



Snohomish County

Planning and Development Services

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 604
Everett, WA 98201-4046
(425) 388-3311
www.snoco.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Councilmember Nate Nehring Council Chair, District 1
Councilmember Megan Dunn, Council Vice-Chair, District 2
Councilmember Strom Peterson, District 3
Councilmember Jared Mead, District 4
Councilmember Sam Low, District 5

Dave Somers
County Executive

VIA: Michael McCrary, Director
Planning and Development Services

FROM: Eileen Canola, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: City of Snohomish North Lake Annexation – BRB Notice of Intention File No. 2025-06

DATE: October 31, 2025

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this staff report is to provide the Snohomish County Council with a review and recommendation on the 240-acre North Lake Annexation proposal by the City of Snohomish (City). This review is required by section 2.77.040 of the Snohomish County Code (SCC). The City submitted a Notice of Intention (NOI) to the Washington State Boundary Review Board for Snohomish County (BRB), no. 2025-06. The BRB has distributed the NOI to affected parties for review during the 45-day review period which ends on December 1, 2025.

Within the 45-day review period, the options for the County Council on this proposed annexation are to invoke or not invoke the jurisdiction of the BRB to hold a public hearing on the proposed annexation. The County Council also has the option to state a position to oppose, or not oppose, the proposed annexation, or to not state a position. If the BRB approves a request to invoke its jurisdiction, it will hold a hearing at which the County Council can provide its position. If BRB jurisdiction is not invoked, the annexation would be deemed approved. If the annexation is approved by the BRB either following a public hearing or because no party invokes BRB jurisdiction, the annexation would still need to be finalized by a City ordinance that sets the effective date. The authority of the County Council for reviewing annexations is set forth in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.93.100 and SCC 2.77.040.

The County and the City have adopted an interlocal agreement (ILA) titled, *Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Snohomish and Snohomish County Concerning Annexation and the Orderly Transition of Services for the North Lake Annexation Area Within the Snohomish Urban Growth Area Pursuant to*

RCW 35A.14.296, effective September 30, 2025. This ILA is a requirement of the ILA method of annexation (RCW 35A.14.296) that is being used for the North Lake Annexation and helps to facilitate the annexation and ensure agreement upon logical boundaries and the orderly transition of jurisdiction and services. Therefore, the recommendation to the County Council from PDS is to not oppose the annexation and to not invoke the jurisdiction of the BRB.

BACKGROUND

The proposed North Lake Annexation area is approximately 240 acres with 122 residences, an estimated population of 343, and an assessed valuation of \$85,053,367,300 according to the NOI. The City is proposing to annex the entirety of the unincorporated Snohomish Urban Growth Area (UGA) located north of the City that includes the area east of and including 99th Ave SE, west of and including South Machias Rd, and Tax Parcels 28050100101400, 28050100101300, 28050100101200, and 28050100101500, as contained in Exhibit A of the ILA for the North Lake Annexation.

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) in the County's 2024 Comprehensive Plan has an existing designation of Urban Low Density Residential and Urban Medium Density Residential. The County zoning for the area includes R-7,200, R-9,600, and Low Density Multiple Residential (LDMR). The City, in its adopted 2024 Comprehensive Plan, has multi-family and single-family land use designations for the North Lake Annexation area. The City's planned zoning for this area is single-family with a minimum lot size of 7,200 square feet (six units per acre), multi-family at a density of 18 dwelling units per acre, and a small area of multi-family with a density of 12 units per acre described in the NOI.

ANNEXATION METHOD

The annexation method proposed by the City is the "Annexation of Unincorporated Territory Pursuant to Interlocal Agreement" per RCW 35A.14.296, which requires the development and approval of an interlocal agreement with a hearing on the proposed interlocal agreement by all entities considered a party to it. The County and the City have adopted an interlocal agreement specific to the North Lake Annexation Area as required by RCW 35A.14.296, effective September 30, 2025, and this interlocal agreement will not apply to any other annexations. The adopted North Lake Annexation interlocal agreement references the Master Annexation Interlocal Agreement (MAILA) between the City and County, titled, *Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Snohomish and Snohomish County Concerning Annexation and Urban Development Within the Snohomish Urban Growth Area*, effective March 26, 2003, and recorded under Auditor's File #200304070094 ("Master Annexation ILA"). A summary of how the requirements of RCW 35A.14.296 have been met or are anticipated to be met is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Requirements of ILA Method of Annexation Requirement of RCW 35A.14.296

Requirement of RCW 35A.14.296	How Requirement Has / Will be Met
City initiates annexation by notifying affected County, service providers.	The City notified County staff of its interest in pursuing an annexation of the North Lake area with the intent to use RCW 35A.14.296 in January of 2025.
Affected service providers indicate in writing their interest in being party.	The City contacted Fire District 4, informing them of the annexation interest and the method of annexation. Fire District 4 provided its response on July 1, 2025, indicating it did not desire to be a Party to the ILA.

The ILA must ensure that for a period of five years after the annexation any parcel zoned for residential development within the annexed area shall: (a) Maintain a zoning designation that provides for residential development; and (b) Not have its minimum gross residential density reduced below the density allowed.	Subsection 3.3 of the ILA for the North Lake Annexation complies with this requirement.
The County and City shall jointly agree on the boundaries of the annexation and its effective date. The ILA shall describe the boundaries of the territory to be annexed and set a date for a public hearing on such agreement for annexation.	The City Council held a public hearing and approved the ILA for the North Lake Annexation on August 21, 2025, the County Council held a public hearing, and the County approved the ILA on September 30, 2025. The ILA states the effective date of the annexation would be established upon the City Council adoption of an ordinance finalizing the annexation and after publication of that ordinance.
Following the hearing, if the City determines to effect the annexation, they shall do so by ordinance. Upon the date fixed in the ordinance of annexation the area annexed shall become part of the City.	It is anticipated that the City will proceed to effectuate the annexation after the BRB's 45-day review period on the Notice of Intention is completed successfully, and all requirements are met.

REVIEW

Following is a review of the information required under SCC 2.77.040(2):

A. Comments Received

The NOI was circulated for review to County departments and agencies, and there were no concerns expressed opposing the annexation. Information provided by the departments has been included in the review in this staff report. The County's department of Planning and Development Services did not receive any comments from the community regarding the proposed annexation during the BRB's 45-day review period.

B. Total Assessed Value

The assessed value of the North Lake Annexation area is \$85,053,367,300 according to the NOI.

C. Consistency of the proposal with Growth Management Act planning goals, urban growth area designations, countywide planning policies, and the county's comprehensive plan

The proposed annexation is consistent with GMA planning goals, UGA designations, CPPs, and the County's comprehensive plan, as required under RCW 36.93.157.

1. **GMA planning goals (RCW 36.70A.020):** The proposal for the North Lake Annexation, as contained in the NOI is consistent with GMA planning goal (1) Urban growth. This goal states, "Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner." The entirety of the area proposed for annexation is within the City's UGA, and the City is the logical provider of public facilities and services. The proposed annexation area is currently served by the Snohomish County Sheriff for law enforcement, Fire District 4 for fire protection, and the Snohomish County Department of Public Works for road maintenance. The City's infrastructure provides water to the area from the City of Everett, in addition, there are three small water systems within the North Lake Annexation

area, but these are not special purpose districts. Many of the residences in the area use onsite septic, and the City is constructing the Northeast Trunkline of the City's sewer system into the area, which will provide the opportunity for new development to connect to sewer. Upon annexation, the City will take over for road maintenance in the annexation area and will contract with the County Sheriff for law enforcement. The services provided to the proposed annexation area upon annexation are consistent with the planning goals of the GMA and with RCW 36.70A.110(4), which provides in relevant part, "In general, cities are the units of local government most appropriate to provide urban governmental services."

2. **UGA designations:** The proposed annexation area is designated within the Snohomish UGA on the County Future Land Use Map, and the City is the logical provider of public facilities and services.
3. **Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs):** The annexation proposal is consistent with the CPPs. The proposal allows for the transition of unincorporated areas into incorporated areas within the UGA which is supported by the following CPP policies:

Joint Planning (JP)-4 – The County and cities shall develop comprehensive plan policies and development regulations that provide for the orderly transition of unincorporated Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) to incorporated areas in UGAs. Mutual agreements may be utilized to address governance issues and expedite the transition.

Public Services (PS)-1 – Jurisdictions should support cities as the preferred urban service providers.

4. **Snohomish County Comprehensive Plan:** Snohomish County adopted a comprehensive plan under the authority of chapter 36.70A RCW (GMA). The proposed annexation area is identified in the Snohomish UGA, intended to be eventually annexed to the City. Further, policies in the County's comprehensive plan support this annexation using the ILA method per RCW 35A.14.296, specifically policies Land Use (LU) 1.E.2 and Interjurisdictional Coordination (IC) 1.B.3:

LU Policy 1.E.2 The county shall not support any proposed annexation by a city unless and until an annexation agreement has been signed by the county and said city ensuring the continued implementation of Policy LU 2.A.1 for the area to be annexed.

IC 1.B.3 The county shall seek interlocal agreements with the cities to establish a process for transferring authority over pending projects, permits, and records and establishes reciprocal impact mitigation for transportation, parks, and schools prior to potential or planned annexations or incorporations.

D. Impacts relevant to boundary review board considerations as established by state law.

1. The following section provides comments related to RCW 36.93.170 – Factors to be considered by the Boundary Review Board.
Factor 1 Population and territory; population density; land area and land uses; comprehensive plans and zoning, as adopted under chapter 35.63, 35A.63, or 36.70 RCW; comprehensive plans and development regulations adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW; applicable service agreements entered into under chapter 36.115 or 39.34 RCW; applicable interlocal annexation agreements between a county and its cities; per capita assessed

valuation; topography, natural boundaries and drainage basins, proximity to other populated areas; the existence and preservation of prime agricultural soils and productive agricultural uses; the likelihood of significant growth in the area and in adjacent incorporated and unincorporated areas during the next ten years; location and most desirable future location of community facilities;

a. Population and territory; population density; land area and land uses; assessed valuation. The proposed North Lake Annexation area is approximately 240 acres with 122 residences, an estimated population of 343, and an assessed valuation of \$85,053,367,300 according to the NOI. The population density is 1.4 per acre. The City is proposing to annex the entirety of the unincorporated Snohomish Urban Growth Area (UGA) located north of the City that includes the area east of and including 99th Ave SE, west of and including South Machias Rd, and Tax Parcels 28050100101400, 28050100101300, 28050100101200, and 28050100101500, as contained in Exhibit A of the ILA for the North Lake Annexation. The primary use of the area is residential.

b. Comprehensive plans and zoning: The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) in the County's 2024 Comprehensive Plan has an existing designation of primarily Urban Low Density Residential with and small area of Urban Medium Density Residential. The County zoning for the area includes R-7,200, R-9,600, and Low Density Multiple Residential (LDMR). The City, in its adopted 2024 Comprehensive Plan, has multi-family and single-family land use designations for the North Lake Annexation area. The City's planned zoning for this area is single-family with a minimum lot size of 7,200 square feet (six units per acre), multi-family at a density of 18 dwelling units per acre, and multi-family with a density of 12 units per acre described in the NOI.

c. Applicable service agreements: The City and County have existing service agreements related to technological services (IT), fire inspections, animal transport services, a consortium for housing and community development, law enforcement services, waste management, jail services, and emergency management.

d. Applicable interlocal annexation agreements: The County and City have an existing MAILA and adopted an ILA for the North Lake Annexation area as required by the ILA annexation method per RCW 35A.14.296. Together, these agreements facilitate the annexation by defining a logical annexation boundary and coordinate the transfer of jurisdiction and service. The Surface Water Management (SWM) division of the County's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) provided that the ILA for the proposed North Lake Annexation, which in Sections 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 of the Annexation ILA, provides satisfactory updating amendments to the Surface Water Management provisions in the Master Annexation ILA Section 9. The Transportation and Environmental Services (TES) division of the County's Department of Public Works (DPW) stated that it worked with the City, prior to this annexation submittal, on the annexation boundaries and accompanying interlocal agreement to make sure that Snohomish County Public Works concerns were addressed. This annexation submittal reflects those discussions.

e. Topography, natural boundaries, and drainage basins, proximity to other populated areas; the existence and preservation of prime agricultural soils and productive agricultural uses: The area proposed for annexation is predominately flat, with some areas of steep slopes. The annexation area is bound by State Route 9 to the west, and agricultural land to the east, as designated on the County's Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The City's corporate limits are to the south of the annexation area, and to the north is rural land designated on the County's FLUM.

f. Likelihood of significant growth in the area and adjacent incorporated and unincorporated areas during the next ten years. As noted in the NOI, the City has extended a sewer trunk line into the western portion of the annexation area, and any development after annexation would need to connect to sewer, as feasible. Therefore, immediate redevelopment of the area is not anticipated. Growth to the north and east of the area proposed for annexation is not anticipated, as those areas are designated rural and agricultural, respectively, on the County's FLUM.

Factor 2. Municipal services; need for municipal services; effect of ordinances, governmental codes, regulations and resolutions on existing uses; present cost and adequacy of governmental services and controls in area; prospects of governmental services from other sources; probable future needs for such services and controls; probable effect of proposal or alternative on cost and adequacy of services and controls in area and adjacent area; the effect on the finances, debt structure, and contractual obligations and rights of all affected governmental units.

- a. **Municipal services:** The City is the logical provider of urban municipal services, and the County is a provider of regional services as identified under chapter 36.70A RCW. However, the City is not a full municipal service provider, as noted in the NOI, after annexation, the City intends to contract with the Snohomish County Sheriff for law enforcement. The County and City have an existing MAILA and adopted an ILA for the North Lake Annexation area as required by the ILA annexation method per RCW 35A.14.296. Together, these agreements provide for the coordinated transfer of jurisdiction and service and establish coordinated planning for development of the annexation area.
- b. **Present cost and adequacy of governmental services and controls in the area:** The City conducted a fiscal analysis for the proposed North Lake Annexation and stated in the NOI, that with conservative estimates the fiscal impacts are offset by the benefits of annexation. As indicated in the NOI, the City has determined that there are adequate governmental services for the area currently and post annexation. The County's SWM division of DCNR commented that the proposed annexation would moderately reduce SWM service area and would have moderate impact on programs. Program service area and functions would adjust to the annexation.
- c. **Effect of finances:** As noted in the NOI, the annexation proposal is informed by a fiscal analysis conducted by the City. The County expects minimal general fund impact as the County considered fiscal impacts of potential annexation during its review and approval of the ILA for North Lake Annexation area. The proposed annexation is expected to have

minimal impact on the overall County budget or County services. The general fiscal impacts would be a loss of REET revenue and sales tax revenue from the area if annexed. The Surface Water Management (SWM) division of the Department of Natural Resources (DCNR) estimated a revenue loss as the annexation agreement provides for the County to collect surface water management services charges and provide surface water services during the calendar year of annexation. There will be an estimated impact of \$71,711.51 annual revenue loss after the calendar year of annexation. SWM services will adjust to the revenue loss; however, some programs may have a disproportionate impact due to funding structure.

- d. **Rights of all affected governmental units.** The annexation proposal does not appear to affect the rights of all affected governmental units including Fire District 4, Sno-Isle Libraries, Snohomish School District, City of Everett (for water), or Snohomish County.

Factor 3. The effect of the proposal or alternative on adjacent areas, on mutual economic and social interests, and on the local governmental structure of the county.

It is not anticipated that the annexation proposal will have substantial effect on the adjacent areas. The area to the north is designated rural and the area to the east is designated agricultural in the County's FLUM. The City's corporate limits on the south would extend to include the North Lake annexation area. The annexation proposal helps to meet the City's population growth targets and housing needs. The County's SWM division of the DCNR commented that a moderate revenue impact is anticipated to the SWM division from the annexation as the current revenue (2025) is about \$18,578 annually, and projections of future revenue impact, assuming 2.8% annual increases, in 2026 would be \$19,098, and in 2027 would be \$19,632.

E. Impacts relevant to boundary review board considerations as established by state law.

The following comments relate to RCW 36.93.180 - Objectives of the Boundary Review Board:

Objective 1. Preservation of natural neighborhoods and communities.

Once annexed, the City will have more local control over the impacts of future development to its community. The annexation of the North Lake Annexation area will bring the existing natural neighborhoods, including the North Ridge community, into the City's corporate limits to ensure logical annexation boundaries. This annexation proposal would not split or separate out existing neighborhoods or communities.

The annexation, as proposed, would further this objective.

Objective 2. Use of physical boundaries, including but not limited to bodies of water, highways, and land contours.

The annexation proposal uses the physical boundary of State Route 9 on the west, and land designated on the County's Future Land Use Map as rural to the north and agricultural to east. The City's corporate limits are to the south of and adjacent to the annexation proposal.

The proposed annexation furthers this objective.

Objective 3. Creation and preservation of logical service areas.

The proposed annexation will not affect the service areas for Fire District 4 and the County Sheriff as both will continue to service the area. The annexation proposal will provide the opportunity for the annexed area to connect to the City's sewer system upon development and as feasible.

The annexation as proposed furthers this objective.

Objective 4. Prevention of abnormally irregular boundaries.

The proposed annexation boundaries do not create abnormal or irregular boundaries. The annexation would create a continuous City jurisdiction. The ILA for the North Lake Annexation allowed for the City and County to agree upon the annexation boundaries to prevent abnormally irregular boundaries. The TES division of DPW commented that it worked with the City prior to this annexation submittal on the annexation boundaries and accompanying interlocal agreement to make sure that Snohomish County Public Works concerns were addressed and that this annexation submittal reflects those discussions.

The annexation as proposed furthers this objective.

Objective 5. Discouragement of multiple incorporations of small cities and encouragement of incorporations of cities in excess of ten thousand population in heavily populated urban areas.

This objective does not apply to the proposed annexation.

Objective 6. Dissolution of inactive special purpose districts.

This objective does not apply to the proposed annexation.

Objective 7. Adjustment of impractical boundaries.

The annexation, as proposed in the NOI provides practical boundaries.

The annexation furthers this objective.

Objective 8. Incorporation as cities or towns or annexation to cities or towns of unincorporated areas, which are urban in character.

The North Lake Annexation area is within the City's UGA and as such is designated to be annexed according to the CPPs and the City and County's comprehensive plans. This is consistent with the GMA that supports and directs cities to be the providers of urban services and counties to fulfill the role as a provider of regional services.

As proposed, the annexation does further this objective.

Objective 9. Protection of designated agricultural and rural resource lands.

This objective does not apply to the proposed annexation. The proposed annexation area is not designated agricultural land or rural resource land.

F. Impacts to county facilities and other county-owned property:

There is no County property within the North Lake Annexation area. The SWM division of DCNR commented that There are no SWM projects currently on the 6-year CIP list in the annexation area.

G. Impacts to the provision of public facilities and services:

County departments were provided with the opportunity to provide input on drafting the ILA for the North Lake Annexation that is required by RCW 35A.14.296 and to the NOI (BRB file no. 2025-06). The following comments were received from County departments related to the annexation's effect on the County's provision of public services:

- a. The SWM division of DCNR estimated impact of \$71,711.51 annual revenue loss after the calendar year of annexation, and that SWM services will adjust to the revenue loss; however, some programs may have a disproportionate impact due to funding structure.
- b. The Solid Waste division of the Department of Public Works (DPW) had no concerns or comments on the annexation proposal.
- c. The Facilities Department had no concerns or comments on the annexation proposal.
- d. SNO-911 stated that no action is necessary until after the annexation is approved.
- e. The Permitting division of the Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS) estimated a loss of approximately \$600 per year from mechanical permits and perhaps \$3,000 once every few years from a remodel.
- f. The TES division of DPW commented that it worked with the City prior to this annexation submittal on the annexation boundaries and accompanying interlocal agreement to make sure that Snohomish County Public Works concerns were addressed. This annexation submittal reflects those discussions.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review detailed above, the proposed annexation is consistent with the GMA, the CPPs, local comprehensive plans, the factors and objectives of the BRB, and will have minimal impact to County budget and services. The County and City have adopted an ILA for the North Lake Annexation, as required by the ILA method of annexation per RCW 35A.14.296, to facilitate the annexation and govern the transition of services.

This conclusion has been reached by comprehensively reviewing the annexation against the applicable BRB factors and objectives, County codes, and other applicable statutes and determining that the relevant factors and objectives that the BRB must consider would be advanced by the annexation.

The recommendation to the County Council from PDS is to **not oppose** the annexation and **not invoke** the jurisdiction of the BRB.

cc: Ken Klein, Executive Director
Mike McCrary, Director, PDS
Darren Groth, Manager, PDS
Kelly Snyder, Director, DPW
Greg Farris, Director, SWM-DCNR
Ryan Hembree, County Council Legislative Analyst