



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 13-0237 **Version:** 1 **Name:** 3/18/13 Status of Annexation of Township Parcels
Type: Report or Communication **Status:** Filed
File created: 3/18/2013 **In control:** City Council
On agenda: 3/18/2013 **Final action:** 3/18/2013
Enactment date: **Enactment #:**
Title: Status of Annexation of Township Parcels
Sponsors:
Indexes:
Code sections:
Attachments: 1. Annexreport8 (2).pdf, 2. R-11-406.pdf, 3. AnnexationParcelMaps3-1-13.pdf, 4. boundary commission handout.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
3/18/2013	1	City Council	Received and Filed	

Status of Annexation of Township Parcels

BACKGROUND

On June 13, 2011, City staff presented City Council with an update on the status of the City’s analysis of the annexation of islands of township property within the area identified as being within the City’s ultimate boundaries. The report detailed the history of the annexation process, the number of township island parcels that had yet to annex (approximately 580 at that time), a summary of major issues such as safety services and public services, tax implications, examples of anticipated expenses associated with utility connection, policy options, and a staff recommendation. The report is attached to this memorandum as Attachment 1, June 13, 2011 Annexation Report.

Staff recommended that the City initiate the annexation of parcels owned by private utility companies and a cluster of township island parcels as a pilot effort. On September 19, 2011, by resolution R-11-406, see attached, City Council directed staff to initiate the annexation of properties owned by utility companies and, where feasible, publically owned land. The resolution also directed staff to begin a strategic process of annexing clusters of township islands in accordance with the staff analysis described in the June 13, 2011 report. Staff was also directed to provide a report to Council in early 2013.

STATUS TO DATE

Since City Council passed the annexation resolution, a staff team has met regularly to identify parcels to be annexed first and to develop the procedures for annexing township parcels into the city and has taken the steps to undertake those annexations. Different procedures may be available for parcels in different situations. Multiple service areas, including Public Services, Community Services, Financial Services, Safety Services, and City Attorney have been involved with this effort.

Analysis and Execution

- Obtained the forms required and information about the process to annex parcels when the application must be made to the State of Michigan Boundary Commission, including communication with Boundary Commission staff to help facilitate the process when Ann Arbor starts submitting applications (Boundary Commission handout is attached).
- Identified all six utility owned parcels that remain in township jurisdictions and obtained legal descriptions for them.
- Identified three publically owned parcels (City parks) that have yet to be annexed into the City and obtained legal descriptions and surveys for them. The legal descriptions and surveys need to be confirmed or corrected, if needed.
- Using the prioritization model previously developed and shown to Council at the June 13, 2011 work session, analyzed which cluster or clusters of residential parcels should be annexed first and determined that two small clusters of parcels with a total of 3 homes and 12 vacant private lots should be included in the first round of annexations. The three homes are currently connected to City water and sanitary service.
- Determined which parcels need to be processed by application to the Boundary Commission (privately owned property) and which could be processed through mutual resolutions of both Ann Arbor Township and the City of Ann Arbor (City owned property).
- Created maps, Attachment 4, that show the locations of the parcels that will be included in this first round of City initiated annexation. These maps are also required as part of the application to the Boundary Commission.

Costs and Fees

- City staff requested Ann Arbor Township to waive its fees (\$400 for each parcel) for City owned property to be annexed through the mutual resolution process. The Township declined.
- No fees are charged by the State for Boundary Commission applications.
- Staff is in the process of determining an estimated overall in-house cost (staff time) to process the annexation of each parcel.

Communication

- Communicated with the University of Michigan inviting the University to submit an application and to pay the costs of annexing 5 UM parcels. Staff also communicated with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission on one property that remains in the township, inviting them to submit an application and to pay the costs of annexation. When applications are received from the University of Michigan and the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission, staff will process those applications for annexation by mutual resolutions of the City of Ann Arbor and Ann Arbor Township.
- Periodically communicated with Ann Arbor Township about the status of the effort. All affected properties in the pilot application are in Ann Arbor Township.

NEXT STEPS

Over the next several months, Staff will continue to pursue annexation of 24 identified parcels mentioned above, in the following manner:

- Prepare the necessary resolutions for City Council, as well as the application documents for

the Boundary Commission.

- Prepare letters to the property owners.
- Update the City's website regarding annexations.
- Present the required resolutions to City Council for action.
- Complete application material and send to Ann Arbor Township (for City owned parcels) and the Boundary Commission (for all other parcels).
- Continue communication with Ann Arbor Township and the Boundary Commission.

Attachments

1. June 13, 2011 Annexation Report
2. Council Resolution R-11-406
3. Annexation Parcel Maps
4. State Boundary Commission Handout on Annexation

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