



Annexing Into the City of Clearwater: What You Need to Know

What is annexation?

Annexation is the process set forth in the Florida Statutes that allows properties outside the current city limits to become part of the city. Annexation allows businesses and residents to join the City of Clearwater and receive municipal services that are available to properties located within city limits.

What is an agreement to annex?

When a property owner wants to receive city services such as sanitary sewer or solid waste pick-up but does not qualify for annexation because the property is not contiguous to city boundaries, the owner and city can enter into an Agreement to Annex. This legally binding document allows the property owner to receive available services in advance of annexation. It specifies that once the property becomes contiguous, the city will notify the property owner and initiate the annexation to complete the process.

Why is the city initiating my agreement to annex?

Staff routinely studies areas in the city with Agreements to Annex to identify the properties that have become eligible for annexation and then moves forward with the provisions of the agreements for these properties.

How will this affect my taxes?

The City Council establishes the annual tax millage rate for city residents, as Pinellas County does for unincorporated areas. The city has some franchise fees that the county does not have. These fees may be offset by the elimination of any city surcharges for city services already received. In addition, when a property is annexed, the county's Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) is removed from the tax bill.

How will my services change?

Utilities

Sanitary Sewer: City code requires that residences connect to the city's sanitary sewer system if it is "reasonably available." If the system is available and you are not already connected, you will be provided notice and given 90 days to connect. If you are already receiving sanitary sewer service, any surcharges for previous sanitary sewer service outside the city limits - upon annexation - will be eliminated.

Solid Waste: In addition to twice-weekly garbage collection, Clearwater provides once-weekly trash and yard waste collection. You will be allowed to conclude your current contract with your private solid waste provider before receiving solid waste services. Clearwater Customer Service will work with you to determine when your contract ends and when the city will deliver a black barrel and a yellow recycling bin to you to begin collection. You may opt to cancel your private service sooner and initiate city Solid Waste services upon annexation. Please contact Solid Waste/General Services for current rates at (727) 562-4920.

The city also provides a full-service, citywide residential curbside recycling program. Please call (727) 562-4920 or learn more about the City of Clearwater's recycling guidelines by going to www.myclearwater.com or www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/municipal/clearwater.pdf.

Water: If you are receiving city water, surcharges for out-of-city use will be eliminated. Annexation will allow you to connect to the city's public water system if your property is currently on a private well and you choose to connect. If you are already in an existing Pinellas County water service area, your water provider will remain the same.





Utilities (cont'd)

Stormwater Utility: Stormwater utility fees are used for engineering services, operation and maintenance of the stormwater infrastructure, and capital improvements to control flooding and improve water quality. The stormwater management system collects, treats, and conveys stormwater. These utility fees are also used to pay for drainage system maintenance and to plan for future collection systems. Upon annexation, your utility bill will reflect the addition of this fee. It is currently \$11.80 per month per residential unit.

For more information on utility billing and customer support, please call (727) 562-4600 or visit Customer Service's list of frequently asked questions at www.myclearwater.com/services/customer_service/faq.asp.

Public Safety

Police Department: City of Clearwater Police provide patrol, law enforcement, crime prevention and other related services. The department reaches out to Clearwater's residents through community meetings and the department's website.

Police patrol operations are currently divided into geographic districts. Each is under the command of a lieutenant who is the district commander and your primary point of contact for non-emergency questions or concerns. However, in an emergency, always call 9-1-1. Visit www.clearwaterpolice.org for more information on the City's Police Department, its programs, and services.

Security Systems: All home alarm systems in the City must be registered with the Clearwater Police Department. If you have a home security system, please call Loretta Keating at 562-4450 to get it registered.

Fire & Rescue Services: You will continue to be served by Clearwater Fire & Rescue for fire and emergency medical services. The department serves the community through eight fire stations strategically located throughout the city. To learn more or to determine which station is closest to you, visit www.myclearwater.com/gov/depts/fire/index.asp.

Leisure

Parks and Recreation: You will have access to recreational programs offered by the city such as athletics, senior, cultural, aquatics, camps, fitness, dance, and nature programs at the city's recreation facilities at a resident rate. For more information regarding parks and recreation services, please visit www.myclearwater.com.

Library: The Clearwater Public Library System is part of the Pinellas County Public Library Cooperative, which serves residents in its member cities. For information on the Clearwater Library System, including frequently asked questions, please visit www.myclearwater.com/cpl.

Who should I call if I still have questions?

Please call the city's Planning & Development Department, Long Range Planning Division at (727) 562-4567.



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