



BUTTE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

1453 Downer Street, Suite C • Oroville, California 95965-4950
(530)538-7784 • Fax (530)538-2847 • www.buttelafco.org

To: Registered Voters and/or Landowners within the Stewart Avenue Annexation No. 3 Area

From: Butte Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

Re: **Invitation to attend an information meeting to be held on March 19, 2014, regarding the Stewart Avenue Annexation No. 3**

Date: March 12, 2014

This letter is concerning Butte LAFCo File No. 13-15 – City of Chico - Stewart Avenue Annexation No. 3. This annexation was approved by the Butte Local Agency Formation Commission on February 6, 2014, subject to a protest hearing. If you have questions about this proposal that were not answered during the public hearing process, please call the LAFCO Office at (530) 538-7784. It is important that you are fully informed prior to taking any action.

To ensure that area residents, landowners, and registered voters are fully informed about the Stewart Avenue annexation, LAFCO staff will be holding an informational meeting on **Wednesday, March 19, 2014, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., in Conference Room 1 in the City of Chico Municipal Center, 421 Main Street, Chico.** LAFCO staff and City of Chico staff will be available to answer any questions regarding the annexation.

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or the annexation, please call Stephen Betts, Butte LAFCo Deputy Executive Officer, at (530) 538-7784, or via email at sbetts@buttecounty.net. We will do our best to assist you in working your way through this process.

Enclosure

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FACT SHEET ON ANNEXATION TO THE CITY OF CHICO

Background

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is a local government body that consists of two representatives from the County Board of Supervisors, two representatives from the county's incorporated cities, two representatives from the county's special districts, and a member of the public. This Commission is empowered by the State of California through the provisions enacted in the Cortese Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. Section 56001 of this law states that it is the policy of the State of California to encourage growth and development, which are essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well-being of the state. Pursuant to this policy, it is the responsibility of LAFCo to determine the most logical boundaries possible when reviewing and approving requests for annexations or reorganizations of local government boundaries.

Process

Annexation requests can be initiated either by individual property owners or by the City of Chico. These requests are generally processed through the City's Planning Services Department. This Department will make a preliminary determination as to the number of parcels to be included in the annexation proposal based on logical boundaries and community support/interest and submit an application to LAFCo. LAFCo staff then reviews the request and may either recommend approval or denial of the application as submitted, or may amend the application to include or exclude parcels based on its policy of encouraging logical boundaries and ensuring the most efficient provision of public services such as fire, police, and sewer service. LAFCo then conducts a public meeting at which time public comment is encouraged and a formal action is taken on the annexation request. These public meetings are generally held on the first Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m. in the Butte County Board of Supervisors Chambers at 25 County Center Drive in Oroville.

How does this process affect you?

It is in your interest to contact LAFCo staff and/or City of Chico staff at this time and ask any questions you may have. Here are the appropriate contacts:

Mark Wolfe, City of Chico
Community Development Director
411 Main Street
Chico, CA 95927
(530) 879-6800
mark.wolfe@Chicoca.gov

Stephen Betts, Butte LAFCo
Deputy Executive Officer
1453 Downer Street, Suite C
Oroville, CA 95965
(530) 538-7784
sbetts@buttecounty.net

What are the costs/benefits to you if your property is considered for annexation?

The most common question asked of LAFCo staff is how will this annexation affect my parcel and my pocketbook? While LAFCo cannot predict or guarantee the policies of the City of Chico, we have compiled a list of questions/answers concerning the impacts associated with annexations as they are presently known. LAFCo staff realizes that this list does not address all questions and concerns and encourages all parcel owners with additional concerns to please review this information and contact either the City of Chico or LAFCo if you have any further questions.

Q: Will I pay more taxes?

A: Property taxes that are paid on a parcel of land are not affected by what jurisdiction the parcel is located in, with the exception of any bonded indebtedness incurred for a specific purpose, such as school facilities. The City of Chico at present does not have any bonded indebtedness, which means there is no difference between the property taxes on parcels in the City and County.

The City of Chico does assess a 5% utility user's tax.

Q: What about fees for services?

A: There are county assessments that are attached to certain parcels, depending on your location, to pay for a variety of services such as street lighting, road maintenance, animal control, storm drainage, flood control, and others. Generally speaking, existing county assessments for street lighting, animal control, and street maintenance will be removed following annexation as these services are provided by the City of Chico at no direct cost to parcel owners.

The City of Chico does have mandatory fees for trash collection, green waste (yard clippings) collection, and recycling, however, this is true for all parcels located within the Chico Urban Area regardless of jurisdiction.

Q: Will I be forced to connect to the City of Chico sewer system?

A: Annexation of existing developed parcels will not require mandatory connection to the city sewer service unless your existing septic system fails to operate properly. Major expansions of an existing use or development of vacant land will require connection to city sewer service.

Q: Will I be able to continue existing uses on my property such animal keeping, home occupations, trash and/or yard debris burning or the presence of signs?

A: It has always been the position of the City that pre-existing uses may continue, but not be expanded. If these uses should be discontinued, they will not always be allowed to resume. Burning is prohibited in the City limits. Signs are unaffected for a period of five years, after that they must be made to conform to City standards. The City of Chico does not allow the burning of yard debris or other material. However, burning on unincorporated parcels within the City of Chico's Sphere of Influence that are less than 0.9 acres in size is currently not permitted under regulations by the Butte County Air Quality Management District. If you have any doubts about existing uses, please contact the City about the use in question.

Q: Will public services improve or decline?

A: In general, the City can provide identical or improved fire and police protection. City police service will provide 24-hour patrol service, crime prevention and home security inspections, and traffic enforcement on neighborhood roads. City fire service includes aerial ladder truck service, Class 2 fire insurance rating and uniform Fire Code protection.

Q: Will my once rural neighborhood be required to install curbs, gutters and sidewalks?

A: Only new development on parcels will be required to install these improvements.

Q: Are there different standards for building in the City and the County?

A: No. Both jurisdictions follow the Uniform Building Code for construction.

Q: The most common concern expressed to LAFCo is that parcel owners do not wish to be governed by the City Council who they did not vote for.

A: As City residents, you will be able to vote in all municipal elections and have the opportunity to serve on all the City's Commissions.