

City Annexation
Questions and Answers



City of Porterville
Community Development and
Public Works Departments

Zoning Information

- Q: What about my present use of the property? Will it be allowed in the City?
- A: Yes. Porterville's General Plan and the County of Tulare's General Plan both agree upon uses intended for your area. The zoning intended for this area once annexed to the City would be supported by the City of Porterville's General Plan designation.
- Q: What happens if my present use does not conform to City zoning if I annex?
- A: If you have uses that are allowed under the current Tulare County Zoning Ordinance, you would be allowed to continue those uses. These types of uses are considered "legal non-conforming" uses indefinitely, and they cannot be expanded or changed without first obtaining a Conditional Use Permit. Once a "legal non-conforming" use is discontinued for a period of six months or longer, that use would not be allowed to be re-established on your property. More details on this subject are available in Chapter 307 of the Porterville Development Ordinance.
- Q: Can I have a business in my house?
- A: A Home Occupation Permit and Business License can be approved for minor businesses. Please note that no residential homes are allowed to display signs for businesses approved in a residential zoned area.
- Q: What about my animals?
- A: The City of Porterville's Animal Keeping Ordinance permits up to three dogs, three cats and three chickens* not to exceed a total of seven household pets. Livestock and farm animals may also be permitted in certain circumstances, depending on the zoning and size of your parcel. Please contact city staff for more information specific to your property. *Chickens are permitted in residential zones and are subject to certain conditions.

Fire Insurance

- Q: If I were annexed, would I receive a break on fire insurance?
- A: Yes! Since you would be located in the City, Fire protection and response time would be quicker than County protection. Additionally, even though the City currently assists the Tulare County Fire Department in this area, more equipment and personnel would be dispatched to a fire in the City limits than in the County.

Taxes

- Q: Will my property taxes increase?
- A: No. A portion of the tax assessment would instead just be directed to the City rather than the County. This portion, 11.8% of 1% of a properties assessment, is placed in the City's General Fund and can be used toward Capital Projects and other general needs for the city.
- Q: What about sales tax?
- A: Sales tax is paid at the point of purchase, so business owners within the annexation area will be required to collect an addition ½ cent sales tax for Measure H. Most residents don't change

shopping habits as a result of annexation, so it is unlikely that it will be a major change to the daily shoppers.

Q: Are there other special assessments in the City?

A: The City currently collects a 6% Utility Users Tax (UUT). Within a few months of annexation, you will notice this utility user tax showing up on utility bills. On average, this UUT costs an extra \$20 per month per household. Because it is based on the utility bill itself, it could vary from house to house. This 6% tax is applied to phone, electric, gas, cable TV and municipal water bills. It typically does not apply to cell phones or internet, but it depends on your service provider.

Water – Sewer – Refuse – Streets

Q: Once I annex, what will the City require me to do?

A: Nothing. If you are presently using a private well and septic tank, you may do so until one or the other fails. At that time, you would be required to connect to City services for the failed system, assuming you are within ¼ mile of the nearest main line. Failure is defined as an event where septic tank and/or leach field requires replacement. Maintenance, pumping, etc., is normal and not considered failure. Existing residences could connect to water immediately upon annexation with payment of fees. At that time, fees would be imposed upon your property for water or sewer.

Q: If I decide to connect to City water, sewer, and obtain City refuse service, what will it cost?

A: The fees for water and sewer are based on a number of factors specific to your parcel and the land use. Please contact the City Public Works Department for an estimate of connection fees. These fees can typically be estimated within just a few days. Trash service can be maintained with your current provider for up to five years. After that point, service will be transferred from the private provider to the City.

Q: If I am not connected to City sewer or water, what services do I expect to receive?

A: Police and Fire protection are far greater in the City than in the County. City streets will be added to a maintenance schedule. Street sweeping will also occur on streets with curb and gutter. Garbage service is available immediately upon annexation. Please note that if your street does not have curb and gutter, the street sweeper cannot effectively sweep, and those routes will not be scheduled.

Q: Will I be required to construct curb, gutter, and sidewalk once I annex?

A: No. The only time you would be required to construct curb, gutter, and sidewalk would be at the time you decide to develop the land, if vacant, or upon request to remodel, reconstruct, or add on if the land has an existing structure.

Q: Will I have to install curb, gutter, and sidewalk if I do any construction on my property?

A: The City will not require an owner to install curb, gutter, or sidewalk for maintaining and keeping structures in good repair, unless the improvements or additions exceed approximately \$20,000 within a two-year period. The exact dollar amount changes each year with the Engineering News Record prescribed increase; effective July 2015, the amount is \$21,569. If your improvements exceed that threshold, then the curb, gutter, sidewalk improvements will be required.