

Areawide Transportation Authority Ballot Proposition

Ordinance Serial No. 26-080 / Information Memorandum No. 26-126

What is being proposed?

The Borough Assembly is considering a ballot proposition that would allow the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to exercise areawide authority to acquire public rights-of-way, design transportation projects, and construct roads, streets, sidewalks, and related drainage facilities. The proposal would be submitted to voters at the November 3, 2026, regular Borough election.

Why is voter approval required?

The proposed authority is an areawide power that must be ratified by the Borough's qualified areawide voters before it can take effect.

Why acquire rights-of-way before roads are built?

Acquiring rights-of-way early is generally less expensive and more efficient than waiting until land has been developed. Early acquisition can help avoid future costs associated with relocating driveways, buildings, wells, septic systems, utilities, or redesigning transportation projects.

Will this authorize the Borough to build roads anywhere immediately?

No. The ordinance grants authority, but individual projects would still require planning, design, budgeting, public processes, and any necessary approvals before construction could occur. The proposal establishes the Borough's ability to undertake transportation projects on an areawide basis.

What types of transportation projects could be included?

The authority would apply to roads, streets, sidewalks, and related drainage facilities.

How would this benefit Borough residents?

The proposal is intended to:

- Preserve future transportation corridors before development occurs.
- Enhance connectivity throughout the Borough.
- Improve public safety.
- Reduce future infrastructure costs.
- Shorten project delivery timelines by securing rights-of-way and planning corridors in advance.

How does this relate to Road Service Areas (RSAs)?

Road Service Areas would continue to exist and remain responsible for maintaining the transportation network. RSAs could still construct roads and develop improvement projects within their areas. The proposed authority would allow the Borough to design and construct roads using areawide revenue in addition to the work performed by RSAs.

Does this eliminate or replace RSAs?

No. RSAs will continue to maintain roads, and develop transportation improvement projects within their service areas.

Would the Borough be limited to only certain types of roads?

No. The authority encompasses local roads to major transportation corridors and associated infrastructure.

Will this increase taxes?

The ordinance itself does not impose a tax increase. It seeks authorization for the Borough to acquire rights-of-way and conduct transportation design and construction activities on an areawide basis. Funding decisions for specific projects would occur through future budget and project approval processes.

What question will appear on the ballot?

Voters will be asked:

"Shall the Matanuska-Susitna Borough adopt and exercise the areawide power to acquire public rights-of-way, design, and construct roads, streets, sidewalks, and related drainage facilities?"

What happens if voters reject the proposition?

If the proposition is not approved by a majority of voters, the areawide authority described in the ordinance would not take effect.