



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.
WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091
PHONE: (907) 373-9050
FAX: (907) 373-0788

COUNCIL MEMORANDUM NO. 92-108

From: Mayor Stein
Date: September 23, 1992
Subject: Veterans Home

Senator Kerttula is continuing his efforts to establish a veterans home in the Mat-Su Area. Even though his district now includes only Palmer, he is the main player in getting a home anywhere in Alaska.

Local veterans have recently acquired a copy of the Palmer Economic Development Authority's proposal for "A Veteran's Home for Palmer".

If Wasilla is to figure in the statewide equation as a site for the home some effort should be made to present the considerable advantages of our community. Those advantages are significant and we stand a good chance to win this project.

A promotional package should be prepared and include all of Wasilla's advantages, an artist's conceptual drawing of the home, the site description and statements of local support.

I suggest that the Council consider a firm commitment to offer a site for the home at no cost to the project and allocate at least \$1,000 from Council Contingency to prepare the promotional package for state decision makers.

Representatives from the Veterans Community Service Council have asked to speak under persons to be heard.

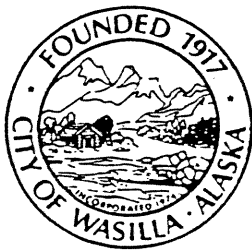
John C. Stein, Mayor

Enclosures

APPROVED

DATE: 9-28-92

BY: [Signature]



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.
WASILLA, ALASKA 99687
PHONE: (907) 373-9050
FAX: (907) 373-0788

REQUESTED BY: ADMINISTRATION:
PREPARED BY: ADMINISTRATION

RESOLUTION NO. WR91-07

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF WASILLA, ALASKA SUPPORTING AN ALASKA VETERANS HOME AND OFFERING A SITE.

WHEREAS, under the Veterans Health Services and Research Administration State Home Program in the Department of Veterans Affairs, funds are available to help states establish state veterans homes; and

WHEREAS, priority under the federal program is granted to states that have not previously received a veterans home grant and have high unmet needs for care of veterans; and

WHEREAS, a large number of veterans reside in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, there is no state veterans home to meet the needs of the veterans; and

WHEREAS, ample public land is available for siting a veterans home in Wasilla and the surrounding areas; and

WHEREAS, Wasilla offers a rural setting, suburban community services and close proximity to the Anchorage urban center; and

WHEREAS, well established veterans organizations are available to support residents of a veterans home in Wasilla.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Wasilla City Council expresses its support for construction of a veterans home in Alaska; and

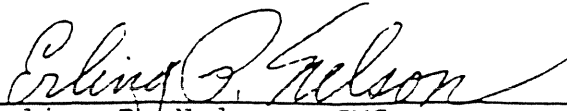
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Wasilla supports siting the veterans home in the Wasilla/Mat-Su area; and

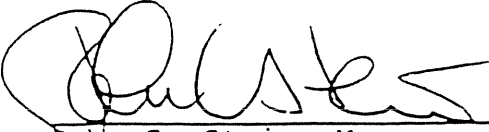
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City pledges its assistance to secure contribution of state or municipal lands for use as a site for the proposed state veterans home.

I certify that a resolution in substantially the above form was passed by a majority of those voting at a duly called and conducted meeting of the governing body of the City of Wasilla this 11th day of February, 1991.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:


Erling P. Nelson, CMC
City Clerk


John C. Stein, Mayor

VETERANS' HOME PETITION

BACKGROUND:

In May, 1992, the Alaska Legislature passed S. B. 44, sponsored by Sen. Jay Kerttula of Palmer, authorizing establishment of the first Veterans' Home in Alaska. In June, 1992, Gov. Walter J. Hickel signed S.B. 44 into law. The Department of Administration is now overseeing a feasibility study to see if a Veterans' Home should be built in Alaska.

WHY BUILD A VETERANS' HOME IN ALASKA:

Presently, some 71,509 military veterans reside in the State of Alaska, according to the federal Veteran's Administration and including data from the 1990 U.S. Census. This means Alaska has the highest per capita number of military veterans of any state in the nation in general. And, with more than 25,000 Vietnam Era veterans making Alaska their home, our state leads all other states (again on a per capita basis) for the number of Vietnam military veterans compared to civilians.

WHO PAYS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A VETERANS' HOME:

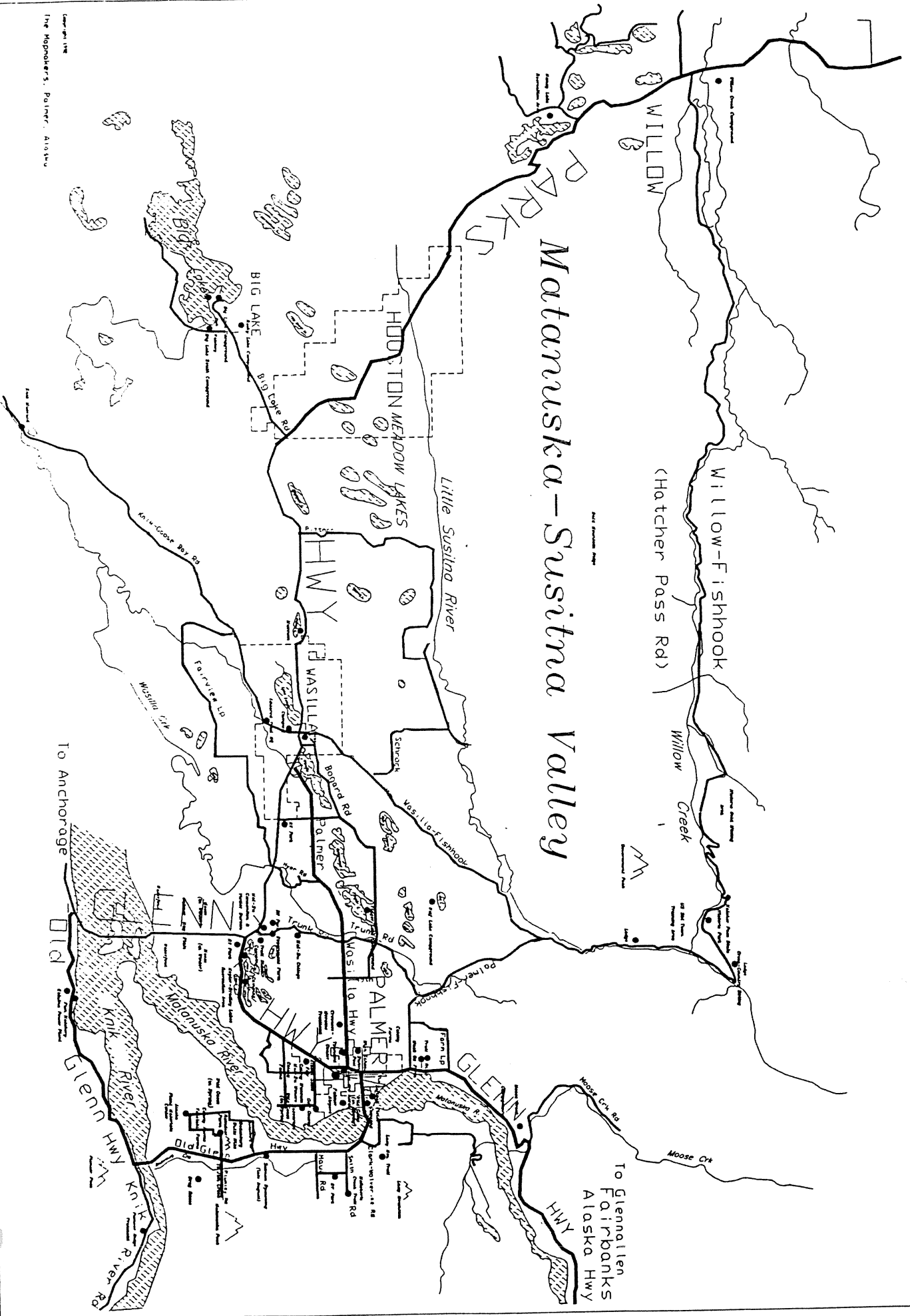
The federal Veterans Administration pays 65% of the construction cost of each Veterans' Home, and the home can be established so that the state does not need to provide funding for a Home's operation and maintenance. The remaining 35% of construction cost can be provided by the state, a borough or a city government.

The number of military veterans in Alaska clearly shows the need for a Veterans' Home to be established here, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly and the City Councils of Palmer and Wasilla have unanimously passed resolutions urging that a Veterans' Home be built and that the home be located in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

20 Kaye



A Veteran's Home
for
Palmer, Alaska



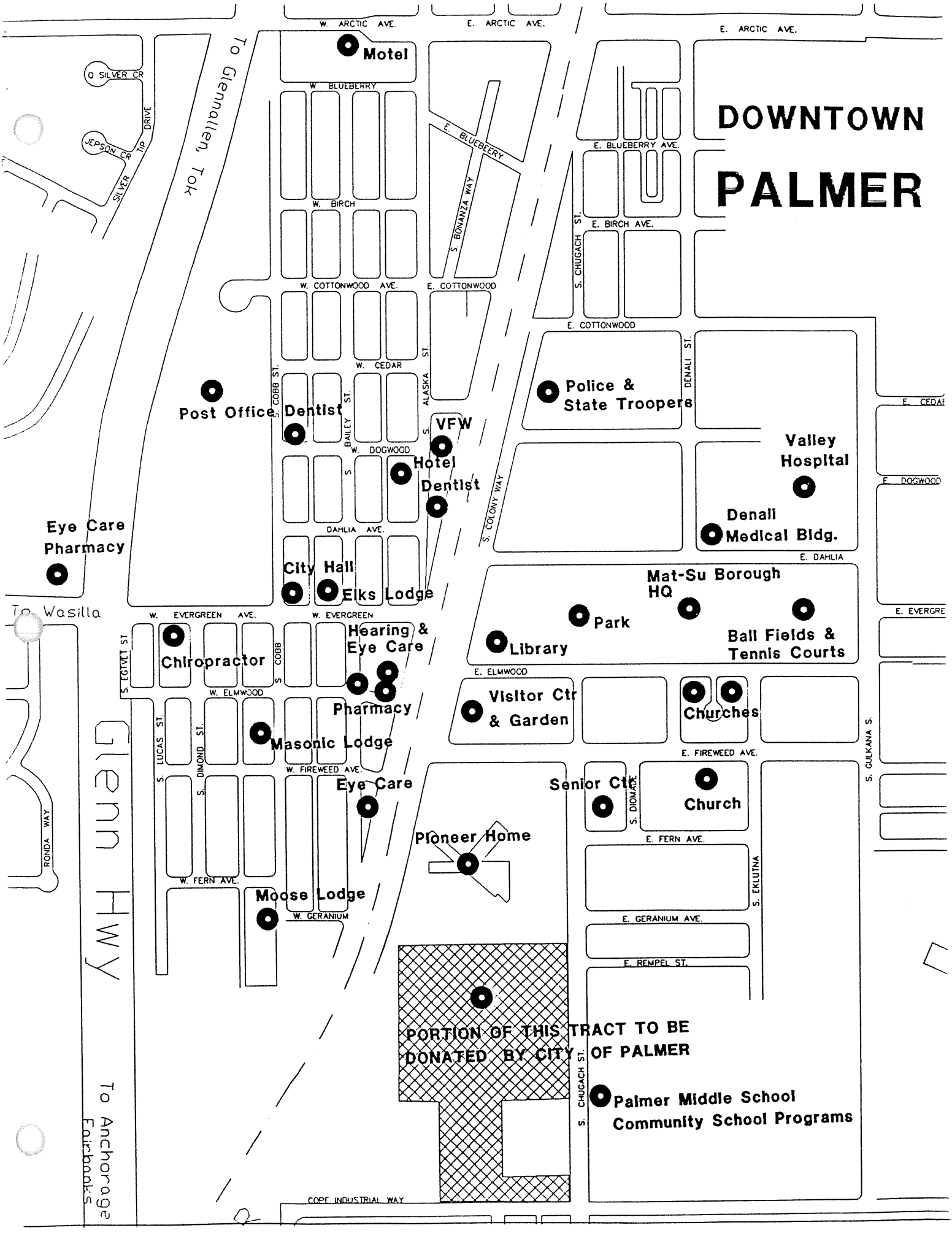
Matanuska-Susitna Valley

Copyright 1988
The Mapmakers, Palmer, Alaska

To Anchorage

To Glennallen
Fairbanks
Alaska Hwy

DOWNTOWN PALMER



Post Office, Dentist

VFW

Police & State Troopers

Valley Hospital

Denali Medical Bldg.

Eye Care Pharmacy

City Hall, Elks Lodge

Mat-Su Borough HQ

Library

Ball Fields & Tennis Courts

Chiropractor

Hearing & Eye Care

Pharmacy

Masonic Lodge

Eye Care

Pioneer Home

Senior Ctr

Church

Visitor Ctr & Garden

Churches

Moose Lodge

PORTION OF THIS TRACT TO BE DONATED BY CITY OF PALMER

Palmer Middle School
Community School Programs

To Wasilla

To Glennallen, Tok

Glenn HWY

To Anchorage
Fairbanks

COPE INDUSTRIAL WAY

WHY A VETERANS' HOME IN PALMER?

Location

Palmer is located on the Glenn Highway, 42 miles from Anchorage, Alaska's largest population center, and 35 miles from the military community and facilities of the two southcentral military bases, Fort Richardson and Elmendorf.

The Glenn Highway is part of Alaska's major transportation system, connecting with Fairbanks, Anchorage, the Kenai Peninsula, Prince William Sound, and the Alaska Highway. Because of its easy access to the highway system, the Alaska Railroad, and air traffic, Palmer is known as the transportation hub of Alaska.

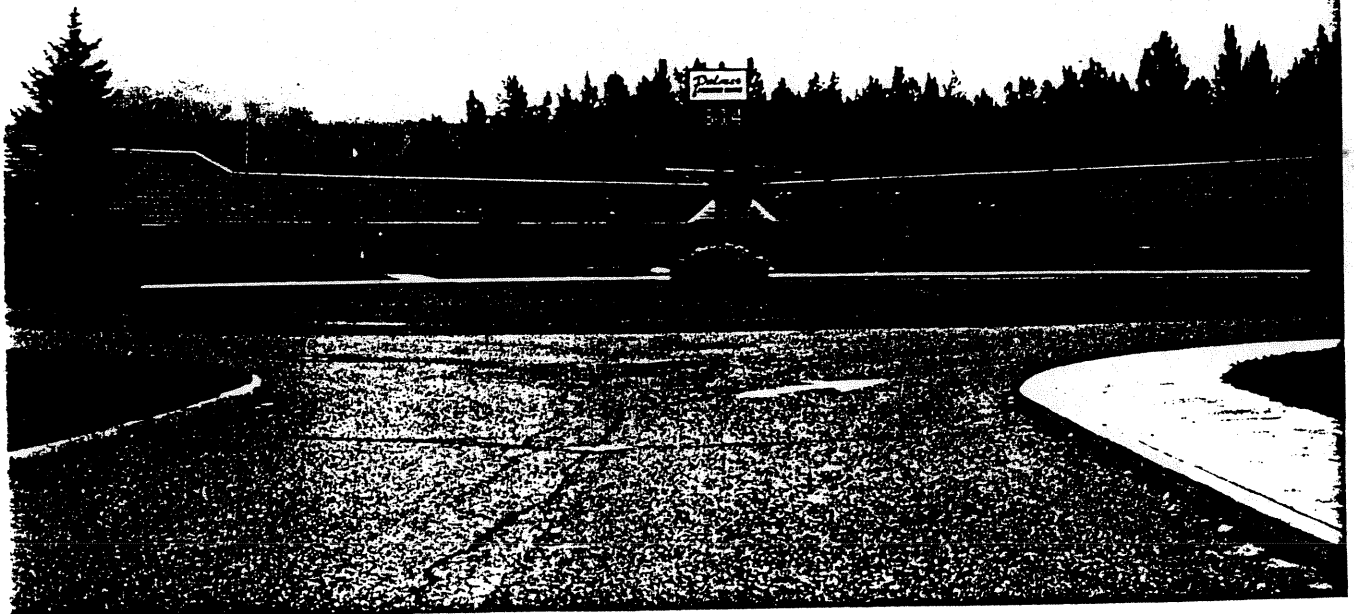


Public Participation

The City of Palmer will donate the land for the Veteran's Home. The site, which adjoins the State of Alaska Palmer Pioneer Home, is close to the center of town, across the street from the Senior Center, and only a few blocks from Valley Hospital and Denali Medical Center.

The land is dedicated to senior housing, and the City of Palmer is presently evaluating a feasibility study concerning their plans to construct senior housing there. It is highly possible that a combination senior housing – veterans' home complex would make the construction and operation of such an arrangement more feasible.

Because of the location of the site next door to the Pioneer Home, which is operated by the State of Alaska, arrangements could also be made to operate the Pioneer Home and the Veteran's home jointly. This would avoid duplication of certain services and facilities, resulting in considerable savings which would not be possible if another location were to be chosen.





Senior Housing Task Force

The City of Palmer has established a Senior Housing Task Force. Members of the Task Force are very familiar with the senior community and their needs, and are highly involved in senior affairs. They have been very active in working toward establishing senior housing and services. The Task Force strongly supports a Veterans' Home for Palmer and will assist in any way possible.

Many Community Amenities Cater to Seniors

The City of Palmer's public services are well known. Besides paved sidewalks, streetlights, close-by public parks and benches, other factors, such as full police protection, a low fire rating and a sewer & water system contribute to a pleasant quality of life and effective construction and operation of a public facility. Sidewalks downtown and paved trails through parks lend themselves to pleasant strolls on foot or in wheel chairs.

Residents of the Veteran's Home will have easy access to an established senior community and social life. The Palmer Senior Center offers many activities enhancing the senior community's daily life through a number of programs described on a separate page.

A community of veterans active with social outreach, the local VFW Post 2509 and the American Legion offer their own special camaraderie.

Churches of many denominations make their home in Palmer, where veterans will be made welcome. Three of these churches are within two blocks of the proposed site.

Palmer is home to a host of community organizations, whose special projects include brightening the life of residents of senior institutions. These groups include the 4-H clubs, Boy Scouts, Business and Professional Women, Soroptomists, and fraternal and service organizations. Residents of the Palmer Pioneer Home, for instance, are also assisted in a number of ways by individual volunteers, who help with social activities, letter writing, and reading.

Hotels, motels and bed & breakfast facilities offer easy access for friends and relatives who visit residents at the Veterans' Home.

Retail and service establishments are close to the planned site.



Seniors Are Active In Palmer

The Palmer Public Library is two blocks from the site, as is the Palmer Visitor Center. The Visitor Center is very appreciative of those senior citizens, who come to mingle with the tourists and share their stories and experiences. A short walk from the site to the public garden, Palmer Visitor Center's "Agricultural Showcase", provides much pleasure to young and old during the summer months.

Gift shops at the Visitor Center, the Palmer Pioneer Home, and the Palmer Senior Center serve as an outlet for crafts created by senior citizens, and are an opportunity for a little extra income.

The Alaska State Fair with its many exhibits serves as a showcase for crafts and handiwork. Competition for award ribbons and prize money among local senior citizens is high.

The Palmer Golf Course has been a source of enjoyment for many residents, as well as their out-of-town visitors.

Tennis courts, ball parks, a swimming pool, an indoor gym and a walking court at Palmer Middle School one block from the site, are there to be used by the active senior population.

Community Schools programs offer numerous participatory activities, where seniors' assistance is appreciated in sharing their knowledge, or to keep on learning.

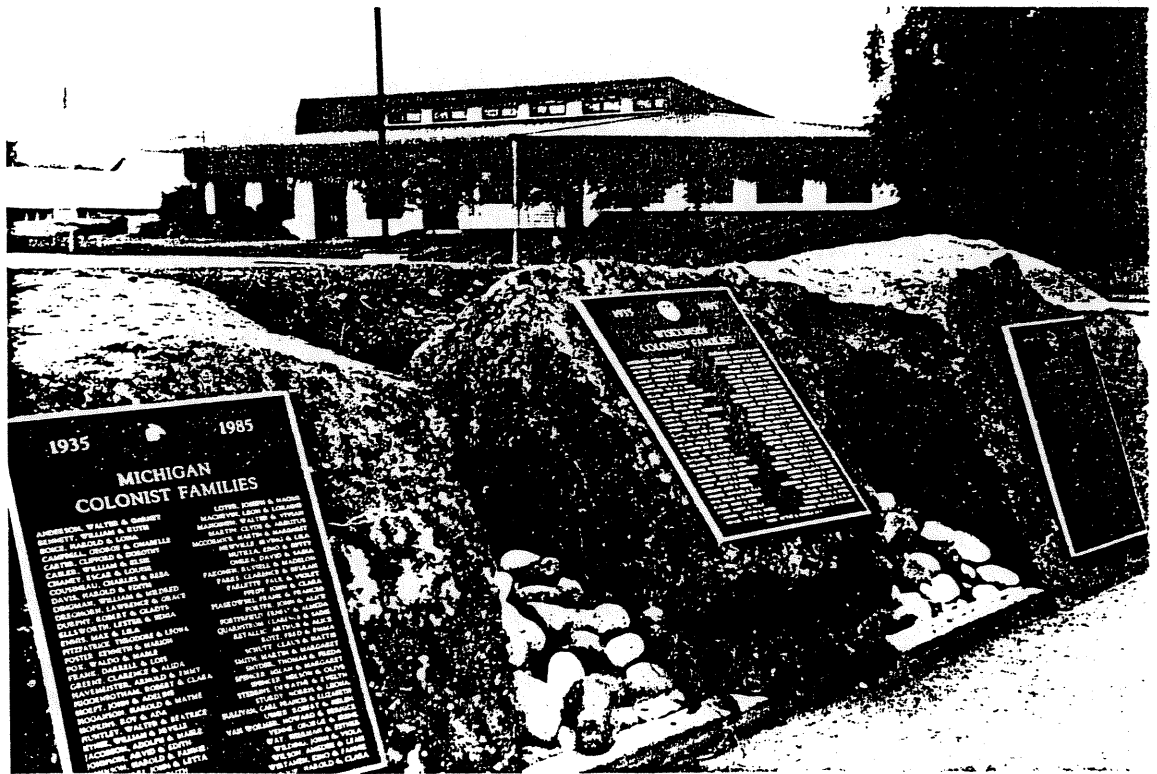
Nearby lakes and trails are easily accessible for fishing or other outdoor endeavors.

Productions of Valley Performing Arts theatre locally, or organized trips to Anchorage offer the cultural stimulation many senior citizens appreciate.



History and our Seniors

The senior population has a special place in the hearts of Palmer's residents. Many descendants of area homesteaders and colonists keep the town's history alive by honoring in many ways those who built the town. The Historical Society and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's Cultural Resources Department encourages Seniors to relate their lives's experiences through their oral history collection and sharing photographs so that we may never forget their contributions. The Palmer Chamber of Commerce appreciates senior citizens to take part in their events, be it the parade, or the annual Colony Christmas, or Colony Days festivals.



Human Resources for Seniors

Palmer Senior Center

The Palmer Senior Citizens Center, Inc.'s primary mission is to promote honor, dignity, security and independence for older Alaskans and to assist them in maintaining meaningful quality lives. Enabling and facilitating Seniors in their utilization of community resources allows them to maintain their independence in the community. Palmer Senior Center targets these individuals with the greatest economic and social needs, specifically the physically or emotionally frail and disabled, isolated, minority and low-income Seniors. This mission is addressed through the following programs.

NUTRITION PROGRAM

Congregate and home-delivered meals. Serving hot meals, meeting one-third of the daily recommended dietary allowance to the older Alaskan in a group setting or in their home.

Nutrition and Health Education. Educating the older Alaskan in the areas of nutrition and health.

CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Outreach. Initial contact with the older Alaskan and encouraging their use of existing community resources and services.

Case Management. Coordinating fragmented delivery of community resources and services for the at-risk older Alaskan with multiple needs, promoting their continued health and independence.

Information, Referral and Advocacy. Providing the older Alaskan with critical information and referral to community resources and services. Referral includes follow-up contact.

ADULT DAY CARE PROGRAM

Offering a safe, supervised setting of social, recreational and therapeutic activities for the physically or emotionally frail/disabled older Alaskan and the older Alaskan with Alzheimer's Disease or a related disorder.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation, Escort and Shopping Services. Driving the older Alaskan from one location to another, accompanying and assisting where necessary (includes shopping with a client).

SENIOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

Preparing the older Alaskan, meeting the poverty criteria established for Alaska by the US Department of Health and Human Services, for unsubsidized employment through subsidized part-time employment and training in community service activities.

OTHER SERVICES include weekly physical therapy and exercise programs, visits by podiatrists, hearing specialists, and social security representatives.





Health Care For Seniors

*WASILLA
WILL HAVE
BETTER FACILITY*

ol

VALLEY HOSPITAL

Valley Hospital is a 36-bed full-service health care facility, located close to the proposed site. These services include:

- 24-Hour Emergency Room with on-site physician
- Nuclear Medical & MRI
- CAT Scan Technology
- Laboratory for on-site testing
- Day Surgery
- Physical Therapies
- Dietitian
- Health Care Education Outreach
- Respiratory Care

PHYSICIANS

Valley Hospital's team of specialists, as well as other health care providers, have a strong presence in Palmer to provide the following services which seniors may require:

General & Family Practice:	6
General Surgery:	3
Internal Medicine:	1
Orthopedic Surgery:	2
Emergency Medicine:	4
Anesthesiology:	2
Obstetrics:	4
Dentists:	3 clinics
Orthodontist:	1
Opticians/Optometrists:	3
Hearing Specialist:	1

WASILLA HAS
All of This

Other Human Resource Organizations & Services

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

The "Loan Closet" offers wheelchairs, hospital beds, crutches, etc. to those needing the devices. Rehabilitation services are provided by volunteers. The "Reach to Recovery" program is for those recovering from mastectomy operations. Services are free to any age group.

BISHOP'S ATTIC

Provides low-cost clothing, household items and furniture, and offers volunteer aid to emergency victims.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVIC (U of A)

Conducts educational programs and is the umbrella for Mat-Su Homemakers clubs. The majority of Palmer's Homemakers consist of Seniors.

LIFEQUEST, INC.

A non-profit agency, funded largely through the Division of Mental Health and Developmental Disabled to provide mental health services to the Mat-Su area. The Center provides counseling; 24-hour crisis service, intervention, individual, family and couple therapy; consultation/evaluation; services to victims of physical and sexual abuse and their families; as well as community support programs. The Center also provides services to the chronically mentally ill.

MAT-SU COUNCIL ON THE PREVENTION OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Their services include prevention, intervention, treatment, education and recovery programs, such as counseling outpatient treatment programs with aftercare services, a women's outpatient treatment program, and a 24-hour helpline.

MAT-SU EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Employment oriented services include testing, evaluation, screening, vocational counseling, employment referral, and referral to various assisting agencies, such as Adult Education, Division of Veterans' Administration, American Legion, etc. The agency also administers the Unemployment Insurance Program, the Veteran's Job Training Act (VJTA), and the Work Incentive Program. The VJTA provides special services, including veterans' preference, to all veterans, with even more special provisions for the disabled veteran.

STARTING POINT

This private organization provides alcohol and drug abuse treatment for individuals and families.

VETERANS' CENTER

The Center offers counseling for Veterans, with emphasis on the Vietnam Veteran.

R. I. P.

Although there is a cemetery in Palmer, a local funeral home will facilitate the transfer to a veterans' final destination at the National Cemetery at Fort Richardson, Alaska, or other places in the US and take care of arrangements, including counseling to the bereaved. Two flower shops, and other services essential for these last ceremonies, are located in Palmer. Oftentimes, these heroes receive their last honors from their comrades at VFW, the American Legion, the Elks or the Moose.

