

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION OVERVIEW



Jed Smith, Local Government Specialist

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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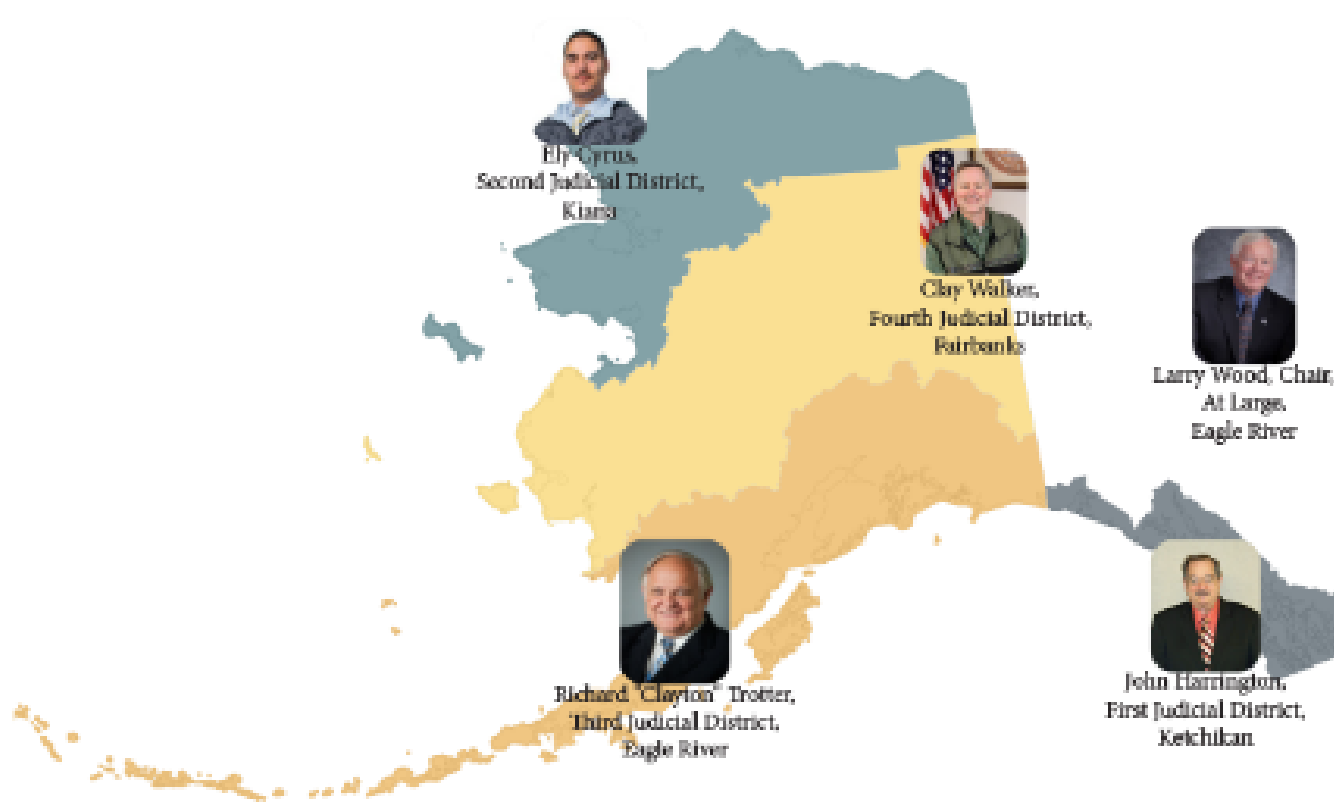
3/17/2025

Article X, Sec. 12 Alaska's Constitution

“A local boundary commission or board shall be established by law in the executive branch of the state government. The commission or board may consider any proposed local government boundary change. It may present proposed changes to the legislature during the first ten days of any regular session. The change shall become effective forty-five days after presentation or at the end of the session, whichever is earlier, unless disapproved by a resolution concurred in by a majority of the members of each house. The commission or board, subject to law, may establish procedures whereby boundaries may be adjusted by local action.”



The Commission



LBC Staff



Local Government in Alaska

	Types of Local Government	
	Types of Local Government	Example
Cities	First Class City	City of Dillingham
	Second Class City	City of Bethel
	Home Rule City	City of Cordova
Boroughs	Unified Home Rule Borough	Municipality of Anchorage
	Non-Unified Home Rule Borough	Northwest Arctic Borough
	First Class Borough	Municipality of Skagway
	Second Class Borough	Matanuska-Susitna Borough



Mandatory Areawide Powers

All boroughs have three mandatory area-wide powers:

- AS 29.35.160 – Each borough constitutes a borough school district and establishes, maintains, and operates a system of public schools on an areawide basis.
- AS 29.35.170 – A borough shall assess and collect property, sales, and use taxes that are levied in its boundaries.
- AS 29.35.180 – shall provide for planning, platting, and land use regulation.



Borough Formation in Alaska

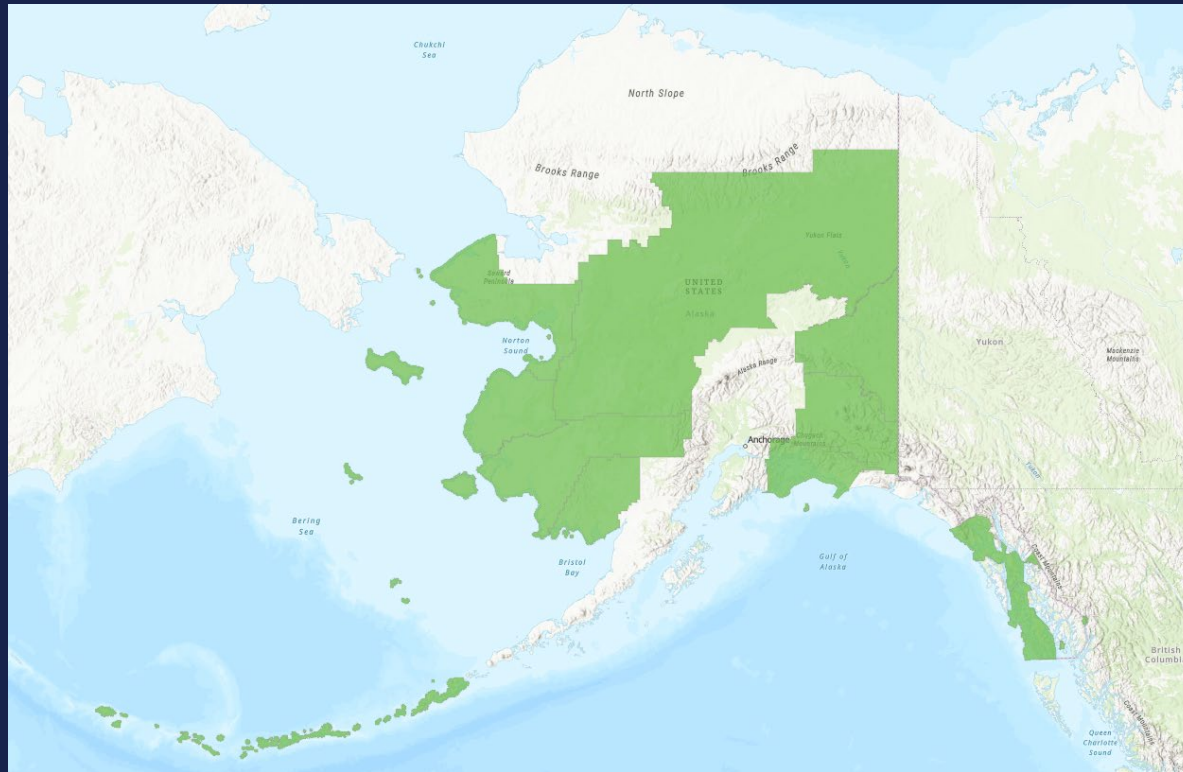
- 1961- Bristol Bay Borough
- 1963- Mandatory Boroughs Act (Ketchikan Gateway, City and Borough of Juneau, City and Borough of Sitka, Kodiak Island Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Municipality of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Fairbanks North Star Borough)*
- 1968- Haines Borough
- 1971- North Slope Borough
- 1986- Northwest Arctic Borough
- 1987- Aleutians East Borough
- 1989- Lake and Peninsula Borough
- 1990- Denali Borough
- 1992- City and Borough of Yakutat
- 2007- Municipality of Skagway
- 2010- City and Borough of Wrangell
- 2013- Petersburg Borough

* Legislatively mandated

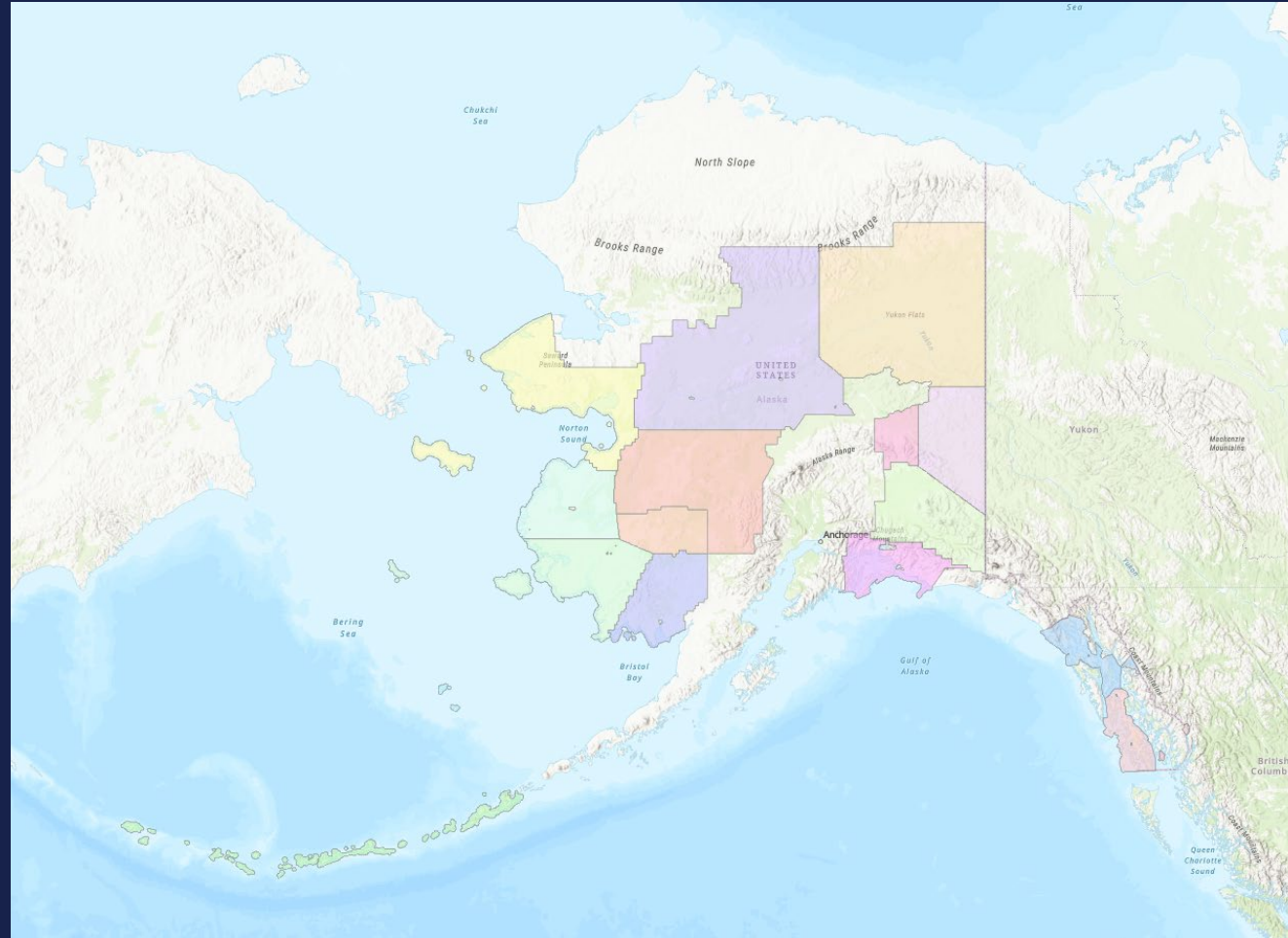


The Unorganized Borough

“The entire State shall be divided into boroughs, organized and unorganized.”
Article 10, Section 3, Constitution of the State of Alaska



Regional Education Attendance Areas



Changing Local Government

Types of Boundary Changes

Incorporation

Annexation

Detachment

Dissolution

Reclassification

Deunification

Merger

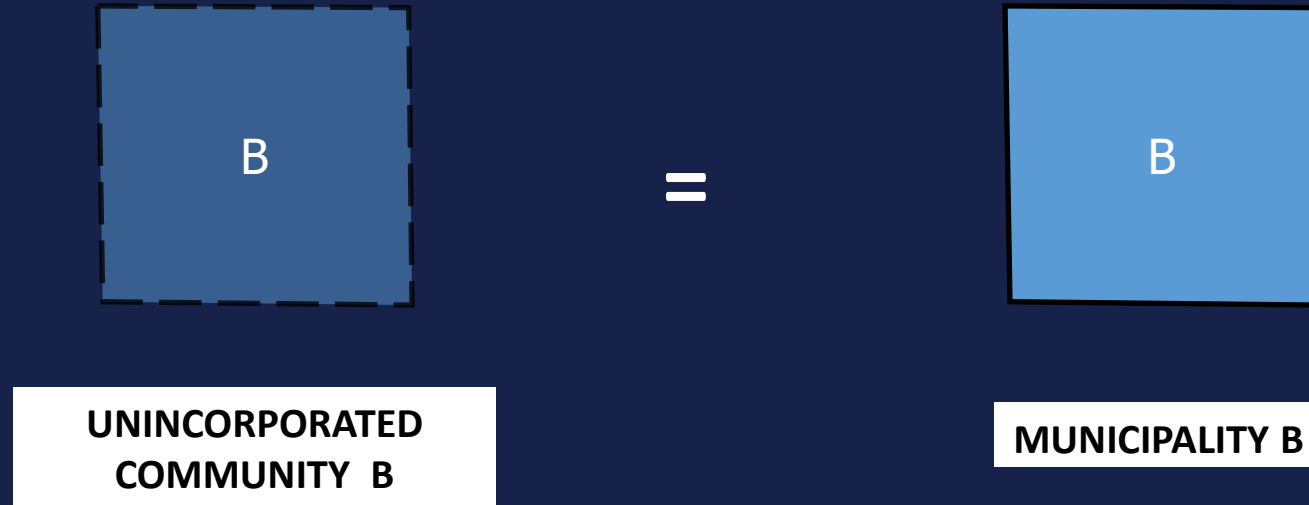
Consolidation

Unification



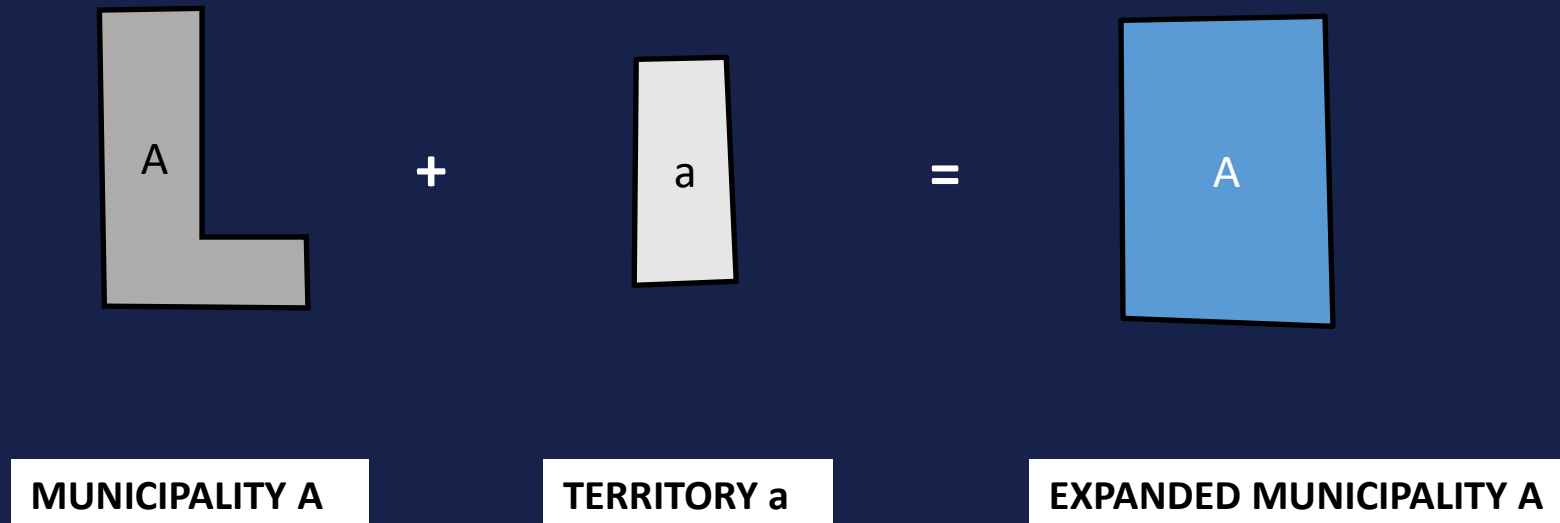
Boundary Changes: Incorporation

An unincorporated community becomes a municipality.



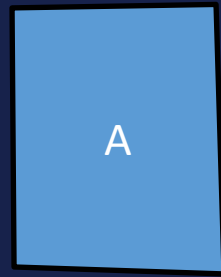
Boundary Changes: Annexation

A municipality adds territory to its boundaries

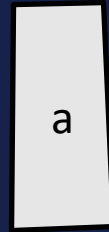


Boundary Changes: Detachment

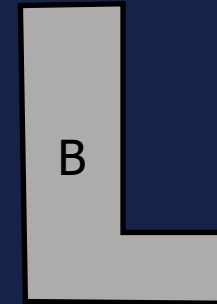
A municipality reduces its territory.



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MUNICIPALITY A

TERRITORY a

SMALLER MUNICIPALITY B



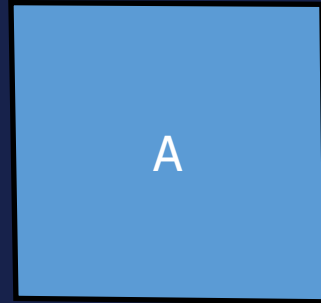
Boundary Changes: Dissolution

A municipality ceases to exist. A community may remain in its place.

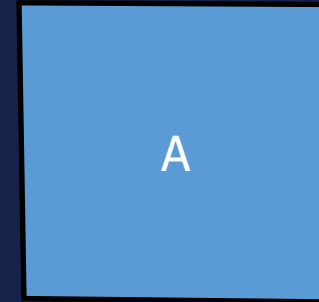


Boundary Changes: Reclassification

A municipality changes its type.



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SECOND CLASS CITY A

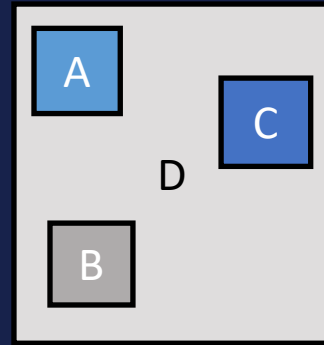
FIRST CLASS CITY A



Boundary Change: Unification*

A borough and all cities within form a single municipality

*Not an LBC process



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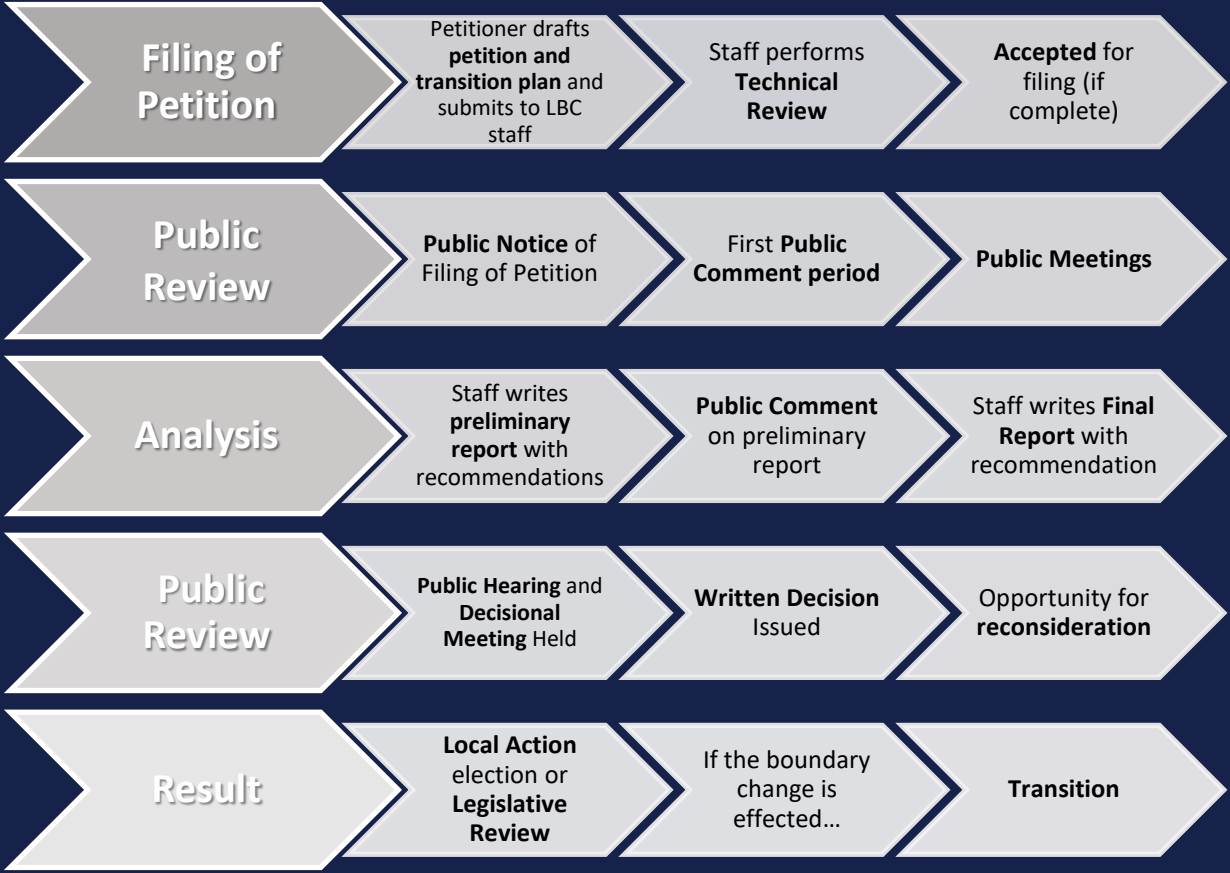


BOROUGH D WITH CITIES A, B, C

MUNICIPALITY (BOROUGH) E



LBC Process

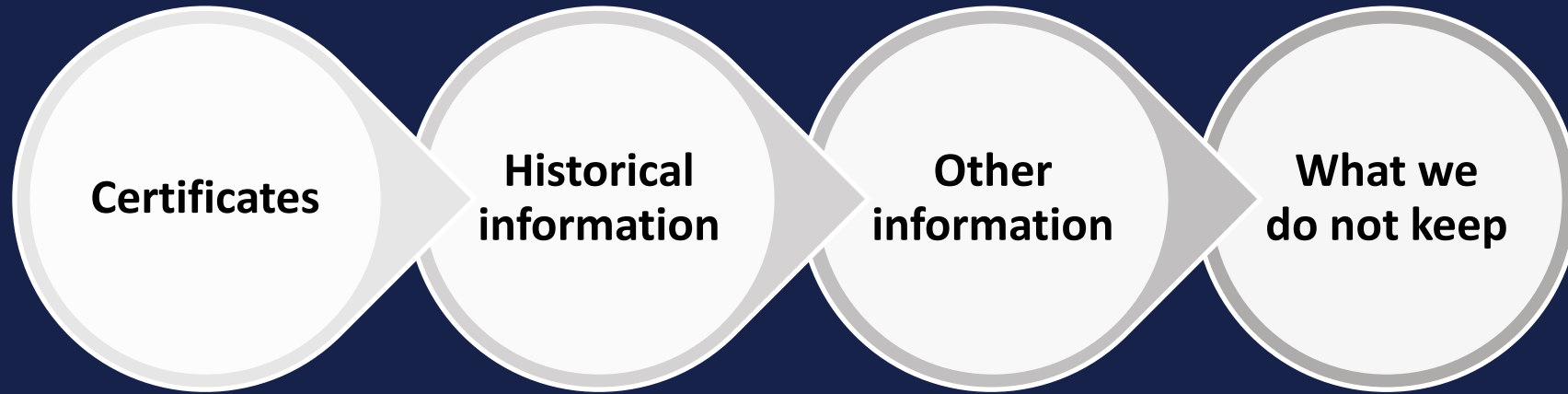


LBC Staff Role (3 AAC 110.435)

- LBC Staff serves as an advisor to the LBC. May not act in an advocacy capacity as a petitioner.
- Provides technical assistance, information, and forms to petitioners, respondents, and interested persons with procedural questions.
- Ensure the commission is fully and accurately informed by providing new or additional information that supplements questions or refutes information provided by a petitioner, respondent, or other person.



What LBC Staff Can Do For You



- Municipal certificates
- Records of official municipal boundaries and classifications

- Petition information and materials
- Boundary change information since territorial days
- Constitutional and legal historical information
- Some maps

- Municipal boundaries
- LBC publications
- REAA boundaries
- Original Village Corporation Charters

- Ordinances
- Up-to-date Charters
- Land Surveys



Questions?

For further information, contact LBC staff.

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