

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 20-105**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY APPROVING
STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022.

Borough Action Priorities:

A. KNIK-GOOSE BAY ROAD RECONSTRUCTION (CENTAUR AVENUE TO VINE ROAD) - \$120-150 MILLION

This federally funded project will expand Knik-Goose Bay Road to a four lane divided highway from Centaur Avenue near the City of Wasilla to Vine Road, a major north-south arterial that connects to the Parks Highway. The project also includes signalized intersections, drainage improvements and a reconstructed separated pathway. Construction will be phased with Phase 1, Centaur Avenue to Fairview Loop, anticipated to start late 2021 and construction Phase 2, Fairview Loop to Settlers Bay Drive in 2023. Design is currently at approximately 75 percent. Right-of-way acquisition and utility coordination are underway. Construction is expected to begin in 2021.

B. BOGARD ROAD AND ENGSTROM ROAD/GREEN FOREST DRIVE INTERSECTION UPGRADE - \$7 Million

The Engstrom Road area has seen exponential residential development in the last five to ten years. As with most of the borough, a road grid network has not been developed which can carry and efficiently move and disperse large amounts of traffic such as is being generated from the Engstrom Road corridor. As a consequence, most of the traffic travelling to and from the large residential subdivisions are funneled to the Bogard Road intersection. This intersection has a number of issues including inadequate size, very limited traffic control (through signage), only one turn lane, extremely poor sight distance, and an offset with the Green Forest intersection. Project design is underway and construction is expected to start in summer 2023.

C. FULL COMPLEMENT OF TROOPER STAFFING AND PRESENCE IN THE MATSU VALLEY EQUALING 71 SWORN OFFICERS - UAA Justice Center report of February 22, 2018 recommends an increase of 26 sworn staff, for a total of 71 sworn staff. We support this goal and request it be achieved within three years.

- D. CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR ASSESSMENT OF THE WEST SUSITNA ACCESS ROAD PROJECT** - This project will provide access for development of borough and state land between the Little Susitna (Little Su) and Susitna (Big Su) Rivers, allowing economic development of the natural resources. An extension of the road past the Susitna River also provides potential to bring those resources materials and other resources that are developed further north to Port MacKenzie.
- E. SUPPORT FOR ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES OFFICE AT SEWARD-MERIDIAN PARKWAY** - Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDOT&PF) is actively exploring options to establish a Mat-Su based District office. This office will consist of 25-35 AKDOT&PF personnel that may include designers, Right-of-Way agents, and construction managers. A building already owned by AKDOT&PF and located on Seward Meridian Parkway has been identified as the possible facility for this District office. This prospective location is a central location within the Mat-Su Borough core area and would significantly increase accessibility to projects for AKDOT&PF staff, while at the same time significantly reducing commute time between Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough for AKDOT&PF staff. Design for the facilities is underway and opening the office is expected in late 2021.
- F. SUPPORT FOR ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME OFFICE IN THE MAT-SU BOROUGH** - There is a great opportunity to have an important state department headquarters office relocated to the Mat-Su Valley. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game Office located at 333 Raspberry Road in Anchorage is not easily accessible by residents needing its services, or their staff. In addition to being obsolete, the building sustained serious damage in the 2018 earthquake, and needs to be replaced. There are property options and land is available near the intersection of the Glenn and Parks Highways. The State needs to make this a priority and make the investment to move this essential function. This would add improved infrastructure, many jobs, and an opportunity for the business to be enhanced.
- G. STATE-WIDE TRANSPORTATION BONDS** - The borough fully supports a State-Wide Transportation Bond package legislation during the 2020-2021 legislative session to present to voters in 2021 that would fund construction of much needed major transportation projects within the Mat-Su Borough. Approximately \$50 Million to \$100 Million in funding is needed

to expand highway, rail, and port facilities in order to meet increased demand by continued growth in the Mat-Su Borough.

H. SUPPORT FOR STATE FORESTRY TO IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO HARVEST/REMOVE BEETLE KILLED SPRUCE TO REDUCE FIRE HAZARD -

The Spruce Bark Beetle has killed thousands of acres of spruce trees within the borough. These trees are now becoming a tremendous fire hazard in the core area of the borough as well as nearly every community to the north and east. Borough residents have experienced great economic, physical and emotional loss due to a number of devastating wildfires over the last several years and preventative measures must be taken. The borough fully supports the state in seeking state and federal funding for the harvesting/removing these trees as quickly as possible to reduce the danger of fire to borough residents and businesses.

Borough Funding Priorities:

A. HOUSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL - \$13 Million

On November 30, 2018, South Central Alaska's 7.1 earthquake caused significant damage to Houston Middle School. Although major damage occurred to both public and private facilities, Houston Middle School was most significant.

The Borough has received \$15 Million in insurance proceeds but this is woefully short of providing a safe and effective facility for our future students of Houston. A need for \$13 Million to repair and replace the facility is requested by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

B. FULL FUNDING FOR SCHOOL BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT - \$16,888,635

Full funding as voted upon by citizens on October 10, 2010, for a 70-30 percent share of construction of necessary schools and school improvements for the fast growing Mat-Su Borough. Citizens willingly chose to pay more for these important educational opportunities under the State's School Debt Service program.

It is imperative that our citizens can go to the ballot box with full faith that their decision will be carried out as presented. Without this confidence in their decision, the citizens' ability to trust our government systems is shattered.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough continues to be a growing community. Population has increased in the past 10 years

from 88,995 to 110,218, a 24 percent growth. This growth resulted in the need for additional schools. The cuts to the School Bond Reimbursement Program unequally and negatively impact the residents of the Mat-Su Borough.

In 2015 Governor Walker eliminated \$5.7 million from the School Bond Reimbursement Program for schools built in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The 2019 State Budget eliminated \$9 Million. The Borough's services to our voters were negatively impacted. Another loss of \$16 Million, as approved in the State's Fiscal Year 2021 budget, hurt the borough's ability to perform necessary services and again drove home the idea that our word with our citizens is not secure.

The Borough requests full reimbursement of \$16,888,635.

C. MATCHING FUNDS FOR VOTER APPROVED ROAD BOND PROJECTS - \$17.145 Million

In late 2019, the borough submitted ten project applications to the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) for 50/50 matching funds through the Community Transportation Program. This funding will cover necessary planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocations, engineering, inspections and testing, administrative expenses, and construction for the MSB bond projects. Scoring of the applications took place in January 2020 with two projects, Seldon Road Extension and Hemmer Road Upgrade and Extension scoring well enough to secure match funding. Two other projects, Hermon Road Upgrade and Extension, and Trunk Road Extension South, Phase II/III are included in the public review draft of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Amendment #1.

The Borough requests funding in the ADOT&PF STIP for the remaining eight projects:

Project No. 102. Hermon Road Upgrade and Extension (Parks Hwy to Palmer-Wasilla Hwy) - \$7 Million

Project No. 103. MSB School District 2018 Pedestrian Projects (Safe Routes to Schools Plan Implementation) - \$2 Million

Project No. 104. Aspen Ridge Road Extension to Palmer Fishhook Road - \$5.5 Million

Project No. 105. Cheri Lake Drive / Karen Avenue / King Arthur Drive Corridor Improvements - \$7 Million

Project No. 106. Trunk Road Extension South, Phase II/III - \$3.6 Million

Project No. 107. Tex-Al Drive Upgrade and Extension - \$5.5 Million
Project No. 110. Trunk Road Connector / Katherine Drive - \$2.2 Million
Project No. 208. Smith Road Extension and Paved Pathway - \$1.49 Million

D. COMPLETION OF PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION - \$140 Million

Project scope would include final design and construction of Segment 2 including the Rail Reserve, and for Segments 1-5 final design, survey, construction of sub-ballast, rail, ties, ballast, and signal/communications installation. Port MacKenzie is a deep-water port where one of the largest cargo vessels in the world has docked and been loaded. This rail extension from the Alaska Railroad mainline to Port MacKenzie will provide a shorter rail route from Interior Alaska to tidewater, which in turn will substantially boost the export of Alaska's minerals and natural resources helping diversify the statewide economy. The project will create jobs, lower transportation costs, and increase economic development. Fuel imports transported north on Port MacKenzie Rail to the Interior would help lower high energy costs. The Alaska Railroad is the first in the nation to receive approval by the Federal Railroad Administration to transport Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) by ISO container. AIDEA is working to expand an LNG facility adjacent to the rail extension and near Port MacKenzie to develop a fuel supply chain to Interior communities. By providing bulk transportation of LNG, the use of LNG in the Interior will increase and significantly improve the air quality, an added benefit. The rail extension could also save more than \$100 million in construction costs for the State's proposed natural gas pipeline over other ports as Port MacKenzie is 140 miles closer than Seward and 32 miles closer than Anchorage to the Interior. Less expensive bulk transport costs will also help stimulate the development of natural resources and mines such as the one-billion-ton limestone deposit near Livengood. Several sizable mining projects have designated Port MacKenzie as their marine terminal for exports including: A Canada to Alaska railway project estimated to export \$100s of billions in commodities including bitumen. Additionally, Trilogy Metals, Inc., in the Ambler Mining District which is projected to hold 8 billion pounds of copper, 3 billion pounds of zinc and more than 1 million ounces of gold-equivalent precious metals that could be transported on this rail line.

The shorter mileage to tidewater will also reduce the cost of transporting coal when coal prices recover, helping coal from Alaska's Interior be competitive on the world market. A number of private companies have leased land at Port MacKenzie and will take advantage of the rail extension's quicker transport time to the Interior, including Central Alaska Energy, who plan to import low sulfur fuel, store it in million gallon tanks and transport it around the state.

E. PORT MACKENZIE DEEP-DRAFT DOCK PILE SLEEVE PROTECTION - \$6 Million

This project will install pipe pile sleeves and fender pile sleeves to protect the deep-draft dock piles from slow deterioration caused by scour from silt and ice impact as well as material loss due to corrosion. Steel pile sleeves and grout will be added to the 64 pipe piles and 14 fender piles of the deep-draft dock. The design for this work has already been completed. The cost estimate to complete the construction is \$6 million. The deep-draft dock piles were driven in 2004 and have now lost their hot-dipped galvanized protective coating, as verified by an engineer inspection in August 2019, due to scour from the silt and ice laden currents of the Knik Arm of Cook Inlet. These protective pile sleeves, coupled with the cathodic protection system that was installed in 2015, will extend the life of the deep-draft dock twenty (20) to thirty (30) years longer than the alternative of not installing the pile sleeves. This pile protection system will save or defer tens of millions of dollars on future repairs and replacement of the piles. The project could be completed in the fall of 2021 if funding is approved. This project is essential to protect the \$14.7 Million already invested in the construction of the Port MacKenzie deep-draft dock.

F. SHIRLEY TOWNE DRIVE BRIDGE - \$200,000

The Shirley Towne Drive Bridge incurred severe damage and the road approach at the north end of the bridge was washed out by flooding in 2012. Currently Deneki Bridge, which is several miles downstream, is the sole means of access to this area. The road access to the Deneki Bridge is within the Willow Creek floodplain and periodically floods throughout the year including winter due to large rainfall events or ice-jams. It is imperative to have a second means of access for residents and users of the land on the north side of Willow Creek during natural disasters such as flooding, fire or earthquakes. The repair of Shirley Towne Drive Bridge would provide this second means of access. The Shirley Towne

Drive Bridge repair project would also provide direct access to North Willer Kash Road and North Jim Carter Road, which are access points for Borough and State timber harvest areas.

A project to extend the north segment and abutment of the bridge and rip-rap the creek's northern bank for erosion protection is currently in design and is funded for construction based on a preliminary review. The funding requested for this project would cover replacement of additional bridge components as determined to be necessary during the design process or other contingencies during construction.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this 17 day of November, 2020.


VERN HALTER, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE B. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk
(SEAL)

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: Hale, Nowers, McKee, Leonard, Mayfield, Sumner, and Boeve