provides another layer of resilience while giving residents a chance to tune in to a stable, ad-free platform.

Through the lens



MSB Public Affairs photography has been featured nationally on multiple networks and publications. Visual storytelling transcends all language barriers.



Delivering Quality Services

New Construction and Development

Houston High School is substantially complete and has been occupied by students and staff since early 2023. The project team is working on final completion and closeout in early 2024.



MAT-SU CENTRAL SCHOOL

The construction contract was awarded to F-E Construction in August 2023. Groundbreaking commenced immediately with the aim of completing the foundation before the onset of winter. This goal was achieved by October 2023. Construction activities were halted for winter on November 1, 2023, but construction management tasks are ongoing during this period. The objective during this winter break is to finalize all project submittals and establish a well-defined construction schedule in preparation for the spring construction phase.



JONESVILLE PUBLIC USE AREA

The Borough continues to assist and monitor the AK Department of Natural Resources (DNR) planning process for the Jonesville Public Use Area. The MSB is eager to enter into a management agreement with DNR to develop and maintain an outdoor shooting range and associated amenities.



Delivering Quality Services

Animal Care

1,662 Licenses Issued	1,100 Animals Altered
3,400 Approximately - Animals Vaccinated	815 Problem Reporter Statements
3,347 Intakes (new record number)	771 Rescue Placements (new record)
1,902 Enforcement Cases	564 Returns to owners
1,260 Adoptions	



Mat-Su Borough Animal Care and Regulation (MSB AC&R) comprises three divisions: **Shelter Operations, Enforcement Operations, and Veterinary Operations.** As a public health and safety entity, we are instrumental in rabies prevention, decreasing the chance of other diseases, reducing the incidents of animal bites, and ensuring animals are properly restrained and cared for. This includes all domestic animals living in Mat-Su Borough.

We operate seven days a week, and our Enforcement Officers are available 24/7.

We operate with a focus on **“Capacity for Care.”** With that focus, we have decreased the in-shelter stay time of our animals from an average of 25 days to 16 days in fiscal year 2023 to approximately 9 days thus far in fiscal year 2024. This directly and positively impacts the health and well-being of animals.

Just a few of our Community Programs/Outreach/Training:

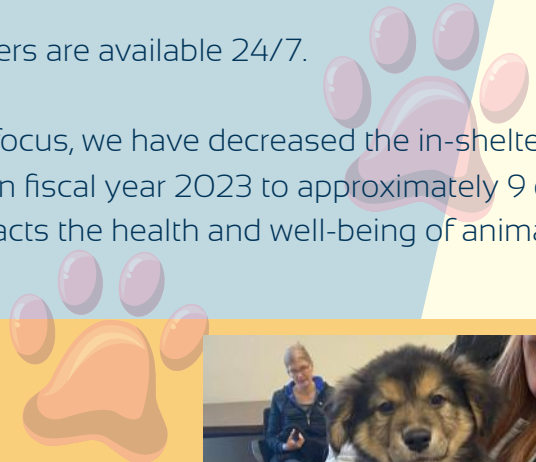
- **Community License/Vaccination Clinic** – low-cost vaccinations.
- **Assisted Living/Nursing Facility Site Visits**
- **Volunteer/Foster Program** – A completely restructured volunteer program with one hundred volunteers and fosters.

Rescue Partner Program – We've built professional relationships with the rescue organizations in our community and transferred a record number of animals to them.

Shelter to Shelter Initiative – Allows collaboration with the other Animal Care shelters and agencies in the State of Alaska.

Alaska Animal Control Association – A means to promote Animal Control Officers and their role in public safety.

Department of Corrections Canine Training Program – Partnering with DOC trainers to provide training to our animals and increase adoptability.



Betty White Adoption Event



Delivering Quality Services

TRANSPORTATION 21

**Nov. 2,
2021**

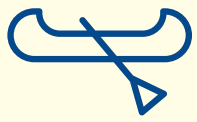
Mat-Su Borough voters approve 20 projects in a \$61M transportation infrastructure improvement package.

**Nov. 7,
2023**

Mat-Su Borough voters approve 17 projects in a \$38M transportation infrastructure improvement package that requires a 50% match from another funding source.

These projects represent important arterial and collector roads and pathway upgrades that contribute to better traffic flow, less congestion and better overall safety across the Borough.

Project	Estimated Cost (50% projected cost)	Project	Estimated Cost (50% projected cost)
School Site Traffic & Safety Improvements: Pioneer Peak Elementary	1,128,000	West Lakes Blvd. Big Lake Trail #1 - Separated Crossing	1,375,000
School Site Traffic & Safety Improvements: Shaw Elementary	9,190,000	Edgerton Parks Rd-Mountain Trails Dr Upgrade and Pathway Phase II	1,087,000
School Site Traffic & Safety Improvements: Finger Lake Elem.	742,000	Inner-Outer Springer Loop Pathway	1,192,500
Green Forest Drive Reconstruction	3,110,500	Earl Dr., EEk St. Pavement Rehab: Bogard Rd. to Finger Lake Elem.	246,500
Hemmer Rd Ext South	2,945,000	Jolly Ck. Drainage Improvements	976,500
Museum Drive Extension	3,068,500	Gershmel Loop Pavement Rehab: Fireweed Rd to Fireweed	323,500
Burma Rd Upgrades & Improvements	5,792,500	Big Lake Boat Launch Access and Parking	161,000
Yoder Rd Reconstruction: Talkeetna Spur to Southfork Road	2,619,500	Tait Dr. Pavement Rehabilitation: Bogard Rd to Seldon Rd	274,000
King Arthur Dr Reconstruction: Parks Hwy. to No Name Hill Dr.	3,267,500		



Delivering Quality Services

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

Maintained road miles Currently 1,163 miles of road under annual maintenance

- 8.1 miles of newly developed roads were accepted into maintenance:
- (3.05 miles paved and 5.06 miles of gravel road)

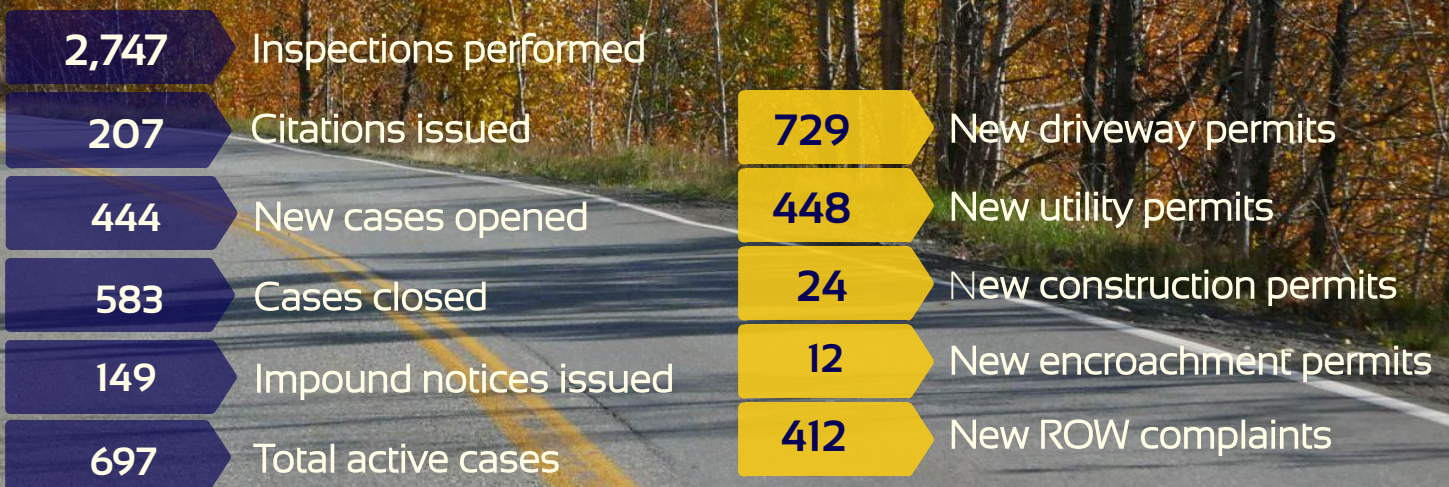
Costs per mile to maintain varies by area - \$4,890 to \$14,030 per mile annually

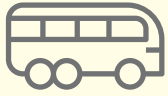
- There were 16 RSA & LID projects completed in 2023**
 - 8 miles of roads improved - 6 miles of road paved - 1 guardrail replacement project

Waterbody Setback Advisory Board

The Waterbody Setback Advisory Board had its kickoff meeting on November 1, 2023 where the board was given a presentation on the history of waterbody setbacks. The next meeting was scheduled on December 14 where they did a deep dive on the applicable code sections. After the December 14th meeting, the board is scheduled to meet on the second Tuesday of every month until final completion of the project.

Permit Center: ensure effective and efficient code compliance





Delivering High Quality Services

The MSB Bike and Pedestrian Plan (BPP) www.matsubikeandped.com



The BPP's purpose is to create a roadmap to a safer, better-connected bike and pedestrian network. It addresses conflicts between the motorized and non-motorized networks to reduce safety risks.



The Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP)

The CHSTP is in place to improve and ensure access to transportation services for priority populations, including older adults, youth, individuals with disabilities, those living in poverty, indigenous populations, veterans, and limited English speakers. These populations, and those without vehicles or homes, experience a higher need for transit options to access essential services.

Capital Improvement Program FY22-23

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) helps the MSB plan and budget for community infrastructure improvements. The CIP is updated annually. One CIP project was funded this past year, the Jay Nolfi Park in Big Lake. Park enhancements include expanding and paving pathways, adding inclusive and accessible playground equipment, and paving a trail.

Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Department is updating the Borough-wide Comprehensive Plan, a tool for developing strategies for guiding growth, promoting economic development, and delivering high-quality services. Throughout 2023, the project manager has met many planning milestones, including meeting with 13 community councils, assembling a steering committee, speaking at two Chambers of Commerce events, presenting at the Wasilla Economic Forum, facilitating eight public workshops with approximately 100 attendees, and developing a community survey that received 1,389 individual responses. Staff also provided regular updates to the Planning Commission, Assembly, and the Mayors and Managers of the cities of Palmer, Wasilla, and Houston and interviewed 15 community stakeholders.

Historic Preservation Plan

In December 2022, the MSB was awarded a Certified Local Government grant from the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office to complete the remaining work on the Historic Preservation Plan update. This past year, we have focused on drafting the historical themes for the plan and facilitating additional rounds of public engagement. This plan will provide guidance when dealing with cultural resource-related topics and provide valuable resources for local museums, visitor centers, and historic societies.

The Planning Services Division hosted/presented at/and participated in 155 public meetings this past year.



Managing Growth

Assessments

The Borough Assessor's responsibility is to set values at full and true value for the market conditions for January 1 of each year.

9.6% The average single-family residential value went up with no inventory change

15% The volume of sales down over last year

10.97% The total appraised value up from tax year 2022 to tax year 2023

8.54% Taxable assessed value projected increase

600 new single-family residential homes constructed for tax year 2023
48 multi-family **21** commercial buildings
Single-family residential homes average appraised value increased from \$320,688 to \$354,162.

The Solid Waste Division conducted:

137 clean-ups

109 tons of material collected

156 abandoned vehicles removed from public rights-of-way

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP

The Borough supported the Jim Creek Spring Clean-up. Over 300 volunteers from the local community and several user groups removed approximately 11,000 pounds of trash and debris from the Jim Creek Recreational Area during this event.

Additionally, the Borough supported a clean-up event at the Jonesville Public Use Area. Volunteers from the local community and other user groups filled two 40-yard dumpsters. In addition to the organized clean-up events, Community Development staff removed approximately 4,000 pounds of trash and discarded appliances from numerous sites around the Borough.

Current Planning - applications received

Tall Structures Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) - up 60%

Variances - down 50%

Marijuana Retail/Cultivation CUPs - down 64%

Earth Materials Extraction CUPs - up 11%

Core Area CUPs - down 50%

Legal Nonconforming Structure Determinations - down 9%

Multi-family permits - up 20%

Mandatory Land Use permits - up 100%

Alcohol License referrals - up 23%

Flood permits - up 92%



Managing Growth

Aligning emergency services resources to meet increasing demands for emergency services

Preparedness

The Borough continues to perform fuel reduction work at schools, facilities, and parks. Fuel reduction work at the urban-wildland interface is continuing at high-risk locations in the core area.

The 15th Annual Mat-Su Emergency Preparedness Expo delivered successfully, with 72 exhibitors and close to 2,000 attendees.



Station 3-9 is planned for 2024 and 2025 construction and will serve as a combined EMS/Fire and training facility for emergency services. The facility will be located at the Glenn Hwy & Marsh Rd. intersection near Palmer.



Mat-Su Borough staff have created a new public emergency information application to serve as a single source for public information during an emergency event. The public can click on the map or type in their address to see if their area has been designated for:

- **Ready** – prepare to evacuate,
- **Set** – set to evacuate at a moment’s notice,
- **Go** – leave immediately.

This provides a graphic user interface showing the distance away from event data such as evacuation areas, secured roads, and detours.

Visit ready.matsugov.us to learn more about getting and being prepared for disaster.

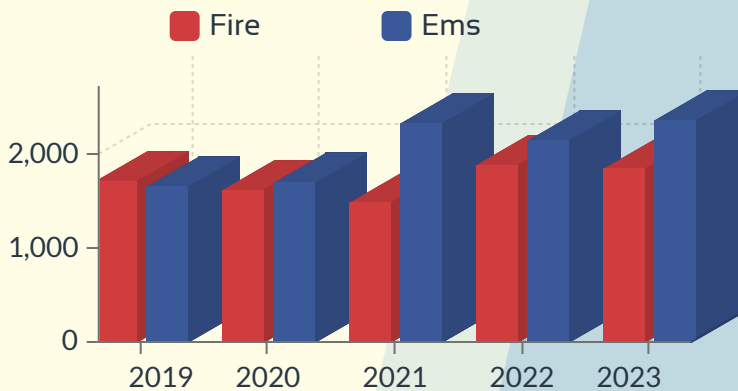


Managing Growth

EMS & FIRE

In 2023, the Borough faced multiple significant weather events that strained emergency services resources. Emergency Services continued to serve through near record-breaking surges in responses and requests for service. All calls were answered through wind events, blizzards, cold snaps, and flooding.

Fire and Rescue Incidents



20%

Increase in fire/rescue incidents 2019 - 2023

In 2023, Borough EMS became the first agency in Alaska to be 100% Nationally Registered, all responding EMTs, and paramedics are certified at both the State and national levels.

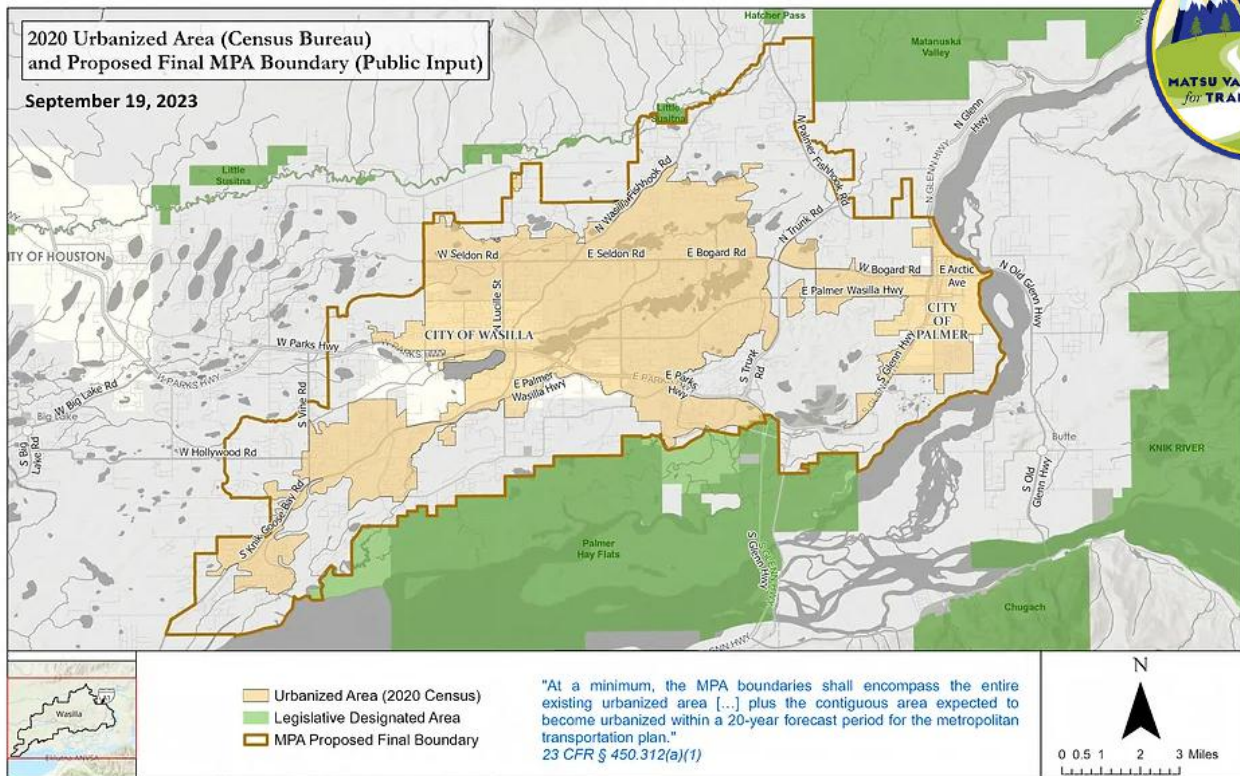
- Working with Mat-Su Regional Medical Center, EMS has helped reduce the activation time for critical heart attack treatment by over 30%.
- Assisted with teaching ETT programs to the Borough fire departments, working toward training all responders in the MSB to a minimum of ETT, increasing medical response capabilities.
- Successful implementation of First Watch, a data parsing system that allows for real-time surveillance of call types and performance measures.
- MSB EMS is an active partner with Alaska's "Project Hope," providing naloxone kits and treatment resources in response to the opioid crisis.
- Youth training program with MSBSD, continue with year two of the youth Firefighter program to attract responders.
- With an increased need for rescue services, DES is updating equipment and providing better training for added technical rescue scenarios.



Managing Growth

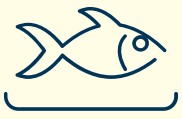
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Mat-Su Valley Planning for Transportation (MVP), the emerging Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater core area of Mat-Su, has been approved by the Governor. An MPO is a planning organization that develops short and long-range plans for a local transportation system infrastructure, including roads, transit, and bike and pedestrian facilities. The plans created by the MPO guide all Federal transportation infrastructure investments within the MPO service area boundary.



In December 2022, the U.S. Census designated a portion of the Core Area of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) as an "urbanized area" or UZA. Along with the new designation comes a change in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding allocations. Currently, non-profit transit and health and human service organizations operate transit in the Borough and rely on FTA Rural Transit funding.

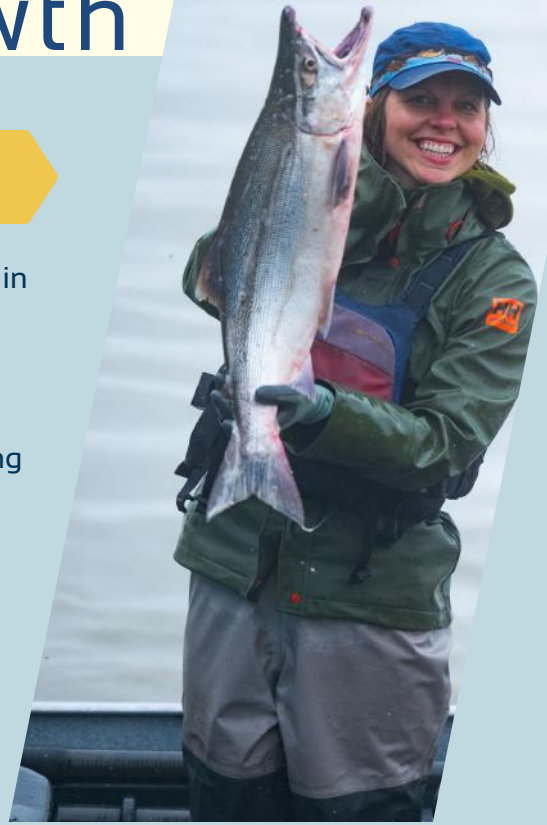
In October, the MSB applied to be designated as a direct recipient of FTA funding based on the urbanized area designation. During the 1st quarter of 2024, Planning staff will work on the FTA grant application, the Request For Proposals for contract transit services, and the non-Federal local match government funding plan for a future transit program to present to the Assembly for approval.



Economic Growth & Tourism

Fisheries

Salmon populations, returns, and fishing opportunities for residents in Mat-Su continue to be a concern. Though the Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) is actively working to guide policy decisions at the State and Federal levels, MSB Public Works Department and Fish and Wildlife Services are actively making habitat improvements, there is still work to be done to manage our unique fishery sustainably.



Fish and wildlife resources continue to be important drivers to the high quality of life Mat-Su residents and visitors have come to expect. The MSB FWC meet monthly to discuss important fish and wildlife issues and encourages public attendance, either in-person or virtually.

The greatest success of the FWC so far has been establishing and maintaining the Conservation Corridor. The Corridor has successfully allowed more fish to pass through the commercial drift fleet gauntlet of nets and into northern waters. With more fish making their way to Mat-Su natal streams to spawn, this increases the chance of meeting escapement goals as well as offering a reasonable opportunity for sport and guided sport fisherman to harvest salmon.

The Fish & Wildlife Commission is dedicated to maintaining the Conservation Corridor and enforcing conservative fishery management for the Northern District in the future. These and other challenges, concerns and successes, such as habitat issues and solutions, are described fully in the [2024 Mat-Su Fisheries Booklet](#).



It Takes Fish To Make Fish

Photo Credit: Fernando Lopez

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish & Wildlife Commission

2024



Managing Growth

SOLID WASTE

95,614 Tons of waste collected by the Solid Waste Division

Tonnage has again increase in 2023 by 4,614 tons

65,000 Tons of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)

An increase of 1.5% from MSW from 2022

21,000 Tons of Construction and Demolition waste (C&D)

A 5% increase from C&D compared to the previous year

A design is in the works to increase the size of Cell 4. Increasing capacity for cell 4 now will cost less than building a new cell and improve the life of cell by as much as four years.

Design has also started for our new tipping floor with construction to begin in the summer of 2024. This will be at the end of the new road that is nearly complete. The new entrance will provide multiple entry lanes to improve traffic flow into and out of the landfill, improve safety and provide more opportunities to recycle and reuse items that might otherwise be thrown away.



This new area with our composting grant will create better trash diversion programs for compost, developing a construction and demolition (C&D) reuse program, tire recycling/reuse, with additional space to add more creative diversion programs in the future.

RECYCLING

The MSB Solid Waste Division diverts recyclable waste from the landfill to save expensive lined cell space for refuse. This lengthens the useful life of landfill cells and reduces future development costs. Each ton diverted saves the landfill \$106 in airspace costs.

2023 recycling efforts diverted 9,614 tons of material from the landfill MSW cell. This included recycling material from VCRS, Big Lake, Central Landfill, Sutton, Talkeetna and Willow of 2,051 tons of material, an increase of 900 tons from the previous year.

There were also 1762 tons of brush, and 5801 tons of scrap metal diverted from the landfill. In 2024, we hope to start a glass collection and diversion program along with a C&D reuse program that will further reduce tonnage to the landfill while providing more opportunities for the community to recycle. Year over year, recycling has increased by 3,131 tons.





Managing Growth

Leachate

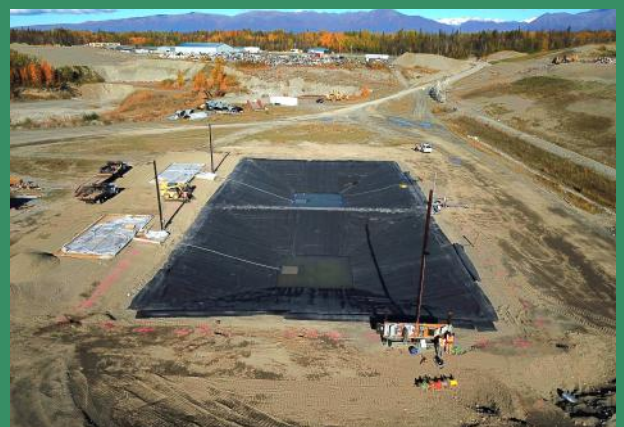
The Central Landfill generates between 3 to 5 million gallons of leachate annually, with disposal costs of \$.08 to \$.12 per gallon to Anchorage Waste Water Utility (AWWU). As the landfill waste volume increases and new cells are built and filled with waste, the volume of leachate produced will continue to increase. Disposal by Central Landfill to AWWU is permitted through March 2025.

With the cost to accept leachate escalating due to new EPA regulations, it is unknown if AWWU will eventually stop accepting landfill leachate or simply increase the cost to support a pre-cleaning of leachate for removal of PFAS required by the EPA before they receive it.

Central Landfill has been exploring options for the last three years on how to decrease leachate and reduce future costs to manage it. The first method adopted was to recirculate. Recirculation started late summer 2023. Solid Waste was able to recirculate approx. 30,000 gallons of leachate a week or approx. 600,000 gallons of leachate saving almost \$72,000 in transportation and disposal costs. Recirculation is a short-term solution.



Recently the Solid Waste Department went to bid and accepted a contract to build a leachate evaporation system. This system can evaporate 20,000 gallons of leachate per day. This is substantially more than generated allowing room for increased leachate and continued recirculation in future years. This evaporation system will make us independent from future wastewater regulations and reduce our current cost to \$.06 to \$.08 per gallon. Design and build are expected to be completed by December 2024.





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Matanuska-Susitna Borough 2023 Performance Report

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