Thank you for coming today.
I have a 45-minute introductory presentation.
How about if I complete the introduction first, then we can spend the rest of the morning discussing your annexation questions.
How does this sound?
This introduction touches on many annexation-related issues.
If you wish we can hold additional workshops after today focusing on specific aspects of annexation.
Also, I’d be delighted to meet with each of you later to explore your annexation concerns in depth.

NEXT SLIDE
Before getting to the presentation allow me to tell you a bit about who I am.

I run an organization called Community & Environmental Defense Services.

CEDS helps citizens with a variety of issues threatening a neighborhood or the environment.

We are a nationwide network of attorneys, planners, engineers, environmental scientists, and other professionals.

I’m the president of CEDS and serve as the principal strategist.

NEXT SLIDE
I wrote these books.

Of the two, How To Win Land Development issues, is the best.

This book can be downloaded free from our website.

Given my citizen-oriented background you might assume that I’m anti-annexation.

NEXT SLIDE
Annexation

A valuable growth management tool.

Actually, I believe annexation can be one of the best ways for a town or city to grow.

NEXT SLIDE
Through annexation a municipal government can entice development companies to provide concessions which would be illegal through the normal growth management process.

NEXT SLIDE
Possible **Benefits**

- Increased tax base;
- Heightened growth control;
- More jobs - better pay;
- Increased shopping opportunities;
- Larger population – more political influence.

These concessions can translate into the following benefits to those who live within and nearby the town.

**NEXT SLIDE**
Maximizing the benefits of annexation requires very careful analysis and planning, without which approval of a flawed annexation is more likely along with a decline in quality of life.
I believe that Quality of Life impact should be the prime directive for any annexation.

In fact, an annexation should be rejected if an applicant cannot prove that it will have a positive quality of life impact.

NEXT SLIDE
And the best annexation projects can actually enhance existing quality of life for those living in and nearby a town.

NEXT SLIDE
These are the four topic I will cover during the remainder of this presentation.

Again, through these four topics I hope to demonstrate how a Town can attract annexations which will enhance quality of life,

And how citizens can ensure that their Town does not approve a flawed annexation proposal.

NEXT SLIDE
First, I will provide a few examples of how annexation, and all other forms of growth, affect specific quality of life factors.

NEXT SLIDE
In my book, How To Win Land Development Issues, I present these 24 Quality of Life factors. All 24 factors can be affected by growth. Of course we don’t have time today to discuss all of them. Instead I’ll focus on four examples.

NEXT SLIDE
For each example I will provide a very limited comparison of how different land uses affect the factor.

I’ll also give one or two examples of the criteria citizens can use to assess how a land use change may affect their quality of life.

Then I’ll offer an example of a beneficial impact, then a negative.

NEXT SLIDE
The first of the four factors I’ll present is taxes. There seems to be a common belief that as a town grows taxes will decline.

NEXT SLIDE
While growth can stabilize taxes, this graph shows that an increase is more likely.

In this graph I compared the tax rate for 155 Maryland municipalities with the land area of each town.

In GENERAL, as town area increases so do total taxes paid by residents.

The take-home message from this data is this: If you want to keep taxes low, keep your town small.

NEXT SLIDE
Examples of Better Annexation Deals

- New Market
  - 925 houses;
  - $24 million in direct benefits;
  - $25,000 per house.

- Ridgely
  - 440 houses;
  - $6 million in direct benefits;
  - $15,000 per house.

But annexation does provide the potential to derive additional economic benefits from growth.

Here are two of the better annexation deals I’ve come across.

The New Market deal would have netted $25,000 per house in up-front benefits.

Ridgely residents derived $15,000 per house.

It is entirely possible that annexation deals like these might stabilize or even reduce taxes.

But this can only be determined with a comprehensive fiscal impact analysis.

A very informal survey of Maryland municipalities indicates that many do not obtain benefits of the magnitude given in this slide.

By the way, despite the impressive benefits, the voters of New Market rejected the annexation proposal.

They viewed preserving the atmosphere of their small town as being of greater value.

NEXT SLIDE
This slide shows the results of two Cost of Government Services Studies. One was conducted in Cecil County; the other in Wicomico. This slide shows that for every dollar of tax revenue generated, farms consume 81 cents in government services. Commercial land uses 34 cents in services for every dollar of tax revenue generated. The poorest relationship is for residential where the services consumed average $1.19 for every dollar of taxes paid. Generally, residential growth tends to increase taxes for everyone while commercial development generates excess revenue.

NEXT SLIDE
Commercial Annexation

*May* = Lower Taxes

But one cannot necessarily assume that commercial development automatically means lower or even stable taxes.

NEXT SLIDE
Nationally-recognized fiscal impact expert Eben Fodor is preparing a new economic model for San Diego. Initial results from this model and other studies indicate that commercial development may require significantly more government services than previously thought.

Also, a New Hampshire study showed that commercial growth can increase property taxes by driving up the value of existing homes.

It is for these reasons that citizens should demand a comprehensive fiscal impact analysis to determine how annexation may impact their tax rates.

NEXT SLIDE
Now let’s turn to the second of the four factors – Traffic.

Rural residents expect low traffic volume and minimal congestion on their roads.

NEXT SLIDE
Each new single-family home adds about ten vehicle trips a day to local roads.

NEXT SLIDE
Each acre of commercial development adds an average of 500 trips per day.

But the commercial trip generation rate extends over a considerable range:

For example, a nursery generates 90 daily trips per acre while a fast-food restaurant generates 3,000 trips per acre.

NEXT SLIDE
How Much Is Too Much Traffic?

Conventional traffic impact analyses are usually limited to intersections and frequently just those with traffic lights.

The evaluation is then further limited to answering just one question: Will the added traffic cause rush-hour congestion to go from moderate to severe.

This conventional analysis ignores some very critical quality of life impacts.

NEXT SLIDE
As traffic volume increases on residential streets, the safety of our children declines.

With increasing traffic volume also comes an increase in noise and air pollution.

Combined, these traffic effects can lower the value of homes located along residential streets.

It is exceedingly rare to see a traffic study which fully evaluates these impacts.

Generally, quality of life will be preserved if residential street volume does not exceed 1,000 trips per day.

NEXT SLIDE
Part of the attraction of living in a rural area is freedom from congestion and delay.

Many rural residents must travel long stretches of road for shopping or getting to work.

A conventional traffic impact study would ignore congestion on rural roads such as this.

NEXT SLIDE
A congestion problem would only be recognized if traffic volume reached the 14,500 trips per day needed to cause excessive delay at a signalized intersection.

NEXT SLIDE
But those driving rural roads may begin experiencing excessive delay at a traffic volume of 2,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day.

This is one-seventh to a third of the volume causing undue congestion in the urban setting.

NEXT SLIDE
Following is an example of how annexation can be used to preserve and even enhance existing traffic conditions.

Then I’ll offer an example of a negative traffic impact.

NEXT SLIDE
On many residential streets existing traffic volume and speeds are a concern.

Quality of life could be improved for those living along these streets if speed humps or pedestrian refuge islands were added.

Those wishing to have their land annexed into a Town could be asked to cover the cost of installing these traffic calming measures.

This could result in a net improvement in quality of life, at least with respect to traffic.

NEXT SLIDE
The red arrow in this slide points to an existing residential street that dead-ends.
The residents of the 14 townhomes on this street presently enjoy many benefits.
They can hold community events on the street.
They are pretty much free of traffic noise and pollution.
Its pretty safe for their children to play in the street.
NEXT SLIDE
In this slide the dead-end street has been extended into a through road.

This was proposed as part of an actual project in Baltimore County.

We successfully helped the residents of the dead-end street protect their quality of life from the impact of creating a through-road.

Had this success not been achieved, traffic volume on the street would have increased five-fold along with a considerable increase in speed.

Again, impacts such as these are not considered in most conventional traffic impact studies.

But there is no reason why citizens cannot insist upon a more comprehensive study, particularly in the context of an annexation.

NEXT SLIDE
Now we’ll move onto the third quality of life factor addressed in these examples: Schools.

NEXT SLIDE
It is rather easy to assess the impact of annexation on local schools.
First one estimates the number of additional students.
This slide shows each new single-family home adds 0.11 to 0.21 students to local schools.

NEXT SLIDE
Student generation rates can vary considerably by house type, as shown in this slide. The rates also vary from area to area. In fact my home County computes separate pupil generation rates for 15 separate areas within the county.

NEXT SLIDE
A popular myth is that age-restricted housing does not add to school enrollment.

This isn’t true, particularly when indirect effects are considered.

Some studies show that new age-restricted housing will add to enrollment by making older, cheaper homes in the area available to young families.

This is called the echo effect.

With the echo effect each new age-restricted home adds 35% of the students generated by unrestricted housing.

NEXT SLIDE
Now for a couple of criteria for evaluating the impact of additional students on local schools. The National Education Association recommends a ratio of no more than 15 students for each teacher. This is particularly important for grades Kindergarten to third.

NEXT SLIDE
School size is a second criteria.

For our children to get a good education it also helps to keep schools relatively small.

Elementary schools do best when total enrollment ranges from 300-400 students

For middle and high schools the recommended range is 900-1200 students.

NEXT SLIDE
Annexation could have a positive quality of life effect by attracting families to a community that has been experiencing declining school enrollment.

In some cases the influx of students may keep a local school open which would otherwise close due to low enrollment.

NEXT SLIDE
Unfortunately, over-crowded classrooms and schools is a more common effect of growth. To prevent this from happening, annexation decisions must be postponed until a thorough school-impact analysis is completed.

NEXT SLIDE
The last quality of life factor I’d like to touch on is water quality.
There’s a direct relationship between land use and the quality of wetlands, streams, lakes, tidal waters, and even ground water.

Generally, water quality declines as the land draining to waterway transitions from forest to farm to developed.
The impact of developed land uses is directly related to impervious areas.

Impervious area prevents rain from soaking into the earth.

Rainwater washes large volumes of pollution from impervious surfaces and into nearby waters.

Impervious areas include rooftops, streets, sidewalks, and parking lots.

NEXT SLIDE
A watershed is all the land area which contributes flow to a wetland, stream, tidal creek or other water body.

Aquatic resources begin to decline when the extent of impervious surfaces in a watershed reaches certain thresholds.

NEXT SLIDE
Highly sensitive aquatic resources, like trout streams, begin to decline when development covers more than 2% to 4% of a watershed with impervious surfaces.

This equals about one house for every ten acres. And yes, there are trout streams on the eastern shore; six in fact.

NEXT SLIDE
Other aquatic resources begin to decline at a density of one house per four acres or 8% impervious area.

One study indicated that shellfish waters are degraded when there is one septic system for every seven acres of watershed area.

These thresholds can be used as criteria to assess the impact of an annexation proposal upon aquatic resources.

NEXT SLIDE
Another common myth is that ponds, bioretention, and other stormwater measures will eliminate aquatic resource impacts. If only this were true. Unfortunately it is not. It is also untrue for other approaches such as environmentally sensitive design, low-impact development, etc. We simply lack the technology and maintenance programs to develop without causing some aquatic resource degradation. This is not an argument for No-Growth. Instead, it is call for planning development so aquatic resource damage is minimized.

NEXT SLIDE
But new development can actually improve water quality.

For example, most existing neighborhoods were built without runoff pollution control measures. Occasionally it is possible to capture runoff from the older community and treat it with measures serving proposed development.

NEXT SLIDE
But, again, I don’t want to mislead you into thinking that water quality impacts can be eliminated.

In fact, some water quality degradation is unavoidable when a watershed is transformed from forest to farm to developed.

The level of degradation could be high if control measures are not maintained as described in this January 3rd Washington Post article.

This article presents the results of a study I conducted in Saint Mary’s County where we found three of four measures were so poorly maintained that no water quality protection was provided.

Therefore it is critical that water quality impacts be fully assessed prior to approving an annexation proposal.
Now onto the second of the four presentation topics.

The annexation process.

NEXT SLIDE
This chart is from the Municipal Annexation Handbook prepared by the Maryland Municipal League.

This great resource outlines the process by which land can be annexed from a County into a city or town.

NEXT SLIDE
To be eligible for annexation a property must be contiguous to the existing municipal boundary. County land cannot separate the property to be annexed from the municipal boundary.

NEXT SLIDE
An annexation can be initiated in two ways.

First by petition.

The petition must be signed by a minimum of 25% of the voters and 25% of those who own property within area to be annexed.

Second, a Town may initiate annexation but needs the consent of 25% of the voters-property owners within the area to be annexed.

NEXT SLIDE
Annexation Resolution

- Area to be annexed;
- Anticipated land uses;
- Public facilities needed; and
- Public facility financing.

After the municipality verifies that the petition contains the signatures of 25% of voters-property owners, then a resolution is prepared containing the four items of information shown in this slide.

NEXT SLIDE
A public hearing may then be held by the municipal council on the petition. This hearing can take place a very short time following receipt of a petition. State law does not require review by the local planning commission prior to the Council hearing.
The town council can reject an annexation request for any reason or even for no reason at all. This decision will not be overturned by the courts. By the same token, a town council can also approve an annexation and leave citizens with little likelihood of a successful legal challenge.
Fortunately State law does provide citizens with recourse if their Town council approves a poorly-conceived or poorly-evaluated annexation.

This recourse is to petition the Council action to a referendum.

There are two ways of initiating a referendum.

But both ways require swift action on the part of citizens and/or the County legislative body.

Getting signatures from 20% of the voters is the first challenge.

The next challenge is frequently more difficult; convincing a majority of voters to vote against a flawed annexation.

NEXT SLIDE
Two other annexation documents are also common.

The annexation agreement is a contract between the town and the owners or developers of land to be annexed.

The agreement is used to overcome obstacles to potential annexations by exacting concessions from the parties involved.

This agreement normally sets out the terms and conditions under which an annexation is to occur as well as any special obligations of the parties.

The Town council would only then move to approve an annexation once they are satisfied with the agreement.

The DRRA is a more detailed contract between a local government and the property owner or developer.

The DRRA is executed after the annexation is approved and sets forth the details needed to implement the broad provisions of the annexation agreement.

NEXT SLIDE
In 2006, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB1141 which will improve pre-annexation planning.

If an annexation conflicts with the County land use plan then the project is put on hold for five years. The comprehensive plan must contain an annexation plan and a municipal growth element.
The Municipal Growth Element must be adopted by October 2009.
The element must address the ten factors listed in this slide.

NEXT SLIDE
Other Changes

- Water Resources Element;
- Priority Preservation Area Element (HB2); and
- Sensitive Areas Element: Farm & Forestlands.

HB1141 and other 2006 legislation required additional improvements in planning as well.

NEXT SLIDE
Now for the third of the four topics.
Getting more of the benefits of annexation with fewer growing pains.

NEXT SLIDE
To Annex or Not?

Quality of Life Impact Analysis

The answer to this question depends upon another.

Will the annexation have a net positive effect upon quality of life?

The best way to answer this second question is through a Quality of Life Impact Analysis.

NEXT SLIDE
Again, this analysis should be done from the perspective of the citizens who presently reside within and near a town.

NEXT SLIDE
QoL Impact Analysis

- Resident preferences;
- Criteria; and
- Scenarios.

These are the three components to the Quality of Life impact analysis.

The goal of the analysis is to determine which of many possible growth scenarios would be most effective in preserving and enhancing existing quality of life.

NEXT SLIDE
The first step is to learn what residents cherish most and like the least about their town.

NEXT SLIDE
This information on resident preferences is best gathered through questionnaires and interviews followed up by meetings at the street or neighborhood level.

NEXT SLIDE
The way in which residents perceive growth impacts varies depending upon the context.

For example in this slide I have drawn a red line around an existing neighborhood.

Several cropfields adjoin the neighborhood.

If you asked residents about annexing these cropfields versus annexation in general you’d likely get very different responses.

This is why it is important to urge residents to consider the pros and cons of growth at the neighborhood scale...

NEXT SLIDE
the Town scale ...

NEXT SLIDE
Then at the regional scale.

NEXT SLIDE
 Returning to the survey of resident preferences.  
The survey should begin by asking residents what they like best and least about their neighborhood.  

NEXT SLIDE
Next, residents should be provided with the current zoning for each of the adjoining cropfields. The residents should be asked to review a list of land uses permitted on the cropfields with current zoning.

From this exercise a list of acceptable and unacceptable uses would be compiled.

Finally, residents would be queried on what uses they would most like to see made of each cropfield.

NEXT SLIDE
Neighborhood residents should be asked to identify what problems they presently experience. This question would lead to a discussion of how residents think development of the cropfields might serve to resolve each problem. The discussion would then turn to whether the benefits derived from these improvements outweigh the benefits derived from the existing cropfields.

NEXT SLIDE
The neighborhood residents would then be asked to consider many of these same questions, but at the Town scale ...
Then at the regional scale.

NEXT SLIDE
With a clear understanding of resident preferences, criteria are then drafted to evaluate how possible growth scenarios would impact each quality of life factor.

NEXT SLIDE
Good Criteria

- Directly relate to resident preferences;
- Scientifically valid;
- Sounds reasonable; and
- Easy to apply.

Good Quality of Life Impact evaluation criteria would meet these four requisites.

NEXT SLIDE
Earlier in this presentation I touched on several examples of good evaluation criteria. Four of these examples are presented in this slide.

NEXT SLIDE
The next step in the quality of life impact analysis is to identify realistic scenarios for how a town could grow.

NEXT SLIDE
The scenarios must be credible and should begin with those most likely to preserve and enhance quality of life.

The first scenario should be development of vacant, infill parcels located within existing town boundaries.

Next, consideration should be given to redeveloping abandoned shopping centers, warehouses, and homes within existing municipal boundaries.

Once all infill and redevelopment opportunities are identified, move onto vacant lands adjoining Town boundaries.

If any new roads are proposed then the impact of induced growth should be considered.

Finally, include a scenario for any new big-box stores or other major development projects rumored for the area.

**NEXT SLIDE**
The criteria would then be applied to each scenario to assess impacts to each quality of life factor.

NEXT SLIDE
This slide depicts three possible growth scenarios.

Scenario A is redevelopment while B and C involve annexation.

NEXT SLIDE
**Scenario Examples**

A. Redevelopment: 10 ac. commercial;
B. Annexation: 10 ac. 80 residences;
C. Annexation: 55 ac. 500 residences.

Here is a very brief and incomplete description of each of the three scenarios.
But this is enough of a description for the following illustration of the impact analysis.

**NEXT SLIDE**
This and the next two slides will apply two of several school impact criteria to the three growth scenarios.

This slide shows the number of students added to the three schools serving the town.

Scenario A is commercial so does not add any students.

Scenarios B and C are both residential which do increase student enrollment.

**NEXT SLIDE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We'll focus on the elementary school for this analysis.

The elementary school was designed for 400 students. Enrollment is presently 365 students and several recently approved, but unbuilt, projects would add another 15. This brings projected enrollment up to 380 students or 90% of capacity.

Scenario A, the commercial redevelopment project, has no impact on schools.

The 80 houses built under annexation Scenario B raises enrollment to 99% of capacity.

Growth should not be allowed to cause a school to exceed 100% of capacity.

Scenario C sends enrollment to 121%, which is way beyond the upper limit Town residents should deem acceptable.

NEXT SLIDE
The school impact analysis should also examine the effect on class size.

The goal should be to keep class size to the 1:15, teacher to student ratio recommended by the NEA.

This goal should be achieved without adding portable classrooms or sacrificing art, music, or other specialized classrooms.

The elementary school has 20 classrooms, in addition to the specialized rooms.

The teacher to student ratio is presently projected to be 19.
Scenario A would not change the ratio.
Scenario B increases average classroom size to nearly 20.
Scenario C causes average class size to swell to 24.3 students.
Clearly Scenario C is the least acceptable unless some provisions are made to resolve this impact.

**NEXT SLIDE**
The analysis should then move onto to first, other school impact issues, then all of the other quality of life factors Town residents identified among their preferences.

A complete quality of life analysis would allow residents to quickly understand how each growth scenario impacts each of the quality of life factors they deem important.

From this analysis it would then be possible for residences to grasp the cumulative impact of each growth scenario.

This understanding should create an atmosphere allowing residents to reach a broad consensus on how their Town should grow.

I strongly suspect that this approach would make it far easier for Town officials to attract beneficial annexation proposals.

I also suspect such a consensus view would relieve the Town of having to deal with poorly conceived proposals.

NEXT SLIDE
If you are looking around for a good **partial** example of the preceding analysis, then I suggest checking out this document.

You can download this plan from the Town of Vienna website, which appears in red on this slide.

While this is a great plan, it covers only a portion of a complete quality of life impact analysis.

I urge you to demand a thorough analysis before your town proceeds with an annexation proposal.

**NEXT SLIDE**
But if the Town council insists upon rushing forward with annexation, then this last of the four topics will show you what to do.

NEXT SLIDE
There are three components of a strategy to stop a bad annexation proposal.

The first is technical. I urge you to do at least some analysis to verify that an annexation is, in fact, dumb growth or that the necessary studies have not been completed objectively.

The goal of political action is to convince a majority of Council members that Town voters overwhelmingly support your position.

Though it is unlikely that legal action will stop a bad annexation, litigation is occasionally warranted.

NEXT SLIDE
Most Citizen Victories are...

- 90% Political;
- 5% Technical; and
- 5% Legal.

Please keep in mind that most citizens campaigns targeting bad annexation proposals succeed in a political arena.

Generally, 90% of your volunteer hours should go into political organizing, although 90% of your expenses will likely be lawyer fees.

NEXT SLIDE
Citizens have the advantage in a political arena, while the applicant is better equipped to fight and win a protracted legal battle.

This is why most successful citizen campaigns focused on political action.

NEXT SLIDE
Earlier in this presentation I explained that it is very difficult to overturn an annexation once approved by the Town council.

Therefore, I strongly urge you to act BEFORE the Town council holds a hearing on an annexation proposal.

NEXT SLIDE
The moment you first hear rumors of a possible annexation you **MUST** begin organizing.

Contact your representative on the Council.

Ask if the annexation rumor is true.

If yes, then urge them to thoroughly evaluate the proposal in a process that includes Town residents.

If necessary, remind them that you and other residents have a right to know how a proposed annexation will impact your quality of life **BEFORE** it is approved.

**NEXT SLIDE**
Demand Thorough Study First

- Fiscal impact analysis;
- Traffic impact analysis;
- School impact analysis;
- Needs analysis; and
- Others focusing on resident preferences.

Demand that these and other quality of life impact studies be completed BEFORE the Council holds their hearing.

NEXT SLIDE
If the Council does direct that studies be completed, then become actively involved in study design, execution, and interpretation of results.

To the maximum extent possible, verify the data supporting each study with your own measurements.

You will find lots of advice on this topic in our book How To Win Land Development Issues.

NEXT SLIDE
State law does not require planning commission review of a proposed annexation.

A number of local laws are also silent on this point.

You should insist that the Town council request planning commission review prior to formal action on an annexation request.

NEXT SLIDE
You may have as little as 60 days from the date you first learn of an impending annexation until it becomes a *fait accompli*.

You cannot afford to wait in hopes things you will get better.

NEXT SLIDE
These are some of the more common signs that a Town Council has been wooed into rushing an annexation through the process.

When any of these troubling signs appear you must immediately begin aggressively organizing your neighbors.

**NEXT SLIDE**
Organizing Goal

Win support of 20% of voters.

Your first goal must be to prepare for a referendum should the Council approve the annexation without thorough study.

To do this you must convince a minimum of 20% of the registered voters to support your effort.

20% of course is the minimum number of voters needed to bring an annexation proposal to referendum.

NEXT SLIDE
Organizing Steps

• Frequent voters;
• Initial education;
• Initial poll;
• Expanded education; then
• Community meeting.

These are the five steps involved in first winning the support of 20% of the voters, then a majority of all Town residents.

NEXT SLIDE
About 10% to 20% of all voters will have participated in most or all of the last four elections. These frequent voters are the folks most likely to come out for a referendum, particularly when it doesn’t coincide with a presidential election. Frequent voters also tend to be the most active residents of a community and the most responsive to a well-reasoned message. For these and other reasons get the registered voters file for your town. then focus your initial efforts on the frequent voters.

NEXT SLIDE
After identifying the frequent voters, draft a letter focusing on the top three reasons why the annexation should not be approved. Close the letter by letting the voter know you will call to answer questions and to ask whether they would sign a referendum petition, if necessary.

NEXT SLIDE
Follow-up on the letter through a phone or door-to-door canvass to learn how each voter perceives the annexation and what issues motivate them the most.

Ask if they would be willing to sign a petition if a referendum is needed.

NEXT SLIDE
Town Council

• Present poll results to Council; and
• Ask for specific, public commitment to:
  • Postpone action until studies completed; and
  • Planning Commission makes recommendation.

If the initial education effort shows that many frequent voters share your concern then present your findings to the Council along with the following request.

Ask the Council for a specific, public commitment to:

  Postpone action until all necessary studies are completed; and
  the Planning Commission makes a recommendation based on these studies and their own public hearing.

NEXT SLIDE
If the Council makes a firm commitment then continue monitoring the process to ensure annexation approval does not creep by.

NEXT SLIDE
If the Council refuse to commit to a responsible course of action then...

NEXT SLIDE
Expand the education effort to all other voters in the town.

Use the results from the frequent voter poll to refine your message so you can maximize support.

NEXT SLIDE
As more and more voters demonstrate support for your position find new ways of communicating this message to the Council.

Increase the pressure on the Council to do the right thing by escalating to these more aggressive tactics.

By the way, recall is actually an example of a nuclear option.

But I need to keep the other nuclear options to myself.

NEXT SLIDE
Does this approach really work?
Can it actually stop a bad annexation proposal?
Well, with us today are some of the leaders of Aberdeen Communities Together.
These folks not defeated three flawed annexation proposals in Aberdeen.
They then replaced the pro-annexation mayor and Town council members with candidates committed to responsible growth management.
I believe the strategy I just outlined resembles that employed by Aberdeen Communities Together.
Chuck: Is that correct?
NEXT SLIDE
Residents of New Market employed a similar strategy to defeat an annexation with great economic benefits.

But in the end they valued the small town atmosphere more.

NEXT SLIDE
The controversial 164-acre Zeltman annexation was voted down, with 1,413 votes against the proposal and 560 in favor.

Like the folks in Aberdeen, Mount Airy residents rejected an annexation.

They also replaced pro-annexation incumbents with responsible growth management candidates.

NEXT SLIDE
Denton council takes stand against request for annexation for homes on Sharp Road
By JOHN EVANS
Caroline Editor
August 17, 2007

DENTON — Right war, wrong battlefield? But a point made against annexation.
That might be the impression many came away with from the Denton town meeting Aug. 6, after the town council said no to a request for the annexation of a small enclave of residential properties along Sharp Road. The request was made by developer Chris Coyle on behalf of seven property owners.

"Irrespective of the legal merits of this, our town has already annexed so much, at this particular time we're not in favor of any further annexation," said Councilman Robert Clendaniel. "(The town) has already bitten off quite a bit. We need to take care of that. While I have sympathy for the folks who want to come in, I am not in favor of it. This is not about your development ... it's about what I can afford to pay to buy a home in town, about having our kids go to school in trailers, about losing a quality of life, about tax rates going through the roof."

It is my hope that this workshop moves us closer to reaping the benefits that annexation can provide,
without making the sacrifices Denton Councilman Clendaniel talked about during the interview for this newspaper article.

NEXT SLIDE
Thank you.