

Staff Report

ISU Research Park Expansion Urban Fringe Plan Amendment

September 24, 2013

BACKGROUND

At its September 17, 2013 meeting, the City Council referred a letter from Mr. Steven Carter, Director of Iowa State University Research Park Corporation, requesting the City Council initiate the process to amend the Ames Urban Fringe Plan in preparation for an upcoming annexation request. (Attachment 1) The Research Park has identified approximately 200 acres of land for expansion to the south of its current location. **Part of the expansion area is shown in Ames Urban Fringe Plan as Planned Industrial; however, the majority of the area is shown as Industrial Reserve/Research Park. Based upon the requirements of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan, the Industrial Reserve designated area must be changed to an Urban Service designation, such as Planned Industrial, prior to considering the site for annexation.**

The Ames Urban Fringe Plan (Plan) includes a Joint and Cooperative Agreement (also known as a 28E Agreement) that was signed in 2011 by City of Ames, Story County, and the City of Gilbert as signatories to the 2006 adopted Plan. The Plan and the 28E agreement outline the process for reviewing development approvals, annexations, and for amendments in the two-mile fringe area of the Plan. The Plan includes three land use categories know as Urban Service Area, Rural/Urban Transition Area, and Rural Service and Agricultural Conservation Area. Of interest in this case is relationship of the Plan to the process of annexation. The City may annex any land within an Urban Service Area without an amendment to the Plan or approval of other agencies. Annexation of any other area of the Plan or a change in its intended use requires an amendment to the Plan. In addition to the City of Ames consideration of the change the other agencies may also consider its appropriateness. If the Council decides to process this request, Story County will independently review the proposed amendment and make its own determination. The City of Gilbert is unaffected by the proposed change and does not need to participate in the amendment process.

An amendment to the Ames Urban Fringe Plan is to be processed the same as a Land Use Policy Plan Amendment. The 28E agreement identifies that a governing body must initiate the process by its own interest or in response to a property owner request. **This requires that City Council determine if the request to amend the Plan should proceed as a formal application at this time and to begin notice and coordination with Story County. Amending the Ames Urban Fringe Plan would be the first step of many in considering expansion of the Research Park. Expansion will require development approvals consisting of Annexation, Land Use Policy Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Subdivision, and Minor Site Plan reviews.**

Staff Comments:

The Ames Urban Fringe Plan identifies this area as a planned expansion of the City and for the purpose of industrial development. At the time the 2006 Plan was prepared the area was labeled as “transitional” due to the unknown timing of a need for an expansion of industrial uses. Based on the current interest of the Research Park to expand due to lack of available space and the commitment of the State of Iowa to Iowa State University to fund construction of a building in the Research Park, it appears the time and need for expansion has arrived. **If the City Council wishes to proceed with this first step in the process of considering the expansion of the Research Park, it should grant the request to submit an application for amendment of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan.**

Alternatively, Council could turn down the request if it does not believe the timing for considering an expansion is appropriate.

Attachment 1
Request Letter



Iowa State University Research Park Corporation
2711 South Loop Drive, Suite 4050
Ames, Iowa 50010-8648

September 13, 2013

Mayor and City Council
City of Ames
515 Clark Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50010

RE: Request for Map Change to the Ames Urban Fringe Plan

Mayor and City Council:

The Iowa State University Research Park would like the Council to direct the Staff to begin a change to the Land Use Framework Map of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan for the area proposed for expansion of the Research Park. The area is currently designated "*Rural Urban Transition Area - Planned Industrial/Research Park*". For the area to be rezoned the area needs to be designated "*Urban Service Area - Planned Industrial*". Attached is a map showing the portion of the Land Use Framework Map that needs to be changed.

The Research Park owns one of the properties in the mapped area. The other parcels are owned by the Iowa State Foundation and the Hunziker Family. Those entities are cooperating with the expansion of the Research Park.

An annexation request for the area will be forthcoming in the near future. However, we would like this process to begin prior to annexation so the property can be rezoned promptly once it is annexed.

Sincerely,

Steve Carter
Iowa State University Research Park

cc: Kelly Diekmann, Planning Director, City of Ames
Bob Kindred, Assistant City Manager, City of Ames