



Kirkland Potential Annexation

Updated Fall 2009

Frequently Asked Questions—Public Safety

Since 2006, the Kirkland City Council has been carefully studying the annexation of the Finn Hill, North Juanita and Kingsgate neighborhoods, known as Kirkland's Potential Annexation Area (PAA). Throughout the City's analysis of the potential annexation, the City Council has endeavored to meet the intent of the Growth Management Act, evaluate financial impacts of annexation and provide public participation opportunities for those impacted should annexation occur.

The annexation process is guided by a series of strict events. In April 2009, the City Council initiated the annexation process by declaring its intent to hold an election in November. In June, the City presented its annexation proposal to the Washington State Boundary Review Board for King County which was approved. Following several public meetings, the City Council adopted zoning regulations in July for the PAA that define land use designations, identify allowed uses within each zone and regulate such things as building height and setbacks.

The purpose of this Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) handout is to address questions and concerns the City has heard from current City and PAA residents about public safety services.

One of the noticeable changes in services should annexation occur, is that PAA residents would be served by the Kirkland Police Department and not by the King County Sheriff's Office. All but a small portion of the PAA is currently served by the City of Kirkland Fire Department via a contract with King County District #41. If annexation occurs, the City of Kirkland intends to provide the same public safety services to the PAA residents as it does to Kirkland residents.

How will annexation affect police services?

If annexation occurs, the City of Kirkland Police Department intends to provide equivalent police services in the annexation area as it provides in existing city limits. Three patrol districts are planned for the PAA; adding to the existing five districts in current city limits. An officer for each of the new patrol districts and a supervisor will be on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The anticipated hiring of additional officers will provide for more police coverage in the PAA than what is currently provided by the King County Sheriff's Office.

In addition to general patrol services, additional staff would be added to the Investigations, Traffic, K9, Corrections and other police support services to meet the needs of a larger city. For more information about KPD, go to www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/police.



For annexation information, go to www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/annexation.

- **Subscribe to receive email updates**
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Email: annexation@ci.kirkland.wa.us

Phone: 425-587-3001

How will the City hire additional police personnel should annexation occur?

At this time, it is anticipated that 37 new commissioned officers will be hired should annexation occur. Most new officers are trained at the State's criminal justice academy and are required to complete "field" work with Kirkland Police Department. The training process can take up to 18 months.

If annexation occurs, the City would immediately begin the hiring process so that police patrol services can be established as quickly as possible for the PAA by the effective date of annexation. Because it is unlikely that the City can hire and train such a large number of officers between the time of the election and the effective date of annexation, it will be necessary to phase in service levels over time.

The City is currently in discussion with the King County Sheriff's Office regarding transition coverage and services.

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What will happen to police response times if I annex to Kirkland?

As it does now in the existing City, the regional dispatch center will prioritize 911 emergency calls and dispatch officers as needed. “Priority 1” calls will have the highest priority. Such calls are requests for service of an emergency nature which require immediate police response, as there is reason to believe that a continuing serious threat to life exists.

What about 911 and dispatch services?

The City of Kirkland, several East King County cities, and numerous fire departments are partners in the regional public safety dispatch center known as the North East King County Regional Public Safety Communications Agency (NORCOM). As of July 1, 2009, dispatch services for the Kirkland Police and Fire Departments are coordinated from the NORCOM Center located at Bellevue City Hall. For more information on NORCOM, go to www.norcom.org.

Would the crime rate be affected if annexation occurs?

Should annexation occur, the Kirkland Police Department anticipates an increase in citizen reports of crimes as residents and businesses in the PAA begin to connect with their local police department. This has occurred with Kirkland’s past annexations and with other communities’ annexations. The increase in reported crimes will result in higher crime statistics in the initial phase of transition but is not an indication of higher levels of crime. With a higher number of patrol officers working in a geographical area, greater emphasis can be placed in areas prone to certain crimes such as motor vehicle thefts, motor vehicle prowls and residential burglaries.

Will Kirkland police respond to vandalism and other requests at parks in the PAA that remain with King County?

The King County Sheriff’s Office is the primary responder to King County Parks located within cities’ corporate boundaries. Ownership and maintenance responsibilities for Big Finn Hill Park will remain with King County at this time. Currently, when no County deputy is available to respond to County parks issues, the Kirkland Police Department provides assistance on emergency type calls. This assistance will continue.

Is a jail going to be located in Kirkland?

The City of Kirkland is working with other north and east King County cities and the City of Seattle to plan for a new jail capacity. Most cities within King County have had contracts with the County that allow them to house their misdemeanants in the County’s jails. The cities’ current contract with the County expires in 2015. Because of projected growth in its felony population, the County has stated that it will not have room in its existing jail facilities to house city misdemeanor inmates after the contract expires, and that cities should be planning a replacement facility for the jail beds they are losing at King County. The need for additional jail space is not a result of the potential annexation.

The City of Kirkland currently operates a twelve bed municipal jail which can house a portion of the City’s inmates. Like other cities, Kirkland will need to build or contract for more jail beds to house its misdemeanor inmates. A site for a new regional jail has not been chosen at this time. For more information on the regional jail planning efforts, go to www.necmunicipaljail.org.

How will annexation affect fire and emergency medical services?

The City of Kirkland Fire and Emergency Services intends to provide equivalent services in the annexation area as it currently provides in existing city limits. Presently, through a contract with King County Fire District #41, the City provides fire protection and emergency medical services to all but a small portion of the potential annexation area. The Kingsgate area is served by three separate fire districts: Woodinville Fire & Life Safety District, King County Fire District #41 (contract with City of Kirkland) and the Fire District #34 (contract with City of Redmond). Paramedic (Advanced Life Support) services are funded through the Medic One levy and provided from Kirkland’s Fire Station #27 and will continue at the same level should annexation occur.

The City of Kirkland is in discussion with the fire districts that are potentially impacted by annexation regarding transition coverage and services. Recently adopted legislation (ESSB 5808) provides guidance to address annexation of fire districts, particularly the treatment of impacted fire district employees and continuation of existing services.

Does the City of Kirkland ban fireworks?

The sale, possession and discharge of fireworks are prohibited within Kirkland city limits. The ban became effective in 1999. If annexation occurs, the prohibition would apply within the expanded City limits.

Will animal control services be available if annexation occurs?

Currently, animal control is provided by King County Animal Control Services for the City and for King County. If annexation occurs, the City anticipates this service would continue.