

# ANNEXATION

As an area develops, the need for government to provide services increases. Rapid development & population growth frequently occur just outside city boundaries where property is cheaper and zoning regulations may be less restrictive, thereby creating “fringe” areas. The growth of separate “fringe” areas may produce a complex pattern of government by multiple jurisdictions—city, county & special districts—that can lead to administrative confusion, inefficiency, duplication & excessive costs. When properly used, annexation preserves a growing urban area as a unified whole.

The Regional Considerations element of the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan has placed priority on areas identified as “county islands” within the City. All necessary steps will be taken to facilitate the annexation of these islands to the City. Our ultimate goal is to provide the property owners and residents of these areas with the most effective level of service at a reasonable cost.

Upon annexation, the City of Kennewick will provide quality municipal services including police & fire protection, recreation, zoning & building services, public works, street maintenance, appropriate utilities, and park & public facility maintenance.

## **Benefits of Annexation**

The following are just a few of the many benefits to annexation:

- ◆ Land value protection through the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Nuisance Abatement program.
- ◆ Lower property taxes
- ◆ Full access to city water & sewer service with reduced hook up fees.
- ◆ Reduced water and sewer rates.
- ◆ Opportunity to form Local Improvement Districts (LID) for neighborhood improvements or extension of sewer service.
- ◆ Taxes retained in a localized area.
- ◆ Reduced cost for participation in Recreation programs.
- ◆ Faster Police & Fire response.
- ◆ Participation in city government including the opportunity to be appointed to city boards/commissions and/or run for City Council.
- ◆ Opportunity to vote in City and County election, permitting greater access and influence with local elected officials.

## Comparison of Property Tax Rates

The following chart summarizes the 2008 Annual Property Tax Levy per \$1,000 in assessed valuation:

<b>2008 Property Tax Levies</b>		
	<b>CITY</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>
State Schools	\$ 1.9808	\$ 1.9808
County	1.4440	1.4440
City Regular Levy	2.3425	0
Library Bond	0.0973	0
County Road	0	1.9364
Mid-Columbia Library	0.4372	0.4372
School District #17	4.8215	4.8215
Kennewick Hospital	0.1551	0.1551
Fire District # 1 <sup>a</sup>	0.1620	0.1620
Port of Kennewick	0.3603	0.3603
<b>TOTAL<sup>b</sup>:</b>	<b>\$ 11.8007</b>	<b>\$ 12.7485</b>
<sup>a</sup> State statute requires that if the proposed annexation area involves property currently contained within the boundaries of a fire district, that those property owners continue to pay property tax for any voted debt of the district that exists at the time of annexation. The 2008 voted debt levy for Fire District # 1 is \$0.1620. <sup>b</sup> Total does not include Benefit Assessments for Mosquito Control, Noxious Weed Control, and Horticulture Pest Control, however, the rates for these assessments are the same in the City or County areas.		

## Annexation Process

The City of Kennewick processes annexations using the 60% Petition Method (RCW 35A.14.120). Property owners interested in annexation should submit a [“Notice of Intent to Petition for Annexation”](#) form to the Support Services Department with the \$100 initiation fee. This form must be signed by property owners representing at least 10% of the assessed valuation for the proposed annexation area. The City Council must then hold a public meeting within 60 days of receipt of the petition to determine 1) whether or not to accept, reject, or modify the proposed annexation; 2) whether it will require simultaneous adoption of proposed zoning regulations; and 3) whether it will require assumption of all or any portion of existing city indebtedness by the area to be annexed.

If the City Council accepts the initial petition for annexation, then a formal petition must be circulated to all the property owners within the proposed annexation. The petition must be signed by the owners representing at least 60% (50% for “islands”) of the assessed valuation of the proposed annexation area (RCW 35A.14.120). Once this percentage has been achieved, then the petition is to be filed with the City Council and the petition must then be certified as sufficient by the County Assessor. When a legally sufficient petition is filed, the City Council may consider it and set a date for a public hearing allowing proponents and opponents an opportunity to speak. If, following the public hearing, the City Council decides to approve the annexation, it must enact an ordinance to annex the territory. The annexation then becomes effective 5 days after publication of the ordinance.