



1991

30th ANNIVERSARY

2021

BI prior to annexation



Source: Resolution 1990-18

Key dates in COBI's history

- **1947:** City of Winslow incorporates.
- **Sept. 18, 1990:** Winslow voters approve annexation advisory vote.
- **Nov. 6, 1990:** Unincorporated voters approve annexation.
- **Feb. 28, 1991:** Annexation goes into effect.
- **Nov. 5, 1991:** Voters approve changing name from City of Winslow to City of Bainbridge Island.
- **1994:** Comprehensive Plan adopted.
- **2000:** New City Hall at 280 Madison Ave. N. completed.
- **2001:** Voters approve \$8 million bond for purchase of open space.
- **2009:** Voters approve changing the form of government from mayor-council to council-manager.
- **2017:** Council approves resolution recognizing Bainbridge Island as a "welcoming and inclusive City."
- **Nov. 10, 2020:** Council adopts first Climate Action Plan.
- **2020 to present:** City manages response to COVID-19 pandemic.

Celebrating 30 years of all-island government

Bainbridge Island is celebrating a milestone: On Feb. 28, 1991, the City of Winslow annexed the unincorporated area of the island. Voters later changed the name to City of Bainbridge Island. "We never want to miss a chance to celebrate milestones and successes," said City Manager Blair King. "We want to stop for a moment and look back over the last 30 years and appreciate all the work that people have done to get us to this point."

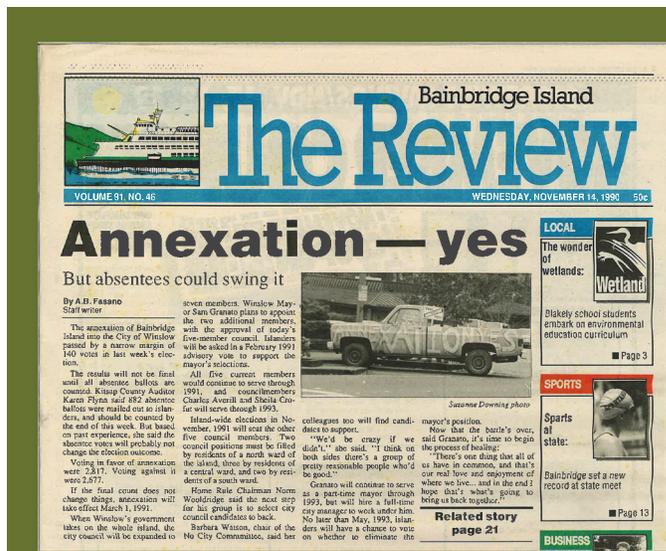
Citizen-led efforts toward annexation spanned 50 years. It wasn't until 1988 when the Home Rule Committee formed that annexation would eventually succeed. "Home rule meant having general purpose government—that is land use planning, police, public safety, public health," said Andrew Maron who was an initial director of the Home Rule movement. "Those things would be decided locally instead of an hour away in Port Orchard—by people you could talk to: your friends and neighbors."

In 1989, the Home Rule Committee asked the City of Winslow to annex the unincorporated area, but the Winslow City Council rejected the request. The Home Rule Committee then gathered 2,300 signatures to incorporate a second city outside of Winslow, but the Kitsap County Boundary Review Board denied the proposal in January 1990. Faced with a situation that seemed to be a dead end, the Committee held a "quit or fight" public meeting and decided to fight. The Committee moved forward on two approaches: state legislative action to allow a vote on incorporation as a second city and annexation to Winslow. At the same time, the newly elected City of Winslow Mayor Sam Granato developed an interest in annexation.

"I didn't like the idea of two cities on the island: one mostly a rural city and the other old Winslow crammed in with no room for expansion or anything. It didn't make sense to me," recalled Granato who owned the Lynwood Theatre and was also concerned about police protection in the unincorporated Bainbridge Island after his staff were threatened with weapons. The sheriff's department had only allocated "half a deputy" to unincorporated Bainbridge Island. The sheriff's deputy arrived at one incident three hours after it was called in. Another time he never showed up, Granato said.

In early 1990, Granato and the Council approved a resolution calling for an election on the annexation proposal. Winslow residents in September 1990 approved the advisory vote to annex the rest of Bainbridge Island. Next came the vote that would decide the island's future. On Nov. 6, 1990, voters in the unincorporated area approved annexation 51.1% to 48.9%, a margin of 139 votes. The City of Winslow suddenly grew from 3,000 to nearly 16,000 residents.

Continued on page 4.



Voters in the unincorporated area approved annexation by a margin of just



Courtesy of The Bainbridge Island Review.

SALES-TAX INCREASE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING BEGINS JAN. 1

The City Council in September approved a one-tenth of 1% tax increase to support affordable housing on Bainbridge Island. The Citywide retail sales tax will increase from 9.0% to 9.1% on Jan. 1.

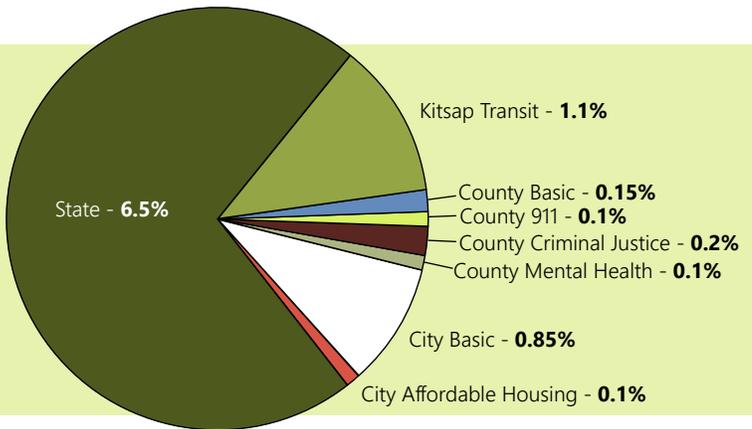
At least 60% of the funds must be used for affordable housing construction, mental and behavioral health-related facilities construction or funding the operation and maintenance of new affordable housing units and facilities where housing-related programs are provided.

The remaining 40% must be used for the operation, delivery or evaluation of mental and behavioral health treatment programs and services or housing-related services.

The funded affordable housing and facilities may only be provided to households with an income 60% or less of the county median household income (MHI). The MHI in Kitsap County is approximately \$80,000 per year, which means eligible households must earn approximately \$48,000 or less.

Sales tax breakdown

The sales tax rate on Bainbridge Island will be 9.1% in 2022. Of this amount, the City's portion will be 0.95%, with the balance going to other agencies.



In addition, eligible households may include any of the following groups:

- » People with behavioral health disabilities
- » Veterans
- » Seniors
- » Families with children experiencing homelessness or at-risk of doing so
- » Unaccompanied youth or young adults who are experiencing homelessness
- » People with disabilities
- » Domestic violence survivors

The affordable housing tax allocation is ongoing, differentiating it from the one-time recent ARPA allocation to affordable housing. The Council was able to increase the sales tax because, in 2020, the state legislature passed HB 1590, which allows a local sales and use tax to be imposed for affordable housing by local officials without voter approval. If the Council had not passed this tax but Kitsap County had, then the affordable housing allocation would have gone to the County with no stipulation that any of it be spent on Bainbridge.

COUNCIL DECIDES HOW TO SPEND STIMULUS FUNDS

The Council in September approved using more than half of the City's \$7 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for projects aimed at providing affordable housing, with the remainder supporting sustainable transportation, wastewater treatment upgrades, emergency hubs and human services.

ARPA, a \$1.9 trillion national economic stimulus bill passed by Congress in March, aims to help communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City Council discussed potential ARPA projects during the summer. City Advisory Groups and the community provided the Council with input in September. Nearly 700 community members reviewed the online survey, and more than 400 responded.

Affordable housing: \$3.75 million

The money for affordable housing includes \$2 million funding for a mixed-income rental housing community at the northeast corner of Madison Avenue and Wyatt Way. Housing Resources Bainbridge is a partner on the project team and will own 13 affordable housing units.

An additional \$1.75 million in ARPA funds will be reserved for other qualifying projects. Additional information will be available at the beginning of 2022.



Sustainable transportation: \$2 million

Staff is currently developing cost estimates and gathering data for the 180 ideas submitted for potential projects.

Wastewater beneficial reuse: \$1 million

Staff is gathering data to determine how additional treatment of wastewater or other processes could support the beneficial reuse of reclaimed wastewater, such as for groundwater recharge, irrigation or stream enhancement. **2021 high-priority project**

Human services funding cycle: \$60,000

The City provides roughly \$330,000 per year in grants to local nonprofit organizations to support human services programs in the community. Council allocated \$60,000 in new funding to this effort. Staff will develop a stand-alone process for ARPA-eligible grants.



Solar panels at emergency hubs: \$250,000

The Council allocated \$250,000 to install solar panels and storage batteries at a limited number of emergency hubs across the island.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OVERVIEW

The Council and staff are working on the following ongoing projects to increase affordable housing on Bainbridge Island. Not included here are the affordable housing sales tax (see page 2) and the \$3.5 million dedicated to affordable housing through a one-time stimulus package (see page 2).

Housing Design Demonstration Projects (HDDP)

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing Nov. 18 to receive community input on whether to extend the City's Housing Design Demonstration Projects (HDDP) program. The program, available in the Winslow area, is intended to promote the development of projects that increase housing diversity and meet green building certification standards with incentives such as increased density and flexible development standards.

On Oct. 28, the Planning Commission discussed Ordinance No. 2021-35, which would extend the City's HDDP program until Dec. 31, 2023. The program, adopted in 2009, was extended in 2019 for two years and narrowed to include only development projects that provide at least 50% affordable housing units. Since the 2019 extension, the City has not received any formal development proposals that plan to utilize the HDDP program.

Following the Nov. 18 public hearing, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the ordinance. Then it will be provided to the Council for consideration. If the Council takes no action, the HDDP program will expire at the end of 2021.



Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE)



The City Council is reviewing a draft ordinance (Ordinance No. 2021-23) that would encourage development of multifamily affordable housing in Winslow and Lynwood Center in exchange for 12 or 20 years (depending on program criteria) of partial property tax relief. The program, known as Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (MFTE), is a financial incentive to encourage development and redevelopment of multifamily and affordable housing by exempting qualifying new housing development from property taxes on the residential improvement value. The tax burden is then shifted to and divided among other property taxpayers. Washington State law allows local governments to adopt MFTE programs.

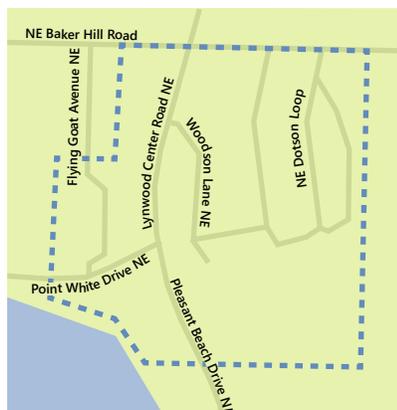
On Oct. 12, Council approved a motion to set the maximum household incomes for the 12-year and 20-year programs to 80% of the area median income for units designated as affordable. The City Council was scheduled to continue discussion on the ordinance Nov. 9.

Where would MFTE apply? The Council is considering applying the program to the following areas of Bainbridge Island:

- Winslow Master Plan Study Area
- Winslow Sewer System Service Area
- Lynwood Center Area: Neighborhood Center (NC), NC/R-12 and R-5 zones



Map of Winslow area



Map of Lynwood Center

Learn more about the MFTE program on the City's website at bainbridgewa.gov/1291.

Housing Specialist



The City will add a new Housing Specialist position to the City Manager's office. This employee will lead the City's programs and services related to affordable housing. Staff requested to add this \$140,525 position during the mid-biennium budget process, and Council approved it.



Housing Action Plan

The City will hire a consultant team to develop a Housing Action Plan (HAP). The goal of the plan is to encourage construction of additional affordable and market-rate housing in a greater variety of housing types and at prices accessible to a greater variety of incomes.

As part of the scope of work, the consultant will generate a Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Inventory, lead public outreach efforts and evaluate and develop policies and tools for increasing housing diversity and affordability. The City received a \$100,000 grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce to support development of the HAP.

The Planning Commission will review the draft HAP and make a recommendation to the City Council, which will consider approval.

2021 high-priority project

Density Bonus for Religious Organizations



The Council on Oct. 26 requested that the Planning Commission work with staff to prepare an ordinance to allow bonus density for affordable housing built on property owned or controlled by religious organizations. The Council is pursuing the topic after the Washington State Legislature in 2019 enacted Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1377 to facilitate the development of affordable housing projects on property owned or controlled by religious organizations. At least one religious organization has expressed interest to the City in potentially pursuing an affordable housing project. The Planning Commission will discuss this topic at its Nov. 18 meeting.



LEARN MORE: bainbridgewa.gov/1189

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30th Anniversary, continued from page 1.

"I've never regretted it. I still think it was the right thing to do. We really set about planning on a long-range basis the future of the island," Granato said.

After annexation, the Council established three wards (north, central and south) and expanded from five to seven members. They wrote ordinances, revised land use codes, hired new staff and created infrastructure. The City, which previously maintained 17 miles of streets, was now responsible for an additional 119 miles of roads.

"We had a huge amount to do," said Maron who was one of two new council members elected after annexation. "I remember even all the county records, the building permit records all had to be carted from the county to the City."

The transition to an all-island City government coincided with a new state requirement for cities to develop a Comprehensive Plan addressing growth. That began the effort to start laying out the vision for the island and to preserve our rural character. "I think we've done fine," Maron said. "We've argued amongst ourselves on various issues, but I think—in the long haul—we've been able to make decisions that reflect what people in the community want."

Maron, who served on the Council from 1991 to 1999 and served as mayor in 1997, now serves on the City's Utility Advisory Committee. The topic that initially got him involved in the Home Rule effort—water resources—is the same issue that keeps him involved today.

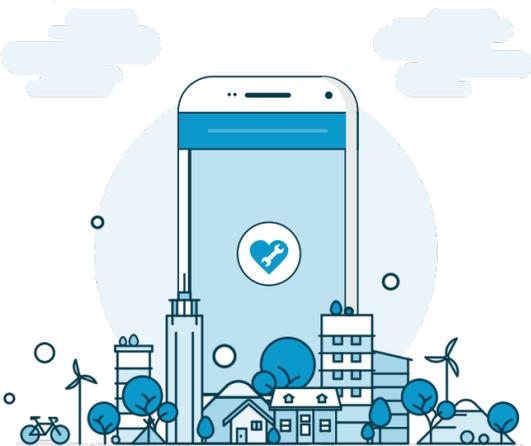
There are two City employees who worked for the City of Winslow prior to the annexation vote. Below they describe what it was like during the transition to an all-island government.

SeeClickFix

See something that needs to be fixed?

- » Potholes
- » Vegetation impeding roadway
- » Damaged or missing street signs
- » Items obstructing road
- » Sidewalk issues
- » Code violations

For the easiest way to submit non-emergency requests, visit SeeClickFix.com.



For Public Works after-hours emergencies (threats to public health, safety or the environment such as sewer spills, loss of water pressure, flooding, downed stop sign or downed tree in the City's right of way), **call 911**. CenCom will contact COBI emergency personnel.



Delbert Frantz
Treatment Plant Operator II
37 years of service

"We started getting more equipment to take care of the whole island. It's come a long way. It really has."



Public Works staff in front of a road grader purchased after annexation.

Did you know?

Before annexation, Public Works staff, which consisted of seven people, used push brooms to sweep Winslow Way on Saturdays, and they sanded the roads with shovels from the back of a truck.




John Inch
Mechanic II
33 years of service

"For me, it's being part of the community. I grew up here, and seeing the progress and what we've accomplished makes it better for people in the future. Looking back, you can still see today all the accomplishments we made related to the infrastructure."