

Annexation

Do you live in Sierra Vista, but, not really?

You shop here, work here, get your books from the library and picnic in City parks. You hike or bike on the City's multi-use paths, entertain your four-legged friends at the City's dog park, and swim at the Cove. Sierra Vista feels like your home town, but, are you really a part of the City? If you live in one of the small areas in the middle of town that still haven't been annexed into the city limits of Sierra Vista, then you aren't really a resident of Sierra Vista. That means you pay more in property taxes than City residents, you can't vote in City elections, and you don't have immediate access to the services of the Sierra Vista fire and police departments, to name just a few advantages you're missing. Now is your opportunity to change all of that by annexing into the City and finally making Sierra Vista your official home town.

For many years the City has only acted on annexations at the specific request of an individual or group of neighbors. Recently, the Mayor and Council adopted a new annexation policy that designates county enclave areas as "proactive annexation areas," which means the City is now reaching out to the residents of those areas to offer them the advantages of annexation. County enclaves are small areas within the City that are surrounded by Sierra Vista but are still under the jurisdiction of Cochise County. New residents to county enclaves are often surprised to learn their homes or businesses are not a part of the City of Sierra Vista. The Mayor and Council have decided that it's time to finally unify the community by offering annexation to these areas of the City.

Here's how it works:

It will take some time from start to finish. Before anything even gets started, residents will have a chance to ask questions and get first-hand information at a public hearing. Council will then take action to approve the gathering of signatures on annexation petitions. Over half (50% + one) of the property owners of an area must sign an annexation petition. In addition, they must represent over half (50% + one) of the property value in that area. The City has a full year to gather signatures but it certainly doesn't need to take that long if the majority of people in the neighborhood sign quickly. Once the signatures are gathered, the last official steps are taken by the City and the annexation is finalized. Be patient-it's worth it!

Why it's worth it:

Being a City resident will save you money on your property taxes. For example, using the 2009 property tax rates, a \$100,000 home in the City pays \$942 in property taxes while the same home in the County pays \$1,197 in property taxes. The difference is the City's property tax rate is \$0.114 per \$100 of assessed value replaces the Fire District tax rate of \$2.66 per \$100 of assessed value.

Annexation doesn't mean your neighborhood will change-the future of any area will still be in the hands of the residents.

Will sidewalks and streetlights be installed or required by the City? No.

Will my zoning change?

No. (Per State law, property is always annexed into the City at a zoning density comparable to the density of its current County zoning.)

Will I be forced to go on the City's sewer system? No.

Will I be forced to use City trash pick-up service? No.

As long as you have a service agreement with a private hauler, you won't have to sign up for City trash collection. But many people are interested in saving money on their trash service through the City, which also includes curbside recycling, free yard-waste pick-up, and bulky item pick-up for a small fee.

Neighbors can come together and decide they want sidewalks or streetlights. The City will help those residents form a local improvement district if requested. The same goes for sewer service. Zoning changes are only considered at the request of a property owner. City trash pick-up service is available to City residents, but you won't be forced to change service unless you want to or the property changes ownership. By annexing, you expand your options, but aren't forced into any changes. And, you'll save money!

What else is in it for you?

Here's a sample:

Maintenance of City streets.

Urban public safety service versus a rural level of service.

Emergency response and a full range of safety programs through the Sierra Vista Police and Fire Departments; now serving the community with three fully-staffed and equipped fire stations.

Access to water conservation programs including the City's toilet rebate program.

Curbside recycling service.

VISTA Transit service, including curbside pickup for elderly and disabled residents.

A voice in local government at public meetings and in the voting booth.

Your 911 call will go immediately to the City's police dispatchers rather than through the Sheriff's office in Bisbee.

Explore the possibility of joining Sierra Vista through annexation. It's a great place to live and work-make it your official home town!

Please let us know your thoughts [click here](#) to go to the Annex Feedback form.

[Annexation Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF\)](#)

[Annexation Booklet \(PDF\)](#)

[Annexation Map \(PDF\)](#)

[Annexation Policy \(PDF\)](#)