# Pickens to grow along U.S. 178

## Annexation creates path to new high school

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Five more parcels have received initial approval for annexation into Pickens city limits as officials work to make police jurisdiction as seamless as possible and guide development along a stretch of U.S. 178.

The vote to annex the additional property comes after Pickens City Council recently gave final approval to annex nine other parcels along U.S. 178 north of Pickens, including the future site of Pickens High School, a few homes and vacant lots.

City Administrator Katherine Brackett said the city usually just has a few annexations a year.

"It's good for the city to grow our limits and just incorporate more people, but this is definitely out of the ordinary," Brackett said.

Pickens City Council voted on first reading to annex five parcels, most of which are vacant, along U.S. 178, Brackett said. The annexations require a second vote.

"That should be the complete left-hand side of the road all the way up to the school," she said. "That just helps us with police jurisdiction."

Brackett said it can be a public safety issue if there are holes in the city's annexations with questions over jurisdiction.

City Councilman Connie Bowers said the new properties help create "a pathway to the new high school, giving us access pretty much all the way up to the high school."

He said the new sewer line could help open up the area for some development as well.

According to Brackett, the city has plans to put in sewer and water lines along U.S. 178.

She has said she would like to see that strip of U.S. 178 develop and said the city's board of architectural review can help control the way the corridor develops, dealing with elements such as signage and beautification.

Public hearings and the council's expected final vote on the property annexation are planned for Nov. 2, Brackett said.

She said there are also about two pieces of property the city hopes to annex on the right-hand side of U.S. 178 to help with jurisdiction at the intersection with Blue Ridge Drive.