

April 11, 2024

TO: Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe & Decatur City Council Members

FROM: Scot Wrighton, City Manager

RE: Involuntary Annexation Tract South of West Sunset

This item was tabled at the City Council's April 1st meeting because council members wanted staff to verify that the tract is fully surrounded (it is), and to allow the complainant's arguments to be re-evaluated. A map of the surrounded parcel is included in the packet. The Legal and Public Works Departments have prepared this item properly, and in accordance with the law.

Like all other involuntary annexations, the proposed West Sunset annexation is fully surrounded and is now one of the "holes in the Swiss cheese" (the "cheese" being the entire territory comprising the city of Decatur). The complainant's reasons for opposing annexation have little to do with the city's reasons for pursuing its annexation policy. It is true that portions of the West Sunset back lots are in the Sangamon River floodplain, and that these lots are presently undeveloped; but much of the Sangamon River floodplain is already inside the city limits, and more of it should be as the city seeks to secure more options for water storage and water supply in the future. Having more of the floodplain in the city also allows the city to regulate and manage the floodplain more effectively and consistently.

If the City Council wishes to amend its annexation policy to allow miscellaneous unincorporated islands throughout the city, that is their prerogative. But presently it is city policy to annex parcels that are fully surrounded as a matter of fairness, equity and consistency of service delivery.