

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT ANNEXATION

For more information visit lincoln.ne.gov
search: annex

How will emergency response be handled?

Lincoln Fire and Rescue provides award winning medical response service to residents within City limits. With the new joint Police-Fire Station just west of the South 70th and Pine Lake Road intersection, medical response will be greatly improved for this annexation area. Eighty percent of all LFR calls are for medical reasons, and LFR's response time for emergency medical service is expected to meet the department's standard for response time and in some areas exceed the department's standard.

The proposed annexation area is also surrounded by fire hydrants that will be utilized by LFR, so many of the existing properties can already be served by City water and hydrants. In cases where existing hydrants are too far away, LFR can relay water or request assistance from Southeast Rural Fire District through their mutual aid agreement for fire engines and water tenders. Southwest Rural Fire is not able to connect to City of Lincoln hydrants. Future hydrants can be installed if development occurs in this area or if the property owners request an assessment district, as described below.

Will property owners be able to keep their septic systems or sewage lagoons?

In nearly all cases individual septic systems could remain; however, annexed properties containing a main building within 300 feet of an available City sewer line will be required to connect to City sewer.

Any property owner within the annexed area could request the City create an assessment district for the purpose of having a sanitary sewer line constructed. If a district is approved by City Council, the city constructs the sewer line and abutting property owners pay the assessment over a twenty-year period.

Will property owners be able to keep their wells?

A property owner may keep their well even if they are within 300 feet of an existing city water line. In order to protect public health, the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department has been inspecting, testing and permitting water wells within the city limits since the 1930's. The program was implemented to protect groundwater contamination from a variety of sources including the surrounding wells that may not be constructed and maintained according to standards. As part of this program, wells in the City require an annual permit from the Health Department with a cost of approximately \$160 per year to cover water quality testing. Water samples are taken to test for coliforms and Nitrates with the results being provided to the homeowners.

If a well fails to meet Health Department quality standards and is within 300 feet of an available City water line, the property must connect to City water.

Any property owner within the annexed area could request the City create an assessment district for the purpose of having a water line constructed within the area. If a district is approved by City Council, the city constructs the water line and abutting property owners pay the assessment over a twenty-year period.

I am currently served by the Lancaster County Rural Water District #1 (RWD). How will the annexation impact this service?

Existing RWD customers can remain on rural water. It is the responsibility of the City to reimburse the RWD district if a customer chooses to switch from rural water to city water.

How could this impact streets in my area?

Annexation does not require that streets be brought up to city standard paving with curb and gutter. The city has many miles of streets that have been inside city limits for decades and remain unpaved. Any street upgrades would be at the request of neighboring property owners. Upgrades would be partially financed with an assessment district that requires approval by City Council.

The City is responsible for maintenance once public streets are annexed. This includes but is not limited to crack sealing, spreading gravel, and snow removal.

What about street lights, sidewalks, and street trees?

Areas that do not have street lights are not required to install them upon annexation. Ornamental street lights can be done by an assessment district process that requires a majority of the affected owners to sign the requesting petition. The assessment district must be approved by City Council.

Annexation also does not require the installation of sidewalks or street trees. The City Council has the authority to order sidewalks constructed on any street. Current City policy is to focus sidewalk assessment districts in areas along school routes, arterial streets and areas of significant pedestrian traffic.

How will this impact my taxes?

Most property owners would see an increase in their taxes due to the higher City levy. A typical residence would see their property taxes increase by approximately \$300 per every \$100,000 in assessed valuation.

If a property is not currently in the Lincoln Public School District (LPS), it would transfer to LPS upon annexation. Property owners would no longer pay the general levy of the school district that they are currently in but would now pay the LPS general levy.

Any property that was in a school district at the time of a bond election must continue to pay on that district's bond until it is retired, even after property transfers to another district. Properties annexed by the City of Lincoln would not have to pay for LPS school bonds approved prior to joining the LPS district. Annexed properties will be subject to all future LPS bonds approved after the date of annexation.

Vehicle owners will be required to pay the City's wheel tax at time of registration or renewal. The current wheel tax for a typical passenger vehicle is \$74. The tax is used to fund snow removal, street construction and rehabilitation.

How will homeowners with small animals be affected?

Fowl and small animals kept outside require a permit, and dogs and cats require a license from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. All cats and dogs must be licensed at six months of age and must have current rabies vaccinations. There are limits to the

number of small animals that can be located on a single property, which vary by animal type.

How will homeowners with large animals such as horses be affected?

One acre is required to own one or two large animals. For three or more large animals, 1.5 acres per animal is required. Large animals require a permit from Animal Control. If a property owner is annexed, but can't meet these lot area requirements, the large animals may remain under certain conditions but may not be replaced.

Can I keep my propane tank inside the city limits?

Yes. The rules and regulations for using and storing propane for residential heating are the same inside the city limits as outside.

Can I keep my barbed wire fence inside the city limits?

Both barbed wire fences and electrically charged fences are prohibited inside the city limits. A barbed wire fence would have to be removed, however a fence may have barbs more than five feet above surface of the ground when further than one foot from a public way.

Are there significant differences in the rules regarding weeds for property inside the city limits compared to land outside the city?

Yes, there are significant differences in the rules regarding weeds for property inside the city limits compared to houses just outside the city. The two major differences are:

- 1) There is no ordinance relating to controlling the height of weeds and worthless vegetation in the County but there is in the City;
- 2) In the City the landowner is responsible for controlling the height of weeds and worthless vegetation on their property and also on abutting streets and alleys.

Currently our property is not in the Lincoln Public School (LPS) district and my child attends school in another district – what happens after annexation?

After annexation, the property automatically becomes part of the LPS district. Students would then be eligible to start attending LPS schools. However, students can also apply under enrollment option laws to remain at their present school. Contact the LPS Student Services Office for more information.

For more information:

Septic Systems and Wells

Health Dept, (402) 441-8040

Streets, City Sewer and Water

Lincoln Transportation & Utilities, (402) 441-7595

Horses, Dogs, Cats and Other Animals

Animal Control, (402) 441-7900

LPS Enrollment

LPS Student Services, (402) 436-1650

Weeds

Lancaster Co Weed Authority, (402) 441-7817

General Information on Annexation

Planning Department, (402) 441-7491