

Simplified Notes for Annexation Remonstrance

Dear Property Owner: You've heard your property is scheduled to be annexed into the city of Bloomington and that your taxes will probably go up and you are wondering how to prevent this from happening. This is a "cheat sheet" type of note on how to oppose your property from being annexed. Attached, you will find the official instructions-these notes are just my simple thoughts on questions I expect to be frequently asked.

So what exactly is annexation?-->If your property is annexed it will become part of Bloomington City and will be taxed as such and you will receive the same services as someone who already lives inside the City of Bloomington. An example is that the Bloomington Police would be at your service first instead of the Monroe County Sheriff's Department. It really boils down to city services verses county services. That is why there is a tax difference. City taxes are generally higher.

What if you don't want to be annexed?--> You can file a petition to fight against it. If enough people file petitions, the annexation will not happen. After 90 days, I will add up all the people who petitioned against it, to see if there is enough people opposed to prevent it from going through. You have 90 days from October 8th to file a petition.

What if I want to be annexed?--> Don't file or sign a petition. It's as simple as that.

Who can file a petition against annexation?-->Anyone who owns property in the areas the city is trying to annex.

How many petitions can I file?-->If you own just one property, you can only file or sign one petition that would count. Your signature counts

as one vote against it in the area that you live in. **There are 7 areas.** You can only vote in the area where you own property. If you own multiple properties, you can file or sign a petition in each of the areas where you own property.

How do I know what I can and can't file for?-->If you are not sure if you can file or have questions about the areas, we are here to help you. You can even call me and either I will help you or have someone who works with me help you. We will answer all your questions and help you exercise your right to fight annexation of your property.

How will I know if there is enough signatures to prevent annexation?

Each area will be looked at separately. It will boil down to a simple percentage of the property owners who petitioned and opposed annexation. If 65% or more successfully petitioned against it, it fails automatically and nothing changes. If 50% or less petitioned then the city wins the annexation fight and it passes automatically and your property will be a city property moving forward. If it works out that the total of the people opposing fall between 50% and 65%, then special rules apply to decide what will happen.

Can I collect other peoples' signatures?-->Yes! But only if you live in the area proposed to be annexed and you can only collect signatures from other people in that area. No signatures from outside the proposed area will count-no matter who collected them.

How will I know if my signature doesn't count?-->Me or someone from my office will contact you. We will let you know that it did not count and tell you WHY it will not count. At that time, if we can fix something to make it count, we will try to help you. Example-You signed a petition from Area 2 but you live in Area 1. We can help you get that fixed. We will work with you to see if you are able to fight the proposed

annexation or if you live outside the areas that are on the City's proposal and are not part of the annexation.

What is the difference between someone getting my signature on their petition and me filing my own petition?--> Nothing really unless there is a paperwork error-such as a signature on the wrong form or if you live in the wrong area written on the form. To prevent this-you can file your own petition by coming to my office in the Courthouse and filing your petition yourself. It will just take a couple of minutes and you will need your ID. This way-you can make sure someone double checked it and that it will count. This service is free and we will have a table setup on the bottom floor of the courthouse to help you. We have all the forms, just bring your ID.

When and where can I come?--> Any weekday that is not a holiday from 8am to 4pm. The Monroe County Courthouse is located at 100 W. Kirkwood in Bloomington, Indiana.

What is a good number to call and get help?--> 812-349-2510 and you can email us at annexation@co.monroe.in.us and someone will contact you. Also, my cell phone number is 812-360-2338 if you want to talk to me directly.

What if I want to collect signatures?--> We can email you out a form to do that, but you will need to bring it back to my office yourself to sign it in front of me or have it notarized. Remember, you can only collect signatures from people who own property in the same area that you own property!

More Questions???--> Please come to a short meeting in the courthouse during the week of Oct 11-15th. These meetings will be at 10am and 2pm and will answer all your questions. You can also call my office and we will be happy to help you.

The last day to sign a petition is Thursday, January 6, 2022 at 4pm. I must have all signatures in my office by that date.

It is always an honor to work with county property owners and I will work hard to see that we will do you right. We will serve you with kindness and explain details in plain language. We won't rush you either. So, if you need us to help you—please come and let us.

Yours in public service—

Catherine Smith

Monroe County Auditor

Contact us:

The Monroe County Auditor's Office is in Courthouse Room 209

Monroe County Auditor's Office Phone: 812-349-2510

Auditor Catherine (Cathy) Smith's Cell Phone: 812-360-2338

Email: annexation@co.monroe.in.us

[TO BE PRINTED ON WHITE PAPER - ATTACH TO EACH REMONSTRANCE COUNTERPARTS]

**INSTRUCTIONS
RELATIVE TO CIRCULATION
OF REMONSTRANCE AGAINST ANNEXATION**

Bloomington City Ordinance Numbers 17-09 South-West A Bloomington Annexation
Bloomington City Ordinance Numbers 17-10 South-West B Bloomington Annexation
Bloomington City Ordinance Numbers 17-11 South-West C Bloomington Annexation
Bloomington City Ordinance Numbers 17-12 South East
Bloomington City Ordinance Numbers 17-13 North Island
Bloomington City Ordinance Numbers 17-14 Central Island
Bloomington City Ordinance Numbers 17-15 South Island

1. The person who circulates a remonstrance form for the purpose of obtaining signatures must be an owner of real property located in the listed area to be annexed, in Monroe County, Indiana.

Owner of property means a person that owns: real property in the area to be annexed that was not exempt from property taxes under IC 6-1-1-10 or any other state law for the immediately preceding year and is not subject to a valid waiver of remonstrance.

2. The person who circulates each remonstrance form must sign the verifying affidavit at the end of that form and must sign a remonstrance form. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE **VERIFYING AFFIDAVIT** BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED AFTER SIGNATURES HAVE BEEN OBTAINED, BEFORE A NOTARY PUBLIC AND THAT THE NOTARY PUBLIC BLOCK ALSO BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE PETITION OR REMONSTRANCE FORM IS FILED WITH THE **MONROE COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE**. Located in Room 209 of the Courthouse, 100 W. Kirkwood Ave, Bloomington, IN.

3. The remonstrance petition may be executed in several counterparts, the total of which constitutes the remonstrance petition. One person can pick up multiple remonstrance forms from the county auditor's office. However, each counterpart may be circulated by only one person and therefore cannot be passed around from one person to another for circulation.

4. An individual may not be compensated for or reimbursed for expenses incurred in circulating a remonstrance petition and obtaining signatures.

5. The signatures on each remonstrance form must be made in the presence of the person who circulates the form and signs the verifying affidavit.

6. Qualified signers are owners of real property located within the area to be annexed as described in the ordinance of The City of Bloomington Common Council, Monroe County, Indiana, as shown by the property tax records in the County. To qualify, the real property owned must not have been exempt from property taxes under IC 6-1.1-10 or any other state law for the immediately preceding year. Each person who signs a remonstrance petition must indicate the address of the real property owned by the person in the area to be annexed.

7. Only one person having an interest in each single property as evidenced by the tax duplicate is considered an owner of the property and may sign a remonstrance petition. A person is entitled to sign a petition only one (1) time in a remonstrance process, regardless of whether the person owns more than one (1) parcel of real property.

8. All names should be written and printed neatly, and as they appear tax records in the County as nearly as possible.

9. Each signature must be dated the date it is applied to the remonstrance and the date of the signature may not be earlier than the date on which the remonstrance forms may be issued by the county auditor.

10. Additional signatures or signature pages may not be added to the remonstrance forms issued by the county auditor's office.

11. After a carrier has finished circulating a counterpart and before submitting it to the county auditor's office, the carrier must swear or affirm before a notary public that the carrier witnessed each signature and is executing the verifying affidavit.

12. The completed remonstrance forms including the verifying affidavit must be submitted to the county auditor's office. A remonstrance petition may be delivered to the county auditor's office in person or by certified mail, return receipt requested; or by any means of delivery that includes a return receipt. The remonstrance petition must be postmarked no later than the closing date for the remonstrance period.

13. No remonstrance form will be accepted by the county auditor's office after 4 p.m. on Thursday, Jan 6th.

14. A person who signs a remonstrance petition may withdraw the person's signature from a remonstrance petition before a remonstrance petition is filed with the county auditor by filing a verified request to remove the person's name from the remonstrance petition. Names may not be added to a remonstrance petition after the remonstrance petition is filed with the county auditor.

15. The county auditor shall prepare and update weekly a list of the persons who have signed a remonstrance petition. The list must include a statement that the list includes all persons who have signed a remonstrance petition as of a particular date, and does not represent a list of persons certified by the county auditor as actual landowners in the annexation territory using the auditor's current tax records. The county auditor shall post the lists in the office of the county auditor.