



## CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.

WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091

PHONE: (907) 373-9050

FAX: (907) 373-9085

### INFORMATION MEMORANDUM NO. 97-18

From: Duane Dvorak, City Planner 

Date: April 23, 1997

Subject: Request for Proposals (RFP) from interested non-profit organizations to sub-lease and occupy the Wasilla Railroad Depot.

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The Administration requested staff to develop the above referenced RFP, in response to ongoing Council discussions about this issue. The RFP language is attached for the Council's review. The RFP was posted at all the usual City posting locations and was advertised as a Public Service Announcement on KMBQ radio station and the Roger's Cable community scanner channel. The RFP was posted on April 2, 1997.

#### Response

One proposal was received prior to the April 22, 1997 deadline. The proposal was submitted by the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce, which the Council has already had the opportunity to review. The proposal appears to be self-explanatory in terms of establishing the Chamber's eligibility status as a qualified non-profit organization. The proposal covers the use intended for the depot, a lease proposal, restoration assessment and cost estimates, activity timeline, site plans, floor plans, etc. In addition, there are a number of support letters from various community organizations, including the local historical society.

#### Related Information

Staff notes that the RFP specifically states that the sub-lessee will be responsible for maintaining the depot. This is not consistent with the Chamber's proposal, which indicates that the City will be responsible for maintenance, including snow removal. If a sub-lease agreement is authorized by Council, however, this would be a negotiable item. The requirements for a disposal of interest in land (which includes leasehold interests, per WMC Section 7.04, Real Property Defined) are set forth in WMC Chapter 7.16, Disposal of Lands.

Staff has attached Council Information Memo 96-23, which generally reviews the Chamber's previous proposal to sublease the depot that was submitted in October-November 1996. Although that proposal was less formal than the current proposal, the resulting memo gives a good overview of the issues relating to the issue relating to the depot. In addition, staff has provided related Council Information Memo 97-17 which outlines the Council's primary options for dealing with this issue.



## **CITY OF WASILLA**

290 E. HERNING AVE.

WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091

PHONE: (907) 373-9050

FAX: (907) 373-9085

### **CITY OF WASILLA REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

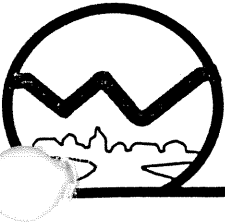
**To all interested non-profit organizations:**

**The Wasilla City Council is requesting proposals for the sub-lease and occupancy of the Old Wasilla Railroad Depot.**

**The Wasilla Railroad Depot is a historical building located along the Alaska Railroad right-of-way. The building may require 50 - 60 thousand dollars worth of repairs before it is habitable. The City Council, though, may consider a sub-lease of the building for less than fair market value to the organization submitting the most favorable proposal.**

**The agency or business selected to sub-lease the depot must meet the occupancy criteria set forth in the City's lease from the Alaska Railroad. In addition, the selected sub-lessee will also be required to bear the cost of maintaining the depot for the duration of the proposed sublease.**

**For more information about sub-leasing the Wasilla Railroad Depot, contact the Wasilla Planning Office at 373-9052 or stop by the Planning Office. The deadline for submitting a proposal is Wednesday, April 22, 1997.**



1830 E PARKS HWY \* SUITE A-116 \* CREEKSIDE PLAZA \* WASILLA, ALASKA 99654 \* PHONE (907) 376-1299 \* FAX (907) 373-2560

April 22, 1997

**RECEIVED**

APR 22 1997

Planning Department

Duane Dvorak, City Planner  
City of Wasilla  
290 E. Herning Avenue  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654-7091

Dear Duane:

In response to the City's request for proposals for the sub-lease and occupancy of the Wasilla Railroad Depot, I am re-submitting the proposal which we presented for the March 24, 1997 City Council meeting.

Please contact me with any questions or comments concerning our proposal.

Sincerely,

Ed Brittingham, Executive Director  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce

CC: Depot Committee  
Jack Williams, President, GWCoC

RECEIVED

APR 22 1997

Planning Department



Wasilla Depot - April 14 1919.



**WASILLA RAILROAD DEPOT  
PROPOSAL FOR OCCUPANCY  
and  
RESTORATION**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Committee Members:

Peggy Bowker, Lockwood Company  
Ed Brittingham, Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce  
Shawn Holliday, Your Valley Lawyer  
Dan Kennedy CPA, Kennedy & Co., LLC  
John Stein, Kids Are People, Inc.  
James Tapscott, Alaska Art Craft  
Jack Williams, First Montauk Securities  
Chair: Phil Lockwood, Lockwood Company

### Contributors:

Bea Adler, Museum of Alaska Transportation & Industry  
Jim Blasingame, Alaska Railroad Corporation  
David Borough, Alaska Live Steamers  
Bill Byers, A&B Tool Rental  
John Cooper, Historian  
Mike Fratwell, Alaska Railroad Corporation  
LeRoi Heaven, Wasilla-Knik-Willow Creek Historical Society  
Burt Lent, Group Three Designs  
Gov. Bill Sheffield, Alaska Railroad Corporation  
Millie Tapscott, Alaska Art Craft

The Depot Committee of the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce recognizes and wishes to acknowledge the substantial restoration work undertaken by the Wasilla Lions Club.

This committee also wishes to recognize the former Board and membership of the Wasilla Chamber who were involved in organizing fund raising activities, the receipts of which were donated to the Wasilla Depot's maintenance and restoration.

The efforts undertaken by both of these organizations in the 1980's allowed for the continued existence of this important structure.

This committee believes the proposal being presented to you builds on these past efforts and ensures the return of the Wasilla Depot to the status of a vital historical asset for the Community of Wasilla and the State of Alaska.



March 20, 1997

Mayor Sarah Palin, and  
Members of the Wasilla City Council  
290 East Herring Ave.  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

RE: Wasilla Railroad Depot Proposal

Greetings:

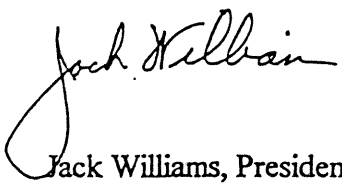
I am writing today to ask for your support for the enclosed "Wasilla Railroad Depot Proposal for Occupancy and Restoration."

Our proposal addresses the Chamber's interest in assisting with the immediate renovations required for occupancy, and the longer term renovations required to return the Depot to its original condition. Its strategic location is appropriate for the Chamber of Commerce, which represents the local business community which makes up the life blood of any community.

With its inclusion on the National Historic Register, the Depot is a prime candidate for grant funding to assist with the historically correct renovations which are required. When coupled with the offers of assistance from such organizations as the Mat-Su Home Builders Association, and Jim & Millie Tapscott from Alaska Art Craft, this can clearly develop into a project that will make the City of Wasilla proud! Our proposal for occupancy by the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce also provides a blueprint for the rejuvenation of a multi-faceted asset for the Community of Wasilla.

Thank you in advance for your support of this important proposal. We look forward to working with the City of Wasilla in pursuing our mission to create a positive economic and civic climate in the Greater Wasilla area, thereby making possible for members and the community to grow and prosper.

Sincerely,



Jack Williams, President  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce

# **CHAMBER ROLE IN COMMUNITY OF WASILLA**

## **OVERVIEW OF GREATER WASILLA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

The Greater Wasilla of Chamber of Commerce (GWCoC) is a voluntary organization of business and professional men and women who have joined together for the purpose of promoting the civic and commercial progress of our community. The area's economic well being is related directly to the caliber of work that is done by the Chamber. That is why the GWCoC has a major impact on business, income and future growth of the area.

There are two primary functions of a chamber of commerce: (1) it acts as spokesperson for the business and professional community and translates into action the consensus of its members, and (2) it renders specific services of a type that can be most effectively rendered by a community organization both to its members and to the community as a whole.

GWCoC activities are overseen by a 10-member Board of Directors comprised of dedicated community leaders who support the efforts of the Chamber. Board members are elected each year for two-year terms. Working together these 10 individuals develop policies for their own operations and for the operations of GWCoC as a whole.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

THE MISSION OF THE GREATER WASILLA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS TO CREATE A POSITIVE ECONOMIC & CIVIC CLIMATE IN THE GREATER WASILLA AREA, THEREBY MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR MEMBERS AND THE COMMUNITY TO GROW AND PROSPER. THROUGH MEMBERSHIP, OUR CHAMBER EXISTS TO FACILITATE GROUP ACTION ON THE PART OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

## **CHAMBER CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY**

- As ambassadors of the community of Wasilla, during 1996, the Chamber responded to approximately 3,500 walk-in visitors and answered phone/mail requests for visitor/relocation information from over 350 additional persons.
- Chamber serves as the primary conduit for information and opinions between government (all levels) and the business community.
- Chamber provides an unbiased forum platform for political candidates to discuss the essential and primary issues of each election.
- Chamber organizes, sponsors, and conducts the Iditarod Days and Wasilla Water Festivals for the community.
- Chamber provided support for Winter Wonderland/Tree Lighting festivals.
- Chamber is in the vanguard of support for development of a four-season resort at Hatcher Pass.
- Chamber passed a joint resolution with the Palmer Chamber in support of a four-season resort in the Butte area of the Valley.
- Chamber is in the vanguard of support for development of the Point McKenzie Port Project.
- Chamber is presently evaluating feasibility for development of a private prison facility at Point McKenzie as the first step in the Port Project development.
- Chamber has been in vanguard of Parks Highway Project.
- Chamber initiated development of a bid proposal for Wasilla to host 1998 Alaska State Chamber of Commerce Fall Convention – unsuccessful, but would have meant 300+ visitors meeting for approximately 3 days in Wasilla and Valley.
- Chamber was involved in supporting similar successful bid to secure year 2000 Republican State Convention for the Valley; networking with Matanuska-Susitna Convention and Visitors Bureau and local Republican Party members.
- Chamber is annually involved in such civic projects as Adopt-A-Highway and the Creek Clean-Up.
- Chamber Board and members are constantly asked and serve on numerous citizen and non-profit advisory committees and boards.

## **PROPOSED USES**

In addition to utilizing the Wasilla Depot as its office, additional uses envisioned by the Chamber include:

- Historical display of authentic railroad equipment, memorabilia, photos, etc.
- Community conference room will be established and made available to any non-profits, civic groups and organizations currently seeking a location (during regular business hours of operation).
- A small gift shop featuring merchandise/items made in the Mat-Su Valley.

# LEASE PROPOSAL

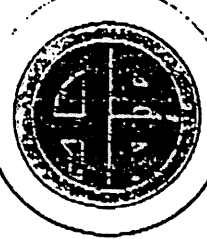
## Chamber proposed basic lease provisions:

<u>Lease Premises:</u>	Wasilla Depot
<u>Tenant:</u>	Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce
<u>Uses:</u>	Chamber Office Historical Railroad Display Community Conference Room Gift Shop
<u>Lease Period:</u>	Not less than ten (10) years
<u>Lease Payment:</u>	Ten dollars (\$10.00) per year
<u>Utility Payments:</u>	Will be assumed by GWCoC (to include gas, heat, electricity, power, and telephone services.)
<u>Insurance:</u>	Fire & Extended Coverage and Liability Insurance will be responsibility of City of Wasilla.
<u>Insurance Certification</u>	GWCoC shall provide City of Wasilla with a copy of its liability coverage, obtained from a reputable insurance company, and at its own expense.
<u>Real Estate Taxes:</u>	Will be responsibility of City of Wasilla.
<u>Exterior Grounds/Parking</u>	
<u>Maintenance:</u>	Will be responsibility of City of Wasilla. (To include snow removal)
<u>Interior/Exterior</u>	
<u>Structural Maintenance:</u>	Will be responsibility of City of Wasilla.*
<u>Sublease or Assignment:</u>	GWCoC, with prior approval of City of Wasilla, will have right to sublease any part of the leased space. *GWCoC agrees to reserve any rent payments received from sublesor in escrow account, to be applied to structural maintenance of Wasilla Depot.
<u>Historical Restoration:</u>	GWCoC will endeavor to make available to City of Wasilla whatever resources can be gathered from its members to assist this process. GWCoC further agrees to assist with any restoration by researching and applying for any available grants.

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITY TIMELINE SCHEDULE**

March 24, 1997:	Proposal presentation to City Council
April 21, 1997:	City Council response to Chamber Proposal
May 1, 1997:	Establishment of Restoration Committee
May 20, 1997:	On-site water supply needed
June 1, 1997:	Exterior painting, loading dock construction begins
August 1, 1997:	Interior clean up and painting begins
September 1, 1997:	Basic occupancy restoration work completion
September 15, 1997:	Parking area paving
October 1, 1997:	Begin work on interior displays
December 1, 1997:	Move-in date
December 15, 1997:	Wasilla Depot dedication

# ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION



Corporate Address: P.O. Box 107500, Anchorage, Alaska 99510  
327 W. Ship Creek Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501

March 17, 1997

Ed Brittingham  
Executive Director  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce  
1830 E. Parks Highway Suite A-116  
Creekside Plaza  
Wasilla, AK 99654

Dear Mr. Brittingham:

Several years ago, the Alaska Railroad Corporation donated the Wasilla Depot to the City of Wasilla. We understand that the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce has an interest in using the depot. The purpose of this letter is to show our support of the efforts of the Wasilla Chamber to use the depot for its headquarters. We believe its plans to display railroad memorabilia, operate a gift shop and offer meeting space for civic groups would enhance this asset and be a benefit to Wasilla.

We are always gratified when a community takes an active interest in the historical nature of the Railroad and works towards preserving its heritage.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at (907) 265-2680.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James B. Blasingame".

James B. Blasingame  
Vice President, Corporate Affairs



**MAT-SU HOME BUILDERS**

P.O. Box 875536 - Wasilla, AK 99687  
Phone: (907) 376-2666 Fax: (907) 376-2667

March 11, 1997

Ed Brittingham  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce

Dear Sir:

I am responding to your request to the Mat-Su Homebuilders Association (MSHBA) regarding the "restoration project" of the Wasilla Railroad Depot.

The MSHBA discussed your request at our March 6, 1997 Board of Directors meeting. We are interested in this as a community project on a limited basis. We would hope other community organizations would also participate in this effort. In the past, our members have contributed substantial effort to other projects in the Valley (i.e. Teelands, Colony House and Wonderland Park). I am confident a similar degree of enthusiasm and participation would be forthcoming for this project also.

What, if any, are the plans for use of the Depot after it has been brought back to a habitable condition? We support and prefer the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce be granted a long term lease on the Depot. In addition, the MSHBA would appreciate an opportunity to be considered as a co-tenant.

Sincerely,



Gary A. Smith  
President, MSHBA



**MISSION STATEMENT**

We promote ethical and credible standards for our industry. In addition, we provide education and information for our members as well as the community. We are the primary authority on general and legislative home building issues in our area.



P.O. Box 870646  
Wasilla, AK 99687  
(907) 376-1211  
FAX (907) 376-3082



March 11, 1997

Ed Brittingham, Director  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce  
1830 E. Parks Hwy., Suite A-116  
Wasilla, AK 99654

Dear Mr. Brittingham:

We at the Museum of Alaska Transportation & Industry have been aware for some time of the need to revitalize the Wasilla Depot of the Alaska Railroad. Its proposed use as headquarters of the Wasilla Chamber of Commerce presents an ideal way to bring the historic structure into the mainstream of Wasilla's commercial district.

I understand the proposal entails sharing the space with the Mat-Su Homebuilders Association whose expertise would be called upon to provide guidance and skilled labor to continue conservation and restoration efforts for the building.

Please consider this a vote of support for these efforts.

Sincerely,

Sherman Bear, President  
Board of Directors



ALASKA ART CRAFT  
JIM & MILLIE TAPSCOTT

March 10, 1997

Mr. Ed Brittingham  
Executive Director  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce  
1830 East Parks Hiway #A116  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

Re: Restoration of  
the Wasilla Depot

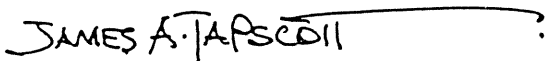
Dear Ed:

This letter confirms that Millie and I offer to help collect historic memorabilia, old photographs, authentic documents, mechanical railroadiiana and miscellaneous other appropriate antiquity for use as decor to create historic ambiance and atmosphere for the old Alaska Railroad depot in Wasilla.

This hinges on the building being restored in a timely manner and the Wasilla Chamber of Commerce being assured they will be the occupants on a long term basis.

The acquisition of some antiquity, photo copying, mounting materials, framing, encasement, etc. and the estimated costs involved would be subject to approval by the Chamber board.

Yours very truly,



Jim and Millie Tapscott



P.O. BOX 872002  
Wasilla, AK 99687-2002

March 11, 1997

Wasilla Chamber of Commerce  
1830 East Parks Hwy.  
Suite 116  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

Dear Jack Williams:

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. ,Tuesday March 11, 1997, your chambers proposal for occupancy , historical renovation and displays, gift shop, and conference area was presented to the Board.

The Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. fully supports your endeavor and provides the attached resolution of support.

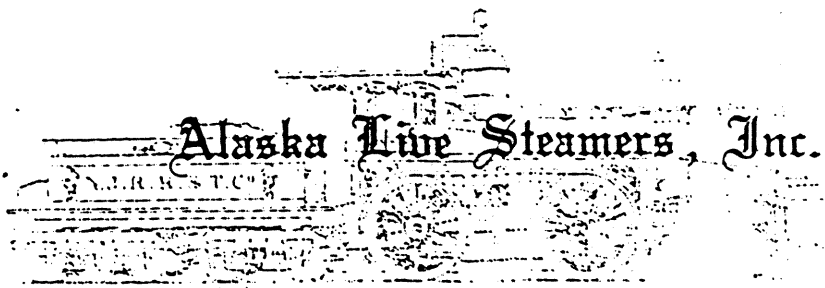
If the Live Steamers can be of any further assistance please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

David F. Borough - President

Cc:File

Enclosures 1- resolution



RESOLUTION of SUPPORT

By action of the Board of Directors on March 11, 1997 in consideration of the proposed Site development of the Wasilla Railroad Depot for use by the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce Presented to the board by David F. Borough President Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. ;

WHEREAS , the Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. share similar objectives in historical preservation and education;

WHEREAS, the Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. believe that the historical restoration of the Wasilla Depot will provide a valuable asset to the Mat-Su Valley;

WHEREAS, the Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. fully support the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce's plan for the Depot reclamation project;

WHEREAS, the Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. agree that the fully completed Depot project will provide a destination activity for all Alaskans, their guests and all visitors to the State of Alaska;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Alaska Live Steamers, Inc. fully support the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce's proposal for Historical restoration and use of the Wasilla Railroad Depot.

David F. Borough

Alaska Live Steamers, Inc.- President

Historical Society

323 Main Street  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

March 13, 1997

To Whom It May Concern:

The Wasilla-Knik-Willow Creek Historical Society is in support of the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce occupying a portion of the Wasilla Depot building.

The reasons we support this are many:

1. It will have the building occupied and cared for by a responsible local business organization.
2. The building is an appropriate place for this type of organization that deals with the local and tourist public in our community.
3. The goals of the Chamber of Commerce are to promote business in Wasilla and this location will be very visible to the business public.
4. With the Chamber using the Wasilla Depot on a daily basis, it will be possible for the waiting room of the depot to be open for the traveling public. They will be able to use the depot facilities and talk to people about Wasilla. This will be another way of helping to promote Wasilla to local and visiting travelers.

The only concerns we see at this time (which we feel can be worked out) are:

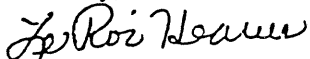
1. Parking. Arrangements could be made to utilize some of the area to east end of the building. There would still be room for a small park strip with picnic tables.
2. Historic preservation.

The waiting room should be restored to it's original appearance dating from the early 1920's. We want to insure the integrity of this historic building as it is listed on the National Register of Historic Building.

This fact will, in itself, draw people to Wasilla and to the Chamber Office.

We ask Wasilla City Council to vote in favor of the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce using the Wasilla Depot building.

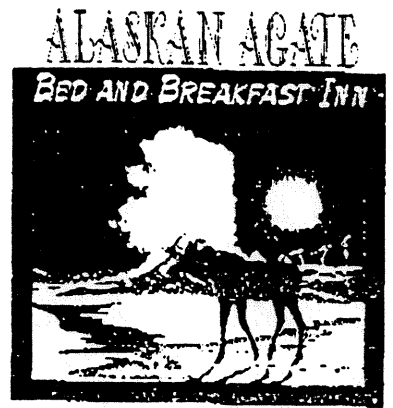
Sincerely,



Wasilla-Knik-Willow Creek Historical Society

LeRoi Heaven, President

phone: 373-9071 fax: 376-5560



March 20, 1997

Ed Brittingham, Executive Director  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce  
Fax 373-2560

Dear Mr. Brittingham:

This letter is to indicate our support for the Chamber's endeavors to gain tenancy in the old Wasilla Railroad Depot. There are numerous examples of Cities and Chambers working together to maintain a historic building and upgrade an eyesore like many see as their first stop in Wasilla. Flagstaff, Arizona has taken a similar historic Railroad depot and turned it into an internationally recognized visitor information center and offices. The maintenance of the depot and development of public restrooms for travelers would help make Wasilla a visitor destination. Development of the Wasilla Railroad Depot as a visitor information center is very important for the growth of Wasilla's visitor industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Wm. Harvey Bowers'.

Wm. Harvey Bowers

MAIN STREET

PARKS HIGHWAY

ALASKA RAILROAD

EXISTING CONCRETE PLATFORM

Deliv  
HC

PARKING  
9 SPACES

POSSIBLE  
FUTURE  
SIDEWALK

WASILLA  
TRAIN DEPOT

EXISTING  
FIRE HYDRANT

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL PARKING

R.R. AVENUE

KNIK ROAD

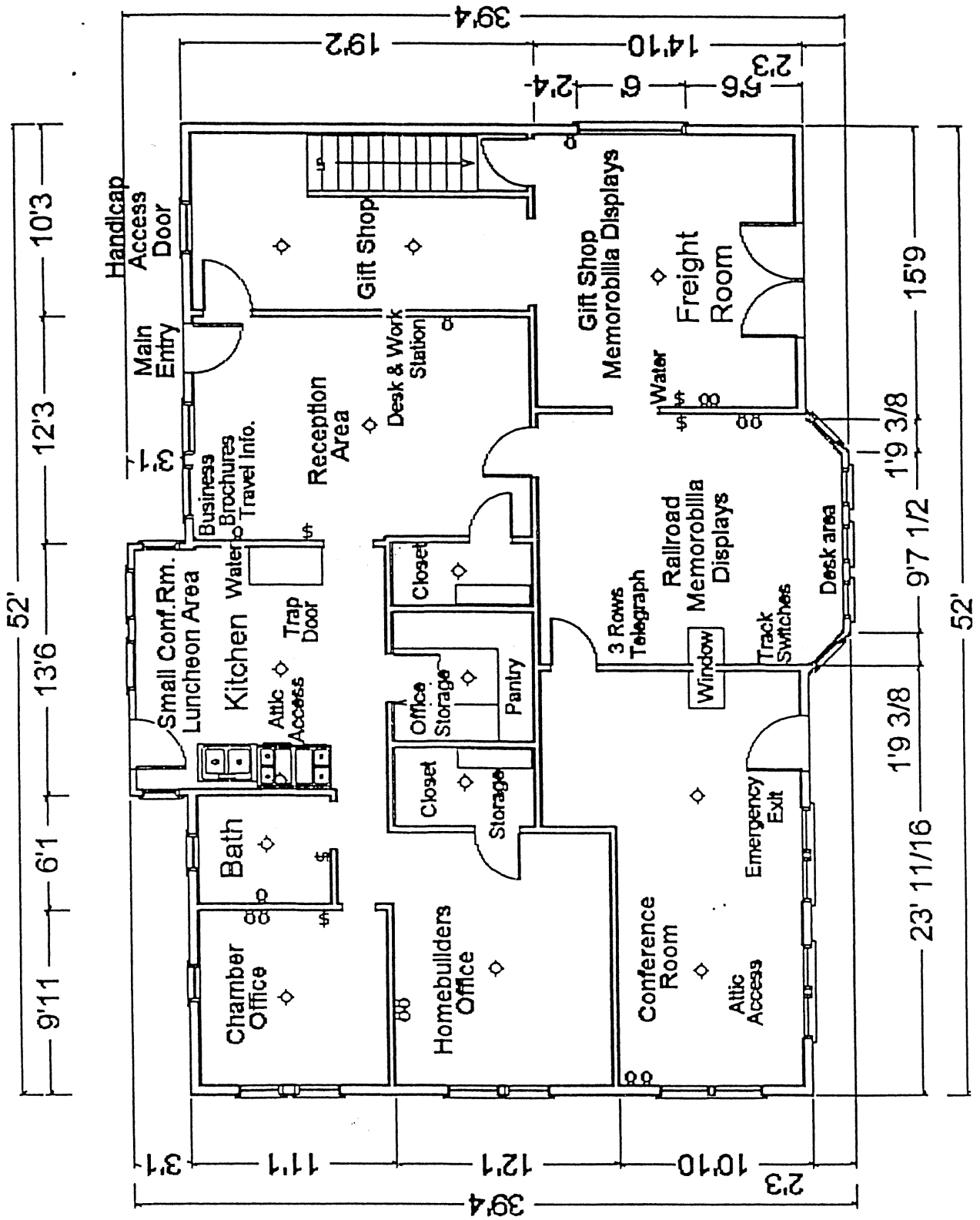
# SITE PLAN

1" = 40'



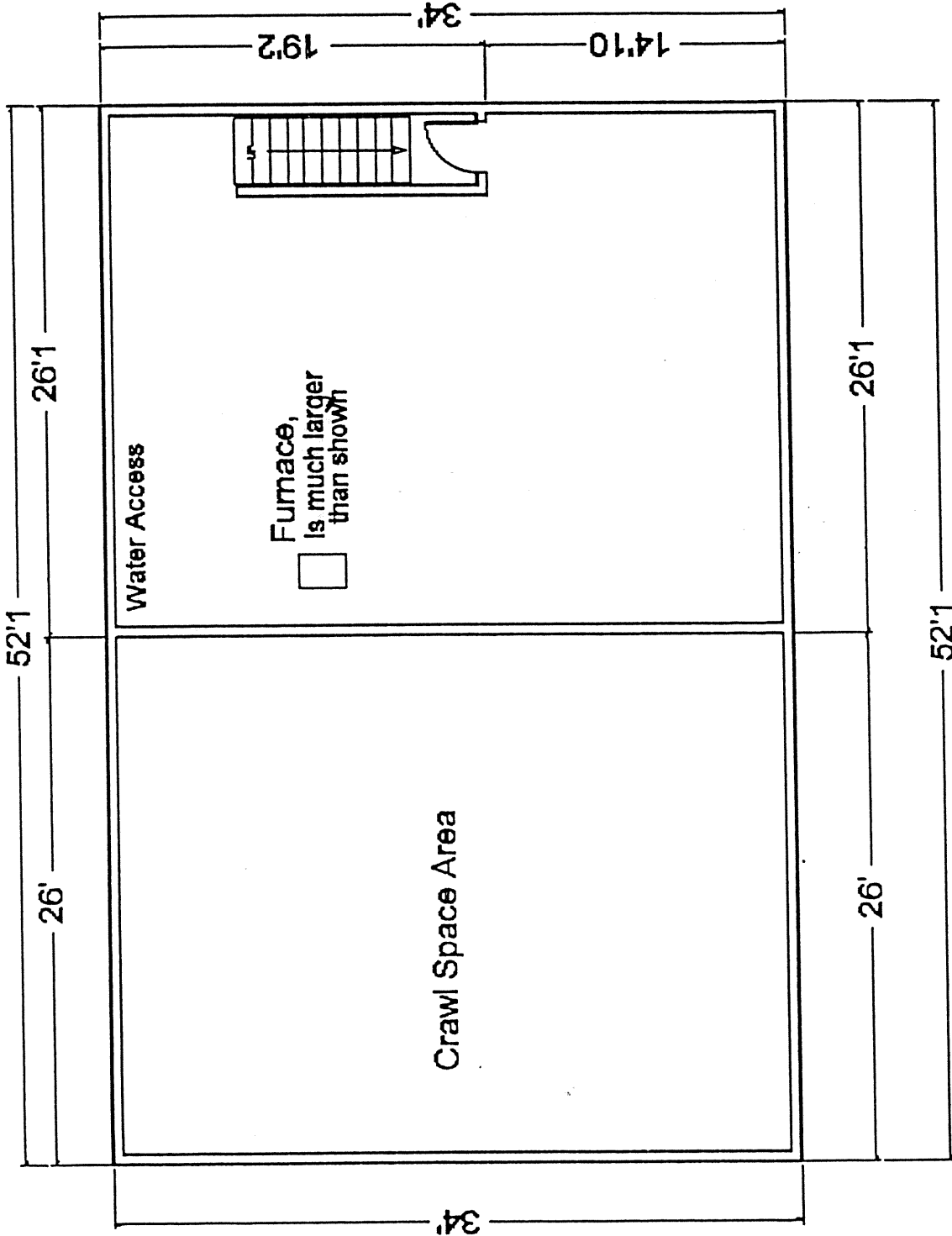
# Main Level

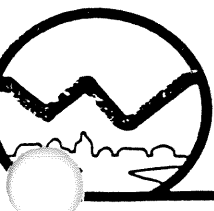
SCALE  
1/8" = 1'





# Basement





RESOLUTION 97-08

**A RESOLUTION OF THE GREATER WASILLA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN SUPPORT OF CHAMBER OCCUPANCY OF THE WASILLA DEPOT.**

WHEREAS the role of any chamber of commerce is to promote the economic prosperity and civic welfare of the community it serves, and;


WHEREAS the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to creating a positive economic climate, and thus assisting in the growth and prosperity of the community, and;

WHEREAS the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce needs a central and highly visible location within the community from which to conduct its business, and;

WHEREAS the Wasilla Depot satisfies the visibility and central location requirements of the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce requests the City Council and Mayor of Wasilla consider making the Wasilla Depot available as the office of the Chamber.


ADOPTED this 12th day of March 1997:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Williams, President

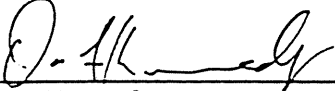
3-12-97  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Shawn Holliday, Vice-President


3/12/97  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Overstreet, Secretary

3/14/97  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Kennedy CPA, Treasurer

3/12/97  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

ATTEST:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Overstreet, Secretary

3/14/97  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# STATE OF ALASKA

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

RONALD L. OTTE  
COMMISSIONER

### DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION

March 18, 1997

Phil Lockwood  
301 W. Lakeview Drive  
Wasilla, AK. 99654

SUBJECT: Railroad Depot  
TOWN: Wasilla  
Pre-construction Inspection  
1994 UNIFORM FIRE CODE

Dear Mr. Lockwood:

In response to your request for an opinion of the requirements needed to bring the Railroad Depot up to the current code because the occupancy of this building is changing to a museum and office building I offer the following:

This building was inspected as a courtesy inspection, it was not a formal inspection nor a priority inspection as defined by our office. You must understand once plans are submitted for a formal plan review items may be identified during this process which may result in additional requirements be met. The type of construction for this building is type V-N, and the occupancy classification would be group "B". I have figured out the occupant load of 47, from the drawing you submitted.

It appears you have enough exits, however, exits signs should be provided in the display area as well as the conference room so the emergency exit is clearly marked. The only other requirement that is not called out in the drawing is the placement of fire extinguishers. A (2A103c) extinguisher should be provided on each level of this building. The boiler must be enclosed, if the basement is to be used for storage as you indicated it might be. Storage of combustible materials is not allowed in boiler rooms or mechanical rooms. In addition if the basement area is to be used for storage, the ceiling must be covered in gypsum wallboard. If a door is not provided at the top of the stairs leading to the basement I would suggest a chain be placed across this area to keep the public out and also to prevent someone from going downstairs in the event of an emergency trying to get out of the building.

PLY TO:

P.O. BOX 111200  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-1200  
PHONE: (907) 465-4331  
FAX: (907) 462-6660

5700 EAST TUMOR ROAD  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99507  
PHONE: (907) 269-5604

1979 PEPPER ROAD  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99709  
PHONE: (907) 451-5200

It must be understood that the inclusion of and compliance with State Fire Safety Regulations does not preclude the necessity of compliance with the requirements of local codes and ordinances. This letter does not take the place of a formal plan review, and it must be understood stamped plans must be submitted to this office prior to any construction, repair, remodel, addition or change of occupancy to this building takes place.

If we can be of further assistance in this matter, please feel free to contact us at the address below.

Sincerely,



Pamela L. Ness  
Deputy Fire Marshal

# Train depot again fulfilling its mission

EDINBURG (AP) — In 1927, the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot opened this city's doors to commerce.

Almost 70 years later, as headquarters of the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce, the stately building comes full circle, once again drawing industry here.

The original brown tile floor and wooden-stained ceiling beams still adorn the old train station. A coat of rich orange paint covers the exterior of the Spanish colonial structure.

"We tried really hard to keep the building looking as close as possible to the way it looked in the late 20s," said Martha Noell, executive vice president for the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce. "There were a few changes that were made in the building's structure. But other than that, it looks pretty much the way it did back then."

The train station closed its doors in 1982, and remained vacant until 1989, when Miguel Pizzuto of Mexico purchased it. Pizzuto began renovating the station, but never finished the job.

"The Chamber of Commerce is always looking to renovate classic

is part of our community's history and reflects our downtown area."

The building, situated just west of the courthouse on University Drive, houses the Chamber of Commerce as well as the Visitors Bureau, the Economic Development Corporation and the Industrial Foundation.

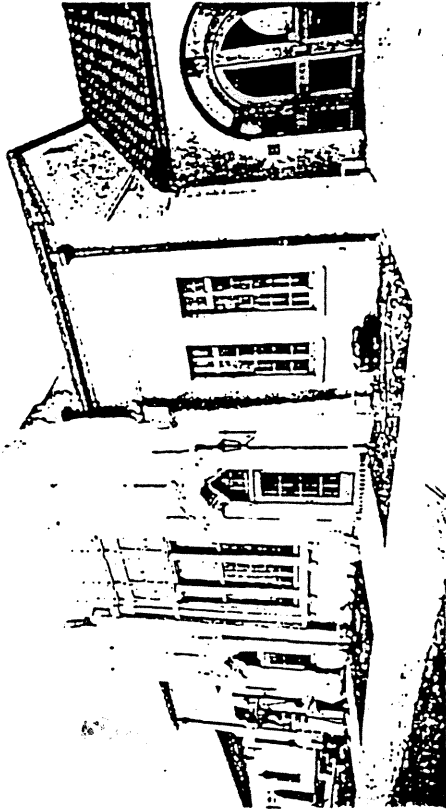
"The city of Edinburg has always been proud of the old train station," said Mayor Joe Ochoa. "With the structure housing the Chamber of Commerce, all the citizens of Edinburg can really enjoy the building."

After two years of shuffling paperwork, restoration of the historic building began in January. During that time, the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce was housed in temporary quarters.

"Because the train station is considered a Texas Historical Landmark, we had to be very careful in our restorations," Noell said.

Light fixtures on the outer windows were in bad shape and had to be duplicated.

"Through some old photographs, and with the help of some architect lectures from Corpus Christi, we now have the light fixtures looking like they came with the building,"



Associated Press

This train depot in Edinburg opened the city's doors to commerce. The station closed in 1982 and sat empty for many years, left to the mercy of neglect and vandals. It was recently restored and is now the home of the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce, once again serving to fulfill the city's commerce needs.

buildings such as the old train station," Noell said. "These old buildings are our heritage."

In June 1994, the Edinburg Industrial Foundation purchased the station with a \$400,000 grant from the Texas Department of Transportation.

Noell said.

The white concrete Roman columns at the center of the open waiting rooms were enlivened with glass to create more and meeting room space.

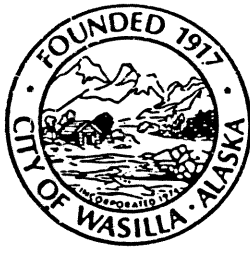
"When we restored the building we had the public in mind," she said. "We have three meeting rooms which we have made available to the public."

The rooms rent for \$10 a business hour and \$40 during the evening.

"Now that the Chamber of Commerce has moved into the building, it is once again playing a center role in Edinburg's development," Noell said.

The station still attracts some of its old clientele. About once a week, two local train conductors stop to eat lunch at the nearby Jaiba Restaurant. Frequently they peek in at the old station.

"The old train station will always be a focus point for tourists as the residents of Edinburg," Milford said.



INFORMATION MEMORANDUM NO. 96-32

From: Karol Kolehmainen, Assistant City Planner <sup>KK</sup>

Through: Duane Dvorak, City Planner <sup>DD</sup>

Through: Sarah Palin, Mayor

To: Wasilla City Council

Date: November 20, 1996

Subject: Preliminary investigation of the possible sub-lease of the Alaska Railroad (ARR) Wasilla Depot Building by the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce.

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At the November 13, 1996 regular meeting, the Wasilla City Council requested staff investigate subject sub-lease. This memorandum provides information on the request, ownership of the Depot Building, and stage of remodel. Also included is background information on City goals for the building and past handling of such requests. While staff has not formulated any recommendations in this memorandum, we have provided some options and points for consideration by the Council.

The Request

The Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce (GWCO) formalized their request in a letter dated November 11, 1996 (att. 1). In paragraph seven, they requested the City consider making the Depot available "...at no cost, for its permanent location". The Chamber desires a site with maximum exposure, accessibility, and a high profile to fulfill their role as "...the primary conduit for tourist, business and community information". Of significant note are the statistics from the previous year, counting 6000 visitors and 4000 telephone calls. They expect these totals could conservatively double if located in their own stand alone facility. The letter addresses some of the renovation work necessary for the building and mentions a possible commitment by the Homebuilders Association to work on the exterior of the building stating they might "take the depot renovations as their pro-bono annual project." The letter indicates an interest in, but a lack of understanding of, interior repairs which are necessary.

Ownership

In 1982, the Depot and eighty-five (85) feet of the Railroad's mainline track right-of-way was leased to the City for fifty-five (55) years (att. 2). In the original agreement, the

lease could be assigned without Alaska Railroad (ARR) permission, subject to the terms and conditions of the City lease; however, this paragraph was changed in a supplemental agreement (att. 3) to require written consent. Also of note, is a change in the property to include only the north forty-five (45) feet of the southerly 85 feet of the right-of-way. Additionally, there is a twenty-five foot setback from the Railroad's track facilities and bumping blocks required for vehicular parking. These restrictions severely limit parking to certainly less than ten vehicles (perhaps as few as seven). The City is bound to sub-lease only to non-profits, with commercial use limited to a small gift shop for a tourist center or a museum.

### Stage of Remodel

Mr. John Cooper's memorandum (att. 4), dated October 21, 1996, provides the most current insight as to the state of the remodel project. The basic, and necessary, restoration is almost complete (foundation, wood skirting almost done, new wiring heating and alarm systems, and basic window repairs). Also identified are the repairs which remain, including interior cleaning and painting, replacing the bathroom floor, repair of the plumbing, reworking the rear freight door (handicapped entrance), rebuilding the platform (the railroad is considering an old style plank deck), and stripping and repainting the building. The insulation in the building may also be very inadequate for a full time occupant. In the past, this project alone has had estimates between \$2500 and \$13,738. City funds, with a CIP request of \$51,173 with \$20,000 allocated, have essentially been expended.

### City Goals

The City must maintain the depot as a historic landmark and any use would need to be compatible with this requirement. According to letters from Mayor Stein to interested parties, the City would like to restore the building to a stable condition and then sub-lease it to a not-for-profit tenant. Several factors for consideration are mentioned in the letter (att. 5), not the least of which is paragraph four, a reference to the City's desire to have a use which would generate sufficient revenue to pay the routine operation and maintenance costs. As stated earlier, parking is very limited and pedestrian traffic is subjected to the hazards of a forty-five mph main rail line.

There has been a previous sub-lease to the Lion's initiated in 1993. Among other requirements, the group agreed to maintain both the interior and exterior of the building. Other costs mentioned in this agreement were providing \$40,000 of insurance and utilities being paid by the Lion's.

### Factors and Options

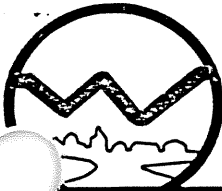
The costs and fees associated with the restoration and maintenance of the building seem to conflict with the City's needs and the Chamber's desires. The volume of traffic generated by any use and the safety of those involved must be considered. There

have been several previous inquiries from other non-profit organizations, the most recent being the 4-H Leaders Board at the September 23, 1996 Council meeting, and a fair process should be used to determine the occupant.

Past inquiries have been met with a request of a budget for the proposed use. This is a reasonable request considering the investment by the community. In the interest of fairness, the City could go out for bids from all interested non-profits. The timing of the bid could aid some and eliminate others, especially if restoration is included as a requirement. The most recent stated policy has been to delay occupancy until restoration is complete. Keeping with this policy would mean denial of any requests until the building is restored. The City could continue this policy or determine if there are advantages to a "partnership" with a tenant prior to the completion of the project.

Attachment 1	GWCOG Letter
Attachment 2	ARR Lease Extract
Attachment 3	ARR Lease Supplement Extract
Attachment 4	John Cooper Memorandum
Attachment 5	Mayor Stein Letter





November 11, 1996

**CLERKS OFFICE**

ATTACHMENT 1

The Honorable Mayor Sarah Palin  
290 East Herning Avenue  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654-7091

NOV 12 1996

RECEIVED

Dear Sarah:

At your request I am writing to formalize the Chamber's interest in the Wasilla Depot as our permanent home. As you are aware, the Chamber is losing its long-standing lease with the Cottonwood Creek Mall Management on November 23, 1996.

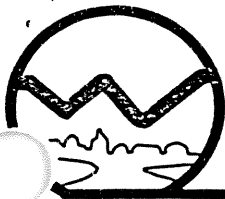
I have been asked by the Chamber Board to find new quarters, and have approached the task at two levels. First, I have initiated a search for a short-term solution. Ideally, this will result in rent-free housing for up to one year. Second, I have simultaneously begun exploring long-term permanent housing options.

At the top of our long-term list is the currently vacant train depot. It is our opinion that there is no better potential location for the Wasilla Chamber of Commerce offices than the depot. It affords maximum exposure and accessibility which are essential to the role we must fill for the community.

Last year, while located in the Cottonwood Creek Mall and without the benefit of direct exterior signing, we responded to over 6,000 people who visited our office. We also handled another 4,000 telephone requests for tourist/relocation information. This year's count appears to be close to equalling last year's, despite the drop in summer tourism throughout the Valley. It is obvious that if we were in a properly signed, stand-alone facility our visitor numbers would (conservatively) double.

As the City begins to assert itself as the destination location within the Valley, it is absolutely essential that the Chamber, the primary conduit for tourist, business, and community information, be located in the highest profile location the community can offer.

The current partially-renovated condition of the depot has been addressed by the President of the Homebuilders Association, Phil Lockwood. Phil indicated to me that his association would be willing to take the depot's renovations on as their pro-bono annual project. He further indicated that with their skills and attention, the entire exterior could probably be completed in one day. However, I have been told there are extensive renovations to the plumbing, heating, and interior which are required. Also, the historical integrity of any renovations must also be considered. The depot is listed on the National Historic Register, according to Jim Blasingame, Alaska Railroad Vice-President of Corporate Affairs.



Greater  
*Wasilla*  
Chamber of Commerce

*Wasilla . . . "Home of the Iditarod"*

1801 Parks Highway • Suite C 18 • Cottonwood Creek Mall • Wasilla, Alaska 99654 • Telephone (907) 376-1299 • Fax (907) 373-2560

I would like to request that the City of Wasilla consider making the depot available to the Chamber, at no cost, for its permanent location. I am planning to make myself available at the next City Council meeting in the hopes of addressing our request.

Please contact me if I can provide you with any additional information.

Sincerely,

Ed Brittingham, Executive Director  
Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce

CC: Board of Directors, GWCO

Contract No. 69-25-0003-5480

ATTACHMENT 2

L E A S E

THIS INDENTURE, made this 30<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1982, by and between THE ALASKA RAILROAD, herein called the "Railroad," and CITY OF WASILLA, P.O. Box 430, Wasilla, AK 99687, herein called "Lessee."

WITNESSETH:

FIRST: The Railroad hereby leases to the Lessee the following described property:

The Alaska Railroad Wasilla Depot Building ARR Bldg. No. 16001 and appurtenances thereto i.e., fuel oil systems; septic systems along with the land described below all of which is located within the Railroad mainline track right-of-way at Wasilla, Alaska, described as follows:

The southerly 85 feet of the Railroad's mainline track right-of-way from the east right-of-way line of the State of Alaska crossing at track Survey Station 5662+12.60, Milepost 159.87 (Main Street extended) east to a point 150 feet east of the east side of said Wasilla Depot Building.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above-described premises, subject to the provisions following for a term of FIFTY-FIVE (55) YEARS, beginning OCTOBER 1, 1982, but subject always to the following express conditions, namely:

ATTACHMENT 3

Supplement No. 1 to  
Contract No. 69-25-0003-5480

S U P P L E M E N T

WHEREAS, by a lease dated September 30, 1982, designated as Contract No. 69-25-0003-5480, THE ALASKA RAILROAD therein called "Railroad", did lease to the CITY OF WASILLA, P.O. Box 430, Wasilla, AK 99687, therein called "Lessee", The Alaska Railroad's Wasilla Depot Building along with a portion of the Railroad's mainline track right-of-way at Wasilla, Alaska; and

WHEREAS, it has been discovered that there are two (2) errors in the subject lease which require correcting. The first error is in the legal description and the second error appears in Condition 21.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby agreed between the parties hereto that effective upon execution of this Supplement the lease between them dated September 30, 1982, designated as Contract No. 69-25-0003-5480, is hereby amended as follows:

1. The legal description contained on Page 1 of the aforesaid lease is hereby deleted in its entirety and the following inserted in place thereof:

The Railroad hereby leases to the Lessee the following described property:

The Alaska Railroad's Wasilla Depot Building  
ARR Bldg. No. 160-01 and appurtenances thereto  
i.e., fuel oil systems, septic systems along  
with the land described below all of which is  
located within the Railroad's mainline track  
right-of-way at Wasilla, Alaska, described as  
follows:

The north 45 feet of the southerly 85 feet of  
the Railroad's mainline track right-of-way from  
the east right-of-way line of the State of  
Alaska crossing at track Survey Station  
5662+12.60, Milepost 159.87 (Main Street  
extended) east to a point 150 feet east of the  
east side of said Wasilla Depot Building.

2. Condition 21, Page 5 of the aforesaid lease is hereby deleted in its entirety and the following inserted in place thereof:

It is further agreed that the Lessee shall have no power to assign this lease, for the purpose of transferring total interest therein to another without first having received the written consent of the Railroad. The prohibition shall not prohibit Lessee from subleasing or renting the premises herein leased to others subject to the terms and conditions of this lease without the prior consent of the Railroad.

EXCEPT AS HEREIN AMENDED, all other terms and conditions of the aforesaid lease shall remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Supplement this 29th day of December, 1982.

THE ALASKA RAILROAD

By *James Riley*  
Manager, Industrial Development &  
Real Estate

CITY OF WASILLA

By *Charles Newcomb*  
Title *Mayor*

10/21/96

ATTACHMENT 4

Memo

Ref.: Brief closure report, larger projects or potential problem overview.

To: Sarah Palin, Mayor  
From: John Cooper, Director

Sarah,

As you already know staff in both the Museum and Recreation Divisions are lined out for the immediate future and know what their tasks are. For the last half of this month, before seasonal layoff, Jana Griffin and Ken Langlois will be primarily focusing on Museum Division maintenance projects and will be paid out of the museum's special salaries account. As you may already be aware with 8 buildings and a small park the Museum Division has had to run its own small Public Works Dept..

Wonderland Playground: I have arranged, and paid for, an M.E.A. power drop for security lights, and the installation of a light pole. The meter base has been installed and we have an electrician ready to install the security lights after M.E.A. does their part. Because of time, season, and cost the wooden perimeter fencing of the playground will have to wait. Where possible existing fencing has been strengthened.

Old Wasilla Airport Park: #1. I believe at all costs the City should avoid further involvement with the bleachers loaned to us by the school district and which have been placed at the Iditarod Start site. They are slick metal types, which need a fair amount of work anyway, and I think represent a major liability to the city in frost or rain conditions. #2. Landscape Architect Jonathon Shilk is working on the final concept design drawing (after multiple public meetings and planning sessions) for the 29 acre Airport Park site. It will soon be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission who will then send it to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will in turn send it to City Council for their review and approval.

Wasilla R.R. Depot: The most basic, and necessary, restoration of the building is almost complete. The foundation repairs are complete. The wooden skirting replacement will soon be complete. Wiring, heating, and alarm systems are new. Basic window repairs are complete. To do: Interior cleaning and painting needs to be done. The bathroom floor needs installation and the plumbing needs to be reengineered and installed. The rear freight door needs to be rebuilt and ramped as a handicapped access portal. The platform needs to be rebuilt and the Railroad has agreed to consider redoing an old style plank deck. To date two contractors have not gotten us the estimates required by the railroad. The building needs to be stripped and repainted in its original color ( Latte tan or dark green) and due to expense may wind up as a volunteer project in

warmer weather.

**Herning/Teeland Store:** The sewer installation will go in tomorrow. The water hookup (access to water) has some problems and we hope to have them resolved this week. If not it may take till late May to connect.

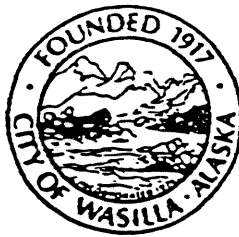
**Historical Park:** Due to log repairs and a new and higher foundation the Trench Cabin needs a raised floor. It will be installed in November.

**Museum Sprinkler System:** As originally intended, and funded, a straight forward sprinkler system installation would be relatively easy to install. However, the buildings roof badly needs support which could be given as part of a restoration of the main exhibit hall. To do this the plan has been to sell the existing 600 lbs of existing halon fire suppression gas for the best price possible and to combine the money with existing money as to allow both restoration of the building and installation of a sprinkler system. At this time it might be better to simply follow the original plan unless sufficient skilled help can be marshalled to follow through on the preferred plan. (Perhaps with Historical Society volunteer support?)

**Bumpus Ballfields/Mat-Su Softball Association management contract:** Late in the season this year it became clear there was a problem developing with the Mat-Su Softball Association and how they have, or have not, lived up to their contract. The Assoc. seems to currently be in clear violation of the contract inasmuch as without making any arrangement with or talking to the City about it they hired an employee to do functions normally provided by the city and then also in violation of the contract they billed the City for said employees services. In order to insure contract compliance the contract should be renegotiated, in one year increments.

**Department status:** A great deal of staff, thought, examination, and planning went into the formation of the Museum and Recreation Services Department (not to mention years of volunteer time and service). As a professional I strongly recommend the organization be left as is.

**Training:** Seasonal crew chiefs should both be assisted in getting their water system certifications as to be much more efficient timewise when it comes to turning water mains on and off at public facilities. Now they have to wait for Public Works staff to do it when they can schedule it in. More skills should be required of our seasonals, such as Certified Drivers Licenses, and we may have to pay more as well. With only one crew chief CDL driver and a very large water truck the crew chief will be tied up too much when his supervision and skills are needed elsewhere.



## CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.  
WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091  
PHONE: (907) 373-9050  
FAX: (907) 373-9085

September 26, 1996

### ATTACHMENT 5

4-H Team Leaders' Board  
Dorothy Adams  
HC01 Box 6267  
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Dear Ms. Adams:

Thank you for your inquiry and ideas for use of the old Wasilla railroad depot.

As you are aware, the depot foundation is being restored as well as its basic mechanical and electrical systems. The City's goal is to get the building into stable condition and ready to sub-lease to a not-for-profit tenant sometime in 1997. The City will advertise for proposals at that time.

As you consider your proposed use, please consider the following criteria which we expect will be among those to be used to select the tenant:

- (1) The depot is a historical landmark. It is to be kept in a condition and used in a manner which preserves its historically accurate appearance both outside and in.
- (2) Because of its limited parking and neighboring congested highway, any use should minimize generation of automobile traffic.
- (3) Because of its location adjacent to the dangerous 45 mph main rail line, pedestrians must be safely separated from the tracks.
- (4) The proposed use should generate revenue sufficient to pay the routine operation and maintenance of the building including heat, lights, insurance, snow removal, reserves for painting, roof replacement, furnace repair and so forth.

In order to fully understand those costs, you should develop a budget for the building for your proposed term of use. Museum and Recreational Services Director John Cooper may be able to help you with cost estimates.

We look forward to discussing this opportunity with you.

Sincerely,

John C. Stein, Mayor

cc: Council  
John Cooper