

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Strategic Plan

FY 2022 - 2027

March 31, 2021



INTRODUCTION


The FY 2022 - 2027 Strategic Plan is the result of a Special Meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly held on February 20, 2021. The purpose of the plan is 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 work to develop and publish an annual performance report. The report will focus on the implementation status of the strategic plan.

	<h2>VISION</h2> <p>The greatest community in Alaska to live, work and play</p>
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	<h2>MISSION</h2> <p>To efficiently and effectively deliver responsive services to the public and to cultivate opportunities for commercial enterprise to prosper</p>
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	<h2>VALUES</h2> <p>Accountability; Customer Focus; Dedication; Integrity; Responsiveness; Teamwork</p>
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FRAMEWORK

The following framework was developed to represent the three focus areas on the left, key objectives in the center gray-shaded area, and strategic outcomes in the black-shaded block. This graphic is informed by the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis depicted in Figure 2.

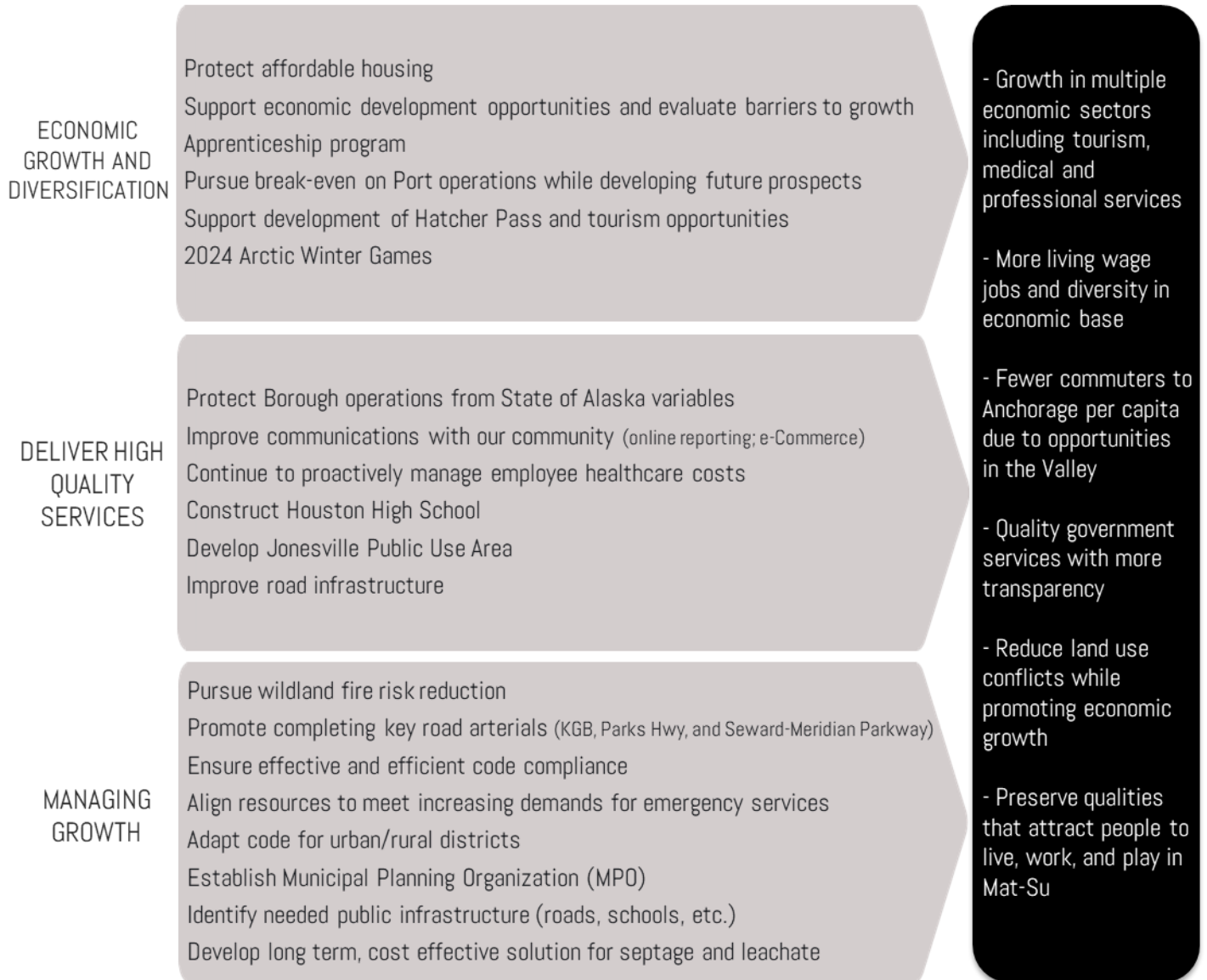


Figure 1. Strategic Plan Framework

FRAMEWORK



Figure 2. SWOT Analysis

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION

1. Protect affordable housing.
 - a. Continue to keep the barrier to entry low for new homeowners and renters by continuing to improve Borough processes and code associated with multi-family and subdivision developments (Planning Department).
 - b. Develop a self-administered Local Improvement District (LID) program that allows homeowners to make capital improvements within a given service area (Finance Department).
2. Support economic development opportunities and evaluate barriers to growth.
 - a. Develop a working group that meets periodically to discuss various economic development matters (Administration).
 - b. Continue to improve and maintain public infrastructure (roads, public safety, schools, etc.) (Administration).
 - c. Consider incentives for businesses desiring to move to the Borough (Administration).
 - d. Support completion of the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project (Public Works).
3. Apprenticeship Program. Work with partners in education and industry to enhance apprenticeship opportunities and improve skilled labor workforce (Administration).
4. Pursue break-even on Port operations while developing future prospects.
 - a. Pursue increased cargo opportunities in the near-term (Port).
 - b. Contract for professional services to support marketing and business development (Port).
5. Support development of Hatcher Pass and tourism opportunities.
 - a. Pursue upgrading Hatcher Pass Road to allow bus travel from Palmer to Willow through Hatcher Pass (Public Works).
 - b. Support development of the Skeetawk ski area (Community Development).
 - c. Maintain and develop tourism-related infrastructure such as boat ramps, parks, trails, pools, and ice rinks (Community Development).
6. 2024 Arctic Winter Games. Establish partnerships, complete event planning, and host a successful competition (Multiple Departments).

STRATEGIC RESULTS

- Growth in multiple economic sectors including tourism, medical, and professional services
- More living wage jobs and diversity in economic base
- Fewer commuters to Anchorage per capita due to opportunities in the Valley

DELIVER HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

1. Protect Borough operations from State of Alaska variables (reduce dependence on State funding).
 - a. Evaluate strategies to address infrastructure development (Finance Department).
 - b. Develop sustainable approach to funding existing bond debt service obligations (Finance Department).
2. Improve communications with our community (finances, online reporting; e-Commerce).
 - a. Evaluate improvements to the Borough website (Information Technology).
 - b. Refine e-Commerce offerings and optimize for consumer use (Information Technology).
 - c. Improve financial reporting including: automating reporting; developing formatted reports for public use; and continuing to achieve Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) reporting excellence awards (Finance Department).
 - d. Develop and publish an annual performance report (Administration).
 - e. Continue to publish annual Citizen's Financial Report (Popular Annual Financial Reporting – PAFR) (Finance Department).
 - f. Launch Problem Reporter application for the public to report various issues (e.g. junk/trash, potholes, etc.) (Multiple Departments).
3. Continue to proactively manage the cost of labor and employee healthcare costs and leverage cost containment strategies (Human Resources).
4. Construct Houston High School (Public Works).
5. Develop, construct, and manage Jonesville Public Use Area (Community Development).
6. Improve road infrastructure.
 - a. Review maintenance contracts looking for opportunities to reduce the per mile cost of road maintenance while maintaining service levels (Public Works).
 - b. Investigate opportunities to advance road construction and road connectivity by partnering with developers and offering incentives (e.g. incentivize construction of collector roads as a part of new subdivisions) (Multiple Departments).

STRATEGIC RESULT

- Quality government services with more transparency (described in an annual performance report)

MANAGING GROWTH

1. Pursue wildland fire risk reduction within the Borough.
 - a. Conduct seasonal public education campaigns to raise awareness (Department of Emergency Services and Public Affairs).
 - b. Advance completion of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) for all high risk areas (Department of Emergency Services).
 - c. Mitigate Borough high risk areas and coordinate fuel reduction measures with State of Alaska (Community Development Department).
 - d. Streamline commercial permits for beetle-kill harvesting (Community Development Department).
 - e. Pursue funding opportunities to assist landowners with wildland fire risk reduction (Department of Emergency Services and Community Development Department).
2. Promote completing key road arterials (KGB, Parks Highway widening, and Seward-Meridian Parkway) (Administration).
3. Ensure timely, effective, and efficient permitting and enforcement by coordinating resources to address specific problems (i.e. strategic enforcement) leading to responsible ownership and compliance (Planning Department).
4. Continue to align resources to meet increasing demands for emergency services (Department of Emergency Services).
5. Adapt code for urban/rural districts to better meet land use needs.
 - a. Establish a new core area boundary based on the 2020 census data (Planning Department).
 - b. Continue to modify code in order to address the growing number of land use conflicts caused by population growth (Planning Department).
6. Establish Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) (Planning and Public Works Departments).
7. Identify needed public infrastructure.
 - a. Identify land for future Borough facilities (e.g. fire station, school, etc.) (Planning and Community Development Departments).
 - b. Identify and fund procurement of key rights-of-way for future road corridors (Planning and Public Works Departments).

MANAGING GROWTH

8. Develop long term, cost effective solution for septage and leachate.
 - a. Develop methods to effectively treat leachate at the Central Landfill (Public Works).
 - b. Explore feasibility of use of City of Palmer wastewater treatment facility as a future septage treatment facility (Public Works).

STRATEGIC RESULTS

- Reduced land use conflicts while promoting economic growth
- Preservation of qualities that attract people to live, work, and play in the Mat-Su