

Annexation Task Force Meeting
July 10, 2017, 5:30 p.m.
Carnegie Town Hall – Council Chambers

Meeting Summary

- Councilor Kiley began the meeting at 5:30 p.m., with some opening remarks regarding the goals of the Annexation Task Force. Public attendance was high, with the Council Chambers and the overflow room at capacity and some people standing. The Task Force members stated their names and their affiliation to this group.

- The first item of business was a presentation for discussion of annexation policy recommendations and criteria. Director Mike Cooper presented the information beginning with an overview of the annexation process, including voluntary and city-initiated annexations, and then broke each of those down into smaller topics for discussion. These topics and findings are below. **“7/10/17 Presentation,” which includes slides that were used as visual aids for this presentation can be found via the Annexation Task Force webpage under Meeting Information July 10.**

How should the City of Sioux Falls proceed if a voluntary annexation request results in an unannexed pocket of property?

After discussion the task force did not see a benefit to changing the current practice of moving forward with a petitioned annexation in these instances. However, it was noted, that if a new pocket will be created due to an annexation, the City should make it a practice to reach out to the owner of the unannexed property prior to annexation to inquire whether they would consider annexation under the circumstances. In addition, the task force suggested that any annexation petition should have notification letters sent to abutting property owners to help provide some additional notice of city development and potential future annexation.

Under what circumstances should the City of Sioux Falls initiate an annexation discussion with a property owner?

The task force determined the best time to begin discussions with property owners about annexation is, 1) when City Council approved triggers are met, and 2) through the administrative prioritization of unannexed areas throughout the city. Below are some triggers approved by the task force members.

- Trigger 1 - Land surrounding the unannexed property is fully developed. Contact should be made with a property owner if the surrounding land is completely developed. Going forward, whenever a petitioned annexation is requested around a property, even if it is currently undeveloped, the property owners development intentions should be made known to the properties impacted by that development. They should also be given a possible future timeline for the development.

- Trigger 2 - Utilities are connected to, adjacent to, or available to the unannexed property owner.
Ideally, this property owner has already been talked to, but if not, the property owner should be approached about annexing their property. If utilities are available, this is an indication that there is a good amount of development happening in the area.
- Trigger 3 - Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
A CIP is developed out for a five-year timeframe, but the funding is likely to be most secure within a three-year period. If a CIP project is planned within the next three years, that will directly impact an unannexed property, contacts should be made to begin annexation discussions. This trigger would allow the City to provide better awareness about upcoming development.
- Trigger 4 - Improved street
If it is known that a street will be improved that directly abuts an unannexed property, discussions about annexation with this property owner should begin.

Under what conditions would a pre-annexation agreement be appropriate?

A pre-annexation agreement outlines a timeline for annexation and details the required infrastructure improvements and the timeline for those improvements as well. The task force agreed, that every possible effort should be made to enter into an agreement with a property owner as early as possible. Especially, if they will be directly impacted by upcoming development or CIP improvements. If agreed to, it will give everyone a comfort level about what the future holds. The question of whether a pre-annexation agreement is a legal, binding document was asked of Assistant City Attorney, Danny Brown. He replied that it is not. The discussion then led to, when a property is sold, how does a potential buyer know whether that agreement exists? It was suggested that the city pass the information onto the local realtors association as a way of informing them of the agreement, who in-turn can let their clients know. Other than the efforts of entering into pre-annexation agreements with property owners, a priority list should be developed for those properties impacted by a CIP project within the three-year timeframe or other development.

When should City staff move forward with an annexation study?

The task force members had several questions regarding the annexation study, which is needed for a city-initiated annexation to move forward. To help them better understand the need for a city-initiated annexation, they requested a list of “compelling reasons for annexation” be provided by City staff. This subject will be the starting point for the August 9, 2017 meeting.

- Councilor Kiley inquired about the next Annexation Task Force meeting date since there was not enough time to finalize all recommendations at this meeting. The task force reviewed their calendars and scheduled the next meeting for Wednesday, August 9, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. in the Carnegie Town Hall. The sole purpose of the meeting will be to continue to develop annexation policy

recommendations. An open house in September would be the next step if the members are comfortable with the recommendations they create. Following the Open House, possibly in October, another Task Force meeting would be scheduled to review the public comments and recommendations received at the Open House and to make any modifications to the original recommendations. These would then be presented to City Council for consideration in November/December. This is a tentative timeline so dates may be modified or more meetings added as-needed.

- Several public input comments were made, with approximately half of them coming from property owners of the Split Rock Heights neighborhood. Other neighborhoods represented included Mystic Meadows and Pine Lake Hills. Topics revolved around costs and the ramifications of those costs on people's lives, and results of formal surveys conducted to gauge the level of interest in annexation within these neighborhoods. A majority in all neighborhoods represented were not interested in being annexed into the city at this time. A large percentage also noted that they would likely sell their homes if annexed which they suggested could produce a glut of homes on the market if annexation of some of the larger neighborhoods occurred. There was a request to have the formal recommendations released to the public prior to the open house to give the public time to review them and come to the meeting with educated questions. **"7/10/17 Public Input Presentation" which includes slides that were used as visual aids for the Split Rock Heights neighborhood's presentation can be found via the Annexation Task Force webpage under Meeting Information July 10.**

The meeting concluded at 7:06 p.m.