



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What is annexation?**

Annexation is a procedure for bringing unincorporated areas of a county into an adjacent incorporated city or town. In short, annexed properties become “in the city.” The process is outlined in Indiana Code 36-4-3, and allows a municipality to expand its boundaries to include existing developed or urban areas and to accommodate future growth opportunities and planning.

- **Why is the City proposing these annexations?**

The City’s boundaries are outdated. Although the areas in question may already be developed and are considered a part of the Bloomington community, they are not “in the city” at this time. The proposed areas have been largely identified for annexation for decades, and many of the current or prior property owners agreed to be annexed in the future in exchange for City sewer service. Recent legislative changes direct municipalities to annex these types of areas sooner.

The annexations will allow all households and businesses in the community to be a part of the same future and create efficiencies and improvements in local government services for the areas. Some of the areas are islands completely surrounded by the City, while others have already developed beyond the old boundaries as a part of the Bloomington community. The annexations also include the new I-69 corridor, and will allow the City to promote and stimulate economic development and diversity of uses around the I-69 expansion.

- **What is the procedure for annexation?**

The City of Bloomington is in the process of considering seven areas for annexation. The City is committed to ensuring that all potentially affected residents have an opportunity to provide input and be fully informed. Before introducing these annexation ordinances, the City will conduct a series of six public information meetings on March 20-25 at City Hall to inform and receive input from residents regarding the proposed annexation process.

Following the public information meetings, the next step would be for the City to introduce ordinances for one or more of the proposed annexations, after which the City

will hold a public hearing at a date to be determined.

- **Am I in the annexed area?**

Please visit our website at bloomington.in.gov/annex to view maps and lists of parcels for the proposed annexed areas.

- **How long will the process take?**

The process for the City to consider approving the annexations could be completed this year. If adopted, the City is currently proposing to delay the effective date until January 1, 2020, which means the areas would not be “in the city” until 2020 even if the ordinances are adopted this year.

- **Will taxes increase on the annexed land?**

Annexation generally adds a municipal “layer” of property taxes to the existing tax layers on a property (school, county, township, library, etc.), and the City anticipates that most properties in the annexation areas would experience a tax increase after the annexation is effective (currently planned for pay 2021). Property owners may see offsets to these increases, such as lower insurance costs due the City’s strong ISO rating for fire service and an increased federal income tax deduction. Property zoned agricultural would likely not see an increase unless/until the property is rezoned with the landowner’s permission.

Notably, even after annexation, the estimated property taxes are substantially lower than comparable communities around the state and surrounding areas.

- **Once annexed, when do City taxes show up on property tax bills?**

Under the current plan, not until 2020 (taxes payable in 2021).

- **What services does the City provide to the areas that are annexed?**

Upon annexation, the areas are generally assured of receiving City services in the same manner they are provided or made available to the City’s current residents and businesses. Enhanced services proposed for these areas include:

- City fire services, including more firefighters and new stations, with improved insurance ratings;
- City police services, including more police officers;
- City street maintenance, snow plowing, and storm water;
- City trash and recycling;
- Opportunities for transit expansion;
- Additional parks and trails;
- High-speed fiber-optic broadband access;
- Access to programming such as park services, Housing and Neighborhood

Development (HAND), Community and Family Resources Department (CFRD), Economic and Sustainable Development (ESD), etc.

City residents are also eligible to vote in all municipal elections, be elected to City offices, and to serve on a variety of appointed City boards and commissions. Being a resident means actively participating in the future of your community and the opportunity to let your voice be heard.

- **Will my sewer or water provider change with annexation?**

No. The City is already the primary sewer and water provider to many of the annexation areas. However, annexation will make sewer extensions easier for developers and property owners in the annexed areas.

- **How much land is the City proposing for annexation?**

The total number of acres being proposed for annexation is 9,848. The approximate acreage for each annexation area is as follows:

- South-West Area – 5,113
- South-East Area – 2,876
- North Island Area – 110
- Central Island Area – 93
- South Island Area – 232
- Northeast Area – 557
- North Area – 867

- **What is the total parcel count for the annexation areas?**

The total number of non-right-of-way parcels is about 7,293. The total number of parcels including right-of-way parcels is 7,551.

- **What is the population of the areas proposed for annexation?**

Based on the most recent census data, the estimated populations in the seven different annexation areas are as follows:

- South-West Area – 9,452
- South-East Area – 3,382
- North Island Area – 302
- Central Island Area – 352
- South Island Area – 1,055
- Northeast Area – 269
- North Area – 140

- **Will annexation affect where my child attends school?**

Annexation will have no effect on school district boundaries, nor will it have any effect on where your child attends school.

- **Will the City hire township fire fighters?**

While the City cannot guarantee employment to any individual or group, when hiring new fire positions created as a result of the annexations the City intends to provide a point preference in the scoring system to township firefighters whose jobs may be impacted by the annexations. This will provide a scoring advantage to a township firefighter impacted by the annexation over another similarly qualified candidate. Importantly, the City welcomes qualified candidates to apply for open positions in all of its departments. The City seeks to hire the most qualified individuals for every position, and many factors must weigh in the balance, including experience, qualifications, the needs of the department at the time, and diversity considerations. In addition, public safety has another layer to consider, since hiring for those positions is overseen by the City's Board of Public Safety, as required by state statute, and is subject to state Fire and Police PERF requirements as well. The point preference for impacted township firefighters is permitted by IC 36-8-4-10(b)(3), and will be applied by the Board of Public Safety as a part of the normal scoring system in new hires. The City plans to notify the county and townships when openings arise for which impacted firefighters might apply.

- **Will annexation change my current zoning and property use?**

All property will continue to maintain its current zoning classification until such time as the City updates its comprehensive plan and Unified Development Ordinance, which govern zoning and property use. The City hopes to adopt a plan and any zoning changes to accommodate the annexation areas prior to the effective date of the annexations in January 2020. The City does not anticipate dramatic changes in zoning through this process. During the zoning process, the City will consult with property owners, and the Plan Commission and City Council will review suggested changes. Some current county zoning is not replicated in the City's code and might need to be added. In the end, some zoning will likely remain the same and some may change, but all property owners will have opportunities to weigh in.

As far as property use, any legal use of land prior to the effective date of the annexation that ultimately conflicts with future rezonings will still be permitted as a legal non-conforming use (e.g., it is grandfathered). So, for example and with respect to animals such as horses, the City currently has more restrictive rules for livestock than the County. But if a property in an annexation area already has animals, that existing use will be grandfathered and not subject to City standards unless changes to the use are made.

Another example is signage. Newly annexed areas will be subject to the signage standards in the City's Unified Development Ordinance only when they seek to change

the existing signage on the property or erect new signage not already in place. Any existing signage installed under County standards may remain in place and will be grandfathered, until such time as a change is made to the signage. Some provisions of the sign standards will apply, however, for example, signs in public rights of way.

- **What City Council districts will each of the proposed areas be assigned to?**

They will be assigned to a Council district in the annexation ordinance(s), and the City anticipates redistricting after the annexations are effective, depending on which annexations become effective.

- **Why are you annexing specific parcel or portion X?**

The City proposed the overall annexation areas based on a variety of factors, including urbanization, opportunities for future growth, the I-69 expansion, and the City’s existing services. The territory was developed more from a macro perspective with general areas in mind.

- **Who can I contact if I have more questions?**

Please visit our website at bloomington.in.gov/annex for more information. You may also contact Diane Daily, the City’s Customer Service Representative, at (812) 349-3802, or visit our office in City Hall, located at 401 North Morton Street.

We also encourage you to attend one of our public information sessions at City Hall. The information sessions are scheduled as follows:

DATES	TIME	LOCATION
March 20, 2017 (Mon.)	6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	All meetings will be held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 401 North Morton St., Bloomington, IN 47404
March 21, 2017 (Tues.)	6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	
March 22, 2017 (Wed.)	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	
March 23, 2017 (Thurs.)	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	
March 24, 2017 (Fri.)	6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	
March 25, 2017 (Sat.)	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	

- **What if I want to stop the annexation in my area?**

The City is hopeful that you will consider the totality of the benefits of local government services that the City provides to, and the opportunities it creates for, you and the community before taking a position to reject being a part of Bloomington. The City is committed to engaging in a respectful discussion about annexation and invites you to do the same. Ultimately the City Council must approve the annexations, and there have and will continue to be numerous opportunities to voice your concerns. We encourage you to provide your comments online at bloomington.in.gov/annex (“Provide comments here” link). There will also be an opportunity to provide comments during the public outreach meetings. If the City moves forward with introducing the annexation ordinances,

there will also be a formal public hearing before the Council at a later date. If the City ultimately adopts one or more annexation ordinances, there will be a 90 day opportunity for those properties that do not have a remonstrance waiver to sign a remonstrance petition. The City will provide more information about the remonstrance process after any such ordinance is adopted.