Why you might NOT want to be annexed by the city of Lake Stevens

There are several reasons you have been told why it would be wonderful to be annexed into the City of Lake Stevens. Have you ever wondered why certain entities are so eager to annex our property into the city? Here are a few things that should be considered.

**Higher Density Housing**

This is the PRIMARY reason for this annexation attempt. A developer who owns a 30 acre parcel on Rhodora Heights Road wants to increase density above and beyond what Snohomish County currently allows. They want to increase the density in a RURAL area to something called HIGH URBAN RESIDENTIAL and/or COMPACT RESIDENTIAL. They want to cram as many houses or apartments into that parcel as possible.

HUR (High Urban Residential) allows over 90 lots in a 10 acre plot. That would potentially add up to **270 tightly packed “homes” to that single, 30 acre parcel**. In the entire 95 acre proposed annexation area, there are currently only about 150 homes, over 50 of which were added within the last 5 years, but with much less allowed density than the City and the developer are planning for Rhodora Heights.

**Debt Transfer and Taxes**

The City of Lake Stevens has over $18,000,000.00 of accumulated debt. If our neighborhood is annexed, a portion of that debt will be transferred to us and paid by us. Do YOU need more debt? The City also plans to **increase your property tax by 1% year over year until the year 2024** (page 6 of the 2018 Budget). Some of us believe our taxes are high enough already.

**City Planning**

The City of Lake Stevens annexed Frontier Village (Safeway Area) over 12 years ago. Think about that the next time you are driving around in circles trying to get in or out of that chaotic shopping area. A new design, already in process will cost over $70 million dollars, and will still require you to exit Frontier Village from Davies Road to the north, or 4th Street to the south, as you do today. There will still be no direct access to Highway 9 or 204. Is the kind of planning you support?

**The Trestle**

Adding thousands of new residents to the City and area will add thousands of cars to the traffic nightmare most of us “enjoy” every day called “The Trestle.” At a recent Lake Stevens City Council meeting, Mayor John Spencer said; “We are working on it (the trestle), yet we have NOTHING concrete at this time and we are NOT making any promises.” Well, increasing housing density TODAY will mean more, horrible traffic on The Trestle TOMORROW. That is concrete, and that is a promise.

I moved to the Lake Stevens area in 2004 when the population of the City was 7,400 people. Through annexation and increases in zone density, the population has ballooned to over 30,000 today. Lake Stevens’ plan is to add tens of thousands more, (about 45,000 by the year 2035) primarily by **INCREASING DENSITY**. The City is doing this **without ANY major improvements in infrastructure**. There are no sidewalks or even shoulders to walk on in most of the city. Residents are left to risk their lives simply trying to walk or bike to Tom Thumb on narrow roads with NO SHOULDERS.

Most of us are not against growth, we’re against uncontrolled growth just for the sake of adding more of OUR tax dollars to the City’s coffers, with no improvement in infrastructure or services. **How about we see some examples of better roads, better planning, less crowding and better services BEFORE we commit our land and money to this City?** The City has proven over and over, that they don’t care how crowded, idiotic and dangerous the roads are. While the roads go in circles and The Trestle rots, the City plans for new police stations and city buildings!

Many of you got a knock on the door last winter from a paid signature gatherer. That person presented only the perceived benefits of adding YOUR LAND to the City. **Nobody was told of the downsides.** The City was very quiet during this process, ignoring rules about notifications, and public hearing announcements. They say a benefit of annexation is that it gives you a local voice, yet the City did their very best to find ways to silence that voice, or worse yet, ignore it altogether.

Some concerned residents will be circulating another petition. It will be presented to the Snohomish County chapter of the Boundary Review Board. It will ask them to review this annexation attempt and make sure the City of Lake Stevens does things properly and with legally required communication to the people (US!) that will be affected by it.

Best Regards, Stacy Brewer. Concerned Resident. (sbrewer2001@gmail.com)
This is a **High Urban Residential** zoned neighborhood on 99th near Frontier Village. Even MORE houses are being added to this development today. This is what we can expect in Rhodora Heights once we join the City of Lake Stevens.

The Rhodora Heights parcel would be over three times the size of this Lake Stevens neighborhood pictured to the right. Is that what you would like next door to your house?

The type of high density development Lake Stevens is planning will lead to much bigger problems on the Trestle, which is already well over it's designed capacity. Does this scene look familiar?