

**City of Palmer, Alaska**  
**Special City Council Meeting**  
**August 25, 2020, at 6:00 PM**  
City Council Chambers  
231 W. Evergreen Avenue, Palmer  
[www.palmerak.org](http://www.palmerak.org)

**AGENDA**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. ROLL CALL**

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. **Committee of the Whole:** Presentation from Agnew::Beck Regarding Annexation Study (note: action may be taken by the Council following the Committee of the Whole).....Page 3

**G. RECORD OF ITEMS PLACED ON THE TABLE**

**H. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

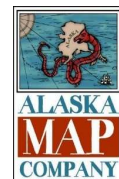
**I. ADJOURNMENT**



# Community + Economic Analysis for Preparation of an Annexation Petition

Presentation to Palmer City Council  
August 25, 2020

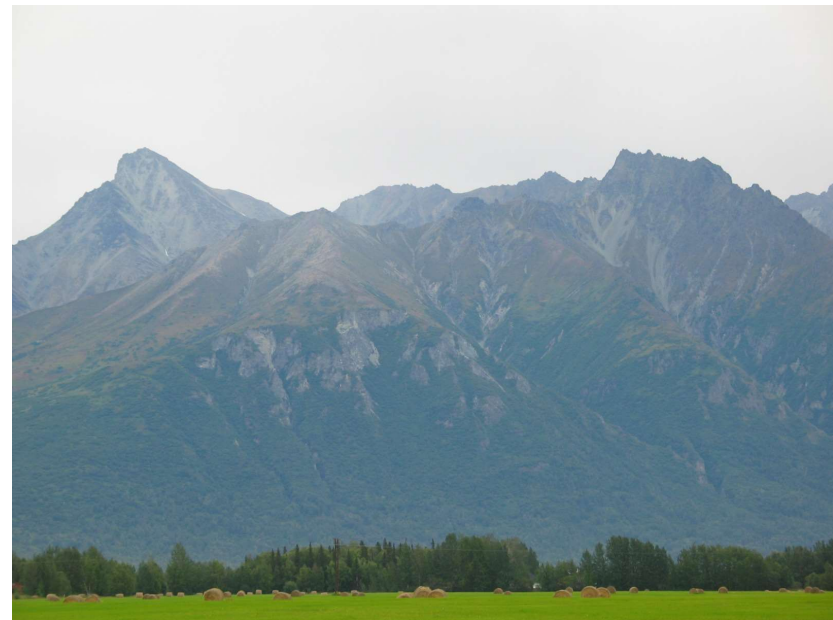
Agnew::Beck Consulting, Halcyon Consulting  
and the Alaska Map Co.



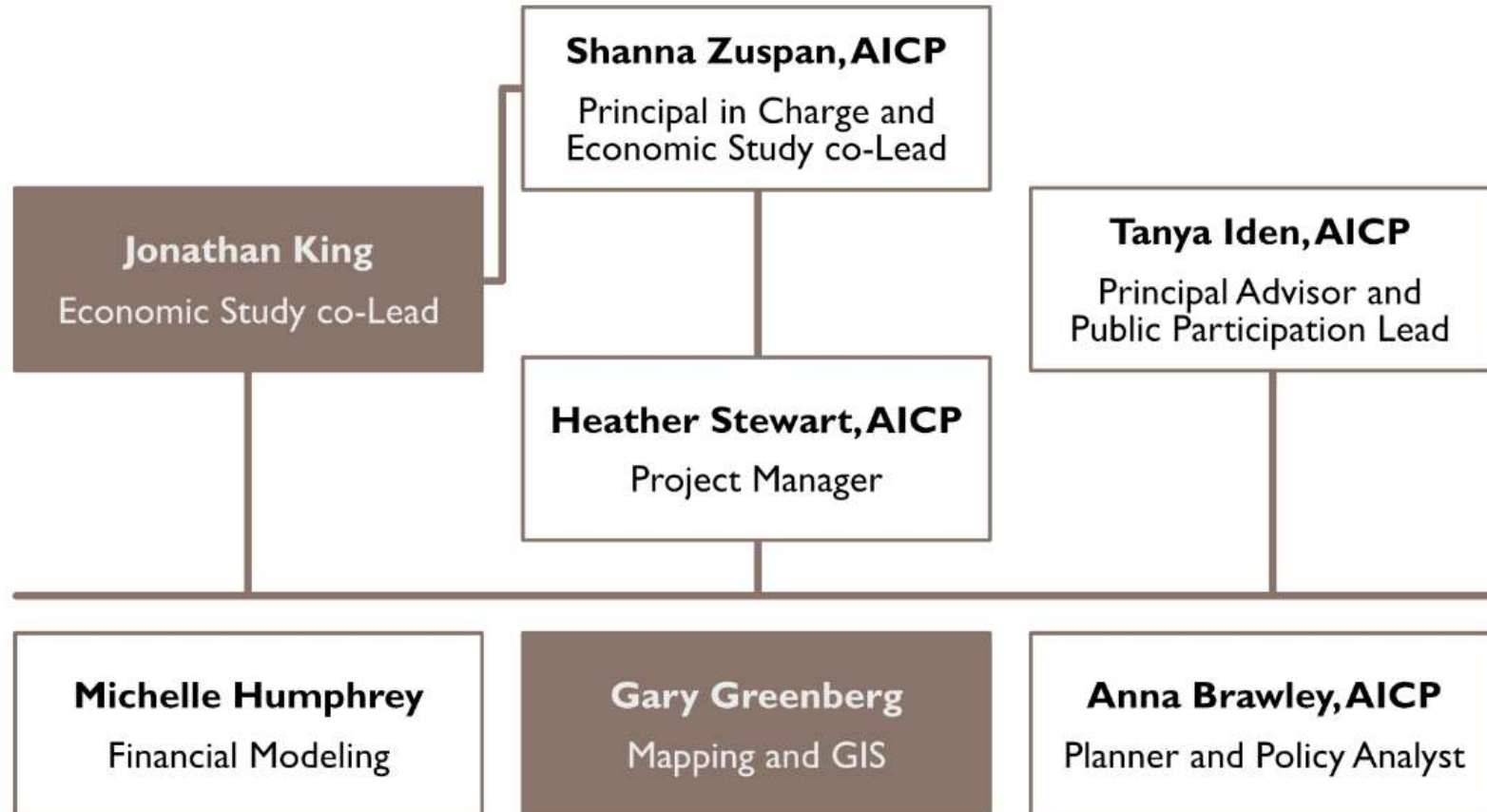
# Project Overview

## Community and Economic Analysis for Preparation of an Annexation Petition

- About the Project
  - Purpose
  - Annexation in Palmer
  - Annexation Process in Alaska
- Methodology
  - Study Areas
  - Economic Analysis
  - Community Analysis



# Project Team





# About the Project

- Purpose
- Annexation in Palmer
- Annexation Process in Alaska



# Project Purpose

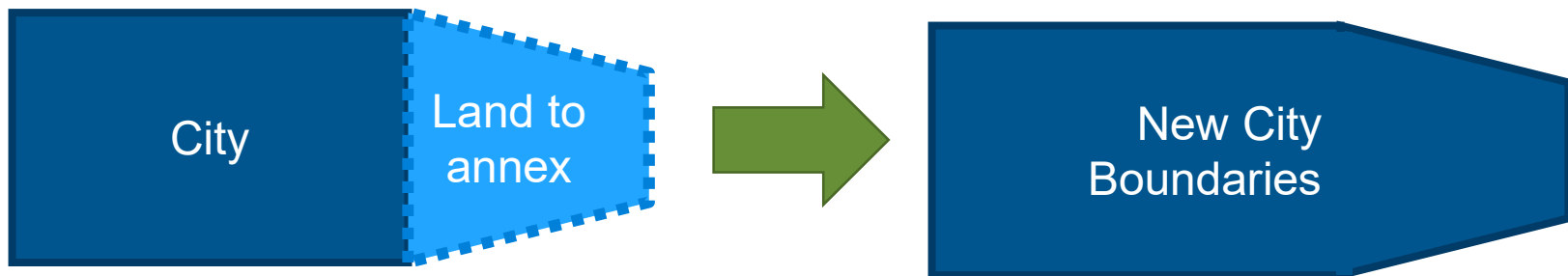
The purpose of the Community and Economic Analysis is to lay the foundation for a successful annexation of territory into the City of Palmer.

- Annexation would affect the City's governance, finances and service provision.
- If done right, annexation can improve these municipal roles and functions.
- This study is intended to:
  - Identify land areas outside current City limits would most likely contribute to a successful annexation;
  - Identify regulatory, financial, or service provision issues that should be addressed **before** making an annexation petition; and
  - Inform the City and potential future citizens within the Greater Palmer community about the annexation process and how it could affect them.

# What is Annexation?

Annexation is a legal process: a city officially expands its boundaries to include more territory. This means:

1. The city expands in size, with a larger boundary.
2. Newly-added residents and properties receive, or are eligible for, city services.
3. The city's taxing authority, land use rules, and other local laws apply to this area.
4. Residents in this area become eligible city voters and can directly participate in city government.



*Adapted from the Local Boundary Commission manual*



# Why Do Cities Annex Land?

Changing or expanding its jurisdiction can benefit a city, as well as the residents it serves:

## 1. Support or encourage future growth.



- Room for new subdivisions and housing
- More commercial opportunities
- Infrastructure (water, sewer, roads) for new development
- Protecting land uses



## 2. Provide services more efficiently, cost effectively, and/or to more residents.

## 3. Maximize local control:



- Increase where services can be provided and where local tools like land use regulations can be applied.
- Give residents who currently live outside city limits a direct say in local issues that impact them.

# Palmer's Goals for Annexation

Any proposed annexation must meet the City of Palmer's goals for annexation:



1. To promote orderly, high quality development and the cost-effective extension of services, where and when warranted.

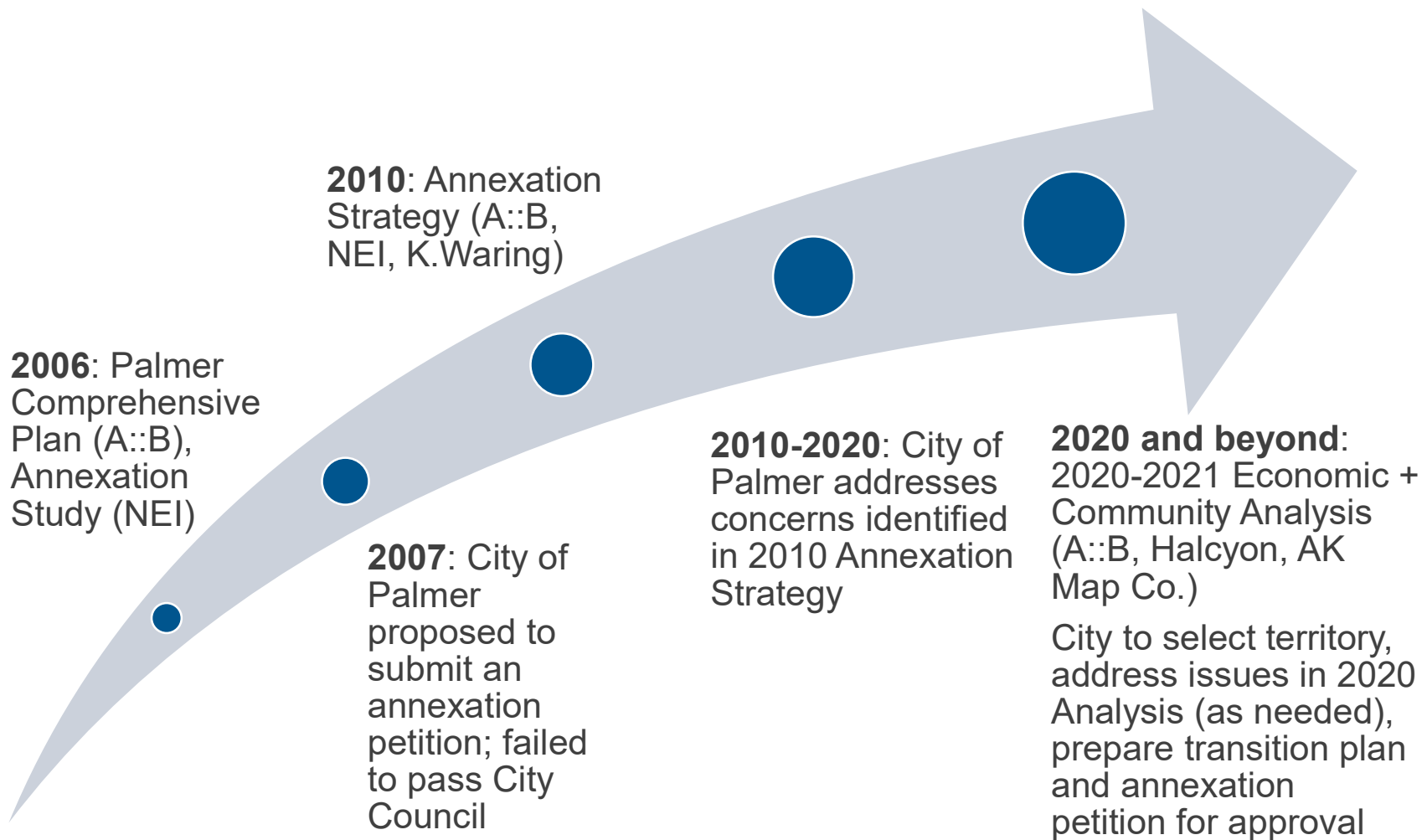


2. To sustain a desirable quality of life in and around Palmer.



3. To ensure a sustainable tax base along with long-term economic viability, fiscal health and natural environment in Palmer.

# Annexation in Palmer



# Annexation in Alaska (process)

- Annexation by a local government requires a petition.
- All petitions to change local boundaries are reviewed by the Local Boundary Commission (LBC), which approves or rejects the petition.
- After LBC approval, the petition can be formally approved through Legislative review, or by a local vote of current city residents and residents in the area(s) proposed for annexation.
- A petition can be filed by any of the following (Because it is a very local process, petitions from cities or residents are most common):
  1. By the City, endorsed by the City Council and leadership (this process outlined in the next slides);
  2. Signed by at least 10 percent of registered voters in the city; or
  3. Signed by at least 10 percent of registered voters in the territory proposed for annexation.
  4. The Legislature or Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Commerce (DCCED) could also submit a petition (this is rare).
  5. The Local Boundary Commission can also designate a person to submit a petition (this is rare).

# 4 Phases for Annexation Process

We are here!

## 1 Pre-Planning

- ▶ Comprehensive plan
- ▶ Identify goals
- ▶ Economic analysis
- ▶ Identify needed policy changes, before or after annexation

## 2 Prepare Petition

- ▶ Identify feasible areas for annexation
- ▶ Engage with residents and address concerns
- ▶ Draft petition
- ▶ Create transition plan

## 3 LBC (Local Boundary Commission) Petition Review + Decision

- ▶ City submits petition
- ▶ LBC evaluates using required criteria
- ▶ LBC decides whether to approve or deny annexation

## 4 Annexation

- ▶ City boundaries officially adjusted to include new area
- ▶ Governance, services & land use designations applied according to transition plan
- ▶ Any other needed policy changes

2009 to 2021

2021

2021...TBD

...Pending LBC Approval

# LBC Process for City Petitions



## 1. Petition Filed

- City submits petition
- LBC staff deems complete
- Petition accepted for filing

## 2. Public Comment

- Public notice of petition filed
- Comment period for public to submit comments or legal briefs
- City (petitioner) may file reply briefs

## 3. LBC Staff Analysis

- Local public meeting
- Staff publishes preliminary report and recommendations
- Public comment period on staff report
- Staff publishes final report for LBC consideration

## 4. LBC Hearing and Decision

- Public hearing by LBC
- Decision choices:
  - Approve
  - Amend, or conditionally approve
  - Reject
- LBC issues written decision
- If requested, LBC may reconsider decision

## 5. Implementation

- If approved: Legislature reviews
- Legislature may override LBC only by concurrent resolution (majority of both houses)
- LBC decision also subject to judicial appeal

# Local Boundary Commission Criteria

The Local Boundary Commission (LBC) is required in regulation to evaluate all petitions for the following criteria (long version in Attachment 2):

Is there a reasonable need for annexation?	Are essential services already provided by another jurisdiction?	Are the areas compatible in character with the established City?	Does the City have the resources to efficiently serve the new area?
Is the population in the new area large enough to justify annexation?	Are the boundaries appropriate to expand City services?	Is annexation in the best interest of the State, overall?	Will this proposal receive Legislative approval?

A successful petition will:

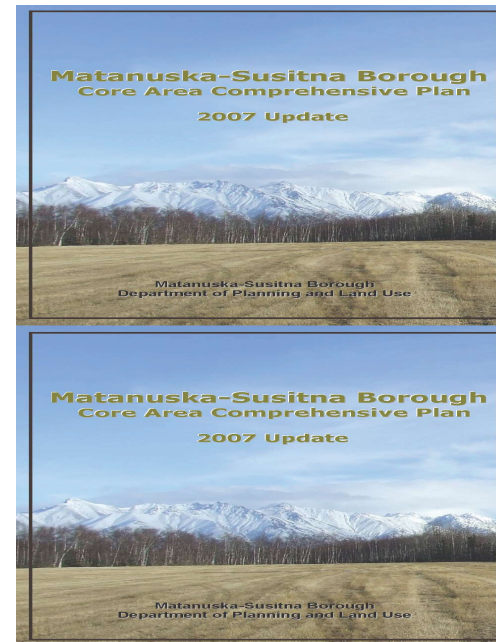
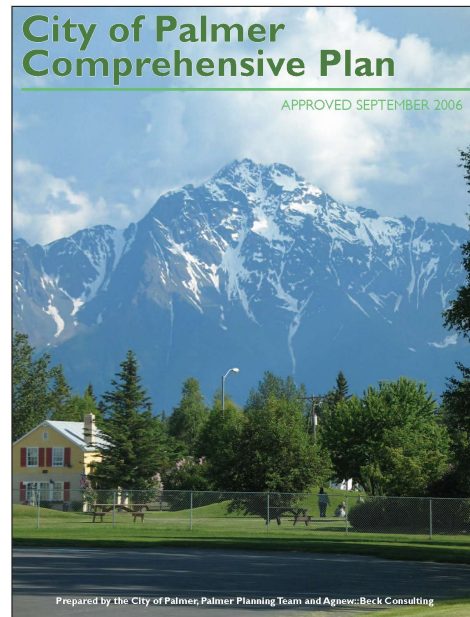


- address the criteria above,
- make a good case that annexation is feasible, and
- in the best interests of existing and potential new residents.

# Follows Local Priorities

A successful annexation petition will also be compatible with local plans, e.g.,

- Palmer Comprehensive Plan (2006)
- Matanuska-Susitna Borough Core Area Comprehensive Plan (2007)







# Methodology

- Guiding Principles for Annexation
- Study Areas
- Economic Analysis
- Community Analysis

# Guiding Principles for Annexation

- A set of overarching guiding principles for annexation can help guide the study and later annexation process.
- Attachment 1: Recommended Guiding Principles for Annexation
  - Based on established City of Palmer goals for annexation,
  - Local Boundary Commission annexation criteria (Attachment 2), and
  - recommendations from the 2010 Palmer Annexation Strategy (excerpt in Attachment 3)



**FINAL DRAFT**

Prepared for  
The City of Palmer

by Agnew :: Beck Consulting  
with Kevin Waring Associates and Northern Economics, Inc.

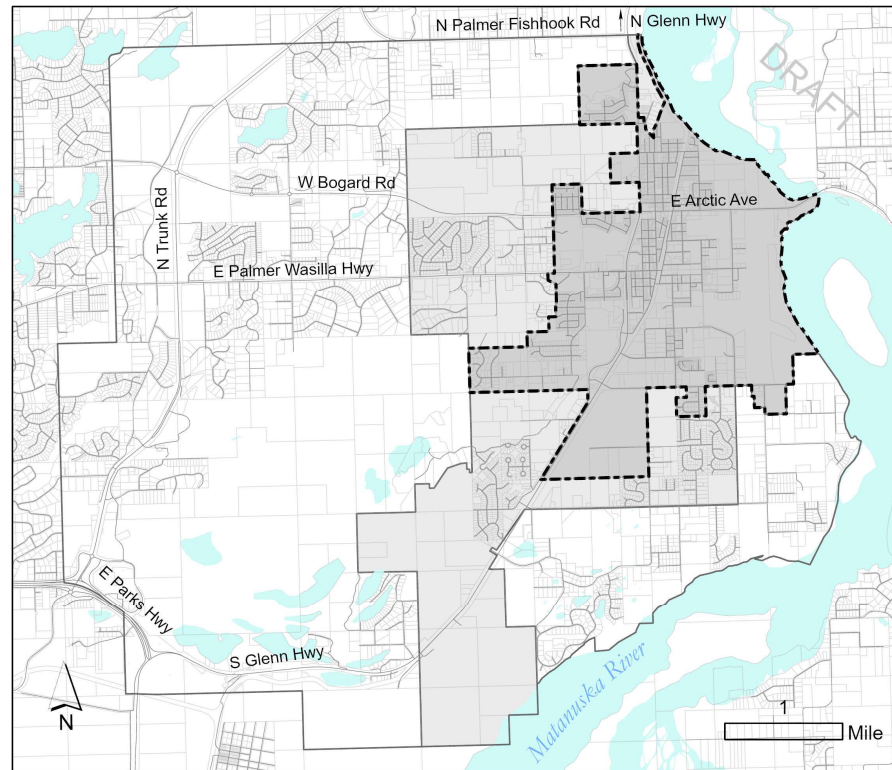
May 2010

# Study Areas

The economic analysis requires a set of geographic boundaries to generate financial estimates.

Study areas are chosen to fit with Local Boundary Commission criteria for annexation.

The economic and community analysis will identify where annexation is most likely to lead to successful outcomes for the greater Palmer community.

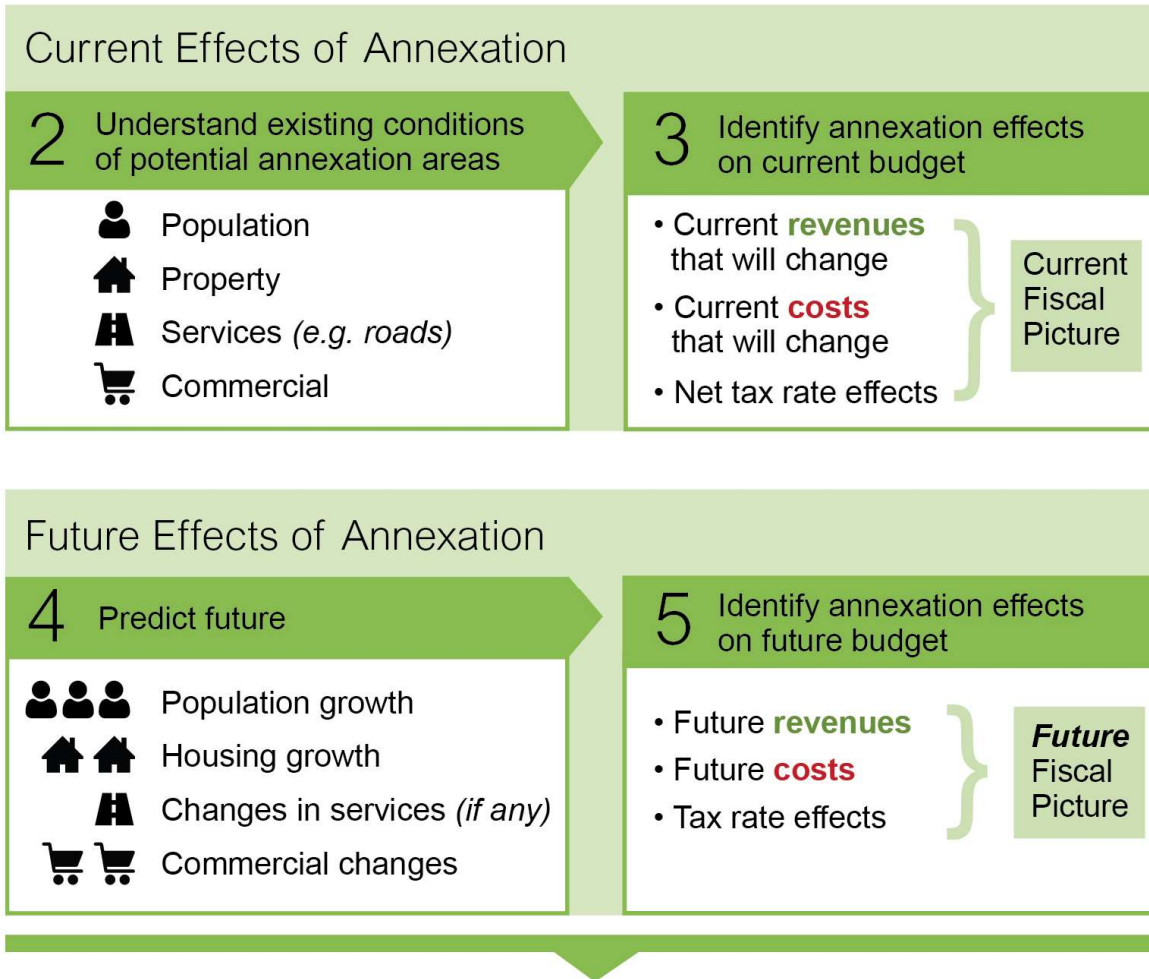
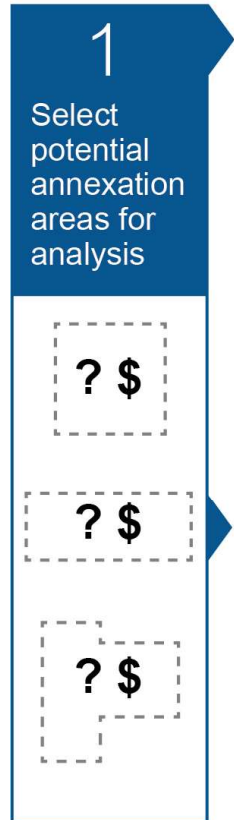


City of Palmer  
**2020 Annexation Study**  
Source Data: Matanuska Susitna Borough GIS  
Date: 8/12/2020 10:55 AM

--- Palmer City Limits  
■ Focus Area



# Economic Analysis



### City of Palmer Budget

**Revenues** that will change:

- Taxes (real, personal, motor vehicle, sales)
- Permits and Licenses (business, building plans and permits, other permits)
- Fees and Services (some)
- Fines and Forfeitures

**Costs** that will change:

- Administrative
- Police (some labor categories)
- Fire (some labor categories)
- Public Works (road costs)

**Output:** Fiscal effects of each annexation area





# Community Analysis

- Provide accurate information about what this change will mean for the City, existing and potential new citizens.
- Community-informed potential benefits and challenges of annexation generally and in study areas.
- As possible, identify community concerns that can be addressed before an annexation petition is brought to the Local Boundary Commission.

## Approach:

- Focused community discussion tailored to different groups, e.g., the business community, potential residents, agriculture community, landowners in a specific neighborhood.
- COVID-safe community engagement practices.
- Focus on constructive dialogue to identify and address concerns upfront.
- Analyze issues:
  - How big is the issue?
  - Are there ways to address it before an annexation petition?
  - How can this input inform any future annexation petition(s)?

# Thank you. Questions?

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Consultant Team Project Manager  
Agnew::Beck Consulting  
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907-277-5523



## Attachment 1: Recommended Guiding Principles for Annexation

The following is a draft set of guiding principles for the City to use in developing an annexation petition, based on previous annexation lessons learned and current city goals.

1. **Annexation Goals:** Proposed annexations meet the City of Palmer's broad goals for annexation:
  - To promote orderly, high quality development and the cost-effective extension of services where and when warranted.
  - To sustain a desirable quality of life in and around Palmer.
  - To ensure a sustainable tax base along with long-term economic viability, fiscal health and natural environment in Palmer.
2. **Local Boundary Commission:** Proposed annexations satisfy the Local Boundary Commission's criteria for annexation. In summary, LBC is concerned that:
  - There is a need for the territory to be annexed (e.g., to protect the health and safety of residents, to allow the city to plan and control growth that would otherwise adversely impact the city).
  - The city has the human and financial resources to efficiently and cost-effectively provide essential city services to the annexed territory.
  - The annexing city and the territory are compatible in character, have a sufficiently large and stable combined population to support the extension of city government, and include all areas necessary to provide the full development of essential city services at an efficient and cost-effective level.
  - The proposed annexation is in the balanced best interests of the state, the territory proposed for annexation, the annexing city, and the borough in which the annexation is proposed.
3. **Long-range Planning and Analysis:** Proposed legislative annexations are based on long-range planning (e.g., the Palmer Comprehensive Plan, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Development Plan, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Core Area Comprehensive Plan, Matanuska-Susitna Borough Long Range Transportation Plan) as well as analysis demonstrating the fiscal, economic and community feasibility of the annexation. The analysis should be driven by City decision makers and include public engagement to solicit concerns and issues, share information and develop ideas about possible ways to resolve annexation issues before an annexation petition is developed.
4. **Transition Planning:** To the extent possible, the City is prepared for the annexation well before a petition is submitted to the Local Boundary Commission so that landowners in newly annexed territory have a clear understanding of what to expect upon annexation. For example, the City should have appropriate zoning that can be applied to the newly annexed territories. City service departments should have clear guidance as to which services will be provided in the new territory, to what level and when. If City policy and/or regulations will impact legitimate residential or business activity in the newly annexed territory, a review and process for addressing these impacts should be carried out before an annexation petition is submitted.

5. **Public Process:** A public process will be conducted in good faith with existing and potential future residents, utilizing a variety of outreach methods and meeting opportunities:
  - **Before drafting an annexation petition:** Conduct general public outreach regarding annexation issues to proactively identify and address any legitimate land use and development policy issues that would be created by an annexation, including advance informational meetings and consultations with residents, landowners, and stakeholders in the preliminary territory. Use public outreach to inform residents about the annexation process generally, and the City's general goals, policies and process to ensure annexations happen with transparency and good faith for the benefit of area residents.
  - **During draft annexation petition review:** Review draft annexation petition(s), analysis supporting the annexation, and transition plan(s) with the public to identify and address any legitimate concerns of city residents and residents of the territory to be annexed. Present final draft annexation petition for formal hearing and final action by the City Council.
  
6. **Decision to Annex:** City Council decisions to annex territory come from good planning and economic analysis, and the desire to maintain the character and quality of life of the Palmer community.



## Attachment 2: Local Boundary Commission (LBC) Annexation Criteria

The Local Boundary Commission (LBC) is the State entity responsible for approving annexations. The LBC has defined a process for developing, submitting and considering any petition of annexation territories. The LBC process does not dictate how to select study areas for annexation, but their overall annexation criteria is a helpful starting place to choose areas to analyze for economic and fiscal impacts.

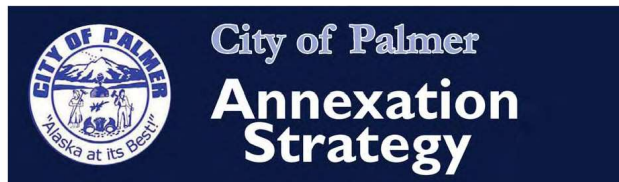
### Local Boundary Commission Standards for City Annexation (3 AAC 110.090-3 AAC 110.130)

Item	Standard	Specifics that may be considered
Need	Need for the territory to be annexed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing or anticipated residential and commercial growth outside the city anticipated over 10 years.</li> <li>Existing or anticipated health, safety and general welfare problems</li> <li>Existing or anticipated economic development</li> <li>Adequacy of existing services in the territory</li> <li>Extraterritorial powers of municipalities</li> </ul>
Essential city services by another jurisdiction	Territory may not be annexed to a city if essential city services can be provided more efficiently and more effectively by another existing city or by an organized borough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum local self-government with minimum local government units.</li> <li>Prefers annexation over new service areas</li> <li>Essential city services include public safety, planning, platting</li> </ul>
Character	Whether the territory is compatible in character with the annexing city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use, subdivision platting and ownership pattern</li> <li>Salability of land for private uses.</li> <li>Population density / recent population changes</li> <li>Suitability of land for community purposes</li> <li>Transportation and facility patterns</li> <li>Natural geographic features/environmental factors</li> </ul>
Resources	If the economy within the proposed expanded boundaries of the city has the human and financial resources to provide essential municipal services efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenses and revenues from added territory</li> <li>Economic base and property values</li> <li>Industrial, commercial and resource development</li> </ul>
Population	Whether the population of the proposed expanded city is sufficiently large and stable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total population</li> <li>Duration of residency / age distribution</li> <li>Historical population patterns / seasonal change</li> </ul>

Item	Standard	Specifics that may be considered
Appropriate boundaries	Whether the boundaries are appropriate to provide essential municipal services efficiently and cost effectively. Must include all land and water necessary to do that.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land use and ownership patterns / Population density</li> <li>• Transportation patterns</li> <li>• Geographic features / Should be contiguous</li> <li>• Not large unpopulated areas</li> <li>• 10 years' worth of predictable growth</li> </ul>
State	Whether the annexation is in the best interests of the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes maximum self-government (extends services to an organized borough where local government needs cannot be met)</li> <li>• Promotes minimum number of government units</li> <li>• Relieves the state from providing local services</li> </ul>
Legislative Review	Additional criteria if the annexation is approved tacitly by the legislature (as opposed to a vote of the city and territory registered voters)	<p>Must meet one</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Territory wholly or substantially surrounded by the city</li> <li>• Health and safety of territory residents in danger and city needed</li> <li>• City services should be extended into the territory and it's impossible to do that without annexing the territory</li> <li>• Territory residents are receiving benefits of city services but not paying for them</li> <li>• Annexation allows the city to plan and control growth that would otherwise adversely impact the city</li> <li>• Annexation will promote maximum local self-government and minimal government units.</li> <li>• Annexation enhances how the existing city meets the standards for incorporation of cities.</li> <li>• LBC decides that the Constitution of the state is best served through a legislative review process</li> </ul>

### Attachment 3: 2010 Palmer Annexation Strategy Excerpt

The following pages contain an excerpt from the 2010 City of Palmer Annexation Strategy prepared by Agnew : : Beck Consulting, Kevin Waring Associates and Northern Economics, Inc. for the City of Palmer.



**FINAL DRAFT**

Prepared for  
The City of Palmer

by Agnew : : Beck Consulting  
with Kevin Waring Associates and Northern Economics, Inc.

May 2010

# RECOMMENDED ANNEXATION STRATEGY

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## **An Annexation Strategy for the City of Palmer**

First and foremost, all proposed annexations should comply with all Local Boundary Commission (LBC) standards and procedures for approval. LBC approval is just one part of a successful annexation. The annexation petition and process must also fairly address local issues and concerns about annexation, and the City must be prepared and committed to implement the annexation to the general satisfaction of existing and new residents.

The following recommendations represent the consultant's advice to the City of Palmer for a successful and effective approach to annexation.

### ***Prior to any future annexation proposals:***

The City of Palmer should:

1. Articulate clear goals for City of Palmer annexations in general. Consultants recommend that the City use the following three goals:
  - a. Plan for orderly growth in nearby areas so essential public services can be provided efficiently and cost-effectively where and when warranted. Make plans for needed infrastructure prior to development, to avoid the high costs and inconvenience of retrofitted infrastructure.
  - b. Sustain a desirable quality of life in and around Palmer.
  - c. Protect the City's long-term economic viability and fiscal health.
2. Proactively address legitimate issues created by annexation, prior to annexation. Only by solving these issues first can the City build trust and credibility. A number of these issues are identified in this report, with preliminary recommendations for how the City can address and resolve them. Examples include revised zoning for agricultural lands, creation of a rural residential zone, and revised standards for services in low density residential areas.
3. Establish an explicit approach to deciding when and where to annex territory:
  - a. Though future annexation petitions will be brought on a case-by-case basis as deemed appropriate, the City should define a long-term conceptual boundary for territorial growth. Over time, the cities of Palmer, Wasilla, and surrounding areas will continue to grow. As land is developed and more people locate their homes and businesses in these areas, the two cities will be asked to provide higher levels of service. In order to provide increased city services, Palmer and Wasilla will annex developed territory, growing closer together. Given these trends, the

consultants recommend designating the existing Palmer Water and Sewer Service Area boundary as this long-term conceptual outer boundary for the expansion of City limits.

Identifying the Water and Sewer Service Area as the long-term conceptual boundary for the City of Palmer does not, by itself, mean that the City will actively pursue annexation of this area. Rather, it is meant to a reasonable guide for landowners and the City in preparing for growth and the possibility of future annexations. It may be decades before Palmer's growth warrants annexing to the limits of this long-term conceptual boundary.

- b. Phase annexations within the long-term conceptual boundary, following the criteria below:
  - i. Scale individual annexations to the City's infrastructure, operational and fiscal capability to deliver services.
  - ii. Coordinate the City's annexation planning with other public and semi-public entities that also have major local governance or service responsibilities such as the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and its service areas, the University of Alaska, Matanuska-Susitna College, and public utilities, and with applicable Matanuska-Susitna Borough plans (e.g., its Comprehensive Development Plan, Core Area Plan, Long-Range Transportation Plan, and Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan).
  - iii. Annex vacant territory with imminent development potential sooner rather than later. A major benefit of annexation is that it provides a chance to coordinate and guide infrastructure development. After development occurs, this and other benefits of annexation are often forfeited, and annexation often becomes unwelcome and politically problematic. Specific priorities include:
    - Existing or potential commercial corridors and nodes near the City whose development might erode the City's sales tax base.
    - Undeveloped and/or under-developed tracts with near-term potential for residential or other land uses, in order to ensure that development meets city standards for roads, drainage, utilities, etc.
    - Undeveloped and/or under-developed tracts whose future use and development will have major influence on the quality of life in and around Palmer (mainly the two major road corridors: the Glenn Highway corridor and the Palmer-Wasilla Highway corridor).

- Nearby vacant tracts whose development potential has been or may be substantially enhanced by public infrastructure investments.
  - Tracts that enhance the City’s long-term ability to function as a trade, service, governmental, and job center for Greater Palmer.
  - Built-up areas as requested by residents, or as essential to maintain cost-effective city services, or as required by LBC boundary standards.
- c. Include Planning and Zoning Commission review in the process of deciding when and where to annex territory. A resolution supporting annexation in itself and specific areas would be an asset to the City Council in their decision-making process.

***When the City is ready to proceed with future annexation proposal(s):***

4. Identifying Priorities for Annexation: If and when the City is ready to move forward with an annexation proposal in the near-term, and considering the criteria presented above, it is the judgment of the consultants that the priority for annexation should be the area bounded by the Palmer-Wasilla Highway corridor on the north, the old Trunk Road on the west and the Glenn Highway corridor on the south and east. Identifying a particular area helps all parties focus attention where benefits of annexation are greatest and limits unnecessary expenditure of planning resources and political energy.
5. Public Process: LBC (Local Boundary Commission) regulations set minimum requirements for local public consultation before an annexation petition is submitted for review. Experience indicates that the City would be wise to greatly expand its local public process for drafting and review of annexation petitions. Based on conversations with Palmer-area residents and business owners, consultants recommend the following measures:
  - Conduct general public outreach regarding annexation issues; work to solve legitimate concerns prior to proceeding with annexation (this report is a part of implementing this recommendation)
  - Define a preliminary territory of interest for consideration for annexation.
  - Hold advance informational meetings and consultations with residents, landowners, and stakeholders in the preliminary territory to learn of local issues and concerns before drafting an annexation petition.
  - Prepare a preliminary draft annexation petition for internal review that:
    - Addresses issues raised by residents and stakeholders about the potential impacts of annexation on taxes, services, and land use and rural lifestyles;

- Analyzes the impact of a prospective annexation on city operations and finances;
  - Evaluates the costs and resource requirements to extend city facilities and services to prospective annexations;
  - Includes a detailed transition plan for the extension of city services in the post-annexation period, and for intended land use policy.
- Initiate appropriate revisions to existing city policies and codes; ensure that critical revisions are in place for timely post-annexation implementation.
  - Present the draft petition for public review with residents/stakeholders.
  - Present the (revised) draft annexation petition for formal hearing and final action by the city council.

### **Specific Steps to Address Identified Issues**

In the course of the many meetings and consultations that have occurred to date, additional specific ideas surfaced that merit the City's consideration, some of which the City has already begun to implement. These are listed below.

- 1) Clarify the process for zoning newly annexed territory. This could be done through a three-step process:
  - a. As part of the City's process to develop an annexation proposal, prepare a preliminary land use plan map with generalized land use classifications (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, and park/conservation, agriculture) for the territory proposed for annexation. These preliminary classifications may be based on the city development goals and the Core Area Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan Map. Accompany this map with an explanation of the intent of these designations, allowing for refinements in boundaries, uses and intensity of use upon annexation approval by the LBC.
  - b. Identify areas where current or likely future uses are not a good fit with existing zoning codes. For these areas, develop general intentions for new or revised zoning districts. New categories expected to be needed include: a low density/rural residential zone, a revised agriculture zone, and changes to better accommodate home-based business.
  - c. After annexation approval, work with landowners to amend the City's land use plan, based on the generalized land use classifications in the preliminary land use plan. Discontinue use of the (T) Transitional Use District now in city code.
- 2) Complete the process to revise PMC Title 17.56 (Agricultural District). In particular, consider:
  - a. Revising setbacks for fences on farms to allow fencing to the lot line.
  - b. Allowing vehicle storage for a limited number of vehicles as a permitted use, with additional vehicle storage allowed only as a conditional use.

- c. Including the conservation of Class I and II soils as an explicit purpose of the Agricultural Zoning District.
  - d. Including an Agricultural Use Notice.
  - e. Including a statement that one purpose of the Agricultural Zoning District is to implement the Palmer Comprehensive Plan, which endorses the goal of protecting agricultural lands and promoting agriculture as a component of the local economy.
- 3) Revise PMC Title 6 to allow, within the Agricultural District:
- a. Smaller setbacks for livestock to correspond with fencing requirements or as otherwise deemed acceptable, and
  - b. Noise and odor from livestock that is associated with normal farm operations.
- 4) Explore the possibility of designating parts of the city, in very low-density areas, where refuse hauling service may not be required, as long as other trash-related ordinances are followed (e.g., no burning, compliance with zoning rules).
- 5) Explore the desirability of agreements to contract with existing services areas to continue to deliver services for a transitional period.
- 6) Public process:
- a. Have multiple meetings at different times of day to accommodate business people, families, and people who cannot make City Council meetings. In particular, the City should seek to meet with farmers in winter months when they have the time to attend meetings, prepare responsive briefs/comments, etc.
  - b. Hold informal meetings focused on annexation (at City Council meetings, people don't get their questions answered). Give people an opportunity to ask questions about how annexation will impact them.
  - c. Prepare an information sheet and have a public workshop attended by city staff who can answer questions about these topics: What is annexation? How will it impact landowners? What is different upon annexation (rules, business license, new rules about business)?
  - d. Provide a draft plan for providing services upon annexation that it can share with the public early on in the outreach process preceding an annexation petition.
  - e. Make sure the City releases correct information, ahead of the rumors.
  - f. Be sure information on annexation issues reaches people with concerns about this topic. Good ways to get out information include:
    - post at the library
    - banners/signs on roads (as long as it's legal)
    - present to groups that meet regularly: Kiwanis, Rotary, Elks, Senior Center, Chamber of Commerce, farmers, etc.
    - give at least four weeks notice of meetings/etc
    - newspaper notices are often not effective, but putting an extra flyer in the newspaper is.



- Flyer in the mailbox
  - Try to include a notice in the DNR newsletter on crop reports that goes out to farmers
  - Email: For persons who have business licenses with the City or Borough, email out to them. Probably have email addresses in order to get the business license; if not, include that as part of the application.
- 7) As part of communications about annexation proposals,
- a. Include a cost-revenue analysis
  - b. Include information about the planning process that precedes annexation proposals. Refer to the 2006 Palmer Comprehensive Plan and regional plans such as the Core Area Plan, the Matanuska Susitna Borough's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.
  - c. Present a clear rationale to the public for proposing the annexation of particular lands. Guide any future annexation plans consistent with the three goals below:
    - Fiscal Health: Revenues – annexation can help sustain the City's fiscal health by securing tax revenues development within the Greater Palmer area, in particular possible from commercial development along the Palmer Wasilla and Glenn Highways.
    - Fiscal Health: Costs – annexation provides residents, land owners and the City the opportunity to guide development to ensure public services and facilities can be provided effectively, efficiently and at low cost
    - Keep Palmer "Palmer" – annexation provides the opportunity to guide development
  - d. Be clear and consistent in communicating how zoning of annexed properties will be handled. To the extent possible, work with landowners prior to annexation to clarify acceptable zoning designations. If necessary, revise the zoning code.
- 8) Take steps to enforce real estate disclosures and educate homeowners about living next door to farms. Consider other ways of addressing this issue, including:
- a. Passing a resolution not to enact nuisance ordinances that would restrict normal farming practices.
  - b. Requiring resource management easements for new residential development adjacent to an agricultural zone.
  - c. Passing a local right-to-farm ordinance
- 9) Adopt a preferential policy to route public infrastructure improvements around rather than across farmland, where feasible.
- 10) Support agricultural reforms, as needed, in State policy regarding fertilizer application, manure management, water management, etc.

## Norma Alley

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**From:** Janelle Burkleo <jmburkleo@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 2:41 PM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Proposed City limits

To the City Council,

I am a resident in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in the area being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I have concerns about this is being considered. It would seem that the motivator behind this proposed incorporation is in order to increase the amount of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without any serious thought as to how this might affect them. What are the benefits of being incorporated? How much will my taxes be increased? What restrictions are placed on individuals living within city limits? Making this decision during a pandemic seems irresponsible when the voices of those affected is minimized. I have not received anything or spoken to anyone regarding this possibility. The general consensus on our neighborhood forum is that we do not agree with the proposal and do not wish to be annexed into city limits. I ask that you reconsider and have actual conversations with communities and residents that might be affected in the future. Thank you for your consideration.

Janelle Burkleo

Sent from my iPhone

## Norma Alley

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**From:** Ethan Coats <bigethancoats@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 3:43 PM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Annexation

This is the email I sent to the Council. Feel free to copy and edit with personal notes. Send your email to the following address:

[nalley@palmerak.org](mailto:nalley@palmerak.org)

To the City Council,

I am a resident in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in the area being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I have concerns about why this is being considered. It would seem that the motivator behind this proposed incorporation is in order to increase the amount of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without any serious thought as to how this might affect them and without providing more services to those affected in order to justify the increased taxation. Making this decision during a pandemic also seems irresponsible when the voices of those affected is minimized. The general consensus on our neighborhood forum is that we do not agree with the proposal. I ask that you reconsider incorporation and have ongoing conversations with communities and residents that might be affected in the future. Thank you for your consideration.

-Ethan-

Sent from my iPhone

## Norma Alley

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**From:** kgrein21 <kgrein21@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 11:46 AM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Palmer City Expansion

To the City Council,

I am a resident in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in the area being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I have concerns about why this is being considered. It would seem that the motivator behind this proposed incorporation is in order to increase the amount of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without any serious thought as to how this might affect them and without providing more services to those affected in order to justify the increased taxation. Making this decision during a pandemic also seems irresponsible when the voices of those affected is minimized. I also fear losing some freedoms my family currently enjoys, such as operating our off road vehicles from our home to our destination.

The general consensus on our neighborhood forum is that we do not agree with the proposal. I ask that you reconsider incorporation and have ongoing conversations with communities and residents that might be affected in the future. Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin Grein

## Norma Alley

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**From:** Thomas McMunn <tmcmunn1988@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 11:46 AM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Mountain Ranch Neighborhood

To the City Council,

I am a resident in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in the area being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I have concerns about why this is being considered. It would seem that the motivator behind this proposed incorporation is in order to increase the amount of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without any serious thought as to how this might affect them and without providing more services to those affected in order to justify the increased taxation. Making this decision during a pandemic also seems irresponsible when the voices of those affected is minimized. The general consensus on our neighborhood forum is that we do not agree with the proposal. I ask that you reconsider incorporation and have ongoing conversations with communities and residents that might be affected in the future. Thank you for your consideration.

Thomas McMunn

## Norma Alley

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**From:** Melissa O'Brien <melissa.r.obrien@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 11:45 AM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** City limits

To the City Council,

I am a resident in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in the area being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I have concerns about why this is being considered. It would seem that the motivator behind this proposed incorporation is in order to increase the amount of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without any serious thought as to how this might affect them and without providing more services to those affected in order to justify the increased taxation. Making this decision during a pandemic also seems irresponsible when the voices of those affected is minimized. The general consensus on our neighborhood forum is that we do not agree with the proposal. I ask that you reconsider incorporation and have ongoing conversations with communities and residents that might be affected in the future. Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

## Norma Alley

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**From:** flyers <flyers@mtaonline.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 4:33 PM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Annexation

Hello,

The City of Palmer proposed annexation is of considerable concern to residents of the areas that will be annexed. The intention of this annexation is clearly intended to increase taxes, fines and regulations that provide very little benefit to the residents of these areas. For these reason, I, as a resident in the area, am strongly against this annexation.

Also of particular concern is the limited time that residents had to provide responses to the scheduled meeting. The Pioneer Meadows Homeowners Association only received this presentation and agenda today. Isn't part of the intention of this effort to allow the public the opportunity to weigh in on the decision. With the limited time provided to review the materials, I feel that the City of Palmer has greatly limited the amount of feedback and participation from the public as a whole. That is a disservice to this whole process. Although I understand the concerns with the pandemic and limiting the number of individuals in the chamber, I see no reason why the City of Palmer cannot use available technologies to encourage the most discussion from residents or to postpone this agenda until the pandemic is over and more input from the community is available. This gives the appearance that the City of Palmer has already made a decision, regardless of how residents feel.

Concerned resident,

Breanne Phillips  
11633 E. Annie Lane  
Palmer Alaska  
99645

## Norma Alley

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**From:** Bill Riley <wiley12@att.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 3:46 PM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Palmer Annexation Plans

To: The Palmer City Council,

My wife and I are new senior homeowners, for 2 years now, in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in one of the areas being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I'm curious as to why you feel it is necessary to annex our neighborhood in the first place and what the ramifications of your annexation would be to all of us in the Mountain Rance neighborhood. I'm also very curious as to why you would want to take on this project during this insane pandemic which has caused so much damage to so many businesses and has caused serious job loss to many citizens of this state. Your timing could not be any worse !!

A number of us believe your primary and possibly only reason to annex our neighborhood is to increase the number of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without knowing what the new taxes might be and how much the new taxes will cost us.

Perhaps you could mail or email the residents a list of what will be expected from us and what we can reasonably expect from you in return. Along with the lists, you should seriously consider sending all of us a questionnaire regarding your proposed changes so we can all respond to them.

With this being said, and until you can fully explain your annexation reasoning to the residents of our neighborhood, I say NO to your proposed annexation !!!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

William Riley  
450 N Angus Loop  
907-707-3641  
wiley12@att.net



## Norma Alley

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**From:** James Roberts <jroberts51411@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 11:30 AM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Testimony for Council Meeting

To the City Council,

I am a resident in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in the area being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I have concerns about why this is being considered. It would seem that the motivator behind this proposed incorporation is in order to increase the amount of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without any serious thought as to how this might affect them and without providing more services to those affected in order to justify the increased taxation. Making this decision during a pandemic also seems irresponsible when the voices of those affected is minimized. The general consensus on our neighborhood forum is that we do not agree with the proposal. I ask that you reconsider incorporation and have ongoing conversations with communities and residents that might be affected in the future. Thank you for your consideration.

For reference, I live on S. Conestoga Loop in Palmer.

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James Roberts, MD

## **Norma Alley**

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**From:** Bob Katein-Taylor <bob@katein-taylor.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 11:41 AM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Annexation Study

Palmer City Council,

My testimony for tonight's City Council Meeting is as follows:

I am opposed to the annexation of the neighborhoods and subdivisions surrounding the State Fair Grounds. The study is, I am sure, a significant investment of public monies and you expect some return. But the study does not describe how people living in these areas are a burden on the City of Palmer, the cost borne by the city to provide services to them, nor the inability to address those costs through currently available means; Troopers vs Police, roads, emergency services, direct reimbursements and fees, and so forth.

"Maximum local self-government with minimum local government units." [Attachment 2, page 25] is key to the peaceful enjoyment of our property and our quality of life, and we have that now. We do not need, and will not benefit from, being annexed to the City of Palmer.

Respectfully,

Bob Taylor

## Norma Alley

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**From:** slynn\_weeks <slynn\_weeks@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 3:34 PM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Palmer annexation

nalley@palmerak.org

To the City Council,

I am a resident in the Mountain Ranch neighborhood. As I understand it, my neighborhood is in the area being considered for incorporation into the city limits of Palmer. I have concerns about why this is being considered. It would seem that the motivator behind this proposed incorporation is in order to increase the amount of residents paying taxes to the city of Palmer without any serious thought as to how this might affect them and without providing more services to those affected in order to justify the increased taxation. We moved to our neighborhood based on several factors, one being that we were not considered to be in the Palmer city limits. Making this decision during a pandemic also seems irresponsible when the voices of those affected is minimized. The general consensus on our neighborhood forum is that we do not agree with the proposal. I ask that you reconsider incorporation and have ongoing conversations with communities and residents that might be affected in the future. At this time, we are opposed to this going through.. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
James & Lynn Weeks  
13620 E Cimarron Circle

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

## **Norma Alley**

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**From:** jake whittaker <007jakew@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 25, 2020 3:57 PM  
**To:** Norma Alley  
**Subject:** Annexation of land for the city of Palmer meeting

This meeting was not advertised properly with a 30 day notice to the affected parties. It should not go forward. Land owners were not properly notified. I just found out about it and I am not able to attend nor do research about what the city of Palmer is proposing. This meeting is in violation of the open meeting act. please cancel it and reschedule with proper notice to everyone.

Jake Whittaker

Name: (Please Print)	Item Being Addressed	Mailing Address	Contact Info (Phone and/or E-Mail)
FRANK KISH	ANNEXATION	12205 E. CHALET DR. PALMER, AK	746-3507
JASON ORTIZ	ANNEXATION	13590 E FIELD LANE PALMER, AK 99645	907-631-1288
JIM PSZNAK	''	12880 SCOTT RD.	355-8330
Nanette Honea	Annexation	PO Box 2477	907-715-0211
Robert Honea	Annexation	Po Box 2477	907-715-2711
Scott Brown Lisa Rhodes	Annexation	25001 E Woodstock Dr	907-982-0560
Caleb Saunders	Annexation	PO Box 877710	907-887-3684
JAWN CAMPBELL	Annexation	11511 E. CRIMSONVIEW DR. Palmer, AK 99645	<del>907</del> 907-631-2549
EUGENIE CARL HABERMAN			

Name: (Please Print)	Item Being Addressed	Mailing Address	Contact Info (Phone and/or E-Mail)
MILIC CHMIELEWSKI			