

From: [bballen](#)
To: [Commission. Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Cc: alaskalpaca@mtaonline.net
Subject: Big Lake Incorporation
Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2014 3:45:22 PM

September 17, 2014

Local Boundary Commission
550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1640
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
re: Big Lake, Alaska Petition for Incorporation

Dear Chairman Chrystal and Commissioners:

Local government is a vital factor in the social, economic and political structure of our society. Founded on the principles of community of interest, access and accountability, it remains closest to the people, both in proximity and value.

My purpose of writing and expressing my opinion in regard to the subject matter before you is based on the preceding paragraph. The time for incorporating the unincorporated areas in and around Big Lake is now. Subject area is in the process of experiencing growth from several fronts both industrial and residential creating the need for residents of the community to examine the impact such growth will have on their daily lives.

In my opinion, as a resident, incorporation of our community under the guidelines set forth in Title 29 of the Alaska State Statutes is in the best interest of the people in the affected area. Again stated in the first paragraph of this message, issues impacting the lives of residents should be decided by the people closest to the resulting factors of the decisions made. Simply stated, in order to have a successful community it must enjoy the confidence of the community, reflecting the needs and ambitions of the population, contributing materially to the growth and benefit of the area. Further, residents should be in a position to direct and guide their destiny as they experience social/economic growth, thus the need to establish a local government governed by residents that have made financial and material intangible investments in the current community.

It is incumbent on us to examine other benefits of being an incorporated Second-Class City. Planning, Platting and Land Use powers; The city would not be required to exercise these powers in any circumstances, but may be permitted in all cases in the manner described as follows: "it may be permitted by the Mat Su Borough to exercise these powers".

Big Lake is in most part a recreation area and there must be protection from development not consistent with the existing uses. The zoning must also have an element of enforcement attached.

The city could establish by ordinance economic development promotion, a public works department charged with construction and maintenance of all city owned assets, Parks and Recreation powers with MSB concurrence and

the authority to issue debt through tax-exempt bonds to finance projects approved by the voters.

Commissioners, the delegates of the Constitutional Convention adopted the Alaska Constitution on February 5, 1956. In Section 1 of Article X: Local Government cites, in part, " was to provide for maximum local self-government....."

I submit to you that our delegates to the constitutional convention in 1956 saw the need and requirement of people to govern themselves at a local level and do so without overlapping jurisdictions and service districts. Our petition is consistent with the well written Articles in the Alaska Constitution.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this issue and I request your favorable consideration to our petition.

Respectively submitted,

Bill and Sharon Allen
643 Horseshoe Lake Road
Big Lake, Alaska

From: [Kodiak Adventures Lodge](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Big Lake
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2014 8:22:12 PM

Hello,

I write this in great protest to Big Lake becoming a city. This effort has been wholly by just a few people and I personally do not know anyone who is for this action. I do not see any value in this effort other than raise taxes and give a few people jobs to collect and spend other peoples money. Not what any of us need is more people collecting taxes.

We do not need a city here in Big Lake. We have lived here over 15 years , raised our family here and we like it the way it is. It always seems people can not leave things as they are. Someone moves here and thinks they need to change it to be like where they came from bringing all their rules and ordinances with them. Better to go back where they came from if that is the way they want it. Or better yet move to Anchorage. We did not move here to be part of any city. I could have done that by moving to Wasilla or Palmer.

Alaska does not need another city of any kind. Big Lake as a community is fine the way it is. We are just fine with being part of the borough and nothing more. I will not stay here if Big Lake becomes a city of any kind.

Regards,

Larry Carroll

From: [caseyinalaska](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Comments on Big Lake Incorporation
Date: Monday, September 22, 2014 9:11:19 PM

I think that the residents of Big Lake have no choice but to incorporate. Their voices have not been heard nor their visions for the future, as clearly stated in several comprehensive plans, been used in the planning of the area. This community is in the center of growth or worse, in the overly used "path of progress." Rail, air and highway development is most certainly necessary, but this group should determine how those projects come about, at the very least they should be able to present alternatives.

Currently the residents have been terrified with threats that if they do not do something a highway will cut through the center of town and told that a rail would skirt its edges. They have been forced to choose the least of the evils presented. It would be good for them to have a real voice and it appears that representation through a lone, shared seat on the assembly is not nearly enough.

Big Lake is a very diverse community with a population base large enough to support a city. I think it will be a wonderful thing to see.

As a member of the Big Lake community, both as a business owner, rental property owner and homeowner I support the process and think the residents deserve to vote on incorporation.

As to the question about property overlapping with the City of Houston: it would seem that those property owners who wish to be annexed into the City of Houston should have that right. And, since the timing of that annexation would happen well before incorporation, this should not be an issue. It would make sense that there be but there some type of deadline for such an application.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

From: [promak](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Big Lake Incorporation
Date: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 1:09:49 PM

I support Big Lake Incorporation.
thank you,
Patricia A. Romak
3172 S. Kayak Circle
Big Lake, Alaska 99652
907-892-4814

From: [floyd shilanski](#)
To: [Eningowuk, Brice A \(CED\)](#)
Subject: Petetion to become Second class City
Date: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 10:04:18 AM

Local Boundary Committee:

I have lived in Alaska since the early 1970's. I raised my family in Anchorage when it was still considered, "a small town". We left Anchorage and moved to our lake home in Big Lake, Alaska in the year 2001. Like most who choose to leave the city, we were looking for freedom from burdensome housing associations, excessive property tax and the simplicity of living "The Alaskan Lifestyle".

Over the years we have seen the type of economic growth in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley that has validated the decision we made to leave Anchorage. We have welcomed the progress of having Enstar bring in natural gas and MTA bring phone lines and internet. This progress is beneficial to the greater Valley area however, it does not come without the negative aspects of a developing urban area. In particular, the increase of crime and the burden of a limited policy force.

At this moment, Big Lake sits at the cross hairs of major development in the North. The City of Houston inches closer and closer to absorbing Big Lake into their fold and the greater Knik area is expanding as well; pressure from both directions is ever present. This is showcased in the petition to oppose the annex that the City of Houston is trying to impose in the Horseshow Lake area. This area has no development presently but is earmarked by Houston to become one of industrial growth.

Active residents of the Big Lake area fear that they have not had the representation they should. Therefore, Big Lake is petitioning to become a second class city. As it stands, if there is a political change that is set to impact our area we must travel 50 miles to Palmer for am meeting that starts at 6:00 p.m. As most people in our area work until 5:00 p.m. or 5:30 p.m this becomes a logistical challenge for many.

When Big Lake becomes its own City, they will gain the representation that they lack [today](#). The residents can actively participate in their communities planning and development. In addition, it would pave the way for a local law enforcement as the burden of policing the entire Matanuska Susitna Valley, outside of Wasilla and Palmer, falls on the shoulders of a handful of Alaska State Troopers. This is ineffectual and the lack of physically being able to respond to crimes in the Big Lake area has made our community a coveted haven for thieves, drug dealers and other criminals to run amuck.

In addition, there have been several transportation issues that have been addressed by the Matanuska Susitna Borough, and while we have all tried to weigh in as concerned

citizens, not being established as a City has prohibited our voices from truly being heard. Decisions were made about a four lane divided highway; the port to parks project and several others without the community of Big Lake being properly represented.

There are several active community leaders and those in the planning process who have a vision for the Big Lake area. That vision takes in the thoughts, concerns and ideas of the citizens in our area; considerations that the greater Borough does not justly listen to.

We strongly encourage the Borough to allow Big Lake to become a second class City. Let those that live there have a say.

From: [Fred Nelius](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#); vthompson@houston-ak.gov; [Dukes, Sonya \(GOV sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Houston petition for annexation of land.
Date: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 11:53:34 AM

Fred Nelius
12861 W King Arthur Drive
Houston, AK 99623-1978

9-23-14

RE: Houston petition for annexation of land.

To Whom it May Concern,

I do not pretend to be knowledgeable on the subject, but I understand that all or part of the land that the City of Houston wants to annex is owned by an Alaska Native entity.

Whenever I hear about proposed laws or other government actions, I keep two old sayings in mind.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->1.) <!--[endif]-->Be careful what you wish for.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->2.) <!--[endif]-->Consider unintended consequences.

I believe that Alaska Natives are entitled to lands they obtained through the Alaska native claim settlement act. I also believe that a city should be able to tax and regulate the use of land within its boundaries.

As a Houston resident and property owner I like the fact that the city of Houston wants to increase its tax base so it can afford more services, but I do not want it to acquire land that might eventually become a burden on those of us within the existing city.

If the native entity that owns the property within the proposed annexation **wants their land to be annexed** and will somehow guarantee that they will take no action that would interfere with the rights of the City of Houston to tax and regulate it. I support the annexation.

If the Native owners of said land **do not want to be annexed** or **refuse to provide the above mentioned guarantee**, I am opposed to the annexation.

I do NOT want the city to annex land that some state or federal entity could declare is not taxable and/or subject to the city's development regulations. If that was to happen, the city would wind up providing road maintenance, police and fire protection and other expensive

items for the land over which it has no control.

Sincerely,

Fred Nelius
907-347-9203

From: [Phillip Locker](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Re: City of Houston-Big Lake Annexation Petition`
Date: Monday, September 29, 2014 1:48:57 PM

Dear Commission,

My name is Phillip Locker Jr DDS. I have owned property at Big Lake since 1980 and have been a full time resident since 2008.

I am opposed to Houston annexing Big Lake. The only reason Houston wants to annex Big Lake is because they need more revenue. There is no advantage to Big Lake residents to become part of Houston. I'm sorry Houston made the mistake of becoming a city and are now realizing the true costs. The people of Big Lake don't want to pay for Houston's city government.

I am adamantly opposed to Big Lake incorporating. I believe that a small group of people who want to make Big Lake a city are using the proposed Houston Annex as a crisis to get people to join their agenda.

A large number of Big Lake land owners are not full time residents. They would not be able to vote so they would have no voice. They would have to pay taxes to support the city of Big Lake and would be subject to the regulations imposed by the Big Lake government. I believe that would be unfair.

Forming a new government for a small area is absurd. The only outcome would be disaster.

The solution to the perceived problems vocalized by a minority in favor of a new city would not be solved, only bigger problems would be generated. The answer is never more government!

Please oppose Houston annexing Big Lake and Big Lake incorporating into a city.

Thank you.

Phillip Locker Jr DDS

September 26, 2014

Local Boundary Commission

550 W. 7th Ave, Suite 1640

Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: Petition for Incorporation Big Lake, AK.

Local Boundary Commission,

It is not fair to state whether or not the Commission should or should not consider the action of incorporation for Big Lake, AK, due to the fact that I do not live there and it does not affect me personally. What it does affect is the possibility of more burden to the State of Alaska, having to provide funds to support another city. For instance; Revenue Sharing, support through grants and requests in future Capital Improvement projects. The land mass requested to be incorporated is massive, in my opinion. To undertake the responsibility of services for this size of property is, I believe, more extensive than the petitioners realize.

Under 3 AAC 110.010. Need

(c) In accordance with AS 29.05.021(b), and to promote a minimum number of local government units in accordance with art. X, sec. 1, Constitution of the State of Alaska, a community within an organized borough may not incorporate as a city if essential municipal services can be provided more efficiently or more effectively (1) by annexation to an existing city; (2) by an existing organized borough on an areawide or nonareawide basis; or (3) through an existing borough service area.

Under 3 AAC 110.982. Minimum number of local government units

Among the factors to be considered in determining whether a proposed boundary change promotes a minimum number of local government units in accordance with art. X, sec. 1, Constitution of the State of Alaska, the commission will consider

(6) for city incorporation, whether incorporation of a new city is the only means by which residents of the territory can receive essential municipal services.

Sec. 29.05.021. Limitations on incorporation of a city.

(b) A community within a borough may not incorporate as a city if the services to be provided by the proposed city can be provided on an areawide or nonareawide basis by the borough in which the proposed city is located, or by annexation to an existing city.

The greater Big Lake area does have the services necessary for the community, being provided by the Mat-Su Borough such as; road maintenance, fire and emergency services.

If the Boundary Commission considers moving forward with a recommendation of incorporation I would urge the Commission to consider re-drawing the boundaries to lessen the land mass requested in the petition. The current boundaries incorporate approximately 3,400 residents into a 113 square mile area. This would cause the City of Big Lake to have a burden of providing services to 30 people per square mile. Currently, the Matanuska Susitna Borough provides services to 3.5 people per square mile, with infrastructure and employees already in place. Smaller city boundaries would enable Big Lake to provide better services to a more targeted population.

Respectfully,

Virgie Thompson

2444 N Gaunt Ln.

Wasilla, AK 99623

City of Houston, Alaska
Mayor's Office



September 30, 2014

Local Boundary Commission

550 W. 7th Ave, Suite 1640

Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: Petition for Annexation, City of Houston, AK

Dear Local Boundary Commission,

I would urge the Local boundary Commission to allow the City of Houston to move forward with their annexation petition by the LBC re-drawing or changing the boundaries for the Big Lake Incorporation and the City of Houston annexation petitions. By altering the petition boundaries it would allow the City of Houston to move forward with the property owner's request and by keeping the boundaries as they have been petitioned for the city and Big Lake Incorporation would add an excessive wait time. The city of Houston feels this is unfair as the property owners approached the City of Houston in good faith. Knikatnu currently owns property in the City of Houston and wishes to consolidate its contiguous holdings under one municipality and set of rules. The lands are currently uninhabited, with no road structures or residents to burden the City financially. The potential economic growth of commercial development on Knikatnu lands would offset the cost of services to the City of Houston. The annexation into the City would place zoning regulations on these pieces of property that Knikatnu desires to develop into commercial parcels. As these properties are adjacent to the Port MacKenzie rail extension project, the City feels the control over zoning will be concurrent with its comprehensive plan.

The City feels the annexation is a wise choice for both parties. Knikatnu receives the benefits of City governance, zoning to preserve land values, dedicated road service, fire protections, etc. while the City receives the benefit of commercial growth in a controlled zone, not only for the City of Houston, but for the entire Mat-Su Borough.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Respectfully,



Mayor Virgie Thompson, Petitioner for the City of Houston

September 30, 2014

Local Boundary Commission

Re: Big Lake Incorporation/Houston Annexation Petitions

Dear Sir:

It is ironic that I find myself as the Big Lake petitioner's representative when just a few years ago I attended meetings on the subject because I opposed the idea. I didn't want more taxes, government or regulations. Becoming informed, I learned that Big Lake could incorporate without new taxes, could improve its services and have better control over its destiny. I agreed with other community members to take the position as representative, but the comments to follow are those of myself and my wife, Janet, both 30 year residents of Big Lake.

A. Need for Self Government:

1. Big Lake is represented by one person on the Borough Assembly who represents a huge area from Point MacKenzie and Knik Goose Bay, north to the Little Su. These are vastly different communities and appropriate representation by one person is not reasonable or effective.
2. The Borough does not need to heed the wishes of Big Lake. For example, the Big Lake community voted to request that the Borough not allow tall towers on small properties with small set-backs in our area. We favored towers on larger properties with greater set-backs, but our request was ignored.
3. The goals and objectives outlined in the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan can best be accomplished by becoming a city.
4. The Big Lake population has grown over 4% in just the two years between 2010 and 2012 to over 3,500. If we become a city, we will be about the 16th largest in the State, but growing faster than similar sized Nome and Kotzebue (Houston is about the 25th). The number and complexities of issues before us exceeds the abilities of volunteers who are dedicated and hard-working but ever changing. This was illustrated during the LBC meeting on Sept. 23rd, when the staff from the City of Houston demonstrated their extensive knowledge and expertise in governmental matters. There are sufficient funds in the proposed Big Lake budget to hire a city manager and a city clerk, without increasing taxes. This talent would provide consistent and professional help to the volunteers in the community.
5. A number of significant developments are under construction or proposed in and around our community. These include the rail extension, proposed gas line, and the port expansion with the road connection thereto. These developments will impact us and can best be addressed by an effective local government.

B. Big Lake Boundary Area:

At the beginning of the incorporation process, the boundary of the Big Lake RSA was chosen as the border for the proposed city. Although simple and practical in most respects, we believe that some

of the northern portions of the proposed city are not necessary. All lands north that drain into Big Lake or into Horseshoe Lake should remain within our boundary. The balance of those vacant lands could remain in the Borough, or be annexed later into Houston or Big Lake if the property owner believes that city would best accomplish its objectives.

There might be a few areas on the east side of the Big Lake boundary that have overlapping issues with Houston or the Borough, and some adjustment here would be appropriate if it is logical. The balance of boundary area is still large, but appropriate. It includes all the lakes surrounding Big Lake, and the residents in these areas drive to Big Lake for shopping and for the post office. In addition much of the area has historically been used for recreational purposes and this continued use is important to the social and economic well-being of the community.

C. Annexation of land into Houston:

We can appreciate the KnikAtnu request to be annexed into Houston. The proposed use of the land is for "light industrial" purposes, but a conditional use permit could be granted for heavy industry. We encourage the development of this land as it will provide jobs for our citizens and those of Houston, but we are concerned about the impact on our water shed. We believe the annexation area should be modified to address this drainage issue.

Big Lake has, unfortunately, been designated "an impaired water body" by the DEC. The importance of protecting our natural environment is well documented in our Comprehensive Plan. The community has been working hard to improve upon this impaired water body status, and would be unable to control contamination draining in from surrounding developments.

The residents of Big Lake should have the opportunity to become informed of the pros and cons of incorporating, and be able to vote on the issue.

Sincerely,
Jim Faiks

Janet Faiks

P.O. Box 521152
Big Lake, AK 99652

P.O. Box 940065
Houston, AK 99694
September 30, 2014

Mr. Brice Eningowuk
Local Government Specialist, Local Boundary Commission
Division of Community and Regional Affairs
550 W. 7th Ave, Suite 1640
Anchorage, AK 99501

SUBJECT: Comments on the City of Houston Annexation Petition and Big Lake Incorporation Petition

Dear Mr. Eningowuk:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of the Petition for Annexation to the City of Houston and to voice concern over portions of the Big Lake Incorporation Petition.

City of Houston Annexation Petition

Justification to support a reasonable need for city government and to support a decision by the Local Boundary Commission to approve the petition for annexation includes the following:

1. The essential municipal services of roads, fire protection and local governmental administration for the subject territory can be provided more efficiently and effectively by the City of Houston than is currently provided by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) or by the yet to be incorporated City of Big Lake.

a. Fire Service. Fire service, protecting health, safety and well-being, is the most important municipal service a local government can provide its residents. The territory proposed for annexation is located less than 2 road miles from Houston Fire Station 91, but is more than 10 road miles from the nearest station in the MSB West Lakes (including Big Lake) Fire Service Area. This means the area proposed for annexation is currently without essential municipal fire protection, except for fire response provided as a courtesy by the City of Houston according to a Mutual Assistance Agreement between MSB and the City of Houston.

- Both Houston and West Lakes Fire Departments are rated at classification level 5 by the Insurance Services Office (ISO), a national insurance risk rating and assessment agency. This means both fire departments provide the same level of this essential service, but the West Lakes Department is located too far away to provide effective service.

- Economical Houston fire service is provided as part of the city services funded by the Houston 3.0 mil (total) property tax rate. Area residents subject to MSB West Lake fire

protection currently pay 1.78 mils for their fire service in addition to their other property taxes and service area fees.

- The proposed City of Big Lake will not assume responsibility for fire protection for its residents. If the territory proposed for annexation were incorporated into BLC, there would be no improvement in fire protection, which is in reality no fire service. Moreover, fire protection and responsiveness could suffer even further as another level of government becomes involved in local governance without being able to provide the direct services needed by its residents and property owners.

b. Road Service. Currently, there are no roads in the territory proposed for annexation, but the undeveloped land abuts properties that receive either MSB or Houston road service that could be extended into the territory.

- The City of Houston is in a better position to provide road service in the territory proposed for annexation than either MSB or the proposed City of Big Lake. Due to the existing road network and land development patterns, access into the area will be routed through the City of Houston. An isolated service enclave already exists for the residents of the Miller's Reach subdivision, a neighborhood located in an unincorporated MSB area. Miller's Reach residents routinely and mistakenly lodge complaints with the City of Houston concerning inadequate road maintenance and tardy snow removal.

- As the territory proposed for annexation develops, adding it to the existing MSB road service area covering the Miller's Reach subdivision or to a new road service area formed by Big Lake incorporation, will only add to the problems associated with an isolated service enclave.

- The City of Houston can provide road service to the territory proposed for annexation more economically than by adding it to the existing MSB road network. Houston road maintenance is provided as part of the Houston 3.0 mil (total) property tax rate. Big Lake area property owners subject to MSB road service area fees currently pay an additional 2.57 mils for road service.

c. Local Government Administration. In the territory proposed for annexation, the closest "seat of government" is the Houston city hall, located 2 miles away. Subject area residents would be forced to travel 35 miles to receive MSB municipal administrative services in Palmer and would have to drive 10-12 miles if incorporated into Big Lake. The City of Houston already provides efficient municipal administration closest to the subject area and does not require the formation of another level of government to provide the same services.

2. Resources/taxation. Annexation to the City of Houston will provide municipal services to future residents and property owners in the most efficient and cost effective manner. If the territory were to remain in the MSB, property owners will continue to pay 1.87 mils more in taxes and service area fees, and if the territory were to become incorporated into Big Lake City, they will pay 2.30 mils more in property taxes and service area fees with no commensurate improvement in essential government services.

- a. If territory remains in MSB: (1.87/0.009 mils more than Houston,)
- MSB Area wide property tax rate: 9.662 mils
 - MSB Non-area wide tax rate: 0.52 mils (pays for animal control)
 - Big Lake Road Service Area: 2.57 mils
 - West Lakes Fire Service Area: 1.78 mils (if fire service is available at all)
 - 14.532 mils (12.752 mils **WITHOUT Fire Service**)
- b. If territory were to be incorporated into City of Big Lake: (2.30 mils more than Houston)
- MSB Area wide property tax rate: 9.662 mils
 - MSB Non-area wide tax rate: 0.52 mils (pays for animal control)
 - BLC property tax rate: 3.0 mils
 - West Lakes Fire Service Area: 1.78 mils (if fire service is available at all)
 - 14.962 mils
- c. If territory is annexed to Houston:
- MSB Area wide property tax rate: 9.662 mils
 - Houston property tax rate: 3.0 mils (includes fire, roads and animal control)
 - 12.662 mils

If this territory is annexed to Houston, (future) residents and property owners would immediately receive Houston fire coverage, making them eligible for substantial savings in their homeowner's insurance rates, and would end up paying slightly less in overall property taxes than they pay now without fire protection.

3. Residents/property owner preferences. Although it may not be directly addressed in 3 AAC 110, one would hope that the wishes of the residents/property owners can be taken into consideration. Knikatnu is the sole (surface) property owner of the territory proposed for annexation, and they already own adjacent property in Houston. There are no current residents. Knikatnu, desiring to have the territory annexed to Houston, initiated the action now under consideration which is supported by the City of Houston. Knikatnu wants to consolidate more of their property into Houston. The City of Houston welcomes Knikatnu and can provide essential municipal services that the Mat-Su Borough and incorporated Big Lake cannot.

Big Lake Incorporation

1. 3 AAC 110.040 Boundaries. The Big Lake Incorporation Petition violates 3 AAC 110.040 (b) and 3 AAC 110.040 (c). Given historic and predicted growth and development trends, it is illogical to assume the vast and largely inaccessible and uninhabited land areas requested for incorporation will exhibit the need for municipal services within the timeframe specified, nor have the petitioners explained how they plan to provide essential public safety, infrastructure and other municipal services to this large geographic region if such growth were to occur in the next 10 years.

a. 3 AAC 110.040 (b) (1). The proposal to incorporate more than 113 square miles into a new city **is not** on a scale suitable for city government that may include only that territory comprising a present local community, plus reasonably predictable growth, development, and public safety needs during the 10 years following the anticipated date of incorporation.

b. 3 AAC 110.040 (b) (2). The proposal **does** include an entire geographic region, including an extremely large unpopulated area that is inaccessible and devoid of roads and other infrastructure.

c. 3 AAC 110.040 (c). The proposed incorporation contains several enclaves that will inhibit the development of essential municipal services on an efficient and cost effective level. These enclaves are:

- The Miller's Reach Subdivision

- The Knikatnu properties that is the subject of the Houston Annexation Petition, and

- the land north of the Alaska Rail Road and Parks Highway located along the upper north boundary of the territory proposed for Big Lake incorporation and due west of the upper north-west existing boundary of the City of Houston.

d. Possible remedies. Although the incorporation petition would still include large unpopulated areas, the conflicts with 3 AAC 110.040 could be reduced if the incorporation boundaries were redrawn to:

- eliminate from the incorporation petition the (Knikatnu) territory proposed for annexation to Houston, allowing the annexation petition to proceed separately from the incorporation petition.

- re-draw the north-west boundary to eliminate from consideration the all land north and west of the Port MacKenzie rail extension, thereby reducing the landmass requested for incorporation bring it more in line with 3 AAC 110.040 (b) (1).

- reject the incorporation petition as the petitioners have failed to offer affected residents and property owners sufficient improvements in their essential municipal services that justifies the tax increase needed to fund the incorporation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lance L. Wilson
Houston

To: Local Boundary Commission
550 W 7th Avenue, Suite 1640
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

From: William D. and Carol G. Kane

Date: 10/1/14

RE: Petition to Incorporate Big Lake, Alaska as a 2nd Class City

Dear Chairman Chrystal and Commissioners,

We advocate for the Big Lake's registered voters to determine the immediate and long-term future for the Big Lake area, which consists of full time residents, part time residents/property owners, and those who choose to visit the Big Lake area for year-round recreational purposes. The submitted petitioners' vision for Big Lake to become a 2nd Class City was very intentional to be inclusive and responsive for the present, the next ten years, and at least the next twenty-five years.

Very mindful individuals were forward thinking "visionaries" for Alaska to earn statehood where essential questions were posed 1) proof of resident population and a way to sustain itself economically, 2) self-government for rights and powers, and 3) a plan and build for the future prior to Alaska having statehood proclaimed in 1959. As the record will reflect, it is not a new idea for Big Lake to become a 2nd Class City. Much like our Alaskan forefathers, since the inception of the process for Big Lake to become a 2nd Class City, Big Lake's "visionaries" have heard and continue to hear similar concerns expressed including but not limited to – "Is there a large enough population to sustain fiscal need?" "Keep the status quo." "No new taxes." "Just another layer of government." and "Need an active voice closer to where decisions are being made for the future of Big Lake as a 2nd Class City." Yes, history does repeat itself. Acceptance for Big Lake to become a 2nd Class City and as Alaska's visionaries determined and we now know, those questions can again be asked and answered resulting in a vibrant, proactive Big Lake citizenry just as Alaska's citizenry became and is today.

Currently, not limited to but including compelling evidence, it is very clear Big Lake has dedicated individuals/groups who as volunteers have and will continue to take a leadership role in comprehensive planning impacting Big Lake, ensure a quality of life through parks/trails development, commitment for schools and a much needed response for area youth, road and safety issues, healthy community needs, economic growth and a commitment for a “voice” for local concerns. The individuals who have made commitments for the aforementioned to happen, through their combined efforts will continue to ensure as stated in the Alaska Constitution Section I of Article X: Local government cities in part... “was to provide for maximum local self- government.

Hopeful is an awareness not to distract from the acceptance of Big Lake’s Petition as 2nd Class City as a result of the City of Houston’s efforts to move forward for annexation to re-draw or change boundaries. Paramount to Big Lake’s future is to be given the acceptance of the Big Lake petition and allow our registered voters to have “voice” by voting.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and an affirmative decision to process this for Big Lake’s future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carole Kane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

To: Local Boundary Commission
550 W 7th Avenue, Suite 1640
Anchorage, AK 99501

From: Rebecca Rein

Date: 10/2/2014

RE: Petition for Annexation into Houston and Big Lake Petition for Incorporation

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

This letter is in support of the annexation of lands into the City of Houston.

Knikatnu, a Corporation with considerable holdings already in the boundaries of the City of Houston, came to the City and asked for the remainder of their contiguous land to be incorporated into the city boundaries. This would allow the citizens of Houston to help govern the uses and zoning of the large parcels of land Knikatnu owns. As a citizen, it makes me comfortable to think that a parcel of Corporate owned land rests inside city boundaries, as opposed to outside. Placing this land inside of City boundaries puts on it safeguards that land simply abutting (but potentially affecting) the boundaries of my City does not have.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Rebecca Rein
PO Box 940071
Houston, AK 99694

From: [Ina Mueller](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Big Lake Incorporation & Houston Annexation
Date: Friday, October 03, 2014 10:07:54 AM

Dear LBC Representatives:

I apologize for waiting until the last day to make comments, but I wanted to make sure I chose my words carefully as this is such an important issue. Also, I'm not sure if I was supposed to cc other people on this e-mail, please let me know.

I've watched the process unfold over the past few years of getting the Incorporation details and paperwork to this point. The group involved with forming this petition is a very well-educated, well-respected, diversely talented, successful, dedicated group of individuals. The fields of expertise from individuals in this planning group run from construction, to financial planning, to engineering and a wide variety of general business professionals. This was not an undertaking that anyone has taken lightly. Many of the individuals working on this process openly agree that at "first glance" they were vehemently opposed to Big Lake Incorporation. However, once they truly began to look at what has been happening around our community, and investigated the petition documents and process, it became increasingly apparent that the best avenue for Big Lake to have any say-so in its own future is to Incorporate.

The Big Lake road service area encompasses some of the most beautiful, easily accessible, recreational areas in the Mat-Su Valley. Yes, it is a very large area, however, it is an area that has been under the 'guidance' of the Big Lake RSA already. It is an area that has all similar issues concerning access and development and the area should be looked at in one comprehensive long-range planning concept; which would happen under the auspices of the City of Big Lake.

One of the most common arguments we hear against incorporation is "I like Big Lake just the way it is, I don't want anything to change"! Well, unfortunately, the individuals making those comments have not been paying attention. Like many others supporting incorporation, I have owned property in the Mat-Su and specifically Big Lake area for over 30 years and have seen the dramatic changes taking place in the last few years especially. The residents of Big Lake should have the ability to determine where our major arterial roads ways should be placed. If we do not want a high-speed highway dissecting our elementary school, our grocery store, our post office, etc. – we SHOULD have the ability to say NO and determine where that major infrastructure should be placed. We want the ability to develop a pleasant, family-friendly community that invites a well thought out mix of commerce and residential areas.

There is a popular phrase in finance "No one manages your money like you do", well the same can be said for your community! No one will care as much about the development of the Big Lake area THAN Big Lake residents! It is truly an issue that the residents of Big Lake should have the right to weigh in on. I strongly encourage you to give the residents of Big Lake that chance!

Furthermore, I strongly request that you deny the application for the City of Houston to annex a portion of Big Lake at this time. Again, the resident of the Big Lake area have the right to determine

their own future. Cutting out a significant chunk basically in the middle of some of our most precious water-shed drainage areas prior to Big Lake residents having their ability to weigh in with their thoughts on Incorporation seems unfair to the residents.

I fully support Big Lake's petition to Incorporate!

Sincerely,

Ina Mueller



Ina L. Mueller
PO Box 521847
Big Lake, AK 99652
(907) 230-0935
www.lakeshoreentertaining.com



This email is free from viruses and malware because [avast! Antivirus](#) protection is active.

From: [Jim Hutton](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Big Lake Incorporation
Date: Thursday, October 02, 2014 9:24:14 PM

Dear sirs,

My wife and I were "weekenders" at our cabin on Big Lake for 25 years. As "weekenders", we never gave much thought to the governance of the area. Upon retiring 5 years ago, we built a new home in the Big Lake area and have become quite involved in the community. Our involvement has given us a new outlook on the area and has convinced us that the interests of the community would best be served if we could govern ourselves as a second class city.

We are currently represented on the Borough Assembly by one person, who represents a large diverse area from Point MacKenzie to Knik Goose Bay north to the Little Su River. As this individual is one of seven assembly members, and is also representing a large area, in reality, Big Lake has very little representation on the Assembly, and very little to say on matters which pertain to Big Lake.

Road Service Area 21 (the area suggested as the Big Lake city limits) has approximately 103 miles of roads, 85% of which are substandard by Borough standards. Although these substandard roads represent a fire and health risk, the Borough appears to have little interest in upgrading them to Borough standards. A local Big Lake resident, who is a retired civil engineer, has suggested an inexpensive alternate road construction system to the Borough which could be utilized to improve many of these substandard roads. Although he and his neighbors have tested and proven this design on their local road at their own expense, the Borough has refused to consider this alternative. As a city, Big Lake could choose to upgrade many of these substandard roads at a fraction of the cost of the current Borough road design.

With the developments currently underway or proposed, such as the new prison, railroad extension, gas line, port expansion and the Port to Parks highway, Big Lake is poised see some radical changes. We believe that these changes could best be managed by a local government, not a Borough government. Although we would be adding a layer of government, which no one wants to see, it would be a government that the citizens of Big Lake could "reach out and touch" as opposed to the minimal representation which we currently have in the Borough.

A dedicated group of Big Lake residents has diligently worked on the second class city petition, and has formulated a five year budget proving we could manage ourselves if given the opportunity. Please consider providing this opportunity to the citizens of Big Lake.

Sincerely,

James H. Hutton
Charlene D. Hutton

P.O. Box 520022
Big Lake, AK 99652-0022
18554 West Marion Drive
Big Lake, AK 99652
907 892-1855

From: [Bill Kramer](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Big Lake Incorporation written comment
Date: Friday, October 03, 2014 6:03:26 AM

To whom it may concern,

With regards to Big Lake becoming a second class city I offer the following;

It's been a long almost 2 year process and I wasn't totally supportive of the whole concept until I was able to get my head wrapped around the financial portion of the proposed City. I have been self-employed in AK for the past 35 years. I have owned and operated several medium sized (100 employees) construction companies and currently build and own to lease buildings in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley . The only reason I'm bring any of this up is because I can read financial statements and understand thoroughly the budgeting process. I looked at the proposed city as a small business...the city had to first and foremost be able to comfortably stand on its financial feet utilizing current revenues already collected from the residents of Big Lake...No new taxes...period. I've come to the personal conclusion this is entirely possible based on financial information received from the Mat Su Borough and the limited services the new city would be responsible to properly staff in order to oversee.

With the financial viability resolved in my mind...I moved on to the question "Why"

Now a little more background...I've lived in Big Lake (Horseshoe Lake) for the past 16 years. My wife Cathi and I raised our three children who all graduated from Houston High School and are now in college, graduated from college or are pursuing careers in Alaska.

Three years ago I was asked to run for a seat on the Community Council which I agreed to do. I have served as Community Council President for the past 3 years and have been deeply involved with a growing number of issues that will directly affect the quality of life in Big Lake.

Some of the projects we as a Community Council have been actively participating include...

- * Rail Extension bisecting Big Lake passing close to neighborhoods and crossing existing recreational trail system.
- * Port McKenzie to Parks Highway road improvements. States of Alaska desire to develop a transportation corridor between the two points and owns the default right-of-way down the middle of Big Lake.
- * South Big Lake Road Improvement. Currently under construction and a vital link to the States Port to Parks Transportation Plan.
- * Burma Road improvements...last piece of road that if improved will connect Port McKenzie road to the upgraded South Big Lake road and direct all Port Traffic through downtown Big Lake.
- * Kabata Bridge Project...shows all Northbound truck and car traffic being sent through downtown Big lake which is in direct conflict with the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan.
- * Big Lake Community Impact Study. A 250k grant was provided by the State legislature and a 18 month study is now complete outlining the Port to Parks Hwy. road improvement projects that will impact the community of Big Lake.

- * DEC declaring Big Lake an impaired body of water based on overly stringent (my personal opinion) tests which adversely affect the property values and image of Big Lake.
- Parks Highway upgrades between Wasilla and Big Lake Road.
- * Main State Natural Gas Pipeline now being proposed west of Big Lake to Port McKenzie.

Back to the WHY...Big lake is in the crosshairs of much of the development that is taking place in the Mat-Su Borough and we need a bigger seat at the table. Becoming a second class city will get us that seat. Currently we have a single assembly person who's District 5 stretches from Port McKenzie down KBG Road just short of Wasilla and all the way out past Big Lake to the Little Susitna River. This one voice on the 7 person Mat- Su Assembly is supposed to understand our needs and represent us with his vote at the Assembly table. I'm of the opinion that if a City of Big Lake was formed...a seven (7) person City Council all living and focused on the issues concerning Big Lake would be much more effective in representing the desire of the local residents.

I've been a private sector person all my adult life and certainly not a fan of more government but in this case I believe it's much more about taking local control of our communities destiny. We are simply trying to have a significant voice in how the community of Big Lake retains its quality of life, provides access to family wage jobs and develops in a manner consistent with the Big Lake Comprehensive plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Kramer
PO Box 521783
991 S. horseshoe Lake Rd.
Big Lake, AK 99652
[907-440-5000](tel:907-440-5000) cell

From: [Yvonne Lindblom](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: I support Big Lake's petition to incorporate
Date: Friday, October 03, 2014 11:54:50 AM

I fully support Big Lake's petition to incorporate.

Yvonne Lindblom,
resident of Big Beaver Lake

From: [Roberta Tew](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: i support big lake incorporation
Date: Friday, October 03, 2014 10:37:13 AM

Thank you,



Roberta Tew
(907)892-5657
www.tewsinc.com

From: [Cindy Bettine](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Houston City Annexation and proposed City of Big Lake.
Date: Friday, October 03, 2014 12:05:44 PM

To the Local Boundary Commission,

I am opposed to the City of Houston Annexation of lands in the Big Lake Community Council area. The near-by residential communities have not been notified of this Annexation. The fact that the lands that Houston would like to annexed will be zoned "industrial" compounds my concern. The City of Houston has planning powers, which will notify Houston residents of the development of industrial lands, but it does not notify the near-by Borough residents to the proposed industrial development.

These lands are currently under the Mat Su Borough planning departments management. I believe that the Mat Su Borough can protect and regulate industrial lands (possible future gravel extraction) better than the poorly funded City of Houston.

I support the city of Big Lake's effort to incorporate.

Cindy Bettine
Resident of downtown Big Lake
Box 870008,
Wasilla, Alaska 99687

From: [Michael Solmonson](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Big Lake Incorporation
Date: Friday, October 03, 2014 7:47:42 PM

Dear LBC Representatives:

We have owned our Rocky Lake land in Big Lake since 1990, when we bought a 12 X 12 cabin and lived every summer in it with no water, no electricity, three children, their friends, and two big dogs.

We sold our Anchorage property in 2009 and built and moved into our home on Rocky Lake because this was the place we love. I commute to BP each day, and I am often asked by my coworkers, "Don't you just hate the commute?" My answer: "Are you kidding? I love living out here. It is such a small price to pay." I am a member of the Station 81 West Lakes Fire Department, and I am called out three to four times a week for rescue or fire. My wife, who retired after 35 years of teaching in the Anchorage School District, volunteers at Big Lake Elementary. She teaches math to fifth graders and Shakespeare to fourth graders. She is a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for foster children. She also volunteers at the Big Lake Library.

This is our home. Please listen to those of us who have our hearts invested in this quirky, caring piece of America.

We want kindergartners to be able to walk to the fire station for a field trip. They can now, and they do. Our whole town celebrates this joy.

Please help us keep this gift.

I fully support Big Lake's petition to Incorporate!

Sincerely,
Michael and Jody Solmonson