New City of Liberty Lake

The new City of Liberty Lake is situated 17 miles east of downtown Spokane and two miles west of the Idaho state line. It has an estimated population of 3,265 at present and is projected to grow to a population of 9,753 within ten years. The new city will encompass about four and a half square miles and the boundaries are shown on the map below. It was approved by the voters for incorporation on November 7, 2000.

The next steps for the new city are critical to its long term success: services must be provided, staff must be hired, an “interim” and first-year budget must be prepared; operating and fiscal policies must be adopted; and a working relationship with special purpose districts, other cities, and Spokane County must be developed. Open public meeting laws apply to the interim city council.

This fact sheet is one resource that was developed to help facilitate the transition from unincorporated Spokane County to the new City of Liberty Lake.

New City of Liberty Lake Boundary
New City Guide

A new city must be organized, staffed, and funded to begin official operation between 180 and 360 days after voter approval of the incorporation.

Transition Period

Even before the new city mayor and council are elected, a well-organized and representative transition team can provide much of the groundwork for many of these decisions. Several committees are proposed to be formed in Liberty Lake to expedite this process. A series of forums is proposed to present different elements of importance for consideration of Liberty Lake residents.

Interim Period

The “interim city council” refers to the elected council during the time period between the date of the certification of the results of the election at which its members are chosen and the official date of incorporation, a date which the interim council will choose. This interim council serves as the city council upon the official incorporation date.

Powers of Interim City Council

Adoption of Ordinances and Resolutions
Adoption of Contracts and Agreements
Adoption of SEPA Policies and Procedures
Borrowing Power
- issue tax or revenue anticipation notes or warrants
- borrow from the federal, state, and other governments
Adoption of Property Tax Levy
Acquisition of City Facilities, Equipment, and Insurance
Hiring of Staff
Ballot Propositions to Authorize Taxes
Fire Protection and/or Library District Annexation
Adoption of Development Moratoria
Adoption of Budgets

Official Date of Incorporation

Choosing the official date of incorporation is basically a process of considering which revenues the new city will receive, and when these will become available. For Liberty Lake, the optimum date appears to be September 1, 2001. This date takes fullest advantage of the revenue streams that flow to the new city, allowing time for the adoption of the city’s property tax ordinance, while ensuring County road maintenance responsibility for the maximum time possible after incorporation.

Mayor-Council Form of Government

With the Mayor - Council form of government, a mayor and seven council members are elected and serve for four year terms. The organization is shown here.

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For more information, call the Boundary Review Board Office at 477-4237 or brb@spokanecounty.org.