



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

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Date: January 2025

Manager's Quarterly Activity Report

October, November, December 2024

Community Development

Parks, Recreation and Libraries Division

The Borough's Parks and Trails staff are adapting to warmer temperatures and low snow conditions by utilizing this period for off-season tasks, including trail brushing in preparation for summer maintenance, machinery servicing, signage repair and removal, and addressing increased vandalism. They are also monitoring and mitigating icy conditions at trailhead parking lots. In addition, the team is collaborating with state and non-profit partners on grant applications to support summer trail work.

In the northern Valley, staff have initiated a weekly Outdoor Recreation Report on KTNA 88.9 FM to inform the public about changing trail conditions and recommend the best access points for Borough trails and parks. This initiative aims to enhance community awareness of Borough parks and recreation services.

During Quarter 4, the Palmer and Wasilla Pools operated six days per week. During the Wasilla Pool's winter closure, the Palmer Pool extended operations to seven days per week. Both pools are transitioning to online scheduling, with the new system anticipated to launch this month.

The Brett Memorial Ice Arena has maintained seven-day operations, with hours ranging from early morning to past midnight to accommodate Adult League activities. Staff collaborated with Operations and Maintenance to install a snow fence around the rink's condenser, protecting equipment and ensuring uninterrupted winter operations.

Borough libraries continue to deliver a range of community services, including afterschool programs, homeschool classes, support for new readers, senior group activities, and community education sessions. They also provide venues for elections, community council meetings, non-profit gatherings, and other events.

Land & Resource Management

Utility Easements: In October 2024, a public utility easement was recorded to provide power for the Hammers Family Birch's pumphouse, facilitating sap extraction through a tubing and vacuum system on a Borough-owned parcel. In December, the Borough Manager approved a public utility easement request from Matanuska Electric Association (MEA) for Station 72's property. This easement will provide electricity to a cell phone tower to be leased by Verizon. MEA has also requested a public utility easement on Borough-owned property at the central landfill. The proposed easement will supply power to new facilities at the property's new entrance as part of a Borough-led project.

Farm Leases: As of December 31, 2024, the farmhouse on Holstein Avenue (PMRE Parcel 32) is vacant, and limited deferred maintenance and repairs are underway. The Guernsey farmhouse (PMRE Parcel 31) is expected

to be vacated by the end of April 2025. Both properties will be prepared for sale or lease pending direction from the Assembly.

Permits/Leases

- **Curry Ridge Riders:** Reviewed and discussed plans for temporary structure and spoke and met with members of Curry Ridge Riders.
- **Kashwitna River Trail:** Ongoing application, meeting with surveyor conducted, contact with CIRI initiated.
- **Point Mac Group Access:** Renewal and permit fees were processed. In collaboration with Risk Assessment and the Legal Department, a decision was made to remove insurance requirements, enabling small user groups to maintain reasonably affordable access to parcels.
- **AK Nature Guides:** An application was submitted to renew a five-year land use permit with the Borough for the continued commercial use of Talkeetna Lakes for guided hikes and tours.
- **Hammers Family Birch:** Approximately 75,000 gallons of birch sap were harvested from two Borough-owned parcels. The permittee has requested an amendment to remove parcel 23N04W20B009 and has asked for staff assistance in identifying suitable areas for birch tapping near Talkeetna.
- **Verizon Wireless Shampine @ Station 7-2:** The appraisal for this location determined a monthly rent of \$1,000. The lease is currently undergoing final review, and staff plans to present the associated legislation to the Assembly in the first quarter of 2025.
- **QAP Commercial Building Permits @ Port MacKenzie:** new permits were issued to QAP to continue to operate two storage buildings on Port upland properties.

Agricultural Lands

- **Northern Lights Elk Ranch:** The Assembly approved applications to construct two new residences and subdivide the farm unit, enabling additional family members to reside on and work the farm.
- **Title 13 to Title 23 Ag Conversion:** The Assembly approved an application to convert an agricultural parcel to a fee simple interest with agricultural covenants, as outlined in the code.

Competitive Land Sale: The competitive land sale concluded on December 3, 2024, with properties listed online through the Public Surplus website. Four parcels were offered, and all were successfully sold to Alaska residents. The sale results are summarized below:

Parcel #	Tax Account ID	Acres (+/-)	Minimum Bid Amount	Sold / Final Price
24-07	19N05W25C004	20	\$70,200.00	\$162,200.00
24-08	19N05W11D006	40	\$72,000.00	\$290,100.00
24-09	25N05W01D001	17	\$30,600.00	\$235,100.00
24-10	6670B01L003	0.79	\$45,355.00	\$107,100.00

Trails

Trail Care Agreement Renewals:

MSB007830 - Mid Valley Trail Club renewed their trail care agreement in November 2024.

MSB006888 - Aurora Dog Musers renewed their trail care agreement in October 2024.

MSB004361 - Willow Trails Committee renewed their trail care agreement in October 2024.

MSB007040 - Big Lake Trails is currently working on renewing their agreement.

Earth Materials:

A pre-application meeting was held with Ahtna to prepare for a major material sale from the Alsop Pit in 2025. Over 100,000 cubic yards are expected to be extracted during the 2025 construction season.

Discussions with a DOT&PF contractor regarding the Borough accepting road embankment excavation at Mile 131 of the Parks Highway are ongoing. MSB parcel tax ID 28N05W05B001, a former gravel pit from the construction of the Parks Highway, also serves as an informal winter trailhead. Plans include redeveloping an unused driveway to access the northern portion of the old gravel pit, aiming to minimize disruptions to public recreational use of the parcel.

Timber:

Sealed bids for the third salvage timber harvest off Burma Road, covering 26 acres and intended to supply local firewood, will be opened on December 31, 2024. An outcry auction for a 1,000-acre timber sale in the Fish Creek area is scheduled for January 7, 2025.

Active timber salvage operations are underway at several locations, including the Kashwitna East material site, Baker Farm Road, Burma Road, Alsop A and B, and Mule Creek.

During the last quarter, the saw crew focused on burning slash piles at facilities where fuel reduction work is ongoing. Significant progress was made at Houston High School and Su Valley High School, and fuel reduction work was completed at the Helms Public Safety Building in Willow.

Staff are continuing to identify additional road-accessible timber harvest opportunities on Borough land.

Planning Department

Permit Center

Applications processed by the Permit Center in the past 90 days:

Permit Type	Issued Permits	New Applications	Inspections
Construction	5	4	14
Driveway	1278	151	205
Encroachment	2	6	5
Utility	97	54	178

ROW Complaints in the past 90 days:

Active Cases	Closed Cases	New Cases
88	323	119

Code Compliance

Activity in the past 90 days:

Active Cases	Closed Cases	New Cases
803	134	201

Current Planning

Activity in the past 90 days:

File Types	Active Files	Closed/Issued	New Files
Marijuana Retail	5	2	1
Marijuana Cultivation	0	1	0
Alcoholic Beverage	2	0	0
Earth Material Excavation	7	1	1
Floodplain Development Permit	10	3	3
Tall Structure	3	2	1
Variance	1	0	0
Special Land Use District	1	0	0
Special Event	1	0	1
Multifamily Development Permit	17	0	1

Environmental, Comprehensive & Transportation Planning

MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC): The FWC convened three times this quarter. On December 12, 2024, the Commission hosted its annual Fishing Season Summary in collaboration with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). During the event, members engaged in discussions and posed questions to representatives from ADF&G and NOAA regarding the Chelatna Lake weir project, federal funding opportunities, and various fisheries-related concerns. Additionally, the board is actively reviewing Board of Game proposals and considering potential Water Body Setback ordinances.

Sub-Area Solutions Studies: Public engagement for the draft *Bogard/Seldon Corridor Access Management Plan* (CAMP) began with a presentation to the Mat-Su Borough (MSB) Assembly and Planning Commission on October 9, 2024, accompanied by the launch of a public website featuring the draft plan. Additional presentations were conducted for the Mat-Su Valley Planning Metropolitan Planning Organization, two community councils, and at an Open House on November 6, 2024.

Public engagement opportunities were promoted through:

- MSB press releases
- Boosted Facebook advertisements
- Information slides displayed in borough lobbies during election season
- Direct mailers to property owners within one-half mile north and south of the 13-mile corridor
- Email outreach to stakeholder groups (e.g., community councils, Road Service Areas, utility companies, transit providers, and the school district)
- Announcements on the Planner Platform

The public comment period concluded on December 3, 2024.

Public Engagement Metrics:

- *Open House Attendance*: 50 community members
- *Email Contacts*: 224
- *Facebook Advertisements*: 7 ads, reaching an average of 4,443 people per ad with 464 total engagements
- *Print Advertisement Reach*: Estimated 1,430
- *CAMP Website Visits*: 2,500 visits (11/3/24–12/3/24)
- *CAMP Story Map Visits*: 2,496 visits (10/12/24–12/4/24)

- *Planner Platform Deliveries*: 623 recipients
- *Direct Mailers Sent*: 5,032
- *Media Coverage*: 2 local news stories
- *Direct Engagements*: 14 in-person or phone conversations with Planning Division staff
- *Public Comments*: 31 email or paper submissions
- *Online Surveys*: 68 submissions

Next Steps:

MSB staff, in coordination with HDR, Inc. (the project’s contractor), are analyzing public comments and drafting responses. A revised version of the CAMP will be available to the public at the Transportation Fair on January 30, 2025. This event will serve as a second open house, where attendees can ask questions and provide written feedback on the revised plan. Public notice of the revised CAMP and the Transportation Fair will be sent in early January to the same property owners notified during the initial engagement period.

Public comments on the revised draft can be submitted via email to planning@matsugov.us. Additional outreach will occur through public meetings and media platforms, including an MSB press release. A schedule of public meetings is forthcoming.

Staff from the Planning and Public Works Departments are reviewing the draft *Fishhook Triangle Sub-Area Study*, which will serve as a template for other sub-area studies. In addition to contractor-provided recommendations, staff are developing borough-wide non-infrastructure recommendations for further consideration.

School Walking Routes:

The School Walking Routes Committee convened three times this quarter. During these meetings, the committee:

- Offered technical guidance to the Safe Streets for All grant contractors concerning school walking routes.
- Submitted a resolution of support to the City of Palmer advocating for improvements at the intersection of S. Valley Way and W. Arctic Ave.
- Addressed safety concerns for students crossing E. Bogard Rd. between Wasilla Middle and High Schools.
- Provided technical assistance to the Mat-Su Borough Department of Public Works regarding proposed walking route improvements near Machetanz Elementary School.

South Knik River Community Council (SKRCC):

Staff collaborated with SKRCC leadership to create an application for the SpUD committee and to encourage community members to join the SpUD drafting committee. Using voter registration rolls, Mat-Su Borough property owner records, and the State business license database for businesses with a physical presence within SKRCC boundaries, staff developed a mailing list for public outreach. As a result, 548 public notices were sent.

To date, 28 applications have been submitted. During the November 2024 SKRCC meeting, members voted to require that 75% of SpUD committee members be SKRCC residents. Among the 28 applicants, 86% identify as residents, 64% as property owners, and 39% as business owners (with some individuals identifying in multiple stakeholder categories).

Planning Department Capital Improvement Program (CIP):

The twelve (12) highest priority projects of the FY 2026 CIP were presented to the Planning Commission and Assembly for approval to be considered in the upcoming budget. Both boards passed resolutions of support without objection or amendment.

FY26 CIP projects include:

1. Hollywood Road Pedestrian Pathway
2. Jordan Lake Park
3. Kenlar Road, Hawk Lane, and the Parks Highway Bike Lane
4. Whigmi Road Restroom
5. Jim Creek Campground Expansion
6. Beaver Lake Road Pedestrian and Bike Pathway
7. GPRA Pioneer Loop Expansion and Bridge
8. Government Peak Traverse
9. Lion Head Trail Construction
10. Alcantra Ball Field Renovation
11. Jim Creek Campground Electric and Water Upgrades
12. GPRA Chalet Improvements

Submissions for the FY27 CIP cycle are due by August 1, 2025. The nomination form, instructions, and previous CIP project examples are available at <https://cip.matsugov.us/>.

Fuller Lake, Lake Management Plan:

Mat-Su Borough staff held three meetings with the Fuller Lake parcel owners on October 10, October 17, and November 7. The owners are nearing a final decision on whether to permit personal watercraft on the lake through a timeshare agreement or to ban them entirely. To facilitate this decision, staff have distributed ballots to all parcel owners. The next steps in the Lake Management Plan (LMP) process include a ballot to determine whether the parcel owners will adopt or nullify the LMP. Following this decision, the LMP will be presented to the Assembly for final approval.

Waterbody Setback Advisory Board:

The Waterbody Setback Advisory Board convened three times this quarter to review and propose updates to the existing waterbody setback code. Following extensive discussions and careful evaluation of the current regulations, the board unanimously agreed on several key amendments.

A draft ordinance incorporating these proposed updates is now open for public comment, allowing community members to review and offer feedback. This effort reflects the board's dedication to transparency and public involvement in the decision-making process.

The board will reconvene in the first week of February to review the public comments and consider adjustments to the draft ordinance based on community input. Once finalized, the revised draft will be presented to the Assembly on March 18, 2025.

Platting Division

90-day Summary:

Submitted	Number
Pre-Apps Held	39
Cases created	23
Plats	14
Abbreviated Plats	28
Other Platting Board Resolutions	10
VAC	2
Public Utility Easement/Right of Way	1
Condos	1
Refiles	6
TOTAL RECORDED	56

Port MacKenzie

Vessel Traffic Report:

In October, Port MacKenzie experienced significant activity, accommodating one bulk carrier and 12 barges across its docks and ramps.

- The bulk carrier *Genco Magic* delivered 52,000 tons of road salt from Baja for Northern Gravel & Trucking LLC. The vessel was berthed at the deep draft dock from October 1 to October 12.
- Northern Gravel & Trucking LLC facilitated the loading of three barges with salt for statewide distribution.
- Alaska Crane maintained steady operations, transporting multiple loads from Fire Island via barge.
- Cruz Construction, Inc. delivered equipment and materials to the port via multiple barges from Kongiganak, Alaska.
- Western Construction & Equipment shipped a barge loaded with construction equipment from Tyonek to the port.
- The US Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) conducted a one-day barge docking at the port as part of a Proof of Principle Project.
- Alaska Directional, a first-time port user, loaded a barge with telecommunications freight and construction equipment destined for Beluga.

Conveyor:

A section of the conveyor, previously dismantled on the gravel pad and reassembled on the deep-draft dock trestle for the 2023 salt ship discharge, was utilized again during the salt off-loading operations in October 2024.

Port Commission:

The Port Commission is composed of Chair Dane Crowley, Vice Chair Fred Elvsaas, and Commissioners Bryan Scoresby, John Pike, and Christopher Gerteisen. Both Chair Crowley and Commissioner Gerteisen successfully submitted requests for reappointment to the Port Commission. Their new terms will extend until December 31, 2027.

Barge Haul Out Ramp:

Moffat & Nichol is handling the design, engineering, and permitting for the proposed barge haul-out ramp. As of December, the project has reached 95% design completion.

Public Works Department

Pre-Design & Engineering (PD&E) Division:

During the fourth quarter of 2024, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) provided project studies to the Borough for review and feedback. Additionally, the Planning, Design, and Engineering (PD&E) staff attended and contributed to monthly progress meetings with ADOT&PF and design consultants.

Project Updates:

- *Hemmer Road Upgrade and Extension:*
 - Public and agency comments on the project design plan were collected in the fourth quarter and are now under review.
 - The design team is preparing a *Plans-In-Hand* plan set, anticipated for release in the first quarter of 2025.
 - ADOT&PF is developing a utility conflict list in collaboration with MEA, ENSTAR, and GCI.
 - A preliminary relocation design will accompany the upcoming Preliminary Engineering (PE) Authorization.
- *Hermon Road Upgrade and Extension:*
 - Project plans are approximately 65% complete and have undergone stakeholder review. Feedback is being incorporated into the design to support preliminary Right-of-Way mapping, which will be submitted to the Borough's Platting Board for review.
 - Geotechnical investigations are complete, with final recommendations pending the review of the PS&E plan set.
 - Utility redlines have been received, and ADOT&PF is drafting agreements for relocation work.

Seward Meridian Parkway Phase II, (Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Seldon Road): The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) provides federal funding through the Community Transportation Program, with the Borough contributing a 9% local match. The project's estimated cost is \$44 million. ADOT&PF advertised the project for construction in February 2024, and bids were opened on March 20, 2024, resulting in the contract being awarded to Mass Excavation.

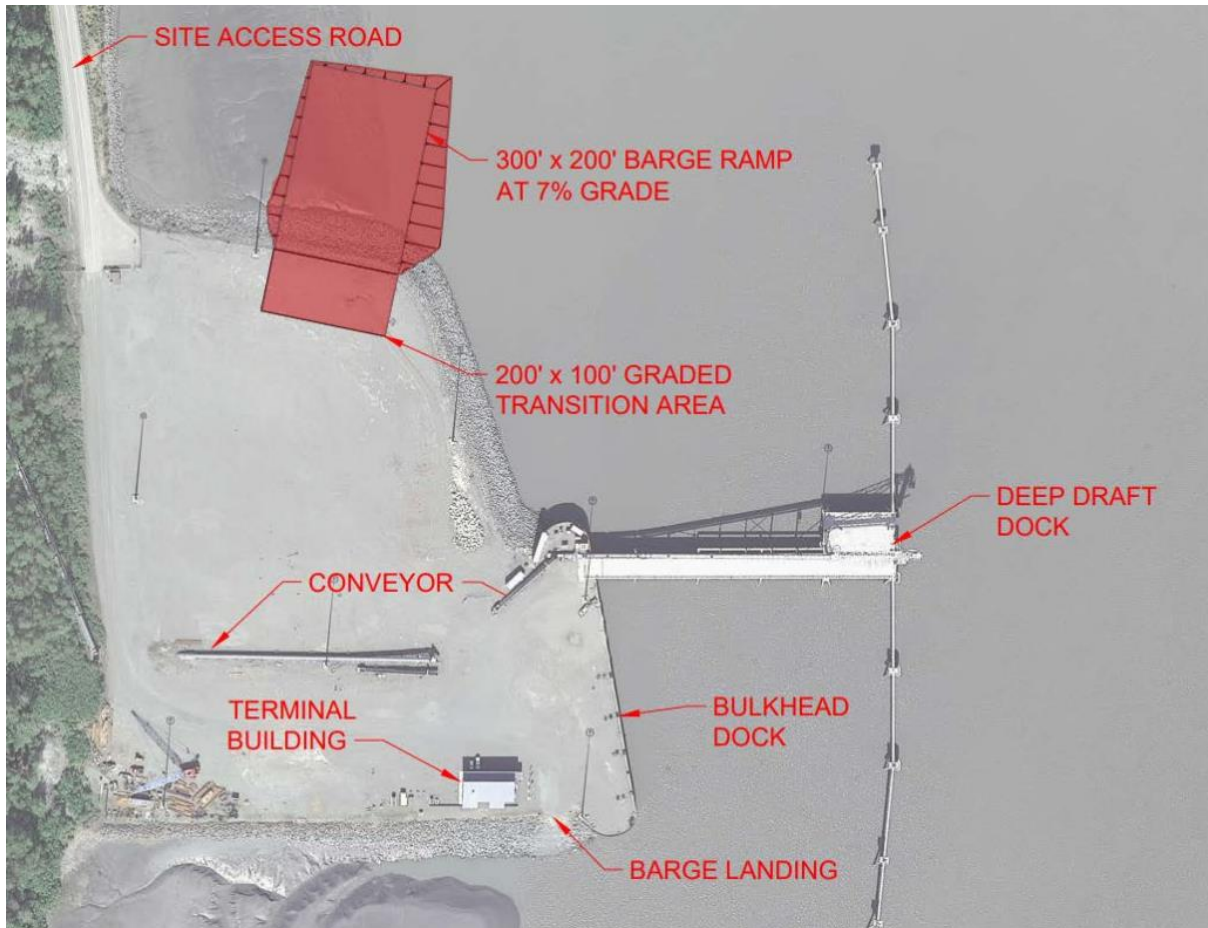
Utility relocations are ongoing, and significant roadwork has been completed in front of Teeland Elementary School, Career Tech High School, and Fronteras Charter School. Temporary street lighting was installed for the winter, with permanent lighting scheduled for installation in the summer of 2025. Road construction is currently in winter shutdown and is set to resume in spring 2025.

Project Management Division

Port MacKenzie Barge Dock Ramp Project: This project aims to design and construct a haul-out ramp for barges and other watercraft. The proposed ramp will be located on the Port's barge dock's north side, facilitating barges' movement onto uplands for storage and annual inspections. Barges will approach the ramp during a rising tide and be positioned on cylindrical airbags. Heavy equipment will then be used to pull the vessels onto the uplands by rolling them on the airbags. A similar process will be employed to re-launch the barges into the

inlet. The ramp is essential to ensure that if a barge cannot be hauled out during a single high tide, it can safely rest on the ramp until the next high tide without risking hull damage.

Beyond its primary purpose, the ramp has the potential to support additional operations, such as offloading cargo, launching or hauling out vessels using a hydraulic trailer, and other specialized activities. The design is 95% complete and has been submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for permitting. Once the site-specific permit is approved, the construction documents will be updated to incorporate the Corps' requirements, finalizing the ramp design for construction.



Above Photo: Preliminary Layout Figure of the Barge Dock Ramp

Welch Road Erosion Repairs, RSA 28: The repair project included constructing a temporary bypass road and a Mechanically Stabilized Earth wall with a gabion basket facing and riprap scour protection. This project addressed significant erosion caused by a channel of the Little Susitna River, which had eroded the slope and shoulder of the roadway. The site presented a nearly 40-foot vertical elevation difference between the river and the road.

The Project Management Division team completed the design and construction management in-house. The wall is now fully constructed, a guardrail has been installed, and the road is open to traffic. The remaining work includes applying a surface course to the roadway, scheduled for completion in the spring.

Meadow Lakes Loop, RSA 27: The Meadow Lakes Loop project is divided into four phases, with the road stretching approximately 4 miles. The plan is to complete about one mile per phase, with the overall goal of

reconstructing the road, including segments where only pavement replacement is needed. The entire alignment has been designed to the 65% level.

- Phase 1: This phase covers Meadow Lakes Loop from approximately Meadow Lakes Spur to just past the railroad tracks. The engineer's estimate for this phase is \$1.6M. Phase 1 is advancing to the final design in preparation for construction bidding documents.
- Phase 2: This phase covers Meadow Lakes Loop from approximately Juliana Drive to Pittman Road. The Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimate for this phase is \$1.9M
- Phase 3: This phase covers Meadow Lakes Loop from Sunset View Circle to Juliana Drive. The ROM estimate for this phase is \$2.2M.
- Phase 4: This phase covers Meadow Lakes Loop from approximately the railroad tracks to Sunset View Circle. The ROM estimate for this phase is \$2M.

Construction for Phase 1 is anticipated to begin in 2025. Phases 2-4 require right-of-way acquisition, which is currently beginning. Construction of phases 2-4 is funding dependent.

Neklason Lake at Homebuilt Circle Fish Passage Improvements: This fish passage improvement project was included in the 2023 and 2024 Road Improvement Program Lists and is funded through the 2021 Alaska Department of Fish and Game Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mat-Su Borough Fish Passage 2025 Grants. The project involves replacing the existing culverts at the Neklason Lake outlet and the Homebuilt Circle crossing, which currently impede the movement of juvenile and adult fish.

The Neklason Lake outlet flows directly into Cottonwood Creek, a vital habitat for spawning and rearing several salmon species and other local fish. The project has reached the 95% design completion milestone and is now in the final right-of-way (ROW) acquisition stages.

Crimsonview – Heavenly Meadows Streets Improvement, RSA 16: The Crimsonview - Heavenly Meadows Streets Improvement Project is focused on enhancing drainage, strengthening the road's structural integrity, and repaving Crimsonview Drive, Crimsonview Court, Vermillion Drive, Thalo Drive, and Ochre Drive within Road Service Area 16. The design team is in the final stages of completing the 95% design documents. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025, subject to available funding.

Kepler Drive Bridge Replacement: Kepler Bradley Lakes Park, part of the Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area, is 1.5 miles east of the Parks and Glenn Highway interchange. The existing one-lane timber bridge connecting Kepler and Bradley Lakes on Kepler Drive was constructed in 1998 as a demonstration project with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. However, the bridge has exceeded its service life, with settling abutments and rising water levels causing the lake to contact the bridge's bottom chord.

Field investigations and preliminary design work (35% completion) were finalized in December 2024. Design alternatives are currently under review, and once a preferred option is selected, the design process will proceed. Construction bidding is planned for spring 2025, with bridge construction expected to begin in fall 2025 and completion anticipated in 2026.

Settlers Bay Drive Pavement Preservation, TIP24: This project is part of the voter-approved Transportation Infrastructure Program (TIP24) from November 2024. It includes resurfacing approximately 1.4 miles of Settlers Bay Drive, from Knik Goose Bay Road to Turner Drive. The scope of work encompasses pavement reclamation, drainage improvements, installation of guardrails, updated signage, road striping, and repaving.

The design Request for Quotes was advertised in early January 2025, with the contract anticipated to be awarded by mid-February. Construction will begin in late 2025, with project completion expected in 2026.

Pioneer Peak Trailhead Improvement: This project will nearly double the Pioneer Ridge (Peak) Trailhead capacity, located at mile 3.8 of the East Knik River Road. The improvements also include installing a single-stall vault toilet. The design is being completed in-house and is currently in the utility relocation and design phase.

School Site Traffic and Safety Improvements – Shaw Elementary School, TIP24: This project, part of the voter-approved TIP24 from November, focuses on reconstructing access to Shaw Elementary School. Key improvements include enhancing onsite circulation, upgrading the intersection at Paradise Lane and Wasilla-Fishhook Road, and providing construction access to Charlie Drive via Foxtrot Avenue. The Shaw Elementary School site is also the proposed location for Birchtree Charter School (BCS), slated to open in fall 2027. These upgrades are designed to address current traffic congestion and accommodate the anticipated increase in traffic with the opening of BCS. The project management division has completed traffic studies and is collaborating with a consultant to finalize the Traffic Impact Analysis. Design work is scheduled to begin in 2025, with construction potentially phased to coincide with the new school’s opening.



Above photo: Mat-Su Central School as of December 23, 2024

Mat-Su Central School: Construction of Mat-Su Central School (MSC) is progressing rapidly, with interior finishes for the new facility well underway. The facility’s mechanical systems are also being commissioned to ensure they are fully integrated and functioning within the engineered design parameters. Completion of this commissioning is required to achieve Substantial Completion (SC), with the SC inspection tentatively scheduled for February 10, 2025.

Additional time was incorporated into the project timeline to address new standard requirements for emergency services radio repeaters, which is essential for maintaining reliable radio communications within the structure. The MSC project marks several significant milestones for the Mat-Su Borough. It is the first construction project to be fully funded without incurring debt and the first to integrate a new road construction project with a new school facility. This strategic approach resulted in a 50% cost saving on the engineering estimate for constructing Katherine Drive, the connector road to MSC. These savings were achieved by situating the school on a large gravel resource, which was used to construct Katherine Drive. Additionally, the project includes improved access

from Pioneer Peak Elementary to Katherine Drive, alleviating traffic congestion at the elementary school and reducing backups onto Stringfield Road.



Above photo: American Charter Academy rendering – Wolf Architecture

The American Charter Academy (ACA) ACA is a purpose-built facility, part of the Education Capital Improvement Bond Proposition No. 1 approved by voters on November 5, 2024. This project addresses the limitations of the current facility, which operates from several units in a strip mall near the intersection of Parks Highway and Pittman Road in Meadow Lakes. Initially designed for commercial use, the existing space is inadequate for ACA's approximately 300 students and 20-25 staff members and does not meet district standards for an educational facility.

The new school will be constructed on a 20-acre Borough parcel off Church Road near its intersection with Seldon Road. The Borough Site Selection Committee, Planning Commission, and Assembly have approved this site. The MSB School District previously funded the facility design, and it is 95% complete. This school is the first shovel-ready project funded by the voter-approved bond proposition.

The currently design facility is a 25,000-square-foot, two-story building modestly designed. It will include 10 classrooms, dedicated art and science rooms, and a gymnasium to support ACA's unique educational program, which consistently produces some of the highest test scores in the state for its second through eighth-grade students. Constructed with light commercial materials and a \$15 million budget, the facility is specifically tailored to ACA's educational needs.

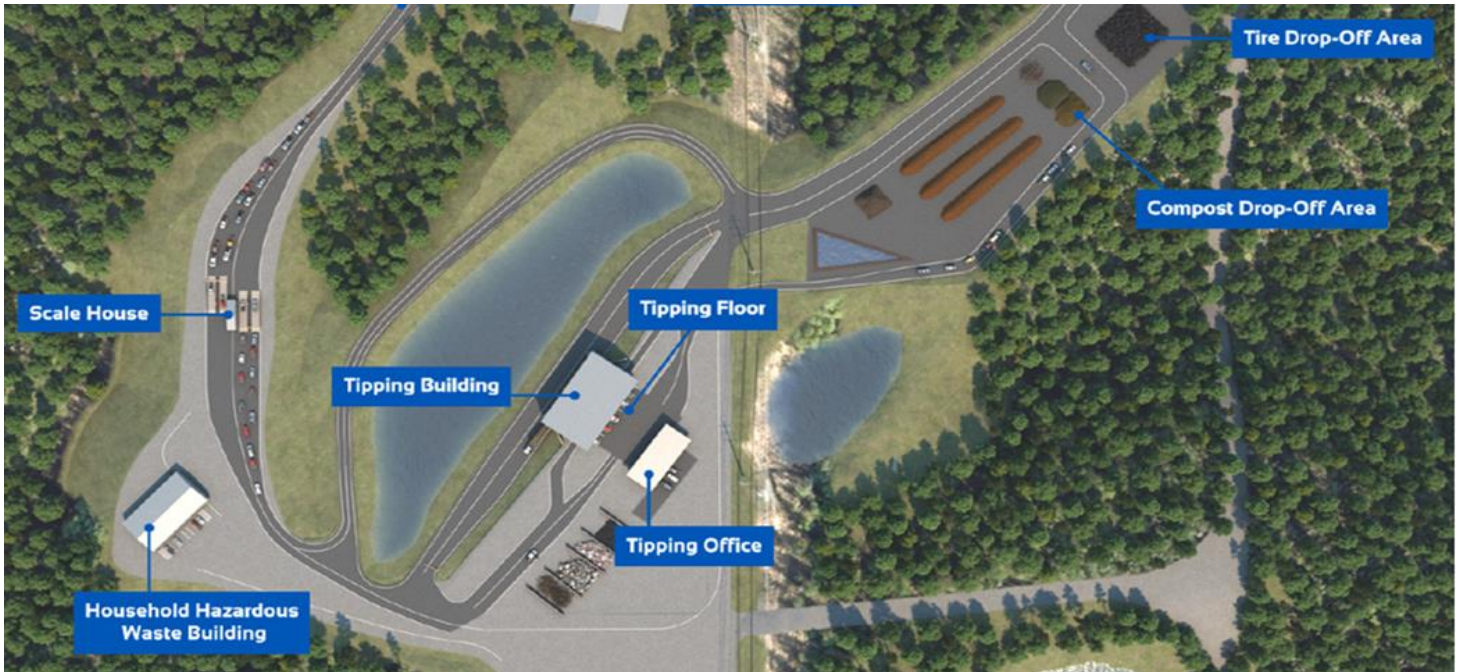
Bidding for construction is scheduled for spring 2025, with contract awards expected in summer 2025. Construction will begin shortly thereafter, and the new campus is set to open in fall 2026, providing ACA with a permanent home designed to enhance the learning experience for its students and staff.

Central Landfill Entrance Phase 1: The Central Landfill Phase 1 project is designed to enhance operations and ensure sustainability for the next century. Building on previous efforts, the project will feature a new, centrally located entrance within future landfill cells. This redesign will separate residential and commercial traffic, improve safety, and resolve queuing challenges at N. 49th State Street. The new entrance will also support better source separation of reusable materials, reducing reliance on Municipal Solid Waste cells and saving millions of dollars over time.

Key upgrades include the construction of a new tipping floor facility, scale houses, an operations building, and four new scales. Customers will benefit from improved access, including an express lane for credit card

payments, a cash window, and faster turnaround times. Additionally, a route from the Palmer-Wasilla Highway will guide customers past Valley Community Recycling Solutions, offering free recycling services before entering the landfill. Space will also be allocated for a future reuse center dedicated to construction and demolition materials.

With the design phase complete, construction is scheduled to begin in 2025, with operations anticipated to start by late 2025 or early 2026. Over half of the project’s funding comes from grants. These improvements will streamline operations, extend landfill longevity, and position the facility for long-term success.



Above photo: Conceptual of the New Landfill entrance.

Station 6-2 Training Pad & Props Expansion: A design contract has been awarded and the Borough is currently reviewing the 35% design proposal. We anticipate construction to begin in the summer of 2025 and completion in fall of 2026.



Above photo: Training Prop Example – Rubble Pile with Confined Space

Academy Charter School (ACS): Academy Charter School (ACS) is part of the Education Capital Improvement Bond Proposition No. 1, approved by voters on November 5, 2024. The proposed new building will add a high school to ACS, expanding their program to include grades 9-12. The new building is expected to be around 29,700 square feet of light commercial construction, housing about 180 high school students and 30 staff members. ACS's existing site can accommodate the new high school building and an additional parking lot to the west of the existing school. Offsite improvements for traffic circulation are also included in the project.

The project will begin once funding is available. Based on the current schedule, construction is anticipated to break ground in 2026, with the new school opening in fall 2027, dependent on when funding is secured.

Birchtree Charter School: Birchtree Charter School (BCS): is included in the voter-approved Education Capital Improvement Bond Proposition No. 1, passed on November 5, 2024. BCS leases a facility at 7000 E Wonder Circle, which is inadequate for its current student population and a waitlist of 133 students. The building is also for sale, and the lease is set to expire soon.

The proposed new school will expand BCS's capacity, accommodating approximately 500 students and 40-45 staff members in a 49,000-square-foot, light commercial facility. The Borough Site Selection Committee, the Borough Planning Commission, and the Assembly have approved the new 68-acre site adjacent to Shaw Elementary School. This location offers ample space, improved traffic flow, and better support for BCS's Waldorf-inspired educational model, emphasizing outdoor learning. The expansive outdoor area will enhance opportunities for outdoor programs and experiences for BCS students.

The School District and Borough have entered into a Letter of Agreement providing advance funding to expedite the project. This has allowed the Borough to begin the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for Architectural and Engineering services ahead of the bond sale and funding allocation in April. The RFP has been advertised, and a design firm is expected to be selected, with the Assembly awarding a contract for services in February 2025. Design work will begin shortly after the contract award, ensuring a smooth transition into the construction phase. Construction is anticipated to begin in spring 2026, with the new school slated to open in August 2027.

The Transportation Improvement Program 2024 (TIP24) includes major traffic and safety upgrades at the Wasilla Fishhook Road and Paradise Lane intersection. These enhancements will address existing traffic issues at Shaw Elementary School and improve access to the current and new BCS facilities. This project is part of the voter-approved Transportation Capital Improvement Bond Proposition No. 4, ensuring comprehensive infrastructure improvements to support the expanded school.

Mat-Su Gateway Visitor Center: The Mat-Su Gateway Visitor Center is designed to provide a well-planned and engaging space to showcase the cultural, natural, recreational, and business assets of the Mat-Su Valley. Located near the Glenn-Parks Highway Interchange, the facility will cover approximately 9,800 square feet, including restrooms, offices, a meeting room, and interpretive areas.

The project has secured \$8,370,038 in funding, including federal grant approval. The design phase has been completed, and the construction contract was awarded in December. Construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2025, with substantial completion targeted for December 2025. Installation of interior exhibits and displays will follow, and the project is expected to close out by the end of March 2026.

Jay Nolfi Park Improvements: This project initially involved building a handicap-accessible playground and a pathway connecting it to the observation deck at the headwaters of Fish Creek. In response to community requests, additional funding was secured for the playground equipment and lighting installation. The lighting

installation was recently completed, enhancing visibility and improving safety in the park during the winter months for the Big Lake community.



Above photo: Jay Nolfi park lighting improvements

Solid Waste Division

Quarterly Numbers	October - November - December	
Landfill Customers	69,878	Customers
Tonnage Accepted (Construction & Demolition, Medical Waste, Asbestos)	15,709	Tons
Motor Oil, Antifreeze, and Cooking Oil Diverted	5,837	Gallons
Household Hazardous Waste Diverted	19,589	Pounds
Recycling Diverted at Central Landfill	65.40	Tons

Recycling	October – November - December	
VCRS Recycling Customers	12,677	Customers
Recyclables Diverted from Landfill by VCRS	474	Tons

Community Clean-Up: Fifty abandoned vehicles have been removed from Borough roads, and 2.15 tons of trash have been collected from nine illegal dump sites across the Borough.

Department of Emergency Services

Emergency Medical Services

Incident Summary:

- October: 904 incidents
- November: 823 incidents
- December: 896 incidents

Fire-Rescue Services

Incident Summary:

- October: 502 incidents
- November: 418 incidents
- December: 423

MSB area fire departments responded to over 1,100 calls, averaging 12 calls per day. DES on-call responders provided roughly 21,193 person-hours during this reporting period.

Water Rescue Team

Team members assisted other Mat-Su Borough (MSB) departments by providing boat transportation for data collection along the Talkeetna River revetment project and facilitating access to MSB property on the Deshka River. The Water Rescue team conducted public education sessions for early childhood development groups and welcomed eight new team members, marking the largest single recruitment in the team's history.

This quarter, the team prioritized joint training with local fire departments on ice rescue operations. Members also utilized MSB pools for weekly training during the winter months to enhance their water rescue skills. Additionally, the team completed seasonal equipment maintenance and prepared their boats and specialized equipment for the upcoming summer season.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management (EM) is reviewing the MatCom dispatch contract for potential updates. EM is collaborating with IT and Project Management to complete the installation of security cameras at all DES facilities as part of a grant-funded project, with completion expected by spring.

Staff is evaluating a new climate change-related threat: landslides caused by melting permafrost in the Matanuska Narrows. Members of Kings Chapel received Community Emergency Response Team training and participated in a public expo at the facility. Support continues for the MSB Coalition of Seniors.

EM is also preparing an "Active Shooter" plan and coordinating a tabletop exercise for stakeholders scheduled for spring. The Emergency Operations Center hosted several training sessions this quarter, including ICS training, which produced 15 new local instructors, and a post-disaster structural evaluation course, which trained an additional 60 participants.

Staff participated in a natural gas tabletop exercise with local utilities in Anchorage and is working with Willow Road Service Areas to address flooding concerns along Willow Creek.



Above photo: MSB EMS and the Northern Lights

Telecommunications

The Montana Mountain (North Repeater) site is operational after a multi-year effort to enhance communications in the northern zones, particularly Caswell. Several equipment failures occurred at the primary radio repeater site for the core area, "Grubstake," prompting the installation of a new backup generator and additional repairs to maintain functionality. Efforts are underway to secure funding for a direct Matanuska Electric Association power feed to provide permanent electrical power to this site.

Special Projects

The Department of Emergency Services, led by the Central Mat-Su Fire Department, hosted this quarter's 2024 State of Alaska Fire Conference. This annual event, sponsored jointly by the State Firefighters Association and the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association, rotates among various locations across Alaska. The 2024 conference brought together over 300 emergency responders and instructors from across the state and two participants from Canada for a week of training and seminars.

The event featured the largest vendor show in recent memory, with 57 local and national vendors displaying emergency services tools and equipment at the Menard Center. This year's conference theme, "Fit for the Mission," highlighted the physical and mental health impacts of working in emergency services, with several sessions dedicated to these critical topics.

The conference received overwhelmingly positive feedback, serving as a valuable opportunity to highlight the Mat-Su Borough's responders, resources, and capabilities to a broader audience.

Trunk-or-Treat events were hosted at several DES facilities for Halloween, where personnel engaged children with fire safety messages, receiving positive feedback from the community. Willow-Caswell voters approved a ballot initiative to consolidate the Willow and Caswell Fire Service Areas (FSAs) into a single FSA, streamlining operations and reducing redundancy.

Fire Prevention Month focused on fire safety education, with DES crews conducting classroom visits, reading sessions with children at libraries, and partnering with Domino's Pizza to install smoke detectors. Additional community engagement activities included the "Shop with a Cop" program and Christmas Day "Santa" deliveries to families in need.

The annual "Guns and Hoses" hockey fundraiser for youth sports filled the Menard Center to capacity and concluded with a victory for the "Hoses" team. DES also supported the Glenn Rich Volunteer Fire Department in Glennallen by donating an older rescue vehicle and hydraulic rescue equipment.

Animal Care and Regulation

The shelter reported an average length of stay of 14.6 days during the fourth quarter of 2024. Despite this increase, a focus on animal enrichment has contributed to a 3% decrease in euthanasia rates. Community support has been strong, with new volunteers joining and generous donations of toys, linens, and treats from Mat-Su Borough residents enhancing the well-being of the animals during their stay. Efforts are ongoing to expand enrichment opportunities in collaboration with the local community.

The shelter also continued its partnership with Mat-Su College, hosting the inaugural veterinary technician program. This initiative aims to address the shortage of trained veterinary technicians in Alaska.

The shelter operations, veterinary operations, and enforcement operations divisions continued to collaborate seamlessly to address the unique challenges of their roles. Their commitment and dedication exemplify the department’s mission as “Animal Advocates and Community Servants.”

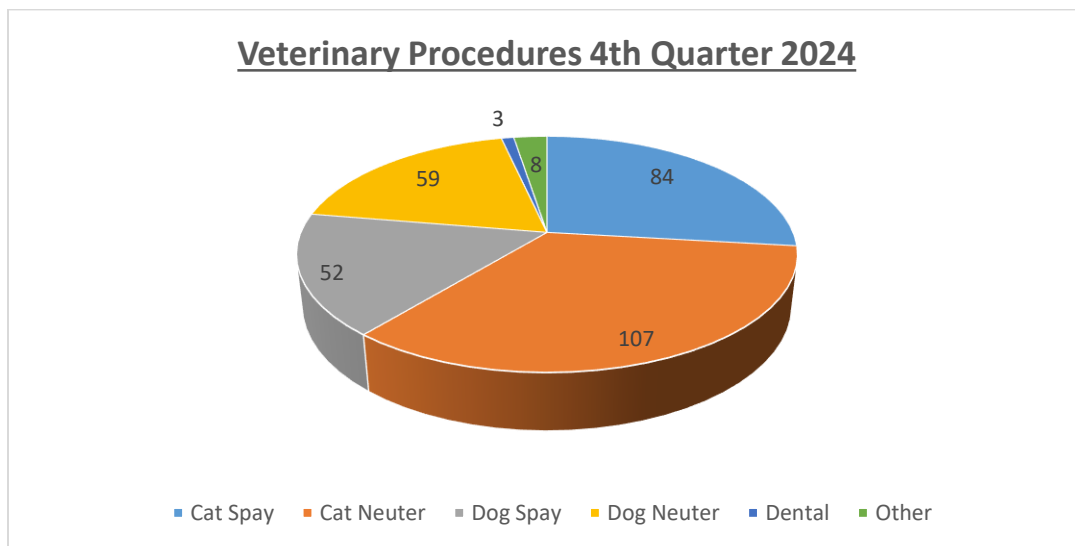
Shelter Operations

The shelter operations team maintained consistent, high-quality animal care seven days a week, facilitating adoptions, reuniting stray animals with their owners, providing food assistance, and collaborating with local rescue partners.

In the fourth quarter of 2024, the Animal Care and Regulation team took in 691 animals, reflecting the typical holiday season increase in intake numbers and a decrease in outcomes. Despite these challenges, 64 animals were transferred to rescue organizations, 111 were reunited with their owners, and 342 were adopted into new homes.

Veterinary Operations

The veterinary clinic team performs daily health checks, administers preventive medicine, conducts spay and neuter surgeries, and provides emergency care. This skilled and dedicated team ensures high-quality veterinary care for the animals while contributing to public health within the community.



Volunteers

In-shelter and foster volunteers continue to play a vital role within the Animal Care and Regulation team. The SPCA Northern Tier Shelter Initiative has extended the funding for the Volunteer Coordinator position through the remainder of FY25. The Volunteer Coordinator has actively recruited volunteers for special events, general shelter support, foster care, and animal care/enrichment. Procedural updates are implemented within the volunteer and foster programs to enhance safety and align with best practices.

Ninety-two animals were placed into foster care, receiving an average of 19 days of care. Foster placements supported animals requiring socialization, those too young to be spayed or neutered, or those undergoing medical treatment before becoming available for adoption.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY FUND
JULY 1, 2024 - DECEMBER 31, 2024

Report Date as of				
December 31, 2024	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>%</u>
*Note these numbers are un-audited	<u>Adopted</u>	<u>Amended</u>	<u>Rev./Exp./Enc.</u>	<u>Used</u>
<u>Areawide</u>				
Revenues:				
Property Taxes	127,397,410	127,397,410	76,059,960	60%
Marijuana Sales Tax	1,850,000	1,850,000	401,715	22%
Excise Taxes	9,505,000	9,505,000	4,224,988	44%
Federal Payments	4,020,000	4,020,000	0	0%
State Grants & Shared Revenues	19,704,361	19,704,361	8,159,126	41%
Fees	7,865,800	7,865,800	4,485,801	57%
Interest Earnings & Other	210,000	210,000	11,508,159	5480%
Recoveries & Transfers	5,777,443	5,786,565	1,557,068	27%
TOTAL AREAWIDE REVENUES	176,330,014	176,339,136	106,396,817	60%
Expenditures:				
Non Departmental	112,730,389	112,979,212	75,463,286	67%
Assembly	8,787,258	8,837,258	4,104,507	46%
Mayor	138,030	138,030	59,727	43%
Information Technology	7,004,730	7,004,730	4,948,721	71%
Finance	10,175,257	10,125,257	5,145,329	51%
Planning	4,890,674	4,890,674	2,085,044	43%
Public Works	2,894,503	2,894,503	1,446,279	50%
Public Safety	19,570,549	19,570,549	9,326,203	48%
Community Development	5,823,385	5,823,385	3,047,652	52%
TOTAL AREAWIDE EXPENDITURES	172,014,775	172,263,598	105,626,747	61%
	4,315,239	4,075,538	770,071	
<u>Non-Areawide</u>				
Revenues:				
Property Taxes	4,582,300	4,582,300	2,679,890	58%
State Grants & Shared Revenues	755,000	755,000	35,000	5%
Fees & Other Miscellaneous Income	275,000	275,000	92,483	34%
Interest Earnings & Miscellaneous	21,000	21,000	86,826	413%
TOTAL NON-AREAWIDE REVENUES	5,633,300	5,633,300	2,894,198	51%
Expenditures:				
Non Departmental	528,883	528,883	528,883	100%
Assembly	3,173,914	3,173,914	1,696,794	53%
Information Technology	68,900	68,900	26,588	39%
Finance	50,000	50,000	115	0%
Community Development	2,110,021	2,110,021	1,168,697	55%
TOTAL NON-AREAWIDE EXPENDITURES	5,931,718	5,931,718	3,421,077	58%
	-298,418	-298,418	-526,879	

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY FUND
JULY 1, 2024 - DECEMBER 31, 2024

Report Date as of December 31, 2024	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	%
<u>Land Management</u>				
Revenues:				
Fees	69,700	69,700	17,432	25%
Interest Earnings	56,000	56,000	10,354	18%
Property Sales & Uses	1,221,000	1,221,000	995,885	82%
Miscellaneous	1,000	1,000	300	30%
Capital Projects	0	0	19,517	
Sale of Gfa	0	0	2,638	
TOTAL LAND MANAGEMENT REVENUES	1,347,700	1,347,700	1,046,127	78%
Expenditures:				
Non Departmental	194,467	194,467	194,467	100%
Community Development	1,351,226	1,351,226	578,850	43%
TOTAL LAND MGMT. EXPENDITURES	1,545,693	1,545,693	773,317	50%
	-197,993	-197,993	272,809	
Budgeted Contribution to Permanent Fund	311,000	311,000	253,778	
<u>Enhanced 911</u>				
Revenues	1,331,000	1,331,000	523,397	39%
Expenditures	1,698,212	1,730,257	1,481,834	86%
	-367,212	-399,257	-958,437	
<u>Fire Fleet Maintenance</u>				
Revenues	1,394,850	1,394,850	1,358,852	97%
Expenditures	1,393,850	1,393,850	566,729	41%
	1,000	1,000	792,123	
<u>Caswell Lakes FSA</u>				
Revenues	452,800	452,800	364,219	80%
Expenditures	564,037	564,037	372,186	66%
	-111,237	-111,237	-7,967	
<u>West Lakes FSA</u>				
Revenues	4,403,217	4,403,217	2,853,744	65%
Expenditures	5,596,255	5,596,255	4,167,352	74%
	-1,193,038	-1,193,038	-1,313,608	
<u>Central Mat-Su FSA</u>				
Revenues	13,530,400	13,530,400	7,883,600	58%
Expenditures	17,226,829	17,291,829	11,542,386	67%
	-3,696,429	-3,761,429	-3,658,786	
<u>Butte FSA</u>				
Revenues	1,353,900	1,353,900	836,083	62%
Expenditures	2,082,969	2,082,969	1,627,835	78%
	-729,069	-729,069	-791,753	

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY FUND
JULY 1, 2024 - DECEMBER 31, 2024

Report Date as of December 31, 2024	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	%
<u>Sutton FSA</u>				
Revenues	290,300	290,300	170,236	59%
Expenditures	369,178	369,178	207,726	56%
	-78,878	-78,878	-37,490	
<u>Talkeetna FSA</u>				
Revenues	742,500	742,500	556,709	75%
Expenditures	642,898	642,898	377,691	59%
	99,602	99,602	179,019	
<u>Willow FSA</u>				
Revenues	1,177,100	1,177,100	913,498	78%
Expenditures	1,026,104	1,026,104	700,736	68%
	150,996	150,996	212,761	
<u>Greater Palmer Consolidated FSA</u>				
Revenues	1,928,200	1,928,200	1,362,211	71%
Expenditures	1,893,386	4,243,386	4,066,260	96%
	34,814	-2,315,186	-2,704,049	
<u>Road Service Administration</u>				
Revenues	3,827,735	3,827,735	3,827,738	100%
Expenditures	3,822,435	3,897,435	2,082,496	53%
	5,300	-69,700	1,745,242	
<u>Midway RSA</u>				
Revenues	1,844,580	1,844,580	1,147,126	62%
Expenditures	2,035,667	2,035,667	1,537,284	76%
	-191,087	-191,087	-390,159	
<u>Fairview RSA</u>				
Revenues	1,635,290	1,635,290	1,136,008	69%
Expenditures	1,726,924	1,726,924	1,243,188	72%
	-91,634	-91,634	-107,180	
<u>Caswell Lakes RSA</u>				
Revenues	939,750	939,750	750,866	80%
Expenditures	911,810	920,881	923,712	100%
	27,940	18,869	-172,846	
<u>South Colony RSA</u>				
Revenues	2,429,350	2,429,350	1,758,939	72%
Expenditures	2,538,794	2,538,794	2,368,255	93%
	-109,444	-109,444	-609,316	
<u>Knik RSA</u>				
Revenues	4,033,490	4,033,490	2,445,221	61%
Expenditures	4,147,994	4,147,994	3,002,749	72%
	-114,504	-114,504	-557,528	

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY FUND
JULY 1, 2024 - DECEMBER 31, 2024

Report Date as of December 31, 2024	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	%
<u>Lazy Mountain RSA</u>				
Revenues	363,530	363,530	266,103	73%
Expenditures	362,178	362,178	314,570	87%
	1,352	1,352	-48,467	
<u>Greater Willow RSA</u>				
Revenues	1,365,640	1,365,640	1,101,743	81%
Expenditures	1,463,851	1,463,851	1,403,579	96%
	-98,211	-98,211	-301,836	
<u>Big Lake RSA</u>				
Revenues	2,299,960	2,299,960	1,773,325	77%
Expenditures	2,464,531	2,464,531	2,014,553	82%
	-164,571	-164,571	-241,228	
<u>North Colony RSA</u>				
Revenues	305,740	305,740	192,151	63%
Expenditures	287,322	291,522	284,393	98%
	18,418	14,218	-92,243	
<u>Bogard RSA</u>				
Revenues	2,346,580	2,346,580	1,669,087	71%
Expenditures	2,492,438	2,492,438	1,722,221	69%
	-145,858	-145,858	-53,134	
<u>Greater Butte RSA</u>				
Revenues	1,416,870	1,416,870	961,364	68%
Expenditures	1,434,340	1,434,340	1,369,480	95%
	-17,470	-17,470	-408,116	
<u>Meadow Lakes RSA</u>				
Revenues	2,716,540	2,716,540	1,830,860	67%
Expenditures	2,910,724	2,910,724	2,557,640	88%
	-194,184	-194,184	-726,780	
<u>Gold Trails RSA</u>				
Revenues	2,603,492	2,603,492	1,821,643	70%
Expenditures	2,758,659	2,758,659	2,436,481	88%
	-155,167	-155,167	-614,838	
<u>Greater Talkeetna RSA</u>				
Revenues	932,320	932,320	762,303	82%
Expenditures	972,697	972,697	833,462	86%
	-40,377	-40,377	-71,159	
<u>Trapper Creek RSA</u>				
Revenues	339,850	339,850	290,518	85%
Expenditures	326,438	326,438	276,517	85%
	13,412	13,412	14,001	

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY FUND
JULY 1, 2024 - DECEMBER 31, 2024

Report Date as of December 31, 2024	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	%
<u>Alpine RSA</u>				
Revenues	346,500	346,500	254,381	73%
Expenditures	377,613	377,613	345,682	92%
	-31,113	-31,113	-91,301	
<u>Talkeetna Flood Control Service Area</u>				
Revenues	69,400	69,400	54,786	79%
Expenditures	42,154	42,154	5,586	13%
	27,246	27,246	49,200	
<u>Point MacKenzie Service Area</u>				
Revenues	13,700	13,700	9,667	71%
Expenditures	36,400	71,400	80,207	112%
	-22,700	-57,700	-70,540	
<u>Talkeetna Water/Sewer Service Area</u>				
Revenues	1,319,100	1,319,100	660,368	50%
Expenditures	1,428,338	1,428,338	998,364	70%
	-109,238	-109,238	-337,995	
<u>Freedom Hills Subd. RSA</u>				
Revenues	0	0	0	0%
Expenditures	5,063	5,063	0	0%
	-5,063	-5,063	0	
<u>Circle View / Stampede Est.</u>				
Revenues	27,000	27,000	17,221	64%
Expenditures	25,767	25,767	5,054	20%
	1,233	1,233	12,167	
<u>Chase Trail Service Area</u>				
Revenues	0	0	0	0%
Expenditures	25,631	25,631	0	0%
	-25,631	-25,631	0	
<u>Solid Waste</u>				
Revenues	11,112,500	11,112,500	6,658,092	60%
Expenditures	19,427,930	19,427,930	14,627,685	75%
	-8,315,430	-8,315,430	-7,969,593	
<u>Port</u>				
Revenues	835,000	835,000	1,678,422	201%
Expenditures	2,594,963	2,594,963	1,118,942	43%
	-1,759,963	-1,759,963	559,479	