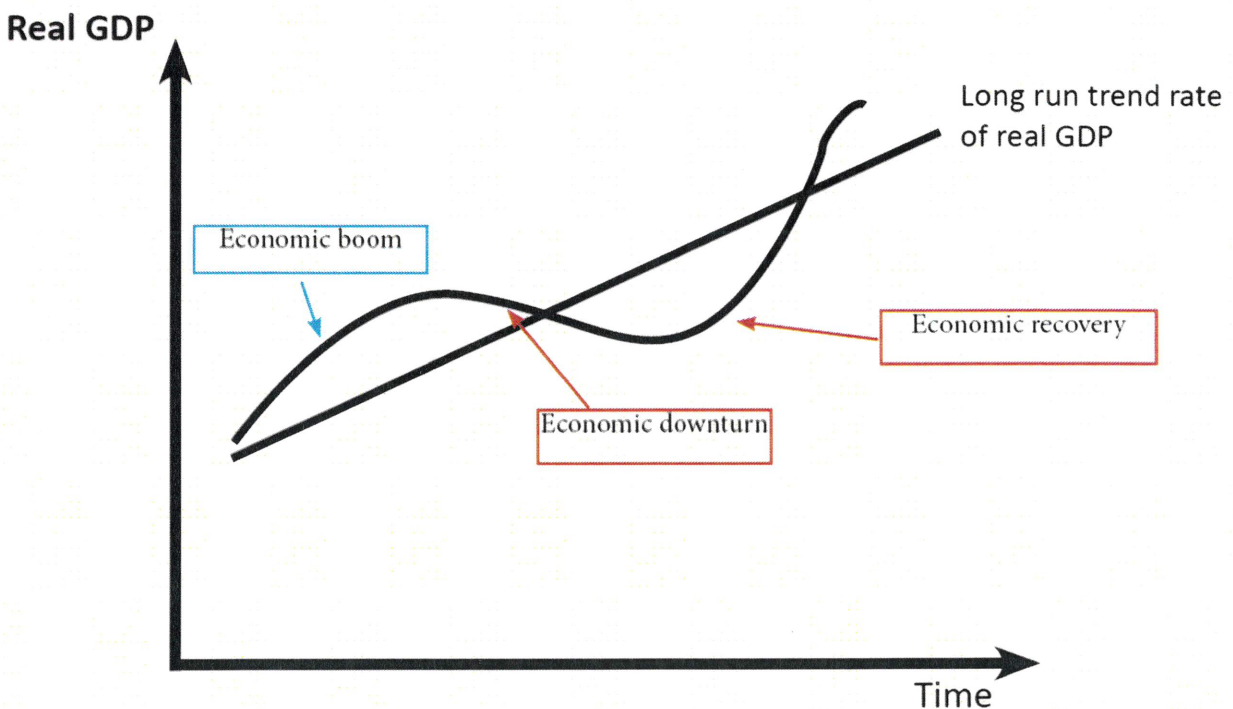




City of Palmer
Board of Economic Development
Regular Meeting
February 5, 2024



**BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 5, 2024, 6 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
231 W. EVERGREEN AVENUE, PALMER
www.palmerak.org**



CHAIRMAN	Lorie Koppenberg
BOARD MEMBER	Christopher Chappel
BOARD MEMBER	Trisha Sims
BOARD MEMBER	Kelsey Anderson
BOARD MEMBER	Janet Kincaid
BOARD MEMBER	LINDSEY CASHMAN
BOARD MEMBER	LOUIS YOUNG

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:
CITY MANAGER – John Moosey

AGENDA

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Organization of the Board
 - 1. Election of Chairperson
 - 2. Election of Vice Chairperson
- E. Approval of Agenda
- F. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings
 - 1. Special Meeting of December 4, 2023
- G. Reports – Staff
 - 1. Library Update
- H. Audience Participation
- I. Unfinished Business
 - 1. Committee of the Whole: Discuss IM 23-003, Discussion of City of Palmer's Central Downtown parking requirements (note: action may be taken by the board following the committee of the whole)
- J. New Business
 - 1. Committee of the Whole: Discuss IM 24-001, Palmer's 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan – 2024 Update and Work Plan Update (note: action may be taken by the board following the committee of the whole)
- K. Board Member Comments
- L. Adjournment



Minutes

**BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA**

**SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2023
6:00 P.M. - COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The special meeting of the City of Palmer Board of Economic Development was called to order by Chair Koppenberg at 6:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

Present and constituting a quorum were Board Members:

Lorie Koppenberg, Chair
Barbara Hunt, Vice Chair
Louis Young
Sarah Tudor

Janet Kincaid
Trisha Sims (via Zoom teleconference)
Christopher Chappel (via Zoom teleconference)

Also, present were:

Brad Hanson, Community Development Director
Pam Whitehead, Recording Secretary (via Zoom teleconference)

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge was led by Jack Snodgrass.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Agenda was amended to add a second Audience Participation as Agenda Item I. The amended Agenda was accepted. There were no objections.

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: None.

F. REPORTS:

Director Hanson reported:

- Update on library – City Council has an upcoming special meeting for a presentation by Wolf Architecture providing information on repairing, expanding, or replacing the library, those costs are not fully developed.
- City Council adopted the budget for the upcoming year.
- Responded to questions regarding capital projects.

G. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Michelle Kincaid spoke of reduced parking requirements within the Central Business District that adds to congestion in downtown. Parking requirements in the code do not account for employees.

Chair Koppenberg asked for the rules of Audience Participation to be suspended to allow a member in the audience, Jack Snodgrass to give a brief presentation and answer questions from the Board.

Jack Snodgrass expressed concerns about the potential for a 10-million-dollar library bond, questioning the feasibility of its repayment from the general fund and suggesting the need to determine the library budget based on the city's financial capabilities.

Mr. Snodgrass also referenced a memo regarding the end phase of construction oil boom funding. He spoke to the city buildings and facilities that were built because of oil boom monies are now ending their useful life, stressing the need for extensive repairs. The importance of addressing these issues with aging infrastructure collectively rather than focusing individually on the library was emphasized.

Chair Koppenberg spoke to a past report of a proposal to establish a community center and the financial challenges associated with the project; the report suggested it would always operate at a loss. Reminded everyone that grants for these projects are for a period of time and should not be considered as a continued source of funding.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Committee of the Whole: Discuss IM 23-003, Discussion of City of Palmer's Central Downtown parking requirements (note: action may be taken by the board following the committee of the whole).

Main Motion: To enter Committee of the Whole to discuss IM 23-003.

Moved by:	Kincaid
Seconded by:	Tudor
Vote:	Unanimous
Action:	Motion Carried

[The Board entered Committee of the Whole at 6:29 p.m.; exited at 7:36 p.m.]

Chair Koppenberg addressed parking in the downtown Central Business District creating economic development issues for businesses and residents. Asked the Board to review and discuss Mr. Moosey's memo to City Council dated May 18, 2023, with the purpose of requesting a joint meeting with City Council to offer suggestions to find solutions to this issue.

Committee of the Whole topics included:

- Discussion began with reference to several potential solutions as reflected in the memo, including multi-level parking structures, shared parking, and public transportation.
- Focused the discussion on parking minimums and requirements and parking for employees.
- Suggested using the general parking requirements as a guide for all areas of Palmer except for high use businesses which could utilize modified parking requirements.
- Discussed feasibility of paid parking programs when the public can park in any business' parking lot for free.
- Raised concerns of turning private property into paid parking areas instead of the private property owner building more buildings on their property eliminating the parking.
- Voiced concerns about private property owners being forced to give up their parking or property for public use parking.
- Discussed enforcement of parking requirements.
- Defined high use businesses as restaurants, bars, cafes, bakeries, hotels, motels, entertainment venues, dance halls and auditoriums, with suggested modified parking requirements of one parking

space per 100 square feet of gross floor area plus one parking space per every three employees, plus ten spaces for every 1,000 square feet of outside seating area in excess of 20 outdoor seats; if gross floor area is greater than 5,000 square feet eleven spaces per 1,000 square feet

- Discouraged using public parking to meet a business' parking requirement.

[The Board exited Committee of the Whole without objection at 7:36 p.m.]

The Board agreed to continue the discussion at the January meeting with the purpose of drafting a Resolution with proposed changes and schedule a joint meeting with City Council.

Chair Koppenberg will provide her table that she created for tonight's meeting to Director Hanson to be included in next month's packet for review and discussion.

I. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Michelle Kincaid, owner of Valley Hotel and Koslosky's Center, repeated her concern about the parking problem in the central basic district, is supportive of better signage, and fencing and commented the current parking code is not adequate and does not consider employee parking.

J. NEW BUSINESS: None.

K. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Board Member Sims:

- Commented it's a complicated issue but thinks we will get there.

Board Member Chappel:

- Commented the meeting was productive, thanked Lorie for everything she has done and looks forward to seeing what we come up with.

Board Member Kincaid:

- Good dialogue.

Board Member Tudor:

- Glad to see we are working on it and hope everyone will come together to decide what to do for the city.
- Reminded everyone of the upcoming Colony Christmas.

Board Member Young:

- Enjoyed working on the parking requirements.

Chair Koppenberg:

- Thanked Jack Snodgrass for sharing his insights at the meeting.
- Colony Christmas, Christmas and New Year are all coming up.
- Thanked the Board members.

Board Member Hunt mentioned her term expires at the end of the month.

Next meeting is January 8, 2024.

L. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned without objection at 7:46 p.m.

APPROVED by the Board of Economic Development this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Lorie Koppenberg, Chair

Brad Hanson, Community Development Director

DRAFT



Unfinished Business



**CITY OF PALMER
BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 23-003**

SUBJECT: Discussion of Palmer Municipal Code 17.64 Parking and loading

AGENDA OF: February 5, 2024
December 4, 2023, Special Meeting
October 9, 2023

February 5, 2024, Update

No new information was provided to staff. The packet is the same as the special meeting.

December 4, 2023, Special Meeting

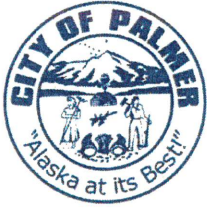
A special meeting has been requested to discuss City of Palmer Parking Code requirements. Chairperson Koppenberg is to provide staff with recommendations, so the BED can consider drafting a resolution for the city council to consider.

December 4, 2023, Update

Packet material includes items provided at the October Meeting.

October 9, 2023, Meeting

Chairperson Koppenberg has requested that this item is on the agenda for discussion. Included in the packet is a parking study conducted by City Manager Moosey regarding potential solutions to event parking issues.



John Moosey
City Manager

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Palmer City Council
FROM: City Manager
DATE: May 18, 2023
SUBJECT: Addressing Challenges and Opportunities in City Parking

I. SUMMARY

The City of Palmer is facing familiar parking challenges, characteristic of many growing communities. While additional parking spaces might seem like an easy solution, we must also consider aesthetics, business activity, and the optimal utilization of our limited space. Our focus should not only be on increasing parking infrastructure, but on effective parking management strategies that enhance our city's functionality and attractiveness.

II. CHALLENGES AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Managing parking in a growing suburban city like Palmer requires careful planning, collaboration between city officials, residents, businesses, and strategic decisions by the City Council. Here are the challenges and potential solutions we should consider:

1. Lack of Parking Infrastructure: As we grow, we should explore creative solutions such as multi-level parking structures, shared parking agreements, and better public transportation to reduce the dependency on cars.
2. Parking Restrictions: We must ensure that parking restrictions are clear, consistent, and well-communicated to avoid confusion and accidental violations.
3. Parking Enforcement: Consideration should be given to outsourcing parking enforcement to a professional service, which can operate more effectively and efficiently than our current resources allow.
4. Parking for Businesses: We need to work closely with businesses to identify their parking needs and offer feasible solutions such as parking permit programs, shared parking agreements or off-site parking facilities.

City of Palmer

III. CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT PARKING

The Central Business District is particularly affected by these parking issues. Although our residential population is declining, business activities, recreation, and special events have significantly increased. This growth and influx of visitors puts pressure on our limited parking resources, which must be managed effectively to prevent any negative impact on our city's vibrant downtown culture.

Challenging Questions:

1. What is the City's responsibility to create more parking? Currently, we have 185 public parking spaces. Should we invest more?
2. How can we balance limited downtown space for business opportunities against space for cars?
3. How does parking enhance or detract from business growth, given that our City's revenue is primarily based on sales tax?
4. What is the proper balance between what the city receives from its business community (sales tax) and what the city invests in business opportunities?

IV. CASE STUDIES AND QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Please refer to the detailed descriptions and challenging questions raised in the attached document for specific case studies including the Eagle Hotel Parking Lot, the conflict between a new successful business and a neighboring establishment, and the effects of community events on parking.

V. CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDATIONS

Immediate Actions:

- A. Seek the Council's input on balancing commercial investment and city requirements like parking, landscaping, and accessibility.
- B. Ask the Planning Commission to review our current parking code, last revised in 2020.
- C. Create 12 new downtown parking spaces north of the depot.



- D. Require Palmer Area Chamber of Commerce to provide offsite parking for Friday Flings and Colony Days.

Short Term Actions:

- A. Act on results of the City of Palmer Downtown Public Outreach.
- B. Hire a third-party firm to analyze the feasibility and impact of the 557-train operation downtown.
- C. Consider a shuttle service between downtown and the MTA Center.

Long Term Actions:

- A. Create a two-sided angled car park along Colony Way for increased downtown parking.



- B. Negotiate with the Eagle Hotel to improve their extra required parking lot, providing an additional 18 prime parking spots.

The City of Palmer's continued economic growth depends heavily on effective parking management. Thoughtful investment and planning are critical to ensure our community's prosperity. Parking challenges must be carefully considered and remain a priority for our downtown area.

Attachments:

- 1. Addendum 1: Parking Numbers
- 2. Addendum 2: City of Palmer Parking Code
- 3. Addendum 3: Case Studies and Questions for Consideration

Let's address these challenges and opportunities together, aiming to create a balanced, effective parking solution for our city.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Moosey'. The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'J' and 'M'.

John Moosey, City Manager

ADDENDUM 3: CASE STUDIES AND QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

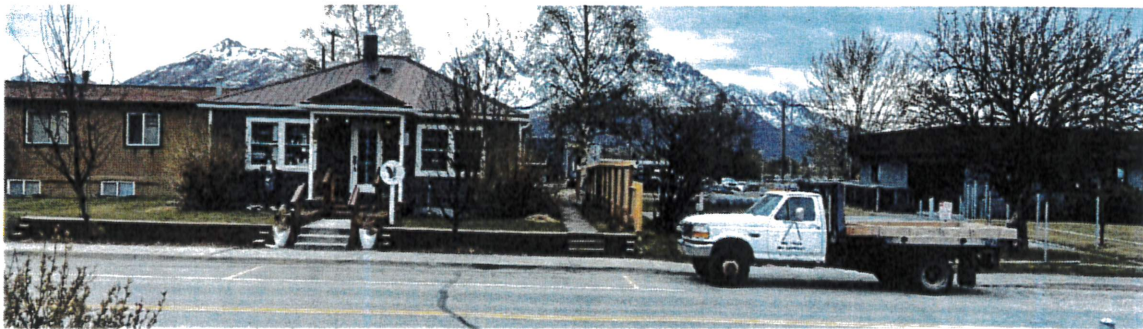
PARKING CASE STUDIES AND QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. EAGLE HOTEL PARKING LOT



In 20XX, Eagle Hotel was required by the city code to create additional parking. As a solution, they acquired a lot which currently sits vacant, used only occasionally for transient parking and vehicle storage. Despite being unsightly and attracting unsavory activities, this lot has potential to be an asset to the city's parking resources. However, it needs significant improvements to ensure it meets city aesthetic standards and discourages illicit activities. Future decisions need to focus on how to transform this lot into a valuable parking asset while considering safety and aesthetic elements.

2. NEW SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS UPSETS NEIGHBOR



In 2022, a new business, a small restaurant with a seating capacity for 35, opened in a General Commercial district. The restaurant's success, especially during breakfast and lunch hours, has stirred the ire of a neighboring business owner. Despite the restaurant's parking plan, which complies with city regulations and includes a mix of on-site and street parking, the level of activity has disrupted the peace for the neighbor. This case highlights the dilemma between fostering business growth and maintaining harmony among neighboring establishments. Despite meeting the city code, a successful business can become a burden for others if its operations disrupt the neighborhood's balance.

ADDENDUM 3: CASE STUDIES AND QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3. FRIDAY FLINGS AND COLONY DAYS



Summer events such as Friday Flings and Colony Days bring an influx of visitors to Palmer, increasing demand for parking in the Central Business District. Streets closures during these events further reduce available parking. Street vendors also occupy prime parking spots, leaving less space for visitors. The challenge is to balance the city's desire for these revenue-generating events with the necessity for adequate parking. Potential solutions include creating more nearby parking, requiring vendors to park elsewhere, relocating these events, or investing in a shuttle service to make better use of parking at the MTA Center and Palmer Junior Middle School.

4. ABANDONED AUTO DETAIL LOT



The site of an Auto Detail business that burned down in 2018 has remained vacant and unmaintained. The city could benefit from putting this lot into commercial use, but strict on-site parking regulations could deter potential development. A small building of 4000 square feet would require ten on-site parking spaces, resulting in paving most of the lot. These extensive requirements, coupled with construction costs and utility connections, can be daunting for potential developers. The city must balance the need for adequate parking with encouraging private investment and development.

ADDENDUM 3: CASE STUDIES AND QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

5. INCREASED PARKING REQUIREMENTS

In 2005, the city increased downtown parking requirements due to a lack of investment. Properties couldn't be redeveloped due to inadequate parking. As a result, many buildings downtown are not fully compliant with the parking codes and, thus, could not be legally occupied. The city code requires parking and other site plan requirements to be reevaluated with any change of use or occupancy. This case study underscores the delicate balance between encouraging full occupancy and economic opportunities and maintaining appropriate parking standards.

Chapter 17.64

PARKING AND LOADING

Sections:

- 17.64.005 Intent.**
- 17.64.015 General provisions.**
- 17.64.021 Parking lot design standards.**
- 17.64.031 Parking spaces required.**
- 17.64.035 Off-site parking.**
- 17.64.041 Shared use parking.**
- 17.64.050 Central business district.**
- 17.64.060 Off-street loading.**
- 17.64.070 Development plan requirements.**
- 17.64.080 Landscaping requirements.**

17.64.005 Intent.

The intent of this chapter is to promote the safety, convenience, comfort and common welfare of the public by providing minimum standards to regulate vehicle parking in a safe and efficient manner, to avoid the unnecessary congestion and interference with public rights-of-way, to reduce traffic hazards, and to provide safe operation of traffic circulation. (Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 4, 2005)

17.64.015 General provisions.

A. Permanently maintained parking facilities for the use of occupants, employees and patrons of buildings shall be provided for all new buildings at the time of construction.

B. Outside the central business district, free parking shall be required for any addition or enlargement of an existing building and for any change in the use of any building that would result in additional parking space being required. The number of parking spaces shall be that specified in this chapter unless it is demonstrated to the zoning administrator that the addition or enlargement of the existing building or the change in the use of any proposed building will not increase parking demand or reduce the total number of pre-existing required parking spaces and that the amount of proposed off-street parking is within 90 percent of the total requirement for all proposed uses and structures, including the enlargement of the existing building.

C. The intended use of all parking spaces required in this chapter is the temporary use by operable vehicles. Parking spaces shall not be used for the storage of delivery vehicles or trailers, motor homes, campers, dumpsters or other objects.

D. No existing parking area and no parking area provided for the purpose of complying with the provisions of this title shall, after January 17, 1978, be relinquished or reduced in any manner below the requirements established in this title. (Ord. 21-006 § 3, 2021; Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 6, 2005)

17.64.021 Parking lot design standards.

A. Standard parking stalls shall be a minimum of nine feet in width and 20 feet in length.

B. Parking lots with 90-degree parking stalls shall have a minimum aisle width of 25 feet.

C. All parking areas, except for single- and two-family dwellings, shall be designed so no parking space requires the backing of a vehicle into public rights-of-way, except for alleys in the central business district, or across a sidewalk.

D. Turning and maneuvering space shall be located entirely on private property. Vehicles backing into central business district alleys or departing single- and two-family dwellings are exempt from this requirement.

E. Ingress and egress to parking facilities shall be designed to maintain adequate sight distance and safety.

F. A secured wheel bumper to prevent encroachment of vehicles on pedestrian, bicycle or traffic routes shall be provided in parking stalls which are perpendicular to building fronts or abut property lines. This requirement does not apply when a fence or sight-obscuring landscaping occupies the same property line of the parking area or to single-family and two-family residences. The bumper shall not be less than six inches high.

G. No wall, post, guardrail or other obstruction that will restrict car door opening shall be permitted within five feet of the centerline of a parking space.

H. Parking lots shall be designed to avoid erosion damage to grading and surrounding landscaping.

I. Accessible parking for persons with disabilities shall be designed in accordance with the Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities for Americans with Disabilities Act.

1. An access aisle shall be provided of not less than five feet in width for each space, except accessible parking spaces may share a common access aisle.

2. Accessible space shall be designated by the international symbol of accessibility.

3. Accessible spaces shall be located near building entrances and have an unobstructed route to accessible entrances and along a path at least 36 inches in width without going behind parked cars.

4. One in every eight accessible spaces, but not less than one, shall be served by an access aisle with a width of at least eight feet and shall be designated "van accessible."

Total Parking Spaces in Lot	Minimum Required Accessible Spaces
1 – 25	1
26 – 50	2
51 – 75	3
76 – 100	4
101 – 150	5
151 – 200	6
201 – 300	7
301 – 400	8
401 – 500	9
501 – 1,000	2 percent of total spaces

J. Prior to approval by the city for use, all parking facilities within the city shall be permanently surfaced with a suitable gravel base or paved with concrete or asphalt compound.

K. Parking facilities which adjoin the side of a lot in residential districts shall be separated from the residential district by a fence or sight-obscuring landscaping. Fences shall be six feet in height; landscaping shall not be less than four feet. The fence or landscaping shall be maintained in good condition and shall comply with the requirements of PMC 17.60.070.

L. All parking areas in nonresidential use districts and parking areas which serve nonresidential uses shall have lighting which meets the level of illumination, uniformity ratios and minimum lumen intensities specified in the illumination guidelines set by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. The lighting system shall be designed to prevent glare to motorists on public rights-of-way and shall be arranged to reflect the light away from adjoining premises and streets.

M. Signage or other provisions designating parking lot layout shall be required if the city determines that the layout is not apparent to the general public. (Ord. 17-014 § 3, 2017; Ord. 07-032 § 3, 2007; Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 8, 2005)

17.64.031 Parking spaces required.

A. The following minimum number of free parking spaces shall be provided for all structures and uses. For uses not specifically identified in this section, the requirement for free off-street parking shall be the same as for the use duly determined by the zoning administrator to be the most similar.

Use	Parking Requirement
Airport use	One parking space for each 1,600 square feet of gross floor area
Automobile service stations, repair garages	Four parking spaces for each vehicle repair bay, plus three parking spaces
Churches, auditoriums, theaters and other similar places of assembly	One parking space for every four seats in the principal auditorium or assembly room
Dance hall, bowling alley or skating rink	One parking space for each 400 square feet of gross floor area
Hospitals, nursing, convalescent homes	One parking space for each three beds based on maximum capacity
Hotel	One parking space for each two guest rooms
Laundromat	One parking space for each 250 square feet of gross floor area
Manufacturing uses; industrial, research, testing, processing, assembling, all industries	One parking space for each 500 square feet of gross floor area, plus one parking space for each 300 square feet of office gross floor area

Use	Parking Requirement
Medical offices and clinic	One parking space for each 300 square feet of gross floor area
Mortuary	One parking space for each four seats in the principal seating area
Motel	One parking space for each guest room
Post office	One parking space for each 100 square feet of gross floor area
Professional, offices, financial institutions	One parking space for each 300 square feet of gross floor area
Residences, multifamily	One and one-half parking spaces for each one-bedroom unit; two parking spaces for two-bedroom units; two and one-half parking spaces for each three-bedroom unit, plus one guest parking space for each five units
Residences, single-family and two-family	Two parking spaces per dwelling unit up to 1,800 square feet and three parking spaces for each dwelling unit over 1,800 square feet
Restaurants and bars	One parking space for each four seats based on maximum seating capacity

Use	Parking Requirement
Retail space, under 1,000 square feet	One parking space for each 500 square feet of gross floor area
Retail space, over 1,001 square feet	One parking space for each 350 square feet of gross floor area
Retail space, for furniture, large appliances, carpets or similar use	One parking space for each 500 square feet of gross floor area
Retail, shopping center	One parking space for each 350 square feet of gross leasable space
Rooming houses or boardinghouses	One parking space for every two guestrooms
Schools – Elementary	Two parking spaces for each classroom
Schools – Middle	Three parking spaces for each classroom
Schools – Senior high	One parking space for every three students based on the proposed building capacity at the time of initial construction
Self-storage facilities	One parking space for each 2,000 square feet of gross floor area, plus one parking space for each 300 square feet of gross floor area used for offices

Use	Parking Requirement
Swimming pools	One parking space for every four persons based on pool capacity
Warehouses, storage and wholesale businesses	One parking space for each 2,000 square feet of gross floor area, plus one parking space for each 300 square feet of gross floor area used for offices, or a minimum of three, whichever is greater

B. Calculation of Amounts of Required Parking.

1. Unless a specific use is listed above, the required number of parking spaces shall be the sum of the combination of uses on the lot.
2. If the calculation of required spaces results in a fraction of a parking space, the number shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number. (Ord. 21-006 § 4, 2021; Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 10, 2005)

17.64.035 Off-site parking.

A. All parking spaces provided shall be on the subject lot with the main building they serve, except that the commission, by conditional use, may permit the parking spaces to be on an abutting lot or any lot within 300 feet of the building if it determines that it is impracticable to provide parking on the subject lot.

1. Effective March 27, 2001, if the commission permits parking spaces to be on a lot other than the subject lot, then the commission, as a matter of law, shall require at a minimum the following conditions: that the off-site lot be made subject to duly recorded enforceable covenants running with the land reasonably acceptable to the city, which covenants:
 - a. Burden the off-site lot to the extent necessary to provide adequate incremental parking for the benefit of the subject lot;
 - b. Make the city a third-party beneficiary of the covenants;
 - c. Prohibit the termination, amendment, or subordination of the covenants without council approval; and

- d. Have a priority position prior to any deed of trust, mortgage or other encumbrance that can foreclose out the covenants.
2. The required priority position of the covenants may be obtained by due subordination of any existing encumbrance.
3. Upon the recording of the covenants, the owner of the subject lot must reimburse the city for obtaining a title policy on the off-site lot showing the covenants have the required priority position.
4. The owner of the subject lot shall post and maintain signs on the subject lot and on the off-site lot informing the public of the off-site parking relationship between the off-site lot and the subject lot.
5. If through change of use of the subject lot or otherwise the off-site parking is no longer required or if the extent of such requirement is significantly reduced, then the city, upon the written request duly signed by both the owner of the subject lot and the owner of the off-site lot and delivered to the city manager, shall in due course and after council action allow the termination or amendment of the covenants to meet the then-current requirements for parking for the subject property. (Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 11, 2005)

17.64.041 Shared use parking.

Joint use of off-street parking facilities within 600 feet may be permitted by the commission subject to the following conditions:

- A. The off-street parking requirements for buildings of limited uses, for example churches, auditoriums, clubs, or lodges, may be supplied through the use of off-street parking facilities provided for other uses, for example, business offices, retail stores, and manufacturing or wholesale buildings whose operations are not normally conducted during the same hours.
- B. Off-street parking space designated for joint use shall meet all other requirements as set out in this chapter.
- C. Sufficient evidence shall be presented to the commission to demonstrate that there will be no substantial conflict in the principal operating hours of the use or structures for which the joint use is proposed.
- D. The owner of the parcel seeking a shared parking agreement has adequate area on the lot or within 300 feet of the lot which could be used for parking in the event it is no longer possible to obtain shared parking.
- E. The use of off-street parking space for joint use shall be subject to the prior approval of the commission. (Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 13, 2005)

17.64.050 Central business district.

In order to encourage economic growth in the downtown core and permit the redevelopment of property to its highest commercial use, parking requirements may be waived after review by the city council. It is the intent of

this clause to provide as much off-street parking as practical while allowing commercial development in the core area. The central business district is described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the Palmer/Wasilla Highway & the Glenn Highway centerlines, then north along the centerline of the Glenn Highway, then east to the northwest corner of parcel 18N02E32 Lot D9, then east along the north side of parcels 18N02E32 Lot D9, Tract B, Colony Fair, 18N02E32 Lot D8, 18N02E32 Lot D7, then north along the west side of parcel Tract A-1, Colony Fair RSB T/A & C, then east along the north side of said parcel to the centerline of S. Cobb St., then north along the centerline of S. Cobb St., to the centerline of W. Blueberry Ave., then east along the centerline of W. Blueberry Ave., then southeast to the centerline of E. Blueberry Ave., then east along the centerline of E. Blueberry Ave., then crossing over S. Colony Way to continue east along the centerline of E. Blueberry Ave., to the centerline of S. Denali St., then south along the centerline of S. Denali St., to the centerline of E. Cottonwood Ave., then east along the centerline of E. Cottonwood Ave., to the centerline of S. Gulkana St., then south along the centerline of S. Gulkana St., to the southeast corner of Tract A, Arbor Estates, then west along the south property line of Tract A to Lot 4, Block 2, Arbor Estates, then south to the southeast corner of Lot 4, Block 2, Arbor Estates, then west along the south property lines of Lots 4, 3, 2, and 1, Block 2, Arbor Estates, then west to the junction of S. Eklutna & E. Fern Ave., then west along the centerline of E. Fern Ave., to the centerline of S. Chugach St., then north along the centerline of S. Chugach St., to the centerline of E. Fireweed Ave., then west along the centerline of E. Fireweed Ave., to the centerline of S. Colony Way, then south along the centerline of S. Colony Way, then west to the southeast corner of parcel 17N02E04 Lot B4, then west along the south side of said parcel, to the centerline of S. Cobb St., then north along the centerline of S. Cobb St., to the centerline of W. Fern Ave., then west along the centerline of W. Fern Ave., to the centerline of S. Dimond St., then north along the centerline of S. Dimond St., to the centerline of W. Elmwood Ave., then west along the centerline of W. Elmwood Ave., to the junction of W. Elmwood and the Glenn Highway, then north along the centerline of the Glenn Highway to the point of beginning.

- A. The following minimum number of parking spaces shall be provided for all structures and uses in the central business district only. For uses not specifically identified in this section, the requirement for parking shall be the same as for the use duly determined by the zoning administrator to be the most similar.

Use	Parking Requirement
Churches, auditoriums, theaters and other similar places of assembly	One parking space for every five seats in the principal auditorium or assembly room

Use	Parking Requirement
Dance hall, bowling alley or skating rink	One parking space for each 500 square feet of gross floor area
Hospitals, nursing, convalescent homes	One parking space for each four beds based on maximum capacity
Hotel	One parking space for each three guest rooms
Laundromat	One parking space for each 350 square feet of gross floor area
Medical offices and clinics	One parking space for each 400 square feet of gross floor area
Mortuary	One parking space for each five seats in the principal seating area
Professional, offices, financial institutions	One parking space for each 400 square feet of gross floor area
Residences, multifamily	One parking space per dwelling unit.
Residences, single-family and two-family	Two parking spaces per dwelling unit.
Restaurants and bars	One parking space for each five seats based on maximum seating capacity

Use	Parking Requirement
Retail space, all types	One parking space for each 500 square feet of gross floor area

- B. No required existing parking spaces in the downtown district shall be relinquished as a result of this section.
- C. In areas with designated public on-street parking, each 25 feet in front of a lot will be counted towards the parking requirement for the lot.
- D. *Repealed by Ord. 21-006.*
- E. *Repealed by Ord. 21-006.*
- F. To promote growth in the central business district, the city council may waive the fee-in-lieu fees. (Ord. 21-006 § 5, 2021; Ord. 16-015 § 4, 2016; Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 14, 2005)

17.64.060 Off-street loading.

- A. All uses involving the receipt of or distribution of materials or merchandise by vehicles shall provide and maintain sufficient off-street loading space on the premises so as not to obstruct the freedom of traffic movement on public rights-of-way.
- B. On the same lot or premises with every building structure or part thereof erected and occupied for commercial, manufacturing or industrial use, or other uses similarly involving the receipt of or distribution of materials or merchandise by vehicles, there shall be provided and permanently maintained adequate space for standing of vehicles and unloading services in such manner as not to obstruct the freedom of traffic movement upon public rights-of-way. The space shall not be less than 15 feet wide by 25 feet long with a 14-foot height clearance and shall have access to an alley or street. (Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 16, 2005)

17.64.070 Development plan requirements.

Plans for all parking and loading areas shall accompany the building plans when the application for a building permit is made. Such plans shall show the following:

- A. Area of the lot involved;
- B. Layout and dimensions of each parking space;
- C. Entrance and exit to the parking area and the direction of traffic;
- D. Widths of all curb cuts, entrances, exits and driveways serving each parking or loading area;

- E. Lighting plan (see item in parking lot standards);
- F. Landscaping (see PMC 17.64.080). (Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 17, 2005)

17.64.080 Landscaping requirements.

- A. All parking lots shall have landscaping as required by this section, except those parking lots for single-family and two-family dwellings.
- B. All required parking lots of five spaces or more shall provide a landscape buffer at least five feet in width along any property line adjacent to a street, except for those in the airport commercial, airport industrial, airport mixed use, business park, and industrial districts where they do not border a residential district.
- C. For parking lots containing less than five spaces, an area equal to at least five percent of the parking lot shall be in landscaping which is visible to the street, except in the airport commercial, airport industrial, airport mixed use, business park, and industrial districts.
- D. For parking lots containing five or more spaces, an area equal to at least 10 percent of the parking area shall be in landscaping which is visible to the street, except in the airport commercial, airport industrial, airport mixed use, business park, and industrial districts.
 - 1. Any interior landscaping planter counted towards the percentage requirement must have a minimum five-foot-wide area exclusive of any vehicle overhang. Only low-level shrubs, ground cover and grass shall be used in vehicle overhang areas.
 - 2. Any landscaping between the building and the parking lot counted towards the percentage requirement must have a minimum five-foot-wide area exclusive of any vehicle overhang. Only low-level shrubs, ground cover, and grass shall be used in vehicle overhang areas.
- E. No parking lot shall contain 45 or more contiguous parking spaces without a curbed planting area. Interior landscaping planters shall be dispersed throughout the entire parking lot area. Parking lots in the industrial and business park zoning districts may be exempt from interior landscaping requirements. Applications may be submitted to the commission requesting substitution of interior landscaping in exchange for common use area(s) for employees, such as a picnic or exercise area. (Ord. 21-006 § 7, 2021; Ord. 06-017 § 3, 2006; Ord. 05-036 § 18, 2005)

The Palmer Municipal Code is current through Ordinance 23-004-A, passed July 25, 2023.

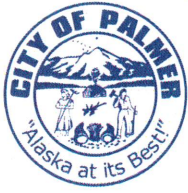
Disclaimer: The city clerk's office has the official version of the Palmer Municipal Code. Users should contact the city clerk's office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

City Website: www.palmerak.org

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New Business



**CITY OF PALMER
BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 24-001**

SUBJECT: Annual Update of Palmer's Economic Development Plan

AGENDA OF: February 5, 2024

The BED reviews and updates the City of Palmer's annual Economic Development Plan and then presents to Palmer City Council for consideration during the City Council and Board of Economic Development joint meeting. The plan shall be consistent with City Council policies and the City's Comprehensive Plan. The current plan was originally developed in 2011 with yearly updates and was based on the City of Palmer's Comprehensive Plan's summary of goals for economic vitality.



RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BOARD OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO
CITY COUNCIL

**2023 CITY OF PALMER
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Community Economic Development Goals

Goal 1 ... Strengthen Palmer's position as the preferred location as the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's institutional and utility co-operative hub.

Goal 2 ... Encourage expansion of medical, health-care, technology and research-related economic sectors, and other professional jobs in the Palmer area to make this the medical, health-care and vocational career center for Southcentral Alaska.

Goal 3 ... Strengthen Palmer's role as a retail and professional services hub and as a unique place to shop for residents of Palmer, area residents and visitors.

Goal 4 ... Strengthen Palmer as a tourism destination and hub for travel through the southern Matanuska-Susitna area.

Goal 5 ... Strengthen efforts to improve Palmer's quality of life by supporting Palmer as the agricultural center of the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

Goal 6... Promote beautification of Palmer's open space and parks.

Goal 7 ... Maintain quality residential neighborhoods and promote a diverse range of quality housing from high density to single family housing which satisfies the needs of all sectors of the housing market.

Goal 8 ... Provide the necessary public infrastructure to support and retain existing industrial uses and expand industrial development within the community.

Goal 9 ... Palmer remains and continues to grow as the industrial education and career center of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

Goal 10 ... Continue to develop and market the municipal airport to maximize its economic benefit to the community.

Goal 11 ... Increase marketing of Palmer and its diverse attractions, events and location.

Goal 12... Create a business-friendly environment for commerce and industry.

Goal 13...Review Economic Development Plan Each August and prepare report on progress in implementing Goals and Objectives

Goal 14... Study the feasibility of annexing property into the city limits to prepare for future commercial and industrial growth and to preserve the character of the community.

Goal 15...Acknowledge and consider Palmer's unique connectivity and pedestrian access with all existing and future developments.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Update 2023

Goal 1 ... Strengthen Palmer's position as the preferred location as the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's institutional and utility co-operative hub.

Objective A – Maintain existing institutions and secure new institutions by developing an action plan with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Matanuska-Susitna School District, Job Corps, the University, state agencies and Justice System to determine and pursue a very specific list of action items necessary to meet their long-term needs.

Objective B – Develop an action plan with the Hospital, Clinics, and other health-care providers to determine and pursue a very specific list of action items necessary to meet their long-term needs.

Goal 2 ... Encourage expansion of medical, health-care, technology and research-related economic sectors, and other professional jobs in the Palmer area to make this the medical, health-care and vocational career center for Southcentral Alaska.

Objective A – Promote the Palmer area as a hub of higher education by working with the University of Alaska, Alaska Pacific University and other educational institutions to increase the number of highly trained medical and health care specialist and technology and research related specialist who are available in the community.

1. Determine what new programs might be developed in the Palmer area, and how the City might help these institutions to expand.
2. Encourage the development of learning opportunities in medical and healthcare fields at local institutions of higher learning and the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center.

Objective B - Market the community to desired businesses, including technology and research-based businesses, and professional businesses such as law, medicine and veterinary science.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Update 2023

Goal 3 ... Strengthen Palmer's role as a retail and professional services hub and as a unique place to shop for residents of Palmer, area residents and visitors.

Objective A – Work with the Planning & Zoning Commission to provide space for commercial expansion through the development of a new central business zoning district or zoning overlay.

Objective B – Promote Palmer as a more attractive retail and professional service destination.

Objective C – Actively pursue infrastructure improvements and identify areas appropriate for developing new areas and redeveloping vacant properties for commercial general development.

Objective D – Identify need and options for effective public parking in downtown and within the city.

1. Resolve fee in lieu of formula and parking waiver issues.
2. Examine interest in forming Special Assessment District or Business Improvement District.

Goal 4 ... Strengthen Palmer as a tourism destination and hub for travel through the southern Matanuska-Susitna area.

Objective A – Preserve, improve and celebrate Palmer's historic character; develop design guidelines for the historic district.

Objective B – Support efforts to improve and promote community attractions, including cultural facilities and multiple trails systems. Improve linkages between attractions. Evaluate the opportunities and threats of promoting theme rail excursions into Palmer.

Objective C – Build on the success of existing community events, including the Alaska State Fair.

Objective D – Support efforts to attract more team sports activities, sporting events and outdoor activities in and around Palmer.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Update 2023

Objective E – Establish, improve and maintain city-wide parks and recreation facilities and programs.

Objective F – Discuss and study the possibility of a permanent Friday Fling/Farmer’s Market area as well as a public stage.

Goal 5 ... Strengthen efforts to improve Palmer’s quality of life by supporting Palmer as the agricultural center of the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

Objective A - Promote distribution, awareness of, and sales of local agricultural products.

Objective B - Promote and expand farmers' market opportunities within the city limits and the greater Palmer area.

Objective C - Collaborate with state funded organizations and the agricultural community to promote Alaska Grown products.

Objective D - Open dialogue with the agricultural community to promote agricultural products and agricultural heritage.

Goal 6... Promote beautification of Palmer’s public space, open space, and parks and facilities.

Objective A – Public Safety.

Objective B – Library and City Hall

Objective C – Establish, improve, and maintain neighborhood parks and recreation facilities and programs.

Goal 7 ... Maintain quality residential neighborhoods and promote a diverse range of quality housing from high density to single family housing which satisfies the needs of all sectors of the housing market.

Objective A - Encourage a diverse range of quality housing, from attractive higher density housing to housing for a more rural setting.

Objective B - Encourage new housing developments to have adequate access to transportation, employment opportunities, services, and social and support networks.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Update 2023

Objective C – Encourage infill development and higher density housing and prepare new zoning standards and design guidelines to ensure higher density housing is high quality.

Objective D – Encourage the development of areas for single family housing appealing to the upper end of the housing market.

Objective E – Encourage rehabilitation of older residential structures.

Objective F – Promote continued development and maintenance of high quality elder care facilities and senior citizen campuses in Palmer.

Objective G – Review code enforcement process and provide a report with recommended actions to City Council on a quarterly basis to gain prospective of property owners and residents understanding and compliance with city standards to protect the long-term stability of neighborhoods and Palmer’s economic vitality.

Goal 8 ... Provide the necessary public infrastructure to support and retain existing industrial uses and expand industrial development within the community.

Objective A – Review and identify logistical, environmental and other beneficial resources in the Palmer area available to attract new technology industries and prepare a map of existing utility lines and anticipated utility network expansions that serve developable property in the Palmer area.

1. Develop a survey questionnaire to determine what industrial sector needs to invest and develop in Palmer.

Objective B – Review current infrastructure master plans to ensure they place a priority on maintaining effective municipal services.

Objective C – Ensure that adequate areas are identified within the city for industrial growth.

Goal 9 ... Palmer remains and continues to grow as the industrial education and career center of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Update 2023

Objective A – Promote vocational, aviation, technical and career training centers and opportunities within the greater Palmer area to prepare individuals for a global marketplace.

Goal 10 ... Continue to develop and market the municipal airport to maximize its economic benefit to the community.

Objective A – Promote the Palmer Municipal Airport as a site for air taxis, aircraft maintenance and repair companies, flight schools, and aircraft rental and leasing businesses.

Objective B - Operate the Airport in a balanced manner, and as an integrated function of the whole community. Activities of the airport which generate revenue to the City are desirable, however, not at the risk of diminishing the quality of life for the residents of the City.

Goal 11 ... Increase marketing of Palmer and its diverse attractions, events and location.

Objective A - Collaborate with the Palmer Visitors Center, the Greater Palmer Chamber of Commerce, the Mat-Su Visitors and Convention Center, and other organizations to actively promote Palmer.

1. Develop multimedia promotional material showcasing the attributes of Palmer as a business friendly, geographically key location.
2. Budget funding for development and publish quality brochure for Palmer as a marketing tool.

Objective B - Work to maintain and improve Palmer's quality of life. Continually enhance hiking and biking trails, parks, health care resources, downtown upgrades, etc.

Objective C – Continue to develop and promote the city owned Golf Course, Community Center (Depot), and MTA Events Center as economic factors.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Update 2023

Goal 12... Create a business friendly environment for commerce and industry.

Objective A – Implement online business transaction with the City, for example electronic filing of sale tax.

Goal 13...Review Economic Development Plan Each January and prepare report on progress in implementing Goals and Objectives.

Goal 14... Study the feasibility of annexing property into the city limits to prepare for future commercial and industrial growth and to preserve the character of the community.

Objective A – Develop an annexation document that clearly explains pros and cons of annexation.

Objective B – Consider where future annexation should logically occur.

Objective C – Prepare transition plan regarding potential future zoning.

Objective D – Study and make recommendations regarding new proposed zoning districts: Central Business District and Highway Commercial District.

Goal 15... Acknowledge and consider Palmer's unique connectivity and pedestrian access with all existing and future developments.

QuickFacts

Palmer city, Alaska

QuickFacts provides statistics for all states and counties. Also for cities and towns with a *population of 5,000 or more*.

All Topics



Palmer

Population estimates, July 1, 2023, (V2023)



PEOPLE

Population

Population estimates, July 1, 2023, (V2023)

Population Estimates, July 1, 2022, (V2022)

Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2023)

Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2022)

Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2023, (V2023)

Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2022, (V2022)

Population, Census, April 1, 2020

Population, Census, April 1, 2010

Age and Sex

Persons under 5 years, percent

Persons under 18 years, percent

Persons 65 years and over, percent

Female persons, percent

Race and Hispanic Origin

White alone, percent

Black or African American alone, percent (a)

American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent (a)

Asian alone, percent (a)

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent (a)

Two or More Races, percent

Hispanic or Latino, percent (b)

White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent

Population Characteristics

Veterans, 2018-2022

Foreign born persons, percent, 2018-2022

Housing

Housing units, July 1, 2022, (V2022)

Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2018-2022

Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2018-2022

Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2018-2022

Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2018-2022

Median gross rent, 2018-2022

Building permits, 2022

Families & Living Arrangements

Households, 2018-2022

Persons per household, 2018-2022

Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2018-2022

Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2018-2022

Computer and Internet Use

Households with a computer, percent, 2018-2022

Households with a broadband Internet subscription, percent, 2018-2022

Education

High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2018-2022

Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2018-2022

Health

With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2018-2022

Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent

Economy

In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2018-2022

In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2018-2022

Total accommodation and food services sales, 2017 (\$1,000) (c)

Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2017 (\$1,000) (c)

Total transportation and warehousing receipts/revenue, 2017 (\$1,000) (c)

Total retail sales, 2017 (\$1,000) (c)

Total retail sales per capita, 2017 (c)

Transportation

Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2018-2022

Income & Poverty

Median household income (in 2022 dollars), 2018-2022

Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2022 dollars), 2018-2022

Persons in poverty, percent



BUSINESSES

Businesses

Total employer establishments, 2021

Total employment, 2021

Total annual payroll, 2021 (\$1,000)

Total employment, percent change, 2020-2021

Total nonemployer establishments, 2020

All employer firms, Reference year 2017

Men-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017

Women-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017

Minority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017

Nonminority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017

Veteran-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017

Nonveteran-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017



GEOGRAPHY

Geography

Population per square mile, 2020

Population per square mile, 2010

Land area in square miles, 2020

Land area in square miles, 2010

FIPS Code