

City of Poulsbo Planning Department



Annexation Process, Benefits & Concerns



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What is Annexation?

Annexation is when portions of an unincorporated Urban Growth Area (UGA) are incorporated into the city limits. While there are several methods of annexation allowed by the State, a common method is the 60% petition method. See the information within this brochure for more information on the annexation process. For frequently asked questions, see the Annexation FAQ brochure available at the City of Poulsbo Planning Department.

How does the GMA relate to annexation?

The Growth Management Act (GMA) makes annexations a part of the overall planning process and essentially eliminates much of the annexation decision-making process in cities because planning for growth occurs earlier, during the formation of the Urban Growth Area boundaries and the development of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The decision about annexation is not whether to annex, but rather when. Important factors that may influence the timing of annexation include population growth, the city's ability to provide urban services in a proposed area, and the current housing and economic market.

What are Potential Benefits of Annexation?

- Local services may become available to properties within an annexation area. City police service will be provided and utilities are available for connection, subject to the ability to extend to a connection point.
- The City's zoning and development ordinances will help to ensure orderly growth. The City boundaries can become more logical, eliminating confusion regarding service provision.

- Residents in the unincorporated Urban Growth Area (UGA) may already feel affected by actions of Poulsbo's government, but they are largely unable to be influential in its affairs as Kitsap County residents. Upon annexation, residents from the UGA will be able to be involved directly in city politics by going to elected City officials for assistance or by being elected or appointed to a public position in city government.
- Annexation may increase the City's sphere of influence, its ability to attract businesses, and its ability to seek out financial grants by adding land and population to the city limits. Annexations that include industrial land may attract new industry or jobs, promoting further development of commercial enterprises.
- Urban infrastructure and improvements in annexed areas may bring about improved real estate values and marketability.

What are Potential Concerns of Annexation?

- Residents sometimes argue that they chose to live in the area because they did not want the services and/or taxes that come with belonging to a city.
- Residents may feel the area's "rural" character would be lost.
- There may be concern that city codes and regulations are inappropriate for the area (such as livestock regulations).
- Property owners may worry that property values will increase upon entering the city with a respective increase in taxes.



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How do I get more information?

- Review the “Annexation Frequently Asked Questions” brochure for more information on the annexation process.
- Visit the City’s website for access to brochures, applications and the Poulsbo Municipal Code.
- For more information, contact the Poulsbo Planning Department by phone, e-mail or in person.
- You may also want to contact other City Departments, including Finance (360.394.9881) and Public Works (360.779.4078).

The annexation process usually takes 6 months to 1 year to complete. Annexation is exempt from Poulsbo Municipal Code Title 19, Project Permit Application Procedures. Annexation is also exempt from State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review.

The typical process includes twelve steps:

1. The annexation initiators will have a pre-application conference with City of Poulsbo staff. The City will post a map of any annexation-related pre-application conferences on the City website, and a summary letter of the conference will be available for public review;
2. The annexation initiators submit a letter requesting approval to circulate a petition;
3. The annexation initiators receive authorization to circulate a petition from the Poulsbo City Council;
4. Within 30 days of City Council authorization to circulate the annexation petition, the initiators of the annexation are required to contact all property owners within the area proposed for annexation and all property owners within the contiguous UGA of the proposed annexation unless an alternative area is approved by the City Council in Step 3;
5. Within 60 days of City Council authorization to circulate the annexation petition, the initiators of the annexation are required to hold a community meeting and present concepts for infrastructure placement required to support the area proposed for annexation. City staff shall be invited to the meeting;
6. The annexation initiators collect signatures on the annexation petition from residents within the proposed annexation area;
7. Once signatures are collected, the annexation initiators submit the petition to the City;

8. Signatures are then submitted to the Kitsap County Auditor for verification and a Determination of Petition Sufficiency is issued;
9. A Notice of Intent is submitted to the Kitsap County Boundary Review Board by the City;
10. The City provides notice in the annexation area and in the newspaper 15 calendar days prior to the public hearing;
11. The City Council holds a Public Hearing to approve or deny the annexation; and
12. If approved, the City Council adopts an Ordinance approving the annexation.

