

STAFF REPORT

PROCESS FOR CHANGES TO THE AMES URBAN FRINGE PLAN November 20, 2007

On August 28, 2007, the Ames City Council reviewed a draft of a process to be used by the City of Ames, Story County, and the City of Gilbert to consider changes to the *Ames Urban Fringe Plan* (see Attachment A). In September, the Gilbert City Council and Story County Board of Supervisors commented on this process. Staff of Gilbert, Story County, and Ames have prepared the attached proposed version reflecting input from the three governing bodies (see Attachment B).

Following are the comments and questions from the Ames City Council on August 28, followed by staff comments on how the current version addresses those:

- *The process as originally presented was to occur only once per year, which to some did not seem often enough to be responsive to citizens.*

Under the proposed process, amendments can be considered whenever the jurisdictions initiate the process by setting a date for a joint meeting. The Ames City Council should consider what it would do if, soon after the process is started for one amendment, another amendment request is made. Would the Council want more than one process to be going on concurrently, on different schedules? Would the Council want to start a new process to consider a new amendment request just after completing the decision on a previous request?

- *The process seems complicated. Is it clear what starts the amendment process? Perhaps only those jurisdictions affected by a proposed change should be involved in deciding whether to consider an amendment?*

Story County agreed that the process was overly complex and also felt strongly that all proposed amendments should be considered. On the other hand, Gilbert is concerned about more requests being made than there is staff capability to consider, and was therefore supportive of an *annual* amendment cycle as opposed to an *open* amendment process. The revised process eliminates the step to "filter" applications, but requires all three parties to agree to a date for the joint meeting at the end of the process before the process starts. Staff points out that, as a purely practical matter, it would be difficult for any process to proceed very far unless all jurisdictions agree to have a meeting.

- *Does it take agreement of all three jurisdictions to change the Plan? For example, what role should the City of Gilbert have in areas beyond its two-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction? Perhaps only those jurisdictions affected by a proposed change should be involved in approving the amendment.*

The Fringe Plan was adopted by mutual consent of all jurisdictions. With this in mind, Gilbert's representative, Gary Reiner, stated that no one jurisdiction should determine that a change does not affect another jurisdiction. Changes can have both direct and indirect effects on all jurisdictions whether they are immediately proximate to a given jurisdiction or not. **Staff believes that the three**

jurisdictions hold different views on this issue. Ultimately, that is something that the Council will need to discuss and decide. The Council should consider, however, whether it would follow a plan containing policies decided by another jurisdiction and with which the Council does not agree. Cooperation is the essence of this joint plan; without agreement of all parties, it seems that joint planning would no longer be feasible.

- *Is it possible to have an amendment process that does not involve a joint meeting?*

Yes, it would be possible, if Ames, Gilbert, and Story County all agree on the same amendment. In that case, the joint meeting could be cancelled. However, that would deprive the public of the opportunity to make comment to, and to hear from, all three governing bodies at once. It would put the burden on the public to determine which meetings to attend.

The Gilbert City Council has discussed this process and is well enough satisfied to proceed with considering any pending amendments. Although Gilbert is concerned about these requests overburdening limited staff, it is willing to wait and see if that becomes a problem. The Story County Board of Supervisors has reviewed this process, but staff has not yet received its comments, or whether it is ready to consider any pending amendments.

Currently, one request for a change to the Framework Plan map is pending, from Mr. David Norris, to change designation of land from Agriculture and Farm Service to Rural Residential. Staff is aware of one other request that may be made once a process is set up - a change in the Framework Plan map from Parks and Recreation Areas to some residential classification. Also, staff may request consideration of a change to the text document to allow townhomes up to 12 units in the Priority Transitional Residential land use designation.

Next Steps.

The next steps depend on the priorities of the three jurisdictions:

1. If City Council supports the proposed amendment process, it can direct staff to contact the Story County Board of Supervisors and the Gilbert City Council to seek a date for a joint meeting to consider specific amendments.
2. If City Council believes that it is more important for all of the governing bodies to agree on the process before proceeding, it can direct staff to seek a date for a joint meeting to discuss this amendment process with the Story County Board of Supervisors and the Gilbert City Council.
3. If City Council is not completely satisfied with the proposed amendment process, but believes that it is more important to consider pending requests for amendments, it can direct staff to contact the Story County Board of Supervisors and the Gilbert City Council to seek a date for a joint meeting to consider specific amendments and at that same meeting discuss changes to how that process works for the next amendment request.

In any case, the City Manager believes that there is little to be gained by the staff of all three jurisdictions continuing to revise the process without discussion among the Story County Board of Supervisors, the Gilbert City Council, and the Ames City Council.

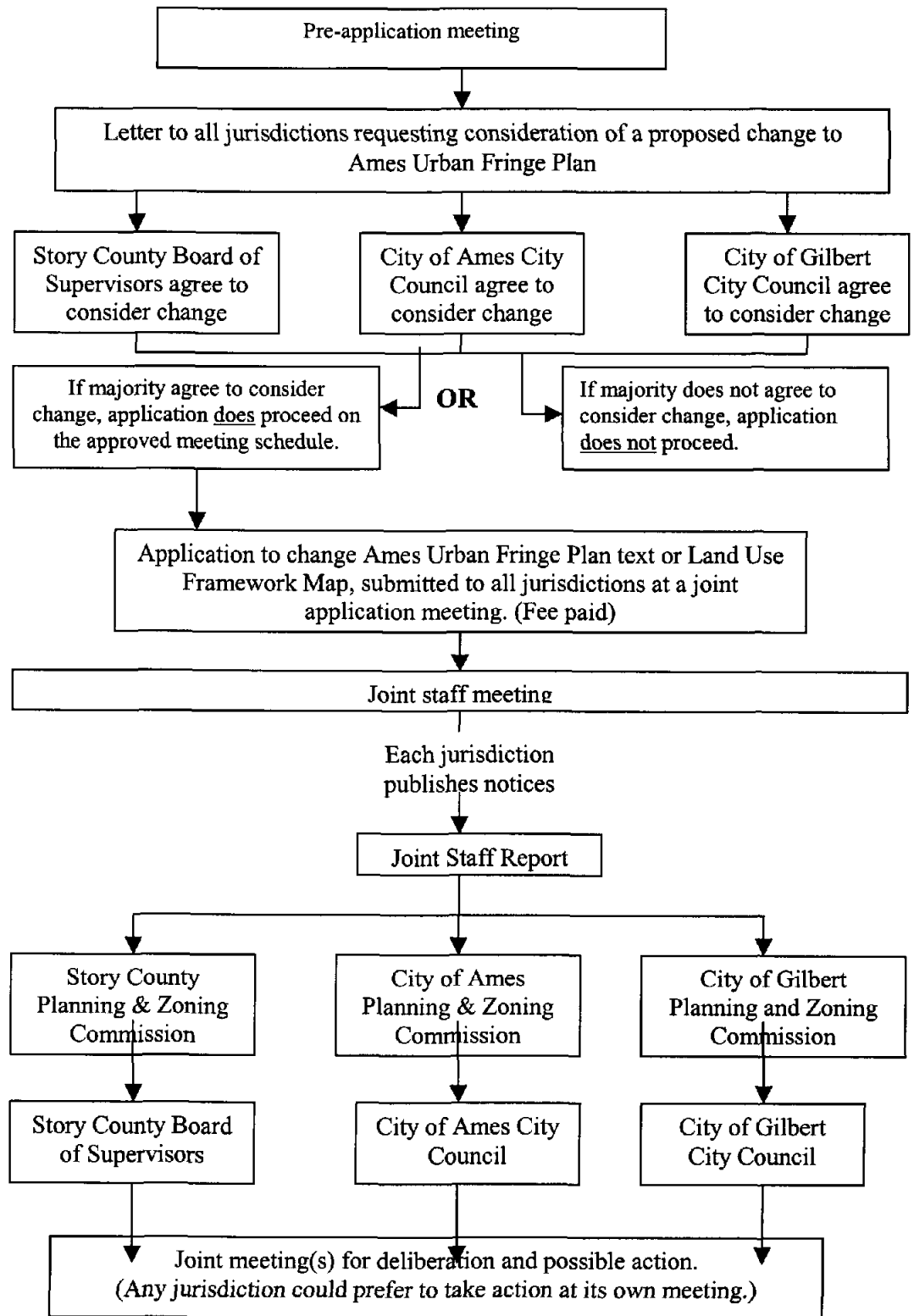
Beyond the current issue of how to amend the Ames urban Fringe Plan, on December 11, staff will present information on the proposed intergovernmental agreement and other Ames Urban Fringe Plan implementation elements for discussion at a City Council workshop. This is in preparation for a possible joint meeting on these subjects with the Story County Board of Supervisors and the Gilbert City Council on implementing the Ames Urban Fringe Plan.

Also, the Boone County Board of Supervisors has approved the Boone County Comprehensive Development Plan and has told its staff that it would be interested in accommodations being included in the Ames Urban Fringe Plan that would allow the Boone County Comprehensive Plan to reference the Ames Urban Fringe Plan as the guide for the part of Boone County that is within the Ames Urban Fringe. The Boone County Supervisors should thus be invited to the next joint meeting among the Story County Board of Supervisors, the Gilbert City Council, and the Ames City Council to discuss this proposal in more detail.

Process for Changes to Ames Urban Fringe Plan

Set formal schedule annually for all public meeting dates and application deadlines.

- Deadline, one month before the earliest of the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.
- Applicant pay 3 fees to Ames and Ames distribute.
- If application is incomplete, applicant is asked for additional information before this proceeds.



Set dates for periodic meetings in advance for an entire year:

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