

**Annexation Process and Guidelines for Property Owners Currently
Not Residing Within the Boundaries of a Fire Protection District**
*Questions and answers on the steps involved in the Plumas LAFCo
(Local Agency Formation Commission) annexation process.*

1) Point of contact for parcel owners interested in officially annexing in to a district to obtain fire protection coverage.

The first point of contact should be with the Fire Department closest to them. Find out if they are able to or willing to provide those services by contract or annexation. Fire Districts will look at things like distance from district boundaries, access to your property, closest water sources and basic infrastructure of your area. If annexation or an out-of-area contract is being considered, LAFCo will play a role as well.

2) Example of typical process and timeline involved for multiple property owners located outside a fire district to do group annexation in to a fire district.

1. Property must be within a fire district's Sphere of Influence (SOI).
 - a. The property must be located in the fire district's SOI. An SOI is a LAFCo-approved plan that designates an agency's probable future boundary and service area.
 - b. Cost: No cost if currently residing in updated Spheres of Influence. There will be additional costs if the new territory has to be brought into a Sphere of Influence. In most cases, this means additional mapping and costs associated with the processing of a Sphere of Influence amendment to meet the requirements of State law. Fire agencies are encouraged to be proactive in the Sphere of Influence Update and (or) amendment process. The fee for an SOI amendment (marginal change) is \$4,000 and an SOI update (substantial change) is \$4,500.
2. Initiation by petition or resolution by the fire agency.
 - a. The landowner(s) works with the fire department to submit a petition of application. In this case the landowner is initiating the application to begin the process. Often a community meeting is held to discuss this process, timelines and estimated costs with interested parties before submitting the application to ensure there is a commitment from interested parties. Alternatively, the Fire District may initiate the process by approving a resolution. In either case it is advisable to discuss initiation of an application before LAFCo with LAFCo staff.
 - b. Cost: No cost to file this form.
3. LAFCo fee deposit required.
 - a. The application goes to LAFCo where it is processed. At this point, a LAFCo fee deposit is required.
 - b. Cost: Typically the fee deposit for a fire district annexation is \$2,887.50.¹ (If the

¹ Amended by Resolution 2014-0001- February 10, 2014 for projects exempt from CEQA, 100% Landowner and Registered Voter Consent developed property, Fire District

property is within the district's SOI.) The LAFCo charge out rate is \$165 per hour to cover both direct and indirect costs of complying with State law. If there are multiple owners wishing the annex, the LAFCo fee deposit and the State Board of Equalization fee may be divided among each of the owners depending upon location and proximity to one another—cost will be shared among multiple property owners. If the applicant is one single-family residence, the fee deposit is \$1,000. If the application is later withdrawn for any reason, LAFCo will refund the unused fee deposit back to the applicant(s). If the LAFCo application is not complicated, a greater portion of the fee deposit will be returned to those applying upon completion of the process. This is generally the case with small annexation proposals. However, if controversy with the application occurs costs may be higher than the required fee deposit based on the level of controversy.

4. LAFCo mapping fee
 - a. Part of this process requires LAFCo to create an updated GIS shape file map used for County assessor's maps, voter registration, GIS planning and Emergency Response Maps.
 - b. Cost: Estimate \$200

5. Map required by licensed surveyor.
 - a. The applicant is required to pay for and provide a map and perimeter boundary description to LAFCo of the area to be annexed. The map and boundary description must be prepared by a licensed land surveyor or a qualified engineer of the applicant's choice. The map and description must meet the State Board of Equalization requirements. Applicants need to contract directly with a surveyor or engineer for this service.
 - b. Sample map:
http://www.calafco.org/local/Plumas/7_Sample_map_&_legal_copy.pdf

6. Environmental review (CEQA)
 - a. Review of the area is required. Documentation of the results is required with the application. Typically, small annexations to fire districts are exempt from CEQA. However, if a proposal includes a land division the environmental review will be prepared by the County as part of its overall entitlement process.
 - b. Filing of an exemption with the County Clerk costs \$50.00.

7. Plan for providing service documentation.
 - a. The fire department and LAFCo have examples for you to use of this format.
 - b. There is no cost associated with preparing a plan for services. However, details must be worked out with the local fire agency.

8. Completed package to Plumas County Board of Supervisors- Tax Exchange negotiations
 - a. Once an Application is initiated, LAFCo staff will forward the application to the Board of Supervisors and the appropriate fire agencies, the County Assessor and Auditor to initiate negotiation of a property tax sharing agreement. This process

defines the amount of property tax revenue, if any, to be received the fire agency after the annexation is completed. LAFCo is not a party to the Tax Exchange process. This process is between the affected fire agency and the other agencies currently receiving a share of the ad valorem property taxes.

- b. Cost: No cost specifically associated with this action item. Costs are included in the application fee.
9. Public Comment period
- a. After the tax negotiation is agreed upon by the County and the fire agency, then LAFCo may set a public hearing for this item and publish a 21-day notice in the newspaper.
 - b. LAFCo Staff will prepare an Executive Officer's report and proposed resolution for consideration by the LAFCo Commission.
 - c. Cost: Costs are included in the application fee
10. Public Hearing
- a. The LAFCo Commission sets a public hearing for this item and may approve, deny or modify the proposal. If the proposal is modified by the Commission, the applicant (s) are responsible for paying additional mapping costs.
 - b. If all landowners consent to the annexation then LAFCo will waive the protest hearing process and after 30 days after LAFCo approval will record as final the annexation and the LAFCo process is completed excepting the filing with the State Board of Equalization.
 - c. Cost: There is a fee required to be submitted to the State Board of Equalization (BOE) along with maps and descriptions meeting their specific requirements. LAFCo will request the fee, which will vary depending upon the acreage included from the application proponents at this time and file all the required information with the BOE. The BOE Fee is based on sliding scale by acreage. See document http://www.calafco.org/local/Plumas/6_jurboundaryreq_copy2005.pdf

***The costs examples above are provided at a starting point to understand the steps involved and timelines to guide you through the process.*

For specific costs call Jennifer Stephenson, LAFCo Executive Officer at (530) 283-7069 or email at jennifer@pcateam.com to reassess the costs, complexity and timelines that currently exist. Each annexation request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.