

# North Highline Governance Study Listening Session

November 21, 2005

## Participant Response Forms

**67 responses received**

### **Neighborhoods represented:**

• Arbor Lake	1
• Beverly park	4
• Boulevard Park	13
• Evergreen	2
• Glen Acres	2
• Hill Top	1
• Salmon Creek	7
• Riverton Heights	1
• Other	1
• Top Hat	4
• Shorewood	10
• White Center	21

### **Length of residence in North Highline:**

• Less than 1 year	3
• About 1 or 2 years	4
• Between 3 and 5 years	5
• Between 6 and 10 years	6
• More than 10 years	38
• Born and lived here all my life	3
• No response	8

**Given that becoming a new City and staying unincorporated are not long term options, would you agree that annexation to the City of Burien is a reasonable choice for residents of North Highline?**

• Yes	26
• No	37
• No response	4

### **Yes Respondents – Why?**

- Burien is paying for improvements as they go without going into debt
- We are more connected with small town Burien than the big city of Seattle. I'm afraid Nickels only wants to increase density and poverty in our area.
- Seattle would tax some residents out of their homes – those on limited income.

### **Yes Respondents – Why?**

- Because being a widow and limited income, Seattle would price me out of my home. Our services here are great.
- Seattle is so big and sprawling that most areas seem lost and forgotten vs. downtown; I feel more affinity to Burien and the life style. I also hope we'd have more chance to keep our open areas, less dense housing. Many of us would probably feel forced to move if forced to higher density building.
- Smaller government; we would have a bigger voice in decisions.
- Hope for better improvements for the area.
- We would be 50% of the population of the new Burien, and only a small percentage of the larger Seattle if we joined them.
- Because I don't want to be part of Seattle. I like Burien.
- We would be lost in Seattle's big government and taxes.
- Both areas have opportunities to grow (Seattle's identity is shaped); Burien is moving forward; lots of ideas.
- We have lived here for over 55 years. Burien might be small but look what Seattle has done to South Park and White Center.
- Because the bureaucracy in Seattle is not for us!
- Seattle has better services and can fill our needs better.
- It's the lesser of 2 evils. I would rather stay unincorporated.
- Why is staying unincorporated not a long term option? I don't think it's lawfully required to [be] within city borders.
- No human services, no commitment to White Center.
- Lower taxes, services seem to be adequate. Not impressed with Seattle's support of South Parka and Boulevard Park areas.
- Would prefer to wait until it is more apparent that staying unincorporated is not feasible. Presently happy with the current status. I don't believe that staying unincorporated long term is not an option.
- Don't want Seattle taxes.
- Keep services the same, same fire/police, same schools, be our own community.

### **No Respondents – Why?**

#### For Seattle:

- There is no need to have 5 water districts. If they do not show any interest in annexing water and sewer districts, I cannot support annexing to Burien. If Seattle annexes us they will assume districts.
- I like that Seattle is progressive and will have the resources for alternative energy, for example, over Burien; and it is important to participate in these plans. I see Burien as being complacent and slow in making changes.
- No; Seattle provides more and better services; joining Seattle makes us part of a large city with power in Olympia and Washington DC. Also, Burien residents are not interested in our participation.
- Burien not big enough to support North Highline. City of Seattle should be the choice. One of the best fire departments in the country & better equipment to serve North Highline's social needs.
- If I am going to be annexed, I want to live in Seattle. My home will have more value in Seattle than Burien. Also, Burien police will not respond to private security companies'

### **No Respondents – Why?**

alarms for private homes. King C. Sheriff and Seattle police do this.

- Seattle can offer better services as they currently serve a much higher population. Seattle house values are typically higher than Burien. As a homeowner, I'd like to keep my home's value.
- Seattle offers better services.
- Seattle is a better economic choice for those living in North Highline.

#### For Remaining Unincorporated:

- Not enough information from Seattle. We should stay unincorporated with King County.
- Stay unincorporated.
- Want to stay unincorporated.
- I choose unincorporation.
- Don't want to be in a city. Lived here all my life. Want to stay unincorporated.
- Annexation by Seattle or Burien is undesirable.
- Stay in King County unincorporated; if not broke, don't fix it.
- I do not agree with your given; show me why staying unincorporated can be improved; stay unincorporated.

#### Other/Misc:

- Should split White Center from the rest of North Highline.
- I don't see that Burien is doing that well. We don't need their problems.
- I believe Burien does not really represent our interests. Just interested in financial boost from this area. Did not want us when they became a city.
- No, not if Seattle input/choice is not yet clear. Have nothing in common with being in Seattle. Does Burien really want us?? Can North Highline be a neighborhood of Seattle?
- Undecided.
- I live in NW area of White Center. I don't feel part of Burien.
- Burien has nothing to offer.
- A great increase in taxes. I don't like the way they spend their tax dollars.
- Taxes will skyrocket, forcing some residents out of their homes.
- The increasing social services required for the population will warrant deeper pockets than Burien has. They do not have the tax base to cover those additional services that North Highline needs.
- Don't think Burien wants my community to be a part of the City of Burien.
- Burien is not representative of the community.
- We are low revenue, high cost and it is not fair to ask Burien to take on that liability. The tax increases would be too high. They are too small and are still struggling with their own growth and infrastructure.
- Burien residents don't want to annex North Highline.

### **Do you agree with the preliminary UAC recommendation to not consider splitting North Highline between Seattle and Burien?**

- |               |    |
|---------------|----|
| • Yes         | 33 |
| • No          | 28 |
| • No response | 6  |

## Yes Respondents – Why?

- More voice in our future as voting as a block
- Just about any option would put White Center with Seattle while putting the more affluent areas in Burien. I think this would cause an economic divide that would cause more tension between the communities instead of unifying them.
- We are stronger when we act as a single entity.
- Won't be able to find a place to put dividing line.
- But it may also benefit some areas to be divided and be part of others.
- We need to stay together to have a larger voice in our new city.
- We are ½ block from Seattle. We don't want to belong to them. And it would put a split in our community.
- I believe it would not benefit either financially or otherwise to split. All or nothing.
- There are no definitive 2-3 "neighborhoods" that could go Burien and/or Seattle.
- Was not privy to decision. On reflection I do agree.
- The views I have are shared with UAC.
- Because I am on the south side and I don't want Burien.
- It is easier to maintain the community by keeping it whole and incorporating into one city.
- More people means a stronger voice.
- We are a community and should not be split.
- Because Seattle will cherry pick the business districts and leave the burdensome parts to Burien.
- There is a cohesion that would be lost if a split happens.
- Stay unincorporated.
- Leave it alone (2 people)
- All or nothing.

## No Respondents – Why?

- You will never make everyone happy. From the meetings I have attended, people relate one community or another. I think a majority can be found among the communities.
- No, because most of my neighbors in Shorewood want to join Seattle. But this is not favored by other areas. You'll never please everyone, but you can please 75% by splitting the area vs. 51% if you do not.
- Why not let people decide.
- Most people in the White Center area want Seattle; most of the rest want Burien.
- Because White Center wants to go to Seattle; let them. This has been stated as such at meetings that have been held. At this meeting, White Center has stated not to go to Seattle and I would be against splitting.
- Split between Burien & Tukwila; North Highline could be divided east and west of Highway 509 – Burien take the west and Tukwila take the east.
- We don't need to be split up; it would weaken our decisions.
- South Park/ White Center
- I think we need more information.
- Let's split! It may make more sense for boulevard Park to annex to Seattle and White Center to Burien.
- North Highline should be divided according to proximity to Seattle boundary lines and

## No Respondents – Why?

Burien lines.

- May provide to be more effective for service delivery and keep neighborhoods together.
- The people living closer to Seattle wanted to go to Seattle and the people living closer to Burien want Burien. Burien people don't want USE (sic).
- I think it would be fair to share the area between the cities.
- Shorewood/White Center area should be split to Seattle.
- White Center should become Seattle.
- Salmon Creek, Arbor Lake and Boulevard Park and Hilltop could go with Burien and the rest with Seattle.
- White Center could be better managed by Seattle. A good split would be 116<sup>th</sup>.
- Loses all identity.
- Let the raciests go to Burien and let the diverse folks in White Center go to Seattle.
- I do support the “no cherry picking” but if a logical and financially sound plan is put forth, then a two-part vote – at the same time – would be acceptable.
- Boulevard park is a separate neighborhood that could go to Tukwila or Seattle.
- Would rather split between Burien and Sea-Tac or Tukwila.
- The area should be split, half to Seattle and half to Burien.

## What additional information would help you decide what you would like to have happen with North Highline government?

- I did not realize that Seattle had not finished their study. I want to have more complete information from Seattle.
- Get all facts out what Seattle has to offer; they are a rich city.
- We have heard from the Seattle Executive's office but not from Burien. It would be helpful to hear their points of view. I do not know much about Burien at this time.
- Consider splitting at Hwy 509 east and west of Highway 509 – Burien take the west and Tukwila take the east - and pursue Tukwila government.
- Information on difference between being Un-Incorporated and Incorporated into Burien.
- Will we have a vote, or will the government decide?
- More information from Seattle before decision.
- I would like to hear from Seattle reps. Are they going to address us? Let's wait and see what they have to say. We have time.
- What is the fiscal situation in Burien? Would they be able to provide services for North Highline? Would like more I put from the City of Burien.
- Time to see what you have printed.
- How many people in North Highline have Seattle water and/or fire?
- Where will new tax dollars go? Where do they go now?
- Nothing. It's clear this area does not generate enough income to interest Burien or Seattle.
- Specific tax information.
- See what Seattle study says and get rid of UAC.
- A consensus from the people of the affected areas.
- Making sure human services will be supported [by Burien].
- Nothing. Let's work with what we have. We are happy with being unincorporated.

**Were you surveyed at your home or business for this project during the last 30 days?**

- |               |    |
|---------------|----|
| • Yes         | 9  |
| • No          | 56 |
| • No Response | 3  |

**Other Comments:**

- I was not aware that Seattle had not completed their study
- Please make a decision that is best for the residents of the area and not only your interests.
- I was really put off by the surveyor trying to ram down my throat the Burien option. He did not give me the full choices I deserved to answer his final question. If this is the attitude of my council, then I am embarrassed of my government. Stay with the County! Glad we are having these public meetings.
- I prefer status quo. After that I prefer a more personal feel of smaller town Burien to facelessness in Seattle, who seems to have little care for smaller groups. Their work to get more income that eliminates fishermen. I like what we have. I like the lesser density. We are a community. I'm afraid I'll end up forced from my home by Seattle's usual higher property density. Burien may still do it to me. Builders definitely want me out.
- I've heard only Seattle/Burien from UAC. Can I assume you have talked with Tukwila? If so, was there any interest shown by Tukwila? Certainly Tukwila has the best tax base and is a long term city with much experience.
- I like how much studying has been done, but I think it's time to make the change and do it.
- Let us go to Burien to continue what we have. Seattle will not want to help us. Lived here for over 56 years and never go to Seattle. Most of our money goes to Burien.
- Lived in the same house for 50 years.
- When is a vote planned? Will unincorporated be one of the choices?
- I would like to hear from the Burien or Seattle City Councils, Mayor or City Manger at one of these meetings. I would also like to see the Seattle study mentioned in this meeting when it has been completed.
- Notice of previous meeting arrived late.
- The core of White Center extends beyond boundary lines in 3 directions. White Center has been integrated into West Seattle since 1916. White Center ends southerline at approximately 107<sup>th</sup> – 112<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, easterly at approximately 8<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, westerly at 26<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW; northerly at Roxbury.
- Why are we dividing up a city? White Center – ½ of it is already in Seattle.
- I had very difficult for me to see the whole picture and I would more feedback so I can vote without a confusion.
- This meeting did not change my mind regarding wanting to be annexed to Seattle and not Burien.
- I feel as if we are being forced to make a choice. I want to stay unincorporated.
- If we're such a non-productive area with economic struggles, why are Seattle and Burien interested in us and our location? What do they have to gain from us?
- Bitterly opposed to annexation.
- The citizens of Burien should be informed re the impact of this decision. I don't believe enough outreach has happened.

- If we annex to Burien, we will be over half the population – but not all are voters – so we may not be able to conform Burien to reality. I can't see at this point that it will make any difference (split). I don't know anything because this is my second meeting. Never heard anything was happening. Seattle is established. Burien is rather new. Seattle has clout. Burien is unknown. Seattle doesn't take care of all its own. Burien Council doesn't even know there is anybody out there.
- I am against annexation. Stay unincorporated . Am paying tax on my house for fire, police, roads. Did not buy in a city because didn't want to live in one.
- I don't believe any additional information re; Burien is necessary. It makes no sense. Seattle is the only logical and sound choice. The push to have Burien put North Highline in the GMA as a PAA has to be stopped. We deserve the right to make a choice and not have it delayed because we've been tied up in their plan.
- Don't like Council teaming with City of Burien to start annexation behind our backs.
- I will probably move if we are incorporated to Seattle.
- No more politics.

### Breakdown by Neighborhood:

# Responses	Annex to Burien			Not split			Neighborhood
	Yes	No	No response	Yes	No	No response	
1	100%				100%		Arbor Lake
4	50%	50%		75%	25%		Beverly Park
13	31%	54%	15%	46%	38%	15%	Boulevard Park
2		100%			100%		Evergreen
2	50%	50%		50%	50%		Glen Acres
1	100%				100%		Hill Top
1	100%				100%		Other
1		100%		100%			Riverton Heights
7	57%	43%		43%	57%		Salmon Creek
10	30%	70%		50%	40%	10%	Shorewood
4	50%	50%		75%	25%		Top Hat
21	43%	43%	10%	52%	33%	14%	White Center
67	26	37	4	33	28	6	

### Note:

These 67 responses were submitted by an audience estimated in the range of 200 to 250 attendees. The reader should also consult the results of the incorporation study's formal surveys, both of which can be found at the UAC website, [www.northhighlineuac.org](http://www.northhighlineuac.org):

- May, 2005 (1562 completed responses)
- November, 2005 (658 completed responses)  
Report to be released 12/1/05