

To: Burien City Council and Planning Commission

From: Rachael Levine *Rachael Levine*
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Date: April 16, 2014

Re: Our Neighbors, Ourselves

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CITY OF BURIEN *3:40pm*

We have the choice to extend or reject additional benefits of annexation for all residents of Burien, including those of us living in the already annexed portion of North Highline as well as those living in the yet unincorporated area. By giving up the "PAA", we would turn our backs on our neighbors and allow a few self-serving, mis-informed or prejudiced voices drown out those who are concerned with the past, present and future of our entire community.

The financial benefits, enjoyed by all of Burien as the result of annexing "Area X", are a reality to the tune of about \$550,000 per year of tax credit from the State of Washington. That money contributed to Burien having its own Public Works Department, certainly an advantage when snow has to be removed! Annexing "Area Y" neighbors, would bring up to \$5 million per year for 10 years that could help address those "infrastructure deficits", claimed by some Councilmembers for White Center. Meanwhile, all of us who live nearby and whose children are served by the Highline School District and our libraries could realize increased security, attention to neighborhood concerns and land use and density policies developed by an accountable local City government.

At a recent NHUAC meeting, social justice and equity for King County were discussed. Over and over the disparities in King County were identified by place. Where you live in this county is a predictor of your life span. Where you live is a predictor of education outcomes for children. The major factor contributing to these differences is the concentration of poverty that can be prevented.

Shaping the future of the City of Burien by including the rest of North Highline gives all residents the benefits of having a larger footprint in seeking project funding, in developing sustainable environmental policies, and in avoiding the life span and educational achievement disparities of the "two King Counties". Do the residents of Burien really want to live in the mind-set of a gated community?

In reading the Burien News, I learned that our city received a "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reports", the highest form of recognition in the area of government accountability and financial reporting. Living close to the Arbor Lake Park, I have witnessed the excellent care of my neighborhood park and noted the recent planting of trees there in celebration of Arbor Day. Kudos to a hard-working City Staff! As far as I know, the City of Burien is in good shape. Let's grow it while we can.

CFTR: 4/28/14

cc: Nhan Nguyen, management Analyst

