

Staff Report

Post-Annexation LUPP Designations

January 8, 2013

Prior to the adoption of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan in 2007, the City's Land Use Policy Plan had land use designations within the City that were the same as outside the City. For instance, outside the City, an area would be designated Village/Suburban Residential. After the land was annexed, it would retain that LUPP designation.

With the adoption of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan, a new designation was created for areas outside the city limits intended for residential development. This Urban Residential designation is similar to Village/Suburban Residential, although the different terminology does not allow for the automatic reassigning of the LUPP designation after annexation.

It was discovered during the recent Rose Prairie annexation that, after annexation in 2011, there was no LUPP designation assigned to it. Therefore, as part of the Athen and Quarry Estates annexation requests, City staff asked the applicants to submit an application for an LUPP map amendment. The intent, at this point, is to process both the annexation and the LUPP map amendment so that the City Council can take action on them simultaneously.

However, there are several issues to consider with this process. One is that the process of an annexation and of an LUPP map amendment are different so that assuring that the public hearings on each occur at the same Council meeting cannot be guaranteed.

Two is that, at least in the case of the Athen request, the property just went through a long process for an LUPP amendment (from Priority Transitional Residential to Urban Residential). An additional amendment process might lead to confusion among all the neighbors who participated in the previous amendment process. (Quarry Estates was designated as Urban Residential in 2010.)

One possible option presents itself in the LUPP and the zoning ordinance. The LUPP already notes that "New Lands" are intended to include those areas designated as Urban Services Area in the Urban Fringe Plan (LUPP, p. 53). New Lands are intended to be developed as villages or as suburban residential. These development types are accomplished with the LUPP designation of Village/Suburban Residential.

Under current policy, the assigning of an LUPP designation is not automatic; it requires a deliberate action by the City Council. However, upon annexation, *zoning is automatic*. Section 29.302 assigns an Agricultural zoning classification when a tract of land is annexed. The City Council then would change it through the specified process for a

zoning map amendment. Under this proposal, the zoning process or designation will not change.

Using the language of the zoning ordinance as a model, language can be incorporated into the LUPP that would automatically allow for the designation of newly-annexed property consistent with the LUPP. Since the Urban Fringe Plan allows for annexation only of land designated Urban Services, it would be possible to assign LUPP designations that correlate directly with the Urban Fringe designations. Urban Residential would become Village/Suburban Residential. The other Urban Fringe Plan designations of Planned Industrial, Community Commercial Node and Convenience Commercial Node would carry over into the LUPP map.

In addition, language in the LUPP can be incorporated that designate Natural Areas in the Urban Fringe Plan as Environmentally Sensitive Areas in the LUPP. The descriptions of these land uses are similar and are intended to designate areas of steep slopes, flood plains and areas of natural vegetation.

By adopting changes that assign LUPP designations automatically upon annexation, the City can be more responsive to customer timetables. Staff and City Council time can be used more efficiently. And multiple similar (but different) processes for a single tract of land can be avoided.

With the City Council's direction, City staff can prepare language to amend the LUPP to allow the automatic assigning of LUPP designations of lands following annexation. Language to incorporate these changes can be developed and submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission as a minor text amendment to the LUPP. This amendment would likely be incorporated into Appendix C: Land Use Policy Plan Amendment Process. This amendment could be brought back to the City Council in late February for approval.

If this change was ultimately adopted by the City Council, it would apply to the pending Athen and Quarry Estates annexation requests. It would also apply to the previously approved Rose Prairie annexation.