

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia Washington

BilAnalysis

BilNo. HB 1950

Regulating incorporation of towns
Brief title

Public Arg: 2/25/97

Reps. D. Schmidt/Thompson/Scott
Sponsor

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BACKGROUND:

An unincorporated area with a population of at least 1,500 may incorporate as a city or town. If the area is located in a county that plans under all of the requirements of the Growth Management Act, the area proposed to incorporate must be located within an urban growth area designated by the county.

The incorporation of a city or town involves several steps over an extended period of time.

A person proposing the incorporation of a city or town files notice of intent with the county legislative authority of the county in which the proposed city or town is located. The boundary review board, if one exists in the county, or the county legislative authority if a boundary review board does not exist in the county holds a public meeting on the proposal.

After the public meeting is held, the county auditor provides an identification number for the incorporation effort that must be included in the petition proposing the incorporation.

A petition proposing the incorporation of the city or town must be signed by at least 10 percent of the registered voters residing in the area proposed to incorporate. The petition must be filed with the county auditor by no later than 180 days after the date the public meeting on the proposal was held.

A public hearing on the proposed incorporation is held by the boundary review board, if one exists in the county, or otherwise by the county legislative authority if the county has designated urban growth areas, any area located outside of an urban growth area is removed from the proposed incorporation. The boundary review board may approve, modify and approve, or disapprove the proposed incorporation. However, the county legislative authority may modify, but may not disapprove the proposed incorporation, unless the minimum population requirements are not met.

If the area proposed to be incorporated has a population of 7,500 or more, the boundaries may not be altered (1) To reduce the population to less than 7,500; and (2) the size of any territory added or withdrawn may not be greater than 10 percent of the size of the area proposed to be incorporated. If the area proposed to be incorporated has a population of less than 7,500, these restrictions do not apply.

A ballot proposition authorizing the incorporation of the area is submitted to voters residing in the area proposed to be incorporated. If the petition is sufficient and, where applicable, the boundary review board has not disapproved the proposal. The incorporation is authorized if the ballot proposition is approved by a simple majority vote of voters voting on the proposition. An interim transition period follows for the transition of the area into a city or town.

Elections are held to nominate and elect the initial elected officials who assume office immediately upon their election with limited powers and to provide for a transition of the area into a city or town. The interim transition period ends 360 days after the date of the election at which voters approved the incorporation, unless the initial legislative body adopts a resolution providing for an earlier date which may not be less than 180 days after the date of the election at which voters approved the incorporation.

The city or town officially incorporates after the transition period and the initial officials take their full powers.

SUMMARY:

A proposed city or town in a county that plans under all the requirements of the Growth Management Act may include an area outside of an urban growth area if (1) At least 25 percent of the boundaries of the area are coterminous with the boundaries of an urban growth area; (2) the area has a population of at least 5,000; (3) the area has a density of at least 500 persons per square mile; and (4) the area is already characterized by significant industrial development.

FISCAL NOTE: Not Requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.