



## September 21 SE Interlocal Annexation Meeting Summary of Question and Answer Session

1. *Will I be able to vote on the annexation?*

This annexation is utilizing a new interlocal annexation method established by [Senate Bill 5522](#) that became effective in June 2020 and does not require a vote by residents.

2. *Who has the final say on the annexation? Do residents have no say?*

The annexation must be approved by both the Lake Stevens City Council and Snohomish County Council. Approval of the annexation requires a public hearing before both bodies. Residents can provide comments on the proposed annexation leading up to and during the public hearing, which is tentatively scheduled for December 2020 or January of 2021. Notice of the public hearing is required to be published/posted weekly for 4 weeks in advance of the public hearing.

3. *Why are the sewer and fire district involved, if it does not affect their service areas?*

The Lake Stevens Sewer District is legally required to expand its service area boundaries to match city boundaries. Portions of the Southeast UGA proposed for annexation are currently outside of the district's service area, which the sewer district will be expanding as part of this annexation. As this is the first annexation processed under the state's new interlocal agreement method, Snohomish Fire District 7 has opted to join the agreement as a means of retaining all of its rights.

4. *Does this annexation impact school boundaries?*

No. School district boundaries are established through a separate process and will not be changed by the annexation.

5. *How much of the city's Urban Growth Area (UGA) will remain following this annexation?*

Beyond the SE Interlocal Annexation area, the city has approximately 600 acres remaining in its UGA. The majority of that is south of 20<sup>th</sup> St SE, while 67 acres in the northeast portion of the city is in the process of being annexed (the Machias Industrial Annexation).

6. *The last two city annexations resulted in 3,600 sf lots. The zoning map for this annexation shows 9,600 sf lots for the waterfront and 6,000 sf lots for the remainder of the area. Is this the plan after annexation?*

Yes. The city assigned zoning predesignations to the UGA in late 2019, which were intended to most closely match the existing county zoning designations. The corresponding city designations are Waterfront Residential along the shoreline and R6 - Six Dwellings per Acre in other areas. There are no plans to amend any of these zoning predesignations as part of the annexation, with

one exception – a few properties pre-designated for commercial use north of 20<sup>th</sup> Street SE are ineligible to change from a residential to commercial use under the proposed annexation method.

Property owners can apply to rezone properties, subject to the required review process and approval criteria and restrictions of this type of annexation. Rezones require a public hearing before both the Planning Commission and City Council.

7. *When might the annexation become effective? At what point will things like mandatory garbage service be required?*

Based on a tentative public hearing in December 2020 or early January 2021, the annexation would likely become effective in January or February of 2021. Once the annexation is finalized, the city would send out a “Welcome to Lake Stevens” pamphlet with city information and contact including information about garbage service.

8. *What is the deadline for submitting building permits to the county, and when will the city take over review of building and planning permits?*

Any building permit submitted and deemed complete prior to the effective date of the annexation would be vested to county code. The city and county have an existing ILA that covers the potential transfer of building and planning permits. Any permits transferred to the city would be reviewed under the county’s building and zoning regulations.

9. *For those of us with livestock and poultry, will we be allowed to keep our animals, which are permitted by the county?*

Yes. The city generally requires a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres in order to keep livestock, while poultry and household animals are permitted on smaller lots. However, annexed properties that were legally permitted to have livestock prior to annexation will retain the rights to keep their animals after annexation if no change or expansion occurs.

10. *Fireworks are currently permitted in the county for 4<sup>th</sup> of July- is the same true for the city?*

Yes. The City permits fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, but not on New Years Eve/Day.

11. *We need to contact someone about overgrowth issues on our property. Will the point of contact change after annexation?*

Prior to annexation, Snohomish County Code Enforcement can be reached at 425-388-3650. Following annexation, the city will assume code enforcement duties in the area.

12. *What is the city’s primary motive for this annexation? A recent financial analysis from the FCS Group showed this area would cost the city millions of dollars.*

The FCS Group completed a financial analysis of several annexation scenarios for the city’s southeast UGA in October 2018. Based on that analysis, the City Council has decided to pursue

Scenario 2, which is to to annex the remainder of Areas 1 and 2 (those areas north of 20<sup>th</sup> St SE, minus the recently annexed Rhodora area). This will help the city in its pursuit to create one community around the lake.

13. *Regarding the cost benefit analysis, what is the downside for a household that is potentially going to be annexed?*

The total property tax levy rate for residents will decrease by approximately 7 cents per thousand dollars of assessed property value following annexation. Like most cities in the Puget Sound region, Lake Stevens does have utility excise taxes, whereas the county does not. Excise taxes are dependent on the amount of the utility bill, but may add between \$5 and \$25 per month in excise taxes for all utilities, depending on which utilities a resident has. As a point of clarification, the city does not have a sewer excise tax (staff had previously indicated that there is a 2% excise tax on sewer service).

14. *The city has said that garbage service is mandatory. Why can't I continue to take my garbage to the dump? Does the city provide garbage service, or will I be required to contract with a third party?*

The city considers garbage collection to be an essential urban service and as such requires collection service for city residents by code. The city contracts with private companies to provide garbage collection services – each company has different levels of service. Additional information will be provided to residents following the annexation.

15. *Would it be more cost effective for the city to have a single garbage provider and negotiate a more competitive bid for the entire city?*

The city is currently working with its garbage providers to develop the most competitive pricing for both existing and newly annexed residents. However, under state law the existing garbage purveyor(s) are permitted to serve the area for 7 years following annexation.

16. *Will the annexation impact any of my utility rates?*

Utility rates (water, electric, sewer) will not change, but will be subject to city utility excise taxes. Excise taxes appear as a separate charge on your existing utility bill.

17. *Will any fees, such as excise tax rates, be phased in for new residents?*

The city does not have a phase-in period for excise taxes. Total property levy rates will decrease upon annexation.

18. *I don't have telephone service. Will I still be charged the excise tax?*

Excise taxes are added to your utility bill. If you do not have a specific utility service, you will not be charged the excise tax.

19. *Are there plans to build sidewalks in the newly annexed areas?*

The city will be assessing the current inventory of sidewalk infrastructure as part of the annexation, and identify areas where sidewalks are warranted.

20. *What is the APU mentioned in the September 21 Powerpoint presentation?*

The slide referenced ADUs, which are accessory dwelling units. ADUs are permitted in the city's residential zoning districts, including the WR and R6 zones.

21. *Can Chief Dyer speak to the impact that annexation will have on police services?*

Upon annexation, the Lake Stevens Police Department proposes to have 24 patrol personnel, with 4-6 working at any one time. The East Precinct proposed 4 detectives and a dedicated traffic officer. This proposal would be an increase from current service levels, which is typically between 1 and 3 SCSO patrol personnel covering the East Precinct.

22. *The letter sent to annexation area residents noted recent improvements to S Lake Stevens Road, including a new multiuse path. Will a similar path be extended to the east side of the lake?*

The city is exploring ways to continue the multiuse path inside and outside the annexation area.

23. *Does the city have construction plans for the annexation area, and will annexation make it easier and faster for developers to build in the area?*

The city does not have any construction plans for the annexation area, and the zoning presdesignations are similar to the uses and development standards currently permitted by the county. The city did evaluate the development potential in the annexation area as part of its 2018 financial analysis.

24. *Will the eastern area along 20<sup>th</sup> Ave be zoned for business?*

Yes, the city has pre-assigned commercial zoning to four properties along the north side of 20<sup>th</sup> St SE, as shown on the zoning map. However, we have learned under this annexation method, these properties would not be eligible to change from a residential to commercial use for XX years. The city intends to correct the rezoning with this year's docket to comply with this requirement.

25. *How will the city better secure the safety net at Sunset Park? Ever since the county replaced the fence with boulders, people have been there at all hours of the day.*

City staff will work with its Parks and Police Departments to address these concerns. The city is adding a place holder in its 2021 budget for likely improvements to Sunset Park.

26. *Will sewer service extend further down Machias Cutoff Road? How much will it cost to connect to sewer, and when will it be available?*

Please contact the [Lake Stevens Sewer District](#) for additional details on future sewer service expansion and potential costs involved.

27. *I have a functioning septic system. Will I be required to connect to sewer?*

No. If you have a functioning septic system, you will not be required to connect to sewer, even if sewer service is currently available or becomes available in the future. Should your septic system fail and sewer service is available to your property, you will be required to connect to sewer.

28. *Will there be a recording of the September 21 meeting available online?*

Unfortunately, the meeting did not record properly. The city has provided this list of questions and answers and also made the Powerpoint available online.

29. *I have additional questions. Who can I contact?*

Please contact Senior Planner David Levitan at [dlevitan@lakestevenswa.gov](mailto:dlevitan@lakestevenswa.gov) or 425-622-9425.