



DATE: June 9, 2026

TO: Mayor Malakoutian and City Councilmembers

FROM: Emil King, Director
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SUBJECT: Cougar Mountain Annexation Petition Status

Background

Summary of the Annexation Process

King County, in its Countywide Planning Policies, identifies unincorporated areas within the urban growth boundary and assigns those areas to cities for future annexation. The City of Bellevue has grown through annexation for many decades. Bellevue's last remaining Potential Annexation Area (PAA) is adjacent to the Cougar Mountain neighborhood to the Southeast of the city (see Attachments A and B).

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35A.14 outlines the process options for annexation. These include direct petition, the method employed in this case, and through an interlocal agreement between a city and county.

Under the direct petition method (35A.14.120 RCW):

- Property owners representing at least 10% of the assessed value of the area must first notify the city of their intent to petition for annexation, and the city must take action to proceed.
- A full petition is then circulated and must be signed by owners representing at least 60% of the assessed value.
- If the 60% threshold is met and after certification of signatures and a public hearing, the city may adopt an ordinance to notify the county of the city's intent to annex the PAA.
- This is then reviewed by the county Boundary Review Board. Upon the Boundary Review Board's approval, the city adopts an ordinance to annex the land.

For additional information on the annexation process and the direct petition method, please refer to the council memo from April 1, 2025.

History of Annexation of the Cougar Mountain PAA

Two property owners in the Cougar Mountain PAA initially submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) for annexation on June 21, 2022. Council chose to reject the NOI on August 1, 2022, based on the implications for staff time and resources in multiple departments. The city was beginning the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan at that time and council suggested that staff may have more time once that effort was complete. Since that time, both property owners have signed Pre-Annexation Agreements with the city, allowing for the extension of utilities, although utilities have not yet been extended.

On February 19, 2025, the city received a new NOI from the same property owners. Council accepted the NOI on April 1, 2025, and provided direction to evaluate two different zoning scenarios (Large Lot -1 or LL-1 and Suburban Residential -4 or SR-4) and to annex all properties in the PAA at once (the PAA is comprised of four smaller annexation areas). On November 25, 2025, petitions for annexation were mailed to all property owners in the PAA.

Parcels in the Potential Annexation Area

The PAA for Bellevue includes 27 parcels to the Southeast of the Cougar Mountain neighborhood totaling approximately 52 acres contained within four potential annexation areas – PAA A, B, C and D.

PAA	Assessed Value (2025)	Acres	Housing Units
PAA A: Cougar Mountain West	\$13,112,500	41.1	2
PAA B: SE Cougar Mountain Drive West	\$991,000	3.2	1
PAA C: SE Cougar Mountain Drive East	\$2,640,000	5.9	1
PAA D: SE 60th Street	\$1,005,000	1.9	1
Total	\$17,748,500	52.1	5

Land Use

All parcels in the PAA are currently zoned R-1 by King County except one, which is zoned R-4. Comparable pre-annexation zoning of LL-1 and SR-2 has been established under Ordinance 6851 (implementing new regulations for “missing middle” and accessory dwelling units). These properties are currently not included in the Future Land Use Map in the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan.

Community Outreach and Engagement to Date

City staff have conducted outreach and engagement to affected properties and surrounding property owners throughout the pre-annexation process. This has included:

1. Sent a postcard to the property owners in the PAA alerting them to the Petition for Annexation.
2. Contacted all property owners via phone or email to make them aware of the potential annexation and answer any questions. All but a few responded.
3. Posted information on the city’s website.
4. Mailed a physical petition with cover letter outlining the annexation process.

5. Held a virtual community meeting on December 1, 2025 for the affected property owners and neighbors in Bellevue to explain the process and answer questions.

Petition Status

To date, the city has received signed petitions from four property owners. Three petitions were received from property owners in PAA A, accounting for 33% of the area’s assessed value. One petition was received from PAA C, accounting for 26% of the area’s assessed value. No petitions have been received from PAAs B or D. Petitions are valid for 180 days from the date signed. The first petition was received on December 5, 2025, and expired June 3, 2026.

PAA	Property Owner Petition Signatures	Percent of Assessed Value
PAA A: Cougar Mountain West	3	33%
PAA B: SE Cougar Mountain Drive West	0	0%
PAA C: SE Cougar Mountain Drive East	1	26%
PAA D: SE 60th Street	0	0%

Next Steps

None of the four PAAs have reached the 60% assessed value threshold. Given the extensive outreach and engagement to date, lack of enough property owner interest in annexation, and signatures starting to expire, staff will be shifting resources to other city initiatives. Future opportunities for annexation are not impacted by this approach.

Policy and fiscal analysis associated with this annexation are included in Attachment C.

Attachments

- A. Cougar Mountain Potential Annexation Area Parcel Map
- B. Map LU-4. Potential Annexation Area
- C. Policy and Fiscal Analysis