

Phase 4: After the Decision

Once a decision has been made about whether to create or expand a library district, there will still be much work to do. Careful planning during the Planning Phase will help this work to go smoothly, so it is important to have plans made before entering this phase. This phase will then be largely a matter of carrying out plans that have already been determined.

Before we discuss what must be done when a successful creation or expansion of a library district has been achieved, we will deal with the issue of an unsuccessful effort. Since almost all unsuccessful efforts are based on the results of an election, we will discuss projects that miscarry only in terms of elections.

Contingency Plans

We may not like to think of it, but there are *always* two possible results of an election. One is that we can win, and that is what we want to do. The other is that we can lose. Many very fine projects have ended with an unsuccessful election. No one did anything wrong; the campaign was well-run and enthusiastic. But for some reason, the voters turned down the district. It may have been that another issue on the ballot affected the outcome, or it could be some unexpected glitch that no one could have anticipated. Sometimes supporters just assume the measure will carry easily, and don't get out to vote, even when they are reminded. In some cases, the educational effort requires one or more unsuccessful elections before success is possible. That is just the way it is sometimes. So, an unsuccessful election does not necessarily mean that the project cannot succeed. And all projects should take some time to decide how they will handle an election that fails.

After an unsuccessful election, the people who worked on a districting project will feel many emotions, ranging from discouragement to disappointment to anger. Emotionally, it will not be a good time to make hard decisions. Therefore, as plans have been made for the work to be completed in case a districting project is successful, contingency plans should also be made for a project that has not been successful. It is now time to complete plans for finding workable alternatives to the original proposed district.

Finding Alternatives

The failure of an election leaves the issues that originally created an interest in districting intact. The Working Group has three options at this point:

1. Try again;
2. Try another alternative;
3. Let the issue rest for a time.

To determine which of these three alternatives is best for your situation, the Working Group should carry out the following tasks:

- First, analyze the election campaign and results.
- Second, based on the analysis, re-examine districting alternatives.
- Third, proceed with an alternative.

Task Number One: Analyze the Election Campaign and Results

The action you will take after a failed election should depend to a large extent on what happened during the election. Therefore, analyzing the election campaign and the election results is an important task. It should be emphasized that the purpose of this analysis is *not* to cast blame. An unsuccessful election does not mean that anyone did anything wrong. Knowing what you now know, however, you may do some things differently the next time around. The Working Group members should look carefully at a [precinct-by-precinct report of the election results](#). Look for areas where the vote for the election was stronger or weaker. Were there any surprises? Were there places where you expected strong support, but support was weaker than expected? Was there stronger opposition than expected in some parts of the proposed district? See if you can understand why this would be.

Reality Check

This analysis is not for the purpose of casting blame. It is an opportunity to regroup, to decide how to proceed, and to learn how to be more successful the next time.

Be sure to talk about the election as a group.

- Were there turning points in the election process, events that had a particularly negative effect on the outcome? Could these events have been avoided, and if so, how?
- If the election was very close, talk about the effect another election might have. Can you change the situation enough to make a difference in the outcome? Would another election soon after this election cause a backlash among voters?

Task Number Two: Re-examine Alternatives

During the Assessment Phase of your project, you looked at several different alternatives to meet your area's library service needs. From these, your group chose one that it felt was best. Since this alternative did not work out, you should re-examine all the alternatives considering the election results.

- If the election was extremely close, and it appears that corrective measures could change the results next time, the Working Group may decide to continue with the same alternative.
- If the districting measure was strongly opposed in one geographical area, but supported in others, the Working Group may wish to redraw the boundaries to exclude parts of the original proposal, so that a district can be created where there is support.
- Parts of the proposed district, such as an existing district library, may choose to consolidate with another district not in the original proposal.
- If the election results were overwhelmingly opposed to the district, with only small pockets of support, the Working Group may simply choose to wait until signs indicate a better likelihood of success.

Reality Check

Patience and timing are important components of the districting toolbox, for the right thing at the wrong time is the wrong thing.

Task Number Three: Proceeding Onward

Once the analysis has been completed, the Working Group can proceed with the new course of action. If the decision is to let the matter rest for a time, the Working Group may wish to disband with the idea that it can be called back together when a new project seems more feasible.

If another election on the same proposed district is to be held, the group should return to the Planning Phase, making necessary changes in the dates and the procedures that will be used. Careful thought will need to be given to how to market the proposal to make it more acceptable to the electorate. Attention should be paid to the arguments that opponents made against the district, and corrective action should be taken.

If the Working Group decides to go with an alternative plan of action, they should return to the Assessment Phase, and re-examine the issues that have been raised. Of course, the failed election will have provided new and accurate information about support for the district in various localities, so the Working Group should be able to move more rapidly through both the Assessment and Planning Phases than they did the first time. Again, all decisions made for the first project will need to be reviewed and possibly modified for the new proposed district.

Reality Check

The arguments made by opponents to the districting effort are invaluable marketing data. Pay attention and act accordingly next time.

Success!

When a decision has been made to create or expand a district, there are several tasks to be performed to get the district up and running. These include:

- First, celebrate your accomplishment!
- Second, the Working Group needs to pay continued attention and stay in contact with the county commissioners, and in some cases city council, as their action is required to create or expand the district.
- Third, in cases of annexations, combinations, and consolidations, the library board is responsible for making notifications of the results to several different agencies.
- Fourth, carry out your new service plans.
- Fifth, publicize the changes that are occurring.
- Sixth, don't forget to thank everyone responsible for making the districting effort a success.

Task Number One: Celebrate!

If your election or petition drive has been successful, take some time to savor it. You have gone through a grueling process; you have worked long and hard. And you have done something that is very worthwhile. You have not only helped to provide library service for yourselves and your families, you have ensured that library services will be available to your community for generations to come. Your Working Group should throw itself a party. Everyone who has contributed should be invited, and you should all take some time to have some fun!

Reality Check

During the speeches at the party, don't forget to thank everyone who was instrumental in making the districting project a success. There is always time for courtesy.

Task Number Two: Pay Continued Attention and Stay in Contact with the County Commissioners and City Council

Depending on the type of districting project, local officials have certain activities that they are required by law to complete.

Establishment or Annexation/Combination. After a successful election to establish a new district or an annexation/combination (which is treated as an establishment), the [board of county commissioners](#) has the following duties to perform:

- They must receive certified election results no more than three (3) days following the election from the board(s) of elections.
- No more than seven (7) days following the election, they must canvass the results. [See Idaho Code section [33-2705](#).]
- They must issue an order creating the district or amending its boundaries, depending on the kind of districting project. In cases where territory from more than one county is included in the district, only the home county commissioners issue this order. Other counties must certify their results to the board of county commissioners of the home county. We have provided a sample order.
- In cases where the new district takes in parts of more than one county, the county commissioners of the home county must canvass all the results and send a certified copy of the creation order to the county commissioners of all other counties that have territory in the district.
- The county commissioners are also responsible for sending a copy of this order to the county recorder, the county assessor, and the [Idaho State Tax Commission](#) in a timely manner, but no later than December 15 of the year in which the election was held. The county commissioners are also required to send a copy of the order to the Board of Library Commissioners, Idaho Commission for Libraries, 325 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702-6055.
- Because the cases of establishment and annexation/combination are both considered to be establishments, the county commissioners must appoint the first district library board. They must do this within five (5) days of issuing the order of establishment. [See I.C. § [33-2715](#).]

Reality Check

I.C. § [33-2705](#) requires the board or boards of elections — the staff of the county clerk(s) — to certify the election results to the board(s) of county commissioners within three (3) days after the election. This statute also requires the board of county commissioners to canvass returns within seven (7) days after the election. This is a shorter period of time than prescribed by I.C. § [34-1410](#), which requires the board of county commissioners to canvass election results within ten (10) days after the election.

Definition

To canvass — in the context of an election — means to count votes. I.C. § [34-1201](#) requires that, once the polls have closed, the judges must immediately proceed to count the ballots cast at such election. The counting must be continued without adjournment until completed and the result declared.

Annexation. After a successful election adding untaxed territory to an existing district, the county commissioners have the following responsibilities:

- The [county commissioners](#) of the county of the area described in the original petition must receive certified election results no more than three (3) days following the election from the board(s) of elections.
- The county commissioners of the county of the area described in the petition must canvass the results no more than seven (7) days following the election. If these commissioners are not the commissioners of the library district's home county, they must certify the results to the commissioners of the home county.
- The county commissioners of the library district's home county must issue an order amending the district boundaries. The order must include a map prepared in a draftsmanlike manner.
- The home county commissioners are also responsible for sending a copy of this order to
 - the county commissioners for every county in which the district lies
 - the [district library board](#)
 - the Board of Library Commissioners, Idaho Commission for Libraries, 325 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702-6055

Combination. When a city library combines with a district library, the city council must send the results of the election to the [district library board](#) and the [board of county commissioners](#).

The county commissioners then have the following responsibilities:

- The county commissioners of the library district's home county must issue an order amending the district boundaries. The order must include a map prepared in a draftsmanlike manner.
- The home county commissioners are also responsible for sending a copy of this order to

- the county commissioners for every county in which the district lies
- the district library board
- the Board of Library Commissioners, Idaho Commission for Libraries, 325 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702-6055.

Annexation of Untaxed Territory by Petition. After territory has been added to a district through the petition method, the county commissioners have the following responsibilities:

- The [county commissioners](#) of the county of the area described in the original petition must notify the county commissioners of the library district’s home county that the petition has been approved.
- The county commissioners of the library district’s home county must issue an order amending the district boundaries. The order must include a map prepared in a draftsmanlike manner.
- The county commissioners of the home county then must send a copy of this order to the county commissioners for every county in which the district lies, the [district library board](#), and the Board of Library Commissioners, Idaho Commission for Libraries, 325 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702-6055. (The county commissioners are required by law to send it to the commissioners for the county in which the petition arose and the Board of Library Commissioners, but the district library board and other county commissioners will also need copies to carry out their functions.)

District Consolidation. After the hearing on a district consolidation, the boards of county commissioners of each county in which the district lies have the following responsibilities:

- The county commissioners of all the [counties](#) in which the consolidated district lies must issue an order certifying the new boundaries and name of the consolidated district.



- They must send copies of this order to the [district library boards](#) and to the Board of Library Commissioners, Idaho Commission for Libraries, 325 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702-6055.
- The county commissioners of the home county of the consolidated district then appoint a board of trustees for the consolidated district from the board members of the districts which have consolidated. The county commissioners must do this within 10 days of the consolidation.

If careful planning has been completed during the Planning Phase, these activities should be routine. The Working Group representatives who have been working with the county clerk and/or city clerks, however, should pay continued attention to these activities to assure that they are completed.

Task Number Three: District Board Responsibilities

In cases of annexation, combination, and consolidation, the district library boards also have responsibilities for notifying interested parties of the changes brought about by the election. These notifications are especially important because they are being sent to those agencies that will allow the changes to be recognized for taxation purposes.

Annexation by Election. After an annexation of previously untaxed area which was achieved by an election, the district board is responsible for sending copies of the county commissioners' annexation order to the following [agencies](#):

- the county recorder
- the county assessor of the home county
- the [Idaho State Tax Commission](#)

This must be done in a timely manner, but no later than December 15 in the year in which the election was held.

Combination. After a city library has combined with a district library, the district library board is responsible for sending a copy of the county commissioners' order of the combination to the following [agencies](#):

- the county recorder
- the county assessor of the home county
- the [Idaho State Tax Commission](#)

This must be done in a timely manner, but no later than December 15 in the year in which the election was held.

Annexation of Untaxed Territory by Petition. After an annexation by petition has taken place, the district library board is responsible for sending a copy of the order of annexation to the following [agencies](#):

- the county recorder
- the county assessor of the home county
- the [Idaho State Tax Commission](#)

This must be done in a timely manner, but no later than December 15 in the year in which the election was held.

Consolidation. After two or more district libraries have consolidated, the board for the consolidated district is responsible for notifying the following [agencies](#):

- the county recorder
- the county assessor of the home county
- the Board of Library Commissioners, Idaho Commission for Libraries, 325 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702-6055
- the State Tax Commission

This must be done in a timely manner, but no later than December 15 in the year in which the election was held.

Notifying the Idaho State Tax Commission. Although this Handbook has already covered notification of the Idaho State Tax Commission of the change in status of the library district, this step is so important that we are repeating information here.

Reality Check

For the new or expanded district to collect taxes on the property within its service area for the next fiscal year, the district's boundaries must be on file with the Idaho State Tax Commission by December 31st of the previous year. There are no exceptions made to this rule!

That is why library law requires the county commissioners (in the case of a district establishment or annexation/combination) and the library board (in the cases of annexation, combination, and consolidation) to notify the Idaho State Tax Commission of the action no later than December 15 of the year in which the action took place.

Notification of the Tax Commission is relatively simple. It should include a cover letter, a copy of the district's legal description and draftsmanlike map, and the county commissioners' order creating or expanding the district. It is best to send this information to the Tax Commission as soon after the issuance of the county commissioners' order as possible, and to send it by certified mail with a return requested. Formation, organization, or alteration documents that are filed pursuant to I.C. § [63-215\(1\)](#) must include contact information that is current at the time of filing and that identifies an individual associated with the taxing district.

Sample Letters to the Idaho State Tax Commission:

- [Establishment of a New Library District](#)
- [Annexations and City/District Combinations](#)
- [Consolidation of Existing Library Districts](#)

Your Library Will Need Funding

Remember: If your district is to receive property tax receipts in the next fiscal year for its new or expanded territory, this notification must be received by the Idaho State Tax Commission no later than December 31st of the previous fiscal year, and library law requires that it be sent no later than December 15th.

Task Number Five: Carrying Out Your Library's Strategic Plan

If you have planned carefully during the Planning Phase, you will have a set of activities that you will begin to work on as soon as the district has been created or expanded. In district creation, this will be a very busy period, as you will need to be making changes in your personnel structure, establishing new policies, and possibly hiring new staff, opening new facilities, and initiating new services.

The more planning that has been done in advance of these changes, the easier this period will be. Fortunately, it will also be a time when the Working Group and library staff will have a well-deserved sense of accomplishment, and this will help to energize you during this busy time.

Task Number Six: Publicize the Changes

As positive changes are made because of the new or expanded library district, it is important that you publicize them. Not only will this let your patrons know what services are being provided, but it also reconfirms to the electors that they have made a good decision. Here are some ideas for publicity:

- Send press releases to all media outlets when you begin or expand a service.
- Several months after the change has been made in the district, ask the local paper to do an in-depth article on the changes. Suggest that they write this article from a patron's perspective and that they interview some of your better customers. (Children are often very interesting interviewees.)
- If you are located close to a television station, suggest a story to the station's news director.
- Create and distribute a nicely printed annual report for the district after its first year of operation, showing new services and how well they have been used.
- At the end of the first year, volunteer to provide speakers for local service club meetings to talk about new library services. A service club or service organization is a voluntary non-profit organization where members meet regularly to perform charitable works, either by direct hands-on efforts or by raising money for other organizations. Service clubs include:
 - Rotary International: <https://www.rotary.org/>
 - Kiwanis International: <http://www.kiwanis.org/>
 - Lions Clubs International: <http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/index.php>
 - Altrusa International: <http://www.altrusa.com/Who-We-Are.aspx>
 - Junior Chamber International (JCI): <http://www.jci.cc/>
 - Civitan International: <http://civitan.org/>
 - Sertoma: <http://sertoma.org/>
 - National Exchange Club: <http://www.nationalexchangeclub.org/>
 - Optimist International: <http://www.optimist.org/>
 - Soroptimist International: <http://www.soroptimistinternational.org/>

- Zonta International: <http://www.zonta.org/>
 - Quota International: <http://www.quota.org/>
 - HandsOn Network: <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/home>
 - DoSomething.org: <https://www.dosomething.org/us>
- Be creative in thinking of new ways to let people know about how wonderful your new or expanded library district is!

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