

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Olympia Washington

BilAnalysis

BilNo. HB 1873

Annexation procedures/cities/towns  
Brief title

Public Arg: 2/25/97

Reps. Boldt/Dunn/Mulliken  
Sponsor

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**BACKGROUND:**

Cities and towns are classified either being code cities or non-code cities and towns. Separate statutes exist for each of these two classifications for cities and towns providing similar but somewhat different procedures by which they annex territory.

Three primary procedures exist for a city or town to annex unincorporated territory that is adjacent to a portion of the city's or town's boundaries.

Two of the procedures involve an election where voters who reside in the area proposed to be annexed vote on a ballot proposition authorizing the annexation. One of these procedures is the resolution/election method, where the annexation is proposed by resolution of the annexing city or town. The other of these procedures is the petition/election method, where the annexation is proposed by petition of voters residing in the area proposed to be annexed.

The third procedure is the direct-property owner petition method where an election is not held and the annexation occurs if the city or town council approves the annexation and a petition proposing the annexation has been signed by the owners of at least 75 percent of the assessed valuation in the area proposed to be annexed, if a non-code city or town is proposed to annex the area or by the owners of at least 60 percent of the assessed valuation in the area proposed to be annexed, if a code city is proposed to annex the area.

**SUMMARY:**

The direct-property owner petition procedures by which cities and towns annex territory are altered.

Continued

If a registered voter does not reside in the area proposed to be annexed under the direct-property owner petition method of annexation, the annexation proceeds under the normal procedures. However, if one or more registered voters reside in the area proposed to be annexed under the direct-property owner petition method of annexation, a ballot proposition authorizing the annexation is submitted to those voters at a special election after all the procedural steps have been completed. The annexation is authorized if this ballot proposition is approved by a simple majority vote of voters voting on the proposition.

A number of technical changes are made to the direct-property owner petition method of annexation to make these separate statutes similar, other than the different signature requirements. These changes include:

- It is clarified that only unincorporated territory contiguous to the city or town may be annexed under this procedure.
- The two basic documents related to an annexation under this procedure are distinguished by referring to the initial document as the written notice of interest in annexation and referring to the second document that is submitted after the city or town initially approves the annexation as the annexation petition.
- It is clarified that an annexation petition may not be circulated unless the city or town legislative body initially approves the proposed annexation.
- It is clarified that if the area proposed to be annexed only includes tax-exempt property, including property owned by a school district, the owner or owners of the tax-exempt property may sign the petition.
- It is clarified that after the annexation petition has been submitted, if it has been signed by the owners of sufficient property, the city or town legislative body holds a public hearing on the proposed annexation and may adopt an ordinance providing for the annexation or may choose not to adopt such an ordinance.
- The process of notifying a boundary review board, if one exists in the county, and potential review of the proposed annexation by a boundary review board is inserted into the annexation laws.

**FISCAL NOTE:** Not Requested.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bills passed.