

Seattle Annexation Of North Highline: A Lose-Lose Resolution

Mayor McGinn does not support annexation under the current or foreseeable economic conditions. On March 28, 2011, the Seattle City Council will vote on a resolution that would put a November, 2011 annexation vote before the people of North Highline. **Seattle residents do not get to vote on annexation. Make Your Voice Heard Before March 28, 2011.**

✦ **Seattle Taxpayers And Annexation By the Numbers:**

Seattle's analysis of its cost to annex North Highline discloses that "[U]nder all scenarios contemplated in the Annexation Report, the City's anticipated operating expenditures will exceed revenues by at least \$1.8 million per year and could be as high as \$16.8 million. The Annexation Report further estimates net one-time expenditures could range from \$4.7 million - \$91.3 million." [Seattle City Council Memorandum, February 23, 2011 from Christa Valles, Central Staff.] Please note that the \$91.3 million figure was reduced to \$39 million during the March 1, 2011 Regional Development and Sustainability Committee meeting because the \$91.3 million included the cost of road repairs and improvements to **all** North Highline streets and the City of Seattle only provides that level of maintenance to Seattle arterials. **(Have you driven down Delridge lately?)**

✦ **What Is Seattle's Plan To Pay For Annexation? (Answer: There is None.)**

Although Seattle's analysis clearly shows that a North Highline annexation would cost Seattle millions of dollars in "one time" costs and millions of dollars in "on-going" yearly expenditures, it does not include a plan to pay those costs. Instead, the January 18, 2011 letter from the Director Seattle's Budget Office to Seattle City Council President Conlin conveyed the assessment that the "City simply does not have sufficient resources (and resource growth) to meet existing demands for its services and take on the new demands that the annexation would require." (Report Transmittal letter to Richard Conlin from Beth Goldberg, January 18, 2011.)

✦ **Heads You Pay (More Taxes) - Tails You Lose (Services)!**

Seattle's Budget Office knows that annexation would cost millions of dollars a year. "Magic money" is not going to appear and pay for an annexation. Either Seattle taxes will rise or Seattle's services will be cut.

If you are concerned about Seattle's \$1.6 billion dollar backlog of road work on arterials, reduced hours at Seattle libraries and community centers, increased fees at Seattle Parks, the conservatively estimated \$200 million repair backlog for Seattle Parks, Seattle's failing drainage systems and water mains, or the fact that annexation would require 50 police officers in North Highline (when SPD is undergoing review by the Department of Justice, 1/3 of Seattle's officers have 3 years or less of experience and SPD is struggling to meet residents' expectations), **now is your opportunity to tell the Seattle City Council what you think.**

Send your emails to: <sally.bagshaw@seattle.gov>, <tim.burgess@seattle.gov>, <sally.clark@seattle.gov>, <richard.conlin@seattle.gov>, <jean.godden@seattle.gov>, <bruce.harrell@seattle.gov>, <nick.licata@seattle.gov>, <mike.obrien@seattle.gov>, <tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov>

For additional information, please contact Liz Giba (PCO 34-Marian) at 206-605-3824.

If you'd like to see how North Highline loses, please see the other side.

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Continuing Seattle's annexation discussion will waste more Seattle taxpayer dollars, threaten the financial sustainability of Seattle, and endanger North Highline's future.

✦ Seattle's Annexation Discussion Ignores The Historical and Community Relationship North Highline Shares With Burien.

Seattle's annexation discussion ignores the possibility of annexation by Burien. Our histories are bound together as neighbors in the Highline School District. In addition to the school district, North Highline and Burien are served by special purpose districts, which provide fire protection, library, water and sewer services. These established relationships will make annexation a much more affordable option for Burien.

✦ Seattle's Annexation Would Likely Result In North Highline Paying Higher Utility Rates And Losing Quality Water And Sewer Providers.

Unlike Seattle Public Utilities, the water and sewer districts in North Highline and Burien regularly invest in infrastructure. Although Seattle's analysis assumes that agreements would be reached with our current providers, those agreements have not been negotiated. Based on assumptions of service levels consistent with existing Seattle communities, Seattle annexation would result in a drop in service levels and an increase in utility rates in North Highline.

✦ Seattle's Annexation Would Definitely Result In The Loss Of the White Center And Boulevard Park Libraries.

The White Center and Boulevard Park Libraries are very close to Burien's northern border. At the March 3, 2011 meeting of the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council, the Director of the King County Library System made it very clear that a Seattle annexation of North Highline will result in the closure of the White Center and Boulevard Park Libraries, leaving only the 2,300 square foot Greenbridge Library to serve the 20,000 people who live in North Highline. He also acknowledged that the Greenbridge facility cannot accommodate the needs of the North Highline community - especially since the White Center Library alone has over ten thousand users a month - many of them students who are using the computers to do homework.

✦ Seattle's On-going Annexation Discussion Is Keeping North Highline From The Opportunity To Finally Have A Voice In Its Future.

After a strong vote of confidence, approximately 14,000 people who live in the southern portion of North Highline (now called North Burien) were annexed to the City of Burien in April of 2010. Since annexation, Burien has invested in the infrastructure of North Burien. A survey of North Burien residents confirmed that they are pleased with the services they are receiving from Burien.

Seattle has been toying with the idea of annexing North Highline since the late 1990's. Burien has agreed not to interfere with any annexation attempt by Seattle through 2011 - unless Seattle indicates it will not proceed. Seattle's on-going discussion is holding up the possibility of North Highline finally moving toward a healthy future as 50% of Burien instead of less than 5% of Seattle. **It is time for Seattle to close the door on the annexation issue and put its money, time and energy in its own neighborhoods.**

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