



# City of Bonney Lake Frequently Asked Questions About Annexation



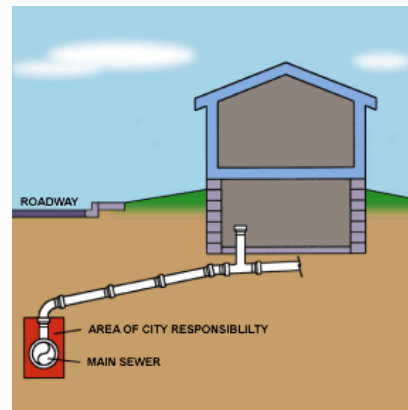
**Do I currently pay taxes that I will no longer have to pay if I annex to the City?** Yes. Upon annexation, you will no longer have to pay the Pierce County Road levy. All other levies will remain the same, such as the East Pierce Fire District, the Pierce County Library District, and the Sumner

School District, as the city is a part of those districts. You would be also required to contribute to the current bond levy that was issued to build the police/fire station. That bond will be paid off in 2011, and will be discontinued. The City has no other current voted approved bonded indebtedness for which you would be taxed.

**Does the City have taxes I do not currently pay in unincorporated Pierce County?** Yes. City residents pay a regular city levy on their property taxes, which funds the general operations of the City. Additionally, city residents pay utility taxes on natural gas, garbage, cable TV, telephone, electric, and water/sewer services. The City property tax and utility taxes are just a little less than Rural Road Levy. So in balance, your taxes would go down slightly upon annexation.

**Will my property taxes change upon annexation?** Your property taxes will decrease if you annex to the City of Bonney Lake. There are some new taxes that you will pay as a city resident, however, there are also taxes that you are currently paying that you will no longer pay. The City estimates that property taxes for the owner of a home with an assessed valuation of \$200,000 will decrease approximately \$82 per year upon incorporation.

**Will existing land uses be allowed to continue?** Yes. All legally established existing uses within the annexation area will be allowed to continue. Any nonconforming use(s) are issued a conditional use permit, which stays with the property and will transfer to any subsequent owners, provided the nonconforming use(s) do not cease for a period of at least 6 months. Once the nonconforming use(s) cease for a period of at least 6 months, the city zoning designations will apply. The City will initiate a process to plan and zone the area to fit City zoning designations. The process will include extensive citizen input and public hearings. Given that the area is currently zoned predominantly as single family residential, it is unlikely that designation will change much.



**Will the City require me to hook up to the sewer system?** Property owners may continue to use their private wastewater disposal system, provided it is functioning properly, or can be made to function in an appropriate

reserve area, as determined by Pierce County health department. However, connection to the City sewer system is required when one of the following applies: A) Wherever gravity sewer mains have been installed across the frontage of a property, a direct connection to public sewer will be required when the property is sold; B) Development of all subdivisions, short plats, multifamily construction, commercial construction, or change of use; or C) If a private wastewater facility fails and the property is within 250 feet of City sewer lines. (See BLMC 13.12.150).

**Will schools change as a result of annexation?**

No. School Districts are independent jurisdictions with independent boundaries - just like water or fire districts. Annexation does not change school district boundaries.

**What are the differences in stormwater charges and services?**

Both the City and the County operate stormwater utilities. The 2009 County rate for a

single family residence in the annexation area is \$95.70 per year. The 2009 Bonney Lake rate is \$10.00 per month (\$120/Year). As part of its long range planning, the City would establish a specific program to improve stormwater facilities in the annexation area.

**What about Utility Taxes?** Utility taxes are taxes levied on the gross operating revenues earned by public & private utilities from operations within the city limits. The City of Bonney Lake receives utility taxes from natural gas, garbage collection, cable television, telephone, electric, and water/sewer services. Most of the utilities pass this along as a surcharge to their utility bills. The current utility tax rate is 6%. State law caps private utility tax rates at 6%. A utility tax would not automatically be imposed on Tacoma Public Utility water customers. That would be subject to a franchise fee agreement between the City and TPU.

**Will annexation affect fire protection services?**

No. there would be no change to fire and emergency medical services.

Both Bonney Lake and the annexation area are part of the East Pierce Fire and Rescue (PCRFD #22), pay the same tax rates, and receive the same services.

**How will annexation affect police services?**

The Bonney Lake Police Department provides police protection services. 911 calls are dispatched under a

contract with the City of Puyallup. The City's Police Department provides law enforcement services, which include vehicle patrols, investigations, and marine services. Animal control services are provided through a contract with METRO Animal Services (Sumner/Puyallup). The current Bonney Lake police force consists of 2 commanders, 5 sergeants, 21 police officers (4 of whom are assigned to the investigations unit), 2 community service officers, and 4 support staff.



Police specialty units include a 2 person traffic unit, a school resource officer, a 4-person detective unit, 24/7 patrol, limited Lake Tapps summer marine services, and participating in regional drug enforcement and auto theft task force units. It is anticipated that upon annexation the City would add 7 additional police personnel the

first year, plus 1 additional code enforcement officer. Additional personnel would be added as revenues allowed.

The City's current rate of commissioned personnel per 1,000 population (2 per 1000) is higher than many comparable Central Puget Sound cities and much higher than the Pierce County Sheriff's Office, which has 0.7 deputies per 1,000 unincorporated residents. Current City response times for emergencies are generally five (5) times faster than the County, with a 3-5 minute response time for City priority calls, while the county average is around 17 minutes.



**If I am annexed, will I have to switch refuse services?** No. Garbage service will continue to be provided through DM (Murrey’s) Disposal. However, refuse service is mandatory in Bonney Lake. All City residents are required to subscribe to at least the minimum service option, a 20 gallon mini-can, which includes recycling.

There are a number of reasons why citizens must sign up for at least the minimum (single 20 gal. can) level of service: 1) It helps pay the public share of refuse collection from public parks, facilities, streets, etc.; 2) It promotes health and safety by helping assure that refuse is disposed off and not left to pile up and become a public nuisance and health hazard, and 3) City residents get a lower rate from DM Disposal because everyone is participating. There is an economy of scale from having mandatory service, which benefits everyone.



**What about streets and street lights?** The City will assume control of all County-owned streets upon annexation, and will maintain them thereafter. All private roads will remain private unless homeowners bring the roads up to current city standards and then deed them to the city.

If streetlights are maintained privately by a homeowner’s association, they will continue to be maintained privately after annexation. County maintained lights will be transferred to the city upon annexation.

**What are the City’s tree cutting regulations?** If you own a single family lot, you do not need City permission or a permit to cut down a tree. If your property is large enough to be subdivided, you need to get a tree cutting permit. Trees less than six inches in diameter measured 54 inches above grade may be removed under any circumstances.

**Will I be required to license my animals upon annexation?** Yes. Both the City and the County have similar animal licensing requirements.

Animal control services are provided through a contract with METRO Animal Services (Sumner/Puyallup).



The animal shelter is located on South Hill, East of the Mall near Pierce College.

**What about livestock and other animals?** Under current City code, animals must be kept in such a manner that meet all of the following minimum standards so that a nuisance is not created that would impact adjacent property owners:

- A. Stables or pasture for horses and other livestock shall be placed on a lot no less than one acre and there shall be no more than two livestock per acre of enclosed usable pasture area;
- B. The pastoral roaming area for livestock shall be maintained no closer than 45 feet from a dwelling on an adjacent lot;
- C. No structure used primarily to house or feed livestock shall be closer than 45 feet from an adjacent property line;
- D. Small animals and poultry may be maintained provided they do not constitute a nuisance, are properly housed in a suitable sanitary structure no closer than 18 feet from any property line, and there must be at least 1,000sf of space, exclusive of buildings, for each such animal.





**Does the City allow home occupations?** Yes, under reasonable standards. Home occupations must be licensed. Home occupations in a residential zone are not allowed to become retail outlets, except for: 1. Mail order sales; or 2. Telephone sales with off-site delivery; or 3. Nonprofit organizations sponsoring fundraisers. Home occupations involving the following activities are prohibited: 1. Auto, watercraft, aircraft & heavy equipment engine repair over 10 horsepower; 2. Auto, watercraft, aircraft & heavy equipment body work/painting; 3. Parking or storage of heavy equipment; 4. Storage of building materials for use offsite; 5. Fabrication/repair of items that can not be physically carried by an average sized person.



**Does the City provide parks and recreation services?**

The City of Bonney Lake provides recreation services through a joint program with Sumner, and the Sumner School District. The City sponsors a variety of special events such as Stars on Stage, Tunes at Tapps, Kids Club, Friday Night Flicks, Boater Safety Courses, and much more. City residents may also obtain an annual \$25 boat launch pass to the Allen Yorke Park Lake Tapps launch. The Bonney Lake Senior Center is open 5 days a week, and includes a lunch program. There are many other activities and programs. The

*For more information about annexing to the City of Bonney Lake, contact the Community Development Department at (253) 447-4356. Also visit the City's web site at: [www.citybonneylake.org](http://www.citybonneylake.org)*

**What are the principal benefits of annexation?**

In general, annexation to the City would increase service levels for the citizens annexed with no increase in property taxes. Annexation benefits would include:

- Slightly lower property taxes;
- Faster police response; more neighborhood police patrol; access to local community crime prevention programs;
- Land value protection through the City's Comprehensive Plan, land use controls, and code enforcement program;
- Participation in city government including the opportunity to be appointed to city boards/commissions and/or run for City Council;
- Opportunity to vote in both City and County elections, permitting greater access and influence with local elected officials.
- Reduced need to travel to Tacoma for permits, court, etc.
- Enhanced essential services
- Lower refuse rates
- A voice in local community decisions

**2009 Property Tax Levy Comparison**

Taxing Jurisdiction	In City Rate	Out of City Rate
<b>*City of Bonney Lake</b>	1.175	0
<b>Pierce County</b>	1.042	1.042
<b>Fire District #22 (EPFR)</b>	1.998	1.998
<b>PC Rural Road Levy</b>	0	1.411
<b>PC Library District</b>	0.443	0.443
<b>Sumner School District</b>	4.560	4.560
<b>Port of Tacoma</b>	0.182	0.182
<b>PC Conservation Futures</b>	0.039	0.039
<b>State of Washington</b>	2.023	2.023
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11.462</b>	<b>11.698</b>

\* Includes voter approved bonds. Source: Pierce County Assessor