

SUBJECT: INFORMING THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SUBMITTAL OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE MAT-SU TRAILS AND PARKS FOUNDATION FOR THE GOVERNMENT PEAK RECREATION AREA.

AGENDA OF: September 2, 2025

ASSEMBLY ACTION: Presented to the Assembly 09/16/25 - BJH

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: For information only.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	8 / 1 9 / 2 0 2 5 X P e t e r B u r t o n S i g n e d b y : P e t e r B u r t o n
Division Manager	8 / 1 9 / 2 0 2 5 X J o e M e t z g e r S i g n e d b y : J o e M e t z g e r
Community Development Director	8 / 2 0 / 2 0 2 5 X J i l l i a n M o r r i s s e y S i g n e d b y : J i l l i a n M o r r i s s e y
Finance Director	Recoverable Signature X C h e y e n n e H e i n d e l S i g n e d b y : C h e y e n n e H e i n d e l
Borough Attorney	8 / 2 0 / 2 0 2 5 X N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s S i g n e d b y : N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s
Borough Manager	Recoverable Signature X M i c h a e l B r o w n S i g n e d b y : M i c h a e l B r o w n
Borough Clerk	8 / 2 1 / 2 0 2 5 X L o n n i e M c K e c h n i e S i g n e d b y : L o n n i e M c K e c h n i e

ATTACHMENT (S): Attachment: Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation Grant Application (9 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT: The Community Development Department has applied for a grant with the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation(MSTPF) for Government Peak Recreation Area(GPRA). The

grant would provide funding for the installation of cohesive, user-friendly signage throughout the GPRA trail system. The application was submitted July 30, 2025.

Attached is the grant application with the MSTPF. The total amount requested from MSTPF is \$37,220. The Borough will provide a \$9,305 cash match. Match funding is available from the Borough's project funding (15040-1800-1828, Fund 440). An in-kind match in the amount of \$9,305 will also be provided by the Borough. The in-kind match includes the staff labor costs of the Land and Resources Management staff and the MSB Trail Crew. The work is expected to be completed in 2026.

This IM is being provided to the Assembly for their information and review.

Additional legislation to accept and appropriate the funding will be sent forward if the grant is awarded.

[My applications](#) → Preview application

MSTPF Grant Application 2025

Trails and Parks Grant Application

[Back](#)

Project Title

Government Peak Recreation Area Signage

Organization Name

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Organization Mailing Address

350 E Dahlia Ave

City

Palmer

Zip Code

99645

Project Contact Name

Peter Burton

Project Contact Title

Land Management Specialist

Email

peter.burton@matsugov.us

Phone

9078617847

Organization Legal Officer

Michael Brown

Title

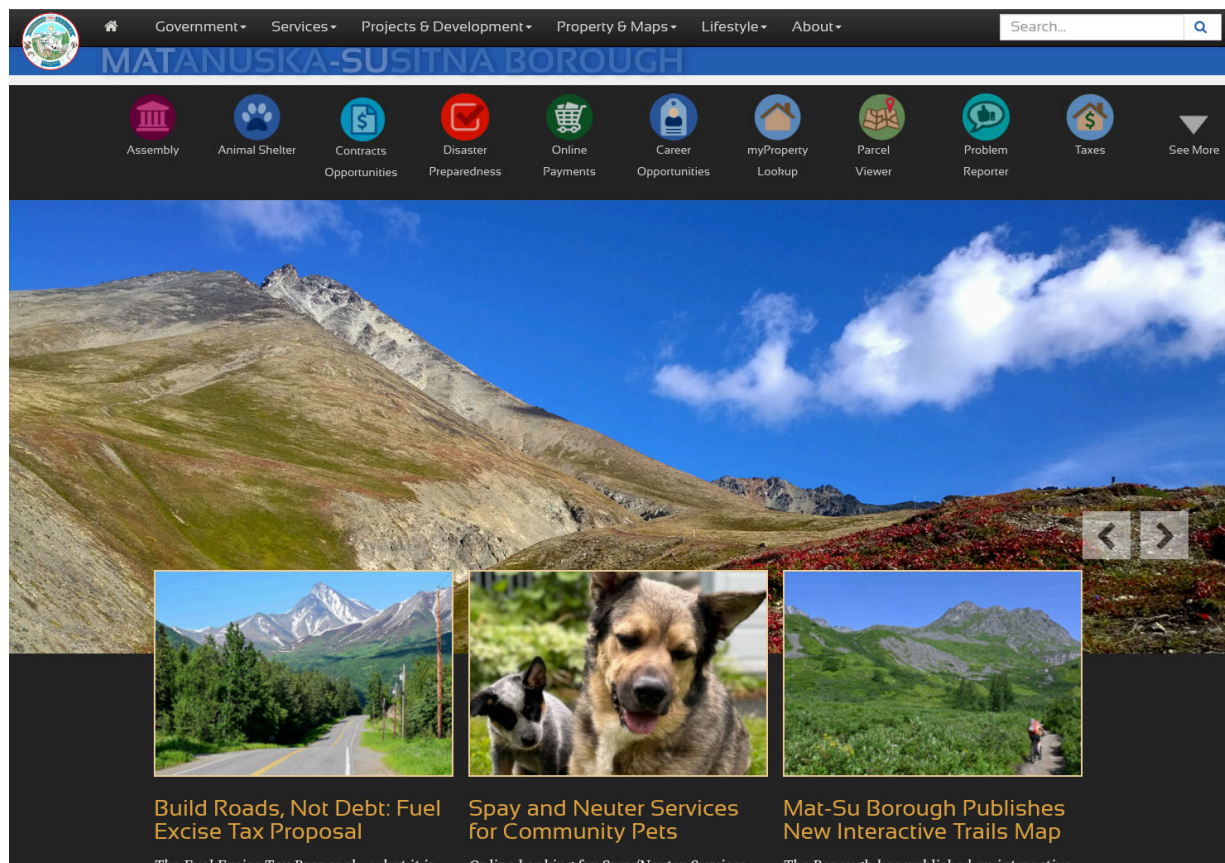
Mat-Su Borough Manager

Legal Officer Email

mike.brown@matsugov.us

Organization Website

<https://matsugov.us/>



Funds Requested

US\$37,220.00

Cash Match

US\$9,305.00

In-Kind Match

US\$9,305.00

Total Match Amount

US\$18,610.00

Total Project Cost

US\$55,830.00

I confirm that I meet the eligibility criteria for this grant

✓

Application is for (check all that apply)

Trail Improvements, Park Improvements

3-4 Sentence Summary of the Project (This summary may be used by MSTPF to describe the project to the public)

The development and installation of cohesive, user-friendly signage throughout the GPRA trail system. The new signs will provide clear, consistently delivered information for hikers, bikers, and skiers. The updated signage will improve the safety, accessibility, and overall trail experience.

ELIGIBILITY

Identify the type of organization

Government Entity or Community Council

Is the project located in the Mat-Su Borough?

Yes

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Location (Address or GPS)

Government Peak Recreation Area, N Mountain Trails Dr, Palmer, AK 99645

Please include an estimate of annual users, and any other relevant user, community, or other demographic data for populations that may benefit from the completion of this project.

The Government Peak Recreation Area (GPRA) currently serves an estimated 300,000 users annually, with year-round visitors including hikers, mountain bikers, cross-country skiers, and families attending events or using the chalet. GPRA has seen explosive growth over the last decade, and it is an accessible destination for residents of all ages for outdoor recreation. Ongoing improvements to the facilities benefits the growing community of users throughout the Mat-Su Valley.

DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Is this project purchasing equipment like a SnoCat, snowmachine, grooming apparatus, etc.?

No

Please describe the community need and expected results or benefits of the project.

The current trail signage at GPRA is inconsistent or incomplete. Different styles have been created and installed by different user groups as the trail system has grown, and as use of the trail systems increase, there is a need for clear, uniform signage to assist users in navigating and recreating on the trails. A cohesive trail system will improve user experience, and support multi-use recreation.

Please provide a detailed narrative description of the project. Your description should explain the 'who', 'what', 'when' (general timing, detailed timeline to follow), and 'where' of the project. If your project concerns trail construction or improvements please include dimensions of the trail or sections of improvement (length and width), and a map clearly showing the location(s).

This project will be led by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, with design and sign placement input from user group partners such as the Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers, the Mat-Su Ski Club, and other local stakeholders. These partners bring valuable insight into user needs, existing sign locations, and trail layouts.

The goal is to replace the current mix of signage with a standardized, cohesive system. This effort aligns with the Borough's broader goal of consistent, user-friendly signage across all public recreation areas. Clear signage will allow a family unfamiliar with the area to confidently find the appropriate hiking route or help a skier avoid accidentally entering a biking trail.

Signs will be installed throughout the GPRA trail system, which includes kilometers of groomed winter ski trails, a growing network of singletrack bike trails, and several hiking routes. Large-format signs featuring comprehensive summer and winter trail maps will be located at the main parking areas. Additional signage will be placed at key intersections, trailheads, and decision points to improve navigation and overall user experience.

Approximately 300 trail markers, 100 wayfinding maps, and 6 large-format signs will be installed. Placement will be prioritized at critical decision-making points and developed in close collaboration with user groups and maintenance staff. Signs will include trail names, directional arrows, user-type information, and seasonal designations.

Work is expected to begin as early as fall 2025 and will be primarily completed during the summer field season of 2026, with final installation and adjustments extending into fall 2026 as needed.

Include a detailed timeline that identifies the overall project start date and completion date, major project tasks with start and completion dates (note that projects are expected to be completed within 18 months of the grant award date).

Fall 2025 - Spring 2026

- Site Review, Design, and Planning
- Assessment of current signage, trail intersections and features, and feedback from partners and user groups.
- Create coherent templates and sign designs, finalize material choices and sign placements.
- Coordinate with staff and partners for field season plan

Spring 2026 - Summer 2026

- Procurement and Installation
- Finalize orders and fabrication of sign components
- Install signage beginning with large signs and high-use areas

Fall 2026

- Project Wrap-up

- Complete any remaining installations
- Adjust signage based on any issues or feedback
- Document and report on completed work

Please include plans for long-term maintenance of the project or equipment purchased with grant funds. Include individuals and organizations responsible.

The signage installed will be durable, weather resistant material selected for a long term outdoor life. The simple design of the improvements and the materials selected will mean that maintenance needs are minimal. However, routine inspections that are incorporated into trail maintenance and feedback from grooming and trail care partners will allow repairs or replacements to be done as needed.

How will you recognize MSTPF's contribution to the project?

MSTPF will be recognized by either incorporating a small logo or watermark in some of the select larger signs, indicating that they were built and provided in partnership with MSTPF, or by creating a dedicated sign near the kiosks. There will be a visible recognition that informs users of Mat-su Trails and Parks Foundation's role in supporting the project and the trail system.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Project Budget -- Please complete the summary budget table below as well as describe the items in the subsequent budget narrative text box. Make sure that the totals here match the coversheet.

		Grant Funds Requested	Cash Match	In-Kind Match	Row Total	Explanation
1	Contractors	0	0	0	0	
2	Organization Staff	0	0	9,305	9,305	
3	Equipment	0	0	0	0	
4	Supplies and Materials	37,220	9,305	0	46,525	
5	Organization Travel	0	0	0	0	

		Grant Funds Requested	Cash Match	In-Kind Match	Row Total	Explanation
6	Column Total	37,220	9,305	9,305	55,830	

Provide a narrative description of your funding request and matching details. Include a description of each line item so we can clearly understand how the requested funds will be spent.

This funding request is for \$37,220 to support the materials and direct cost portion of the project to install signage at Government Peak Recreation Area. MSB will provide a cash match of \$9,305, and In-Kind match of \$9,305, for a total project value of \$55,830.

Under Supplies and Materials, the request of \$37,220 helps cover the cost for pressure-treated lumber, concrete, hardware, and professionally made fabricated signs. The In-Kind cash match of \$9,305 brings the total funds available for materials to \$46,525, which is the total estimated cost of materials for the project.

The In-Kind match of \$9,305 represents the value of staff time dedicated to the project - designing the signs in house, and installation. The total value of staff time dedicated to the project is expected to exceed \$9,305, but it is capped at this number as 50% of the total match.

Can you consider a phased approach with less funding than requested? Please describe.

A phased approach is not applicable to this project, since it is designed to be completed primarily in a single field season. The work consists primarily of installing signage, and breaking the project into multiple phases would reduce efficiency and delay the improvements to the trail system.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

What is the applicant organization's Mission? How do parks and trails help meet this Mission?

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough's vision is to be the "best community in Alaska to live, work, and play." The Community Development Department's mission is to be a steward of public land and resources and provide high quality recreational opportunities, and to support that vision. Parks and trails are a core part of our mission, and creating and maintaining the best possible recreation opportunities for Borough residents to connect with the outdoors.

Please describe one or two similar projects that your organization has completed in the past, and/or projects funded by MSTPF

With support from MSTPF, the Borough developed the Settlers Bay Coastal Park. A public park with three miles of walking trails, two miles of biking trails, and dozens of visitors per day. The park has been a popular destination for locals and visitors to enjoy. Continued support from MSTPF has allowed MSB to continue improving and adding to the park, most recently adding a parking lot that allows visitors to explore the Settlers Bay Coastal Park's 187-acre extension.

PERMITTING DOCUMENTATION

Please identify the landowner and land manager (if any) for this project.

Matanuska Susitna Borough

Include a letter of support or email approval from the applicable landowner or manager with your application.

Applicant is the landowner and land manager.

Reporting Requirements – Applicants will complete Interim and final reports on a schedule appropriate to the project. But no longer than 18 months from the start date on the agreement.

The final grant report must include digital picture(s), GPS track for trails, and other details specified in report form that is provided through this grant portal. Part of this should be suitable for use on our website and other communications channels.

The final documentation for trails should include a digital track (preferably .gpx or.shp) file suitable for adding to a trails map. Newer consumer-grade GPS units provide adequate accuracy for this purpose (but not for easements). The intention is that we can track progress on connectivity throughout the Mat-Su Area.

Check that you agree to the above reporting requirements

✓

Thank you for your interest in helping to create a world-class trail and park system to improve community health and well-being throughout the Mat-Su Borough.



XLSX

[BudgetEstimateGPRASignage...\(13 KiB download\)](#)

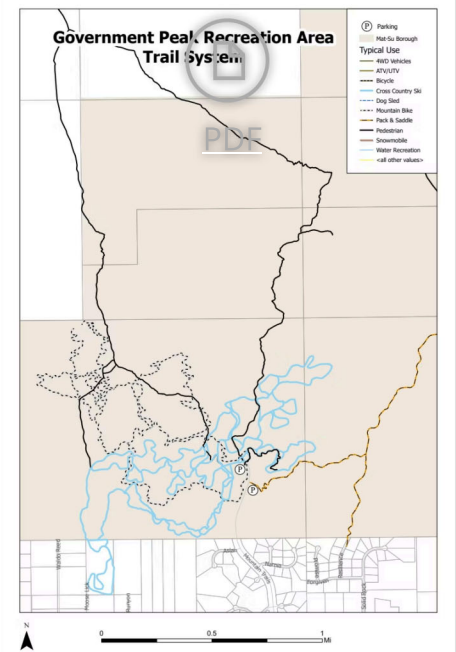


Back



files.metadata.not_found

[CurrentSignageExample.jpg \(246 KiB download\)](#)



[TrailSystem GPRA.pdf \(933 KiB download\)](#)

