

## **POLICIES FOR CONSIDERING VOLUNTARY ANNEXATION PETITIONS**

The majority of voluntary annexation petitions are for parcels of vacant land which the petitioners wish to develop for residential purposes. The involuntary annexations undertaken by the City every two years rely heavily upon the inclusion of substantial amounts of residentially-developed property to meet the population and/or subdivision standards that areas must meet to satisfy the state annexation statutes. The need to include residential property is particularly important in annexing land that is developed for non-residential uses. If land is developed residentially outside the City, that land (and those residential units and lots) can be used to help annex other property that is developed for commercial, industrial, and institutional purposes. In certain instances, having a sufficient residential density or amount of subdivided land is critical to the ability to qualify an involuntary annexation area.

*Principle: If the voluntary annexation of land currently developed or earmarked for residential development may adversely affect the City's ability to annex other property in the future, staff will recommend against the voluntary annexation.*

**Policy: Voluntary annexations may be approved in instances where the annexation of property under current or likely future residential use will not adversely affect the City's ability to annex other property.**

The processing of a voluntary annexation petition is accompanied by a polling of key business units which would provide service to the annexed area, most notably Solid Waste, Utilities, Fire, and Transportation. The question asked each KBU is whether it could serve the proposed annexation area at a level comparable to areas within the City without a negative impact on its operating or capital budgets, or without decreasing the level of service already furnished within the City.

*Principle: If the City cannot provide service comparable to service already provided within the City to the voluntary annexation area without an undue negative impact on City finances or services, staff will recommend against the voluntary annexation.*

**Policy: Voluntary annexations may be approved in instances where City services can be extended to the annexation area, without an undue negative impact on City finances or services.**

Voluntary annexation petitions may involve non-contiguous land. City staff must carefully evaluate petitions for non-contiguous ("satellite") voluntary annexation, both from the standpoint of compliance with applicable state statutes, and from a service delivery/equity perspective (as discussed above). Voluntary annexation properties can, however, include boundaries which, if annexed, create unincorporated territory which is completely surrounded by the City ("donut hole"). Such areas may be very difficult to annex at a later date.

*Principle: If a proposed voluntary annexation may create a situation in which an unincorporated area is completely encompassed by the City limits and the future annexation of such unincorporated area may be difficult or create difficulties in annexing other property in the vicinity, staff would recommend against the voluntary annexation.*

**Policy: Voluntary annexations may be approved in instances where annexation of the property will not create situations where unincorporated areas will not be encompassed by the new City limits.**

**Policy: The foregoing policies may be waived if the City Council determines that either of the following conditions exist:**

- a petitioner for a voluntary annexation would experience a significant hardship if the annexation were not approved; or
- under the facts of a particular voluntary annexation petition, the City's interests are served by varying the application of one or more of these policies.