



ANNEXATION INFORMATION

What is Annexation?

Annexation is a process in which you can bring your land into the City. In doing so, the City of Ridgefield becomes your general purpose government, providing services such as police protection, road maintenance, sewer utilities land use planning and parks.

What are the Laws Governing Annexations?

Annexation requests are governed by Chapter 35A.14 of the Revised Codes of Washington (RCW). The City's Comprehensive Plan text and map and Zoning Code text and map are also applied in determining appropriate zoning for properties that are successfully annexed into the City.

Why Would I Want to Annex?

There are many benefits to annexation. To summarize a few:

- Higher levels of police staffing and shorter response times.
- Improved access to the staff that serve you. Instead of having to travel to Clark County's offices in Vancouver or Battle Ground you can conveniently receive services in downtown Ridgefield.
- More of your property taxes stay in the City rather than being spent elsewhere in Clark County.
- Better representation – Your neighbors would be your elected representatives instead of people from the far reaches of Clark County.
- Better opportunity for you to directly participate and make a difference in your local government, either by running for an elected position or by volunteering for various boards such as the Parks Advisory Board or Planning Commission.
- Access to sewer and utilities. By annexing, those parcels would become eligible to hook up to sewer and water through the City.
- To strive towards one united community in order to marshal the resources necessary to make the entire Ridgefield community a better place to live.

Who Can Annex Into the City?

The general rule is that anyone owning property that abuts the city limits can apply to annex. If you are close to the City, but there are one or more lots between you and the city limits, you would need to either wait until those neighbors annex, or see if they would be willing to annex with you.

The most common method of annexation is the petition method. The petition method is a multi-step process that is described in greater detail below.

How Do I Apply to Annex?

You do not need to know all of the intricacies of the state laws that govern annexation. City staff is available to help you to learn and understand the rules and to foster the petition throughout the following process. The following is a brief overview of the annexation process:

Step 1: You need to identify the area that you propose to be annexed. It may include only your property or you may want to include your neighbors as well.

Step 2: Use the City's Notice of Intent to Annex Application form and have it signed by the owners of at least 10% of the assessed value of the area proposed for annexation. For example, if your property is the only one in the annexation area, your signature would be the only one required. If there are 20 parcels, all of the same value, at least two property owners would have to sign. The purpose of this petition is to show Council there is interest in annexation and to request permission to circulate a 60% petition (Step 4).

Step 3: Your petition is submitted to the City Council. Per state law, the City Council must meet with you not later than 60 days to discuss your request. The Council can accept, reject or geographically modify the proposal, and can decide whether it will simultaneously want to designate the zoning of the property if such an application is filed. The City Council can also decide whether it will require all the involved properties to assume a portion of the City's indebtedness. If the City Council accepts your application, you would go to Step 4. If the City Council does not accept your application, you cannot proceed any further in the process nor can you appeal the Council's decision.

Step 4: Use the City's Notice of Petition to Annex Application to obtain signatures of owners of at least 60% of the assessed value of the area to be annexed. After you have obtained the signatures, submit the Application along with all required information to the City's Community Development Department.

Step 5: After a validated 60% petition is received, the City Council will conduct a public hearing on the annexation request. If the City Council decides to approve the annexation application, the Council is required to affirm its decision-making by approving an ordinance. The approval of ordinances usually takes place at two separately scheduled regular Council meetings.

Who Can I Talk to at the Ridgefield Community Development office?

For further information or to start the annexation process, please contact the Ridgefield Community Development Department at 360.887.3908.