**BIG LAKE** is planning for the future through our **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**Our Vision:**
**A Main Street, Small Town, Recreational Community**

Big Lake could have a stronger community core. The community could be more like a traditional American small town, with expanded commercial, civic services and employment, and a clearer sense of identity. We could maintain and improve the existing open space, and other recreation and tourism resources by preserving trails and good public access to Big Lake and other water bodies. We could manage development to protect the beauty and environment of Big Lake.

**Future Generations**

"Kids are the future of this community. We need to make sure they get healthy things to do. We need to help make this the kind of place where they have opportunity and a future."

We recently asked 112 middle-school students which recreational activities they enjoy and what kind of facilities they would like to see in Big Lake. These are their top five choices for new facilities or youth programs:

1. Dedicated motorcycle/sidecar vehicle route
2. Maintained ice skating rink
3. Dedicated BMX course
4. Skateboard park
5. After-school computer use

**Trails & Lakes**

"Big Lake, where we live is where we play. We don't have to drive out to fish, hike or snowmachine."

Big Lake has a great traditional trail system but most trails are not reserved and many cross private lands. A new Big Lake Trails Committee is working to identify, survey and reserve these important routes, to secure a multi-purpose use trail system for residents and visitors.

**Challenges & Opportunities**

The following major projects have been proposed in the Mat-Su Borough and surrounding areas. All of these projects, independently and collectively, will have a major impact on Big Lake. Let's plan NOW so we can express our positions on the development of these projects and so we can better take advantage of the opportunities that arise as a result of each project.

**Water**

"Keeping our water clean should be our first priority -- for drinking, for fish and wildlife, just for living in Big Lake."

- Improve standards for waterfront development.
- Protect major river corridors and wetlands.
- Improve standards for on-site wastewater management.
- Set the stage for public sewer and wastewater service in select areas.

**Guidemap**

"No plan stays special by accident."

-- Ed McMahon, Author & Planner

This publication summarizes the Big Lake Draft Comprehensive Plan Update. In the spring of 2007, the Big Lake Community Council formally asked the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to update their 1996 Big Lake Comprehensive Plan. The planning process began in January of 2008. Working with Agnew·Beck Consulting, the Big Lake Community Planning Team developed this Guidemap and accompanying Draft Comprehensive Plan Update seeking public comments.

The Planning Team includes 40 Big Lake residents, homeowner, business owners and other stakeholders who belong to six additional work groups. These groups study the issues of: Land Use and Environment; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Transportation; Public Facilities and Services; Economic Development; and Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Get involved! Visit www.agnewbeck.com. Click on “Current Projects” then “Big Lake Comprehensive Plan Update.” Contact Senior Planner, Shelly Waddell, at 907.232.4244 with questions. See the reverse side to learn more.

Planning Team members about the work appearing in posters throughout this publication are otherwise noted. Photos are all courtesy of Planning Team members or Agnew·Beck. Designed by Agnew·Beck Consulting.
Our Goals
These preliminary goals can help guide development decisions in Big Lake. These goals emerged after a public workshop and many months of working together as a Planning Team and in individual work groups. They pertain to major issues our community faces as we plan for the future. We hope these goals will provide our leaders with the direction they need to make well-informed, wise development decisions for the community we care so much about.

Land Use & Environment
- Coordinate the planning of land use and community services and facilities.
- Strengthen the Big Lake economy.
- Protect the natural environment.
- Provide for freedom to enjoy our properties.
- Protect Big Lake for future generations.

Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Identify and reserve a regional trail system for public use.
- Identify and reserve lake access points.
- Support and strengthen State Parks’ role locally.
- Create a narrative inventory and facility plan.

Transportation
- Improve Big Lake roadways: develop a safe and efficient road system that provides connection to the Parks Highway and access to land in the Big Lake area.
- Improve Big Lake’s airport, access and enhance the future of air transportation to the Big Lake area by protecting and improving the existing airport.
- Support regional development through improvements in Borough transportation infrastructure.

Public Facilities & Services
- Improve our community facilities and services.
- Improve public safety.
- Improve water, sewer systems and other utilities.

Economic Development
- Keep the natural environment clean and green.
- Improve access to our lakes.
- Advocate for improved public facilities and services that support tourism and economic development activities.
- Market Big Lake to attract visitors to our community.
- Create an aggressive marketing plan.
- Capitalize on the airport as a center for economic activity.
- Develop commercial lands around certain business/industry uses.
- Support economic growth and decrease overall dependence on outside funding.
- Build local capacity.

Land Use & Environment

Design for a Healthy Lake

Lake-Friendly Site Design...
- Promotes recreation facilities that take advantage of and allow recreation.
- Maintains a smaller footprint for lake septic systems.
- Creates a smaller water footprint for lake septic systems.
- Reduces impervious surface that drains into the lake.
- Maintains the quality and quantity of groundwater.

Poor Site Design...
- Promotes recreation facilities that harm the lake.
- Creates a larger water footprint for lake septic systems.
- Increases sedimentation that harms water quality.
- Buildings and structures too close to lake water.

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Get Involved
- Visit www.agnewbeck.com. Click on “Current Projects” and then “Big Lake Comprehensive Plan Update” for information on upcoming Planning Team meetings and community workshops. Join a work group to delve into an issue you care about that’s facing Big Lake.
- Read and comment on the Draft Comprehensive Plan Update and the Draft Trail Plan.
- Share your views with planning team members. All 40 of them are listed on the project website!
- Contact Senior Planner Shelly Wade (907.222.9424, swade@agnewbeck.com).