



Annexation Glossary

Annexation

Municipal annexations must follow the procedures outlined by the Texas Local Government Code. Annexation laws and procedures were changed significantly and made effective December 1, 2017. This new state law requires landowner or voter approval of annexations.

Annexation of Areas near a Military Base

Under state law, a city may annex for limited or full purposes up to five miles adjacent to a military base. This law allows the voters of the proposed annexed area to choose between either annexation or provide the municipality with the authority to adopt and enforce an ordinance regulating the land use in the area in the manner recommended by the most recent military joint land use study.

Annexation Petition from Registered Voters of Areas with Population Less than 200

A city may annex an area with a population of less than 200, if the city obtains consent to annex the proposed area through a petition signed by more than 50 percent of the registered voters in the proposed area. If the registered voters do not own more than 50 percent of the land in the proposed annexation area, the petition must be signed by more than 50 percent of the owners of land in the area.

Annexation Election for Areas with Population of 200 or More

A city may annex an area with a population of 200 or more, if the city holds an election on the question of annexing an area and the majority of qualified voters approve the annexation. If the registered voters in the proposed annexation area do not own more than 50 percent of the land, then the City must obtain more than 50 percent of landowners' consent through petition.

Consent Annexations

Property owners may petition the City to annex their property. To see the City requirements for consent annexation, also referred to as voluntary annexation, please download the Consent Annexation Guidelines. Contact our office for assistance prior to submitting a request.

Consent Exempt Annexations

State law allows cities to annex outside of the consent process for certain areas, consisting of:

- Enclaves;
- Industrial district;
- Areas owned by a Type-A Municipality;
- Navigable Stream;
- Strategic Partnership;
- Municipality Owned Reservoir;
- Municipality Owned Airport; and
- Roads and Right-of Way.

Please contact Planning staff about the procedures for annexation of consent exempt annexation areas.



Development Agreement (Agricultural)

Texas State law requires the City to offer a development agreement, also referred to as a non-annexation agreement or agricultural agreement, to the owners of property appraised for ad valorem tax purposes as land for agriculture or wildlife management use, or as timber land (Texas Local Government Code, Section 43.016). A development agreement guarantees the continuation of the extraterritorial status of an area. If the landowner consents to the agreement, the city shall exclude the property from annexation for several years. The Agreement may include the term and the landowner's consent to voluntary annexation at the end of the agreement term.

Annexation may proceed if landowners decline to enter into an agreement or if at any time the landowner files any type of subdivision plat or related development document for the area, or the agreement is violated in any way.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

The extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of a municipality is the unincorporated area that is contiguous to the corporate boundaries of the municipality. The ETJ of the City of San Antonio consists of unincorporated land within 5 miles of the municipal city limits and not within the city limits or ETJ of another city. A city can annex land that is within its ETJ and cannot annex land in the ETJ of another city.

Two cities may agree to adjust their ETJ boundaries to achieve more logical boundaries. Governing bodies of other cities making a request for an ETJ adjustment should direct it to the City Clerk's office with copies to appropriate Planning Department staff. All adjustments are evaluated according to the City's Growth and Annexation Policy, in order to ensure that they will not negatively impact the City of San Antonio's interests.

Full Purpose Annexation

Full purpose annexation is the process by which cities extend municipal services, voting privileges, full regulatory authority and taxing authority to new territory. The City regulates land development in its full purpose jurisdiction with zoning, engineering, environmental, land entitlement and building code requirements. An area under consideration for annexing must be within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction and contiguous to the boundaries of the city.

Limited Purpose Annexation

Limited purpose annexation extends the City's planning, building, zoning, health, and safety regulations to an area. The City assesses no taxes and the City is not required to provide full municipal services. Residents in this type of area may vote in City Council and Charter elections but may not vote on proposals to issue bonds, nor seek municipal office. Generally, areas annexed for limited purposes are annexed for full purpose jurisdiction after three years.

Service Agreement

A written service agreement must be negotiated and completed before the annexation of an area, petitioned by landowner. The Service Agreement includes a list of full municipal services the municipality will provide in the annexed area on the effective date of annexation and a schedule when the city will provide service that is not provided on the effective date of annexation. The city is not required to provide a service that is not included in the service agreement.