

# **POLICIES FOR CONSIDERING INVOLUNTARY ANNEXATION**

The City of Charlotte's vision of the future includes the City as an economic engine driving a thriving Region. The City's Smart Growth Principles comprise the blue print for achieving a sustainable, built-out City at the center of the Region. Annexation is a key tool in the orderly development and maintenance of the City.

Annexation of Charlotte's Sphere of Influence enables the City to use its full resources to implement the Smart Growth Principles calling for building and maintaining sustainable neighborhoods, designing development for long term livability, safeguarding the environment and expanding transportation choices.

Residents and property owners in the City's Sphere of Influence receive the advantages of many services and benefits financed by City tax dollars, such as streets, public facilities, cultural events and museums. Annexation ensures greater equity for both the City and its taxpayers. When these residents and property owners are annexed, they share both the benefits and the responsibilities of living within the City. Furthermore, through annexation, the City can avoid some of the problems experienced by many American cities whose boundaries cannot be expanded to encompass developed areas on their edges.

North Carolina statutes give the City of Charlotte the authority to annex areas that meet specified development standards; provided that required procedures are followed and the City commits to extend basic City services into the areas. The City's annexation authority is exercised in a fair and consistent manner to annex areas within the City's Sphere of Influence that qualify for annexation.

These policies are for general guidance only, are not intended to be inflexible and may be varied under such circumstances and in such manner as the City determines to be appropriate.

## **STATEMENT OF POLICIES**

1. **Areas should be considered for annexation typically on a 2-year cycle.**  
A resolution of consideration identifying areas for possible annexation will be adopted in odd-numbered years, with the formal annexation process (report for extending services, public hearing, ordinance adoption) in even-numbered years. The specific steps involved in annexation will be timed to facilitate planning, budgeting and extending services into annexed areas. This policy will allow all of the steps in the formal annexation process to be taken by the same Council.
2. **The annexation process should begin ordinarily by the adoption of a resolution of consideration at least one year before the adoption of a resolution of intent describing the specific boundaries of an area that qualifies for annexation.**  
The intent of this policy is to give one-year, advance notice to interested parties of possible annexation. The resolution of consideration identifies one or more areas

being studied by staff to determine if all or any portion of such area(s) qualifies for annexation.

3. **The effective date of annexation should occur on or about June 30<sup>th</sup>, when possible.**  
An annexation effective date of June 30<sup>th</sup>, the last day of the City's fiscal year, assures that the area is in the City for the full fiscal year, beginning on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Affected property owners are entitled to receive a full, fiscal year of services and become obligated to pay property taxes for a full, fiscal year.
4. **Vacant property should not be annexed except when reasonably necessary to annex an urbanized area.**  
The inclusion of large vacant tracts in an annexation area should be avoided, especially if such tracts are located at or near the exterior boundaries of the area. Such property may be included in an annexation area if reasonably necessary to connect urbanized areas or to avoid illogical boundaries or future problems in annexing the vacant or adjacent property.
5. **Annexed property owners and residents should receive City services in accordance with applicable policy.**  
City services should be provided to annexed property owners and residents in accordance with City policies and in a manner that is consistent with how such services are provided throughout the City.
6. **An area will be considered for annexation without regard to:**
  - **City revenues or costs arising from annexation; and**
  - **The identity of property owners or residents of the area.**An area will be considered for annexation solely on the basis of the area's development and the City's ability to extend services.
7. **The City will provide reasonable, accurate and timely information to affected residents and property owners in an annexation area and to interested citizens of the City.**  
The report detailing plans for extending services into an area will not only be available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office as required by law, but summary copies of the report will be distributed publicly in a variety of ways. Examples of the public distribution of the summary report include the internet and at annexation-related meetings. Copies will also be available for public inspection at branches of the public library near an annexation area. Inquiries will be answered by correspondence, email, and telephone. Staff will also meet with interested residents and property owners at mutually convenient locations (including within the annexation area) and times to respond to questions and concerns about annexation. Prior to the effective date of annexation, information about City services will be mailed to all property owners in the annexation area.
8. **The City will pay economic loss to all qualified solid waste collection firms.**

Opportunities for such firms to serve one or more portions of the City, including annexation areas, will be provided through a managed competition process and not as part of annexation.

*Adopted by Charlotte City Council June 23, 2003*