



Local Agency Formation Commission of Napa County
Subdivision of the State of California

1754 Second Street, Suite C
Napa, California 94559
Phone: (707) 259-8645
www.napa.lafco.ca.gov

We Manage Local Government Boundaries, Evaluate Municipal Services, and Protect Agriculture

Agenda Item 7k (Consent/Information)

TO: Local Agency Formation Commission

PREPARED BY: Brendon Freeman, Executive Officer *BF*

MEETING DATE: February 2, 2026

SUBJECT: Update on Unincorporated Islands

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

This is a consent item for information purposes only. Accordingly, if interested, the Commission is invited to pull this item for additional discussion with the concurrence of the Chair. No formal action will be taken as part of this item.

On June 2, 2025, the Commission established an ad hoc subcommittee on unincorporated islands (“the Committee”) and appointed Commissioners Painter and Ramos to advise staff with respect to possible next steps. The Committee met and considered possible future actions related to public outreach and engaging City of Napa officials. For reference, the Commission’s adopted Policy on Unincorporated Islands is included as Attachment 1.

The Committee agreed the islands already, by and large, have access to all essential public services. Any missing services would not be easily accessible following annexation to the City. Over the last 20 years, few landowners and residents within the islands have indicated strong interest in having their properties annexed into the City.

The Committee recommended no foreseeable actions with one key exception involving an update of the Commission’s website page dedicated to island annexation information. Existing information on the website at that time was presented in a confusing and oftentimes misleading manner indicating islands are an inherent problem. The Committee recommended staff update the page to make it more concise, factual, and user-friendly. This has been accomplished and has resulted in a more condensed page available at: <https://napa.lafco.ca.gov/island-annexation>

Beth Painter, Chair
Councilmember, City of Napa

Paul Dohring, Commissioner
Councilmember, City of St. Helena

David Oro, Alternate Commissioner
Councilmember, City of American Canyon

Belia Ramos, Vice Chair
County of Napa Supervisor, 5th District

Anne Cottrell, Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 3rd District

Joelle Gallagher, Alternate Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 1st District

Kenneth Leary, Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Eve Kahn, Alternate Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Brendon Freeman
Executive Officer

In addition, staff prepared an updated map showing the location of the 26 islands within the City of Napa's sphere of influence, included as Attachment 2. Not all 26 of these areas are eligible for the streamlined island annexation proceedings summarized in the Policy. Toward this end, the Policy requires review by the Commission's ad hoc Policy Committee in the foreseeable future with possible amendments forthcoming.

The status of the Committee and its membership will be considered as part of item 9e on today's agenda.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Policy on Unincorporated Islands
- 2) Map of City of Napa Islands



LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF NAPA

Policy on Unincorporated Islands

(Adopted: February 3, 2020)

I. Background

Unincorporated islands (hereinafter “islands”) are areas of unincorporated territory that are completely or substantially surrounded by an incorporated city or town. The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization (CKH) Act of 2000 includes provisions for streamlining the annexation of islands to cities and towns ([California Government Code \(G.C.\) §56375.3](#)). CKH prohibits creation of new islands unless the Commission determines the prohibition would be detrimental to the orderly development of the community and that the area is located such that it could not reasonably be annexed to another city or town, or incorporated as a new city or town ([G.C. §56744](#)). As a condition of annexation to a city or town that includes territory located within an island, the Commission may require that the annexation include the *entire* island ([G.C. §56375\(a\)\(5\)](#)).

II. Purpose

It is the intent of the Commission to establish a policy that clearly defines the characteristics of islands in Napa County to allow for their streamlined annexation to cities and towns. This is consistent with the intent of the California Legislature when it enacted special legislation, originally adopted in 1977 and subsequently expanded, that made it possible for certain islands to be annexed *without* a protest hearing or election. In approving this legislation, the Legislature recognized the following:

- A) Islands continue to represent a serious and unnecessary statewide governmental inefficiency and that this inefficiency would be resolved if these islands were annexed into the appropriate surrounding city or town.
- B) Property owners’ ability to vote on boundary changes is a statutory privilege and not a constitutional right.
- C) Islands are inherently inefficient and that these inefficiencies affect not just residents within islands, but also those residing throughout the city or town and the county.

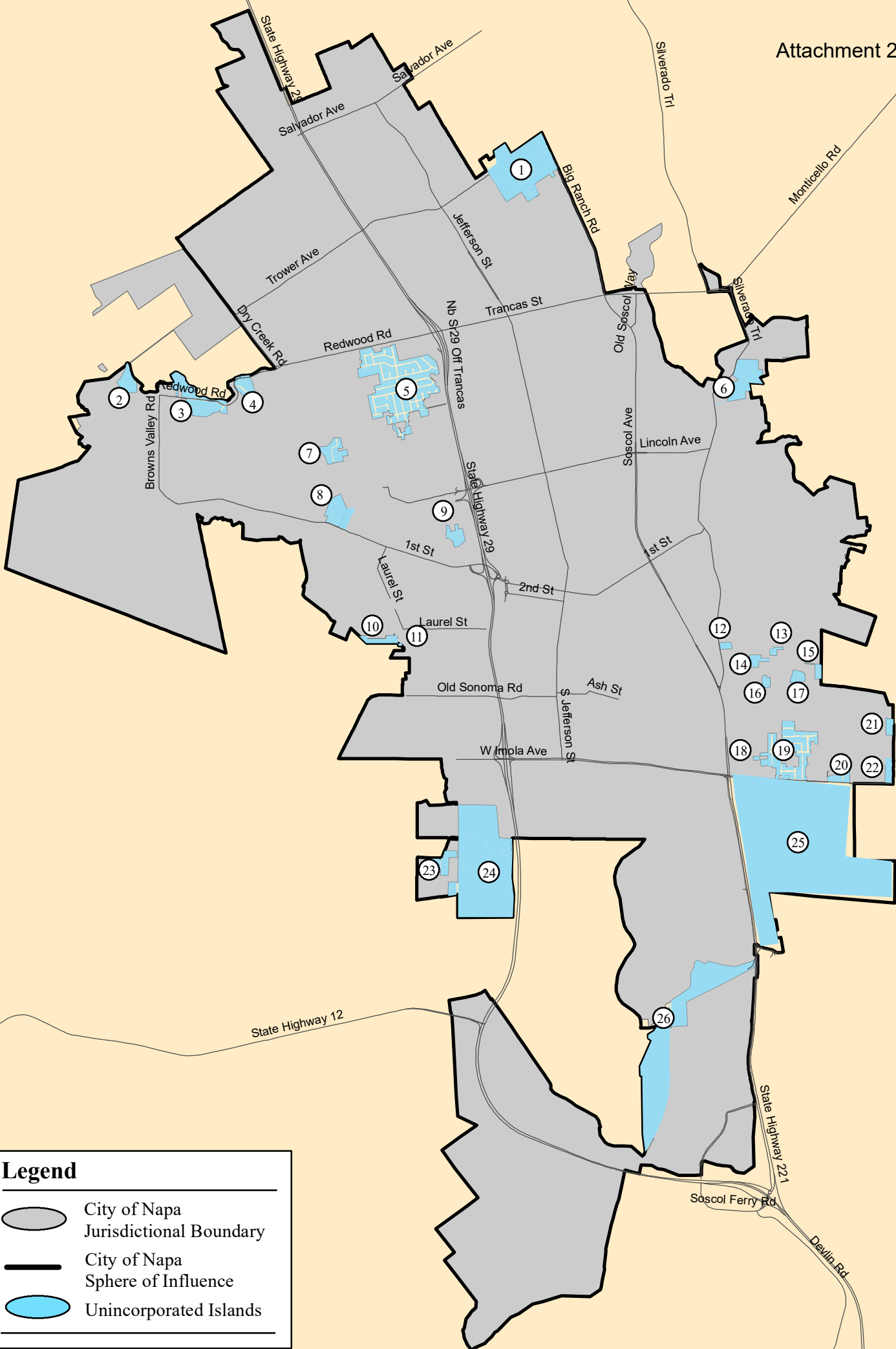
III. Annexation Procedures

In order to utilize the streamlined annexation provisions codified under [G.C. §56375.3](#), a city or town is required to initiate the process by adopting a resolution of application and submit the adopted resolution to the Commission. The Commission shall approve the annexation at a noticed public hearing and waive protest proceedings. The Commission may not disapprove the annexation. A property tax sharing agreement between the County and the affected city or town is required before the Commission may take final action on annexation consistent with [Revenue and Taxation Code §99](#). The Commission encourages any city or town to enter into tax sharing agreements for affected islands prior to adoption of a resolution of application.




IV. Local Policy Definition of “Island”

The Commission defines an “island” in Napa County to include unincorporated territory that meets all of the following criteria:

- A) Located entirely within a city or town’s sphere of influence;
- B) Does not exceed 150 acres in size;
- C) Does not contain prime agricultural land as defined in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act ([G.C. §56064](#));
- D) Does not contain lands subject to Measure P or has a General Plan designation of Agricultural Resource or Agriculture, Watershed and Open Space as reflected in the County of Napa General Plan Land Use Map;
- E) Designated for urban development in the general plan of the annexing city or town;
- F) Surrounded or substantially surrounded by the annexing city or town. Substantially surrounded territory is unincorporated territory with an outer boundary that is 50% or more contiguous to the annexing city or town’s jurisdictional boundary;
- G) The outer boundary is the annexing city or town’s jurisdictional boundary, the annexing city or town’s sphere of influence, and/or property owned by the State of California;
- H) The territory is developed or developing. This determination is based on the availability of public utilities, the presence of public improvements, or the presence of physical improvements on the parcels within the area; and
- I) The territory is currently receiving municipal service benefits from the annexing city or town, or would benefit from the city or town following annexation.



Legend

-  City of Napa Jurisdictional Boundary
-  City of Napa Sphere of Influence
-  Unincorporated Islands

