

From: wayne.ogle@yahoo.com
To: [Commission Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Cc: [Stacy Oliva](#); [Michele Hartline](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT - PETITION TO INCORPORATE NIKISKI AS A HOME RULE CITY
Date: Wednesday, March 08, 2017 3:46:23 PM

March 8, 2017

Comments to LBC Regarding Subject Petition:

I totally support the Petition to the Local Boundary Commission to Incorporate Nikiski as a Home Rule City in the Kenai Peninsula Borough Using the Local Option Method. As Nikiski's twice elected representative to the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Assembly (District 3), I have had a unique opportunity to observe the governmental interaction between KPB and the people of Nikiski. I believe the Petition submitted before the Local Boundary Commission provides compelling and well-reasoned support for the incorporation of Nikiski as a Home Rule City. The most significant reasons for my support of the Petition are as follows:

1. As the District 3 (Nikiski) representative to the Borough Assembly, I am a single vote on issues that affect the Nikiski community. My influence is therefore limited to that of a single voice making Nikiski issues known. A case in point is the proposed Alaska Gas pipeline where Nikiski interests re represented by Borough personnel 35 miles away. The Borough is the closest governmental entity that agencies, companies, and other interested parties can deal with. Many Nikiski homeowners have been frustrated by not having an organization comprised of their neighbors who can adequately represent their interests on vital decisions. In general, Nikiski is growing and a single Assembly representative is not deemed to be sufficient.

2. Alaska State Constitution encourages government at the most local level possible. The Framers were keenly aware that local government usually governs best. The people of Nikiski appreciate this wisdom.

3. Nikiski is a well-defined community historically and currently. The Petition describes the history, demographics and economic vitality of the nearly 6,000 people who live in Nikiski. There is a 'city center' with shops and restaurants, an elementary, middle and high school at the center of the community. There is also a very significant industrial and business base in Nikiski which supports the population economically.

4. Nikiski has demonstrated their desire and ability to control their own affairs through their Service Areas and their elected Boards. We have four Service Areas that currently deliver services common to cities. The Service Area Boards are elected (exception is the Road Board which is appointed by the Borough Mayor). The Service Area Boards take their responsibilities very seriously.

a. North Peninsula Recreation Service Area. Years ago when Nikiski residents desired to have a swimming pool to teach our children basic aquatic skills, they appealed to KPB and were turned down. They became frustrated when other communities were able to build pools. Nikiski residents were not to be deterred. They went through the long process of establishing a service area with voter approval. This demonstrated their willingness to fund and manage this expensive resource within their community. The result result was the establishment of the 'recreation service area' with a dazzling pool & other recreation facilities which are the pride of the peninsula.

b. Nikiski Senior Service Area. Nikiski took action and built a magnificent Senior Center building in a location which is sought out for picturesque photo opportunities. The Senior Center is the focus of a vibrant community center for Nikiski's senior citizens.

c. Nikiski Fire Service Area. Over the years the Nikiski Fire Service Area Board has fostered a fiscally responsible fund balance where expensive fire equipment can be purchased without

resorting to bonding. In fact, the Board is recommending the construction of a third fire station to be paid for from their fund balance. No other service area in the Borough is financially able to do this. The Board is very active and engaged in promoting and funding training and equipment purchases that have made Nikiski Fire Service Area one of the finest departments of its kind in the State.

d. Road Service Area. Years ago, the Borough combined the regional road service areas into one Borough wide service area without a vote of the people. With this local control, Nikiski had been entirely satisfied with their local control over road maintenance. They felt they had been receiving the services their tax dollars were paying for. Road maintenance within Nikiski is currently delivered from a central location in the Borough and with a Board appointed by the Mayor which has NO influence on budget.

5. Petitioners have provided financial data that the incorporation of Nikiski is financially viable.

Petitioners have supported incorporation in great detail using financial data provided from the Borough. A proposed city budget is contained within Petition which entirely supports the city services. This proposed city budget has been examined and validated by Northern Economics as a reasonable financial plan for Nikiski incorporation.

6. There is wide-spread support for Nikiski incorporation. Petitioners have held several public meetings to discuss incorporation within the community. There are social media resources where Petitioners can answer questions from the community and receive input. In general, through these various public exchanges with the Nikiski community, Petitioners are confident there is widespread support for incorporation and will be approved in a vote of the people.

7. Petitioners have presented a well thought out Home Rule City Charter. The Charter reflects the community's desire for minimal government intrusion in their lives while providing expected services efficiently and economically. The Charter is flexible so that it can be amended by vote of the people as needed for changing conditions.

In conclusion, I believe the Petition for Incorporation of Nikiski to a Home Rule City is comprehensive in documenting the 'how' and 'why' such incorporation 'can' and 'should' take place. I highly recommend the Local Boundary Commission "work its will" on this Petition with the end result that the community of Nikiski is permitted to vote for self-determination on becoming a Home Rule City.

Thank you for your consideration,

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District 3 (Nikiski)

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