

# Potential Annexation of Unincorporated North Highline

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**FEBRUARY 1, 2010**  
**SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL BRIEFING**  
**CHRISTA VALLES, CENTRAL STAFF**

# Why Annex?

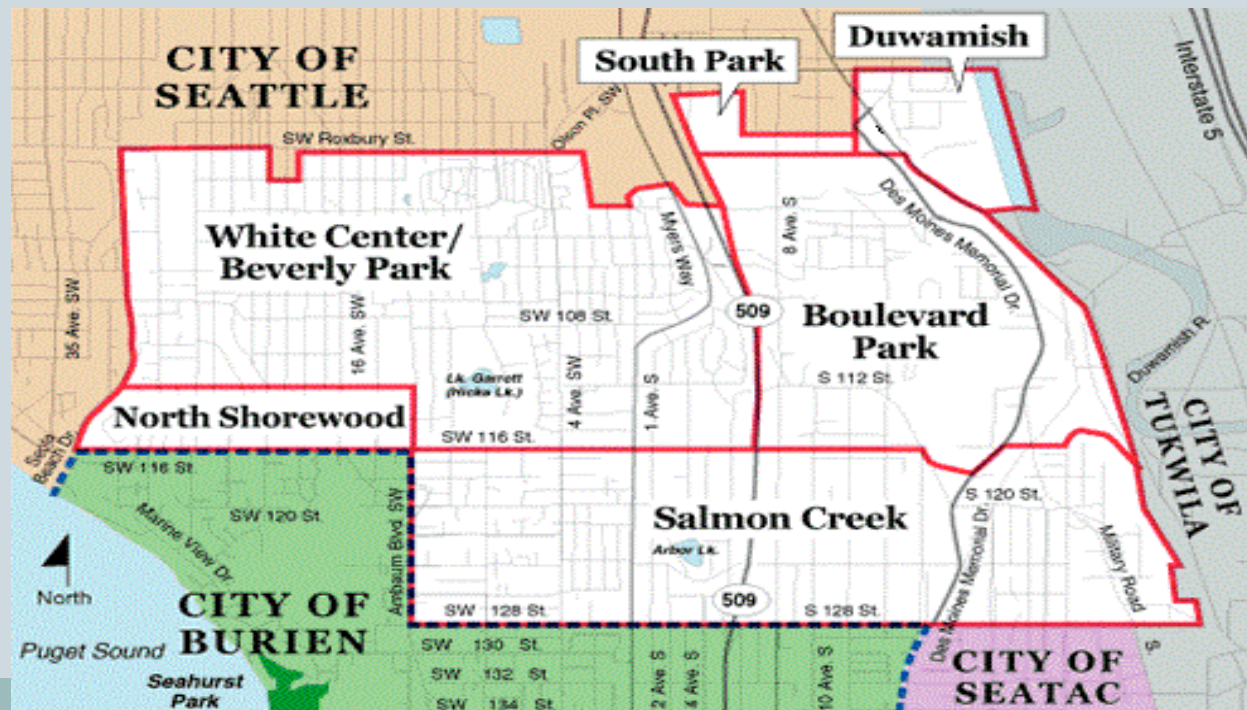
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- State's Growth Management Act (GMA) anticipates all unincorporated areas within a city's urban growth boundaries will eventually be annexed.
  - Prevents fragmentation of local government authority & service duplication
  - Allows for economies of scale
  - Helps assure orderly growth & more logical service boundaries
- Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) establish King County as regional/rural service provider and cities & special use districts as service providers to urban areas.

# Recent History

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- City of Burien designates North Highline a PAA in 2006.
- December 2006: Seattle City Council votes to designate unincorporated North Highline Potential Annexation Area (PAA).



## Recent History, cont.

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- Overlapping PAA leads to negotiations between Burien and Seattle over boundaries.
- Proposed MOU divides PAA boundaries between Seattle and Burien.
- December 2008: Seattle City Council rejects proposed MOU between Seattle, Burien, and North Highline fire districts.
  - Issues
    - City not qualified for State sales tax credit to assist with cost of annexing.
    - Outstanding questions about service delivery issues, especially related to fire service.
    - Concerns about Seattle's ability to afford annexation and lack of more detailed information from Executive on costs/revenues associated with boundary changes.

# Recent Developments

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- Burien proceeds with annexation of southern portion of North Highline, per boundary outlined in MOU.
  - Area includes 1,700 acres, 14,100 people, two libraries, one fire station.
- Annexation approved by North Highline voters in August 2009.
- State Legislature amends RCW 82.14.415 in 2009, enabling Seattle to access sales tax credit of up to \$5 million annually for 10 years to help pay for annexation costs.

## Remaining unincorporated North Highline

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- Acres: ~2200 Acres or 3.43 square miles
- Population: 20,650 (2008 estimate)
- Occupied Housing Units: 7,008
- Owner Occupied: 3,447
- Families: 6,782 (with or without children)
- Highline School District
- Includes Fire Station on southern boundary & small KC library in Greenbridge.

# Services to be provided

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- police protection
- fire protection
- water service
- sewage collection and disposal
- garbage disposal
- street maintenance, street lighting
- storm sewers
- animal control
- planning, building inspection
- public health protection
- parks and recreation
- library services

## Issues to be resolved

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- Budget numbers based on different boundary line & are “ballpark” estimates only.
- Budget estimates assume cardrooms grandfathered... ~\$1.8m in annual revenue.
- Transfer of Special District assets and liabilities.
- Transfer of Fire District & KC Sheriff employees.
- Adequacy of library service.
- Assistance from King County on transition.
- Fire service for remaining unincorporated “Sliver”.

# Election Method of Annexation

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- Notice to adjacent jurisdictions of Intent to Annex
- City Council Resolution to Initiate Election to Annex.
- Resolution filed with King County and Boundary Review Board (BRB).
- BRB review process.
- If BRB approves, City Council passes resolution to set annexation election date.
- Vote held in PAA. (Requires >50% , or 60% if debt assumed)
- City Council adopts ordinance setting effective date of annexation, at which time it must be ready to provide services.

# Recommendations

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- **City should form IDT to ensure coordination across City.**  
(should include Executive Staff, DoF, Law, Council Staff, and Clerk's office).
- **City needs to dedicate adequate resources to effort. Next steps should include:**
  - Developing communications plan to ensure adequate information available to voters in PAA.
  - Initiating negotiations with King County to obtain assistance with transition costs, obtain assurance KC will complete current CIP obligations & address any outstanding issues.
  - Resuming discussions with Special Districts to address outstanding issues.
  - Refining budget numbers and conducting infrastructure assessments. May want to take a closer look at potential zoning issues. City should have better idea of costs and service delivery issues before it sets date of annexation in November after vote.

# Schedule for Council Resolution to Initiate Annexation Election

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## **Regional Development and Sustainability Committee**

- Friday, February 19
  - Discussion of updated budget numbers, outstanding issues/questions related to service delivery & special districts.
- Tuesday, March 2
  - Committee vote on resolution to initiate election to annex.

## **Full Council**

- Monday, March 8
  - Full Council vote on resolution.

\*Public Hearing optional.