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Anchorage—Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority (KABATA) is forging a new partnership with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough by funding a one-stop permit center within the Borough's planning department. The new funding will assist the Borough to streamline permitting processes, increase staff efficiency, save time for customers and help protect the environment by coordinating with federal and state resource and regulatory agencies.

"We recognize the ongoing growth that is occurring in the Borough right now and that additional growth will occur as a result of Knik Arm Crossing. The needs for planning and permitting will only increase in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough as the Knik Arm Crossing moves toward construction." Said Andrew Niemiec, KABATA Executive Director. He continued, "In order to offset these indirect and cumulative impacts, we are assisting the Borough to develop their land use, development, and environmental planning efforts."

KABATA is also funding a Corridor Study and Access Management Plan from Point MacKenzie to the Parks Highway. "This corridor study is particularly important to the success of the bridge and the Borough's ability to plan for the future." Said Larry DeVilbiss, Matanuska-Susitna Borough Mayor. He added, "The corridor study will help us develop a land use plan and get our economic development efforts underway throughout the area that's most likely to see impacts of the Knik Arm Crossing."

The Knik Arm Crossing will create a second route from the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, the state's fastest growing region to Anchorage, Alaska's most populous city. Construction of the bridge could begin in late 2012 and will include 19 miles of road and a bridge of at least 8,200 feet. The bridge is expected to create thousands of construction jobs and spur economic development in the immediate area, resulting in thousands of additional, permanent jobs. The crossing will lower transportation costs to Alaska's Interior, saving fuel and reducing greenhouse emissions. Currently KABATA is in a formal procurement process to select a short list of qualified bidders to move on to a formal RFP process.

KABATA is providing the MSB Planning Department a total of 200,000 over a two year period, and an additional \$70,000 for completion of the Corridor Study and Access Management Plan for a total of \$270,000.

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