



Annexation Facts Sheet Ten Questions and Answers

1. What exactly is “annexation?”

Annexation is simply the process of expanding the City limits to include properties currently outside the City.

2. How does annexation work?

For an area to be annexed, property owners representing at least 60% of the tax assessed value of the area have to petition for annexation. A rough analogy would be that a property owner “votes” with their tax assessed value. A super majority (60%) in favor of annexation is required for the annexation to be successful.

(For more information on annexations see RCW 35A.14.120 on the Washington State Legislature website at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/>; for more information on tax assessed values, see the King County Assessor’s Office at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/Assessor/>.)

3. What are the benefits of being inside city limits?

Additional services become available such as sewer, better access to elected officials, a more direct role in community affairs, a vote in city elections, a smaller and more responsive local government, property taxes stay local, and emergency response from the Enumclaw police department.

4. What are the typical concerns someone might have if their property is being considered for annexation?

Typical concerns regarding annexation include a desire to retain the community’s rural character and existing King County services, opposition to municipal codes, or financial concerns related to property and utility taxes.

5. My well water is great and I have a fairly new septic system. Am I required to discontinue their use and will I be forced to hook up to city sewer?

NO. You can continue to use your well and septic system after annexation, provided they meet current county health department standards. However, if your water or septic system does fail, being part of the city may allow you to connect to the city water or sewer systems as necessary. Current city policy allows for the City to require connection to city sewer if a) the sanitary sewer is in any street, alley or other access which is directly adjacent to said premises; or b) within 200 feet of said premises; however, this provision has historically been used to address health concerns associated with failed septic systems.

6. What is the current sewer connection fee?

As of September 2009, the sewer connection fee is \$5,716.00. The current customer base charge for a single family and multi-family residential is \$25.02 per month; thereafter the volume charge is \$7.44 per hundred cubic feet. The average monthly residential sewer bill is \$77.10 based on 700 cubic feet of water consumption.

7. What is the current water connection fee?

As of September 2009, the inside city limit water connection fee is \$3,110.00, plus a water utility meter setting fee of \$200.00. In 2009, the average monthly residential water bill was \$24.33 for inside city and \$49.34 for outside city customers.

8. Will I be forced to get rid of my livestock?

NO. Livestock are an important component to Enumclaw's Urban Growth Area. Upon annexation, new Enumclaw Municipal Code will likely expand the already permitted pet use provision beyond four pets and other domestic animals to include livestock.

9. Will I be forced to build sidewalks if I do not develop my property?

NO. Half street improvements (curb, gutter, and sidewalk) are only required if a property is being improved and costs of that improvement exceeds \$25,000. In most cases, the applicant will have the opportunity to enter into a Local Improvement Agreement (LIA) with the City for future half street and utility improvements. LIAs are used in lieu of requiring half street improvements at the time of building.

10. How much in utility taxes would I pay?

Currently, residences in unincorporated King County do not pay utility taxes. Upon annexation into the City, residents would be subject to the city's tax on a range of utility services. The amount of tax is usually directly related to the amount of service consumed, making the net change in taxes paid different for each taxpayer.

- Water/Sewer – Water and sewer rates are 50% higher for outside city limit customers due to the higher cost of service for the sparsely populated county area. Upon annexation the 50% surcharge will not apply and existing water/sewer customers will pay the lesser inside city rate. The city's utility tax rates (currently at 8%) are included (rolled-in) within each utility's rate structure, so customers will not see any impact on water/sewer utility taxes.
- Garbage – State law allows the current collector (Waste Management) to continue providing service for seven years after annexation. The city's 8% solid waste utility tax will apply upon annexation.
- Electricity and Telephone – Upon annexation, the city's utility tax rate (currently at 6%) will apply.
- Natural Gas – The city already serves the annexation areas with natural gas. The city's natural gas utility tax (currently at 4%) is included in the rate and thus customers will not see any impact on natural gas utility taxes.
- Cable TV Franchise Fee - Upon annexation, Comcast's City Franchise Fee pass-through (currently at 5%) will apply, which is the same as the County's.

City of Enumclaw, April 2010

If you have further questions or would like more information about the annexation process, please contact the Community Development Department at (360) 825-3593 or visit www.cityofenumclaw.net