

PUBLIC RESPONSE – PROPOSED INCORPORATION OF GOLDEN, KANSAS
05.27.2021 E-MAIL RECEIPT – HARROW, PAUL

From: Paul Harrow <paulharrow@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 27, 2021 3:39 PM
To: clerk <clerk@miamicountyks.org>
Subject: Golden, Kansas

****This email originated from outside of County of Miami****

Paul Harrow
22566 Bridlewood Lane
Spring Hill(Golden), KS

Miami County Board of Commissioners
201 S. Pearl, Suite 200
Paola, Kansas

Date: May 27, 2021
Subject: Incorporation as Golden Kansas

Dear Commissioner(s)

As a resident of northern Miami County, I would like to communicate my strong support for incorporating as Golden Kansas. I cannot express to you enough how important this issue has become for all of us who live in the area. I am aware that there are some complications that come with incorporating, however, in this particular case, the long and short-term benefits to Miami County and its residents far outweigh those potential complications. While it does stand to reason that many of us moved to this region to avoid city-based restrictions, there comes a point where, for the development of the county and for the greater good, we must all make sacrifices. In this case, we are sacrificing some of the freedoms that come from being unincorporated in deference to other freedoms which are being threatened if we do not incorporate.

I have heard from one person, who does not live in Golden, who said that incorporating would block Miami County's ability to develop the area in the future. What this argument fails to realize is that incorporating as Golden IS DEVELOPMENT! Not only that, but it is a very appropriate step in development. A step that respects the land, the people who live here and the surrounding communities. It's the best kind of development! The new city will make the area even more attractive to current and future home owners and potential developers who will work with the new city to develop the area in mutually beneficial ways rather than in ways that divide, anger and alienate the citizens represented by this board of commissioners.

Incorporating as Golden will make northern Miami County a desirable haven for country living particularly when contrasted against the chaos that is being inflicted on southern Johnson County by the city of Edgerton and the business practices of North Point. If Miami County seeks development of its northern region in ways that are a fit for the area and its neighbors, and don't destroy the value of what already exists, the county would do well to allow the Golden incorporation. It then would have a base for the regional development that would happen rather than being at the mercy of outsiders like, Edgerton. Their scheme for annexation and rezoning for industrial, if applied to northern Miami County 1) will not increase tax base, 2) WILL devalue surrounding properties, 3) WILL make the area less desirable for families and homes and 4) will absolutely destroy the goodwill of the people, who currently live in the area, towards the county in which they live and are currently depending on to help them protect and shape what future development will look like.

It makes no sense to cede control of development in northern Miami County to Edgerton, North Point or whoever else can use annexation tactics to invade our county with unwanted, unhealthy, unattractive, environmentally unfriendly, and property value-lowering industrial parks. The developmental step we are proposing with Golden, from rural to city, makes sense. The developmental leap from rural to industrial does not make sense when it is impacting so many residents who have poured their lives and dreams into a region and way of life only to have it be upended by false promises of future business tax base increases and a seemingly unstoppable purchase, annex, rezone scheme.

While the county commission may not possess the means to stop these tactics and, when the people also have virtually no say, vote or recourse, it would be a difficult argument to make for the county commission to actively prevent the good people of northern Miami County from doing the one and only thing legally accessible to make their voices heard and take control back from the corporate scheme seeking to industrialize northern Miami County.

Industrialization versus incorporation is pitting corporate greed against innocent citizens who are simply living their lives. The argument for the path forward is not "we need unsolicited, North Point warehouses and truck traffic to increase our tax base no matter the cost". The argument is: "we need people". We need a desirable landscape, houses and environments where people want to live. Where desirable development happens that enhances the lives of the people nearby and is respectful and suitable to the area. No one in Golden is against development across the board. But driving warehouses up I-35 is different than showing an industrial park down the throats of rural residents and landowners because there happened to be a relatively unknown technicality that has empowered one small town to inflict its will upon the surrounding communities with impunity and indifference.

Yes, tax base is important. But people are more important. And when people are prioritized, then tax base will follow. People pay taxes. Businesses avoid taxes, get tax abatements and the people miss out on the community benefits from these taxes all together. Especially when no taxes are paid at all due to payments made to developers in-lieu of taxes (PILOT) and the like. As I said, it's a scheme. *(And when I say scheme, let no one deny it. These deals happen privately between land owners and front corporations designed to hide the truth of the greater goals for long-term industrialization. When it does finally come to light, it is too late for anyone to do anything about it or make their voices heard. Not that that means anything anyway since the people being impacted do not live in Edgerton and have no recourse or representation in the matter.)*

Unfortunately, through no fault of the petitioners for Golden nor Miami County, it has come down to this: a vote AGAINST Golden incorporation is a vote FOR uncontrolled, unchecked industrialization of northern Miami County against the will of the residents or the county (since the commissioners do not have a say in the matter once the dealing starts). If we want the people to leave, and northern Miami County to become a wasteland of warehouses and

PUBLIC RESPONSE – PROPOSED INCORPORATION OF GOLDEN, KANSAS
05.27.2021 E-MAIL RECEIPT – HARROW, PAUL

truck traffic because there might be some future tax money to be had, well, then I guess it wouldn't make sense to allow Golden to incorporate. But if we want people to stay, and new people to move to the area and build and live and develop appropriately and respectfully, then Golden will have a chance to deliver beauty, desirability, development and taxes that warehouses and semi-trucks never, ever will. It would be a shame for Miami County to miss out on having happy, motivated, and proud residents of Golden, Kansas as part of the county by turning its back on incorporation and embracing the dead end of North Point's sad, selfish, unsolicited, unwelcome march across the region.

There are possibly other ways "to achieve the preservation of our large lot residential and agriculture-friendly way of life while accommodating appropriate new development" but the county has not offered any solutions for the current situation. In the face of the eminent threat by Edgerton to have the land rezoned at will and industrial parks take over the region, we are left with no other options than incorporating. The other options would be for Edgerton to annex land that is not in rural neighborhoods in Miami County. That is the true alternative. There is plenty of land elsewhere. I am certain that the rural neighborhoods in Johnson County WISH they had been given the chance to incorporate, but now it is too late for them. It is desirable for the people within Golden to have a say in how the area is developed. If Golden is not incorporated, we would not have a say. What we are asking for is the right to have a say in how where we live is developed. Incorporation achieves that. Why would anyone vote against that? As it stands now, we are helpless to stop Edgerton/North Point. We have never felt the need to incorporate until now. Having said that, everyone is truly excited about the new city of Golden and I believe that it is a preferred development for the area and citizens and county irrespective of whatever Edgerton does.

Sincerely,
Paul Harrow