

# Birch Bay Incorporation Feasibility Study

## ABOUT THE INCORPORATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

At the request of the Birch Bay Incorporation Study Committee, Whatcom County has commissioned a study to examine the financial feasibility of incorporation of the Birch Bay community. The goal of the feasibility study is to provide the Birch Bay community with reliable information about the financial implications of incorporation—information that will serve as a basis for debate as the community considers its governance choice. The Study will address two key questions:

1. Is it financially feasible to incorporate as a new City of Birch Bay?
2. What are the potential implications of incorporation on local taxes and levels of service?

To answer these questions, the Study Team will model annual revenues and costs of a hypothetical City of Birch Bay. To give residents a meaningful point of comparison, the study seeks to answer the question in the context of the status quo: How do the financial realities of incorporation compare with the status quo (remaining unincorporated)?

It is crucial to remember that the study is designed to clarify what is possible; it is not meant to make a value-judgment about whether residents are better or worse off if they incorporate (compared with remaining part of unincorporated Whatcom County).

## Outcomes of the Feasibility Study

The study will give the community a tool to make more informed choices about incorporation. Should the community decide to go forward with an incorporation petition, the Study will also fill requirements of the Boundary Review Board (BRB), an independent review agency with the authority to oversee municipal and special district boundary changes.

## What areas are included in the Study Area?

The Study will look at the feasibility of incorporating all parcels within the Birch Bay Urban Growth Area (see map).



**BIRCH BAY INCORPORATION STUDY COMMITTEE & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**Birch Bay Incorporation Study Steering Committee**

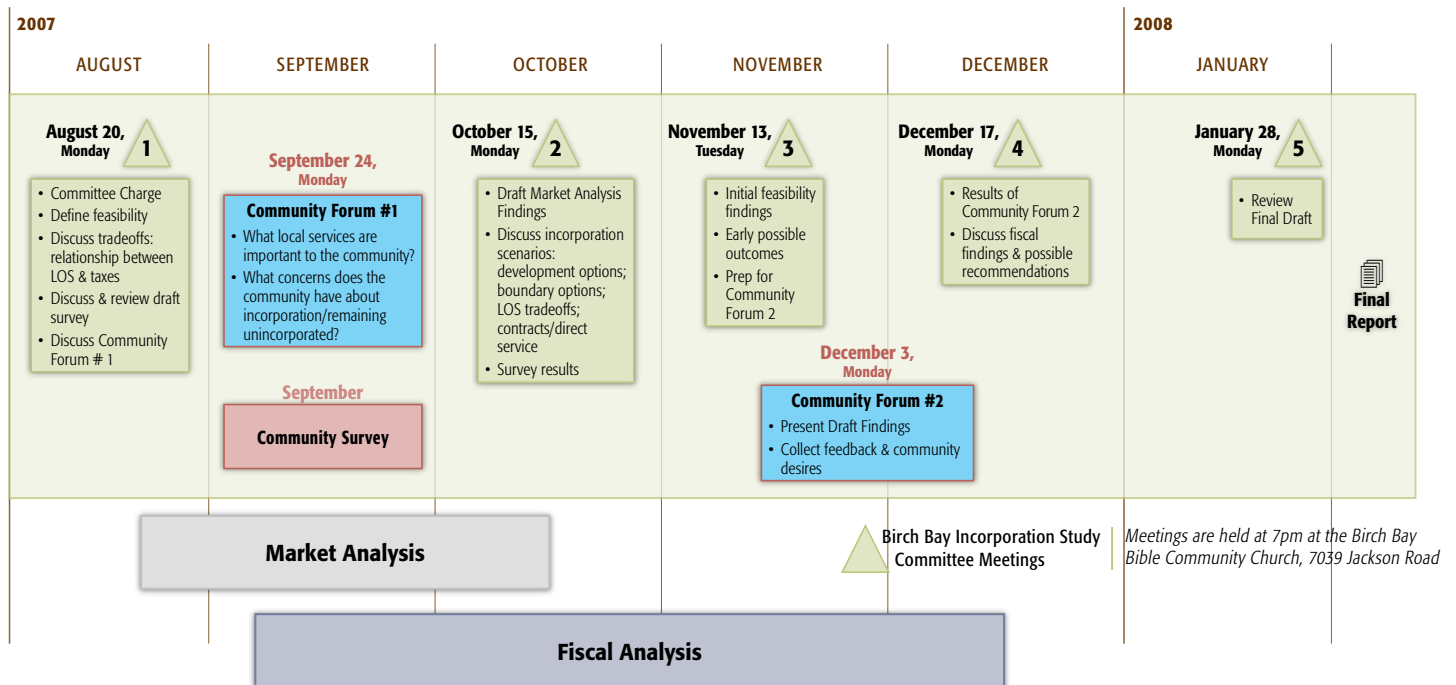
The Birch Bay Incorporation Study Steering Committee is a group of committed local residents interested in learning more about the feasibility of incorporation. The group is meeting monthly to help guide the feasibility analysis. To learn more about the Incorporation Study Committee, contact Kathy Berg at ChairKathy@BirchBayInfo.org.

**Community Involvement: Opportunities to Learn About the Implications of Incorporation & Provide Feedback**

Public participation will be a vital component in Birch Bay Incorporation Study process. The Incorporation Steering Committee is convening two public meetings and a community survey. The first public meeting and community survey are designed to hear from residents what public services and public investments are important to the community. Between September 3 and September 30, 2007, the community can answer the survey by going to [www.berkandassociates.com/survey.html](http://www.berkandassociates.com/survey.html) or by calling (360) 676-6707 ext. 50686 to request a paper copy. The first public meeting will also give participants a chance to learn more about the Incorporation Study process and to ask broad questions of the Study Team. At the second meeting, later in the year, the Incorporation Study Committee will present draft findings for comment.

**Remember, the Final Report will not determine whether or not Birch Bay should incorporate, rather it will give the community information about whether a City of Birch Bay would be financially feasible.**

**Project Schedule**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Email [birchbay@berkandassociates.com](mailto:birchbay@berkandassociates.com) or call (360) 676-6707 ext. 50686