368.7 Voluntary annexation of territory.

1. *a.* All of the owners of land in a territory adjoining a city may apply in writing to the council of the adjoining city requesting annexation of the territory. Territory comprising railway right-of-way or territory comprising not more than twenty percent of the land area may be included in the application without the consent of the owner to avoid creating an island or to create more uniform boundaries. Public land may be included in the territory to be annexed. However, the area of the territory that is public land included without the written consent of the agency with jurisdiction over the public land shall not be used to determine the percentage of territory that is included with the consent of the owner and without the consent of the owner.

b. (1) Prior to notification in paragraph "*c*", the annexing city shall provide written notice to the board of supervisors and township trustees of each county and township that contains all or a portion of the territory to be annexed. The written notice shall include the same information required in paragraph "*c*" and shall set a time for a consultation on the proposed annexation between the annexing city and each county and township that contains all or a portion of the territory to be annexed. The consultation shall be held at least fourteen business days before the applications in paragraph "*c*" are mailed. The governing body of each such county and township may designate one of its members to attend the consultation. Each such county and township may make written recommendations for modification to the proposed annexation no later than seven business days following the date of the consultation.

(2) Not later than thirty days after the consultation, the board of supervisors of each county that contains all or a portion of the territory to be annexed shall, by resolution, state whether or not it supports the application or whether it takes no position in support of or against the application. If there is a comprehensive plan for the county, the board shall take the plan into account when considering its resolution. A copy of the resolution shall be immediately filed with the annexing city and shall be considered by the city council when taking action on the application. The city council shall forward a copy of the resolution to the city development board as part of the city proceedings on the annexation. Failure of a board of supervisors to adopt a resolution shall not delay the proceedings on the application nor shall such failure be considered a deficiency either in the application or in the annexing city's proceedings.

c. A copy of the application shall be mailed by certified mail to the nonconsenting owner and each affected public utility, at least fourteen business days prior to any action taken by the city council on the application. The application must contain a legal description and a map of the territory showing its location in relationship to the city.

d. The city shall provide for a public hearing on the application before approving or denying it. The city shall provide written notice at least fourteen business days prior to any action by the city council regarding the application, including a public hearing, by regular mail to the chairperson of the board of supervisors of each county which contains a portion of the territory proposed to be annexed, each public utility which serves the territory proposed to be annexed, each owner of property located within the territory to be annexed who is not a party to the application, and each owner of property that adjoins the territory to be annexed unless the adjoining property is in a city. The city shall publish notice of the application and public hearing on the application in an official county newspaper in each county which contains a portion of the territory proposed to be annexed. Both the written and published notice shall include the time and place of the public hearing and a legal description of the territory to be annexed. The city shall not assess the costs of providing notice as required in this section to the applicants. The city council shall approve or deny the application by resolution of the council.

e. An application for annexation under this subsection may be withdrawn by an applicant at any time within three business days after the public hearing unless the application was made pursuant to a written agreement for the extension of city services or unless the right to withdraw the application was specifically identified and waived by the applicant in the application. A landowner who has consented to the annexation may, within three business days after the public hearing, withdraw the landowner's consent to the annexation unless the

landowner has entered into a written agreement for extension of city services or unless the right to withdraw consent was specifically identified and waived by the landowner.

f. An annexation including territory comprising not more than twenty percent of the land area without consent of the property owners is not complete without approval by four-fifths of the members of the city development board after a hearing for all affected property owners and the county. When considering such an annexation application, the board may request that the annexing city provide information on the amount of land located in the annexing city that is currently vacant or undeveloped and whether municipal services are being provided to current residents of the annexing city.

2. An application for annexation of territory not within an urbanized area of a city other than the city to which the annexation is directed must be approved by resolution of the council which receives the application. The city council shall mail a copy of the application by certified mail to the board of supervisors of each county which contains a portion of the territory at least fourteen business days prior to any action taken by the city council on the application. The council shall also publish notice of the application in an official county newspaper in each county which contains a portion of the territory at least fourteen days prior to any action taken by the council on the application. Upon receiving approval of the council, the city clerk shall file a copy of the resolution, map, and legal description of the territory involved with the secretary of state, the county board of supervisors of each county which contains a portion of the territory, each affected public utility, and the state department of transportation. The city clerk shall also record a copy of the legal description, map, and resolution with the county recorder of each county which contains a portion of the territory. The secretary of state shall not accept and acknowledge a copy of a legal description, map, and resolution of annexation which would create an island. The annexation is completed upon acknowledgment by the secretary of state that the secretary of state has received the legal description, map, and resolution.

3. An application for annexation of territory within an urbanized area of a city other than the city to which the annexation is directed must be approved both by resolution of the council which receives the application and by the board. The board shall not approve an application which creates an island. Notice of the application shall be mailed by certified mail, by the city to which the annexation is directed, at least fourteen business days prior to any action by the city council on the application to the council of each city whose boundary adjoins the territory or is within two miles of the territory, to the board of supervisors of each county which contains a portion of the territory, each affected public utility, and to the regional planning authority of the territory. Notice of the application shall be published in an official county newspaper in each county which contains a portion of the territory at least ten business days prior to any action by the city council on the application. The annexation is completed when the board has filed and recorded copies of applicable portions of the proceedings as required by section 368.20, subsection 1, paragraph *"b"*.

4. *a.* If one or more applications for a voluntary annexation and one or more petitions for an involuntary annexation or incorporation for a common territory are submitted to the board within thirty days of the date the first application or petition was submitted to the board, the board shall approve the application for voluntary annexation, if the application meets the applicable requirements of this chapter, unless the board determines by a preponderance of the evidence that the application was filed in bad faith, or that the application as filed is contrary to the best interests of the citizens of the urbanized area, or that the applicant cannot within a reasonable period of time meet its obligation to provide services to the territory to be annexed sufficient to meet the needs of the territory. In consideration of the requests, the board may appoint a committee in the manner provided in section 368.14 to seek additional information from the applicant for voluntary annexation as necessary, including the information required of petitioners pursuant to section 368.11. The board, or the committee, if applicable, shall hold a public hearing on the application for voluntary annexation in the manner provided for involuntary petitions in section 368.15. The decision of the board under this subsection shall be made within ninety days of receipt of the application by the board. The failure of the board to approve an application under this paragraph shall be deemed final agency action subject to judicial review.

b. If an application for voluntary annexation is not approved pursuant to this section, the board shall cause the conversion of the application to a petition pursuant to section 368.13 and shall proceed under section 368.14A. The conversion of an application to a petition shall not prejudice the status of the applicant. Judicial review of a board decision under this subsection may be requested by an aggrieved party.

5. In the discretion of a city council, the resolution provided for in subsection 1, paragraph *"d"*, or subsection 2 or 3, may include a provision for a transition for the imposition of city taxes against property within the annexation area as provided in section 368.11, subsection 3, paragraph *"m"*.

[R60, §1038; C73, §426; C97, §617, 621; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**5615, 5616;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, §362.30, 362.31; C75, 77, 79, 81, §368.7]

86 Acts, ch 1245, §845; 89 Acts, ch 299, §2; 91 Acts, ch 187, §2, 3; 91 Acts, ch 250, §3, 4; 92 Acts, ch 1174, §2; 93 Acts, ch 152, §4; 2002 Acts, ch 1132, §5 – 8, 11; 2003 Acts, ch 148, §3, 9; 2005 Acts, ch 19, §50; 2005 Acts, ch 111, §1 – 3, 5; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §179, 180

Referred to in §368.12, 368.25A