

Attachment 1: Initiative Website

Landing Page as of May 23, 2019



COB Home > Government > Departments > Planning and Community Development Department

The University of Washington Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative



Welcome to the University of Washington's Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative webpage. The Initiative is a quarter-long research project conducted by graduate students from the University of Washington's Urban Design and Planning program. This page is intended to guide residents of the Bellingham urban growth areas (UGAs) around the topic of annexation. Explore key aspects of the initiative below. For questions and concerns, visit the FAQ page below or contact us at UWTeam@cob.org to send us your thoughts.

contacts

UW Research Team, UWTeam@cob.org

Planning and Community Development, (360) 778-8300

Why is this research being done?

The research group has been requested by the City to perform an independent analysis of annexation. The team will provide a neutral assessment of the procedure of annexation for the UGAs to the east and south of the City.

How will the research be done?

The research group will be going door to door to survey the residents of the UGAs on their awareness, thoughts and feelings regarding annexation. Additionally, the team will host three separate community engagement meetings, where community members will be asked to provide their feedback. This information will be analyzed with legal and financial data to allow the team to formulate a final recommendation to be delivered to the City.

When will this research begin?

The UW team has already begun preliminary research. Information about when the team will conduct surveys and hold community meetings can be found in the Calendar of Events below.

Where are the unincorporated Urban Growth Areas?

The location of the UGAs that are being studied for this project can be found [here](#).

- [Geneva Area UGA Map](#)
- [Hillsdale Area UGA Map](#)
- [North Yew Street UGA Map](#)
- [Northern Heights Area UGA Map](#)
- [Tweed Twenty Area UGA Map](#)





Calendar of Events

Outreach dates

▶ more in this section

Calendar of Events Page as of May 23, 2019



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Upcoming Events

You are invited to attend an open house about annexation. The UW research team wants to hear residents' opinions and feelings regarding the possible annexation to the City. All residents are welcome to attend the meetings; however, the meetings will be specifically directed toward Bellingham's Northern Heights, Tweed 20, Hillsdale, Geneva and North Yew Street Neighborhoods.

- [Bellingham Area-Wide Map](#)

City Council Meeting - Monday, June 3

7:00pm in the City Council Chambers
City Hall - 210 Lottie St., Bellingham

North Yew Street Community Meeting - Thursday, May 2

6:00 - 7:30 p.m. in the Wade King Elementary cafeteria
2155 Yew Street, Bellingham
[Click here for directions](#)

- [North Yew Street UGA Map](#)

Geneva Community Meeting - Thursday, May 2

6:00 - 7:30 p.m. in the Geneva Elementary cafeteria
1401 Geneva Street, Bellingham
[Click here for directions](#)

- [Geneva Area UGA Map](#)

resources

- [Bellingham Annexations](#)

contacts

UW Research Team, UWTeam@cob.org
Planning and Community Development, (360) 778-8300

Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty, Hillsdale Community Meeting - Tuesday, May 7

6:00 - 7:30 p.m. in the Northern Heights Elementary cafeteria

4000 Magrath Road, Bellingham

[Click here for directions](#)

- Hillsdale Area UGA Map
- Northern Heights Area UGA Map
- Tweed Twenty Area UGA Map

Meeting Materials:

- Meeting Agenda
- City Service Flyer
- Informational Handout
- How will taxes and fees change?



UW - Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative

Information on the research being done by the UW team



FAQs on annexation and research



Annexation Area Maps

Find the UGAs here

▶ [more in this section](#)

Frequently Asked Questions Page as of May 23, 2019



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search site

[COB Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Departments](#) > [Planning and Community Development Department](#)

Frequently Asked Questions



Browse this page for a comprehensive answer to 28 common questions about annexation. Contact the UW Research Team for addition questions about the research process.

resources

- [Bellingham Annexations](#)
- [UW Research on Bellingham UGAs](#)
- [UW Research Team Calendar of Events](#)

contacts

UW Research Team, UWTeam@cob.org

Planning and Community Development, (360) 778-8300

Whatcom County Auditor's Office, (360) 778-5100

1. Why and how is the University of Washington involved in the City of Bellingham annexation process?

A team of University of Washington (UW) Master of Urban Planning students is partnering with the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department to assess the interest of residents living within unincorporated communities adjacent to Bellingham city limits regarding joining the city.

The UW Team is tasked with providing community members with accurate and unbiased information from which the residents can decide if joining the City would be in their best interest. The UW Team does not have a preferred outcome regarding this assessment.

2. What is annexation?

Annexation is the procedure for bringing unincorporated areas of a county into an adjacent city. If an area is annexed, the city becomes the primary provider of local government services such as police, fire and utilities. The most common form of annexation is by petition.

For more information on annexation see the [City of Bellingham Annexation Webpage](#).

3. 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.

4. 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.

For more information on the definition of UGAs see [RCW 36.70A.110 Comprehensive plans—Urban growth areas](#).

5. 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.

6. What is the annexation process?

Washington State law guides the annexation process. Many methods exist, ranging from petition-based to agreements between government authorities. 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, per [Whatcom County Assessor's office assessed valuation](#).

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. Additional information regarding Washington State annexation methods is available on the [City of Bellingham Annexation Website](#) and the WA Municipal Research and [Services Center \(MRSC\) Annexation Methods Website](#).

7. Has annexation occurred recently in nearby areas? What changed after annexation?

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](#)

For a more detailed history of annexation in Bellingham please visit the [City of Bellingham Annexations Website](#).

8. What if a majority of our area does not want to be in the city?

If a significant majority of property owners do not support becoming part of the city, the Bellingham City Council has indicated it is unlikely to move forward with the annexation process.

9. What if I do not want to be part of Bellingham but my neighbors do?

Under the petition method, property owners may choose not to sign annexation petitions; however, if an annexation petition is endorsed by property owners representing at least 60% of the total assessed land value of an area, the City Council may approve an annexation of that area in its entirety. Some property owners may have a pre-annexation agreement tied to their property which may affect their role in the petition process.

10. What is a pre-annexation agreement?

In order to provide water and sewer services to property outside of city limits, property owners/developers were often required to sign a pre-annexation agreement with the City of Bellingham. This agreement works as a no-contest vote for the property owner if the city decides to pursue annexation of the area at a later date. These agreements are tied to property, so your home may be subject to this agreement if you, a previous owner, or the person that developed your land agreed to it.

11. How do I find out if my property is under a pre-annexation agreement?

Pre-annexation agreements are recorded with property deeds, which are filed at the Whatcom County Auditor's office and are typically included in closing documents when a property is purchased. Property owners may consult their deed and attachments to determine if a pre-annexation agreement exists. Questions related to accessing property deeds may be directed to the [Whatcom County Auditor's Office](#) via email to recording@co.whatcom.wa.us, or telephone (360) 778-5100; or the Bellingham Planning & Community Development Department via email to planning@cob.org, or telephone (360) 778-8300.

12. I want to talk to someone about this in more detail, whom do I contact?

Questions generally related to City of Bellingham annexation may be directed to Moshe Quinn of Bellingham Planning & Community Development Department via email to mquinn@cob.org or (360) 778-8354. Questions related to the University of Washington assessment may be directed to the UW Team via email to UWTeam@cob.org.

If an area is annexed...

13. What changes right away?

Most immediate changes that would come after annexation are administrative. The City of Bellingham would assume responsibility for providing urban services including police, fire, city-provided utilities, and infrastructure maintenance. Residents will immediately gain access to city programs, community services and representation by elected city officials.

Property tax and utility rates would update to City rates at the time of annexation. For more information on changes to utility rates and taxes please see questions 16 and 18. For information on changes to taxes for business owners please see question 20.

14. What would take longer to change?

Changes caused by annexation which may take longer include Neighborhood Association establishment, realignment of City Council Ward boundaries, transition from special district to city utility services (where applicable), and infrastructure upgrades.

15. What new fees will affect property owners?

New development within the UGAs will be subject to impact fees relating to park development; water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation improvements; and school facilities. These are enforced to ensure that the developer pays for the additional stress on existing services caused by increases in population. For more information, see the [City of Bellingham's Permit Fees page](#).

Additionally, residential properties will be subject to the City of Bellingham's stormwater fee which charges based upon the amount of impervious surfaces on the parcel. Exact fee rates differ, please consult the [Stormwater section of the Bi-Monthly Utility Billing Rates](#) to see which rates may apply to you.

Lastly, landlords are required in the City of Bellingham to register their rental properties with the City and pay an [annual registration fee](#) along with a [rental safety inspection fee](#) every three years. Please visit the links provided to determine what rates may apply to you.

16. Will my taxes go up?

It is unlikely. Property tax rates within the UGAs will drop between 6.1% and 6.5% for 2019. The taxes for your property will depend on the new applicable fees as listed in FAQ #15 and the assessed value of your home. Please see the UGA specific FAQs for individual property tax rates.

17. How might zoning change?

Zoning is unlikely to significantly change. The City of Bellingham's 20-year plan shows that if UGAs annex, current zoning designations will change to the closest similar zoning as defined by the City of Bellingham. This change may include the addition or subtraction of certain allowable uses (this change mainly affects building in public park spaces), but the general character of the uses will stay the same.

18. What will happen with my utilities?

Generally, communities will transition to City of Bellingham utility services after annexation. In communities where the City of Bellingham already provides utilities, water and sewer rates will drop by 33%. In communities serviced by special districts, the City will either partner with existing districts to ensure appropriate service to residents or develop a plan to provide services directly. Additional information related to utility service levels and costs for Bellingham residents is available on the [City of Bellingham utilities website](#).

19. Will we get better bus service?

The City of Bellingham and surrounding UGAs are provided bus service by Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA). Service is not expected to change as a result of annexation; however, annexed communities will be considered in future transportation planning efforts. Detailed information related to current and planned WTA bus service is available on the [WTA website](#) and within the [2016 Bellingham Comprehensive Plan](#) and [2017 WTA Strategic Plan](#).

20. Will my business have to pay more taxes?

All individuals and firms doing business in Bellingham, whether located inside or outside the City limits, must register with the City Finance Department and are subject to the business and occupation (B&O) tax, unless specifically exempted by Bellingham Municipal Code.

B&O tax is a gross receipts tax measured on the value of products, gross proceeds of sales, or gross income of a business and currently ranges from 0.17% for manufacturing, retailing, and wholesaling to 0.44% for services and other activities. Businesses collecting less than \$5,000 quarterly or \$20,000 annually in gross receipts are exempt from the B&O tax.

The City of Bellingham sales tax rate of 2.2% will apply in addition to the 6.5% sales tax rate levied by the State of Washington on all items and services that are not exempted from sales tax under state law. Please visit the [City of Bellingham Business and Occupation Tax page](#) for more information.

21. Will there be more jobs created in my area?

Annexation is not expected to affect job growth or change land use. However, City of Bellingham neighborhoods and residents are included in economic development plans and policies, and city businesses have access to incentives meant to support business throughout the city.

22. Will it get crowded and busy on my street? Will annexation affect traffic/parking?

Annexation is not expected to affect housing density or traffic patterns; however, City of Bellingham neighborhoods and residents are included in land use and transportation plans and policies which are meant to manage growth and improve roads for all users.

23. Will fire services improve?

Fire service will likely change and may improve as a result of annexation. City of Bellingham residents are served by the Bellingham Fire Department, which maintains a fleet of seven fire engines at 6 stations. Proposed annexation areas are supported by Whatcom County Fire Districts 4, 7, 8, 21, and South Whatcom Fire Authority, which are largely supported by volunteer firefighters. The City and County operate under a mutual aid agreement, meaning that city firefighters respond to county fires if necessary and vice versa. That means that response times in both areas are similar. Annexation would expand the City of Bellingham Fire Department coverage area and may require increases in firefighters, equipment, and stations to maintain or improve fire service.

24. Will we get police in my area?

Yes. City of Bellingham neighborhoods are patrolled 24/7 by uniformed police officers. Unincorporated Whatcom County is supported by the County Sheriff Department which responds to reported crimes based on severity. Once annexed, previously unincorporated areas will gain access to city police services, and the [City Police Department](#) will maintain or improve level of service.

25. Will we get a new park?

Annexation does not guarantee immediate investment in new parks. It does include the newly annexed area in planning by the City of Bellingham Department of Parks and Recreation. The City Department of Parks and Recreation has a goal of providing every city resident with a park or trail that is within a 10 minute walk to their house. The City prioritizes areas with the most need first.

26. Can my child keep going to the same school?

Yes. Bellingham School District attendance areas span across city boundaries and would not change as a result of annexation. Resource officers, [Safe Routes to School](#), and other City resources would become available to schools annexed into the city.

27. What changes would happen to the streets in my area?

Annexed areas would need to meet City of Bellingham standards for streets and sidewalks and will be considered for improvements. Generally, these changes would happen as the City budget permits. Bellingham neighborhoods are also eligible for street improvements under the Washington State [Safe Routes to School](#) program and local [Small and Simple Grant](#) funds for minor community enhancement projects.

28. Will I be able to vote for the Mayor and City Council? Who will represent me now?

Yes, as a resident of Bellingham you will be able to vote in elections for the Mayor of Bellingham and for the City Council. Soon after annexation, the City of Bellingham will conduct a census of new residents, which may result in changes to City Council ward boundaries. Residents are represented by one council member from within their ward and are able to vote for every member of the Council in city elections.



[UW - Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative](#)

Information on the research being done by the UW team



[Annexation Area Maps](#)

Find the UGAs here

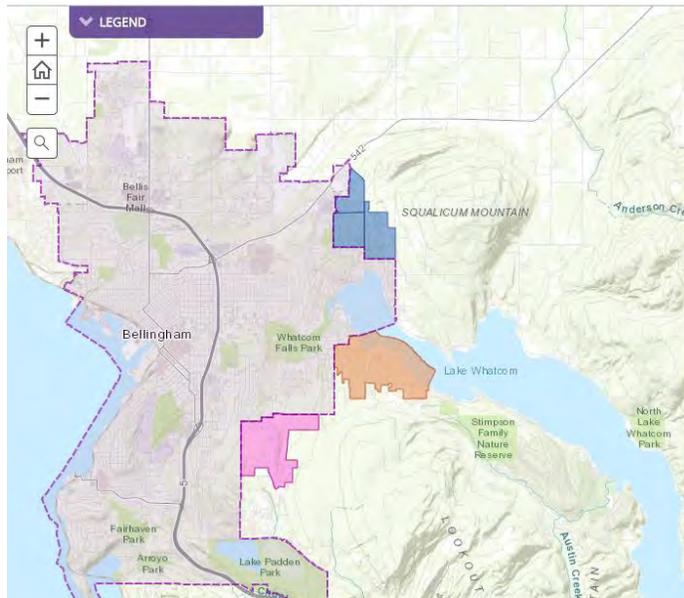


[Calendar of Events](#)

Outreach dates

[▶ more in this section](#)





Bellingham Urban Growth Areas

This map shows several of the Urban Growth Areas of Bellingham that are currently being considered for annexation.

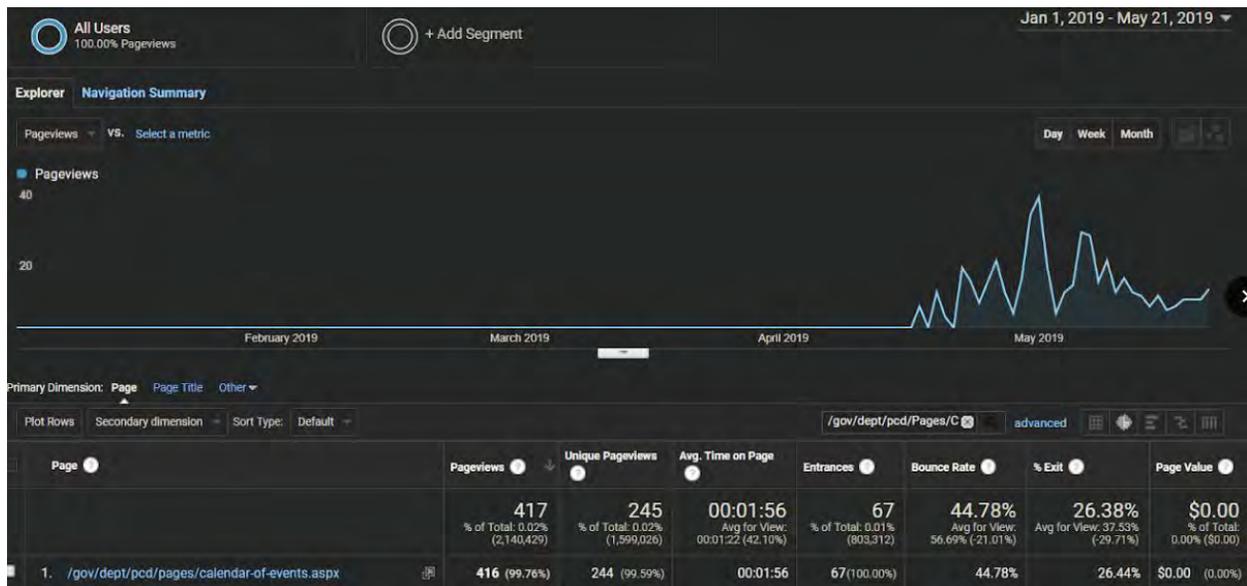
The area highlighted in **purple** is the current boundary of the City of Bellingham. **Blue** represents the neighborhoods of Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty, and Hillsdale. **Orange** shows the Geneva neighborhood and North Yew Street is represented in **pink**.

The areas in **blue**, **orange**, and **pink** are currently being considered for annexation into Bellingham. Residents of these areas are invited to attend a public meeting on May 2nd or May 7th to learn about annexation and share their thoughts. Use the magnifying glass button on the map to find out if your property is in one of these areas. **Event details [here](#).**

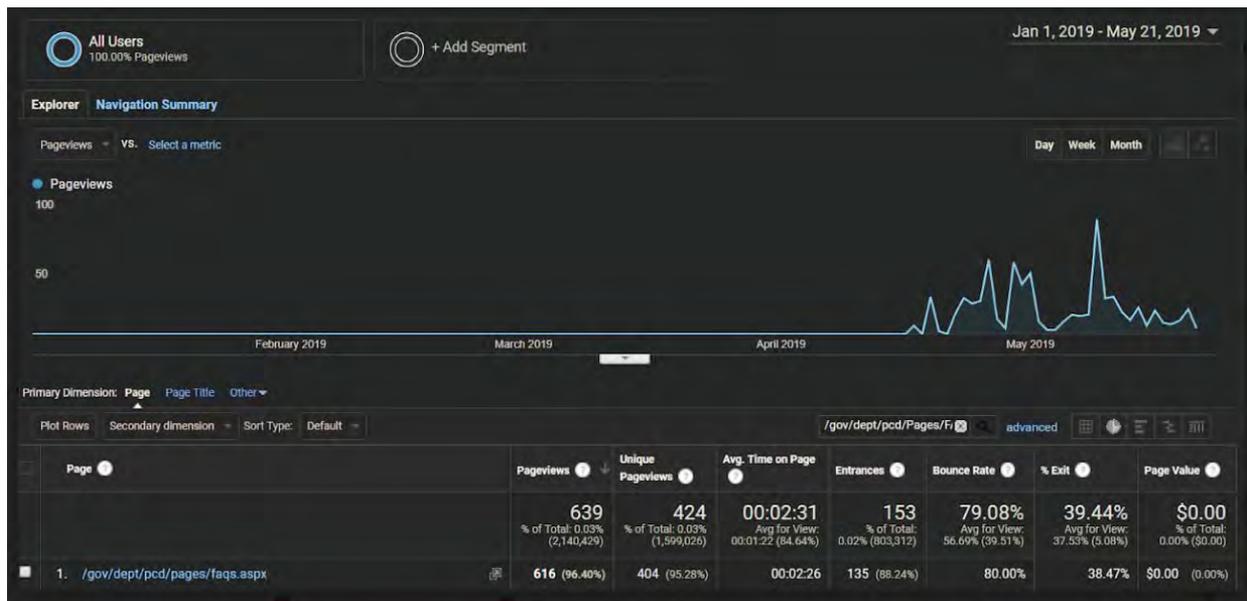
A graduate student research team at the University of Washington will be holding the three public meetings and conducting a survey to assess resident attitudes towards annexation from April - June 2019. **[Learn more about the project and the process.](#)**

Website Analytics

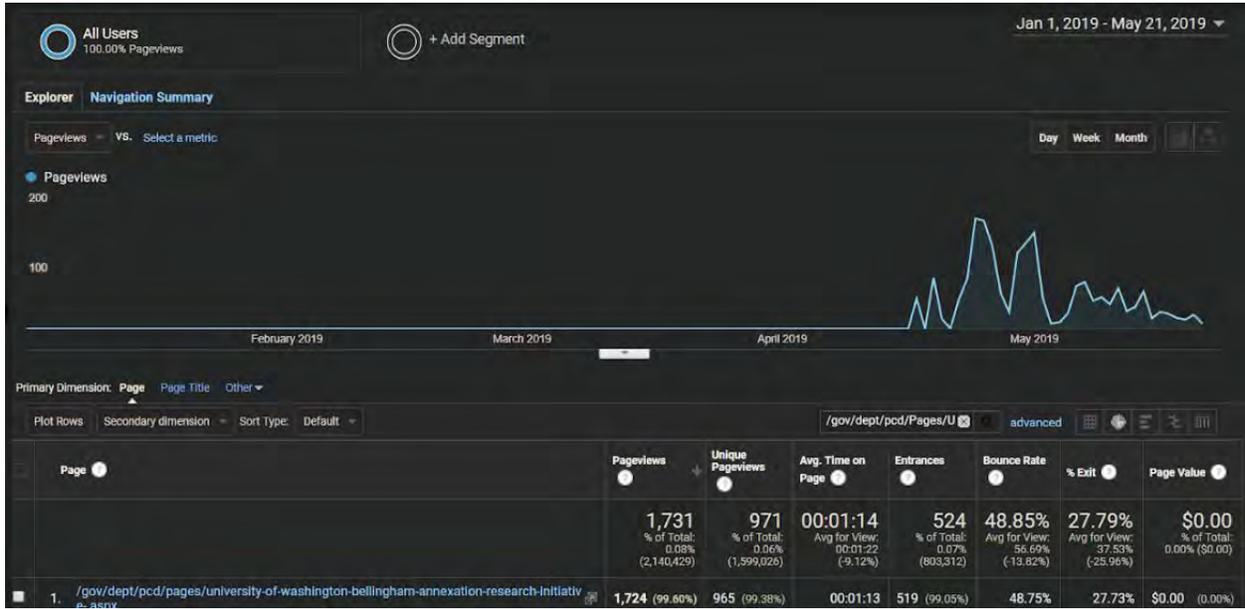
Calendar of Events: Page Views



Frequently Asked Questions: Page Views



Landing Page: Page Views



Attachment 2 - Email Invitations

Sent to Public Officials:

Greetings _____ ,

You are invited to attend one of several open houses on the topic of annexation. The City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department is partnering with a team of student researchers from the University of Washington's Master of Urban Planning program. The research team will assess the interest of residents within Bellingham's: Northern Heights, Tweed 20, Hillsdale, Geneva, and North Yew Street neighborhoods regarding possible annexation to the City.

Because of your leadership as a community member in the role of _____ , we would like to gather your opinion and feedback. Please consider joining us for one of the following dates, and visit www.cob.org/uwresearch for more information.

Meeting 1: Geneva Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM

Meeting 2: Wade King Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM

Meeting 3: Northern Heights Elementary, Tuesday May 7th, 6:00-7:30 PM

Best Regards,

UW Master of Urban Planning
Studio 507

Sent to Community Members:

Greetings _____ ,

You are invited to attend one of several open houses on the topic of annexation. The City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department is partnering with a team of student researchers from the University of Washington's Master of Urban Planning program. The research team will assess the interest of residents within Bellingham's: Northern Heights, Tweed 20, Hillsdale, Geneva, and North Yew Street neighborhoods regarding possible annexation to the City.

Because of your leadership as a community member in the role of _____ , we would like to gather your opinion and feedback. Please consider joining us for one of the following dates, and visit www.cob.org/uwresearch for more information.

Meeting 1: Geneva Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM

Meeting 2: Wade King Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM

Meeting 3: Northern Heights Elementary, Tuesday May 7th, 6:00-7:30 PM

Best Regards,

UW Master of Urban Planning
Studio 507

Attachment 3: Project Fliers and Postcards

Post Card

JOIN US FOR A CONVERSATION ON ANNEXATION

MAY 2 - WADE KING ELEMENTARY

MAY 2 - GENEVA ELEMENTARY

MAY 7 - NORTHERN HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY

ALL MEETINGS ARE FROM 6-7:30PM

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

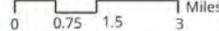
 UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative

Urban Growth Areas to be discussed

Legend

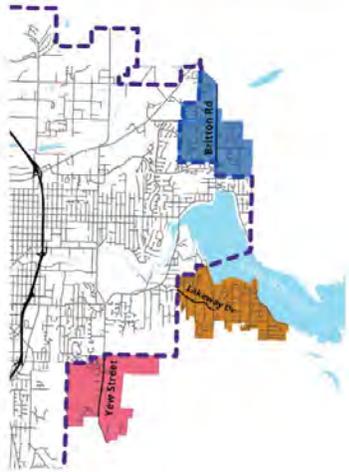
-  Bellingham Boundary
-  Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty, and Hillsdale
-  Geneva
-  North Yew Street

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 www.cob.org/uwresearch

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UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative



City of Bellingham
WASHINGTON

Community Discussions on Annexation

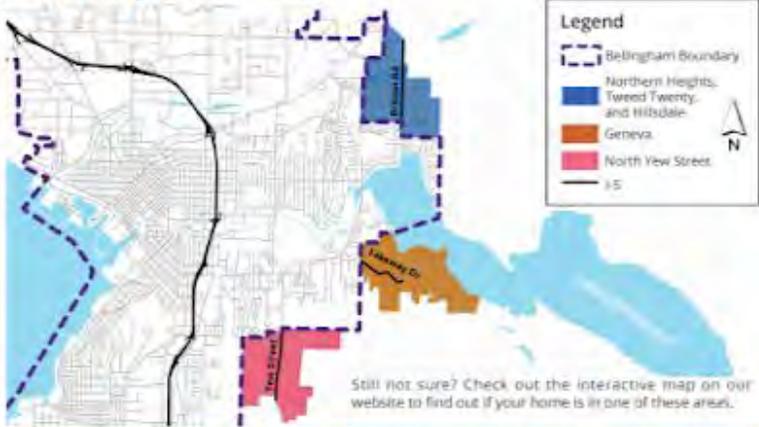
What is the purpose of these meetings?

The meetings aim to provide community members with information regarding the City of Bellingham annexation process. They also aim to gather input from residents and property owners of areas identified for possible future annexation. These areas include Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty, Hillisdale, Geneva, and North Yew Street.

When and where?

- Meeting 1:** Geneva
Geneva Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM
- Meeting 2:** North Yew Street
Wade King Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM
- Meeting 3:** Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty and Hillisdale
Northern Heights Elementary, Tuesday May 7th, 6:00-7:30 PM

Do I live in any of these areas?



Still not sure? Check out the interactive map on our website to find out if your home is in one of these areas.

Legend

- Bellingham Boundary
- Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty, and Hillisdale
- Geneva
- North Yew Street
- I-5

▶ More Information

Please visit our website:
www.cob.org/uwresearch



▶ Contact us

- ▶ UW Research Team, UWTeam@cob.org
- ▶ Moshe Quinn, City of Bellingham, mquinn@cob.org or (360) 778-8354

Attachment 4: Radio Station Public Service Announcement

The City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department is partnering with a team of student researchers from the University of Washington's Master of Urban Planning program to provide accurate and unbiased information about annexation. Several open houses are scheduled to share information with, and collect opinions from residents of: Hillsdale, Geneva, Northern Heights, North Yew Street, and Tweed 20.

- **Meeting 1: Geneva Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM**
- **Meeting 2: Wade King Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM**
- **Meeting 3: Northern Heights Elementary, Tuesday May 7th, 6:00-7:30 PM**

Please visit www.cob.org/uwresearch for more information.

Attachment 5: Press Release

The City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department is partnering with a team of student researchers from the University of Washington's Master of Urban Planning program. The research team will assess the interest of residents within Bellingham's eastern Urban Growth Areas (UGAs), including Northern Heights, Tweed 20, Hillsdale, Geneva, and North Yew Street, regarding possible annexation to the City.

To collect and analyze the opinions of UGA property owners and residents, the research team will:

- Perform an analysis and prepare informational materials outlining costs and benefits associated with annexation in Bellingham's UGAs
- Facilitate three community meetings for UGA residents to learn more about the annexation process and voice their opinions on the process
 - Meeting 1: Thursday May 2 from 6-7:30 PM at Geneva Elementary
 - Meeting 2: Thursday May 2 from 6-7:30 PM at Wade King Elementary
 - Meeting 3: Tuesday May 7 from 6-7:30 PM at Northern Heights Elementary
- Canvassing neighborhoods to administer a survey of residents in relevant UGAs and analyze community interest in annexing to the City
- Brief the Bellingham City Council on findings on June 3, 2019

The research team is tasked with providing community members and the City with accurate and unbiased materials to better inform annexation decisions. The research team does not have a preferred outcome regarding the assessment.

Please visit www.cob.org/uwresearch for more information regarding the project and the process of annexation.

Questions related to City of Bellingham annexation process may be directed to Moshe Quinn of Bellingham Planning & Community Development Department via email to mquinn@cob.org or (360) 778-8354. Questions related to the University of Washington assessment may be directed to the UW Team via email to UWTeam@cob.org.

Media Contacts
Moshe Quinn, Planner II
Planning and Community Development
(360) 778-8354
mquinn@cob.org

Attachment 6: Social Media Announcements

City of Bellingham Informational Meetings

The city is currently collecting and analyzing the opinions of Urban Growth Areas (UGA) property owners and residents as to the possibility of city annexation. As a part of this effort three community meetings will be held for UGA residents to learn more about the annexation process and record opinions.

Meeting 1: Geneva Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM

Meeting 2: Wade King Elementary, Thursday May 2nd, 6:00-7:30 PM

Meeting 3: Northern Heights Elementary, Tuesday May 7th, 6:00-730 PM

Attachment 7: Comment Matrix

All comments submitted to the UW Research Team are considered public records.

Comment Date	Comment	Response
4/29/2019	Include Wade King Elementary School in annexation area to improve emergency (911) response time.	Wade King Elementary School is not located within an area currently being evaluated for annexation by the City of Bellingham. Your concern regarding emergency services response time will be sent to the City Planning and Community Department for consideration in planning for future annexations. To contact COB directly regarding this issue, please call or email Moshe Quinn, mquinn@cob.org or (360) 778-8354.
4/30/2019	Is Geneva a UGA being considered for annexation? A 2011 study, presentations by COB and Whatcom Co., and subsequent vote led to a determination of no community interest in annexation. Would the UW team like more information on the 2011 study, vote and/or community concerns?	Geneva is a UGA being considered for future annexation and is within the scope of the UW study. A community meeting will be held Thursday, May 2nd from 6:00-7:30pm at Geneva Elementary to provide information on the UW study and receive resident input regarding potential future annexation. We hope you are able to attend. Any additional information you would like to share with us is greatly appreciated. You can contact us at UWTeam@cob.org
5/6/2019	I just saw the posted flyers about the survey being conducted this coming weekend. I wish you guys would have posted flyers about the meeting that already happened on 5/2 prior to it! Are there minutes from this meeting that I can view? I would like more information about the pros and cons of annexation before I give an uneducated opinion to whoever is conducting the survey this weekend. My husband and I own 5 acres in the proposed area. Thank you.	First, thank you very much for reaching out and your question. We understand that despite our efforts through radio PSAs and fliers in many local businesses, the word on our meetings did not get out to everyone. However, there is a meeting on Tuesday, May 6, starting at 6:00 at the Northern Heights ES. This meeting will speak specifically about the Northern Heights, Tweed Twenty and Hillsdale areas, but we encourage residents from the Geneva and North Yew St. areas to attend as well. Information on our meeting, which includes our meeting agenda, informational handouts and posters, are available on our website at https://www.cob.org/gov/dept/pcd/Pages/Calendar-of-Events.aspx Meeting outcomes will be posted for all of our meetings shortly. This includes public comments and feedback on the meetings and on the topic of annexation. Thank you again for your message and we hope to see you this Tuesday and Saturday.

5/5/2019	Greetings - the notification process regarding the now past community meeting somehow missed us even though we reside in the proposed annexation area. Notices were just posted today 5/5/19.	Thank you for your comment regarding the notification process of our meetings. I'm sorry to hear you missed the North Yew Street meeting. The UW research team will be hosting another meeting regarding annexation tomorrow at 6pm at Northern Heights Elementary School. There will be information provided there on the N. Yew Street UGA as well. I have attached a PDF of the handout we supplied at the meeting. We have a link to our website on this handout with FAQ about our project and annexation in general. If you are unable to attend the meeting tomorrow at Northern Heights, please forward any questions or comments to our team email. Best regards,
5/6/2019	I was unable to attend the meeting at Geneva Elementary the other day, but wanted to see if you had PDFs of any of the handouts or information that was made available. Also, if any interest was taken at the meeting, you could mark us down as being in favor of being annexed by the City.	Thank you for your comment regarding the annexation research. I am sorry to hear you missed the public meeting. I have attached the handout we had supplied at the meeting. We also have more information regarding the project on our website. The research team will also be hosting another community meeting tomorrow at 6pm at Northern Heights Elementary School. There will be information regarding Geneva there as well. This upcoming Saturday we are conducting a randomized assessment of the UGAs. We will be out knocking on doors to gather the opinions of residents. If we don't reach your house, we will take your expressed support into consideration! Please let me know if you have any questions
5/9/2019	I received information about your meeting yesterday 3 days after the meeting you held. I am extremely concerned about this annexation as it is in my back yard. I would like to be part of your survey as would my family as neighbors. How can we get our opinions and concerns to you.	Thank you so much for your comment. We are sorry to hear we have missed you at our meeting. You can find more information regarding our project here. As for the assessment-- we have randomized addresses in order to keep it scientifically and statistically valid. If we do not go to your address to gather your opinions, you can send your comments and concerns back to our team email to be taken into consideration in our opinion survey. We are a third party gathering the opinion of residents-- we are not making an opinion regarding annexation. We are using these responses by residents to recommend whether this conversation needs to be furthered with City and County officials. I hope this clarified some of your concerns. Please send any comments you want to be taken into consideration.

5/9/2019	I came as a great surprise to myself and many of my neighbors, that we missed a public meeting at Wade King Elementary school regarding UGA. Of the neighbors I spoke with no one got anything in the mail, or any other communications about this meeting. If you are collecting public input you have an obligation to provide notice to the public. If your intent is to report back to the City Council I believe you have an obligation to inform them that you had not made proper public outreach for the meetings.	These were not noticed public hearings, but solely informational meetings – with all of the pertinent information distributed also available online. I am also attaching the handout we distributed at the informational meeting. Additionally, the UW Team, City and County Staff are available during business hours to answer any additional questions. No binding assessment occurred at the informational meetings. The meetings are not serving as the sole basis for any future recommendations. If you have any questions or concerns regarding annexation, please let us know. Additionally, we will be conducting a scientifically valid survey this upcoming Saturday within the UGAs. Thank you for your comment.
5/8/2019	Hello, I own on Christian Way and would like to know how the survey for annexation will take place. I would like my voice to be heard since I do not want this to go ahead. The neighbors I have spoken to feel the same, and were not to pleased that there were only a few notices in out area for this plan. The notices were also put up after many of the meeting had taken place which is a bit frustrating. Please let me know how the survey will be conducted.	We're sorry to hear that you were unable to attend any of the open houses. These were not noticed public hearings, but solely informational meetings – with all of the pertinent information distributed also available online. No binding assessment occurred at the informational meetings. The meetings are not serving as the sole basis for any future recommendations. We will be conducting a randomized public opinion assessment this Saturday from around 10:00 AM to around 6:00 PM. Due to the scientific design of the randomized assessment, we will not be administering the assessment to every single property owner in each area for proposed annexation proceedings. However, if we do not come to your property but you see one of us walking around (we'll all have clipboards), our assessment administrators will have comment cards on which you can write your feedback and opinion regarding the question of annexation. We will take your comments and the comments of other property owners into consideration when presenting our findings to the Bellingham City Council on June 3rd. I'd also like to clarify that this assessment will not determine the outcome of the annexation for your area. The UW Research Team is conducting preliminary research to present to the City Council on June 3rd regarding the current opinions of property owners in the proposed annexation areas. City Council will not make any on pursuing annexation of any areas that evening. Should the Council (at a future date) wish to explore the potential for annexation in one or more areas of the UGA, additional neighborhood meetings will be scheduled to discuss the matter. For more information about the UW Research Team, our research on the issue of annexation, and how annexation would possibly affect you, please visit our FAQ page at https://www.cob.org/gov/dept/pcd/Pages/FAQs.aspx#Question12 . Additionally, the UW Team, City and County Staff are available during business hours to answer any additional questions.

Greetings and thank you for the flyer. Unfortunately I have a commitment out of town tomorrow and cannot attend the meeting at Northern Heights. If affected residents could be provided with advance notification of these meetings it would be helpful in order to perhaps allow for residents to put it on their calendar and attend? I do have questions and concerns about this process, the proposal and ultimately the outcome. This issue was raised several years ago and I am curious how and why it is resurfacing now? Specifically: The attached flyer indicates that the annexed residents would somehow be paying less for city water and sewer? We currently do not pay the city for water and sewer so I am confused how this would save us money to start paying for city sewer and water. Are you guesstimating that our current septic and well service costs are higher than city services by approx. \$600/year? If so, what is your basis for comparison?The annexation process referenced in this flyer indicates that residents initiate the process? Could you advise where and how the residents of the proposed Yew St. annexation are requesting this? As an existing property owner of record in the proposed annexation area, it seems odd that we would not be aware of how this process is unfolding or perhaps be advised that our neighbors have requested this by some method? Is there any information available about how the proposed annexation will affect property values and resale desirability for property owners? Both proposed and historical for previously annexed areas? Is there any data on what specifically and how the annexation change would benefit daily quality of life and neighborhood livability? Are impacts to traffic congestion, noise, wildlife and environment identified? Are any testimonials available from the residents of recently annexed areas that could offer insight as to the proposed vs. real benefits of annexation? I hope that we, along with other residents in the proposed annexation area will be notified about these future proceedings in a timely manner. The proposed annexation affects our daily life and primary residence and I am more than disappointed with the sequence of events thus far.

Forwarded to Moshe Quinn, COB Planning

5/9/2019	<p>Hi ,I am making contact to inquire about your efforts to assist in reviewing annexation interest of the Yew Street area.I am very much in support of the North Yew Street annexation. I own five lots and a 2.4 acre parcel on Bass Street just east of Yew St. Unfortunately, I did not receive any notice of your public meeting or any survey you may have conducted. My daughter, living on Bass St., also did not receive any notice or survey. If there is a survey being circulated, I would appreciate the opportunity to have my favorable annexation response be included. Thank you, Bruce Gustafson 360-739-9750</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We are sorry to have missed you for our informational community meeting. These were not noticed public hearing, but solely informational meetings-- with all of the pertinent information distributed also available online. No binding assessment occurred at the informational meeting. Additionally, the UW Team, City and County Staff are available to answer any questions and accept comments regarding this project. The UW Team is conducting a community assessment on Saturday, May 11th in each UGA. In pursuit of an efficient and statistically valid community assessment, we will visit a random sampling of homes in each UGA. For residents who are not included in this randomization, we are taking all public comments and concerns into consideration via our team email. Your comment of being in favor of annexation will be taken into consideration.Thank you so much!</p>
5/9/2019	<p>Hello Rick, Meet Judy, who lives just outside the city limits and wasn't able to attend the last northern heights annexation conversation. Will you have someone let her know when the next opportunity is to participate in future conversations and share her perspective?</p>	<p>April Barker sent Rick Sepler from the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department your contact information in regards to information about the annexation process. We are sorry to hear we missed you at our informational meeting in Northern Heights. These were not noticed public hearing, but solely informational meetings-- with all of the pertinent information distributed also available online. No binding assessment occurred at the informational meeting. Additionally, the UW Team, City and County Staff are available to answer any questions and accept comments regarding this project. The UW Team is conducting a community assessment on Saturday, May 11th in each UGA. In pursuit of an efficient and statistically valid community assessment, we will visit a random sampling of homes in each UGA. For residents who are not included in this randomization, we are taking all public comments and concerns into consideration via our team email, UWTeam@cob.org. Please let us know any perspective you may have on this process. I hope this answered any questions you may have.</p>

5/9/2019	Hello, I live in the Geneva area n Bellingham. I know the UW grad student team is planning their door-to-door survey on Sat. May 11. I am planning to post this information on the Geneva-Nextdoor website as an Event. However, I would like to get a few more details as to the basic time frame the student team plans to be in the Geneva area to do their survey. What time do they plan to be in the Geneva area neighborhood? Thank you for a prompt reply. Jan Martin Geneva	Thank you for reaching out. We appreciate your interest and the fact that you will post information regarding the assessment in the Geneva UGA. We will be conducting our community assessment starting at 10:00 AM. In pursuit of an efficient and statistically valid community assessment, we will visit a random sampling of homes in each UGA. For residents who are not included in this randomization, we are taking all public comments and concerns into consideration via our team email, UWteam@cob.org. Feel free to include that email in your post to ensure that people know where to direct comments. Thanks again, Jan!
5/10/2019	I attended the event on May 2nd. Since then there have been discussions that many/most residents in Geneva knew nothing about this event or the proposed annexation. It would be great to provide an informational flier to all households. I am concerned that those surveyed will not be adequately informed and the survey will not be a true sampling of informed citizens.	Thank you for passing along your concerns regarding outreach efforts. We understand that despite our efforts through radio PSAs and fliers in many local businesses, the word of our meetings did not get out to everyone. We are continuing our outreach efforts to make sure community members are informed. If you or any of your neighbors are interested in more information regarding our research, it can be found here. We are also taking any comments regarding annexation via our team email into consideration for our final recommendations.
5/12/2019	I do not want to be annexed into the city of Bellingham. I live in the hillsdale area. This is a land grab by the city to increase their tax base. I do not wish to contribute more money to the city to waste on frivolous programs such as housing for the homeless. Good bye.	Thank you for your comments regarding annexation. It will be taken into consideration and represented in our final recommendation to City Council on June 3rd. Best regards, The UW Research Institute

5/11/2019	<p>We were not included in your annexation survey today, but we live within the Geneva annexation area. We strongly support annexation into the City, but my husband and I were deterred by the \$700 + cost of submitting an official application. I was very willing to collect signatures on a petition, but the process of applying for annexation is very complicated and unnecessarily expensive. We are wondering if the City would consider annexing just the Parkstone neighborhood (32 households) even if the rest of Geneva does not wish to be annexed. We hope the City considers our opinion even though we were not part of your random sample. Thanks,</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment regarding annexation in Geneva. We are taking all public comments into consideration for our final recommendation to City Council on June 3rd. Your comment has been duly noted. Again, thank you for your interest. Please forward any other comments to our team email, UWTeam@cob.edu.</p>
5/11/2019	<p>Hi! My name is Kelly Bandia, and I live at 2284 Yew Street Rd. I am not home today to participate in the door-to-door survey, and I'm wondering if there is any way to participate via email or on the telephone? My phone number is 360-303-0078. I would appreciate if someone could email me or call me. Thank you!</p>	<p>Thank you for being interested in the annexation survey! Due to the scientifically valid nature of the survey, it was only conducted at randomized addresses. Although we cannot distribute the survey via email or phone, we are still taking all comments into consideration for our final recommendation. If you have any questions, concerns, or opinions regarding potential annexation, send your ideas back to our team email.</p>

5/10/2019	<p>Thanks for the follow-up.I was quite impressed with the professionalism and knowledge of the issues by you and your fellow Graddies.</p> <p>A very informative and well-presented event. Excellent work. I gave you all an A+.Thanks and all the best to you and your fellow students...you'll do just fine out there, I'm sure.Now...the topic at hand.If you visit my website below I believe within the first few paragraphs of the post, my position on Annexation will become very clear. You can also view the real-time results of the anonymous informal non-binding YES/NO Survey re Annexation posted. Just click "Results" which represents about 2 days of voting.And you can scroll down to the bottom of the post for some comments from residents of Geneva.</p> <p>http://chhoa.metamediacom.com/ Annexation page has been up since 05/05/2019.</p> <p>Be well and travel safe over the summer.Kind Regards</p>	<p>Thank you so very much for your kind words regarding our public meetings! It was a pleasure to design and implement meetings and interface with community members. We had great discussions with residents and have a lot of information to work with. I went to your website and saw the survey results. We appreciate your enthusiasm and for being an active community member. All public comments will be taken into consideration for our final recommendation to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.</p>
5/13/2019	<p>At the Yew Street UGA meeting, it was said a community survey would occur on May 11th, however no one in our neighborhood was surveyed or saw folks out surveying. Did it occur or was it postponed? Thanks</p>	<p>Our survey was conducted on May 11th. Due to the scientifically valid nature of the survey, we only visited a set of randomized addresses. If we have not visited your home or your neighbors, we are also taking public comments and concerns into consideration via our team email. Please forward any thoughts or concerns to UWTeam@cob.org.</p>
5/13/2019	<p>Hi. I'm emailing in regards to the possible annexation of the Geneva neighborhood in Bellingham. Unfortunately, we were not surveyed this past weekend, and did not get to put in our vote. We are not in favor of the annexation. We enjoy our community as it stands. If you have any further questions you are welcome to reach us at:</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding annexation. It will be taken into consideration and represented in our final recommendation to City Council on June 3rd. Best regards, The UW Research Institute</p>

<p>5/14/2019</p>	<p>We attended the UW hosted meeting at Wade King and appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the annexation process. We are supportive of the plan to bring this area into the city of Bellingham. As far as we can tell, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. We've enjoyed living in this area for 20 years now (3 yrs on Edgefield and 17 yrs on Kingsmill) and with the new elementary school in place, it would be wonderful to have more options for homeowners out in this direction. We will keep our eyes open for future meetings on this topic and appreciate being part of the dialogue.</p>	<p>Thank you for your email and comment regarding possible annexation into Bellingham.</p> <p>Your comment of support will be taken into consideration. On June 3rd, we will be presenting our findings to City Council and providing recommendations for the city in moving forward.</p> <p>If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us via our team email.</p>
<p>5/14/2019</p>	<p>To Whom It May Concern,I am a property owner/resident of the North Yew Street community and am concerned about the lack of information made available to residents about the potential annexation of this area that would allow them to make an informed decision about the future of their Whatcom County property (should we actually have a decision in whether this area is annexed or not).A neighbor in my immediate community was browsing COB's website and happened to find a post about the annexation, along with the annexation strategy report and a notice about the meeting that was to be held on May 2. He notified the rest of our neighborhood, all of which had no idea about any of the potential changes.Our neighborhood was very well represented at the May 2 meeting at Wade King Elementary (8 of 20 of my immediate neighboring residences were represented) including properties not included in the UGA but bordering the UGA. However, I felt that overall the attendance for the entire North Yew Street was very poor, likely because the informational meeting was not well advertised or publicized. More direct approaches (like mailers) should have been provided to property owners in the UGA to notify them of the changes, the meetings, and the survey. As I told one of the WWU student team members, if this was my research project I would have been very disappointed with the low turn out at the meeting for area 15. I would also like to note that no one in my neighborhood was surveyed on May 11 (that I have heard of). I understand that it was a random selection of properties, but I would have thought that at least one home in my neighborhood would be included. Perhaps the</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing your comments and concerns with us regarding the annexation research process. All of the pertinent information regarding our survey methodology will be in our final report, which will be published online.</p> <p>Your comments opposing possible annexation have been noted and will be taken into consideration for our final recommendations to City Council. We are not making a decision regarding annexation, we are collecting resident opinions in order to recommend to city and county officials if the conversation of annexation needs to be continued in the UGAs.</p>

	<p>scientific nature of the random picking should have included a larger sampling size so as to actually create a true representative response of the people involved in the annexation area? Other concerns about annexation include development of nearby forested areas, impacting wildlife, traffic, and noise. There is also little benefit provided to me directly by being annexed to the city as water and sewer are currently located too far from my home for me to afford to connect and the street that accesses my home is a private road and likely would not be improved by the city in my lifetime. The minimal proposed decrease in taxes (\$667/year) is not enticing enough for me to be in favor of annexing given that I will see little in the way of improved services. Overall, I am disappointed about the way in which the information about annexation has been provided to homeowners. It certainly doesn't appear that the city is being very transparent in this process which will impact many people involved.</p>	
5/14/2019	<p>I am interested in the distribution of the randomized sample. For full transparency, is there a map showing the general location/ distribution of responses? Also was a separate survey conducted for each UGA or was one survey conducted for all proposed annexed areas?</p>	<p>Good day,</p> <p>Thank you for your comments. You requested information regarding our random sampling and maps for our survey. To create full transparency, we will be including the maps in our final report, which will be available online after our City Council presentation on June 3rd.</p> <p>The survey, to maintain validity, was standardized among all UGAs and had 20 questions. The survey will also be included in our report. All of our research will be made available online.</p>

<p>5/10/2019</p>	<p>I live at 835 Saint Andrews Way on the corner of Saint Andres and Bloor. This annexation will affect us very negatively.</p> <p>1. There has been a recent development between Bloor and Bass that has already caused much negative impact.</p> <p>a) Clear cutting has increased rain run off into our yard and under our house. Before the clear cut we put in a french drain near our hour on that side which kept any run off from under our house. Since then we have flooded often.</p> <p>b) the increase of wind in our yard has cause several huge branches to fall and neighbors trees have fallen as a result of this one property being developed.</p> <p>c) there is a huge pond collecting run off water below this property that is a danger to children drowning.</p> <p>d) eye sore, truck traffic, noise too.</p> <p>2. a) There is a lovely trail at the end of Bloor that connects to the Samish open space that we love to walk, would that disappear?</p> <p>b) While I do think this community needs more affordable housing, I don't see how this is a good choice of spots as the impact of run off, wind, traffic is not being considered. It is possible to increase housing in a more environmentally friendly way and this annexation looks like make money and neighbors and environment be damned.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment regarding annexation. Your comments and concerns will be duly noted and taken into consideration for our final report, which we will be presenting to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.</p> <p>We are a third party gathering the opinion of residents-- we are not making an opinion regarding annexation. We are using the responses and comments by residents to recommend whether this conversation needs to be furthered with City and County officials or not. I hope this clarified some of your concerns regarding this research. Again, your comments will be taken into consideration in regards to our final report.</p> <p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>5/10/2019</p>	<p>For future reference, I would have welcomed the opportunity to attend your informational meeting if i had been made aware of it. am aware that you have been informed of the negative annexation notice that has been widely spread throughout the Yew Street area. The flyers negative slanted language about annexation has many in our area frustrated that misinformation is being circulated. I would encourage you to take this into consideration when receiving random public comments and when preparing your report.</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing your comment with us. Yes, we are aware of the annexation notice that was posted by a resident. We are getting public comments that express both support and opposition to this matter. Thank you for bringing this to our attention, and we will be taking this into consideration for our report.</p>

5/15/2019	<p>I would like to comment on the pending discussion of the Yew St annexation.</p> <p>I would offer that I'm not in favor of the annexation. While the city may need area of growth the Yew Street area already densely populated and traffic is heavy on Yew St Rd.</p> <p>With the recent addition of bike lanes the road has become a hazard to travel most of the heavier commute time s and any time there are large trucks or construction. If by chance the bike lane is being used (almost never) then the danger level increases for everyone.I was a part of the EMS system on Yew St road and surrounding areas for decades I know we will not see an increase in response time or service by the annexation.As far as other services go we will not be able to use the sewer system because the service is a dry line on Yew street at Douglas RD and there are no sewer lines within a mile of our home and beside we have septic systems that are paid. As for water service we have a water line within 350 ft of our property and the city declined service to us and so I had to install and reserve tank to my well to service my home and out new rental so I don't want the monthly bills or need the city water any longer.I moved my rentals outside the city to avoid the landlord licensing law and will not comply with this requirement to allow random inspection of my rentals. See some people have made their choice to not live in the city due to increased school levies, EMS levies and park and rec levies that we do use. I have lived on Yes St Rd for 45+ years and like the location and do not feel in the infrastructure can handle the density you are suggesting without completing the rest of Yew St Rd to Samish Way, resurfacing and widening of Samish Way to I-5 north bound and many other side streets to remove auto traffic in and around the area.With the addition of the density suggested we would need more water storage tanks and service lines, a new EMS station as well as additional resources to patrol the crime that will come with more people.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding annexation. Your comments and concerns are duly noted and will be taken into consideration for our final report, which we will be presenting to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.</p>
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5/16/2019	<p>Hello, My husband and I own property in the Yew Street Area (just outside the city limits on the north end) and seem to have missed all the information and meetings on annexation of our area. I just became aware of your survey yesterday. We want to be counted as in favor of the annexation when you do your presentation to the City Council. . We proposed an annexation several years back but were denied.</p> <p>Our tax parcel numbers are: Property ID: 8058 Geo ID 3803330315000 property ID: 80734 Geo ID: 3803331031160000 This includes our home and several of acres of undeveloped property. We very much want to be annexed. I don't know how we didn't know of any meeting and are upset we were not notified of the May 2 meeting at the local school. Were property owners mailed information? If so we did not receive anything. Please be sure to add us to a list of interested parties that receive mail regarding this topic. Please inform us of anything we need to fill out or do. As I have stated, we are very interested in being annexed to the City.</p>	<p>Thank you so much for your comments regarding annexation. Your comments of support will be taken into consideration for our final report, which we are presenting to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.</p>
5/16/2019	<p>Greetings, I have been a 26 year resident of Northern Heights and my wife and I would like to express our high interest in being annexed into the City of Bellingham. We have always more closely associated with the city than the county. We utilize city resources (like the public library) much more than county services. We live on the border of Squalicum High School and Northern Heights, which are part of the city and it just seems silly that our neighborhood is not. Please record our household as one very interested in joining the city.</p>	<p>Thank you so much for your comment regarding annexation. Your comment of support will be taken into consideration for our final report, which we will be presenting to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.</p>

5/16/2019	<p>Greetings I am writing to express my concerns with the recent annexation assessment survey and city annexation proposal. As I have stated previously, we were more than disappointed to learn about the community meeting after the fact. The survey administered by the University did not provide for any open feedback and questions were limited in scope. For example, there were no questions that touched on any potential downside considerations. The City's Annexation Strategy is crystal clear that cost-savings for homeowners or providing improved services are not what the proposal is about. Rather the city is interested in the 938 additional housing unit capacity of this area. Furthermore the FAQ indicates that the most common method of annexation is for a petition signed by property owners. The annexation assessment underway initiated on behalf of the city is clearly not that method and yet no details were presented about other methods to accomplish an annexation. For example the intent of the City to pursue alternative methods if there is "insufficient interest" from the survey results. The City's Annexation Strategy states their intent to pursue annexation - the survey is apparently a checklist item and the city will move forward with another method of annexation. This would make an excellent survey point - to disclose what action the City can take to proceed with annexation and their intent to do so. Residents participating in good faith in the University survey, presented as if by a neutral party have not been provided clear information about the City's intent, motivation and plans to pursue annexation. The current UGA annexation boundary has been modified since the last proposal in 2005. No information about boundary lines or modifications has been provided and inquiries to the city direct us back to the county. Yet the city is driving this annexation process...how can the annexation be contrived and adjusted to meet the city's goals without any checks and balances? The proposed zoning densities and dwelling unit totals for the UGA should be disclosed along with the city's objectives. Some reference to the impact these changes would make is a critical component of the proposed annexation and has been completely ignored in the FAQ's and survey undertaken on behalf of the city. Please advise who is available to advocate on behalf of the current county residents?</p>	Forwarded to COB staff
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5/19/2019	<p>Hello, Let me check the date the tiny flyer was stuck into my doorframe: May 18, 2019. What was the date of the community meeting: May 2, 2019.</p> <p>I do not share any of the values of Bellingham's mayor, city council, police, or most of the residents. Nothing in common at all. Nothing. You have turned Bellingham into a mini-San Francisco. No. Way. In. Hell.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We are sorry to have missed you for our informational community meeting. These were not noticed public hearing, but solely informational meetings-- with all of the pertinent information distributed also available online. No binding assessment occurred at the informational meeting. Additionally, the UW Team, City and County Staff are available to answer any questions and accept comments regarding this project. This is only preliminary research that we are conducting to see if residents of these areas are interested in possible annexation- we are not trying to start the process of annexation, we are only seeing if residents are in favor or not. Your comment of opposition will be taken into consideration for our final report to Bellingham City Council.</p>
5/19/2019	<p>Hi Team UW, I am writing to express my concerns about the possible Yew Street annexation. I was shocked about the lack of communication for this study and for the meeting at Wade King Elementary. We only found out about it because one person in our neighborhood texted everyone. It was very poorly attended by most of the areas in the study. Why was there no information spread about this? No mailings or anything. This creates a skewed representation of the areas affected and is unfair to all. I have not talked to one person who is for this. A few neighbors and I drove around and talked to people last weekend and NO ONE knew about it. No one was for it on the west side of Yew, on San Juan either. My main concerns are that we moved "out here" for a reason and with possibly 1000 more homes coming in, that would drastically increase traffic on Yew St. and decrease the little wildlife we have left. Lakeway is busy enough as is - have you driven it during commute times? Not to mention the fact that a lot of the folks in the east side of Yew for the annexation drawing won't even gain the city's benefits. Is there someone we can talk to more about this? How possible is it to redraw the line since it was drawn before most of the current houses were built? What if the area only includes the west side of Yew? I do not see anything positive from this particular annexation. I know other areas work well incorporating into Bellingham but I just don't think this works. What are the benefits from your end?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding the research we are conducting on annexation in the UGAs. We know that despite our best efforts for outreach via a press release, radio PSAs, and our website, we had low attendance. These were not noticed public hearings, but solely informational meetings-- with all of the pertinent information also available online. No binding assessments occurred at the information meeting, they were primarily for sharing the basics on annexation.</p> <p>This is only preliminary research that we are conducting to see if residents in these areas are interested in possible annexation-- we are not trying to start the process of annexation, we are only seeing if residents are in favor of not. Your comments of opposition will be taken into consideration for our final report to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.</p> <p>If no UGA residents are interested, the city will not pursue annexation in this area. If you have any more questions or concerns regarding this research, we have more information on our FAQ page. Also, direct any further concerns to our team email to be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Your comments have been duly noted.</p>

5/19/2019	Hi, I am a home owner in Northern Heights and I interested in the annexation into the City of Bellingham.	<p>Thank you for your comment regarding annexation. If you want to learn more about the annexation process and our research, you can find that at our website.</p> <p>We will be presenting our research and findings, including the interest of residents, to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please direct them to our team email to be taken into consideration.</p>
5/19/2019	I am the property owner at 3751 Beazer Road, Bellingham, WA 98226-8886 and would like to sign the annexation petition. I am out of town during the City Council meeting June 3. How do I add my name as an interested-in-annexation property owner? Thank you for your time, the information delivered to my home on a 3x5 announcement, and the fantastic website.	<p>Thank you for your comment regarding annexation. Your email can serve as your note of interest! We will take your support into consideration for our final report to City Council. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please let us know via our team email.</p> <p>Thank you for your interest, and for taking the time to explore our website!</p>
5/20/2019	<p>My name is Sarah Messmer, and I am a homeowner within Northern Heights Community. I am excited for the opportunity for Northern Heights Community to be annexed by the city. Among the incentives are lower water bills and more frequent recycling pickups by Sanitary Services.</p> <p>Northern Heights is a great community. Our residents take pride in the ownership of their homes and are always willing to help each other out. With the proximity of Northern Heights Community to Northern Heights Elementary and Squalicum High School, it makes sense for the city to annex our community.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding annexation. Your comments of support will be taken into consideration for our final report, which we are presenting to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.</p>

5/20/2019	<p>I am writing to express my position against the potential City of Bellingham annexation of the North Yew Street UGA.</p> <p>I would like to point out that while Team UW presents as a non bias third party, much of the material produced by the team reads in a positive way towards annexation. Handouts produced by Team UW as outreach to the community (which was weak at best) averages of statistics were used to positively spin annexation as something that residents should desire. Many if not all answers to FAQ's on the University of Washington Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative web page place a pro-annexation bias on answers.</p> <p>Manly, I am very against having the allowable increase number of homes be built in this area. Congestion at major intersections around Lakeway, increased traffic traveling South from Wade King on Yew (with no sidewalks in that area), quick destruction of wildlife areas by major development, and the paving of green space surrounding are just some of the reasons why this should be considered in inappropriate UGA to annex.</p> <p>Please advise the City Council in your report on June 3rd that I feel that this UGA should be removed entirely from the Cities annexation plans or at the very least re drawn to be reduced in size and not include any area East of Yew Street Rd.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding annexation. All comments will be taken into consideration for our final report and recommendations to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd. The comments regarding redrawing the boundaries and the concerns of information available have been duly noted.</p>
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Hello, I am writing to voice our opposition to the possible annexation of the North Yew Street Road area. We hope that this communication will be considered as we have not had the opportunity to comment with planned community involvement options; flyers announcing public meetings in early May were posted after the date of the meetings. As well, in recent neighborhood discussions, it is clear canvassers contacted about only one in five households. We moved to this neighborhood in 2005 primarily because of the livable neighborhood, traffic safety, and natural surroundings. Children safely ride their bikes around the neighborhood and play in the woods, activities which have defined Bellingham's appeal over other municipalities along Washington's I 5 corridors. In reviewing the proposal, it's clear the volume of growth proposed for this area will negatively impact the safety, environmental health and culture of Bellingham.

Negative Impacts:

-Roads, traffic and transportation:

As mentioned in the 2018 Annexation Strategy, Yew Street is not currently built to urban standards. Given the lack of bike lanes and sidewalks combined with a narrow, winding roadway, the majority of traffic along the south side of Yew St Road is directed to the north end. Both Lakeway and the north end of Yew St Road are beyond capacity. Without widening the south side of Yew Street or adding an alternative connecting route, the vastly increased traffic WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CREATE A HAZARDOUS (AND PREVENTABLE) SITUATION.

I regularly bike commute with our pre-school aged child down Yew St Road. The recent changes in road materials have created large potholes. As bikes have the right-of-way with the new design, it feels safer to avoid the holes. However, planners must be aware that cars on this route regularly pass over a double yellow line. Adding increased traffic congestion will make this already questionable bike route more unsafe. Additionally, bus service to the area is minimal and with Yew Street's substantial incline, non-car trips to grocery stores, jobs and the rest of the community is challenging enough. I

Thank you for your thoughtful comments on annexation. Your comments have been noted and will be taken into consideration for our final report, which we are presenting to Bellingham City Council on June 3rd.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

would like to see Bellingham develop neighborhoods where pedestrians are safe and are not dependent upon driving cars to services.

-Water Flow: Recent developments have shown a large layer of shale underground, congruent with much of the surrounding Samish/Chuckanut areas. Removing second growth cedars, big leaf maples and other trees will create erosion and storm runoff which is now mitigated by this standing timber. Not only is the environmental damage obvious, the residential impacts are substantial as well. A large area of land was recently cleared at the end of Bass St for a private residence. The owner was not able to break through the shale. As a result, large amounts of topsoil washed down Bloor Street and eventually the water landed in ours and other neighborhood yards. Many other neighbors are seeing increased water in their crawl spaces due to the deforestation. Removing this much forest on sloped drainages will no doubt result in residential storm damage and possible slides.

-Increased Storm Damage:With the removal of many of the trees, we run the risk of creating wind corridors that could harm remaining trees and damage current homes. This area is already hugely impacted by south Chinook winds, utility district records will back this up.Lack of Fire Protection:

As stated in the Annexation Strategy, there is an insufficient fire flow south of Bass Street.

-Loss of Habitat:

The surrounding woods are home to owls, yellow finches and an abundance of wildlife.

-Lack of Jobs/Lifestyle:

	<p>Little to no new jobs will be created in this area once development of is complete. Bellingham needs to increasingly beware of becoming another Seattle/Vancouver, BC bedroom community in cultural decline; converting the intrinsic appeal of our green hills into tract housing seems a direct path to this.</p> <p>For these reasons, we strongly oppose this growth.</p>	
5/25/2019	<p>Hi, my name is Laura and you recently came to my door. I live on Silver Oak Ct and got your card from Isis (who said she'd be the one reading this). I'm on my HOA's board and we definitely had some questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Our HOA has a detention pond. Who assumes maintenance of this if we are annexed into the city? The pond is on HOA owned land. Does that land become the property of the city? Does the city also take over the streetlights and sidewalks? Are the medians in our streets our responsibility or the city's?- What is the timeline for annexation -- when would the city take over things?- Any other issue or info that you can think of that may change for those of us in an HOA? <p>Thanks for any info you can provide!</p>	

5/25/2019	<p>I am in the Geneva area and purposely bought outside the city limits to enjoy unincorporated living and regulations. I am opposed to annexation to the City of Bellingham. My taxes and water and sewer charges are already very expensive. My property is subject to development regulations for Lake Whatcom and covered well by the Whatcom County development regulations. I fail to see any personal or neighborhood benefit to being annexed. The City of Bellingham will add expensive lakefront property (mine is not) to their tax base through a proposed annexation but that is not reason alone for us to be annexed.</p> <p>I am sorry that I did not receive the small piece of paper (Really? A quarter sheet of paper?) until after the input meetings. As a retired planner at local, county, and state levels, I found the notice and lack of signage to be shamefully inadequate. If you learn nothing more from your time in this endeavor, please pay more attention to public notice in these times of disengagement from newspapers and standard notification. It was one of the things that graduate level courses should cover. Mine did. Even the AICP exam had a question or two dealing with it all those years ago.</p> <p>I have professionally participated in several actual annexations in the past, including Bellingham/Whatcom County and make these comments in full knowledge of possible benefits in other jurisdictions to annexation. This one looks like a land grab to me.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding annexation. We understand that despite efforts of outreach through a press release, radio PSAs, and fliers in local businesses, the word of our meetings did not get out to everyone.</p> <p>These meetings were open house information sessions-- there was no public comment or voting. Our research is preliminary and is only to inform our recommendations to Bellingham City Council to determine if a more comprehensive process should be initiated. We are a group of third party researchers gathering the opinions of UGA residents.</p> <p>Thank you again for your feedback. Your comments of opposition to annexation have been noted and will be incorporated into our final recommendation.</p>
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5/25/2019	<p>I am in the Geneva area and purposely bought outside the city limits to enjoy unincorporated living and regulations. I am opposed to annexation to the City of Bellingham. My taxes and water and sewer charges are already very expensive. My property is subject to development regulations for Lake Whatcom and covered well by the Whatcom County development regulations. I fail to see any personal or neighborhood benefit to being annexed. The City of Bellingham will add expensive lakefront property (mine is not) to their tax base through a proposed annexation but that is not reason alone for us to be annexed.</p> <p>I am sorry that I did not receive the small piece of paper (Really? A quarter sheet of paper?) until after the input meetings. As a retired planner at local, county, and state levels, I found the notice and lack of signage to be shamefully inadequate. If you learn nothing more from your time in this endeavor, please pay more attention to public notice in these times of disengagement from newspapers and standard notification. It was one of the things that graduate level courses should cover. Mine did. Even the AICP exam had a question or two dealing with it all those years ago.</p> <p>I have professionally participated in several actual annexations in the past, including Bellingham/Whatcom County and make these comments in full knowledge of possible benefits in other jurisdictions to annexation. This one looks like a land grab to me.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments regarding annexation. We understand that despite efforts of outreach through a press release, radio PSAs, and fliers in local businesses, the word of our meetings did not get out to everyone.</p> <p>These meetings were open house information sessions-- there was no public comment or voting. Our research is preliminary and is only to inform our recommendations to Bellingham City Council to determine if a more comprehensive process should be initiated. We are a group of third party researchers gathering the opinions of UGA residents.</p> <p>Thank you again for your feedback. Your comments of opposition to annexation have been noted and will be incorporated into our final recommendation.</p>
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5/28/2019	<p>We attended the information meeting, and at the time we indicated we were undecided - needed more information and time to think. We expected to have the chance to express our updated opinion when students came door-to-door, but that did not happen in our neighborhood - you must just have sampled neighborhoods. After more detailed financial review and discussions of various issues, we both are opposed to annexation - contrary to the presentation materials, total costs would actually be somewhat higher, especially in the near term, as nothing would change in water and sewer bills for several years (per public works rep), but stormwater fees would take effect immediately, plus garbage and other non-city utilities would be higher. The benefits of possibly better fire and police protection and possible park increase sometime (areas like Alderwood would likely get more money/attention) are offset by the risk of possibly greater urbanization forces and higher-density infill in the long term, creating traffic/parking problems, plus there would be potential effects on wildlife, "natural" feel, and darker skies with more street lights and such. Realistically, not much would change in the near term except higher costs, and in the long term we might not like how the city responds to inevitable growth.</p> <p>Please include us as "no" votes.</p>	<p>Thank you for sending an email with your concerns regarding annexation.</p> <p>Reviewing our neighborhood survey areas, we found that we did survey your neighborhood, but because of the random sampling of houses we did not knock on your door. We surveyed 30% of the homes in each neighborhood. We used GIS software and geocoded addresses to create these statistically valid maps before we canvassed on May 11th.</p> <p>That being said, we are taking public comments via email into consideration for our final presentation to City Council on June 3rd. We are not taking votes, and no decision regarding annexation is being made. We are conducting third party research on the opinions of residents within the UGAs to recommend to City Council if this conversation should be carried forward.</p> <p>Your comments in opposition of potential annexation have been noted and will be incorporated into our final report.</p>
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Attachment 8: Follow-up Email

Dear Community Member,

Thank you for attending the Discussions on Annexation meetings on May 2nd and May 7th. The purpose of these meetings was to provide information on the nature and potential outcomes of annexation in Bellingham's unincorporated urban growth areas (UGAs) and to gather the thoughts and opinions of residents within the UGAs. A summary of the comments and concerns identified at the meetings is being prepared and will be included in our final report to the Bellingham City Council.

The next step in the process will be for the UW team to conduct a assessment of UGA resident perspectives on annexation. We will report the outcome of this assessment to the City Council at their regularly scheduled meeting on June 3rd (time to be determined). Public comments will not be taken at this meeting, but there will be multiple opportunities for community input on the topic in the future. There will be no decisions regarding annexation made at that time, and our report will be available to the public.

We encourage your to visit our website www.cob.org/uwresearch which provides extensive information extensive information on annexations as well as updates on project status. You can also use this page to also to ask questions and comment upon the project.

Thank you again for your participation!

UW Team

Attachment 9: Community Assessment Questions

1. Are you or someone currently at home the owner of this property? Yes or no
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

2. Do you know that you live outside of the city limits of Bellingham? Yes or no
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

3. Have you visited the University of Washington Annexation Research Initiative website? Yes or no
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

4. Did you or someone in your household attend any of three open houses led by the UW Research Team? Yes or no
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

5. How well do you understand the annexation process?
 - A. I know nothing about it
 - B. I know a little about it
 - C. I know quite a bit about it
 - D. I understand the process completely

6. Do you feel like you have enough information to make a decision on annexation? Yes or no
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

7. How likely are you to approve of annexation into Bellingham?
 - A. Very Unlikely
 - B. Somewhat Unlikely
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Somewhat Likely
 - E. Very Likely

8. How likely are you to reject annexation into Bellingham?
 - A. Very Unlikely
 - B. Somewhat Unlikely
 - C. Indifferent
 - D. Somewhat Likely
 - E. Very Likely

9. Do you agree with the following statement? I am currently satisfied with the level of public services in my area (e.g. police, fire, water & sewer, parks & recreation, neighborhood funding, infrastructure)

- A. Strongly Disagree
- B. Somewhat Disagree
- C. Indifferent
- D. Somewhat Agree
- E. Strongly Agree

The next set of questions are hypothetical scenarios please answer:

- A. Very Unlikely**
- B. Somewhat Unlikely**
- C. Indifferent**
- D. Somewhat Likely**
- E. Very Likely**

How likely would you be to approve of annexation if it resulted in the total cost of your taxes and utility fees to

- 10. ...increase significantly (>20%)
- 11. ...increase slightly
- 12. ...staying the same as now
- 13... .decrease slightly:
- 14...decrease significantly (>20%)

How likely would you be to approve of annexation if it resulted in the levels of service of police, fire, and parks to...

- 15...significantly diminish
- 16...slightly diminish:
- 17 ...the same as now:
- 18...slightly improve:
- 19...significantly improve:

20. At this point in time, do you favor or oppose annexation of your area into Bellingham?

- A. Favor
- B. Oppose

21. How long have you lived at this address?

- A. Less than 1 year
- B. 1-5 years
- C. 6-10 years
- D. More than 10 years

22. Which of the following best describes your age?

- A. 18 to 35
- B. 36 to 55
- C. 56+

Attachment 10: 30% Randomized Sample Area Maps



UGA Survey Sample Area 2

Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red



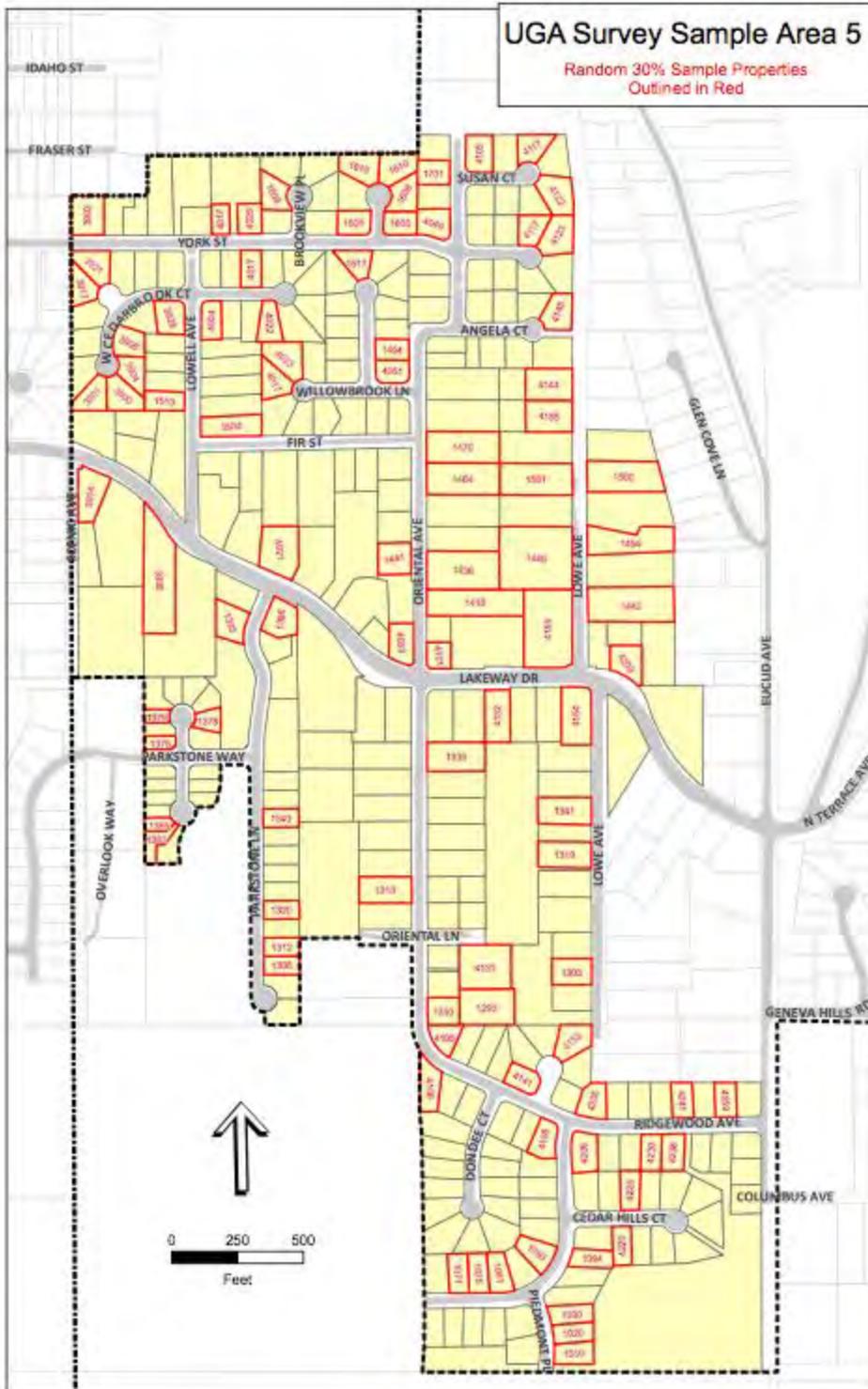
UGA Survey Sample Area 3

Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red



UGA Survey Sample Area 5

Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red



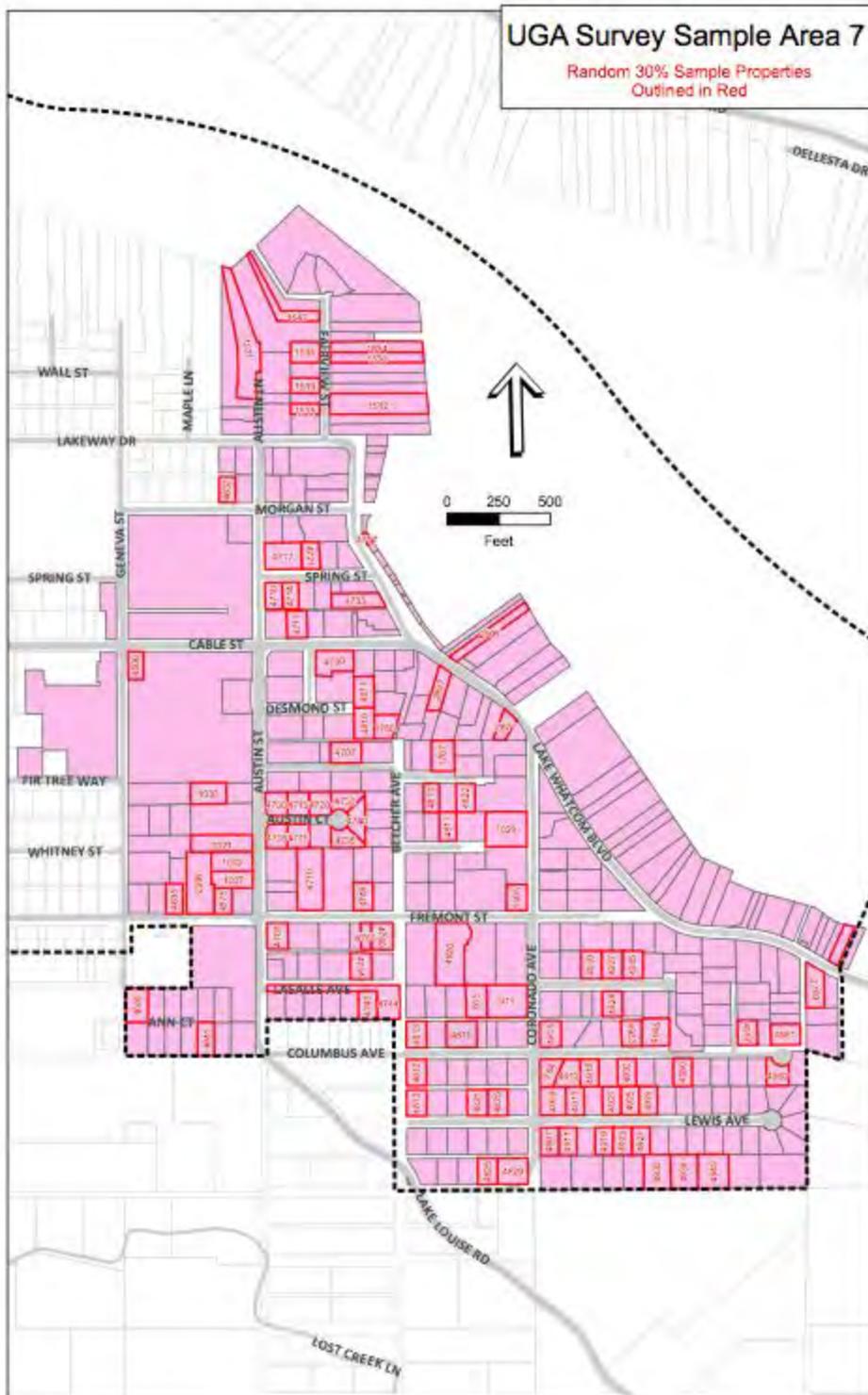
UGA Survey Sample Area 6

Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red



UGA Survey Sample Area 7

Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red



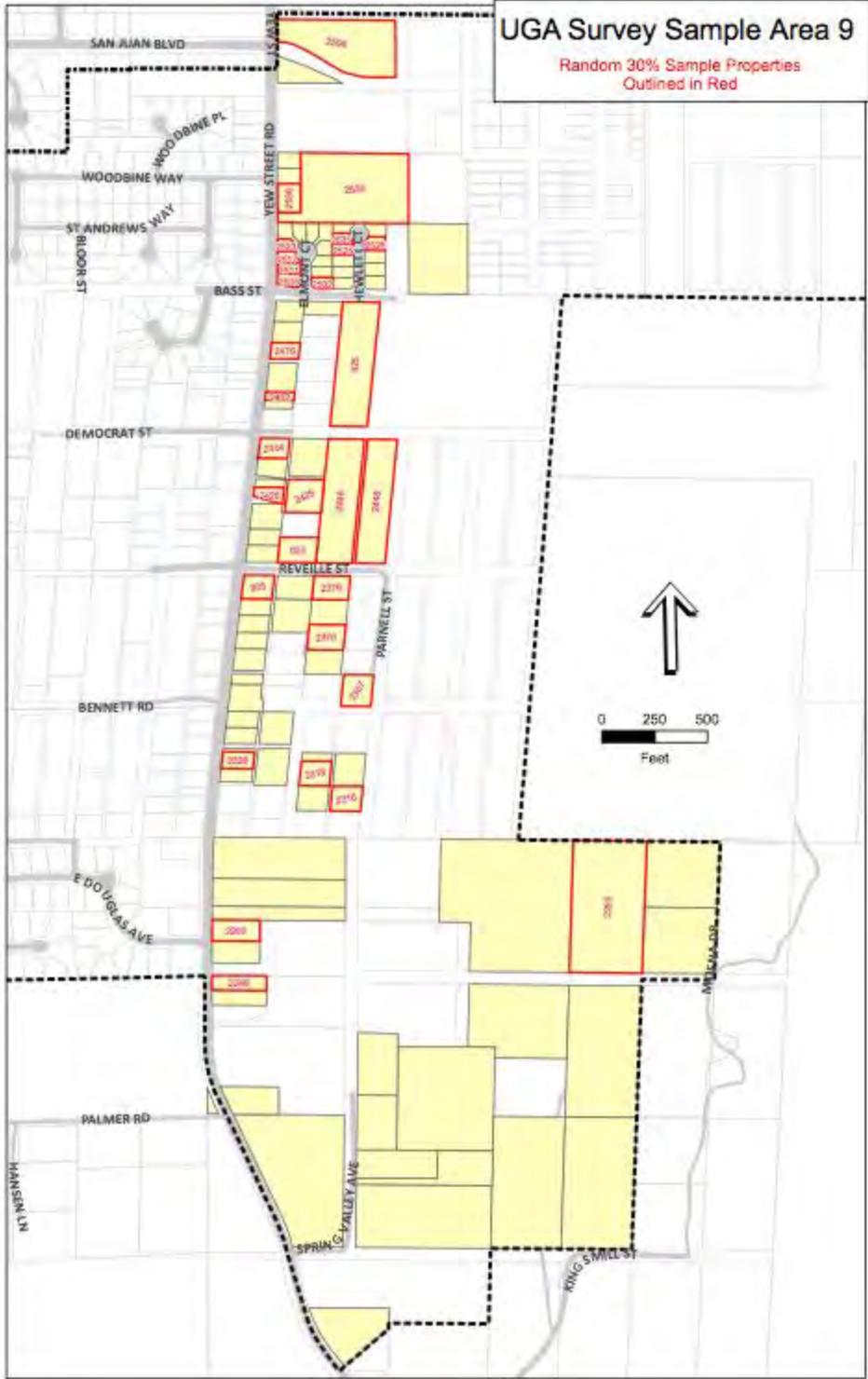
UGA Survey Sample Area 8

Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red



UGA Survey Sample Area 9

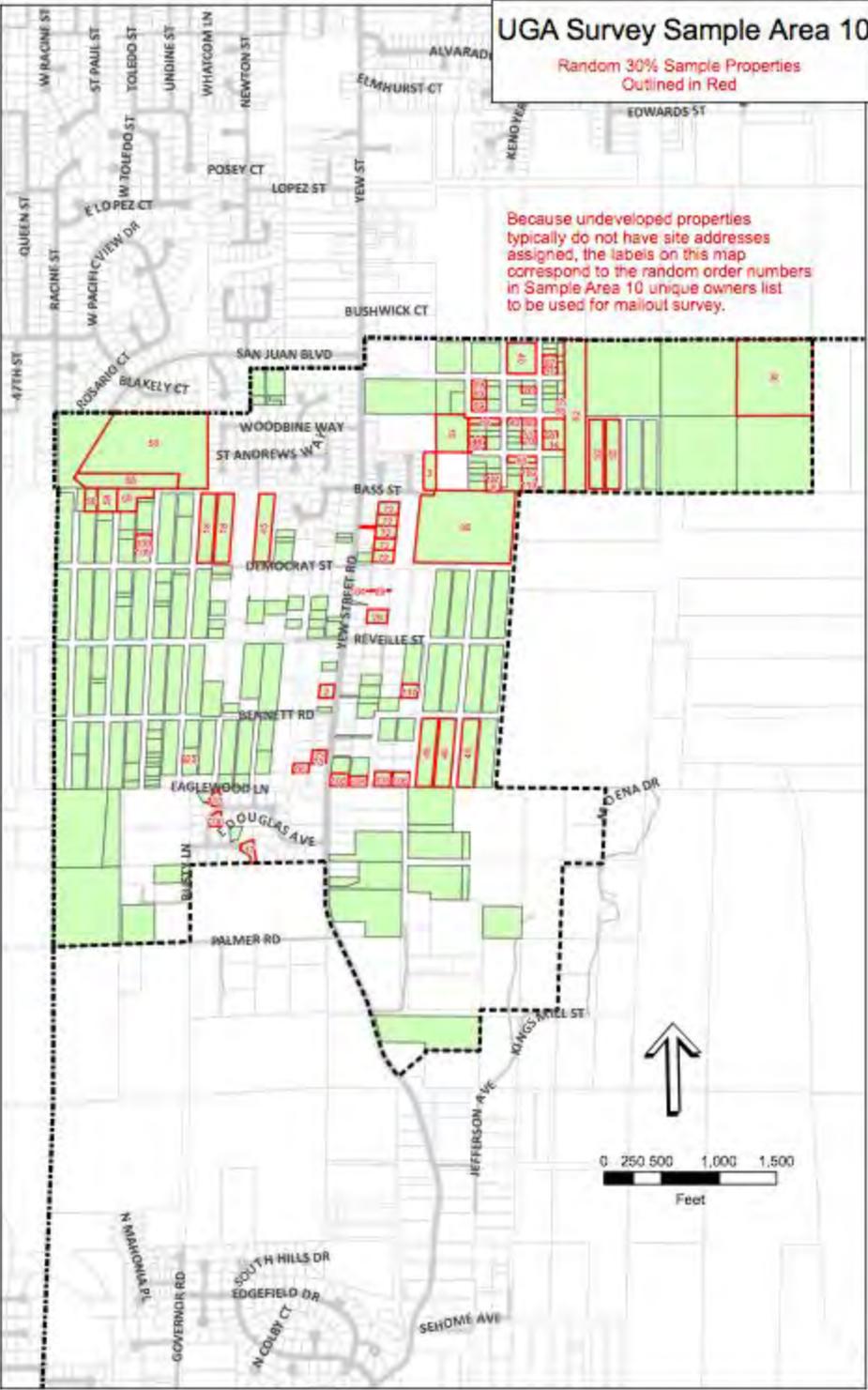
Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red



UGA Survey Sample Area 10

Random 30% Sample Properties
Outlined in Red

Because undeveloped properties typically do not have site addresses assigned, the labels on this map correspond to the random order numbers in Sample Area 10 unique owners list to be used for mailout survey.



Attachment 11: Canvassing Script

Hello

My name is _____ and this is _____, I/we are part of a team of University of Washington researchers seeking opinions of property owners in areas that have been identified as possibilities for annexation into the City of Bellingham. **Are you or someone present the property owner?**

No: Thank you for your time, due to the design of the survey we can only gather assessments from property owners. Here's a flyer about the project (**give flyer and move on**).

Yes: **Great.** This is a preliminary assessment and will not determine if an area is annexed into the city; the information we collect will be used to find out if areas are interested in starting the annexation process.

Do you have a few moments to answer some questions? It shouldn't take longer than 5 minutes.

Yes:

- Great! Begin Survey questions

Lean (Maybe, hesitates or seems unsure)

- Our team of Master of Urban Planning students is partnering with the City of Bellingham to gauge the interest of residents in unincorporated communities regarding joining Bellingham.
- Our job is to provide community members and the City Council accurate and unbiased information from which they can decide if joining the City would be in their best interest. The UW Team does not have a preferred outcome regarding this assessment.

No:

- Not a problem - thank you for your time. Would you like a flyer?

Wrap-Up: Thank you for taking the time to speak with me/us today. If you would like to learn more about the process of annexation and its potential impacts please feel free to visit our website or email our research team, the information is listed on this flyer. We will present our findings to City Council on June 3rd about public interest in annexation.

Postcard

UW Annexation Assessment

A University of Washington research team is gathering community input to measure interest in possible annexation into the City of Bellingham.

For more information on UW's research visit:
www.cob.org/uwresearch

If you have comments, please send them to
uwteam@cob.org



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Bellingham Annexation Research Initiative

Attachment 12: COB Letter Drafted for Canvassing



Planning and Community

City of Bellingham

Development Department

May 11, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

The City of Bellingham has asked the University of Washington's Department of Urban Design and Planning to facilitate directed research assessing interest in annexing to the City from residents living in the unincorporated, easterly-portion of the City's Urban Growth Area (UGA).

The County is required under Washington State law (RCW 36.70A) to establish UGA's as a means of accommodating anticipated urban growth over a twenty (20) year period. The original designation occurred in the early 1990's. These areas were ultimately intended to become part of the City through annexation requests from property owners. However, many portions of the Bellingham UGA have not sought to join the City.

Graduate students in the Master's of Urban Planning (MUP) program at the University of Washington are conducting a survey to determine if residents in those areas that have yet to annex are interested in considering a future annexation. The survey is random and has been designed to be statistically valid. The results of this survey will be used to advise the City Council on whether to allocated resources and direct City staff to hold additional informational meetings and public forums, prepare additional analytic materials and seek the future annexation of all or a portion of the easterly UGA. Should the survey indicate that these is low levels of support, the City will direct its efforts to consider growth in other areas, such as the identified UGA Reserve Areas.

The University of Washington Team will be administering this survey on Saturday, May 11, 2019.

- The survey is voluntary.
- The results of the survey are advisory only and are non-binding.
- Individual household responses will be kept confidential.
- Aggregate responses (i.e. by neighborhood or geographic area) will be released.
- Whatcom County is aware of the survey and supportive of the assessment.

The results of the survey will be made available and posted on the City's website (www.cob.org).

Should you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department at 360-778-8300 or planning@cob.org.

Thank you for your participation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Sepler".

Richard M. Sepler, AICP
Planning and Community Development Director

Planning and Community Development
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
360-778-8300 or planning@cob.org