

**414.02 EXCLUSIVE METHOD OF MUNICIPAL INCORPORATION.**

Subdivision 1. **Initiating the proceedings.** This section provides the exclusive method of incorporating a municipality in Minnesota. Proceedings for incorporation of a municipality may be initiated by petition of 100 or more property owners or by resolution of the town board within an area which is not included within the limits of any incorporated municipality and which area includes land that has been platted into lots and blocks in the manner provided by law. The petition or resolution shall be submitted to the chief administrative law judge and shall state the proposed name of the municipality, the names of all parties entitled to mailed notice under section 414.09, the reason for requesting incorporation, and shall include a proposed corporate boundary map.

Subd. 1a. **Notice of intent to incorporate.** (a) At least 30 days before submitting the petition or resolution to the chief administrative law judge under this section, the township must serve the clerk of each municipality and each township that is contiguous to the township by certified mail a notice of the township's intent to incorporate.

(b) If the proceedings for incorporation are initiated by the requisite number of property owners, the notice of intent to incorporate must be served by the property owner or owners or designee in the manner required under this paragraph. The property owner or owners or designee must serve a notice of intent to incorporate on the town board of the township containing the area proposed for incorporation. The property owner or owners or designee must also serve the clerk of each municipality and each township that is contiguous to the area proposed for incorporation by certified mail a notice of intent to incorporate.

Subd. 2. **Hearing time, place.** Upon receipt of a petition or resolution made pursuant to subdivision 1, the chief administrative law judge shall designate a time and place for a hearing in accordance with section 414.09.

Subd. 3. **Relevant factors, order.** (a) In arriving at a decision, the chief administrative law judge shall consider the following factors:

(1) present population and number of households, past population and projected population growth for the subject area;

(2) quantity of land within the subject area; the natural terrain including recognizable physical features, general topography, major watersheds, soil conditions and such natural features as rivers, lakes and major bluffs;

(3) present pattern of physical development, planning, and intended land uses in the subject area including residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and institutional land uses and the impact of the proposed action on those uses;

(4) the present transportation network and potential transportation issues, including proposed highway development;

(5) land use controls and planning presently being utilized in the subject area, including comprehensive plans, policies of the Metropolitan Council; and whether there are inconsistencies between proposed development and existing land use controls;

(6) existing levels of governmental services being provided to the subject area, including water and sewer service, fire rating and protection, law enforcement, street improvements and maintenance, administrative services, and recreational facilities and the impact of the proposed action on the delivery of the services;

(7) existing or potential environmental problems and whether the proposed action is likely to improve or resolve these problems;

(8) fiscal impact on the subject area and adjacent units of local government, including present bonded indebtedness; local tax rates of the county, school district, and other governmental units, including, where applicable, the net tax capacity of platted and unplatted lands and the division of homestead and nonhomestead property; and other tax and governmental aid issues;

(9) relationship and effect of the proposed action on affected and adjacent school districts and communities;

(10) whether delivery of services to the subject area can be adequately and economically delivered by the existing government;

(11) analysis of whether necessary governmental services can best be provided through the proposed action or another type of boundary adjustment;

(12) degree of contiguity of the boundaries of the subject area and adjacent units of local government; and

(13) analysis of the applicability of the State Building Code.

(b) Based upon these factors, the chief administrative law judge may order the incorporation on finding that:

(1) the property to be incorporated is now, or is about to become, urban or suburban in character; or

(2) that the existing township form of government is not adequate to protect the public health, safety, and welfare; or

(3) the proposed incorporation would be in the best interests of the area under consideration.

(c) The chief administrative law judge may deny the incorporation if the area, or a part thereof, would be better served by annexation to an adjacent municipality.

(d) The chief administrative law judge may alter the boundaries of the proposed incorporation by increasing or decreasing the area to be incorporated so as to include only that property which is now, or is about to become, urban or suburban in character, or may exclude property that may be better served by another unit of government. The chief administrative law judge may also alter the boundaries of the proposed incorporation so as to follow visible, clearly recognizable physical features for municipal boundaries.

(e) In all cases, the chief administrative law judge shall set forth the factors which are the basis for the decision.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary relating to the number of wards which may be established, the chief administrative law judge may provide for election of council members by wards, not less than three nor more than seven in number, whose limits are prescribed in the chief administrative law judge's order upon a finding that area representation is required to accord proper representation in the proposed incorporated area because of uneven population density in different parts thereof or the existence of agricultural lands therein which are in the path of suburban development, but after four years from the effective date of an incorporation the council of the municipality may by resolution adopted by a four-fifths vote abolish the ward system and provide for the election of all council members at large as in other municipalities.

(g) The chief administrative law judge's order for incorporation shall provide for the election of municipal officers in accordance with section 414.09. The plan of government shall be "Optional Plan A", provided that an alternate plan may be adopted pursuant to section 412.551, at any time.

(h) The ordinances of the township in which the new municipality is located shall continue in effect until repealed by the governing body of the new municipality.

**Subd. 4. Effective date of incorporation.** The incorporation shall be effective upon the election and qualification of new municipal officers or on such later date as is fixed by the chief administrative law judge's order.

**History:** 1959 c 686 s 2; 1961 c 645 s 2; 1963 c 807 s 6,7; 1965 c 899 s 6-11; 1969 c 1146 s 8; 1973 c 123 art 4 s 5; 1975 c 271 s 6; 1978 c 705 s 12; 1986 c 444; 1988 c 719 art 5 s 84; 1989 c 329 art 13 s 20; 1Sp1989 c 1 art 2 s 11; 1996 c 303 s 8; 2002 c 223 s 5; 2006 c 270 art 2 s 3; 2008 c 196 art 1 s 6; art 2 s 15; 2009 c 86 art 1 s 69

**414.033 ANNEXATION BY ORDINANCE.**

Subdivision 1. **Unincorporated property.** Unincorporated property abutting a municipality may be annexed to the municipality by ordinance as provided for in this section.

Subd. 2. **Conditions.** A municipal council may by ordinance declare land annexed to the municipality and any such land is deemed to be urban or suburban in character or about to become so if:

(1) the land is owned by the municipality;

(2) the land is completely surrounded by land within the municipal limits;

(3) the land abuts the municipality and the area to be annexed is 120 acres or less, and the area to be annexed is not presently served by public wastewater facilities or public wastewater facilities are not otherwise available, and the municipality receives a petition for annexation from all the property owners of the land. Except as provided for by an orderly annexation agreement, this clause may not be used to annex any property contiguous to any property either simultaneously proposed to be or previously annexed under this clause within the preceding 12 months if the property is or has been owned at any point during that period by the same owners and annexation would cumulatively exceed 120 acres; or

(4) the land has been approved after August 1, 1995, by a preliminary plat or final plat for subdivision to provide residential lots that average 21,780 square feet or less in area and the land is located within two miles of the municipal limits.

Subd. 2a. [Repealed, 1997 c 202 art 5 s 9]

Subd. 2b. **Notice, hearing required.** Before a municipality may adopt an ordinance under subdivision 2, clause (2), (3), or (4), a municipality must hold a public hearing and give 30 days' written notice by certified mail to the town or towns affected by the proposed ordinance and to all landowners within and contiguous to the area to be annexed.

Subd. 3. **60 percent bordered and 40 acres or less.** If the perimeter of the area to be annexed by a municipality is 60 percent or more bordered by the municipality and if the area to be annexed is 40 acres or less, the municipality shall serve notice of intent to annex upon the town board and the chief administrative law judge, unless the area is appropriate for annexation by ordinance under subdivision 2, clause (3). The town board shall have 90 days from the date of service to serve objections with the chief administrative law judge. If no objections are forthcoming within the said 90-day period, such land may be annexed by ordinance. If objections are filed with the chief administrative law judge, the chief administrative law judge shall conduct hearings and issue an order as in the case of annexations under section 414.031, subdivisions 3 and 4.

Subd. 4. [Repealed, 1978 c 705 s 33]

Subd. 5. **Petition by property owners; objections; procedure.** If the land is platted, or, if unplatted, does not exceed 200 acres, a majority of the property owners in number may petition the municipal council to have such land included within the abutting municipality and, within ten days thereafter, shall file copies of the petition with the chief administrative law judge, the town board, the county board and the municipal council of any other municipality which borders the land to be annexed. Within 90 days from the date of service, the town board or the municipal council of such abutting municipality may submit written objections to the annexation to the chief administrative law judge and the annexing municipality. Upon receipt of such objections, the chief administrative law judge shall proceed to hold a hearing and issue an order in accordance with section 414.031, subdivisions 3 and 4. If written objections are not submitted within the time specified in this section and if the municipal council determines that property proposed for the annexation is now or

is about to become urban or suburban in character, it may by ordinance declare such land annexed to the municipality. If the petition is not signed by all the property owners of the land proposed to be annexed, the ordinance shall not be enacted until the municipal council has held a hearing on the proposed annexation after at least 30 days' mailed notice to all property owners within the area to be annexed.

**Subd. 6. If pending proceeding; waivers from parties.** Whenever a proceeding for annexation is initiated under this section and all or any part of the land is included in another boundary adjustment proceeding pending before the chief administrative law judge, no action thereon shall be taken by the municipality, unless otherwise provided by an order of the chief administrative law judge, until final disposition has been made of the pending petition. Under this section, the chief administrative law judge will accept a waiver from all parties having a right to object, stating they have no objections to the proposed annexation and waiving the 90-day period before an annexation ordinance may be adopted.

**Subd. 7. Filing; effective date; copy to auditors.** Any annexation ordinance provided for in this section must be filed with the chief administrative law judge, the township, the county auditor and the secretary of state and is final on the date the ordinance is approved by the chief administrative law judge. A copy of the annexation ordinance must be delivered immediately by the governing body of the municipality to the appropriate county auditors.

**Subd. 8.** [Repealed, 1980 c 487 s 23]

**Subd. 9.** [Repealed, 1997 c 87 s 4]

**Subd. 10. Chief administrative law judge may require additional information.** The chief administrative law judge may require the city or property owners to furnish additional information concerning an annexation by ordinance to inform the chief administrative law judge about the extent to which the proposed annexation conforms to the statutory criteria set forth in sections 414.01, subdivision 1, and 414.031, subdivision 4.

**Subd. 11. When annexed land is in floodplain or shoreland area.** When a municipality declares land annexed to the municipality under subdivision 2, clause (3), and the land is within a designated floodplain, as provided by section 103F.111, subdivision 4, or a shoreland area, as provided by section 103F.205, subdivision 4, the municipality shall adopt or amend its land use controls to conform to chapter 103F, and any new development of the annexed land shall be subject to chapter 103F.

**Subd. 12. Property taxes.** When a municipality annexes land under subdivision 2, clause (2), (3), or (4), property taxes payable on the annexed land shall continue to be paid to the affected town or towns for the year in which the annexation becomes effective. If the annexation becomes effective on or before August 1 of a levy year, the municipality may levy on the annexed area beginning with that same levy year. If the annexation becomes effective after August 1 of a levy year, the town may continue to levy on the annexed area for that levy year, and the municipality may not levy on the annexed area until the following levy year.

**Subd. 13. Electric utility service notice; cost impact.** At least 30 days before a municipality may adopt an ordinance under subdivision 2, clause (2), (3), or (4), the petitioner must be notified by the municipality that the cost of electric utility service to the petitioner may change if the land is annexed to the municipality. The notice must include an estimate of the cost impact of any change in electric utility services, including rate changes and assessments, resulting from the annexation.

**History:** 1969 c 1146 s 12; 1975 c 271 s 6; 1978 c 705 s 15-21; 1979 c 50 s 52; 1985 c 30 s 2,3; 1991 c 291 art 12 s 24; 1992 c 556 s 5-8; 1994 c 511 s 4-8; 1996 c 303 s 13,14; 1997 c 31 art 3 s 14,15; 1997 c 202 art 5 s 3-5; 2002 c 223 s 8-12; 2006 c 270 art 2 s 8,9,13; 2007 c 90 s 2,3,5; 2008 c 196 art 2 s 15; 2008 c 277 art 1 s 98; 2014 c 220 s 3

**414.0325 ORDERLY ANNEXATION IN DESIGNATED UNINCORPORATED AREA.**

Subdivision 1. **Initiating the proceeding.** (a) One or more townships and one or more municipalities, by joint resolution, may designate an unincorporated area as in need of orderly annexation. One or more municipalities, by joint resolution with the county, may designate an unincorporated area in which there is no organized township government as in need of orderly annexation.

(b) A designated area is any area which the signatories to a joint resolution for orderly annexation have identified as being appropriate for annexation, either currently or at some point in the future, pursuant to the negotiated terms and conditions set forth in the joint resolution. Land described as a designated area is not, by virtue of being so described, considered also to be annexed for purposes of this chapter.

(c) The joint resolution will confer jurisdiction on the chief administrative law judge over annexations in the designated area and over the various provisions in said agreement by submission of said joint resolution to the chief administrative law judge.

(d) The resolution shall include a description of the designated area and the reasons for designation.

(e) Thereafter, an annexation of any part of the designated area may be initiated by:

(1) submitting to the chief administrative law judge a resolution of any signatory to the joint resolution;  
or

(2) the chief administrative law judge.

(f) Whenever a state agency, other than the Pollution Control Agency, orders a municipality to extend a municipal service to an area, the order confers jurisdiction on the chief administrative law judge to consider designation of the area for orderly annexation.

(g) If a joint resolution designates an area as in need of orderly annexation and states that no alteration of its stated boundaries is appropriate, the chief administrative law judge may review and comment, but may not alter the boundaries.

(h) If a joint resolution designates an area as in need of orderly annexation, provides for the conditions for its annexation, and states that no consideration by the chief administrative law judge is necessary, the chief administrative law judge may review and comment, but shall, within 30 days, order the annexation in accordance with the terms of the resolution.

Subd. 1a. **Electric utility service notice.** At least 60 days before a petition is filed under this section or section 414.033, the petitioner must notify the municipality that the petitioner intends to file a petition for annexation. At least 30 days before a petition is filed for annexation, the petitioner must be notified by the municipality that the cost of electric utility service to the petitioner may change if the land is annexed to the municipality. The notice must include an estimate of the cost impact of any change in electric utility services, including rate changes and assessments, resulting from the annexation.

Subd. 1b. **Notice of intent to designate an area.** At least ten days before the municipality or township adopts an orderly annexation agreement, a notice of the intent to include property in an orderly annexation area must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in both the township and municipality. The notice must clearly identify the boundaries of the area proposed to be included in the orderly annexation agreement. The cost of providing notice must be equally divided between the municipality and the township, unless otherwise agreed upon by the municipality and the township. This subdivision applies only to the initial designation to include property in an orderly annexation area subject to the orderly annexation



agreement, or any expansion of the orderly annexation area subject to the agreement, and not to any subsequent annexation of any property from within the designated area. This subdivision also does not apply when the orderly annexation agreement only designates for immediate annexation property for which all of the property owners have petitioned to be annexed.

**Subd. 2. Hearing time, place.** Upon receipt of a resolution for annexation of a part of the designated area, the chief administrative law judge shall set a time and place for a hearing in accordance with section 414.09.

**Subd. 3. Relevant factors, order.** (a) In arriving at a decision, the chief administrative law judge shall consider the factors in section 414.031, subdivision 4.

(b) Based upon factors in section 414.031, subdivision 4, the chief administrative law judge may order the annexation:

(1) on finding that the subject area is now or is about to become urban or suburban in character and that the annexing municipality is capable of providing the services required by the area within a reasonable time; or

(2) on finding that the existing township form of government is not adequate to protect the public health, safety, and welfare; or

(3) on finding that annexation would be in the best interests of the subject area.

(c) The chief administrative law judge may deny the annexation if it conflicts with any provision of the joint agreement.

(d) The chief administrative law judge may alter the boundaries of the proposed annexation by increasing or decreasing the area so as to include that property within the designated area which is in need of municipal services or will be in need of municipal services.

(e) If the annexation is denied, no proceeding for the annexation of substantially the same area may be initiated within two years from the date of the denial order unless the new proceeding is initiated by a majority of the area's property owners and the petition is supported by affected parties to the resolution.

(f) In all cases, the chief administrative law judge shall set forth the factors which are the basis for the decision.

**Subd. 4. Effective date of annexation.** The chief administrative law judge's order shall be effective upon the issuance of the order or at such later time as is provided in the order.

**Subd. 4a. Copy to county auditors.** A copy of the annexation order must be delivered immediately by the chief administrative law judge to the appropriate county auditors.

**Subd. 4b. Timing for tax levy.** For the purposes of taxation, if the annexation becomes effective on or before August 1 of a levy year, the municipality may levy on the annexed area beginning with that same levy year. If the annexation becomes effective after August 1 of a levy year, the town may continue to levy on the annexed area for that levy year, and the municipality may not levy on the annexed area until the following levy year.

**Subd. 5. Planning in orderly annexation area.** (a) An orderly annexation agreement may provide for the establishment of a board to exercise planning and land use control authority within any area designated as an orderly annexation area pursuant to this section, in the manner prescribed by section 471.59. The

orderly annexation agreement may also delegate planning and land use authority to the municipalities or towns or may establish some other process within the orderly annexation agreement to accomplish planning and land use control of the designated area.

(b) A board or other planning authority designated or established pursuant to an orderly annexation agreement shall have all of the powers contained in sections 462.351 to 462.364, and shall have the authority to adopt and enforce the State Fire Code promulgated pursuant to section 326B.02, subdivision 5.

(c) The orderly annexation agreement may provide that joint planning and land use controls shall apply to any or all parts of the area designated for orderly annexation as well as to any adjacent unincorporated or incorporated area, provided that the area to be included shall be described in the joint resolution.

(d) If the orderly annexation agreement does not provide for joint planning and land use control, delegate planning and land use control to the municipalities or towns, or establish some other process for planning and land use authority, the following procedures shall govern:

(1) if the county and townships agree to exclude the area from their zoning and subdivision ordinances, the municipality may extend its zoning and subdivision regulations to include the entire orderly annexation area as provided in section 462.357, subdivision 1, and section 462.358, subdivision 1a; or

(2) if the county and township do not agree to such extraterritorial zoning and subdivision regulation by the municipality, zoning and subdivision regulation within the orderly annexation area shall be controlled by a three-member committee with one member appointed from each of the municipal, town, and county governing bodies.

(e) The committee under paragraph (d), clause (2), shall:

(1) serve as the "governing body" and "board of appeals and adjustments," for purposes of sections 462.357 and 462.358, within the orderly annexation area; and

(2) have all of the powers contained in sections 462.351 to 462.364, and the authority to adopt and enforce the State Fire Code promulgated pursuant to section 326B.02, subdivision 5.

**Subd. 6. Validity, effect of orderly annexation agreement.** An orderly annexation agreement is a binding contract upon all parties to the agreement and is enforceable in the district court in the county in which the unincorporated property in question is located. The provisions of an orderly annexation agreement are not preempted by any provision of this chapter unless the agreement specifically provides so. If an orderly annexation agreement provides the exclusive procedures by which the unincorporated property identified in the agreement may be annexed to the municipality, the municipality shall not annex that property by any other procedure.

**History:** 1978 c 705 s 14; 1Sp1981 c 4 art 1 s 171,172; 1982 c 424 s 116; 1983 c 18 s 1; 1988 c 719 art 5 s 84; 1989 c 329 art 13 s 20; 1Sp1989 c 1 art 2 s 11; 1991 c 291 art 12 s 23; 1992 c 556 s 4; 1994 c 511 s 3; 1996 c 303 s 10-12; 1997 c 202 art 5 s 2; 2002 c 223 s 7; 2002 c 236 s 1; 2005 c 136 art 9 s 14; 2006 c 270 art 2 s 6,7; 2007 c 90 s 1; 2007 c 140 art 3 s 6; art 13 s 4; 2008 c 196 art 1 s 10-12; art 2 s 15; 2016 c 158 art 1 s 184