

Annexation

A statement for the voters of King County

From time to time, voters in King County are asked to consider proposals to expand the boundaries of existing cities to include more neighborhoods. Each proposal is described as an Annexation. Washington state law provides that local services should be provided by cities for all areas inside the urban growth boundary, and by county governments for unincorporated areas outside the urban growth boundary. All local governments, including cities and the county, have previously adopted policies that recognize this law and agree to abide by it.

Annexation proposals should be given careful attention by the affected citizens of both the expanding city and the area (or areas) to be annexed.

In general, the Municipal League of King County believes that local urban services should be provided by cities and not by the county government. This standard becomes more urgent as the unincorporated urbanized areas of the county are more and more scattered, and more and more likely to be separated by cities.

We therefore recommend that the voters affected by a proposed annexation should give strong consideration to voting IN FAVOR of the proposal.

This recommendation is consistent with conclusions of the Municipal League's 2003 study entitled *Shortchanged: King County's Fiscal Crisis* as well in earlier studies of possible improvements in county government published by the League during its 95 year history. Two key points from the 2003 study read:

- King County should divest itself of its role as a local service provider—in order to fulfill its role as provider of county services.
- All land within the urban growth boundary should be incorporated or annexed to the city or cities within each area's sphere of influence through a collaboration between King County, existing cities and citizens.

The full text of *Shortchanged: King County's Fiscal Crisis* can be accessed at <http://www.munileague.org/issues/2003/Shortchanged.htm> on the Municipal League's website.