Proposed Annexation Policy Framework

Purpose and Objective

The annexation of land to a city—and in particular, the development and related activities that follow—can impact the County in a number of ways. The purpose of this document is to identify appropriate issues to consider in assessing the potential impacts of an annexation upon the County. While each proposed annexation will have to be evaluated individually, this document provides a good starting place for identifying issues that require consideration and, if appropriate, resolution through one or more of the following mechanisms:

- Tax-sharing Agreement
- Development Impact Fees
- Development Agreement
- CEQA Mitigation Measures
- Joint Planning/Environmental Review MOU
- Community Facilities District

Within the Land Use, Fiscal, and Infrastructure sections that follow, each category of potential impacts briefly references the mechanism(s) that may be best suited to implement measures that reduce or eliminate adverse effects on the County. The use of a Development Agreement to secure public benefits (net gains) should also be considered in connection with individual annexation proposals. Tax-sharing agreements can also be an effective mechanism for non-traditional allocations of property and sales tax revenues in a manner that enables counties to share in the fiscal benefits of development that follows annexations.

Land Use Impacts

Land use impacts vary greatly from project to project and necessarily require individualized analysis. This will typically happen through the environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act. Some of the more common issues to anticipate include the following:

1. Visual Impacts/Aesthetics.
   - Signage, particularly sign height and illumination
   - Architectural and landscape themes that complement the region's agricultural heritage
   - Compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods

Mechanisms: Development Agreement, CEQA Mitigation Measures.

2. Agricultural Resources.
   - County land use policy (including General Plan/Zoning) considerations, including but not limited to foregone development opportunities
   - Project density/intensity
   - Loss of farmland and mitigation on like/better soils (preferably, 2:1 without stacking), within Woodland/Davis "greenbelt" or other strategic areas if feasible

- Appropriate buffers within the project site to minimize impacts on nearby farming operations
- Fencing or other measures to reduce trespassing and vandalism on adjacent farmland
- Proximity of proposed agricultural mitigation to existing conserved lands and the potential for “islands” of agriculture due to development patterns
- Agricultural sustainability/viability, particularly due to development-related impacts, and potential tie-in to Agricultural Economic Development Fund

Mechanisms: Development Agreement, CEQA Mitigation Measures, Joint Planning MOU

3. Growth Inducement.
   - Potential for new infrastructure to ease the path for additional development, potential tie-in to countywide Capital Improvement Plan
   - Effect on regional jobs/housing balance

Mechanisms: Development Agreement, Community Facilities District

4. Air Quality/Odors.
   - Emissions from onsite uses, including industrial facilities and gas stations
   - Odor impacts

Mechanisms: CEQA Mitigation Measures

5. Transportation/Traffic.
   - Measures to reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote active transportation, including bus stops, bicycle paths, and ride-sharing programs, potential to tie-in to bicycle plan
   - Construction of all infrastructure necessary to serve project and mitigate its impacts on existing facilities, potentially including road widening, turn lands, signals and signage, and (for major projects) freeway on-ramps, ingress and egress
   - Ongoing road maintenance issues, including increased wear and tear
   - Mitigation for short-term construction impacts

Mechanisms: Development Agreement, CEQA Mitigation, Joint Planning MOU, Community Facilities District

6. Climate Change/Greenhouse Gases.
   - Energy efficient building design features, onsite solar, and public transit facilities are among the methods frequency used to address GHG emissions
   - Consideration of relevant provisions of the County Climate Action Plan including EV charging stations (will vary by development)

Mechanisms: Development Agreement, Joint Planning MOU

7. Hydrology/Water Quality.
   - Floodplain issues, including displacement of floodwaters and related regional/system effects (may be obviated by onsite detention or retention facilities)

Mechanisms: CEQA Mitigation Measures

8. Biological Resources.
   - Swainson's hawk mitigation (without easement stacking)
   - Coordination with Habitat JPA on biological resources assessment and, as appropriate, mitigation of any impacts

Mechanisms: CEQA Mitigation Measures

9. Urban Decay
   - Effect on existing shopping centers or other facilities that may be affected by a project
   - Ability to address through infill rather than "greenfield" development

Mechanisms: Joint Planning MOU

Fiscal Impacts

Fiscal impacts include the revenue issues typically addressed in a tax-sharing agreement, and will also frequently include both direct and indirect impacts associated with the increased use of County facilities and services. Affected County facilities and services will commonly include including probation, law enforcement, health services, public works, solid waste (landfill), parks, and social services. County infrastructure (e.g., roads, bridges) is discussed separately below. Where practical, contributions to the Yolo County Agricultural Economic Development Fund should also be considered.

Mechanisms: Tax-sharing Agreement, Development Impact Fees, Development Agreement, Community Facilities District

Infrastructure Impacts

Effects on County infrastructure can be direct (e.g., road relocation) and indirect (e.g., bridge reconstruction to accommodate increased traffic). The extension of city utility services, such as water and sewer, also presents unique issues and opportunities, as annexations and related development can reduce the fiscal and other barriers to providing such services to existing portions of the unincorporated area.

Many such impacts will be identified and addressed—to varying degrees—through the environmental review process. However, conventional tools such as "fair share" contributions to new infrastructure are frequently inadequate to fully address effects on County facilities. Alternative approaches, including but not limited to Development Agreements as a means of securing dedicated funding for such improvements and/or implementation of the countywide Capital Improvement Plan, may be appropriate in some cases.

Mechanisms: Tax-sharing Agreement, Development Impact Fees (as CEQA Mitigation Measures or otherwise), Development Agreement, Community Facilities District