

SUBJECT: INFORMING THE ASSEMBLY OF THE MANAGERS SIGNATURE ON AND SUBMITTAL OF THE RASMUSON COMMUNITY GRANT REQUESTING \$250,000 TO FUND UPGRADES TO THE MATANUSKA RIVER PARK.

AGENDA OF: January 7, 2025

ASSEMBLY ACTION: Presented to the Assembly 01/07/25 - BJH

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: For information only.

Route To	Signatures
Community Development Director	<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">1 2 / 1 3 / 2 0 2 4</div> <hr/> X J i l l i a n M o r r i s s e y <hr/> <div style="font-size: x-small;">Signed by: Jillian Morrissey</div>
Finance Director	<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">1 2 / 1 6 / 2 0 2 4</div> <hr/> X C h e y e n n e H e i n d e l <hr/> <div style="font-size: x-small;">Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel</div>
Borough Attorney	<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">1 2 / 1 7 / 2 0 2 4</div> <hr/> X N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s <hr/> <div style="font-size: x-small;">Signed by: Nicholas Spiropoulos</div>
Borough Manager	<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">1 2 / 1 7 / 2 0 2 4</div> <hr/> X M i c h a e l B r o w n <hr/> <div style="font-size: x-small;">Signed by: Mike Brown</div>
Borough Clerk	<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">1 2 / 2 6 / 2 0 2 4</div> <hr/> X L o n n i e M c K e c h n i e <hr/> <div style="font-size: x-small;">Signed by: Lonnie McKechnie</div>

ATTACHMENT (S): Rasmuson Community Grant Application (13 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT: The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Community Development Department is pursuing grant funding in the amount of \$250,000 from the Rasmuson Foundation to fund a portion of Matanuska River Park and Campground upgrades. These proposed upgrades were approved as a 2025 Legislative Priority by the Assembly.

Contact Information

Please review your organization details and enter your application contacts below. If the information displayed is not current, please update your organization and user profiles prior to completing and submitting this form.

Organization Information

Name of Organization: Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Mailing Address of Organization: 350 East Dahlia Avenue Palmer, AK, 99645

Main Phone: (907) 861-8634

Website: www.matsugov.us

Tax ID#: 920030816

Application Owner

Name: Jillian Morrissey

Phone: 907-715-2381

Email: jillian.morrissey@matsugov.us

Organization Leader

The organization lead (CEO, President, Tribal leader, etc) receives information from Rasmuson Foundation in the event that an award is granted.

Organization Lead Name

Mike Brown

Organization Lead Title

Borough Manager

Organization Lead Phone

907-861-8689

Organization Lead Email

mike.brown@matsugov.us

Application Contacts

Please enter/change the information for the grant proposal and project director contacts.

Grant Proposal Contact Name

Jillian Morrissey

Grant Proposal Contact Title

Community Development Director

Grant Proposal Contact Phone

907-861-8634

Grant Proposal Contact Email

jillian.morrissey@matsugov.us

Project Director Name

Hugh Leslie

Project Director Title

Parks, Recreation and Libraries Division Manager

Project Director Phone

907-861-7868

Project Director Email

Hugh.Leslie@matsugov.us

Application Details

Please complete all fields marked as mandatory with an asterisk

Which region(s) in Alaska does your organization serve?

Check any applicable or "statewide" if all regions

Southcentral: Mat-Su

Organization Information

Please tell us about your organization. We will review this information when considering your grant request. Please keep your answers brief.

Organization Mission, and if available, Vision, Values, and/or brief summary of current priorities or strategic goals.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough's mission is "to efficiently and effectively deliver responsive services to the public and to cultivate opportunities for commercial enterprise to prosper". Our vision is to be "the greatest community in Alaska to live, work and play". We value "accountability, customer focus, dedication, integrity, responsiveness and teamwork". We operate under the FY25-30 Strategic Plan that focuses on the following framework: economic growth and diversification, deliver high quality services and managing growth.

The MSB Community Development Department is aligned with the Strategic Plan and is intentionally working towards maintaining and developing resident and visitor recreation infrastructure and opportunities. It was identified in the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Strategic Plan that one of the Borough's strengths is outdoor recreation opportunities and that we have an opportunity to expand those offerings. With the increase in use of our assets, we recognize the need to upgrade existing infrastructure to be able to deliver high quality services to residents and visitors alike.

Briefly describe the services your organization provides, and who is primarily served (target population). Include any recent significant program or leadership changes.

Our Community Development Department provides indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities, programs, services, and facilities to enrich the lives of the Mat-Su residents and visitors. Recreation opportunities include the Wasilla and Palmer Pools, the Brett Memorial Ice Arena, the Matanuska River Park and Campground, the Jim Creek Campground, the Talkeetna Campground, and hundreds of miles of trails for all users. The Borough operates public libraries that are located in the communities of Big Lake, Sutton, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, and Willow. Our department serves all Mat-Su residents from birth to elders. We provide an array of services at our facilities including learn to swim, learn to skate, open skate, after-school library enrichment programs, summer library camps, aqua aerobics, lap swims, open swims, event rentals and coordination with competitive sports teams. Our staff works diligently to provide access to diverse groups and users every single day.

This year, the Community Development Department had a change in leadership. Jillian Morrissey is the new Director and is focused on maximizing our offerings, modernizing our infrastructure and systems while continuing to offer a high quality of customer service. Across all programs, we will enhance programs, schedule for more open hours, and serve more users. Additionally, through strategic budgeting and grant making, we will begin working on a backlog of deferred maintenance and begin capital projects.

Briefly describe your organization's recent community impacts and/or accomplishments.

The Community Development Department is data driven. We review our visitor numbers weekly to prioritize maintenance and anticipate needs. We also utilize data to formulate budgeting for infrastructure and staffing needs. Since the Covid pandemic, the recreation facilities, programs and infrastructure has seen remarkable increase in use. At our most popular trailhead, we have had an over 400% increase in visitor use. We know we are meeting our mission of providing services and are excited to expand and grow. This also means making investments to support the expansion.

In Spring of 2024, the Mat-Su hosted the 2024 Arctic Winter Games. We now know the Mat-Su is capable of hosting world-class sporting and cultural events here. This was a huge accomplishment that involved a small staff and over 2000 volunteers. This experience of the week-long event was profound for our community. The Borough wants to continue to be a resource for the Mat-Su, State and the Nation as an international destination that provides high-quality services, efficient facilities and supportive infrastructure.

This fall, the Borough Assembly voted to acquire an additional recreational facility in Big Lake. This facility is primarily used as an ice arena, but has tremendous capacity for other recreational opportunities and civic needs.

Board/Council Members

Does 100% of your Board of Directors contribute financially to your organization?

N/A - Government

Name	Position	Years on Board	Profession/Affiliation
Tim Hale	Assembly Member - District 1	5	
Stephanie Nowers	Assembly Member - District 2	5	
Dolores 'Dee' McKee	Assembly Member - District 3	3	
Maxwell Sumner	Assembly Member - District 4	0	
Bill Gamble	Assembly Member - District 5	1	
Dmitri Fonov	Assembly Member - District 6	1	
Ronald 'Ron' Bernier	Assembly Member - District 7	3	
Edna DeVries	Borough Mayor	3	

Please describe how your Board/Council supports the organization in carrying out its mission.

The FY 2025 - 2030 Strategic Plan is the result of a Special Meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly held on February 17, 2024. The purpose of the plan was to more closely align the Borough's operations with the Assembly's priorities by providing focused direction to Borough staff and establishing major objectives with measurable outcomes. The plan contains three focus areas:

1. Economic growth and diversification;
2. Delivering high quality services; and
3. Managing growth.

The intent of the planning effort is to meet annually, and revisit objectives associated with each focus area. The items listed in each area are considered objectives over the next five years and allow Borough administration to develop annual objectives in support of each strategic objective and align resources to support attaining these goals.

Near the beginning of each calendar year, Borough administration will publish an annual performance report. The report will focus on the implementation status of the strategic plan.

Additionally, the Assembly approves Federal and State Legislative priorities. This fall, the Assembly approved several Community Development projects that support the Strategic Plan.

Organization Financials

Last Completed Fiscal Year Total Revenue

\$240,848,891.00

Organization Fiscal Year Begins

July

Last Completed Fiscal Year Total Expenses

\$241,129,160.00

Upload - Current Fiscal Year Operating Budget

FY25_Approved_Budget.pdf
16.9 MB - 10/28/2024 11:53 AM

Total Files: 1

Upload - Financials

Please upload a Statement of Financial Position (2-year comparison preferred) AND a Profit and Loss Statement (Statement of Activities, Income Statement, Operating Statement) for your most recent fiscal year.

Audited Financials may be substituted for Balance Sheets and Profit & Loss Statements.

FY23_Matanuska-Susitna_Borough_ACFR.pdf
7.3 MB - 10/28/2024 11:50 AM

Total Files: 1

Project Description

Project Title

Give your request a short, descriptive title.

Matanuska River Park Utility Replacement and Upgrades

Amount Requested

\$250,000.00

Total Project Budget

\$3,050,000.00

Planned Project Start Date

05/01/2025

Planned Project End Date

10/31/2026

Additional notes on timing (optional)

Any defined phases or further explanation

Fully describe the overall project this grant would help fund.

Please provide project scope, goals, staffing, reach, and impact.

The Matanuska River Park & Campground, located at Mile 17 Old Glenn Highway, is a popular destination offering eighty-six (86) spaces for tents or RVs, a central comfort station, an RV dump station, picnic tables, grills, four (4) pavilions, playground equipment, a sand volleyball court, trails, 'pump park' for bike riding, river access, an observation deck, parking areas, a campfire area, and a group camping area. The Park has experienced continued growth in use from residents and visitors alike over the past 30 years. Last year, there were over 50,000 visits to the Park and we had campers from 30 of the 50 states. The Park is open year-round for walk-in use and the Campground is open seasonally from May to September. This park is a crown jewel of the Borough Parks and Recreation facilities and requires upgrades to be able to continue to provide a high level of service and quality of experience for users. Upgrades required include new electrical system, water system, a forest management plan, sustained forestry services,

expanded and reconfigured RV campsites, ADA compliant bathroom replacement, and connection to City of Palmer water and sewer. The budget for this project is large enough that the Community Development Department knows that a phased approach will be required. The most immediate needs are the electrical system and active forestry management in the Park. The funding request to Rasmuson aims to address those two critical needs.

Proposed upgrades include:

- Replacement of the electrical system which has reached the end of its service life and is now characterized by frequent failures and increasing maintenance challenges. This system's age and the consistent breakdowns highlight the urgent need for replacement, which cannot be deferred any longer. The planned upgrades will involve designing and implementing a new, reliable system for electric service.
- Address the failing water facilities including a thorough assessment of the current systems, which have become increasingly difficult and costly to maintain. The planned upgrades will involve designing and implementing new, reliable systems for water service.
- Develop a forest management plan and provide sustained forestry services to support a Federal Aviation Association (FAA) approved safe glide path for the City of Palmer Airport operations. Land Management has staff expertise to provide the necessary planning but will require forestry contractors to execute contract services. This will include felling, stump grinding and replacement with ornamental and native tree species to maintain the traditional character of the park. Additionally, coordination will occur with Chickaloon Tribe to identify culturally modified trees.
- Expand and reconfigure the 'back-in' RV campsites to provide more space for campers. Additionally, significant tree felling in this area is required to support City of Palmer Airport safe glide path. Upgrades to the RV sites will allow rehabilitation of these impacted landscaped areas to maintain the traditional character of the park.
- Install an ADA-compliant bathroom upgrade to support visitor use.
- Connect to the City of Palmer's water and sewer systems to ensure more reliable utility services to the park.
- Additional components of the project will include obtaining necessary permits, coordinating with local utility providers, and restoring any areas of the park affected by the construction.

These improvements are essential for modernizing the park's infrastructure, ensuring reliable utility services, and enhancing the overall experience for all visitors.

What community priorities do you propose to address with this project? How were they identified? Are any organizational partners involved in planning and implementation?

The Mat-Su Borough Assembly, which is a locally elected seven-member council, adopted a Strategic Plan that identified a need for continued expansion of outdoor recreation in the Mat-Su. This project directly supports that priority. Additionally, the Mat-Su Borough works collaboratively with the City of Palmer Airport to provide forestry management for a safe glide path for aviators and the safety of park visitors. This fall, Community Development staff met with Chickaloon Village to discuss cultural resources and artifacts in the park. It is known that there are culturally modified trees (CMTs) in the Park boundary and the Community Development Department would like to protect these cultural resources and in the future, support development of cultural tourism as part of the Park's offerings.

How will you sustain this project?

e.g. maintenance, ongoing funding, staffing needs, etc.

The Borough has a Parks team that supports all operations at the property. This utility upgrade will be done by contracted services with the support from the Borough's Operations & Maintenance team and the Parks team. The Borough also has a Natural Resource Manager that can develop the Forestry Management Plan for the Park. That staff position also oversees a Wildfire Mitigation Saw Crew that could, with additional funds, support the selective felling of trees in the Park. The Community Development Department is committed to working with Chickaloon Native Village to identify and protect culturally modified trees in the Park as well.

Itemized Project Budget

The Project Budget total should match the Project Funding Sources total. List all estimated costs, including items that you are not asking from Rasmuson Foundation. Group like items together using high-level, brief descriptions (e.g. Office furniture; Computers and peripheral equipment; Shipping; Indirect costs).

You may include a final line item for "Indirect and Administrative Costs" which can be up to 15% of the total Rasmuson Foundation request amount, so long as the total grant request does not exceed \$35,000 for Tier 1 requests or \$250,000 for Community Support requests.

Item Description	Cost	In-Kind or Cash
Electrical System Redesign & Install	\$500,000	Cash
Forestry Management Services	\$50,000	In-Kind
Water & Sewer Upgrades	\$1,750,000	Cash
Campground redesign & dirt work	\$250,000	Cash
New ADA-compliant bathroom	\$500,000	Cash
	\$0	Select One
	\$3,050,000	

Project Funding Sources

The Project Funding Sources total should match the Project Budget total. List all actual and potential funding with brief descriptions (e.g. Rasmuson Foundation grant; Community foundation grant; Organization reserves; Individual donations; Capital campaign; Corporate donations; etc.).

Source	Amount	Cash or In-Kind	Status
Rasmuson Foundation	\$250,000	Cash	Pending
City of Palmer	\$50,000	In-Kind	Secured
FY26 Mat-Su Borough Budget	\$250,000	Cash	Planned
2025 Alaska Legislative Funding	\$2,000,000	Select One	Planned
Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation	\$500,000	Select One	Planned
	\$3,050,000		

Optional Uploads

Please upload any additional documents you feel are important to fully understand the project.

Operational pro forma and/or business plan

MRP_Conceptual_Plan.pdf
9.8 MB - 10/28/2024 2:42 PM

Total Files: 1

Organizational chart, including board governance/committees

Org_Chart_from_ACFR.png
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Total Files: 1

Strategic plan

2024-Strategic-Plan-February-28_-2024-Final.pdf
802.2 KB - 10/28/2024 1:06 PM

Total Files: 1

Architectural Drawings

Up to three letters of support for the organization and/or project

PRT_Letter_Of_Support_For_Mat-su_River_park_(1).pdf
54.6 KB - 12/01/2024 2:28 PM

Rasmuson_letter_re_park_and_airport.pdf
342.2 KB - 10/28/2024 2:50 PM

Total Files: 2

Photos

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Total Files: 2

REVIEW AND SUBMIT

You may click “Save Draft” at the bottom of this page to commit all of your changes, then the “Preview Application” button to view your entire application exactly as it will appear to Rasmuson Foundation staff.

Once you are satisfied with the application, click the “Submit Application” button at the bottom of this page. This will submit your request to Rasmuson Foundation staff for consideration. Your digital signature will be applied to this application upon submission. A PDF copy will be emailed to the person listed as the Grant Proposal Contact, as well as the person listed as the Organization Lead.

I certify that the information submitted here is correct to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge that a copy of this application will be emailed to the person listed as the Organization Lead.

Certification

I Agree

Submitter Name

Jillian Morrissey

Date Submitted

12/01/2024