

**Chapter 36.93 RCW**  
**LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION—BOUNDARIES—REVIEW BOARDS**

**Sections**

- 36.93.010 Purpose.
- 36.93.020 Definitions.
- 36.93.030 Creation of boundary review boards in counties with populations of two hundred ten thousand or more—Creation in other counties.
- 36.93.040 Dates upon which boards in counties with populations of less than two hundred ten thousand deemed established.
- 36.93.051 Appointment of board—Members—Terms—Qualifications.
- 36.93.061 Boards in counties with populations of less than one million—Members—Terms—Qualifications.
- 36.93.063 Selection of board members—Procedure—Commencement of term—Vacancies.
- 36.93.067 Effect of failure to make appointment.
- 36.93.070 Chair, vice chair, chief clerk—Powers and duties of board and chief clerk—Meetings—Hearings—Counsel—Compensation.
- 36.93.080 Expenditures—Remittance of costs to counties.
- 36.93.090 Filing notice of proposed actions with board.
- 36.93.093 Copy of notice of intention by water-sewer district to be sent officials.
- 36.93.100 Review of proposed actions by board—Procedure.
- 36.93.105 Actions not subject to review by board.
- 36.93.110 When review not necessary.
- 36.93.116 Simultaneous consideration of incorporation and annexation of territory.
- 36.93.120 Fees.
- 36.93.130 Notice of intention—Contents.
- 36.93.140 Pending actions not affected.
- 36.93.150 Review of proposed actions—Actions and determinations of board—Disapproval, effect.
- 36.93.153 Review of proposed incorporation in county with boundary review board.
- 36.93.155 Annexation approval—Other action not authorized.
- 36.93.157 Decisions to be consistent with growth management act.
- 36.93.160 Hearings—Notice—Record—Subpoenas—Decision of board—Appellate review.
- 36.93.170 Factors to be considered by board—Incorporation proceedings exempt from state environmental policy act.
- 36.93.180 Objectives of boundary review board.
- 36.93.185 Objectives of boundary review board—Water-sewer district annexations, mergers—Territory not adjacent to district.
- 36.93.190 Decision of board not to affect existing franchises, permits, codes, ordinances, etc., for ten years.
- 36.93.200 Rules and regulations—Adoption procedure.
- 36.93.210 Rules and regulations—Filing—Permanent register.
- 36.93.220 Provisions of prior laws superseded by chapter.
- 36.93.230 Power to disband boundary review board.
- 36.93.800 Application of chapter to merged special purpose districts.

**RCW 36.93.010 Purpose.** The legislature finds that in metropolitan areas of this state, experiencing heavy population growth, increased problems arise from rapid proliferation of municipalities and haphazard extension of and competition to extend municipal boundaries. These problems affect adversely the quality and quantity and cost of municipal services furnished, the financial integrity of certain municipalities, the consistency of local regulations, and many other incidents of local government. Further, the competition among municipalities for unincorporated territory and the disorganizing effect thereof on land use, the preservation of property values and the desired objective of a consistent comprehensive land use plan for populated areas, makes it appropriate that the legislature provide a method of guiding and controlling the creation and growth of municipalities in metropolitan areas so that such problems may be avoided and that residents and businesses in those areas may rely on the logical growth of local government affecting them. [1967 c 189 s 1.]

**RCW 36.93.020 Definitions.** As used herein:

(1) "Governmental unit" means any incorporated city or town, metropolitan municipal corporation, or any special purpose district as defined in this section.

(2) "Special purpose district" means any water-sewer district, fire protection district, drainage improvement district, drainage and diking improvement district, flood control zone district, irrigation district, metropolitan park district, drainage district, or public utility district engaged in water distribution.

(3) "Board" means a boundary review board created by or pursuant to this chapter. [1999 c 153 s 44; 1979 ex.s. c 30 s 5; 1967 c 189 s 2.]

**Part headings not law—1999 c 153:** See note following RCW 57.04.050.

**RCW 36.93.030 Creation of boundary review boards in counties with populations of two hundred ten thousand or more—Creation in other counties.** (1) There is hereby created and established in each county with a population of two hundred ten thousand or more a board to be known and designated as a "boundary review board".

(2) A boundary review board may be created and established in any other county in the following manner:

(a) The county legislative authority may, by majority vote, adopt a resolution establishing a boundary review board; or

(b) A petition seeking establishment of a boundary review board signed by qualified electors residing in the county equal in number to at least five percent of the votes cast in the county at the last county general election may be filed with the county auditor.

Upon the filing of such a petition, the county auditor shall examine the same and certify to the sufficiency of the signatures thereon. No person may withdraw his or her name from a petition after it has been filed with the auditor. Within thirty days after the

filing of such petition, the county auditor shall transmit the same to the county legislative authority, together with his or her certificate of sufficiency.

After receipt of a valid petition for the establishment of a boundary review board, the county legislative authority shall submit the question of whether a boundary review board should be established to the electorate at the next primary or general election according to RCW 29A.04.321. Notice of the election shall be given as provided in RCW 29A.52.355 and shall include a clear statement of the proposal to be submitted.

If a majority of the persons voting on the proposition shall vote in favor of the establishment of the boundary review board, such board shall thereupon be deemed established. [2011 c 10 s 80; 2006 c 344 s 28; 1991 c 363 s 91; 1969 ex.s. c 111 s 1; 1967 c 189 s 3.]

**Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10:** See note following RCW 29A.04.008.

**Effective date—2006 c 344 ss 1-16 and 18-40:** See note following RCW 29A.04.311.

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**RCW 36.93.040 Dates upon which boards in counties with populations of less than two hundred ten thousand deemed established.** For the purposes of this chapter, each county with a population of less than two hundred ten thousand shall be deemed to have established a boundary review board on and after the date a proposition for establishing the same has been approved at an election as provided for in RCW 36.93.030, or on and after the date of adoption of a resolution of the county legislative authority establishing the same as provided for in RCW 36.93.030. [1991 c 363 s 92; 1967 c 189 s 4.]

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**RCW 36.93.051 Appointment of board—Members—Terms—Qualifications.** The boundary review board in each county with a population of one million or more shall consist of eleven members chosen as follows:

(1) Four persons shall be appointed by the county appointing authority;

(2) Four persons shall be appointed by the mayors of the cities and towns located within the county; and

(3) Three persons shall be appointed by the board from nominees of special districts in the county.

The governor shall designate one initial appointee to serve a term of two years, and two initial appointees to serve terms of four years, if the appointments are made in an odd-numbered year, or one initial appointee to serve a term of one year, and two initial appointees to serve terms of three years, if the appointments are made in an even-numbered year, with the length of the term being calculated from the first day of February in the year the appointment was made.

The county appointing authority shall designate one of its initial appointees to serve a term of two years, and two of its initial appointees to serve terms of four years, if the appointments are made in an odd-numbered year, or one of its initial appointees to serve a term of one year, and two of its initial appointees to serve terms of three years, if the appointments are made in an even-numbered year, with the length of the term being calculated from the first day of February in the year the appointment was made.

The mayors making the initial city and town appointments shall designate two of their initial appointees to serve terms of two years, and one of their initial appointees to serve a term of four years, if the appointments are made in an odd-numbered year, or two of their initial appointees to serve terms of one year, and one of their initial appointees to serve a term of three years, if the appointments are made in an even-numbered year, with the length of the term being calculated from the first day of February in the year the appointment was made.

The board shall make two initial appointments from the nominees of special districts, with one appointee serving a term of four years and one initial appointee serving a term of two years, if the appointments are made in an odd-numbered year, or one initial appointee serving a term of three years and one initial appointee serving a term of one year if the appointments are made in an even-numbered year, with the length of the term being calculated from the first day of March in the year in which the appointment is made.

After the initial appointments, all appointees shall serve four-year terms.

No appointee may be an official or employee of the county or a governmental unit in the county, or a consultant or advisor on a contractual or regular retained basis of the county, any governmental unit in the county, or any agency or association thereof. [2011 1st sp.s. c 21 s 23; 1991 c 363 s 93; 1989 c 84 s 17.]

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 21:** See note following RCW 72.23.025.

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**RCW 36.93.061 Boards in counties with populations of less than one million—Members—Terms—Qualifications.** The boundary review board in each county with a population of less than one million shall consist of five members chosen as follows:

- (1) Two persons shall be appointed by the governor;
- (2) One person shall be appointed by the county appointing authority;
- (3) One person shall be appointed by the mayors of the cities and towns located within the county; and
- (4) One person shall be appointed by the board from nominees of special districts in the county.

The governor shall designate one initial appointee to serve a term of two years, and one initial appointee to serve a term of four years, if the appointments are made in an odd-numbered year, or one initial appointee to serve a term of one year, and one initial appointee to serve a term of three years, if the appointments are made

in an even-numbered year, with the length of a term being calculated from the first day of February in the year that the appointment was made.

The initial appointee of the county appointing authority shall serve a term of two years, if the appointment is made in an odd-numbered year, or a term of one year, if the appointment is made in an even-numbered year. The initial appointee by the mayors shall serve a term of four years, if the appointment is made in an odd-numbered year, or a term of three years, if the appointment is made in an even-numbered year. The length of the term shall be calculated from the first day in February in the year the appointment was made.

The board shall make one initial appointment from the nominees of special districts to serve a term of two years if the appointment is made in an odd-numbered year, or a term of one year if the appointment is made in an even-numbered year, with the length of the term being calculated from the first day of March in the year in which the appointment is made.

After the initial appointments, all appointees shall serve four-year terms.

No appointee may be an official or employee of the county or a governmental unit in the county, or a consultant or advisor on a contractual or regular retained basis of the county, any governmental unit in the county, or any agency or association thereof. [1991 c 363 s 94; 1989 c 84 s 18.]

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**RCW 36.93.063 Selection of board members—Procedure—Commencement of term—Vacancies.** The executive of the county shall make the appointments under RCW 36.93.051 and 36.93.061 for the county, if one exists, or otherwise the county legislative authority shall make the appointments for the county.

The mayors of all cities and towns in the county shall meet on or before the last day of January in each odd-numbered year to make such appointments for terms to commence on the first day of February in that year. The date of the meeting shall be called by the mayor of the largest city or town in the county, and the mayor of the largest city or town in the county who attends the meeting shall preside over the meeting. Selection of each appointee shall be by simple majority vote of those mayors who attend the meeting.

Any special district in the county may nominate a person to be appointed to the board on or before the last day of January in each odd-numbered year that the term for this position expires. The board shall make its appointment of a nominee or nominees from the special districts during the month of February following the date by which such nominations are required to be made.

The county appointing authority and the mayors of cities and towns within the county shall make their initial appointments for newly created boards within sixty days of the creation of the board or shall make sufficient additional appointments to increase a five-member board to an eleven-member board within sixty days of the date the county obtains a population of one million or more. The board shall make its initial appointment or appointments of board members from the nominees of special districts located within the county

within ninety days of the creation of the board or shall make an additional appointment of a board member from the nominees of special districts located within the county within ninety days of the date the county obtains a population of one million or more.

The term of office for all appointees other than the appointee from the special districts shall commence on the first day of February in the year in which the term is to commence. The term of office for the appointee from nominees of special districts shall commence on the first day of March in the year in which the term is to commence.

Vacancies on the board shall be filled by appointment of a person to serve the remainder of the term in the same manner that the person whose position is vacant was filled. [1991 c 363 s 95; 1989 c 84 s 19.]

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**RCW 36.93.067 Effect of failure to make appointment.** Whenever appointments under RCW 36.93.051 through \*36.93.065 have not been made by the appointing authority, the size of the board shall be considered to be reduced by one member for each position that remains vacant or unappointed. [1989 c 84 s 21.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 36.93.065 was repealed by 1999 c 124 s 1.

**RCW 36.93.070 Chair, vice chair, chief clerk—Powers and duties of board and chief clerk—Meetings—Hearings—Counsel—Compensation.** The members of each boundary review board shall elect from its members a chair, vice chair, and shall employ a nonmember as chief clerk, who shall be the secretary of the board. The board shall determine its own rules and order of business and shall provide by resolution for the time and manner of holding all regular or special meetings: PROVIDED, That all meetings shall be subject to chapter 42.30 RCW. The board shall keep a journal of its proceedings which shall be a public record. A majority of all the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

The chief clerk of the board shall have the power to administer oaths and affirmations, certify to all official acts, issue subpoenas to any public officer or employee ordering him or her to testify before the board and produce public records, papers, books or documents. The chief clerk may invoke the aid of any court of competent jurisdiction to carry out such powers.

The board by rule may provide for hearings by panels of members consisting of not less than five board members, the number of hearing panels and members thereof, and for the impartial selection of panel members. A majority of a panel shall constitute a quorum thereof.

At the request of the board, the state attorney general, or at the board's option, the county prosecuting attorney, shall provide counsel for the board.

The planning departments of the county, other counties, and any city, and any state or regional planning agency shall furnish such information to the board at its request as may be reasonably necessary for the performance of its duties.

Each member of the board shall be compensated from the county current expense fund at the rate of fifty dollars per day, or a major

portion thereof, for time actually devoted to the work of the boundary review board. Each board of county commissioners shall provide such funds as shall be necessary to pay the salaries of the members and staff, and such other expenses as shall be reasonably necessary. [2009 c 549 s 4151; 1997 c 77 s 1; 1987 c 477 s 1; 1967 c 189 s 7.]

**RCW 36.93.080 Expenditures—Remittance of costs to counties.**

Expenditures by the board shall be subject to the provisions of chapter 36.40 RCW and other statutes relating to expenditures by counties. The department of commerce shall on a quarterly basis remit to each county one-half of the actual costs incurred by the county for the operation of the boundary review board within individual counties as provided for in this chapter. However, in the event no funds are appropriated to the said agency for this purpose, this shall not in any way affect the operation of the boundary review board. [2023 c 470 s 2022; 1995 c 399 s 44; 1985 c 6 s 7; 1969 ex.s. c 111 s 4; 1967 c 189 s 8.]

**Explanatory statement—2023 c 470:** See note following RCW 10.99.030.

**RCW 36.93.090 Filing notice of proposed actions with board.**

Whenever any of the following described actions are proposed in a county in which a board has been established, the initiators of the action shall file within one hundred eighty days a notice of intention with the board: PROVIDED, That when the initiator is the legislative body of a governmental unit, the notice of intention may be filed immediately following the body's first acceptance or approval of the action. The board may review any such proposed actions pertaining to:

(1) The: (a) Creation, incorporation, or change in the boundary, other than a consolidation, of any city, town, or special purpose district; (b) consolidation of special purpose districts, but not including consolidation of cities and towns; or (c) dissolution or disincorporation of any city, town, or special purpose district, except that a board may not review the dissolution or disincorporation of a special purpose district which was dissolved or disincorporated pursuant to the provisions of chapter 36.96 RCW: PROVIDED, That the change in the boundary of a city or town arising from the annexation of contiguous city or town owned property held for a public purpose shall be exempted from the requirements of this section; or

(2) The assumption by any city or town of all or part of the assets, facilities, or indebtedness of a special purpose district which lies partially within such city or town; or

(3) The establishment of or change in the boundaries of a mutual water and sewer system or separate sewer system by a water-sewer district pursuant to RCW 57.08.065; or

(4) The extension of permanent water or sewer service outside of its existing service area by a city, town, or special purpose district. The service area of a city, town, or special purpose district shall include all of the area within its corporate boundaries plus, (a) for extensions of water service, the area outside of the corporate boundaries which it is designated to serve pursuant to a coordinated water system plan approved in accordance with RCW 70A.100.050; and (b) for extensions of sewer service, the area outside

of the corporate boundaries which it is designated to serve pursuant to a comprehensive sewerage plan approved in accordance with chapter 36.94 RCW and RCW 90.48.110. [2020 c 20 s 1028; 1996 c 230 s 1608; 1995 c 131 s 1; 1987 c 477 s 2; 1985 c 281 s 28; 1982 c 10 s 7. Prior: 1981 c 332 s 9; 1981 c 45 s 2; 1979 ex.s. c 5 s 12; 1971 ex.s. c 127 s 1; 1969 ex.s. c 111 s 5; 1967 c 189 s 9.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**Effective date—1995 c 131:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [April 24, 1995]." [1995 c 131 s 2.]

**Severability—1982 c 10:** See note following RCW 6.13.080.

**Legislative declaration—"District" defined—1981 c 45:** "It is declared to be the public policy of the state of Washington to provide for the orderly growth and development of those areas of the state requiring public water service or sewer service and to secure the health and welfare of the people residing therein. The growth of urban population and the movement of people into suburban areas has required the performance of such services by water districts and sewer districts and the development of such districts has created problems of conflicting jurisdiction and potential double taxation.

It is the purpose of this act to reduce the duplication of service and the conflict among jurisdictions by establishing the principle that the first in time is the first in right where districts overlap and by encouraging the consolidation of districts. It is also the purpose of this act to prevent the imposition of double taxation upon the same property by establishing a general classification of property which will be exempt from property taxation by a district when such property is within the jurisdiction of an established district duly authorized to provide service of like character.

Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, as used in this act, the term "district" means either a water district organized under Title 57 RCW or a sewer district organized under Title 56 RCW or a merged water and sewer district organized pursuant to chapter 57.40 or 56.36 RCW." [1981 c 45 s 1.]

**Severability—1981 c 45:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1981 c 45 s 14.]

*Consolidation of cities and towns—Role of boundary review board: RCW 35.10.450.*

**RCW 36.93.093 Copy of notice of intention by water-sewer district to be sent officials.** Whenever a water-sewer district files with the board a notice of intention as required by RCW 36.93.090, the board shall send a copy of such notice of intention to the legislative authority of the county wherein such action is proposed to be taken



and one copy to the state department of ecology. [1999 c 153 s 45; 1971 ex.s. c 127 s 2.]

**Part headings not law—1999 c 153:** See note following RCW 57.04.050.

**RCW 36.93.100 Review of proposed actions by board—Procedure.**

The board shall review and approve, disapprove, or modify any of the actions set forth in RCW 36.93.090 when any of the following shall occur within forty-five days of the filing of a notice of intention:

(1) Three members of a five-member boundary review board or five members of a boundary review board in a county with a population of one million or more files a request for review: PROVIDED, That the members of the boundary review board shall not be authorized to file a request for review of the following actions:

(a) The incorporation of any special district or change in the boundary of any city, town, or special purpose district;

(b) The extension of permanent water service outside of its existing corporate boundaries by a city, town, or special purpose district if (i) the extension is through the installation of water mains of six inches or less in diameter or (ii) the county legislative authority for the county in which the proposed extension is to be built is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 and has by a majority vote waived the authority of the board to initiate review of all other extensions; or

(c) The extension of permanent sewer service outside of its existing corporate boundaries by a city, town, or special purpose district if (i) the extension is through the installation of sewer mains of eight inches or less in diameter or (ii) the county legislative authority for the county in which the proposed extension is to be built is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 and has by a majority vote waived the authority of the board to initiate review of all other extensions;

(2) Any governmental unit affected, including the governmental unit for which the boundary change or extension of permanent water or sewer service is proposed, or the county within which the area of the proposed action is located, files a request for review of the specific action;

(3) A petition requesting review is filed and is signed by:

(a) Five percent of the registered voters residing within the area which is being considered for the proposed action (as determined by the boundary review board in its discretion subject to immediate review by writ of certiorari to the superior court); or

(b) An owner or owners of property consisting of five percent of the assessed valuation within such area;

(4) The majority of the members of boundary review boards concur with a request for review when a petition requesting the review is filed by five percent of the registered voters who deem themselves affected by the action and reside within one-quarter mile of the proposed action but not within the jurisdiction proposing the action.

If a period of forty-five days shall elapse without the board's jurisdiction having been invoked as set forth in this section, the proposed action shall be deemed approved.

If a review of a proposal is requested, the board shall make a finding as prescribed in RCW 36.93.150 within one hundred twenty days

after the filing of such a request for review. If this period of one hundred twenty days shall elapse without the board making a finding as prescribed in RCW 36.93.150, the proposal shall be deemed approved unless the board and the person who submitted the proposal agree to an extension of the one hundred twenty day period. [1994 c 216 s 13; 1992 c 162 s 1; 1991 c 363 s 96; 1989 c 84 s 3; 1987 c 477 s 3; 1983 c 76 s 1; 1982 c 220 s 1; 1967 c 189 s 10.]

**Effective date—1994 c 216:** See note following RCW 35.02.015.

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**Severability—1982 c 220:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1982 c 220 s 9.]

**RCW 36.93.105 Actions not subject to review by board.** The following actions shall not be subject to potential review by a boundary review board:

(1) Annexations of territory to a water-sewer district pursuant to RCW 36.94.410 through 36.94.440;

(2) Revisions of city or town boundaries pursuant to RCW 35.21.790 or 35A.21.210;

(3) Adjustments to city or town boundaries pursuant to RCW 35.13.340; and

(4) Adjustments to city and town boundaries pursuant to RCW 35.13.300 through 35.13.330. [1999 c 153 s 46; 1989 c 84 s 4; 1984 c 147 s 5.]

**Part headings not law—1999 c 153:** See note following RCW 57.04.050.

**RCW 36.93.110 When review not necessary.** Where an area proposed for annexation is less than ten acres and less than two million dollars in assessed valuation, the chair of the review board may by written statement declare that review by the board is not necessary for the protection of the interest of the various parties, in which case the board shall not review such annexation. [2009 c 549 s 4152; 1987 c 477 s 4; 1973 1st ex.s. c 195 s 42; 1967 c 189 s 11.]

**Severability—Effective dates—Construction—1973 1st ex.s. c 195:** See notes following RCW 84.52.043.

**RCW 36.93.116 Simultaneous consideration of incorporation and annexation of territory.** A boundary review board may simultaneously consider the proposed incorporation of a city or town, and the proposed annexation of a portion of the territory included in the proposed incorporation, if the resolution or petition initiating the annexation is adopted or filed ninety or fewer days after the petition proposing the incorporation was filed. [1994 c 216 s 9.]

**Effective date—1994 c 216:** See note following RCW 35.02.015.

**RCW 36.93.120 Fees.** A fee of fifty dollars shall be paid by all initiators and in addition if the jurisdiction of the review board is invoked pursuant to RCW 36.93.100, the person or entity seeking review, except for the boundary review board itself, shall pay to the county treasurer and place in the county current expense fund the fee of two hundred dollars. [1987 c 477 s 5; 1969 ex.s. c 111 s 6; 1967 c 189 s 12.]

**RCW 36.93.130 Notice of intention—Contents.** The notice of intention shall contain the following information:

- (1) The nature of the action sought;
- (2) A brief statement of the reasons for the proposed action;
- (3) The legal description of the boundaries proposed to be created, abolished or changed by such action: PROVIDED, That the legal description may be altered, with concurrence of the initiators of the proposed action, if a person designated by the county legislative authority as one who has expertise in legal descriptions makes a determination that the legal description is erroneous; and
- (4) A county assessor's map on which the boundaries proposed to be created, abolished or changed by such action are designated: PROVIDED, That at the discretion of the boundary review board a map other than the county assessor's map may be accepted. [1987 c 477 s 6; 1969 ex.s. c 111 s 7; 1967 c 189 s 13.]

**RCW 36.93.140 Pending actions not affected.** Actions described in RCW 36.93.090 which are pending July 1, 1967, or actions in counties with populations of less than two hundred ten thousand which are pending on the date of the creation of a boundary review board therein, shall not be affected by the provisions of this chapter. Actions shall be deemed pending on and after the filing of sufficient petitions initiating the same with the appropriate public officer, or the performance of an official act initiating the same. [1991 c 363 s 97; 1967 c 189 s 14.]

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**RCW 36.93.150 Review of proposed actions—Actions and determinations of board—Disapproval, effect.** The board, upon review of any proposed action, shall take such of the following actions as it deems necessary to best carry out the intent of this chapter:

- (1) Approve the proposal as submitted.
- (2) Subject to RCW 35.02.170, modify the proposal by adjusting boundaries to add or delete territory. Subject to the requirements of this chapter, a board may modify a proposal by adding territory that would increase the total area of the proposal before the board. A board, however, may not modify a proposal for annexation of territory to a city or town by adding an amount of territory that constitutes more than one hundred percent of the total area of the proposal before the board. Any modifications shall not interfere with the authority of

a city, town, or special purpose district to require or not require preannexation agreements, covenants, or petitions. A board shall not modify the proposed incorporation of a city with an estimated population of seven thousand five hundred or more by removing territory from the proposal, or adding territory to the proposal, that constitutes ten percent or more of the total area included within the proposal before the board. However, a board shall remove territory in the proposed incorporation that is located outside of an urban growth area or is annexed by a city or town, and may remove territory in the proposed incorporation if a petition or resolution proposing the annexation is filed or adopted that has priority over the proposed incorporation, before the area is established that is subject to this ten percent restriction on removing or adding territory. A board shall not modify the proposed incorporation of a city with a population of seven thousand five hundred or more to reduce the territory in such a manner as to reduce the population below seven thousand five hundred.

(3) Determine a division of assets and liabilities between two or more governmental units where relevant.

(4) Determine whether, or the extent to which, functions of a special purpose district are to be assumed by an incorporated city or town, metropolitan municipal corporation, or another existing special purpose district.

(5) Disapprove the proposal except that the board shall not have jurisdiction: (a) To disapprove the dissolution or disincorporation of a special purpose district which is not providing services but shall have jurisdiction over the determination of a division of the assets and liabilities of a dissolved or disincorporated special purpose district; (b) over the division of assets and liabilities of a special purpose district that is dissolved or disincorporated pursuant to chapter 36.96 RCW; nor (c) to disapprove the incorporation of a city with an estimated population of seven thousand five hundred or more, but the board may recommend against the proposed incorporation of a city with such an estimated population.

Unless the board disapproves a proposal, it shall be presented under the appropriate statute for approval of a public body and, if required, a vote of the people. A proposal that has been modified shall be presented under the appropriate statute for approval of a public body and if required, a vote of the people. If a proposal, other than that for a city, town, or special purpose district annexation, after modification does not contain enough signatures of persons within the modified area, as are required by law, then the initiating party, parties or governmental unit has thirty days after the modification decision to secure enough signatures to satisfy the legal requirement. If the signatures cannot be secured then the proposal may be submitted to a vote of the people, as required by law.

The addition or deletion of property by the board shall not invalidate a petition which had previously satisfied the sufficiency of signature provisions of RCW 35.13.130 or 35A.14.120. When the board, after due proceedings held, disapproves a proposed action, such proposed action shall be unavailable, the proposing agency shall be without power to initiate the same or substantially the same as determined by the board, and any succeeding acts intended to or tending to effectuate that action shall be void, but such action may be reinitiated after a period of twelve months from date of disapproval and shall again be subject to the same consideration.

The board shall not modify or deny a proposed action unless there is evidence on the record to support a conclusion that the action is

inconsistent with one or more of the objectives under RCW 36.93.180. The board may not increase the area of a city or town annexation unless it holds a separate public hearing on the proposed increase and provides ten or more days' notice of the hearing to the registered voters and property owners residing within the area subject to the proposed increase. Every such determination to modify or deny a proposed action shall be made in writing pursuant to a motion, and shall be supported by appropriate written findings and conclusions, based on the record. [2012 c 212 s 1; 1994 c 216 s 15; 1990 c 273 s 1; 1987 c 477 s 7; 1979 ex.s. c 5 s 13; 1975 1st ex.s. c 220 s 10; 1969 ex.s. c 111 s 8; 1967 c 189 s 15.]

**Effective date—1994 c 216:** See note following RCW 35.02.015.

**Severability—1990 c 273:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1990 c 273 s 3.]

**Legislative finding, intent—1975 1st ex.s. c 220:** See note following RCW 35.02.170.

**RCW 36.93.153 Review of proposed incorporation in county with boundary review board.** The proposed incorporation of any city or town that includes territory located in a county in which a boundary review board exists shall be reviewed by the boundary review board and action taken as described under RCW 36.93.150. [1994 c 216 s 10.]

**Effective date—1994 c 216:** See note following RCW 35.02.015.

**RCW 36.93.155 Annexation approval—Other action not authorized.** Boundary review board approval, or modification and approval, of a proposed annexation by a city, town, or special purpose district shall authorize annexation as approved and shall not authorize any other annexation action. [1989 c 84 s 16.]

**RCW 36.93.157 Decisions to be consistent with growth management act.** The decisions of a boundary review board located in a county that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 must be consistent with RCW 36.70A.020, 36.70A.110, and 36.70A.210. [1992 c 162 s 2.]

**RCW 36.93.160 Hearings—Notice—Record—Subpoenas—Decision of board—Appellate review.** (1) When the jurisdiction of the boundary review board has been invoked, the board shall set the date, time and place for a public hearing on the proposal. The board shall give at least thirty days' advance written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing to the governing body of each governmental unit having jurisdiction within the boundaries of the territory proposed to be annexed, formed, incorporated, disincorporated, dissolved or consolidated, or within the boundaries of a special district whose assets and facilities are proposed to be assumed by a city or town,

and to the governing body of each city within three miles of the exterior boundaries of the area and to the proponent of the change. Notice shall also be given by publication in any newspaper of general circulation in the area of the proposed boundary change at least three times, the last publication of which shall be not less than five days prior to the date set for the public hearing. Notice shall also be posted in ten public places in the area affected for five days when the area is ten acres or more. When the area affected is less than ten acres, five notices shall be posted in five public places for five days. Notice as provided in this subsection shall include any territory which the board has determined to consider adding in accordance with RCW 36.93.150(2).

(2) A verbatim record shall be made of all testimony presented at the hearing and upon request and payment of the reasonable costs thereof, a copy of the transcript of the testimony shall be provided to any person or governmental unit.

(3) The chair upon majority vote of the board or a panel may direct the chief clerk of the boundary review board to issue subpoenas to any public officer to testify, and to compel the production by him or her of any records, books, documents, public records or public papers.

(4) Within forty days after the conclusion of the final hearing on the proposal, the board shall file its written decision, setting forth the reasons therefor, with the board of county commissioners and the clerk of each governmental unit directly affected. The written decision shall indicate whether the proposed change is approved, rejected or modified and, if modified, the terms of the modification. The written decision need not include specific data on every factor required to be considered by the board, but shall indicate that all standards were given consideration. Dissenting members of the board shall have the right to have their written dissents included as part of the decision.

(5) Unanimous decisions of the hearing panel or a decision of a majority of the members of the board shall constitute the decision of the board and shall not be appealable to the whole board. Any other decision shall be appealable to the entire board within ten days. Appeals shall be on the record, which shall be furnished by the appellant, but the board may, in its sole discretion, permit the introduction of additional evidence and argument. Decisions shall be final and conclusive unless within thirty days from the date of the action a governmental unit affected by the decision or any person owning real property or residing in the area affected by the decision files in the superior court a notice of appeal.

The filing of the notice of appeal within the time limit shall stay the effective date of the decision of the board until such time as the appeal shall have been adjudicated or withdrawn. On appeal the superior court shall not take any evidence other than that contained in the record of the hearing before the board.

(6) The superior court may affirm the decision of the board or remand the case for further proceedings; or it may reverse the decision if any substantial rights may have been prejudiced because the administrative findings, inferences, conclusions, or decisions are:

- (a) In violation of constitutional provisions, or
- (b) In excess of the statutory authority or jurisdiction of the board, or
- (c) Made upon unlawful procedure, or

- (d) Affected by other error of law, or
- (e) Unsupported by material and substantial evidence in view of the entire record as submitted, or
- (f) Clearly erroneous.

An aggrieved party may seek appellate review of any final judgment of the superior court in the manner provided by law as in other civil cases. [2009 c 549 s 4153; 1994 c 216 s 16; 1988 c 202 s 40; 1987 c 477 s 8; 1971 c 81 s 97; 1969 ex.s. c 111 s 9; 1967 c 189 s 16.]

**Effective date—1994 c 216:** See note following RCW 35.02.015.

**Severability—1988 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.24.050.

*General corporate powers—Towns, restrictions as to area: RCW 35.21.010.*

**RCW 36.93.170 Factors to be considered by board—Incorporation proceedings exempt from state environmental policy act.** In reaching a decision on a proposal or an alternative, the board shall consider the factors affecting such proposal, which shall include, but not be limited to the following:

(1) Population and territory; population density; land area and land uses; comprehensive plans and zoning, as adopted under chapter 35.63, 35A.63, or 36.70 RCW; comprehensive plans and development regulations adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW; applicable service agreements entered into under chapter 36.115 or 39.34 RCW; applicable interlocal annexation agreements between a county and its cities; per capita assessed valuation; topography, natural boundaries and drainage basins, proximity to other populated areas; the existence and preservation of prime agricultural soils and productive agricultural uses; the likelihood of significant growth in the area and in adjacent incorporated and unincorporated areas during the next ten years; location and most desirable future location of community facilities;

(2) Municipal services; need for municipal services; effect of ordinances, governmental codes, regulations and resolutions on existing uses; present cost and adequacy of governmental services and controls in area; prospects of governmental services from other sources; probable future needs for such services and controls; probable effect of proposal or alternative on cost and adequacy of services and controls in area and adjacent area; the effect on the finances, debt structure, and contractual obligations and rights of all affected governmental units; and

(3) The effect of the proposal or alternative on adjacent areas, on mutual economic and social interests, and on the local governmental structure of the county.

The provisions of chapter 43.21C RCW, State Environmental Policy, shall not apply to incorporation proceedings covered by chapter 35.02 RCW. [1997 c 429 s 39; 1989 c 84 s 5; 1986 c 234 s 33; 1982 c 220 s 2; 1979 ex.s. c 142 s 1; 1967 c 189 s 17.]

**Severability—1997 c 429:** See note following RCW 36.70A.3201.

**Severability—1982 c 220:** See note following RCW 36.93.100.

*Incorporation proceedings exempt from state environmental policy act:  
RCW 43.21C.220.*

**RCW 36.93.180 Objectives of boundary review board.** The decisions of the boundary review board shall attempt to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Preservation of natural neighborhoods and communities;
- (2) Use of physical boundaries, including but not limited to bodies of water, highways, and land contours;
- (3) Creation and preservation of logical service areas;
- (4) Prevention of abnormally irregular boundaries;
- (5) Discouragement of multiple incorporations of small cities and encouragement of incorporation of cities in excess of ten thousand population in heavily populated urban areas;
- (6) Dissolution of inactive special purpose districts;
- (7) Adjustment of impractical boundaries;
- (8) Incorporation as cities or towns or annexation to cities or towns of unincorporated areas which are urban in character; and
- (9) Protection of agricultural and rural lands which are designated for long term productive agricultural and resource use by a comprehensive plan adopted by the county legislative authority. [1989 c 84 s 6; 1981 c 332 s 10; 1979 ex.s. c 142 s 2; 1967 c 189 s 18.]

**RCW 36.93.185 Objectives of boundary review board—Water-sewer district annexations, mergers—Territory not adjacent to district.**

The proposal by a water-sewer district to annex territory that is not adjacent to the district shall not be deemed to be violative of the objectives of a boundary review board solely due to the fact that the territory is not adjacent to the water-sewer district. The proposed consolidation or merger of two or more water-sewer districts that are not adjacent to each other shall not be deemed to be violative of the objectives of a boundary review board solely due to the fact that the districts are not adjacent. [1999 c 153 s 47; 1989 c 308 s 13.]

**Part headings not law—1999 c 153:** See note following RCW 57.04.050.

**RCW 36.93.190 Decision of board not to affect existing franchises, permits, codes, ordinances, etc., for ten years.** For a period of ten years from the date of the final decision, no proceeding, approval, action, or decision on a proposal or an alternative shall be deemed to cancel any franchise or permit theretofore granted by the authorities governing the territory to be annexed, nor shall it be deemed to supersede the application as to any territory to be annexed, of such construction codes and ordinances (including but not limited to fire, electrical, and plumbing codes and ordinances) as shall have been adopted by the authorities governing the territory to be annexed and in force at the time of the decision. [1967 c 189 s 19.]

**RCW 36.93.200 Rules and regulations—Adoption procedure.** Each review board shall adopt rules governing the formal and informal



procedures prescribed or authorized by this chapter. Such rules may state the qualifications of persons for practice before the board. Such rules shall also include rules of practice before the board, together with forms and instructions.

To assist interested persons dealing with it, each board shall so far as deemed practicable supplement its rules with descriptive statements of its procedures.

Prior to the adoption of any rule authorized by law, or the amendment or repeal thereof, the board shall file notice thereof with the clerk of the court of the county in which the board is located. So far as practicable, the board shall also publish or otherwise circulate notice of its intended action and afford interested persons opportunity to submit data or views either orally or in writing. Such notice shall include (1) a statement of the time, place, and nature of public rule-making proceedings, (2) reference to the authority under which the rule is proposed, and (3) either the terms or substance of the proposed rule or a description of the subjects and issues involved.

This paragraph shall not apply to interpretative rules, general statements of policy, or rules of internal board organization, procedure or practice. [1967 c 189 s 20.]

**RCW 36.93.210 Rules and regulations—Filing—Permanent register.**

Each board shall file forthwith with the clerk of the court a certified copy of all rules and regulations adopted. The clerk shall keep a permanent register of such rules open to public inspection. [1967 c 189 s 21.]

**RCW 36.93.220 Provisions of prior laws superseded by chapter.**

Whenever a review board has been created pursuant to the terms of this chapter, the provisions of law relating to city annexation review boards set forth in chapter 35.13 RCW and the powers granted to the boards of county commissioners to alter boundaries of proposed annexations or incorporations shall not be applicable. [1967 c 189 s 22.]

**RCW 36.93.230 Power to disband boundary review board.** When a county and the cities and towns within the county have adopted a comprehensive plan and consistent development regulations pursuant to the provisions of chapter 36.70A RCW, the county may, at the discretion of the county legislative authority, disband the boundary review board in that county. [1991 sp.s. c 32 s 22.]

**Section headings not law—1991 sp.s. c 32:** See RCW 36.70A.902.

**RCW 36.93.800 Application of chapter to merged special purpose districts.** This chapter does not apply to the merger of irrigation districts authorized under RCW 87.03.530(2) and 87.03.845 through 87.03.855 or to the merger of a drainage improvement district, joint drainage improvement district, or consolidated drainage improvement district into an irrigation district authorized by RCW 87.03.720

through 87.03.745 and 85.08.830 through 85.08.890. [1996 c 313 s 2;  
1993 c 235 s 10.]

**RCW 36.93.900 Effective date—1967 c 189.** The effective date of  
this chapter is July 1, 1967. [1967 c 189 s 24.]