

STAFF REPORT

To: Mayor and City Council Date: October 12, 2010
From: Judy Daniel, AICP Prepared By: Blake Esselstyn, GISP
Director of Planning and Development Julia C. Fields, AICP
Via: Gary Jackson, City Manager
Subject: Public Hearings for Year 2011 Annexation Areas

Summary Statement: Public hearings to obtain public comment on the following proposed annexation areas: Coopers Hawk Drive and Royal Pines.

Review: On July 27, 2010, the Asheville City Council passed Resolutions of Intent beginning the annexation process for the Coopers Hawk Drive and Royal Pines areas. The Annexation Services Plan for these areas was approved on August 10, 2010, and a public information meeting was held on September 13, 2010. Approximately 95 persons attended this meeting. The meeting consisted of a video presentation defining annexation in general and providing a description of the proposed annexation areas and how each meets the standards required for annexation by the State of North Carolina. The video also detailed the specific services that the City would provide to the proposed annexation areas and outlined the financing and revenue sections of the services plan. Staff members from various City of Asheville departments were on hand at the meeting to respond to questions about proposed services.

Prior to the public hearing, staff will make a brief presentation concerning each area; the Mayor should then open the public hearing for each area. As part of the presentation for the Royal Pines Area, Cathy Ball, Public Works Director, will provide Council with information concerning corrections to the approved Plan for Services. Council should hear from the public separately on each area, and the order of comments should be (1) residents of the defined area and residents of the City; (2) and then any other commentators. The staff will bring forward annexation ordinances for Council consideration at the October 26, 2010 meeting. The proposed effective date for these annexations is June 30, 2011.

Pros:

- Supports the City of Asheville's Smart Growth Annexation Program (regular program of annexations) as set forth in the City's 2025 Plan.
- Provides for an urban level of service for developed and developing areas adjacent to the existing city limits and includes those benefitting from existing City services in participation in the costs of such services.

Cons:

- There are mixed reactions from residents of proposed annexation areas, including objections for financial and other reasons.
- Phasing in services to achieve the service plans will involve skillful organization and management.

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact of these annexations is contained in detail on pages 29-35 of the Plan for Services. General fund impact is enumerated on pages 33 and 34.

Recommendation: City staff recommends City Council hold public hearings for each of the proposed annexation areas.