

Benson Hill Communities Infrastructure

If Benson Hill Communities were to annex to Renton, who would pay for the infrastructure improvements needed in the area?

The cost of providing basic infrastructure such as roads and parks would be paid by all property owners in the City of Renton including those in the existing incorporated residential areas and in the commercial areas. Renton would also apply for State and Federal grants to fund infrastructure improvement projects in this area just like any City project. As new areas are urbanized, the developers of these areas would be responsible for paying for street improvements such as curbs, gutters, street lighting, and sidewalks. Similarly, the developers of these areas would pay for the extension of sewers and water.

What infrastructure improvements does Benson Hill Communities need?

A recent fiscal impact study by Berk & Associates for King County estimated, based on King County's capital planning documents, that 2004 transportation needs in the Benson Hill Communities area totaled \$50,071,000 when Benson Road projects were included. When the Benson Road projects were removed, this number dropped to \$14,171,000. Listed "high priority" projects (including Benson Road) accounted for \$24,733,000 of the total amount.

Upon annexation, King County would turn over all publicly-maintained surface water management facilities in the area to the City of Renton. In addition to developing a plan to operate and maintain the facilities, the City will need to develop a capital plan that integrates these facilities into the City's existing system. Those costs are not yet known. While the area is similar to the Renton Highlands and its surface water needs, the City's approach to address drainage is very different from King County, in that Renton does not maintain residential surface water facilities or build detention ponds.

Renton Community Services Department has indicated that the southeastern areas of the current City have lower levels of park acreages than those set out in the City's standards; annexing the Cascade area would provide needed park capacity. However, Community Services expects that they would eventually seek to construct a neighborhood recreation center in the area that could represent a capital investment by the City.

If Renton annexed the area and Fire District 40 were to remain intact, then annexation would require a transfer of the District's capital assets. Depending on the timing of the annexation, Renton and Fire District 40 would need to negotiate about the three fire stations in the area for that asset transfer to take place.

Can Renton tax some areas differently than others?

Generally, no. It is City policy to tax all ratepayers the same regardless of where they live in the City. Renton's portion of the taxing district levy rates the County collects is \$3.14843 per \$1,000 of assessed value. In addition, the City also collects \$0.07861 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation in the form of a general obligation bond for senior housing. The City Council has the authority to, or to not, collect the general obligation bond in a newly annexed area. In the case of that bond, there would be a small difference in taxation for different geographical areas. Because the general obligation bond for senior housing will expire in 2009, this difference in would be for a very short time period.