

STATE OF ALASKA
LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

In re the petition for detachment)
of the Chugiak-Eagle River area)
from the Greater Anchorage Area)
Borough, and the petition for)
incorporation of a second class)
borough in the Chugiak-Eagle River)
area.)

STATEMENT OF DECISION

Whereas, in July, 1975, petitions requesting detachment from the Greater Anchorage Area Borough and subsequent incorporation of a second class Chugiak-Eagle River Borough were submitted to the Department of Community and Regional Affairs in accordance with Title 29 of the Alaska Statutes; and

Whereas, the Department in September, 1975, found the petitions in the proper form with the requisite content and accompanying exhibits; and

Whereas, upon receipt of the sufficient petition the Local Boundary Commission scheduled a public hearing with notice as prescribed by law; and

Whereas, the Local Boundary Commission held a public hearing at the Chugiak High School on October 29, 1975; and

Whereas, the Local Boundary Commission held a public decisional meeting in Anchorage on December 11, 1975, to review the record of the Chugiak-Eagle River petitions;

Now, therefore, the Local Boundary Commission makes the following findings of fact and enters its decision pursuant thereto:

(1) The proposed petition fails to meet statutory and regulatory standards for detachment and incorporation contained in AS 29.18.030 and AAC 19.15.230 in that the area is an integral part of the municipality of Anchorage culturally, socially and economically.

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This is supported by the following facts:

- (a) The Glenn Highway, which will ultimately be four-lane between Anchorage and Eagle River joins the two areas. Traffic counts obtained from the State Department of Highways were submitted to the Commission and reflect that between Eagle River and the Glenn Highway entrances to the Fort Richardson military installation there were 19,400 average daily trips, and between Muldoon Road and Anchorage there were 18,100 average daily trips. These figures indicate a great deal of traffic between Anchorage and Eagle River-Chugiak.
- (b) In addition to private transportation, figures from the Anchorage Municipal transit system regarding the Eagle River-Anchorage route indicate that in two weeks in 1975, 1158 persons rode the bus between Eagle River and Anchorage. Testimony was introduced at the hearing which indicates that many persons in the Eagle River area work and shop in Anchorage. The traffic figures bear this out. The area is in fact an 'exurban' area or a 'bedroom community' of Anchorage.
- (c) The proposed borough further reflects its bedroom status in that there are almost no social or cultural activity centers in the area. The testimony on record reflects that many residents of Eagle River-Chugiak come to Anchorage for movies, theatre, music and other activities of a like nature. This further reinforces the integration of the area with Anchorage.

(2) There are no natural boundaries separating the area from the remainder of the Anchorage municipality. There is a distance of 15 miles between the downtown Anchorage area and the population center of the proposed borough. The only barrier is one of land use, the military

reservation. As land uses change, the Commission finds that the military reservation is not a barrier. In addition, the Glenn Highway runs through the military reservation joining the two areas, furthering the fact of contiguity of the two areas.

(3) The detachment will be inimical to the interest of the State in that the constitutional mandate of a minimum of local government units and tax levying jurisdictions would be violated. The Commission finds that the entire Anchorage area is an integrated area and that the existing borough embraces an area and population with common interests to the maximum degree possible as required by the Constitution.

The record does not reflect that the interests and needs of the Eagle River-Chugiak area differ sufficiently from metropolitan Anchorage to create a separate borough.

(4) The area is not stable enough to support organized borough government in that the Eagle River-Chugiak tax base is not large enough to support necessary services without the support of the larger tax base of the entire Anchorage area. This is based upon the following facts submitted to the Commission.

- (a) The assessed valuation for the 1975-6 tax year is \$134,598,035. The population is 8,402. As previously held, the area is a bedroom community of Anchorage with little business development in the Eagle River-Chugiak area. The Eagle River area receives schools, planning and zoning, tax assessment and collection, animal control, sewers, health protection and transportation services from the Anchorage Municipality. The larger tax base of Anchorage has helped provide bond monies for schools in the area. Higher levels of some services are being provided to Eagle River-Chugiak residents than to other areas of Anchorage, i.e., health center and library.
- (b) Under the budgets prepared by the then Chugiak-Eagle River Borough, the tax rates would have been 18.96 mills

(Eagle River) and 17.20 mills (Chugiak) as compared to the current rates of 12.61 mills and 11.40 mills. Many residents of the area testified to their belief that the area could not afford a separate government.

(c) A review of Chugiak-Eagle River Service Areas elections since 1966 reflects that only 2 issues passed, fire protection for Eagle River and Chugiak, whereas, the residents turned down an earlier fire issue, roads and drainage, parks and recreation, and as late as March 1974, police protection. The Commission construes these facts as indicating an unwillingness and/or inability to support needed municipal functions.

(5) The Eagle River-Chugiak area is guaranteed representation on the assembly of the Municipality of Anchorage and the charter of the new unified government provides for the creation of Community Councils.

(6) The Service Area concept provided for in Alaska Statutes is retained in the new charter and affords the residents of the Eagle River-Chugiak area an opportunity to request the addition of new services or to increase the level of existing services in the area.

(7) There have been no significant changes other than increase in population in the area since incorporation under the provisions of Chapter 52 SLA 1963, and accordingly, the Commission finds there is no justification for modifying the original boundaries of the Greater Anchorage Area Borough set by the Legislature.

The Commission is aware of the Goat Creek Detachment, the conformance of the Greater Anchorage Area Borough boundaries to metes and bounds description and the correction to the southern boundary description of the Greater Anchorage Area Borough.

In accordance with the above findings, the Local Boundary Commission rejects the detachment petition and therefore does not consider the petition for incorporation of the proposed borough as that issue is moot.

Dated at Anchorage, Alaska, this 15th day of March, 1976.

LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Approved:

s/ Sigvald J. Strandberg
Sigvald J. Strandberg, Chairman

s/ Sheila G. Jones
Sheila G. Jones

s/ _____
Josephine Anderson

s/ _____
Oliver Leavitt

Dissent:

s/ _____
Gary Ackerman