

# Annexation



## A Citizen's Guide

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# ANNEXATION

## CITY OF HUNTINGTON, WV

### What is annexation?

Annexation is the incorporation of a land area into an existing community with a resulting change in the boundaries of that community.

### Why annex?

The variety of services provided by the City offers a multitude of reasons for annexation. The following are just a few of the services enjoyed by the residents of the City of Huntington.

- POLICE

One of the most desirable advantages of City residency is the increased level of police protection provided to our citizens. The Huntington Police Department's budget provides funding for 106 full-time police officers and can respond with multiple officers to an emergency situation anywhere in the City in within minutes. Furthermore, unlike county agencies, the Huntington Police Department does not decrease its active patrol personnel during nighttime hours, but actually increases it.

The Huntington Police Department is a full-service Police Department that diligently protects the quality of life standards expected by our citizens. This is enhanced by seeking input from citizens to help develop better strategies for the policing of individual neighborhoods. This cooperation has led to various changes in procedures, ranging from increased speed control in some neighborhoods to development of the bike patrol to combat drug sales in others.

- FIRE

The Huntington Fire Department provides coverage to the citizens of the City of Huntington from six stations, which are strategically located throughout the City. These stations are staffed around the clock, seven days a week by professional career fire fighters. The Huntington Fire Department provides instant response by highly skilled personnel whose goal is to save both lives and property.

In addition to a higher level of security, City residency provides decreased insurance premiums due to the City's Class 2 rating. Huntington is the only Class 2 rated city in West Virginia. Check with your individual carrier to see if annexation may decrease your insurance costs.

- STREET MAINTENANCE

The City of Huntington Public Works Department has a Street Division whose primary duty is street maintenance. The Street Division is responsible for pothole repairs,

maintenance of public drainage systems including storm sewers, cleaning up after storms, mowing grass in public areas, tree removal from public spaces, and street cleaning on a limited basis. Upon annexation residents may petition the City to take over the maintenance of their streets. The City will accept streets, which have been constructed according to proper design guidelines.

The City of Huntington either maintains street lights or contracts with AEP for the maintenance of the street lights.

- SNOW REMOVAL

The Street Department provides snow and ice control within the City limits. Emphasis is placed on clearing the main arteries first and then moving into residential streets. The Street Division also sets out salt barrels on hills for the use of residents if required before the snow removal equipment arrives.

- BUILDING INSPECTIONS

The Inspections and Compliance Division is responsible for the enforcement of the building code and the building maintenance code. These codes are designed to maintain a high standard of construction for new and remodeled buildings and to prevent buildings from deteriorating to the point that they become a public nuisance.

- REFUSE SERVICE

The Sanitation Division provides weekly garbage pickup for all residential dwellings containing up to and including four units. Special trash pickups can also be arranged at an additional cost by calling the Sanitation Division or residents may utilize a free trash drop off facility, which is open one day per week. The trash drop off facility is located at the former Deitz Hollow landfill site and is open every Wednesday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and the second Saturday of each month from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. In addition, once a year in the spring, a neighborhood cleanup program is provided, giving residents several options for getting rid of trash at no cost.

- ZONING CONTROL

Zoning is one of the most important tools used to regulate land use in order to preserve the character and quality of life of a community. Zoning consists of a text describing the different land use zones and a map delineating the different zones. The specific land use zones for your area will be designed by the Planning Director to meet both your concerns and the suitability and special nature of the land. The provisions of the zoning ordinance shall be designed to promote, protect and facilitate public health, safety, morals and the general welfare; to prevent overcrowding of land, blight, danger and congestion; to provide for the use of land for residential housing of various dwelling types; and to accommodate reasonable overall community growth, including population and employment growth.

## What are the costs associated with annexation?

There is no fee for annexation; however, as a resident of Huntington you will incur partial responsibility for maintaining City services. Fees incurred by City residents include a Municipal Fee, which helps to defray the cost of providing fire and flood protection, a Garbage Fee and a Property Tax. The following is an approximate cost of City fees.

- Municipal Fee - \$0.0575 per square foot plus \$80
- Garbage Fee - \$60 per year
- Property Tax - for current rates contact the Cabell or Wayne County Assessor's Office

## What are the City of Huntington's methods of annexation?

The City of Huntington's annexation methods are governed by the West Virginia State Code. Currently there are three methods of annexation.

- Minor Boundary Adjustment
- Annexation With Election
- Annexation Without Election

## What areas qualify for annexation into the City of Huntington?

In the first two methods, the area to be annexed must be contiguous to the City, be urban in nature, and have at least 100 inhabitants (if less than one square mile in area), or an average of 500 inhabitants per square mile. In the third method, the only requirement is that the area be contiguous to the City; density and urban characteristics are not specified. Large areas that have only a small segment of land contiguous to the City may be annexed by minor boundary adjustments.

## Who initiates and approves an annexation?

- **Minor Boundary Adjustment.** City Council initiates the annexation. Approval of the annexation must be from 100% of the freeholders in the area to be annexed. Most annexations are accomplished using this method.
- **Annexation With Election.** 5% of the freeholders inside the City must initiate the annexation. Approval of the annexation must be from the majority of the voters inside the City and a majority of voters and freeholders in the area to be annexed.
- **Annexation Without Election.** Two petitions are required to initiate annexation, one from a majority

of qualified voters in an area to be annexed and the other from a majority of freeholders in the area to be annexed. Approval of the annexation must be granted by City Council.

For more information on annexation or to initiate annexation of an area into the City of Huntington contact the Department of Development and Planning.

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