

SUBJECT: AN ORDINANCE OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF A ONE-ACRE PARCEL ADJACENT TO THE NEW GATEWAY VISITOR CENTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$172,000 AND CLASSIFYING THE PROPERTY AS "RESERVED USE LANDS". (MSB007999)

AGENDA OF: March 3, 2026

ASSEMBLY ACTION:

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: Introduce and set for public hearing.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	2 / 18 / 2026 X Lisa Gray Signed by: Lisa Gray
Land & Resource Management Manager	2 / 13 / 2026 X Joe Metzger Signed by: Joe Metzger
Community Development Department Director	Expired certificate X Jillian Morrissey Signed by: Jillian Morrissey
Finance Director	Recoverable Signature X Cheyenne Heindel Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel
Borough Attorney	2 / 17 / 2026 X Nicholas Spiropoulos Signed by: Nicholas Spiropoulos
Borough Manager	2 / 17 / 2026 X Michael Brown Signed by: Mike Brown
Borough Clerk	2 / 18 / 2026 X Lonnie McKeechnie Signed by: Lonnie McKeechnie

ATTACHMENT (S) : Vicinity Map: (1 pp)
 Drawing: (1 pp)
 Information Memorandum 25-170: (2 pp)
 MSCVB Resolution: (1 pp)
 Ordinance Serial No. 26-029 (2 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Community Development Department proposes purchasing a one-acre parcel next to the new Gateway Visitors Center and classifying the land as "Reserved Use Land". The land is known as 8798 East Tex Cobb Circle, tax account number 17N01E23B002, hereafter

referred to as the "property". This property is privately owned and currently vacant. Acquisition of this property will help preserve unobstructed mountain views to the south-east from the visitor center. Attached is a drawing showing the location of the property, the visitor center, and topographic lines. On August 19, 2025, the Assembly was presented with an Information Memorandum (IM No. 25-170) notifying them of the proposed land acquisition.

The Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau (MSCVB) provided a resolution unanimously supporting the purchase of said property. MSCVB identified the one-acre parcel located directly next to the Gateway Visitor Center as a strategic opportunity to safeguard and enhance the visitor experience, protect public investment, and support the long-term vision for the site.

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was completed by 3-Tier Alaska. The ESA report conforms with the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Practice E 1527-21, Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments. 3-Tier Alaska found no evidence of recognized environmental conditions in connection with the property and concluded the subject property presents a low risk of historical or recent contamination.

After negotiation, the Borough and property owner agreed upon a purchase price of \$172,000 based on third-party appraisal of fair market value, pending Assembly approval. The appraisal was conducted under the requirement of the USPAP (Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices), which is the federal regulatory guide for appraising standards. Closing cost must be factored into the transaction and are estimated at less than \$5,000. Typical closing costs include title insurance premium and escrow/closing/recording fees.

The Land Management Division proposes funding the purchase through the Land Management Fund as permitted under MSB 23.05.070 (D) (2).

Public noticing was conducted in accordance with MSB 23.05.025 and landowners within 600 feet of the property have been notified of the proposed acquisition and land classification. Additionally, notices were published in the Frontiersman and posted in the Palmer Post Office, and on the Borough website. The Gateway Community Council, and local Road Service Area and Fire Service Area boards were asked to comment. There were no comments received from the notice. A Borough interdepartmental review was done and there were no objections.

AUTHORITY

MSB 23.05.030 (B) (1) allows the Borough to acquire real property by purchase or lease of real property for compensation to the owner.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Recommendation is for the Assembly to authorize the Manager to acquire the one-acre parcel located at 8798 East Tex Cobb Circle, described as Beginning at the Southwest Corner of Lot 25 of the A.A. Cobb Subdivision as shown on the Plat filed at page 240, book 7 within the Palmer Recording District Records; thence South $56^{\circ} 46'$ West a distance of 250 feet; thence North $33^{\circ} 14'$ West a distance of 160 feet; thence North $56^{\circ} 46'$ East a distance of 250 feet; thence South $33^{\circ} 14''$ East a distance of 160 feet to the Point of Beginning all located in the North one-half of Section 23, Township 17 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian in the Palmer Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska (MSB Tax Parcel 17N01E23B002), in the amount of \$172,000 plus closing costs, appropriate funds from the Land Management Fund and classify the land as "Reserved Use Lands".

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

FISCAL NOTE

Agenda Date: March 3, 2026

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FISCAL ACTION (TO BE COMPLETED BY FINANCE)	FISCAL IMPACT YES NO
AMOUNT REQUESTED \$172,000*	FUNDING SOURCE Land Management Budget
FROM ACCOUNT # 203.000.000 4xx.xxx	PROJECT
TO ACCOUNT:	PROJECT #
VERIFIED BY: 2 / 1 7 / 2 0 2 6  L i e s e l Z a n t o Signed by: Liesel Zanto	

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:

(Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031
Personnel Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land/Structures	172.0*					
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	172.0*					

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE						
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FUNDING:

(Thousands of Dollars)

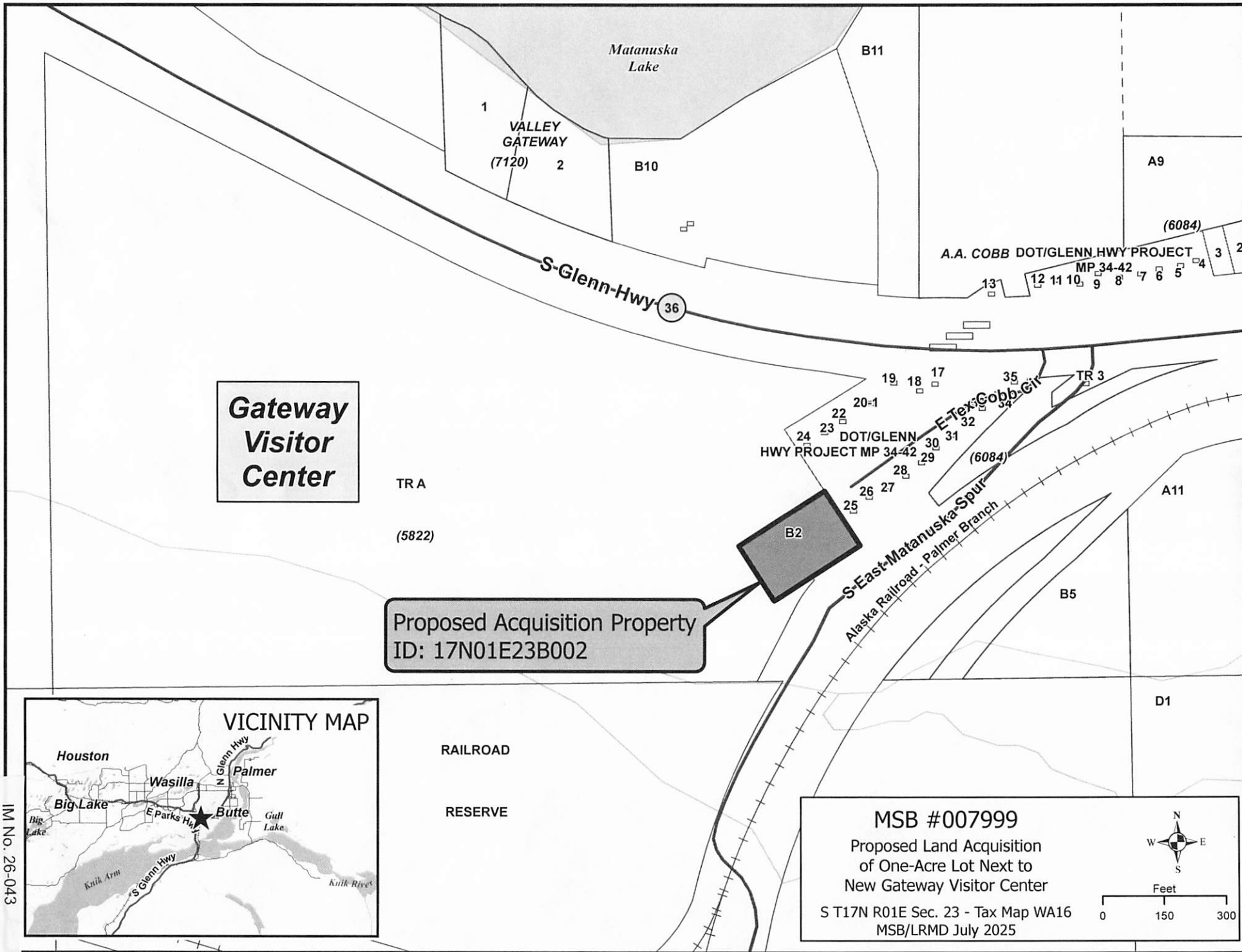
General Fund						
State/Federal Funds						
Other	172.0*					
TOTAL	172.0*					

POSITIONS:

Full-Time						
Part-Time						
Temporary						

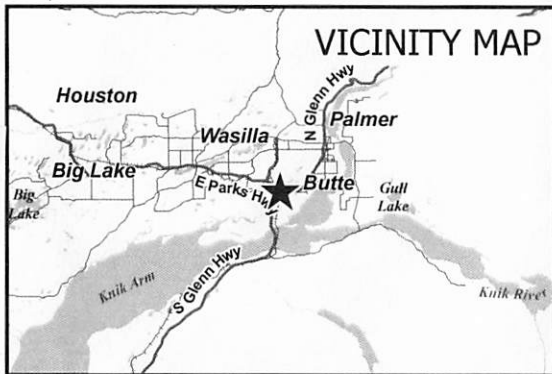
ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary) *\$172,000 plus any closing costs or other expenses.

APPROVED BY:	 Recoverable Signature
	 C h e y e n n e H e i n d e l
	Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel



**Gateway
Visitor
Center**

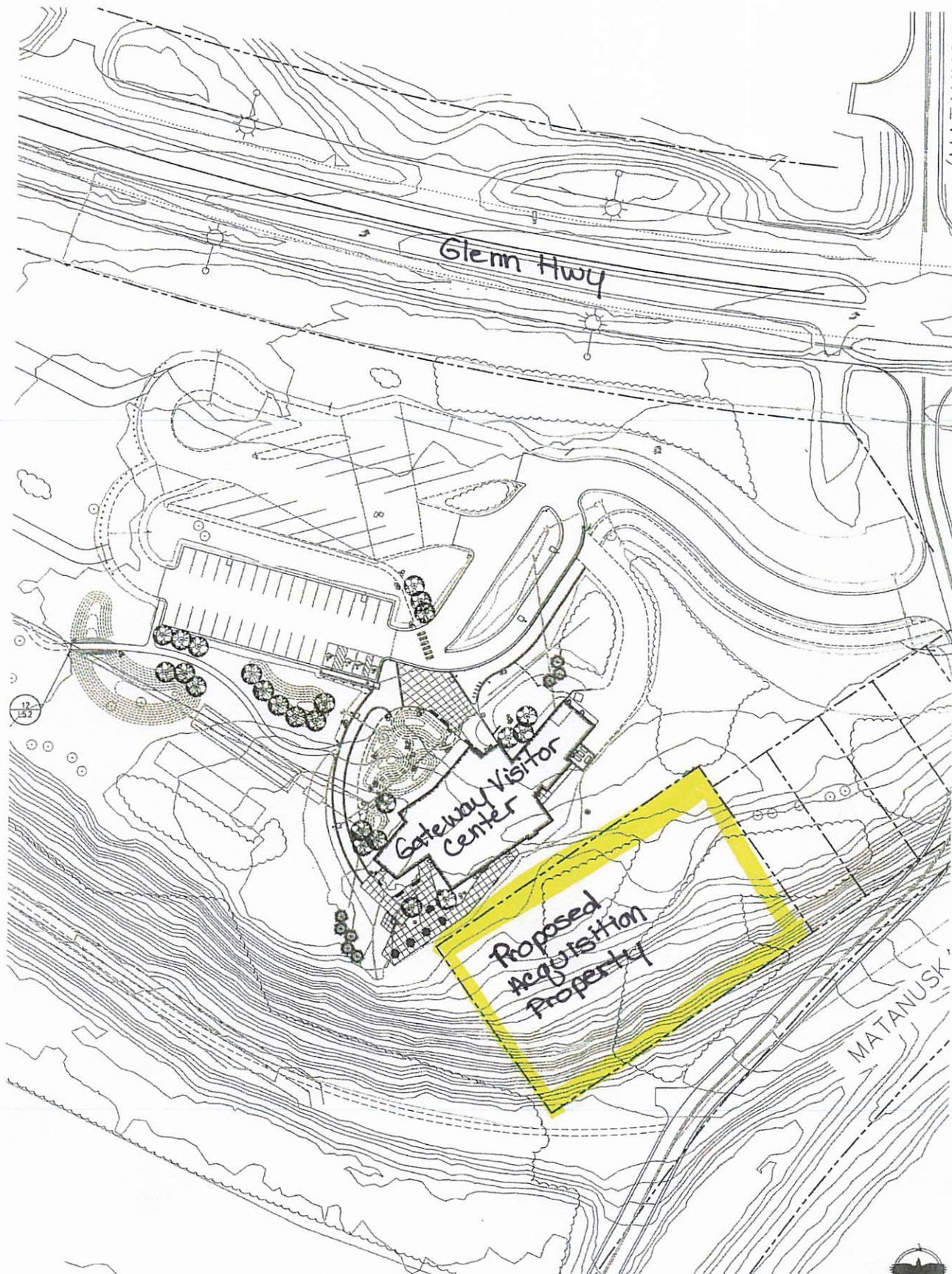
Proposed Acquisition Property
ID: 17N01E23B002



MSB #007999
 Proposed Land Acquisition
 of One-Acre Lot Next to
 New Gateway Visitor Center
 S T17N R01E Sec. 23 - Tax Map WA16
 MSB/LRMD July 2025

0 150 300 Feet

N
W E
S



0' 40' 80' 120'



**SUBJECT: ASSEMBLY NOTIFICATION OF LAND ACQUISITION OF ONE ACRE
ADJACENT TO THE NEW GATEWAY VISITOR CENTER. (MSB007999)**

AGENDA OF: August 19, 2025

ASSEMBLY ACTION:

Presented to the Assembly 08/19/25 - EMW

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: For information only.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	7/31/2025 X Lisa Gray Signed by Lisa Gray
Land & Resource Management Manager	7/31/2025 X Joe Metzger Signed by Joe Metzger
Community Development Department Director	8/1/2025 X Jillian Morrissey Signed by Jillian Morrissey
Finance Director	8/1/2025 X Liesel Zanto for C.H. Signed by Liesel W. Zanto
Borough Attorney	8/4/2025 X John Aschenbrenner Signed by John Aschenbrenner
Borough Manager	8/4/2025 X Michael Brown Signed by Mike Brown
Borough Clerk	8/7/2025 X Estelle Wiese for Signed by Estelle Wiese

ATTACHMENT(S): Map and Drawing (2 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Community Development Department proposes purchasing a one-acre lot next to the new Gateway Visitor Center known as 8798 E. Tex Cobb Circle, tax account number 17N01E23B002. This property is privately owned, and the land is vacant. If a structure was ever constructed on said property it could block a portion of the mountain views to the east from the visitor center. Attached is a map showing the location of the property and a drawing that shows

the Gateway Visitor Center with topographic contour lines.

Land & Resource Management proposes using the Land Management Permanent Funds for land acquisition.



**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

WHEREAS, the Matanuska-Susitna Convention & Visitors Bureau (Mat-Su CVB) Board of Directors recognizes the strategic importance of the Gateway Visitor Center as a key resource for welcoming and informing visitors to the Mat-Su Valley, thereby to stimulate economic development throughout the entire Mat-Su Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Board has identified the adjacent Lawalter property, a one-acre parcel located directly next to the Gateway Visitor Center, as a strategic opportunity to safeguard and enhance the visitor experience, protect public investment, and support the long-term vision for the site; and

WHEREAS, the Mat-Su Borough has initiated the process of pursuing the acquisition of the Lawalter property, which includes notifying the property owners, securing an appraisal, and presenting legislation to the Borough Assembly; and

WHEREAS, protecting and enhancing the Gateway Visitor Center's surroundings directly aligns with the mission of the Mat-Su CVB to strengthen tourism infrastructure and preserve the integrity of the visitor experience;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mat-Su CVB Board of Directors unanimously supports the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the purchase of the Lawalter property adjacent to the Gateway Visitor Center; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes its President & CEO to work with the Mat-Su Borough throughout this process, including budgetary support as feasible and appropriate, to ensure the successful acquisition and protection of this property for the benefit of the community and its visitors.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 22nd day of September, 2025, by unanimous vote of the Mat-Su CVB Board of Directors.

Casey Ressler, President & CEO, Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau