
North Highline Community Open House on Annexation November 16, 2005

King County Office of Management and Budget
Office of Executive Ron Sims

Tonight's Agenda

□ Presentation

- King County Annexation Initiative;
- How annexation works;
- Governance studies and outreach efforts in North Highline;
- Annexation options and issues to consider
- Short Question and Answer.

□ Small group discussion –

- Goal is for community members to talk with each other about concerns, questions, and preferences.

□ Reconvene as group:

- Review small group work
- More Question and Answer
- Adjourn

General Questions

- Questions:
 - how many people's first meeting on the issue of annexation?
 - who never heard about it til tonight?
 - who has been following this issue through this last year? for many years?
 - how many of you already have a good idea of what you prefer in terms of joining a city?
 - How many of you haven't made up your minds yet?
 - How many of you need more information?

North Highline Diversity

- Neighborhoods – White Center, Boulevard Park, Top Hat, Beverley Park, Salmon Creek; and small portion of South Park
- 32,400 residents; about 12,000 households; about 13,500 registered voters.
- Community Diversity – most diverse community in all of King County
- Unlike the other major urban unincorporated areas, no city has designated the area for purposes of annexation.

North Highline – Diverse in every way

- Number 1 characteristic is **Diversity**
 - half of population is non-Hispanic white
 - Diversity shows up in languages -- 49 different languages in Highline Schools
 - 25% of the people are foreign-born
- But North Highline is diverse in other ways too:
 - collection of distinct neighborhoods – similar in some ways and different in others
 - Almost 10% of your population consists of seniors – that’s 3,000 people
 - Many of those seniors, & some younger families, have been there long time
 - Half of North Highline residents have been in same house since 1995
- Community strength: Housing is affordable compared to the rest of King County
 - typical house sells for \$140,000 - \$160,000, much more affordable
 - home ownership rate is 54% - comparable to Burien & higher than Seattle
- Greenbridge will change North Highline
 - opportunities for market-rate housing to accommodate new families
 - still maintaining some subsidized housing for families who need it.
 - Park Lake Homes (569 units) was demolished; Greenbridge will have 900+ units.

Why are we here promoting annexation?

- King County's Annexation Initiative

- Initiated in Fall 2003.
- Concerted effort to accelerate the pace of annexation of urban unincorporated areas.
- Focusing on ten remaining major urban unincorporated area in King County.
- North Highline, West Hill, East Federal Way; Lea Hill; Northeast Kent; Fairwood, East Renton Hill; Juanita-Kingsgate-Finn Hill; Klahahie; Eastgate
- About 200,000 residents who live in urban areas but are not part of cities.

Goals of the Annexation Initiative

- To meet the service vision objectives of the State's Growth Management Act – the County is the regional and rural service provider; Cities are the urban local service provider.
- To create greater financial stability in the county's general fund by reducing the regional subsidization of local services for urban unincorporated areas.
- To **preserve the quality of local services** to urban communities by transferring governance responsibility to cities, which have more revenue options available for funding urban local services than the county does.

What services does King County currently provide?

	Regional	Local
Mandated	Superior court Jail Public Health including base funding for community clinics Prosecutor Public Defender Public Records Elections Licensing Juvenile Court Small Claims Court	Local roads Sheriff Misdemeanant Court Jail for misdemeanants Public Defense for misdemeanants Building permits and inspections Fire inspections Surface water management
Discretionary	Regional parks Regional Human services Children and family services Animal control Regional Economic Development Regional Transportation	Local Human Services Parks with Swimming and limited youth programming Economic Development – small business assistance, façade improvement;

What are your options for future governance?

- Annexation by another city
 - Local government services transferred to a city
 - KC continue to provide regional services with stable resources
 - Special district changes possible (libraries, fire district, other)
- Incorporation
 - New local government
 - KC continues to provide regional services with greater resources
 - Special district stay the same
- Retain Unincorporated status
 - KC local government at lower service level
 - KC regional government at lower service level
 - Special districts stay the same

Why can't we stay the same?

- ***King County is subsidizing urban local unincorporated services by \$20 million a year using funds intended for maintenance of regional and rural services.***
- ***For the North Highline, King County estimates spending \$12 million on local general fund services while the area generates \$4.4 million in local revenues. The balance, \$7.6 million, is covered from other regional sources.***
- ***Cities have other taxes options to supplement revenues that are not available to the county as a matter of law.***

Why annex?

- To **preserve the quality of local services** to urban communities by transferring governance responsibility to cities
- Services already lost given King County's limited revenue options under state law:
 - Loss of Recreation Services
 - Increase in fees for services such as ballfields, use of facilities, etc.
 - Loss of human services such as childcare subsidies
- King County is not in a financial position to provide additional services and will likely have to consider further service cuts in the future.

What is “PAA” designation?

- PAA is “Potential Annexation Area”, a legal term under GMA
- City process under Growth Management Act where a city as part of its Comprehensive Plan designates an urban unincorporated area as an area it will plan to serve in the future.
- If an area is designated as a PAA, other cities **cannot** annex without the designating city releasing the area.
- It is an important step towards annexation but it is not the same as annexation.
- King County supports North Highline being designated as PAA by a city as it represents concrete action that will continue moving the community towards an annexation solution.

Annexation Fundamentals

- What is “annexation” –
 - Annexation is a process by which an area outside but adjacent to an existing city becomes part of that city.
 - Process is dictated by state law.
- Many procedural steps in state law including opportunities for public input
 - 5 methods – all methods have roles for cities and residents
 - County has very limited formal role
- Boundary Review Board for King County, a state agency, has responsibility for overseeing annexation processes including public hearings.

Five Methods to Annex

- ****Election – Initiated by 10% petition of voters or council act****
- Direct 60 % Petition by Registered Voter
- 50/50 Voter/AV Direct Petition Method
- Annexation of small unincorporated Islands Method (not applicable)
- Annexation by Interlocal Agreement between county and city; subject to referendum by voters.
- *Key actors in these methods are **resident registered voters/property owners and the City Council***

Election Method

- King County advocates that the election method be used to allow broadest participation.
- An Election Method would list *one city for a yes or no vote.*
- *Listing more than one city at a time is not allowable under state law.*

Who will make the final decision as to annex?

- ***City Council will take action to initiate a vote***
- ***Residents who are registered voters will decide.***
- ***Upon successful vote, City Council will then pass a resolution making it effective.***

Timing of the annexation decision

- Residents and cities need sufficient time to understand the issues and choices.
- King County actively supports vote of the people in 2006 with annexation to occur in 2007.
- Recognition that it may have to be delayed a year -- vote in 2007 with effective date in 2008 but discourages further delay.

Splitting North Highline?

- King County support all of North Highline transition to city status.
- King County is opposed to part of the area being annexed and the remainder being left behind with even fewer resources.
- If the community and annexing cities supported a division that resulted in all neighborhoods being annexed in a timely fashion, King County would support that.

Past Governance Study Efforts in North Highline

- UACs were created by King County Ordinance and Executive Order to provide citizen input to King County policy and programs that affect the unincorporated areas.
- Unincorporated Area Councils (UACs) have been a key point of contact to increase community awareness of the issue.
- King County recognizes the UAC as a collective voice of the communities they represent, but they are not the only voice. Ultimately, the decision will be made by voters.
- Several studies of governance options predate the Annexation Initiative – 1992, 1997, 1999, and 2002 and involved the NHUAC and community groups.
- 2003 North Highline Ad Hoc Governance committee -- King County Councilmember Constantine has been working with NHUAC on governance prior to the Annexation Initiative.

Current Efforts in North Highline – 2003 and 2004

- Countywide Summit with Cities in Fall 2003 reiterating the importance of the effort.
- December 2003 Seattle sponsors opinions and attitude survey by professional survey company.
- 2004 Seattle and Burien both begin to examine the cost to annex of part or all of North Highline & Councilmember Constantine secures funding for new governance study focusing on incorporation study.
- April 2004 Seattle City Council passes resolution laying out criteria to be met prior to council consideration of PAA designation or annexation for West Hill or North Highline.

Current Efforts in North Highline – 2005

- **January 2005** King County briefs Making Connections Deputies and Partner Group on Annexation Initiative and indicates availability of staff to work with Making Connections. Provides update at August meeting.

- **February 2005** King County Annexation Initiative presents at NHUAC
- **April 2006** King County Council completes contract with independent consultant for Governance/Incorporation Study
- **May 2005** Incorporation Study Kicks Off
- **July 2005** King County, Burien and Seattle develop flyer for White Center Jubilee Days presenting annexation basics and choices. Flyer is provided in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

- **September 2005** To support community awareness of governance issue, a 13,000 household mailing of the NHUAC governance study community meeting is funded by Annexation Initiative
- **November 2005** Community Open house hosted by King County

- **December 2005**
 - NHUAC finalize their governance recommendation
 - Trusted Advocates sponsor community forum on Annexation
 - Burien will finalize its cost of annexation study.
 - Seattle expect to issue their Cost to Annex Study

2005 NHUAC Governance Study

focus on incorporation

- Sponsor – King County Councilmember Constantine’s Office
- Study Group Members -- NHUAC Councilmembers
- Approach –
 - Data collection from King County, adjacent cities of Seattle and Burien; and special districts;
 - Community Input -- 2 door to door surveys (1500 households targeted), focus groups, community meeting on level of service; public comment
 - Schedule -- May through December

UAC Preliminary Recommendation – Key Points

- ❑ Staying unincorporated is not an option for long term community development;
- ❑ Incorporation as a stand alone city is not financially feasible;
- ❑ Keep all neighborhoods together -- preference of majority of council;
- ❑ UAC preliminary recommendation for area to annex to Burien;
- ❑ This recommendation is expected to be finalized at the December 1st meeting after a public meeting on Nov 21st and a report of survey results.

Annexation Options

- Seattle is the largest city in the State:
 - Pop. Est 572,600
 - If annexed, North Highline = 5 percent of total.
 - City Services Model – Seattle provides services directly through city departments and staff as well as partnerships with non profits and other providers as needed.
 - Many services offered city wide from central locations.
 - Some services offered in neighborhoods directly.
- Burien – newly incorporated in 1993
 - Pop. Est 31,130
 - If annexed, North Highline = over 50 percent of total.
 - Services provided generally through contracts with public and non profit service providers.
 - Most city services provided from downtown Burien locations.
 - Some services would be offered in neighborhoods directly with dedicated staff.

Current City Activities

- Burien City Council is considering amending their Comprehensive Plan to designate North Highline as a Potential Annexation Area and to set policies to guide further annexation discussions in the community to include North Highline residents and Burien Residents.
- Seattle Mayor Office staff has indicated it will finish its internal study of the cost to the city of annex by the end of the year. Seattle staff is meeting with community groups. Not yet indicated timing for PAA designation.
- Important Shift – one year ago – no city was showing significant interest in annexing this area. *Today two cities are actively examining the issue.*
- King County will continue to work to encourage timely action by interested cities.

Being an informed consumer of government services

- Comparison of Taxes and Fees for residents
- Review chart of service provider changes
- Handouts summarize current King County service levels and offer questions to ask of cities
- Question and Answer Session
- Small Group Discussion

Local Services Residential Tax and Fee Comparison

	Uninc. KC	Seattle	Burien
Residential Property Tax	\$2,435	\$2,303	\$2,344
Annual Utility Taxes			
Telephone	-	\$58.00	\$58.00
Gas	--	\$22.00	\$22.00
Electricity*	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00
Water/Sewer	--	\$24.00	--
Cable TV	\$15.00	\$39.00	\$29.00
Solid Waste	--	\$19.00	\$12.00
Utility Tax SubTotal	\$75.00	\$222.00	\$181.00
Other Taxes and Fees			
Cable Franchise Fee	\$24.00	\$12.00	\$24.00
Surface Water Fee	\$91.43	\$110.36	\$102.00
Surface Water Bond	\$10.57	--	--
Noxious Weed Fee	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50
Conservation Fee	\$5	\$5	\$5
SUB TOTAL	132.5	128.86	132.5
Grand Total	\$ 2,643.00	\$2,654.00	\$ 2,658.00

Special Districts

	King County --Stay Unincorporated	Annex to Seattle	Annex to Burien
Fire	North Highline Fire	Seattle Fire Department	Burien would annex to North Highline Fire
Library	King County Library System	Seattle Public Library	King County Library System
School	North Highline District	No Change – Potential addl' support from Families and Education Levy	No Change
Utilities	SW Suburban; ValVue	Seattle Public Utilities	SW Suburban; ValVue

Local Services

	Stay Unincorporated	Annex to Seattle	Annex to Renton
Police	King County Sheriff	Seattle Police Department	Burien Police Department through contract with King County Sheriff
Roads	King County Roads Services Division	City of Seattle Department of Transportation	City of Burien contracting with King County Roads Services
Parks	King County Parks	City of Seattle	City of Burien

Local Services continued

	Stay Unincorporated	Annex to Seattle	Annex to Renton
Local Human and Health Services	King County – also regional service provider	City of Seattle	City of Burien
Housing Services	King County	City of Seattle Seattle Housing Levy provides extra funding	City of Burien in conjunction with King County Housing Consortium
Economic and Community Development	King County	City of Seattle	City of Burien

Question and Answers Session

2006 Continued Community Dialogue

- ❑ *2006 will be a year of community outreach, discussion and hopefully, decision.*
- ❑ *King County will continue working actively with the community and adjacent cities to develop a governance solution that secures a vibrant and sustainable future for the communities of North Highline.*