



Appendix A: Public Meeting Materials and Outcomes

Geneva Elementary - May 2, 2019	1
Agenda	2
Handout	4
Information Posters	6
Sample Questionnaire	9
Activity Outcomes	10
Questionnaire Outcomes	11
Wade King Elementary - May 2, 2019	13
Agenda	14
Handout	16
Information Posters	18
Activity Outcomes	21
Questionnaire Outcomes	21
Northern Heights Elementary - May 7, 2019	24
Agenda	25
Handout	27
Information Posters	29
Activity Outcomes	32
Questionnaire Outcomes	32
Northern Heights	33
Hillsdale	35
Tweed Twenty	37

Geneva Elementary - May 2, 2019

An informational open house regarding the process and effects of annexation was held at Geneva Elementary School May 2, 2019 from 6:00pm - 7:30pm. The open house was hosted by the University of Washington Annexation Research Initiative Team and supported by City of Bellingham and Whatcom County Staff. The event was intended to cover the area identified in Figure A1, and was attended by 46 Geneva area residents, 39 of which returned questionnaires. Event agenda, informational materials, and sample questionnaire are included herein, along with a summary of activity and questionnaire outcomes.



Figure A1. Geneva Elementary Meeting - Coverage Area



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative



Agenda

A Discussion on Annexation

Hosted by

University of Washington Master of Urban Planning Studio

May 2, 2019 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Geneva Elementary School – 1401 Geneva St, Bellingham, WA

-
- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 6:00 – 6:15 | Welcome and Registration |
| 6:15 - 6:30 | Event Kickoff <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>University of Washington Annexation Research Initiative overview</i>● <i>Event format & objectives overview</i> |
| 6:30 - 7:00 | Open House <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Information and Q&A tables</i>● <i>Interactive activities</i>● <i>Questionnaire</i> |
| 7:00 - 7:20 | Group Discussion (time permitting) <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Open house highlights</i>● <i>Additional Q&A</i> |
| 7:30 | Event Conclusion |
-

Additional Information:

- City of Bellingham
Annexation Website: <https://www.cob.org/services/planning/annexations>
Contact: Moshe Quinn mquinn@cob.org or (360) 778-8354
- UW Annexation Research Initiative
Website: www.cob.org/uwresearch
Contact: UWTeam@cob.org

Open House Stations

Information and Q&A

Annexation 101

Information and frequently asked questions about the annexation process and University of Washington research initiative

Tax & Fee Changes

Information on tax and fee differences between the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County, and what they mean to residential property and business owners

City Services

Information on services provided for City of Bellingham residents including police, fire, public works, parks & recreation

Interactive Activities

Fact vs. Fiction

Test your understanding of the Bellingham annexation process by identifying statements as fact or fiction

My Community Is...

Let the UW team know which community or communities you most closely identify with by placing a dot on the provided chart and leaving a comment, if desired

What's Most Important to Me?

Identify elements of community involvement and property ownership which are most important to you by placing dots on the provided chart and leaving comments, if desired

Questionnaire

Provide the UW team feedback on the event and your thoughts on annexation by completing either a paper or electronic copy of the event questionnaire at any point during the event

Notes:



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative



Welcome Geneva!

The University of Washington (UW) Master of Urban Planning students are partnering with the City of Bellingham Planning to assess the interest of your area joining the City. We look forward to discussing this possibility with you today.

What is Annexation?

Annexation is the procedure for bringing unincorporated areas of a county into an adjacent incorporated city. An unincorporated area has yet to join a city or form a town or city of its own. The most common form of annexation is the "petition method", whereby property owners (or residents) of the area sign a petition asking to become part of the city. If an area is annexed, the city becomes the primary provider of local government services.

Why is the city exploring annexing these areas?

The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined as urban growth areas (UGAs) should be in a city. Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does. Due to this, both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs.

The average single family home owner will pay **\$83 less** a year in taxes & fees.



- \$215
Property Tax



+ \$132
Storm Water Fee

Has annexation happened before in nearby areas? What changed afterward?



Yes, the most recent annexations were of Mt. Baker Highway/Britton Road and Bennett/Bakerview/Airport Drive in April 2019. The effects after annexation vary by community; however, the following have generally happened:



- Lower utility costs for City of Bellingham water and sewer services and extension of service to vacant properties (upon the submission of an application)



- Consideration for the City of Bellingham to improve public park spaces (trails, playfields, etc.) identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Plan
- Inclusion in City planning and budgeting for parks, infrastructure, and other neighborhood improvements
- Increased levels of service provided by the City of Bellingham police and fire departments



- The ability to vote in Bellingham elections along with representation on the Bellingham City Council



- Establishment of Neighborhood Associations officially recognized by the City of Bellingham and representation on the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission (MNAC)



- Access to city and state funding for neighborhood development through programs such as Small and Simple Grants and Safe Routes to School

Additional Resources

University of Washington Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative Website
www.cob.org/uwresearch

City of Bellingham Annexations Website
<https://www.cob.org/services/planning/annexations/Pages/bellingham-annexations.aspx>

City of Bellingham 2018 Annexation Strategy <https://www.cob.org/Documents/planning/growth/annexations/annexation-strategy.pdf>

***Cost estimates based on an owner-occupied single family home valued at \$300,000 property tax value with a roughly 7,500 sq ft lot with roughly 2,500 sq ft currently using City of Bellingham water in 2019. If you are not on city water you will not receive the savings.

A special thanks for data from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department, Whatcom County GIS and icons via The Noun Project.

Contact Info

UW Research Team
Email: UWTeam@cob.org

Bellingham Planning Department
Moshe Quinn
Email: mquinn@cob.org
Phone: (360) 778-8354



Annexation 101

Things to know about annexation

Why is the city exploring annexing these areas?

The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined by urban growth should be in a city.

- Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does
- Both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs

What is an “unincorporated area”?

In the case of Bellingham, an unincorporated area is an area within and governed by Whatcom County that has yet to join a city or form a town or city of its own.

What is an “Urban Growth Area” (UGA)?

- Bellingham urban growth areas (UGAs) are unincorporated areas next to city limits identified by Whatcom County that are characterized by urban growth
- Establishment of UGAs is required by the Washington Growth Management Act of 1990 for the purpose of encouraging urban growth within existing urban areas
- Several UGAs have already experienced significant development and are being considered for potential annexation by the City of Bellingham

What is the annexation process?

Washington State law guides the annexation process. Many methods exist, ranging from petition-based to agreements between government authorities.

- Bellingham has grown via annexation throughout its history, and this is a common process

The most used annexation method is the **petition**:

- The petition starts with **interested residents** submitting a Notice of Intent to Annex that represents either:
 - **at least 10% of the residents** of the area to be annexed, or
 - the owners of **at least 10% of the land value** in the area to be annexed
- If the City Council decides that the proposed annexation is good for the public, it may begin a public process to study the annexation proposal
- In this case, the supportive residents must use official petition forms to collect the signatures of property owners that represent **at least 60% of the total assessed land value** of the area requested for annexation
- At the end of the public process, the City Council votes for or against the annexation in question. There is no guarantee of annexation by filing a petition and application for annexation to the City



Tax & Fee Changes

How much will this cost me?

The average single family homeowner in Geneva will pay **\$83 less** a year in taxes & fees.



- \$215
Property Tax



+ \$132
Storm Water Fee

***Cost estimates based on an owner-occupied single family home valued at \$300,000 property tax value with a roughly 7,500 sq ft lot with roughly 2,500 sq ft currently using City of Bellingham water in 2019. If you are not on city water you will not receive the savings.



Rental Property Owners

- Rental registration fees
- Per unit annual fee ranging \$8 - \$10 per unit
- Rental inspections and fees are required every 3 years



Business Owners

- City of Bellingham Business and Occupation Tax will apply to businesses with gross revenue more than \$20,000 per year
- City of Bellingham sales tax rate of 2.2% will apply on top of the state rate of 6.5%

Property Tax Levies

New Levies

- City of Bellingham Affordable Housing
- City of Bellingham Fire Pension
- City of Bellingham General Fund
- City of Bellingham Greenways IV
- City of Bellingham RDA
- Affordable Housing Bellingham

No Longer Applicable Levies

- Emergency Medical SVC Fire #04
- Fire SWFA Expense Fund
- County Road Diversion
- County Road Fund
- Rural Library

Total Rate:

\$22.07/\$1,000 in assessed value

\$30.98/\$1,000 in assessed value

A special thanks for data from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department, Whatcom County and icons via The Noun Project.

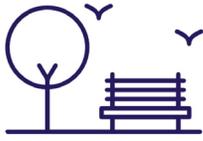


UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative



City Services

How does annexation affect your neighborhood?



The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined as urban growth areas (UGAs) should be in a city. Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does. Due to this, both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs.



Lower utility costs for City of Bellingham water and sewer services and extension of service to vacant properties (upon the submission of an application)

Consideration for the City of Bellingham to improve public park spaces (trails, playfields, etc.) identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Plan



Inclusion in City planning and budgeting for parks, infrastructure, and other neighborhood improvements

Increased levels of service provided by the City of Bellingham police and fire departments



The ability to vote in the City of Bellingham elections along with representation on the Bellingham City Council

Establishment of Neighborhood Associations officially recognized by the City of Bellingham and representation on the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission



Depending on the UGA you are located in, there will be varying potential increased in stormwater fees and reduced property taxes and water bills.

Check your FAQ sheet to review estimated costs for your neighborhood



Access to city and state funding for neighborhood development through programs such as Small and Simple Grants and Safe Routes to School



Questionnaire

Name (optional):

Email (optional):

Phone (optional):

Neighborhood:

Northern Heights Tweed 20 Hillsdale Geneva North Yew Street

Other (please explain):

How did you hear about this event?

Flyer Website Word of mouth Other (please explain):

How engaged did you feel in this meeting?

Very engaged Somewhat engaged Somewhat disengaged Very disengaged

What is the most important thing you learned today?

Did this event improve your understanding of annexation?

Yes No

How supportive of annexation are you at this time?

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- No opinion
- Somewhat unsupportive
- Very unsupportive

Additional comments:



Activity Outcomes

Open house attendees had the opportunity to engage in activities identifying their community association, comment on aspects of potential annexation perceived as most important, and review frequently asked questions and responses in a fact vs. fiction quiz format. Activity takeaways are presented in Table A1:

Table A1. Geneva Meeting - Attendee Priorities and Comments

Topic	Respondents	Comments
Community Identity	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in city government • Currently identify with Bellingham • Disinterest in city services, sidewalks, lights, etc.
Lower Costs	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower property taxes
Services	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services are difficult to deliver to Geneva • Support for feeding wildlife • Opposition to feeding wildlife
Streets & Sidewalks	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority opposition to street lights, particularly LED • Minority support for street lights • Crosswalks on Lakeway & Cable • Stop neighborhood cut-throughs from Lake Louise
Safety	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for decreased speed on residential streets • Opposition to installation of traffic lights on Lakeway Dr.
Parks & Open Spaces	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad support for improved park, playground, and open space access and maintenance
Other	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for local government representation and voting in city elections • Opposition to additional government bureaucracy • Lake Whatcom water quality

Questionnaire Outcomes

Attendees were encouraged to complete a questionnaire regarding their experience at the meeting and opinion related to annexation during the event. In the case of the Geneva Elementary meeting, 39 of 46 questionnaires were returned, the outcomes of which are provided below in Figures A2 through A5. This information was not evaluated as representative of overall community sentiment or statistically analyzed, as open house events were focused on sharing information with community members. Rather, attendee input was documented and used by the UW Team to inform follow-on assessment efforts.

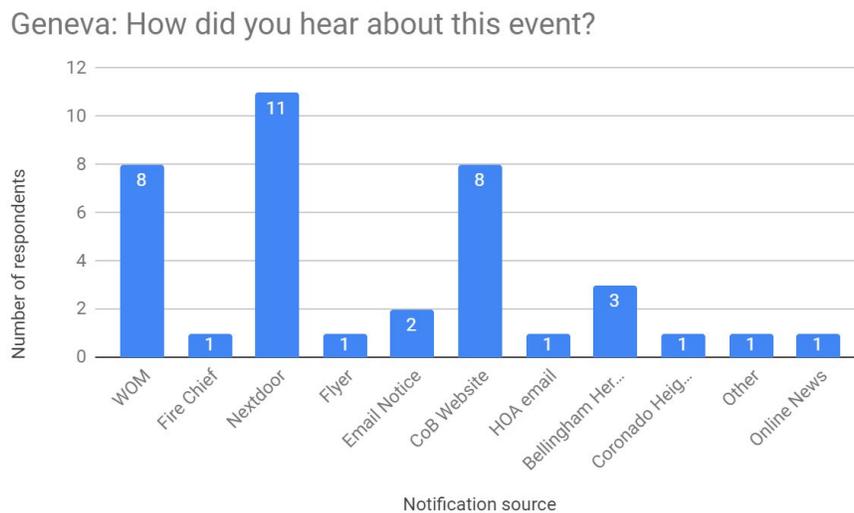


Figure A2. Geneva Meeting - Public Notification Sources

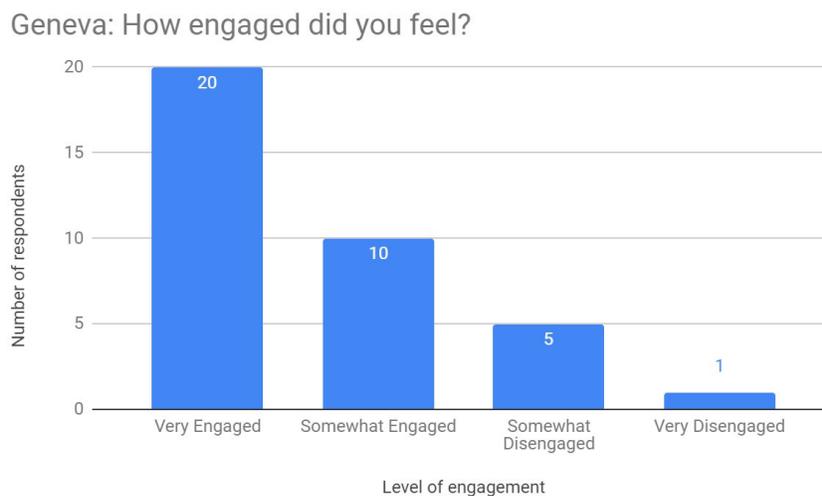


Figure A3. Geneva Meeting - Attendee Engagement

Geneva: How supportive are you of annexation at this time?

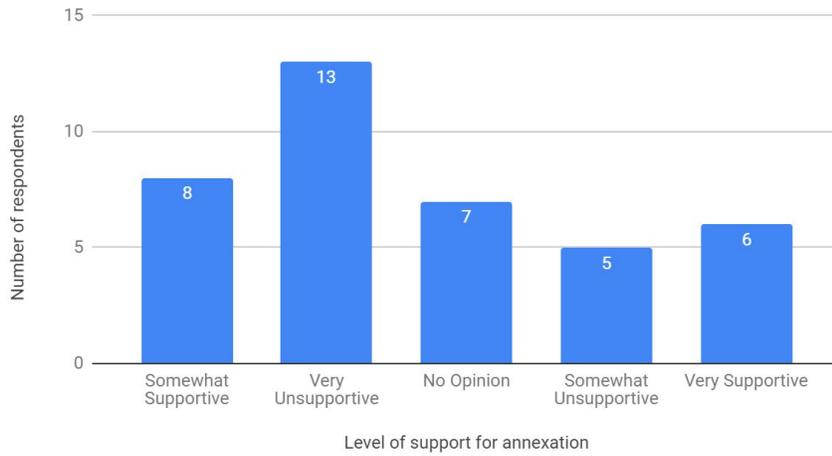


Figure A4. Geneva Meeting - Respondent Support for Annexation

Geneva: Did this event improve your understanding of annexation?

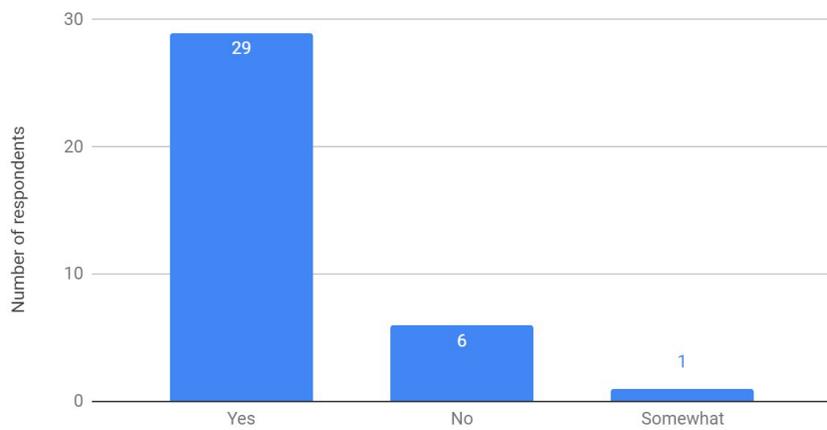


Figure A5. Geneva Meeting - Attendee Understanding of Annexation

Of the 39 people who responded to the Geneva meeting questionnaire, most reported that they felt engaged and at the meeting and the meeting improved their understanding of annexation. However, the majority of respondents indicate they do not support annexation.

Wade King Elementary - May 2, 2019

An informational open house regarding the process and effects of annexation was held at Wade King Elementary School May 2, 2019 from 6:00pm - 7:30pm. The open house was hosted by the University of Washington Annexation Research Initiative Team and supported by City of Bellingham and Whatcom County Staff. The event was intended to cover the area identified in Figure A6, and was attended by 31 North Yew Street area residents, of which 24 returned questionnaires. Event agenda, informational materials, and sample questionnaire are included herein, along with a summary of activity and questionnaire outcomes.

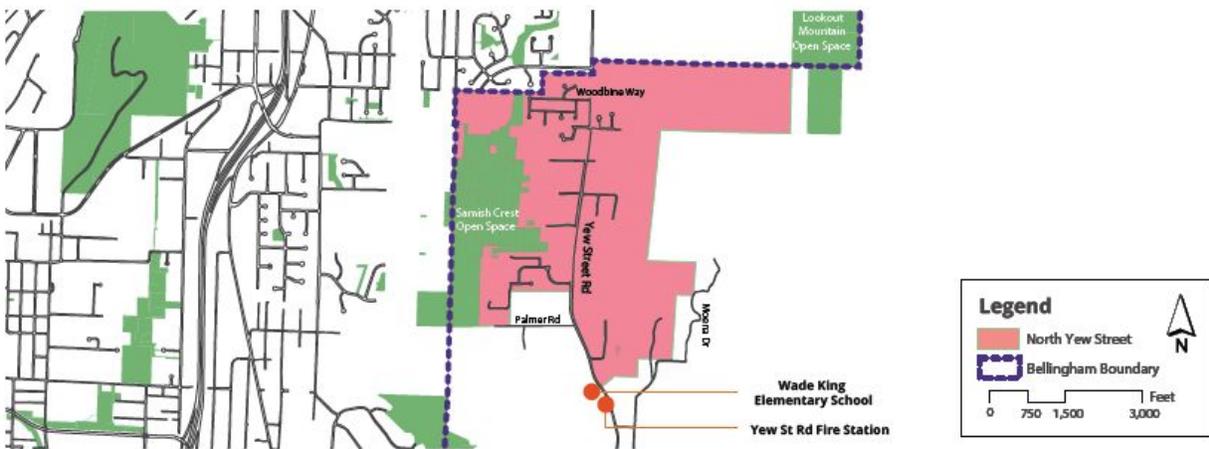


Figure A6. Wade King Elementary Meeting - Coverage Area



Agenda

A Discussion on Annexation

Hosted by

University of Washington Master of Urban Planning Studio

May 2, 2019 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Wade King Elementary School – 2155 Yew Street Rd, Bellingham, WA

- 6:00 – 6:15 Welcome and Registration
- 6:15 - 6:30 Event Kickoff
- *University of Washington Annexation Research Initiative overview*
 - *Event format & objectives overview*
- 6:30 - 7:00 Open House
- *Information and Q&A tables*
 - *Interactive activities*
 - *Questionnaire*
- 7:00 - 7:20 Group Discussion (time permitting)
- *Open house highlights*
 - *Additional Q&A*
- 7:30 Event Conclusion
-

Additional Information:

- City of Bellingham
Annexation Website: <https://www.cob.org/services/planning/annexations>
Contact: Moshe Quinn mquinn@cob.org or (360) 778-8354
- UW Annexation Research Initiative
Website: www.cob.org/uwresearch
Contact: UWTeam@cob.org

Open House Stations

Information and Q&A

Annexation 101

Information and frequently asked questions about the annexation process and University of Washington research initiative

Tax & Fee Changes

Information on tax and fee differences between the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County, and what they mean to residential property and business owners

City Services

Information on services provided for City of Bellingham residents including police, fire, public works, parks & recreation

Interactive Activities

Fact vs. Fiction

Test your understanding of the Bellingham annexation process by identifying statements as fact or fiction

My Community Is...

Let the UW team know which community or communities you most closely identify with by placing a dot on the provided chart and leaving a comment, if desired

What's Most Important to Me?

Identify elements of community involvement and property ownership which are most important to you by placing dots on the provided chart and leaving comments, if desired

Questionnaire

Provide the UW team feedback on the event and your thoughts on annexation by completing either a paper or electronic copy of the event questionnaire at any point during the event

Notes:



Welcome North Yew Street!

The University of Washington (UW) Master of Urban Planning students are partnering with the City of Bellingham Planning to assess the interest of your area joining the City. We look forward to discussing this possibility with you today.

What is Annexation?

Annexation is the procedure for bringing unincorporated areas of a county into an adjacent incorporated city. An unincorporated area has yet to join a city or form a town or city of its own. The most common form of annexation is the “petition method”, whereby property owners (or residents) of the area sign a petition asking to become part of the city. If an area is annexed, the city becomes the primary provider of local government services.

Why is the city exploring annexing these areas?

The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined as urban growth areas (UGAs) should be in a city. Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does. Due to this, both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs.

The average single family home owner will pay **\$667 less** a year in taxes & fees.




-\$199
Property Tax


+\$132
Storm Water Fee


-\$601
City Water & Sewer

Has annexation happened before in nearby areas? What changed afterward?



Yes, the most recent annexations were of Mt. Baker Highway/Britton Road and Bennett/Bakerview/Airport Drive in April 2019. The effects after annexation vary by community; however, the following have generally happened:



- Lower utility costs for City of Bellingham water and sewer services and extension of service to vacant properties (upon the submission of an application)



- Consideration for the City of Bellingham to improve public park spaces (trails, playfields, etc.) identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Plan
- Inclusion in City planning and budgeting for parks, infrastructure, and other neighborhood improvements
- Increased levels of service provided by the City of Bellingham police and fire departments



- The ability to vote in Bellingham elections along with representation on the Bellingham City Council



- Establishment of Neighborhood Associations officially recognized by the City of Bellingham and representation on the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission (MNAC)



- Access to city and state funding for neighborhood development through programs such as Small and Simple Grants and Safe Routes to School

Additional Resources

University of Washington Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative Website
www.cob.org/uwresearch

City of Bellingham Annexations Website
<https://www.cob.org/services/planning/annexations/Pages/bellingham-annexations.aspx>

City of Bellingham 2018 Annexation Strategy <https://www.cob.org/Documents/planning/growth/annexations/annexation-strategy.pdf>

***Cost estimates based on an owner-occupied single family home valued at \$300,000 property tax value with a roughly 7,500 sq ft lot with roughly 2,500 sq ft currently using City of Bellingham water in 2019. If you are not on city water you will not receive the savings.

A special thanks for data from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department, Whatcom County GIS and icons via The Noun Project.

Contact Info

UW Research Team
Email: UWTeam@cob.org

Bellingham Planning Department
Moshe Quinn
Email: mquinn@cob.org
Phone: (360) 778-8354



Annexation 101

Things to know about annexation

Why is the city exploring annexing these areas?

The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined by urban growth should be in a city.

- Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does
- Both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs

What is an “unincorporated area”?

In the case of Bellingham, an unincorporated area is an area within and governed by Whatcom County that has yet to join a city or form a town or city of its own.

What is an “Urban Growth Area” (UGA)?

- Bellingham urban growth areas (UGAs) are unincorporated areas next to city limits identified by Whatcom County that are characterized by urban growth
- Establishment of UGAs is required by the Washington Growth Management Act of 1990 for the purpose of encouraging urban growth within existing urban areas
- Several UGAs have already experienced significant development are being considered for potential annexation by the City of Bellingham

What is the annexation process?

Washington State law guides the annexation process. Many methods exist, ranging from petition-based to agreements between government authorities.

- Bellingham has grown via annexation throughout its history, and this is a common process

The most used annexation method is the **petition**:

- The petition starts with **interested residents** submitting a Notice of Intent to Annex that represents either:
 - **at least 10% of the residents** of the area to be annexed, or
 - the owners of **at least 10% of the land value** in the area to be annexed
- If the City Council decides that the proposed annexation is good for the public, it may begin a public process to study the annexation proposal
- In this case, the supportive residents must use official petition forms to collect the signatures of property owners that represent **at least 60% of the total assessed land value** of the area requested for annexation
- At the end of the public process, the City Council votes for or against the annexation in question. There is no guarantee of annexation by filing a petition and application for annexation to the City



Tax & Fee Changes

How much will this cost me?

The average single family homeowner in North Yew Street will pay **\$667 less** a year in taxes & fees.



- \$199
Property Tax



+ \$132
Storm Water Fee



- \$601
City Water & Sewer

***Cost estimates based on an owner-occupied single family home valued at \$300,000 property tax value with a roughly 7,500 sq ft lot with roughly 2,500 sq ft currently using City of Bellingham water in 2019. If you are not on city water you will not receive the savings.



Rental Property Owners

- Rental registration fees
- Per unit annual fee ranging \$8 - \$10 per unit
- Rental inspections and fees are required every 3 years



Business Owners

- City of Bellingham Business and Occupation Tax will apply to businesses with gross revenue more than \$20,000 per year
- City of Bellingham sales tax rate of 2.2% will apply on top of the state rate of 6.5%

Property Tax Levies

New Levies

- City of Bellingham Affordable Housing
- City of Bellingham Fire Pension
- City of Bellingham General Fund
- City of Bellingham Greenways IV
- City of Bellingham RDA
- Affordable Housing Bellingham

No Longer Applicable Levies

- Emergency Medical SVC Fire #04
- Fire SWFA Expense Fund
- County Road Diversion
- County Road Fund
- Rural Library

Total Rate:

\$22.07/\$1,000 in assessed value

\$30.98/\$1,000 in assessed value

A special thanks for data from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department, Whatcom County and icons via The Noun Project.

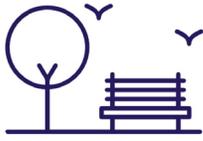


UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative



City Services

How does annexation affect your neighborhood?



The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined as urban growth areas (UGAs) should be in a city. Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does. Due to this, both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs.



Lower utility costs for City of Bellingham water and sewer services and extension of service to vacant properties (upon the submission of an application)

Consideration for the City of Bellingham to improve public park spaces (trails, playfields, etc.) identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Plan



Inclusion in City planning and budgeting for parks, infrastructure, and other neighborhood improvements

Increased levels of service provided by the City of Bellingham police and fire departments



The ability to vote in the City of Bellingham elections along with representation on the Bellingham City Council

Establishment of Neighborhood Associations officially recognized by the City of Bellingham and representation on the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission



Depending on the UGA you are located in, there will be varying potential increased in stormwater fees and reduced property taxes and water bills.

Check your FAQ sheet to review estimated costs for your neighborhood



Access to city and state funding for neighborhood development through programs such as Small and Simple Grants and Safe Routes to School



Activity Outcomes

Open house attendees had the opportunity to engage in activities identifying their community association, comment on aspects of potential annexation perceived as most important, and review frequently asked questions and responses in a fact vs. fiction quiz format. Activity takeaways are presented in Table A2:

Table A2. Wade King Meeting - Attendee Priorities and Comments

Topic	Respondents	Comments
Community Identity	7	
Lower Costs	1	
Services	2	
Streets & Sidewalks	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety for children walking to Wade King • Support for bike lanes
Safety	5	
Parks & Open Spaces	4	
Other	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic concerns • Privacy concerns • Wildlife/habitat preservation • Tree conservation • Small community quality of life

Questionnaire Outcomes

Attendees were encouraged to complete a questionnaire regarding their experience at the meeting and opinion related to annexation during the event. In the case of the Wade King Elementary meeting, 24 of 31 questionnaires were returned, the outcomes of which are provided below in Figures A7 through A10. This information was not evaluated as representative of overall community sentiment or statistically analyzed, as open house events were focused on sharing information with community members. Rather, attendee input was documented and used by the UW Team to inform follow-on assessment efforts.

How did you hear about this event?

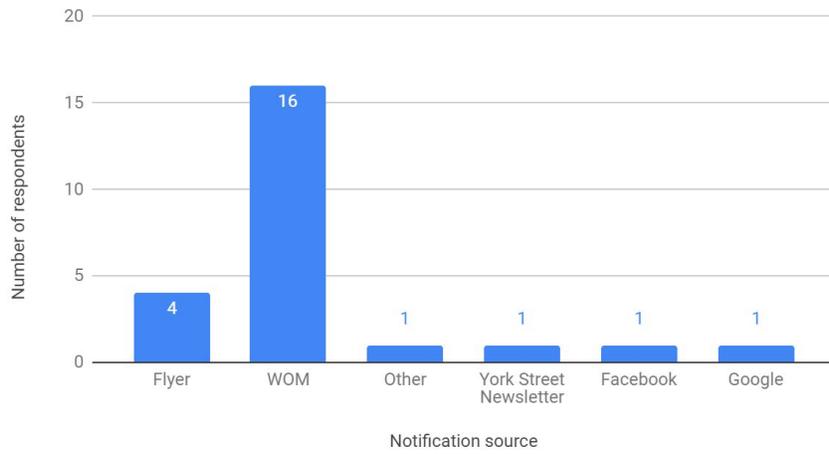


Figure A7. Wade King Meeting - Public Notification Sources

How engaged did you feel?

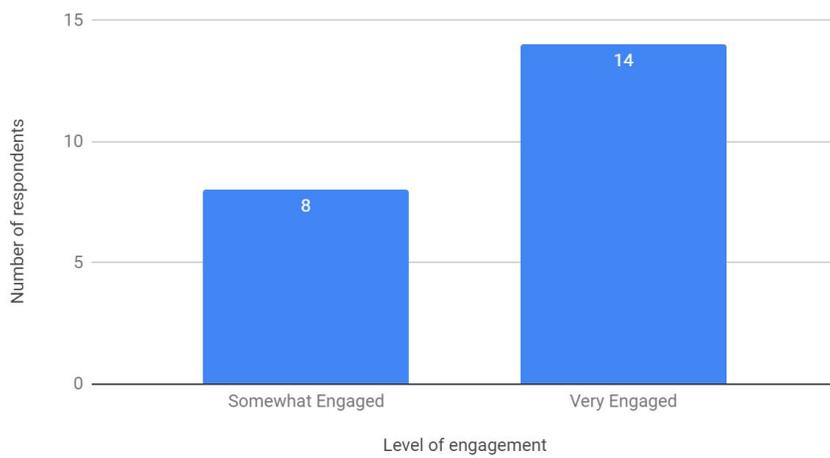


Figure A8. Wade King Meeting - Attendee Engagement

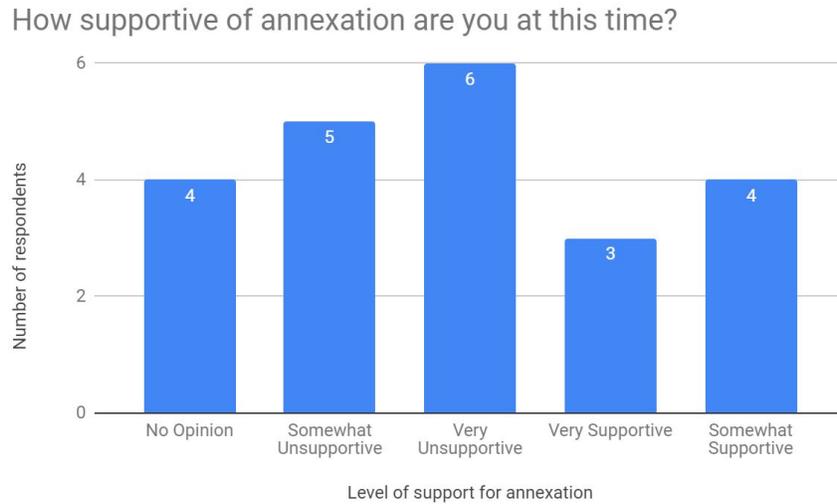


Figure A9. Wade King Meeting - Respondent Support for Annexation

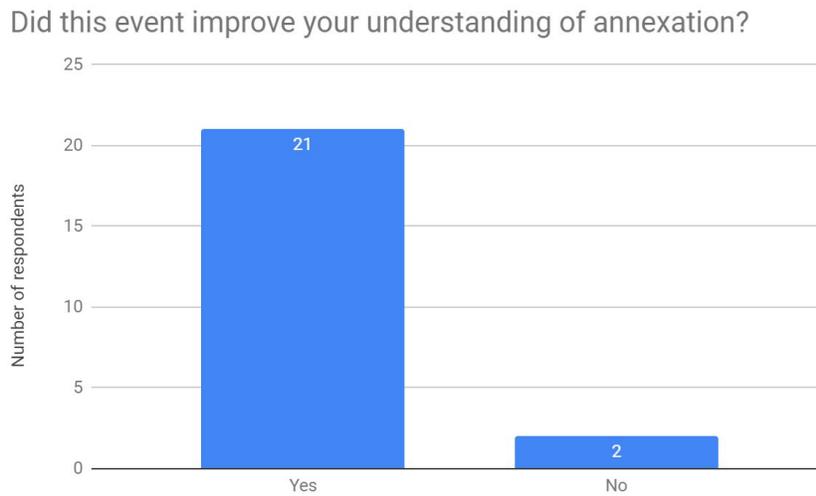


Figure A10. Wade King Meeting - Attendee Understanding of Annexation

Of the 24 respondents, most reported they felt very engaged and nearly all respondents felt the meeting improved their understanding of annexation. However, responses indicate a majority of respondents were unsupportive of annexation at the time of the questionnaire.

Northern Heights Elementary - May 7, 2019

An informational open house regarding the process and effects of annexation was held at Northern Heights Elementary School May 7, 2019 from 6:00pm - 7:30pm. The open house was hosted by the University of Washington Annexation Research Initiative Team and supported by City of Bellingham and Whatcom County Staff. The event was intended to cover the area identified in Figure A11, and was attended by 51 Northern heights, Hillsdale, and Tweed Twenty area residents combined, of which all 51 returned questionnaires. Event agenda, informational materials, and sample questionnaire are included herein, along with a summary of activity and questionnaire outcomes.

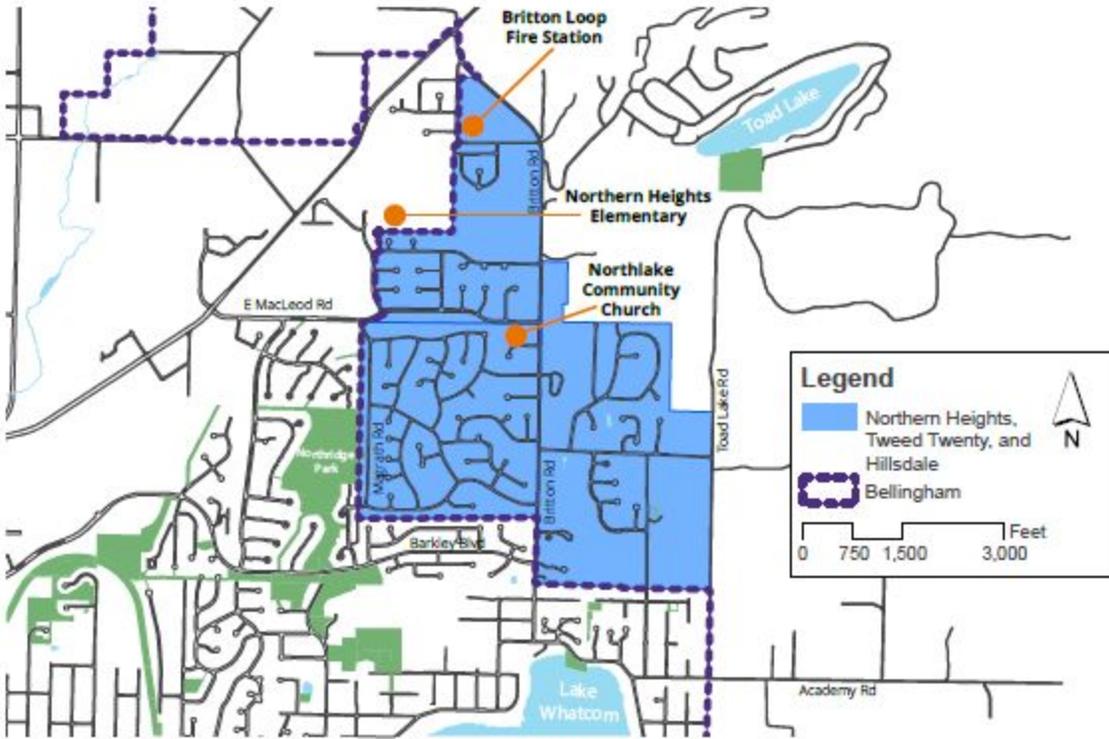


Figure A11. Wade King Elementary Meeting - Coverage Area



Agenda

A Discussion on Annexation

Hosted by

University of Washington Master of Urban Planning Studio

May 7, 2019 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Northern Heights Elementary School – 4000 Magrath Rd. Bellingham, WA

- 6:00 – 6:15 Welcome and Registration
- 6:15 - 6:30 Event Kickoff
- *University of Washington Annexation Research Initiative overview*
 - *Event format & objectives overview*
- 6:30 - 7:00 Open House
- *Information and Q&A tables*
 - *Interactive activities*
 - *Questionnaire*
- 7:00 - 7:20 Group Discussion (time permitting)
- *Open house highlights*
 - *Additional Q&A*
- 7:30 Event Conclusion
-

Additional Information:

- City of Bellingham
Annexation Website: <https://www.cob.org/services/planning/annexations>
Contact: Moshe Quinn mquinn@cob.org or (360) 778-8354
- UW Annexation Research Initiative
Website: www.cob.org/uwresearch
Contact: UWTeam@cob.org

Open House Stations

Information and Q&A

Annexation

Information and frequently asked questions about the annexation process and University of Washington research initiative

Tax & Fee Changes

Information on tax and fee differences between the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County, and what they mean to residential property and business owners

City Services

Information on services provided for City of Bellingham residents including police, fire, public works, parks & recreation

Interactive Activities

Fact vs. Fiction

Test your understanding of the Bellingham annexation process by identifying statements as fact or fiction

My Community Is...

Let the UW team know which community or communities you most closely identify with by placing a dot on the provided chart and leaving a comment, if desired

What's Most Important to Me?

Identify elements of community involvement and property ownership which are most important to you by placing dots on the providing chart and leaving comments, if desired

Questionnaire

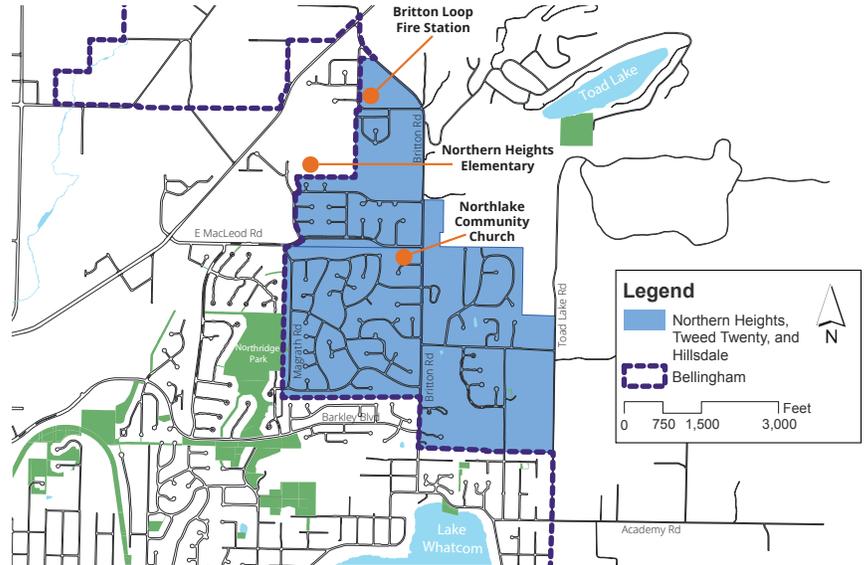
Provide the UW team feedback on the event and your thoughts on annexation by completing either a paper or electronic copy of the event questionnaire at any point during the event

Notes:



Welcome Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty & Hillsdale!

The University of Washington (UW) Master of Urban Planning students are partnering with the City of Bellingham Planning to assess the interest of your area joining the City. We look forward to discussing this possibility with you today.



What is Annexation?

Annexation is the procedure for bringing unincorporated areas of a county into an adjacent incorporated city. An unincorporated area has yet to join a city or form a town or city of its own. The most common form of annexation is the “petition method”, whereby property owners (or residents) of the area sign a petition asking to become part of the city. If an area is annexed, the city becomes the primary provider of local government services.

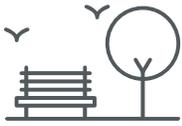
Why is the city exploring annexing these areas?

The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined as urban growth areas (UGAs) should be in a city. Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does. Due to this, both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs.

A single family homeowner in Northern Heights/Tweed Twenty will pay **\$889 less** a year in taxes and fees. A Hillsdale homeowner will pay **\$372 less**.

	UGA			
	Northern Heights & Tweed Twenty	- \$266 Property Tax	- \$23 Storm Water Fee	- \$600 City Water & Sewer
	Hillsdale	- \$266 Property Tax	- \$23 Storm Water Fee	- \$83 Lake Whatcom Watershed Fee

Has annexation happened before in nearby areas? What changed afterward?



Yes, the most recent annexations were of Mt. Baker Highway/Britton Road and Bennett/Bakerview/Airport Drive in April 2019. The effects after annexation vary by community; however, the following have generally happened:



- Lower utility costs for City of Bellingham water and sewer services and extension of service to vacant properties (upon the submission of an application)



- Consideration for the City of Bellingham to improve public park spaces (trails, playfields, etc.) identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Plan



- Inclusion in City planning and budgeting for parks, infrastructure, and other neighborhood improvements

- Increased levels of service provided by the City of Bellingham police and fire departments

- The ability to vote in Bellingham elections along with representation on the Bellingham City Council



- Establishment of Neighborhood Associations officially recognized by the City of Bellingham and representation on the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission (MNAC)



- Access to city and state funding for neighborhood development through programs such as Small and Simple Grants and Safe Routes to School

Additional Resources

University of Washington Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative Website
www.cob.org/uwresearch

City of Bellingham Annexations Website
<https://www.cob.org/services/planning/annexations/Pages/bellingham-annexations.aspx>

City of Bellingham 2018 Annexation Strategy <https://www.cob.org/Documents/planning/growth/annexations/annexation-strategy.pdf>

***Cost estimates based on an owner-occupied single family home assessed at \$400,000 with 2,500 sq ft of impermeable surfaces. Water and sewer costs are estimated using typical yearly usage for City of Bellingham municipal water. Actual homeowner savings will vary.

A special thanks for data from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department, Whatcom County GIS and icons via The Noun Project.

Contact Info

UW Research Team
Email: UWTeam@cob.org

Bellingham Planning Department
Moshe Quinn
Email: mquinn@cob.org
Phone: (360) 778-8354



Annexation

What is annexation?

Why is the city exploring annexing these areas?

The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined by urban growth should be in a city.

- Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does
- Both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs

What is an “unincorporated area”?

In the case of Bellingham, an unincorporated area is an area within and governed by Whatcom County that has yet to join a city or form a town or city of its own.

What is an “Urban Growth Area” (UGA)?

- Bellingham urban growth areas (UGAs) are unincorporated areas next to city limits identified by Whatcom County that are characterized by urban growth
- Establishment of UGAs is required by the Washington Growth Management Act of 1990 for the purpose of encouraging urban growth within existing urban areas
- Several UGAs have already experienced significant development are being considered for potential annexation by the City of Bellingham

What is the annexation process?

Washington State law guides the annexation process. Many methods exist, ranging from petition-based to agreements between government authorities.

- Bellingham has grown via annexation throughout its history, and this is a common process

The most used annexation method is the **petition**:

- The petition starts with **interested residents** submitting a Notice of Intent to Annex that represents either:
 - **at least 10% of the residents** of the area to be annexed, or
 - the owners of **at least 10% of the land value** in the area to be annexed
- If the City Council decides that the proposed annexation is good for the public, it may begin a public process to study the annexation proposal
- In this case, the supportive residents must use official petition forms to collect the signatures of property owners that represent **at least 60% of the total assessed land value** of the area requested for annexation
- At the end of the public process, the City Council votes for or against the annexation in question. There is no guarantee of annexation by filing a petition and application for annexation to the City

A special thanks for data from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department, Whatcom County and icons via The Noun Project.



Tax & Fee Changes

How much will this cost?

A single family homeowner in Northern Heights/Tweed Twenty will pay **\$889 less** a year in taxes and fees. A Hillsdale homeowner will pay **\$372 less**.



***Cost estimates based on an owner-occupied single family home assessed at \$400,000 with 2,500 sq ft of impermeable surfaces. Water and sewer costs are estimated using typical yearly usage for City of Bellingham municipal water. Actual homeowner savings will vary.

Northern Heights & Tweed Twenty

Hillsdale



- \$266
Property Tax

- \$266
Property Tax



- \$23
Storm Water Fee

- \$23
Storm Water Fee



- \$600
City Water & Sewer

- \$83
Lake Whatcom Watershed Fee



Rental Property Owners

- Rental registration fees
- Per unit annual fee ranging \$8 - \$10 per unit
- Rental inspections and fees are required every 3 years



Business Owners

- City of Bellingham Business and Occupation Tax will apply to businesses with gross revenue more than \$20,000 per year
- City of Bellingham sales tax rate of 2.2% will apply on top of the state rate of 6.5%

Property Tax Levies

New Levies

- City of Bellingham Affordable Housing
- City of Bellingham Fire Pension
- City of Bellingham General Fund
- City of Bellingham Greenways IV
- City of Bellingham RDA
- Affordable Housing Bellingham

No Longer Applicable Levies

- Emergency Medical SVC Fire #04
- Fire SWFA Expense Fund
- County Road Diversion
- County Road Fund
- Rural Library

Total Rate:

\$22.07/\$1,000 in assessed value

\$30.98/\$1,000 in assessed value

A special thanks for data from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department, Whatcom County and icons via The Noun Project.

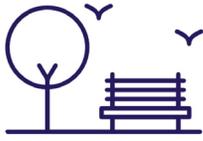


UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative



City Services

How does annexation affect your neighborhood?



The Growth Management Act of 1990 says that all areas defined as urban growth areas (UGAs) should be in a city. Whatcom County does not have the resources to support urban areas while the City of Bellingham does. Due to this, both the County and City agree that these areas should be part of the City of Bellingham to best serve the residents of the UGAs.



Lower utility costs for City of Bellingham water and sewer services and extension of service to vacant properties (upon the submission of an application)

Consideration for the City of Bellingham to improve public park spaces (trails, playfields, etc.) identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Plan



Inclusion in City planning and budgeting for parks, infrastructure, and other neighborhood improvements

Increased levels of service provided by the City of Bellingham police and fire departments



The ability to vote in the City of Bellingham elections along with representation on the Bellingham City Council

Establishment of Neighborhood Associations officially recognized by the City of Bellingham and representation on the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission



Depending on the UGA you are located in, there will be varying potential increased in stormwater fees and reduced property taxes and water bills.

Check your FAQ sheet to review estimated costs for your neighborhood



Access to city and state funding for neighborhood development through programs such as Small and Simple Grants and Safe Routes to School



Activity Outcomes

Open house attendees had the opportunity to engage in activities identifying their community association, comment on aspects of potential annexation perceived as most important, and review frequently asked questions and responses in a fact vs. fiction quiz format. Activity takeaways are presented in Table A3:

Table A3. Northern Heights Meeting - Attendee Priorities and Comments

Topic	Respondents	Comments
Community Identity	6	
Lower Costs	19	
Services	21	
Streets & Sidewalks	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety for children crossing Roma Rd.
Safety	13	
Parks & Open Spaces	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land has to be available and these areas are developed
Other	0	

Questionnaire Outcomes

Attendees were encouraged to complete a questionnaire regarding their experience at the meeting and opinion related to annexation during the event. In the case of the Northern Heights Elementary meeting, 51 of 51 questionnaires were returned, the outcomes of which are provided below by neighborhood (Northern heights/Hillsdale/Tweed Twenty) in Figures A9 through A20. This information was not evaluated as representative of overall community sentiment or statistically analyzed, as open house events were focused on sharing information with community members. Rather, attendee input was documented and used by the UW Team to inform follow-on assessment efforts.

Northern Heights

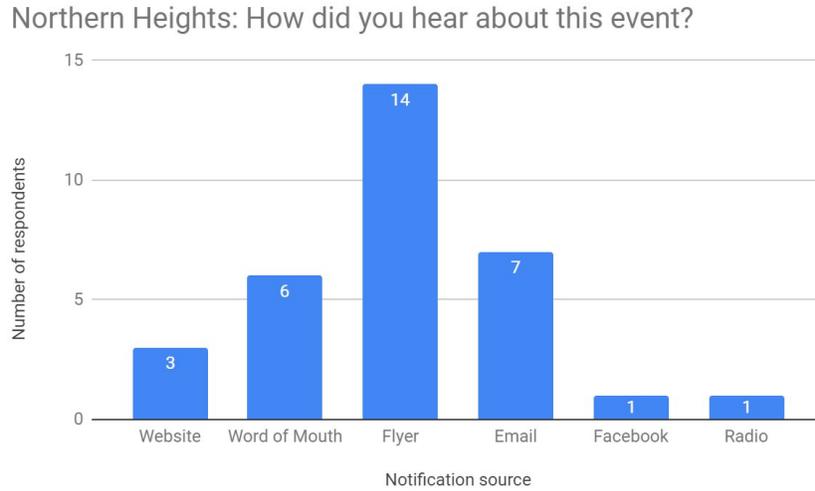


Figure A12. Northern Heights - Public Notification Sources

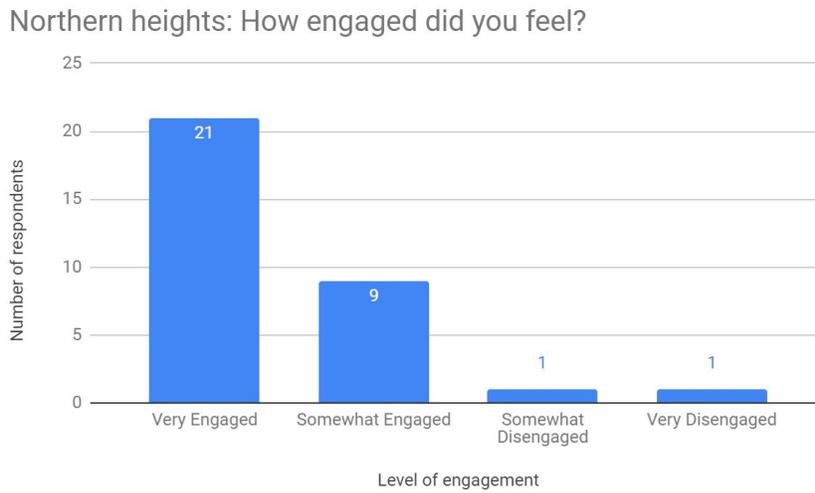


Figure A13. Northern Heights - Attendee Engagement

Northern Heights: How supportive are you of annexation at this time?

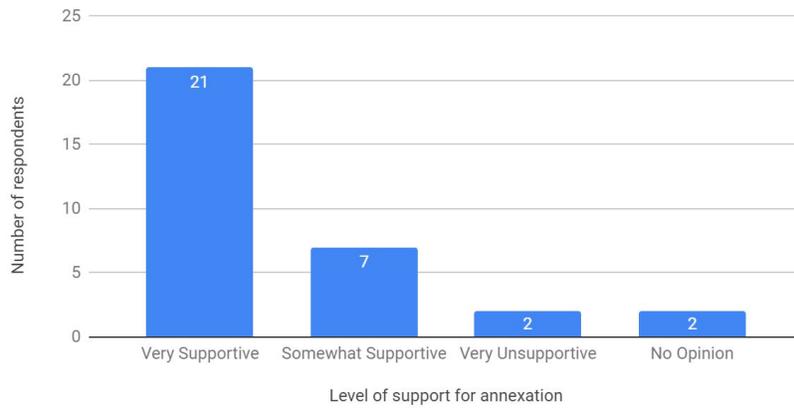


Figure A14. Northern Heights - Respondent Support for Annexation

Northern Heights: Did this event improve your understanding of annexation?

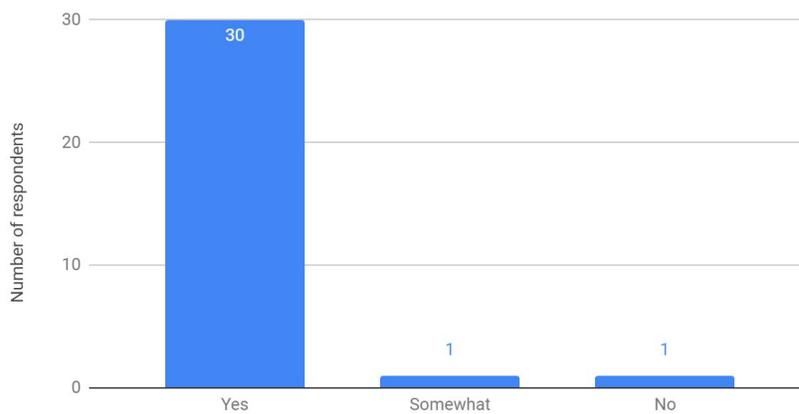


Figure A15. Northern Heights - Attendee Understanding of Annexation

Of the 51 total respondents, 31 reported they were from the Northern Heights area. Of these, most people reported they felt very engaged and nearly all respondents felt the meeting improved their understanding of annexation. Attendee responses in this area were largely supportive of annexation.

Hillsdale

Hillsdale: How did you hear about this event?

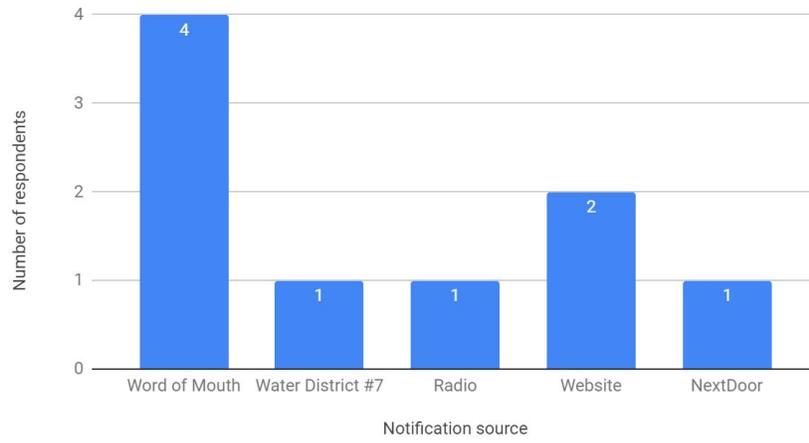


Figure A16. Hillsdale - Public Notification Sources

Hillsdale: How engaged did you feel?

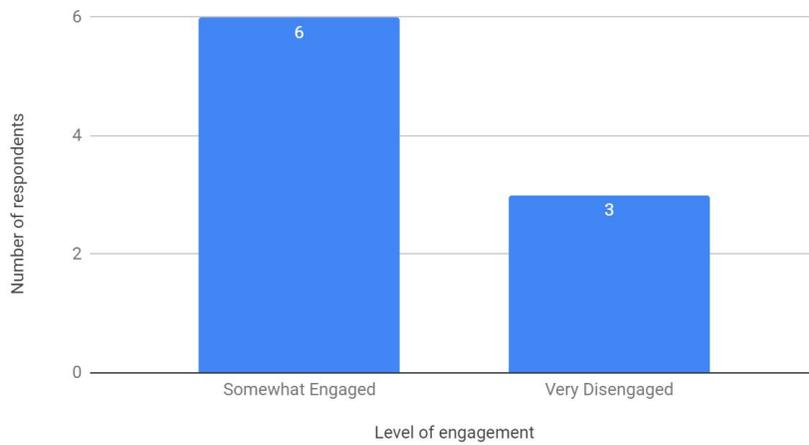


Figure A17. Hillsdale - Attendee Engagement

Hillsdale: How supportive are you of annexation at this time?

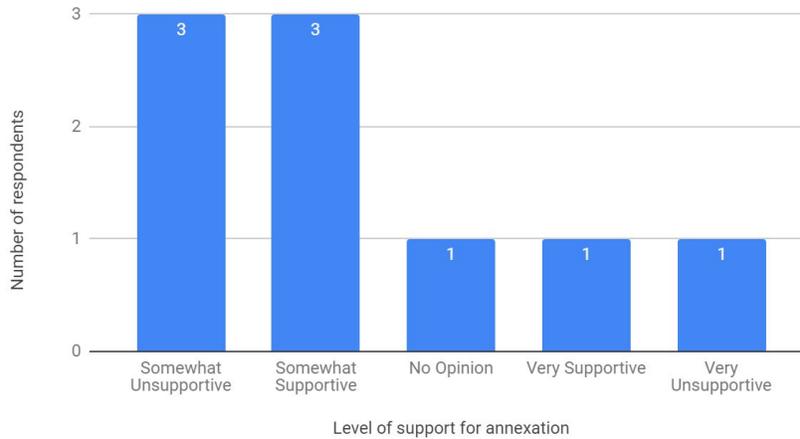


Figure A18. Hillsdale - Respondent Support for Annexation

Hillsdale: Did this event improve your understanding of annexation?

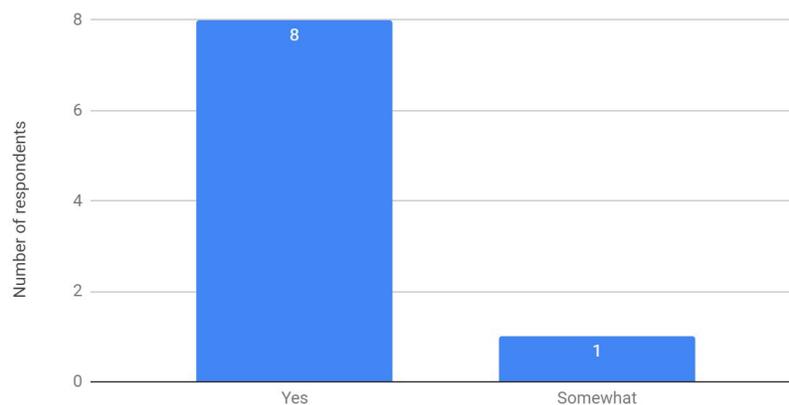


Figure A19. Hillsdale - Attendee Understanding of Annexation

Nine attendees reported they were from the Hillsdale area. Of these, most people reported they felt very engaged and nearly all respondents felt the meeting improved their understanding of annexation. Respondent support for annexation in this area was generally split at the time of the questionnaire.

Tweed Twenty

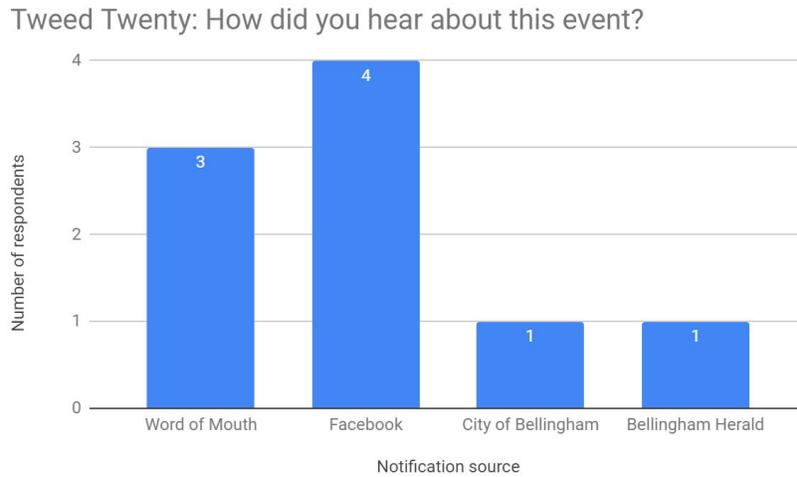


Figure A20 Tweed Twenty - Public Notification Sources

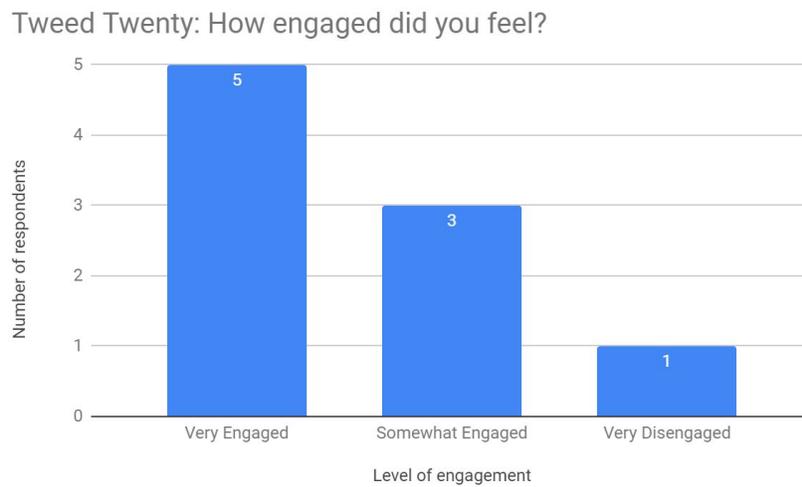


Figure A21: Tweed Twenty - Attendee Engagement

Tweed Twenty: How supportive are you of annexation at this time?

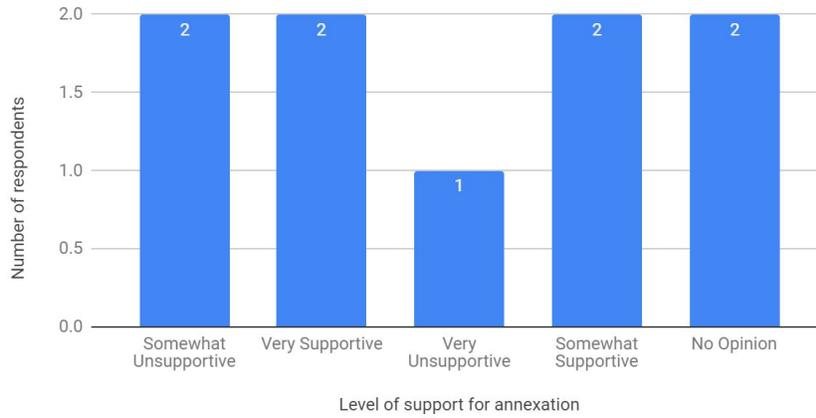


Figure A22. Tweed Twenty - Respondent Support for Annexation

Tweed Twenty: Did this event improve your understanding of annexation?

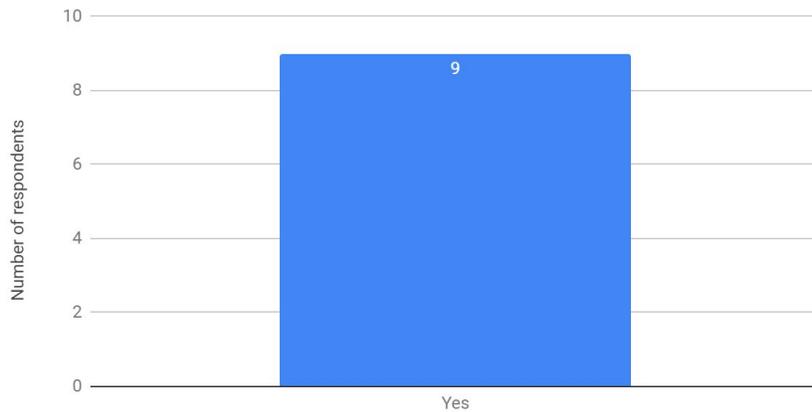


Figure A23. Tweed Twenty - Attendee Understanding of Annexation

Nine attendees reported they were from the Tweed Twenty area. Of these, most people reported they felt engaged, and all respondents felt the meeting improved their understanding of annexation. Respondent support for annexation in this area was approximately split at the time of the questionnaire.