

ITEM #:	<u>51</u>
DATE:	<u>05-13-25</u>
DEPT:	<u>P&amp;H</u>

### COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT:      INITIATION OF VOLUNTARY ANNEXATION OF LAND SOUTH OF THE  
IOWA STATE RESEARCH PARK ADJACENT TO 4140 S 530TH AVENUE**

**BACKGROUND:**

The City has received an annexation petition from the Iowa State University Research Park (ISURP) for approximately 35 acres of land along University Boulevard/S 530th Avenue, abutting the City's southern corporate limits. ISURP owns approximately 150 acres of land in total south of the current Research Park boundary, but desires to only annex a portion of the land at this time. The ISURP intends to develop the subject property as a corporate agricultural research and development facility. An annexation plat is included in Attachment A.

The subject property is 36.87 gross acres including right of way and is currently in agricultural production. A farmstead was previously divided from the subject property in 2012. The farmstead parcel has frontage on S 530th, but is otherwise surrounded by the subject property. 530th Avenue is paved as a two-lane road across the frontage of the site.

**The ISURP has applied for a 100% voluntary annexation. City Council can accept the petition as is or consider adding the farmstead parcel to make more uniform boundaries.** Under Iowa Code Section 368, up to 20% of the total land area of a voluntary annexation may be comprised of nonconsenting properties (referred to as the 80/20 rule). This is allowed by statute to avoid creating islands or to create more uniform city boundaries. The parcel with the farmstead is 3.17 gross acres, or 9% of the annexation area. **Staff believes including this parcel will make a more uniform boundary with no jurisdictional gap along 530th Avenue. If the farmstead is left out at this time, it would not be incorporated into the City unless the owner requested annexation or if the ISU controlled land to the west were to annex, which is not anticipated by ISU.**

The first step in the annexation process is for the City Council to accept the application and define the boundaries desired for annexation. **With Council's decision regarding what territory to include in the annexation, the final territory description will be completed based upon all consenting applications and incorporation of nonconsenting properties. Once this is accepted, the formal notification process will begin, which includes a series of notifications to property owners and governmental entities, and ultimately a public hearing with the City Council for formal approval.**

**There is a difference in overall timing in this case as a 100% voluntary application vs. an 80/20 annexation. Because the ISURP parcel is just beyond two miles from Kelley it would not require state approval if it was a 100% voluntary application. However, if the City initiates an 80/20 annexation, the annexation will require state review at the City Development Board. The total time to complete an 80/20 annexation process with State approval is likely two to three months longer than a 100% voluntary application.**

## **PLAN 2040 CONSISTENCY:**

**Ames Plan 2040, the City's comprehensive plan, designates the subject property and adjoining properties as "Employment" (Emp.) and show them as a future urban growth area for the City.** Three adjacent properties to the south and east are owned by the ISURP are designated as Employment and total 114 acres. While they are not planned for development at this time, they may be annexed and developed by the ISURP in the future.

Ames Plan 2040 identifies the purpose of Employment designation as for general industrial areas and large-scale employment centers that are part of a planned business or the ISU Research Park. Applicable zoning districts include the RI Research Park Innovation District and GI General Industrial District.

The site is readily serviceable by City water and sewer. Water and sewer infrastructure exists just to the north of the subject site and can be extended by the developer to serve the site. The area is within the Xenia water territory buyout area, which allows for the owner to buy out service territory rights and to then utilize city water to serve the site.

Staff has had additional discussions with ISURP staff about how to incorporate this site into the approved ISURP master plan and expected development of the remaining land. The site needs to account for future transportation planning, regional storm water detention facilities, and looping of water mains east back to Riverside as originally planned with the third phase of the ISURP.

**Along with the property's annexation, it would be appropriate to review infrastructure needs for the development of the area and prepare a developer agreement. These issues will be addressed in more detail through future steps of rezoning and other development approvals.**

## **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Initiate an 80/20 annexation of approximately 40 acres including the ISRUP property and abutting parcel containing a farmstead in order to make more uniform boundaries.
2. Initiate an 100% voluntary annexation of approximately 37 acres including the ISRUP property.
3. Decline to proceed with initiating the ISURP annexation request at this time.

## **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Authorizing an 80/20 annexation would reflect the City's practice to evaluate annexations comprehensively to anticipate future needs. Although including the farmstead is not essential at this time, it does make for more uniform boundaries and consistency with City plans. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, as described above.

## **ATTACHMENT(S):**

[Annexation Plat.pdf](#)  
[Future Land Use Map](#)