

Sir:

This morning you requested information on the impact of future annexation of land to the City of Jonesboro. I will present a very succinct statement, to be followed by data that substantiates my position.

Statement – Future annexation will significantly work to reduce funding for public transportation in Jonesboro.

According to a formula Congress uses to fund Section 5307 Small Urban public transit systems two factors are equally considered: 1. Population and 2. Population Density. If Jonesboro were to annex additional territory, its population density would decline, thus reducing that portion of the city's funding based on population density. That would be true, unless of course, the parcels to be annexed already had a population per square mile ration greater than that which Jonesboro had prior to the annexation. In that none of the land that lies immediately outside of the Jonesboro corporate limits has a higher population density than that of the city, it will be guaranteed that further annexation of land into the City of Jonesboro will have a deleterious effect on its public transit funding.

The current proposal to annex 20 acres into the City of Jonesboro will most likely have a very modest negative impact on the city's public transit funding. But several of the arguments being used to support this annexation causes Jonesboro's public transit officials to have serious concerns about the future.

It has been presented that these 20 acres are very proximate to the city and in the interest of controlling the way this land is developed the annexation should be approved. But it is obvious that all of the land immediately outside the corporate limits of Jonesboro is "proximate" to the city and could, therefore be annexed using the same rationale at a later date. Also, in the interest of equity, it would seem that the city of Jonesboro would then be bound to all future annexation effort based on this July 2016 precedent. Were these other pieces of land annexed, public transit funding for the City of Jonesboro would indeed be severely impacted in a negative manner.

Moreover, we have heard some proponents of this July 2016 annexation present that bringing in these 20 acres would help "square the boundaries" of the city. However, a view of the boundaries of the City of Jonesboro shows that they are very irregular and that this "squaring the boundaries" rationale could be used to bring in a tremendous amount of additional square mileage if it then became a precedent.

A study of 29 cities indicates (see attachment) that Jonesboro already has an extremely low population density (less than 900 persons per square mile). The average population density of the cities in this study is between 1,510 and 1,839, well above that of Jonesboro.

Accordingly, in light of this data and the concerns that we have about this present setting
annexation that is now being proposed, we believe that we must oppose the annexation
ordinance in an effort to safeguard future public transit funding for the City of Jonesboro.

If you should have questions, please contact me. →

Regards,

Steve Ewart
Transit Director

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Study in Relative Population Density of 29 Cities

City	Population 2013)	(all Square Mileage (Land only)	Population Density (Pop/sq mi	Rank by Density
1 Columbia MO	115276	63.080	1827.457	4
2 Tyler TX	100223	54.200	1849.133	3
3 Fort Smith AR	87650	64.600	1356.811	15
4 Fayetteville AR	78960	55.200	1430.435	10
5 St. Joseph MO	77147	43.990	1753.739	6
6 Springdale AR	75229	41.800	1799.737	5
7 Jonesboro AR	71551	80.000	894.388	21
8 Gulfport MS	71012	56.900	1248.014	18
9 Jackson TN	67685	49.500	1367.374	13
10 Conway AR	63816	45.340	1407.499	12
11 Bowling Green KY	61488	35.400	1736.949	7
12 Rogers AR	60112	37.890	1586.487	9
13 Owensboro KY	58416	19.100	3058.429	1
14 Joplin MO	50789	35.560	1428.262	11
15 Monroe LA	49761	28.700	1733.833	8
16 Meredian MS	40921	45.100	907.339	20
17 Bentonville AR	40167	31.300	1283.291	16
18 Cape Girardeau MO	38816	28.430	1365.318	14
19 Paragould AR	27078	30.800	879.156	22
20 Paducah KY	25018	19.900	1257.186	17
21 Starkville MS	24775	25.700	964.008	19
22 Oxford MS	20865	10.000	2086.500	2
Average	59398	41	1510	
1 Cleveland OH	388072	82.70	4692.527	
2 Cincinnati, OH	298550	79.50	3755.346	
3 Montgomery, AL	228957	79.10	2894.526	
4 Tuscaloosa, AL	116888	76.00	1538.000	
5 St. Louis, MO	315685	66.00	4783.106	
6 Lubbock, TX	202225	75.00	2696.33	
7 Topeka, KS	142411	70.00	2034.44	
Average	312701	75	1839	

Of the 22 cities listed, Jonesboro is the seventh (7th) largest in population. Jonesboro also has the largest square mileage of any of the 22 cities included in this study. Accordingly, Jonesboro ranked twenty-first (21st) of the 22 cities listed with regards to its population density. Only Paragould ranked lower (22nd) in this population density study.

Also, please note that the 7 cities listed in **blue colored type** are all considerably larger than Jonesboro, averaging over 300,000 in population, Other than Cleveland OH, with 2.7 square miles more than Jonesboro, these cities all have less square mileage than Jonesboro.