

Subject: Annexation Policy

Policy No.: CPM #700-0001

Effective Date: 8/12/2019

Purpose:

This document sets forth the Annexation Policy of the City of Woodstock, Georgia, replacing the “Annexation of Unincorporated Islands” Policy established in 1996, attached hereto for reference as Exhibit “A.”

Strategy and Objectives:

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Woodstock, Georgia hereby set forth the following strategy and objectives of this Annexation Policy:

I. Municipal Expansion:

- 1.) All means of annexation available under State Law, O.C.G.A 36-36-1 et seq. will be exercised, as deemed in the best interest of the City of Woodstock.

II. Priorities:

- 1.) Incorporating areas completely surrounded by the City, sometimes called “unincorporated islands” or “islands;”
- 2.) Incorporating areas already receiving City services, now and in the future;
- 3.) Incorporating all property between the current City boundary and Cobb County;
- 4.) Annexations that serve to align the municipal boundary, consolidate, and connect disparate areas;
- 5.) Annexations that may provide long-term municipal growth and expansion opportunities; and
- 6.) Annexations aligned with adopted economic development goals and objectives.

III. Land Use and Zoning:

- 1.) The City of Woodstock Comprehensive Plan, now and as amended, will guide land use decisions for property proposed for annexation, however, a host of factors will be weighed when determining the appropriate zoning, including but not limited to:
 - (a) Input from the citizens of the City of Woodstock;
 - (b) City or County zoning districts and current land uses contiguous to and in the general vicinity of the annexation area;
 - (c) Recommendations from the DPC and the Planning Commission; and
 - (d) Input from and discussions with the Cherokee County Government.

IV. Decision Factors:

- 1.) When deciding to approve or deny an annexation, the following factors may be considered, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) The unincorporated property is already receiving City services;
 - (b) Positive fiscal impact to the City is projected;
 - (c) Opportunities for future commercial growth are anticipated;
 - (d) Opportunities for positive long-term growth for the City are anticipated;
 - (e) A mix of housing types and/or a type of housing desired by the City is proposed;

- (f) Public improvements proposed with the annexation that may include, but not be limited to the enhancement of transportation, recreation, water/sewer, parking, stormwater, or public safety facilities;
 - (g) The opportunity to extend municipal services and that services can be extended, as validated by the municipal departments;
 - (h) Whether the annexation proposed includes individual lots within a platted subdivision, which is generally not as desirable as an entire subdivision seeking to annex as a community using one of the annexation methods prescribed by state law; and
 - (i) Mitigating factors that warrant the annexation of property.
- 2.) Regardless of any factors considered, if the Mayor and City Council believe the annexation is in the best interests of the City of Woodstock, it will be approved.
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EXHIBIT A

Subject: **Annexation of Unincorporated Islands**
Policy No.: **700-0001**
Effective Date: **1/09/1996**

BACKGROUND: O.C.G.A. 36-36-90 provides that the governing authority of any municipality may annex unincorporated islands in the sole discretion of the governing authority. The City has the absolute authority to annex such islands but some landowners objected to being annexed. Because of these objections, the Mayor and Council previously avoided proceeding with annexation of these islands. However, after studying the issue, the Council determined it would be in the best interest of the City and of the residents and owners of said unincorporated islands to annex them into the City once the ownership of the property changed hands.

PROCEDURE:

It is the intent of the Mayor and City Council to annex in all unincorporated islands contained within the City Limits. In order to address the immediate concerns of landowners of such islands, however, the City did not pursue annexation in 1996, but instead approved a resolution stating that at such time as an unincorporated island is sold or transferred to a new owner, the City will begin the annexation process as soon as reasonably possible. A copy of this resolution was forwarded to each unincorporated land owner at the time of its adoption on 1/9/1996 by certified mail, or hand delivery.