

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: ANNEXATION OF IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PARK
PROPERTY WITH ONE NON-CONSENTING PROPERTY**

BACKGROUND:

The Iowa State University Research Park (ISURP) seeks to annex land south of the current Research Park and the City's corporate limits on S 530th Avenue. ISURP owns four parcels totaling approximately 150 acres in this area. **However, the Research Park has submitted an annexation application for only one of the parcels. The remaining parcels may be annexed and developed in the future.**

On May 13, 2025, the City Council voted to initiate annexation of the ISURP parcel and a non-consenting parcel at 4140 S 530th Avenue to create more uniform city boundaries. Under Iowa Code, up to 20% of a voluntary annexation may consist of non-consenting properties (the "80/20 rule"). This is allowed to avoid creating islands or to create more uniform city boundaries.

An annexation area map, annexation plat, and a listing of parcels and ownership are attached. **The annexation area totals 40.04 gross acres, with 9% being non-consenting, as illustrated by Table 1 below:**

	Consenting (Property Gross Acreage)	Nonconsenting (Property Gross Acreage)
Acres	36.87	3.17
Percent of Annexation Area	91%	9%

Although leaving the non-consenting parcel out does not inhibit any planned future annexation, its inclusion does create a uniform boundary along S 530th Avenue because it is surrounded by the ISURP parcel on three sides. If the nonconsenting property is not included, its annexation would require voluntary annexation from the owner in the future as there is no other land in this area that abuts the site that is planned for annexation. Iowa State University controls the lands to the west of the property.

PLAN 2040 CONSISTENCY:

Ames Plan 2040, the City's comprehensive plan, designates the subject properties and adjoining properties as "Employment" (Emp.) and shows them as a future urban growth area for the City (see attached Future Land Use Map and Plan 2040 Excerpts).

The Employment designation is for industrial and large-scale employment uses, such as ISURP Applicable. Applicable zoning districts include the RI Research Park Innovation District and GI General Industrial District.

As part of the future rezoning of the property after annexation, a master plan will be required to address infrastructure needs and long-term planning for the area. The master plan will incorporate this site into the approved ISURP master plan and address the expected development of the remaining land. City water and sewer utilities exist within the current ISURP boundaries and can be extended by the applicant to serve the ISURP site. The ISURP would be required to buy out Xenia Rural Water service territory to allow for City water service, per the agreement terms between the City and Xenia. More information regarding infrastructure for the annexation area can be found in the Addendum.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:

The Planning and Zoning Commission considered the request at a Public Hearing on June 18, 2025. No members of the public spoke at the hearing. Commission discussion focused on the non-consenting property in response to comment letter received from the Washington Township trustees (See attached). Staff described the uniform boundary that would be created and how utility services would be available in the future. Emergency response would be provided upon annexation.

The Commission voted 6-0 to recommend the City Council approve the 80/20 annexation by finding that the proposed annexation is consistent with the Ames Plan 2040 comprehensive plan and that the proposed annexation creates more uniform boundaries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

State Code allows for the Board of Supervisors to make a recommendation about annexation. On July 14, 2025, the Story County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 26-11 supporting the proposed annexation.

The City received a letter (see Attachments) from the Washington Township Trustees urging that the City not approve an 80/20 annexation and to only annex the ISURP land as 100% voluntary. They do not believe the non-consenting parcel needs to be annexed at this time, and that its annexation will lower the tax base of Washington Township. Township tax base is not a component of the findings for approval of an annexation under state law.

The owner of the non-consenting property has spoken to staff and does not desire to be included within the annexation. No written comment has been provided.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the voluntary 80/20 annexation of two parcels and the abutting right-of-way south of the Iowa State University Research Park, totaling 40.04 gross acres, by finding that the proposed annexation is consistent with the Ames Plan 2040 comprehensive plan and that the proposed annexation territory creates more uniform boundaries.
2. Approve a 100% voluntary annexation of only the ISURP property by finding that the proposed annexation is consistent with the Ames Plan 2040 comprehensive plan.
3. Deny the request to annex land south of the ISURP.

4. Refer the request to staff or the applicant for more information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The proposed annexation is consistent with Ames Plan 2040 projections for growth and is the first piece of ISURP's next phase of growth.

The inclusion of adjacent nonconsenting property along S 530th is intended to create more uniform boundaries as the ISURP property surrounds the nonconsenting property. If the property were not annexed as part of the current request, annexing the property in the future would almost certainly require the property owner to consent to annexation. With approval of an 80/20 annexation, the application must be forwarded to the State for review and final approval by the City Development Board.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Addendum.pdf](#)

[Attachments.pdf](#)