



TITLE

Hess/Laird Territory Special Study Pre-Zoning

RECOMMENDATION

A Resolution recommending the City Council of the City of American Canyon approve Special Study Pre-Zoning for the Hess/Laird Territory consistent with the General Plan (American Canyon Municipal Code Chapter 19.50)

CONTACT

Brent Cooper, AICP, Community Development Director

Matthew Summers, City Attorney

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

The Hess/Laird property consists of approximately 281 acres and is located outside the City limits in unincorporated Napa County, east of State Route 29 and north of Watson Lane. In March 2026, the property owners initiated an application with the Napa County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to annex their property into the City of American Canyon (Assessor Parcel Numbers 057-090-065 and 057-090-066). A location map of the Hess/Laird property is included as Attachment 2.

The properties surrounding the Hess/Laird territory include:

- North: Unincorporated Napa County Commercial and Agriculture/Open Space lands
- South: Watson Lane and vacant land adjacent to Paoli Loop
- East: Agricultural and rural lands within unincorporated Napa County
- West: State Route 29 and Light Industrial properties within American Canyon

The General Plan contemplated eventual annexation of the Hess/Laird property into the City limits. General Plan Land Use Element Policy LU-11.5 states: "Meet and confer with Napa County and LAFCO to amend the City's Sphere of Influence to include the "Hess and Laird" Properties and other properties at the direction of the City Council." Earlier administrative and financial actions associated with the Hess/Laird properties were approved by the City Council on April 21, 2026. These include a property tax sharing agreement and an urban limit line and regional housing needs allocation agreement with Napa County, governing the property tax sharing and regional housing needs allocation transfers that would occur if and when the proposed Hess Laird annexation is

approved and if and when the City's urban limit line is amended by a General Plan amendment to include the Hess Laird Affected Territory. The City and County approvals of the property tax sharing agreement and urban limit line and regional housing needs allocation agreement are approval of pre-annexation ministerial administrative and financial actions that do not themselves constitute a change to the urban limit line or approval of the proposed annexation of the Hess Laird Affected Territory.

The County previously approved an Industrial zoning designation for the property. However, as part of the annexation process, California law and LAFCO procedures require the City to establish zoning regulations for the property that would take effect upon LAFCO approval of the annexation. Per California law, the zoning must be consistent with the City's General Plan.

The General Plan designates the property as Special Study which is defined as a designation on certain parcels that may be needed for future urban growth, but for which appropriate land use designations have yet to be determined. To maintain consistency with the General Plan, staff recommends that the territory be pre-zoned with the corresponding Special Study (SS) zoning district. A copy of the General Plan land use map, showing the Special Study designation on this property is included as Attachment 3.

The American Canyon Municipal Code Chapter 19.50 describes the SS zoning district as:

- Allow properties to be zoned or pre-zoned until the City has completed appropriate planning studies to determine the types and intensities of land uses through an amendment of the City's General Plan.
- Allow agricultural, grazing, open space, and public uses within the district as interim uses.

A map depicting Special Study zoning on the Hess/Laird property is included as Attachment 1, Exhibit A. A copy of the Special Study zoning regulations is included as Attachment 1, Exhibit B

If recommended by the Planning Commission, the Hess/Laird pre-zoning application will advance to the City Council on September 1, 2026.

COUNCIL PRIORITY PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Organizational Effectiveness: "Deliver exemplary government services."

FISCAL IMPACT

Not applicable due to zoning regulations that allow very limited land use potential.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Affected Territory Special Study General Plan designation was evaluated in the General Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) (SCH# 2022070038). The implementing Special Study Pre-Zoning, and contemplated LAFCO actions are consistent with the General Plan, is a contemplated "Project Approval" under the Program EIR. Therefore, approval of the Pre-Zoning

based on the Certified General Plan Final EIR, which includes the Statement of Overriding Considerations and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, complies with CEQA. The City Council certified the General Plan Final EIR by adoption of Resolution No. 2025-37 on May 20, 2025. A copy of the addendum is included as Exhibit C to Attachment 1.

COMMUNICATION

Level 0: No Further Public Communication Needed

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Resolution Hess Laird Pre-Zoning](#)
2. [Hess Laird Location Map](#)
3. [Hess Laird General Plan Land Use Designation](#)