

THE POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY OF ANNEXATION--ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

by

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(ABSTRACT)

The evolution and relative importance of four issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and planning, financial considerations, and race-related considerations--were examined and analyzed as critical factors in Roanoke, Virginia's historic use of annexation. Particular attention was paid to the 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexation suits because they occurred during the period of increasing county opposition to annexation.

An historical and political geographic methodology, which focused on Guelke's idealism, was used to analyze the role of the two principal actors, city and county officials as public personae, whose actions on the four issues constituted the scenario for the city's thirteen annexation suits.

Civic boosterism and community autonomy played the initial role motivating the two principal actors in each suit. Expanding population, urbanization, and the statutory changes in Virginia's annexation laws in 1904 increased the im-

portance of public services and planning and financial considerations. Race-related considerations, however, were publicly ignored until the late 1960s after passage of the civic rights legislation.

Rising county opposition resulted in passage of numerous bills permitting counties to provide services and other government functions comparable to those offered by cities. This gave Roanoke County officials and their constituents an alternative to annexation. As a consequence, Roanoke County increasingly opposed the city's annexation plans. In 1980 Roanoke County gained immunity from further annexations.

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family and my good friend  
for their love, friendship, and un-  
derstanding. Without their patience and support I could not  
have achieved this goal.

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## Chapter I

### ANNEXATION AS A GEOPOLITICAL CONCEPT

Municipal annexation is the legal extension or enlargement of the boundaries of a city or town, into the adjacent territory of a less populated and subordinate political unit.<sup>1</sup> The most important geopolitical procedure for municipal territorial expansion<sup>2</sup> and urban political integration,<sup>3</sup> annexation permits the city to acquire vacant and developed suburban areas, increase its population, and add industrial and commercial properties to the tax base.<sup>4</sup>

Annexation has facilitated the growth of many American central cities.<sup>5</sup> City officials have viewed annexation as a

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<sup>1</sup> National League of Cities, Adjusting Municipal Boundaries: Law and Practice (Washington: National League of Cities, 1966), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> I. M. Barlow, Spatial Dimensions of Urban Government. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 1981), p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas R. Dye, "Urban Political Integration: Conditions Associated with Annexation in American Cities," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 8:4 (November 1964), p. 431.

<sup>4</sup> Luther H. Gulick, The Metropolitan Problem and American Ideas. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), p. 51; Frank S. Sengstock, Annexation: A Solution to the Metropolitan Area Problem, (Ann Arbor: Michigan Legal Publications, 1960), pp. 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> R. D. McKenzie, The Metropolitan Community, (New York: Russell & Russell, 1933), pp. 191-93. "Central city" here denotes the largest and most important urban unit, and whose development is responsible for most of the surrounding peripheral development.

solution for specific problems confronting their city and the larger urban area. Such problems include provision of public services in outlying areas, recapturing a tax base, and racial discord. Although annexation can alleviate city problems, suburban<sup>6</sup> residents often oppose annexation. The resulting geopolitical conflict is a major reason many cities no longer annex.<sup>7</sup> Annexations have become rare in the Northeast and Midwest but remain widespread in the South and West.

Annexation has played a significant role in the political geography of Roanoke, Virginia. Since its incorporation in 1874, Roanoke has attempted thirteen annexations, twelve of which were successful. Early annexations proceeded smoothly, but suburban opposition increased following the city's 1925 annexation. By 1980, suburbanites opposed to Roanoke's annexations had secured immunity from further annexations. The annexations of 1943, 1949, and 1962 reflect this changing attitude.

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<sup>6</sup> "Suburban" here denotes those communities, both incorporated and unincorporated, outside the central city's corporate boundaries.

<sup>7</sup> Duane Lockard, The Politics of State and Local Government, 2nd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1969), p. 487.

## 1.1 NINETEENTH CENTURY URBANIZATION AND ANNEXATION

Although many cities such as Roanoke either can no longer annex suburban territory or face strong opposition when they attempt to annex, annexations have, historically, played an important role in city growth in the United States from the nineteenth century onward. Increasing population growth and transportation improvements in the nineteenth century enabled city workers to commute increasingly greater distances to their city jobs. Urbanization, consequently, spread outward from the cities, starting new suburbs and engulfing existing satellite communities.<sup>8</sup> Most American cities, including Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Newark, New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh, periodically annexed suburban development in response to the centrifugal spread of urbanization.<sup>9</sup> Annexations allowed each city to dominate a politically unified urban region.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Harold M. Mayer, "The Spatial Expression of Urban Growth," (Washington, D. C: Association of American Geographers, Commission on College Geography, Resource Paper No. 7, 1969), pp. 41-42.

<sup>9</sup> Edward W. Soja, "The Political Organization of Space," (Washington, D. C: Association of American Geographers, Commission on College Geography, Resource Paper No. 8, 1971), p. 46; R. D. McKenzie, pp. 191-93.

<sup>10</sup> Victor Jones, Metropolitan Government, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 123; R. D. McKenzie, pp. 191-93; Thomas H. Reed, "Progress in Metropolitan Integration," Public Administration Review, 9 (1949), p. 1; Thomas Muller, The Economic Effects of Annexation: A Second Case Study of Richmond, Virginia. (Washington: The

The political methods used to achieve or restrict annexation paralleled the changing attitudes towards annexation. Until the end of the nineteenth century, special state legislative action was needed to effect boundary expansions.<sup>11</sup> Through special legislation, annexation was adapted to each city's particular situation.<sup>12</sup> Suburban residents supported annexation because they wanted city services, such as modern sanitation and paved streets. Annexation allowed local governments--cities, towns, townships, and counties--to adapt reasonably well to the diverse needs of the urban and rural populations. Cities and towns annexed the urbanizing fringe while the predominantly rural areas remained under county or township administration.<sup>13</sup>

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Urban Institute, 1976), p. 3; Edward W. Soja, p. 46; David R. Berman, State and Local Politics, 2nd ed., (Boston: Holbrook Press, 1978), p. 193; Raymond E. Murphy, The American City, An Urban Geography, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974), p. 515. David G. Bromley and Joel Smith, "The Historical Significance of Annexation as a Social Progress," Land Economics, 49:3 (1973), p. 307.

<sup>11</sup> Edward W. Soja, p. 46; David R. Berman, p. 193; Raymond E. Murphy, p. 515.

<sup>12</sup> William O. Winter, The Urban Polity. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1969), p. 124.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas H. Reed, "A Call for Plain Talk," National Civic Review, 51:3 (March 1962), p. 121.

Despite early successes, municipalities faced increasing suburban and rural opposition to annexation in the final decades of the nineteenth century. Many suburban residents and farmers wanted to preserve their community's autonomy and to avoid city taxes.<sup>14</sup> Farmers feared that city taxes and planning and zoning codes would interfere with their farming and/or development schemes.<sup>15</sup> These groups formed alliances in many state legislatures to restrict annexation statutes. The restrictions included referenda for proposed annexations or limited annexation petition to property owners, whose land faced higher taxes.<sup>16</sup>

While some states restricted annexation, municipal incorporation statutes usually remained liberal with few restrictions and low minimum population requirements. Incorporation permitted even very small communities to gain political autonomy that cities enjoyed, often including annexation im-

<sup>14</sup> Duane Lockard, p. 487; Kevin R. Cox, Conflict, Power, and Politics in the City: A Geographic View, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), p. 26; Roscoe C. Martin, "Government Adaptation to Metropolitan Growth," in Politics in the Metropolis, 2nd ed. Thomas R. Dye and Brett W. Hawkins eds. (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1971), p. 487, John C. Bollens and Henry J. Schmandt, The Metropolis, Its People, Politics, and Economic Life, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 241.

<sup>15</sup> Victor Jones, p. 325.

<sup>16</sup> David Berman, p. 193; Kevin R. Cox, Location and Public Problems, (Chicago: Maaroufa Press, Inc., 1979), pp. 316-17; J. C. Bollens and H. J. Schmandt, p. 241.

munity. Suburban communities using liberal incorporation statutes to avoid annexation, contributed to the dramatic increase in the number of small municipalities.<sup>17</sup> Local and state politicians facilitated these incorporations because additional jurisdictions added jobs and increased local revenues.<sup>18</sup>

Despite continuing peripheral growth, cities annexed their suburbs less and less frequently. Increasing suburban independence and political autonomy strengthened annexation resistance. The distance of newer suburbs to the city also made annexation less practical.<sup>19</sup> Most of the older northeastern and midwestern cities became completely encircled by small, incorporated suburbs that they were unable to annex.<sup>20</sup> The "Balkanized" metropolitan region circumscribed the city's once dominant authority to solve regional problems.<sup>21</sup> Political fragmentation became endemic to most metropolitan regions.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Luther Gulick, p. 52; Roscoe C. Martin, p. 487; Raymond E. Murphy, pp. 506-07; Edward W. Soja, p. 46.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas H. Reed (1962), p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> Duane Lockard, pp. 487-88.

<sup>20</sup> Kevin Cox (1979), pp. 311 and 316; Harold Mayer, pp. 4-5.

<sup>21</sup> William O. Winter, State and Local Government in a Decentralized Republic, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981), p. 78; I. M. Barlow, p. 19; R. D. Mckenzie, p. 303.



## 1.2 TWENTIETH CENTURY URBANIZATION AND ANNEXATION

In the twentieth century, urban growth was more than a gradual expansion of the city's built-up area. It created vast, low-density development and a more spatially dispersed urban region. Urban growth also tended to coalesce around small, autonomous satellite and suburban communities whose growth did not always parallel the central city's growth.<sup>23</sup> At first these suburbs were primarily residential, but later commercial and industrial development followed.<sup>24</sup> Technological advances, suburban industrial growth, the easy availability of home mortgages, and the appeal of suburbia, all contributed to the increasing suburbanization and political independence of urban areas.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Amos H. Hawley and Basil G. Zimmer, "Resistance to Unification in a Metropolitan Community," in Politics and Geographic Relationships, Toward a New Focus, W. A. Douglas Jackson and Marwyn S. Samuels eds. (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 416; Brett W. Hawkins and Thomas J. Dye, "Metropolitan Political Fragmentation: A Research Note," Midwest Review of Public Administration, 4:1 (February 1970), p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Duane Lockard, p. 487. Donald J. Bogue, "The Geography of Recent Population Trends in the United States," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 44:2 (June 1954), pp. 127-29; William O. Winter (1981), p. 76; Frank S. Sengstock, p. 1; R. D. McKenzie, p. 173.

<sup>24</sup> A. H. Hawley and B. G. Zimmer, p. 416.

<sup>25</sup> J. C. Bollens and H. J. Schmandt, pp. 240-41; Jean Gottmann, "The Growing City as a Political Process," South-eastern Geographer, 9:2 (November 1969), pp. 6-7; R. D. McKenzie, p. 187; Thomas H. Reed (1949), p. 1; Thomas W. Reed (1962), p. 121; Leo F. Schnore, "The Socio-Economic

Because of growing opposition and the statutory changes and restrictions, annexation has had an uneven history in the twentieth century. Annexations were less common from about 1900 when states adopted more restrictive annexation statutes. In the 1930's the Great Depression created a financial obstacle to annexation; then World War II provided a further drain on financial and other resources. Annexation did not become common again until 1945.<sup>26</sup>

In the first two decades of this century, 1900-1920, cities grew faster than suburban areas, but by 1930, suburban growth surpassed city growth.<sup>27</sup> Suburbanization expanded rapidly after World War II. Cities depended increasingly upon suburban annexations for growth.<sup>28</sup> Such expansion continued into the 1950's and 1960's. By the 1960's, however, large annexations were less and less common, except in the West

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Status of Cities and Suburbs," American Sociological Review, 28:1 (February 1963), p. 83; Henry S. Shryock, "Population Redistribution Within Metropolitan Areas: Evaluation of Research," Social Forces, 35:2 (December 1956), p. 158.

<sup>26</sup> Betty Tableman, Governmental Organization in Metropolitan Areas, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1951), pp. 4-5.

<sup>27</sup> Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, Urban and Rural America: Policies for Future Growth, (Washington, D. C: Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 1968), p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> Donald J. Bogue, p. 127.

and South.<sup>29</sup>

Cities which do not annex often find that population growth and commercial/industrial development are only sustained by increasing the density of urban land uses. The increasing density of urban development, however, raises the cost of land which drives residential and commercial uses from the city to cheaper and readily available suburban areas.<sup>30</sup>

In Virginia, as in Texas, California, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Arizona, North Carolina, and Missouri,<sup>31</sup> post-war laws encourage annexation and discourage incorporation. Statutes permit annexation through special legislation, municipal ordinances, or across county boundaries, but rarely require referenda.<sup>32</sup> With such favorable annexation laws,

<sup>29</sup> Richard L. Forstall, "Annexation and Incorporation Changes Since 1970 Census: With Historical Data for Larger Cities for 1900-1970," The Municipal Yearbook, Chicago: International City Managers Association, 1975, pp. 22-25; Leo F. Schnore, "Municipal Annexations and the Growth of Metropolitan Suburbs, 1950-1960," American Journal of Sociology, 67:4 (January 1962), p. 408.

<sup>30</sup> Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, p. 3; Maurice H. Yeates, North American Urban Patterns, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1980), p. 236.

<sup>31</sup> Luther H. Gulick, p. 52; William O. Winter (1981), p. 79; Betty Tableman, p. 13; Thomas H. Reed (1962), p. 121.

<sup>32</sup> J. C. Bollens and H. J. Schmandt, pp. 242-45; Bryan Massam, "Political Geography and the Provision of Public Services," Progress in Geography, 6 (1974), 187; David Berman, p. 194; Thomas Muller, p. 3.

many cities in these nine states annexed large areas, especially in the rapid growth decades of the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's.<sup>33</sup> Increased annexation minimized political fragmentation, even in the larger metropolitan areas, and added large, undeveloped parcels for future growth.<sup>34</sup>

### 1.3 ISSUES IN ANNEXATION

While the literature on annexations recognizes many issues, four have been especially prominent: (1) civic boosterism and civic autonomy; (2) the provision of public services and comprehensive planning; (3) financial considerations; and (4) race-related considerations. The following section provides a discussion of relevant aspects of each issue.

### 1.4 CIVIC BOOSTERISM AND COMMUNITY AUTONOMY

Cities have annexed suburban areas for a variety of pragmatic reasons--to expand the city's population, to recapture businesses and industries that relocated to the suburbs--but annexations have also indicated "civic boosterism." Civic boosterism, according to Brownell and Goldfield, dates from the colonial era and results from growth policies which pro-

<sup>33</sup> I. M. Barlow, pp. 16-17; B. Tableman, p. 13.

<sup>34</sup> J. C. Bollens and H. J. Schmandt, p. 245; Edward F. Soja, pp. 48-49.

moted each city's image as a progressive and prosperous community for economic investment.<sup>35</sup>

The three prominent groups among annexation supporters are also traditional civic boosters: (1) city officials, (2) business and industrial interests, and (3) civic organizations. Within the city, government, newspapers, chambers of commerce and their allies among the commercial, industrial, and real estate interests have traditionally believed that annexation benefits both the city itself and the entire metropolitan region. These groups have been especially active in the South, a region in which annexations have been especially frequent since the late nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup> The civic boosters promote urban expansion as the "wave of the future" and a sign of economic prosperity. They argue that since annexation increases the city's size, population, and economic base, annexation will in turn enhance the city's regional and national status; increase per capita state and federal revenue allocations; and reduce taxes and improve services.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Blaine A. Brownell and David R. Goldfield, "Southern Urban History," in The City in Southern History, The Growth of Urban Civilization in the South, Blaine A. Brownell and David R. Goldfield, eds. (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1977), p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Richard L. Forstall, pp. 23-25; Leo F. Schnore (January 1962), pp. 407-08.

<sup>37</sup> Brett W. Hawkins, Politics and Urban Policies, (Indianap-

City government officials, especially politicians, see annexation expanding the city government, providing more jobs in an enlarged bureaucracy and additional patronage positions. Business interests and their allies believe annexation will increase their power and influence in the metropolitan region. These city boosters hope to lure outside business and industry to the community by advertising the city's growth as proof that firms will prosper in this urban environment. Furthermore, city officials and business and industrial leaders compete with other regional and national cities for growth. They hope that annexation, by increasing the city's size and population, will give them additional advantages in this race, such as the rivalry between St. Louis and Chicago in the nineteenth century. Many southern cities, in fact, pointed to these two cities as prosperous communities whose rise they attributed partly to frequent and extensive annexations.<sup>38</sup>

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olis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1971), p. 55; David R. Goldfield, "Pursuing the American Urban Dream: Cities in the Old South," in The City in Southern History, pp. 61 and 71; Howard N. Rabinowitz, "Continuity and Change: Southern Urban Development, 1860-1900," in The City in Southern History, p. 115; Blaine A. Brownell, "The Urban South Comes of Age, 1900-1940," in The City in Southern History, pp. 150-51 and 155-56; R. L. Johnston, Political, Electoral, and Spatial Systems, (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 150; Raymond E. Murphy, p. 520; Victor Jones, pp. 259-62.

<sup>38</sup> Wyatt W. Belcher, The Economic Rivalry Between St. Louis and Chicago 1850-1880, (New York: AMS Press, 1968), pp.

Civic groups and intellectuals also support annexation as a means to achieve efficient and progressive government for the metropolitan community. They claim that the suburbs are only "extensions" of the adjacent city, rather than distinct communities. They argue, therefore, that annexation will end unnecessary political fragmentation and bring a centralized, metropolitan administration. This will eliminate service duplications, improve efficiency, increase the number and quality of services, and lowers per capita service costs. Annexation is consistent with their personal and organizational philosophies stressing "good government."<sup>39</sup>

In contrast, opponents of annexation have been characterized as less familiar with local suburban problems and/or satisfied with the local government, including services. Farmers and other rural residents accustomed to limited public services willingly trade fewer services and capital facilities for less congestion and pollution, lower living costs, and lower taxes.<sup>40</sup>

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114-138 passim; Brett W. Hawkins (1971), p. 55; Victor Jones, pp. 254-63 passim; Blaine A. Brownell, pp. 155-56.

<sup>39</sup> Robert L. Lineberry, "Reforming Metropolitan Governance: Requiem or Reality," The Georgetown Law Journal, 58:675 (1970), p. 693; Victor Jones, pp. 259-62; Brett W. Hawkins (1971), p. 55; Blaine A. Brownell, pp. 142 and 150-51.

<sup>40</sup> A. Hawley and B. Zimmer, pp. 426-29. Jeanne Fox, "Regionalism and Minority Participation," JCPS Public Policy Series, (Washington, D. C: Joint Center for Political

Suburbanites have perceived few positive benefits from annexation, but many negative effects for the community. Cox, Sengstock, and Short, among others, note that each suburban community acquires social and economic advantages as an autonomous municipality which enhance its desirability as a place to live. The jurisdiction gains fiscal authority to raise and spend local revenues. It is rarely in the suburban economic interest to surrender this autonomy to promote metropolitan political integration. Annexation incorporates a community's advantages into the larger city, reducing per capita revenue allocations, despite higher taxes.<sup>41</sup> Annexation also jeopardizes the advantages the middle class seek in suburbia: less crowding and congestion, socioeconomic homogeneity, "supposedly" superior schools, public services, home ownership opportunities, and participation in local policy decisions. The economic advantages resulting from greater service efficiencies may not compensate for loss of these personal "advantages" and the community's political independence. For these reasons suburbanites support their community's independence and the status quo and resist at-

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Studies, 1973), p. 30.

<sup>41</sup> Kevin Cox (1979), pp. 310-11; (1973), pp. 19-20; John R. Short, An Introduction to Political Geography, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 162-64; Frank S. Sengstock (1960), pp. 4-5.



tempts to impose city control through annexation.<sup>42</sup>

Although suburbanites resist annexations, cities and their civic boosters in several states can overcome this opposition by using pro-annexation statutory techniques. One of these techniques is the "home rule" statute. The "home rule" statutes embody a philosophy, popularized in this century, which argues that cities have the right to govern their affairs with the minimum of "interference" from the state government. "Home rule" statutes in Texas, Missouri, and Oklahoma, for example, allow large cities to annex extensively with little effective opposition. Cities annex through municipal ordinances regardless of suburban sentiments. In this way they can boost their size, population, and economic base when they believe it necessary without having to gain the approval of those suburbanites facing annexation. As a consequence, cities in "home rule" states have been able to annex many suburban communities and have become some of the largest cities, geographically, in

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<sup>42</sup> Thomas R. Dye, "The Local-Cosmopolitan Dimension and the Study of Urban Politics," Social Forces, 41:3 (March 1963), pp. 244-46. Robert L. Lineberry and Ira Sharkansky, Urban Politics and Public Policy, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1974), p. 130; Betty Tableman, pp. 13-14; Oliver P. Williams, "Life Style Values and Political Decentralization in Metropolitan Areas," Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, 48:3 (December 1967), pp. 302-03; Luther H. Gulick, pp. 125-27; Kevin Cox (1979), p. 307; I. M. Barlow, p. 21; B. W. Hawkins and T. R. Dye, p. 18; Victor Jones, p. 296.

this county.<sup>43</sup> In Virginia, "home rule" has never been embodied in a specific statute. The "home rule" concept as it relates to annexation developed from the General Assembly's changes in the annexation statutes when the legislators revised the state's constitution and statutory code in 1902-04. These revisions permitted cities and towns to annex territory under "general laws" rather than having to seek legislative permission as was the custom in the nineteenth century.<sup>44</sup>

Even though the "home rule" philosophy has been an effective tool for civic boosterism, promoting annexation in many cities in several states, in other states it has actually increased the restrictions on annexation. In these latter states suburbanites and their representatives have used the "home rule" philosophy to resist "forced annexations." "Home rule" fosters a suburban belief in "self-determination" and freedom from city evils.<sup>45</sup> In this respect "home rule" has been turned into a tool for suburban civic partisans who seek to maintain their community's autonomy

<sup>43</sup> William O. Winter (1981), p. 79.

<sup>44</sup> William L. Martin and J. E. Buchholtz "Annexation--Virginia's Dilemma," Washington and Lee Law Review, 24 (1967), pp. 243-44; S. J. Makielski, jr. and David G. Temple, Special District Government in Virginia, (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, 1967), pp. 3-4.

<sup>45</sup> Victor Jones, p. 296; Edward Soja, pp. 45-46.

and to oppose the city's annexation attempts. Suburban "home rule" charters often require referenda to give the community a veto over any annexation proposals.<sup>46</sup>

Each municipality and its territory evolve a local identity and constituency, re-enforced by incorporation, the "home rule" statutes, and fiscal authority. The municipality's boundaries take on an immortality and a constituency: its residents and government employees develop civic allegiance and a vested interest in the community's preservation. They become their community's civic boosters. Their identities becomes tied to the municipality's continued existence. Geopolitical conflicts tend to erupt, consequently, when one municipality, usually a city, attempts to annex a suburban community. This conflict results because one political jurisdiction is attempting to expand its territory at the expense of the other jurisdiction's existence, ending the privileges and advantages which the latter jurisdiction and its constituency enjoy.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Victor Jones, pp. 236-37.

<sup>47</sup> Albert J. Reiss, jr. "The Community and the Corporate Area," University of Pennsylvania Law Review, 105:4 (February 1957), p. 457; Edward Soja, p. 46; Victor Jones, p. 296; Luther R. Gulick, pp. 49-50; Thomas Reed (1962), p. 122; Anthony Downs, "Metropolitan Growth and Future Political Problems," in The Structure of Political Geography, Kasperson and Minghi eds. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), p. 287; Donald J. Curran, "The Metropolitan Problem," National Tax Journal, 16:3 (September 1963), p. 214.

### 1.5 PUBLIC SERVICES AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Supporters of annexation contend that by reducing political fragmentation, annexation provides better services for more people and at a lower cost. They argue that political fragmentation creates service inefficiencies. Each jurisdiction tries to provide a full range of public services for residents thereby creating duplications.<sup>48</sup> Adjacent jurisdictions compete in service provisions rather than cooperating to reduce costs and to end inefficiencies and inequitable service and tax provisions.<sup>49</sup>

At times service "spillovers" result because one municipality, generally the city, provides services that are not provided by neighboring jurisdictions. Spillovers and costs associated with providing services to non-resident workers raise central city expenses, and residents of the adjacent jurisdictions benefit without paying for the services.<sup>50</sup> Some suburban municipalities even underfinance public services expecting residents to benefit from the service spill-

<sup>48</sup> I. M. Barlow, p. 22; Frank Sengstock, p. 117.

<sup>49</sup> I. M. Barlow, p. 116; Kenneth Newton, "American Urban Politics: Social Class, Political Structure, and Public Goods," Urban Affairs Quarterly, 11:2 (December 1975), pp. 253-54.

<sup>50</sup> Raymond E. Murphy, p. 520; A. Hawley and B. Zimmer, p. 416; Harold M. Mayer, pp. 5-6; Edward H. Hobbs, "A Problem--Fragmentation, One Answer--Annexation," National Civic Review, 60:8 (September 1971), pp. 431-32; I. W. Barlow, pp. 22-23; Bryan Massam, p. 201.

overs.<sup>51</sup>

Each community's government sets tax rates needed to raise revenues to cover service costs. The greater the financial resources, the greater the number of services provided.<sup>52</sup> Each community's financial resources, consequently, are the crucial indicator of the quality and variety of public services which the community's government can offer residents. In most communities, property taxes provide the largest source of revenues for services. Community officials who want to enhance the tax base restrict land uses to: (1) promote high-property tax districts such as affluent residential areas and commercial/industrial zones; and (2) minimize low-tax districts such as multiple-family housing.<sup>53</sup> Metropolitan political fragmentation can raise public service costs, promote inequalities, and create fierce competition among jurisdictions who are seeking to maximize

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<sup>51</sup> Frank S. Sengstock, pp. 2-3; Jeanne Fox, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup> I. M. Barlow, p. 23; Donald J. Curran, p. 214; Bryan Massam, "Political Geography and the Provision of Public Services," Progress in Geography, 6 (1974), p. 201; J. C. Bollens and H. J. Schmandt, p. 246.

<sup>53</sup> Anthony Downs, "Metropolitan Growth and Future Political Problems," in The Structure of Political Geography, Kasperson and Minghi, eds. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), p. 288; Kenneth Newton, pp. 253-54. Kevin R. Cox (1973), pp. 19-20; David Harvey, "Society, the City, and the Space-Economy of Urbanism," (Washington, D. C: Association of American Geographers, Commission on College Geography, Resource Paper No. 18, 1972), p. 16.

their economic base at the expense of neighboring jurisdictions.<sup>54</sup> The suburbanization of the middle and upper classes, businesses, and industries, and the segregation of the poor and minorities in the city, exacerbates the fiscal disparities between the city and suburbs.<sup>55</sup>

Meanwhile suburbs seek businesses and industries for their communities to gain high-tax revenues and offset service costs. Suburbs with large nonresidential tax bases can maintain low property taxes while providing equal or better services than the less affluent city and suburbs.<sup>56</sup> These gains are a boom for suburbs where these firms locate but pose serious financial losses for the cities.<sup>57</sup> Municipal annexation, by incorporating both affluent and poor areas in one political jurisdiction, distributes the region's economic resources more equitably. This provides a high level of services for more people and at a lower cost.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Edward H. Hobbs, pp. 431-32; Raymond E. Murphy, p. 521. Kenneth Newton, pp. 253-54.

<sup>55</sup> Lowdon Wingo, "Introduction: Some Public Economics of Social Exclusion," in Minority Perspectives, Lowdon Wingo ed. (Baltimore: Resources for the Future, Inc. 1972), p. 4; Woo Sik Kee, "City-Suburban Differentials in Local Government Fiscal Effort," National Tax Journal 21:2 (June 1968), pp. 183-89 passim; Jean Gottman, p. 7.

<sup>56</sup> A. Hawley and B. Zimmer, p. 417;

<sup>57</sup> Anthony Downs, pp. 287-88;

<sup>58</sup> Edward Hobbs, pp. 431-32; Raymond E. Murphy, p. 521; Kenneth Newton, pp. 253-54.

Even with the socioeconomic differences between the suburbs and the city, Curran found that increasing population density and rising service demands in suburban areas caused increasing homogeneity in public service expenditures, and uniformity in tax rates between the two groups. Competition among suburban communities brought more services, as the communities vied to offer their residents the best service package. With the growing demand for services and capital improvements, communities with low taxes were forced to raise taxes more often than communities with higher taxes in order to provide additional services and to upgrade existing ones. Government officials in high tax communities were restrained by residents' opposition to further tax increases. This restraint increased conformity in tax rates among suburban communities.<sup>59</sup>

Curran hypothesized that the increasing homogeneity of public services and public service expenditures diminished the socioeconomic differences between suburban and city communities. This could increase chances that suburbanites would support city annexation.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Donald Curran, p. 215-18; I. M. Barlow, p. 29.

<sup>60</sup> Donald Curran, pp. 221-22.

Annexation does not always improve government efficiency or administration for the urban region. Differences between the city's needs and suburban needs may interfere with the city government's ability to provide services for suburban residents. A larger bureaucracy may be overspecialized, inflexible, or over-departmentalized. The responsiveness of small governments may outweigh any inefficiencies resulting from their size. Smaller bureaucracies serve a smaller, usually more homogeneous community, and can be adapted specifically to meet their constituency's needs.<sup>61</sup>

In most municipal governments, there is a service monopoly that arises from the very nature of public works. These services are available to residents usually from only one supplier who can dictate their scale, quality, and price, regardless of individual needs or preferences. In suburban areas, small governments can compete for new growth by tailoring service packages to the desires of the community.

<sup>61</sup> Robert L. Bish and Robert Warren, "Scale and Monopoly Problems in Urban Government Services," Urban Affairs Quarterly 8:1 (1972), pp. 98-99; Vincent Ostrom, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren, "The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry," American Political Science Review, 55:4 (December 1961), pp. 837-38; Gregory C. Krohm, "An Economic Analysis of Municipal Annexation Policy: Approached from the Theory of Fiscal Clubs," (unpublished doctor's dissertation, Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, March 1973), pp. 159-60; Winston W. Crouch, "The Government of a Metropolitan Region," University of Pennsylvania Law Review, 105:5 (February 1957), pp. 482-83; Duane Lockard, p. 489.



Such an opportunity is lost when the suburb is annexed to the city.<sup>62</sup>

Along with service inefficiencies, officials promoting annexation argue that the integration, coordination, and comprehensive provision of urban services is most effective on a regional basis. The city planning administration can devise such a program after annexing the suburban periphery.<sup>63</sup> Individual jurisdictional planning efforts fail to address regional problems precisely because such problems necessitate a region-wide public policy response. Furthermore, many cities annex undeveloped areas to ensure proper zoning, land-use planning, and construction codes, prior to and during development. Annexation prior to full development avoids problems created by subdividers and contractors who provide minimal or poorly designed subdivision layouts incompatible with city regulations.<sup>64</sup>

Among those arguing that annexation's effectiveness is overstated, Ostrom et al. note that interjurisdictional conflicts in urban areas are often exaggerated. Local go-

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<sup>62</sup> R. Bish and R. Warren, pp. 102-03; Betty Tableman, p. 34; Thomas Muller, pp. 1-4.

<sup>63</sup> Dean S. Rugg, Spatial Foundations of Urbanism, (Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Company, Publishers, 1978), p. 202; Jean Gottman, p. 9; Raymond Murphy, p. 515; Harold Mayer, p. 5; Frank Sengstock, pp. 5-6.

<sup>64</sup> Luther Gulick, pp. 17-19; Thomas Muller, p. 2; Harold Mayer, p. 5.

vernments function as a "system" which forces cooperation and interaction to minimize conflict. Such cooperation creates "consistent and predictable" behavioral patterns, rather than conflicting and contradictory actions. Metropolitan governments cooperate because this facilitates smoother intergovernmental relations and solves problems. Ostrom et al. also note that this cooperation, in effect, reduces community autonomy in pursuit of common goals. As a consequence, the historic argument for annexation to coordinate planning within the urban region is less plausible because cooperation promotes common planning objectives.<sup>65</sup>

Annexations have been most successful in small, metropolitan regions where annexation can effectively reduce jurisdictional fragmentation. Annexation is less effective in large metropolitan areas because the region becomes too large for the city to control. In such cases, annexations may postpone or exaggerate problems, or create a municipality too large and complex to be efficient and harmonious. Diseconomies of scale develop which disrupt annexation's objectives.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> V. Ostrom, C. Tiebout, and R. Warren, pp. 831 and 842.

<sup>66</sup> Martin I. Glassner and Harm J. De Blij, Systematic Political Geography, 3rd ed., (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1980), p. 240; Thomas Reed (1962), p. 122; Jean Gottmann, pp. 8-9.

Changing urban geopolitics provide several alternatives to municipal annexation to provide public services and capital improvements in suburban areas outside the city. Among these is county government. In recent years counties have faced increasing demands for public services, due to growing suburbanization in areas far from municipalities and rising opposition to municipal annexations. Counties have become more like municipalities. This has given rise to the "urban county."<sup>67</sup>

County government is a "logical" instrument for coordinating services because it is already established, its structure is familiar, and its administrative area is often coterminous with the metropolitan region. The county's role does not increase the metropolitan region's political fragmentation but offers an alternative to annexation. The county can provide more services with greater coordination than individual service districts.<sup>68</sup> Where well-organized governments such as "urban counties" exist, area residents

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<sup>67</sup> Herbert S. Duncombe, County Government in America, (Washington: National Association of Counties, 1966), p. 30; Thomas P. Murphy and John Reh fuss, Urban Politics in the Suburban Era, (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1976), p. 147.

<sup>68</sup> Mark B. Feldman and Everett L. Jassy, et al., "Note: The Urban County: A Study of New Approaches to Local Government in Metropolitan Areas," Harvard Law Review, 73:3 (January 1960), p. 526-27; Herbert Duncombe, p. 30.

have often resisted annexation successfully.<sup>69</sup>

Service districts are another alternative to annexation. They allow communities to tailor services to meet customer preferences or the optimal level for efficiency.<sup>70</sup> Communities minimize service district costs by tailoring the districts to offer several services with similar distribution areas. Although increasing the number of governments provides a more precise allocation of goods according to citizen preferences, it raises costs per unit. Service districts offer increased services and a better "fit" to customer tastes with lower per unit costs. Suburban areas gain better services without annexation.<sup>71</sup>

Service districts also undermine the dual monopolies that government officials hold both as public representatives and as service administrators. Government officials often favor the production of services over their constituents' preferences; expediency is promoted over efficiency or need.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Raymond Murphy, pp. 506-07.

<sup>70</sup> Vincent L. Marando and Carl Reggie Whitley, "City-County Consolidation, An Overview of Voter Response," Urban Affairs Quarterly, 8:2 (December 1972), pp. 192-93; V. Ostrom, C. Tiebout, and R. Warren, pp. 837-38; R. Bish and R. Warren, pp. 103-05.

<sup>71</sup> R. Bish and R. Warren, pp. 104-06.

<sup>72</sup> R. Bish and R. Warren, pp. 106-10; V. Ostrom, C. Tiebout, and R. Warren, pp. 837-38.

A third alternative to municipal annexation is intergovernmental service agreements, whereby two or more governments "trade" services. These agreements cover such services as water and sewage, education, and police and fire protection. They foster better services, greater efficiency, and lower per unit costs.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, suburbs with similar socioeconomic characteristics can develop their own service packages.<sup>74</sup>

A fourth alternative is for the city to provide services for suburban communities. The city's centralized administration provides planning and service coordination and minimizes duplications and spillovers. The quality of services improves, and the city's central location is cost effective. Suburban governments avoid costly capital outlays for many services, and cities can assess surcharges to offset capital costs and higher taxes that city residents pay.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Thomas R. Dye, Charles S. Liebman, Oliver P. Williams, and Harold Herman, "Differentiation and Cooperation in a Metropolitan Area," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 7:2 (1962), p. 146.

<sup>74</sup> T. Dye, C. Liebman, O. Williams, and H. Herman, pp. 154-55; Bryan Massam, p. 202; I. M. Barlow, p. 17; J. Bollens and H. Schmandt, p. 246; Anthony Downs, p. 289.

<sup>75</sup> Mable Walker, "Fiscal Aspects of Metropolitan Regional Development," University of Pennsylvania Law Review, 105:4 (February 1957), pp. 496-98; Betty Tableman, pp. 33-34; Thomas Muller, pp. 1-4.

Ostrom et al. argue that with several small jurisdictions residents can choose a community whose service mix and service costs fit their particular preferences. Price competition is, however, only equitable: (1) where the jurisdiction's public goods are sufficiently internalized to prevent spillovers into adjacent communities; and (2) when the benefits and costs of public services are distributed uniformly throughout the region. Competition is greatest in large metropolitan regions where residents have enough information to compare public services and their costs, thus pressuring local governments to allocate tax resources efficiently.<sup>76</sup>

#### 1.6 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF ANNEXATION

Annexation allows cities to regain suburbanizing population and economic resources, thus promoting city population growth, a broader economic base, and lower per capita taxes. The increased land available for development works in tandem with the expanded economic base to make the city competitive with suburban communities for industrial and commercial firms seeking to locate in the urban region. Given the continuing suburbanization of urban areas, Cox notes that annexation is a major factor in the continued fiscal health of

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<sup>76</sup> Ostrom, pp. 838-40.

most central cities.<sup>77</sup>

Where cities have annexed large, undeveloped suburban areas, such as Dallas, Denver, Kansas City, and Los Angeles did prior to 1915, these parcels were developed into low-density residential and commercial districts resembling those in the city's suburbs. The areas provided continued economic development and population growth for decades afterwards.<sup>78</sup> Many American cities no longer annex land. Besides the legal restrictions and the lack of unincorporated territory, annexations can create financial problems which have become more important in annexation proposals in recent years.<sup>79</sup>

Because of higher costs, cities are more selective in their annexation goals. Cities attempt to annex economically lucrative areas: affluent residential and commercial/industrial districts, municipal properties and facilities, and natural resources. They bypass adjacent but impoverished areas. Poor communities cost the city more in public services and capital improvements than they return in taxes. These areas may remain unincorporated, despite a serious need for

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<sup>77</sup> Kevin Cox (1979), pp. 310-11; R. D. McKenzie, p. 191; Thomas Muller, pp. 3-4; Betty Tableman, pp. 4-5; Joel Miller, "Annexation, The Outer Limits of City Growth," American Demographics, (November 1984), p. 32.

<sup>78</sup> Harold Mayer, p. 4; Victor Jones, p. 129.

<sup>79</sup> Jeanne Fox, p. 7.

better services and capital improvements.<sup>80</sup>

Davies argues that suburban commuters provide many economic advantages for the cities which help to underwrite the costs of providing services. The commuters' business and industrial activities in the city create demand for offices and factories and spawn auxiliary firms to supply their needs. This demand increases property values, employment opportunities, and tax revenues, which offset commuter service costs.<sup>81</sup>

When a city annexes land it usually incurs compensation costs, payable to the township or, as in Virginia, the county in which the land was originally held. The city reimburses the holding government, usually at fair market value, for schools, public facilities, and any accompanying public debts that are part of the area annexed.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> David Berman, p. 194; Thomas Muller, pp. 79-80 and 141; Harold Mayer, p. 5; I. M. Barlow, pp. 16-17; J. Bollens and H. Schmandt, p. 242; Kevin Cox (1979), p. 329.

<sup>81</sup> David Davies, "City-Suburban Differentials in Local Government Fiscal Effort, A Comment," National Tax Journal, 22 (September 1969), p. 422-23.

<sup>82</sup> Chester Bain (1966), p. 161-91 passim; Frank Sengstock, pp. 93-95.



## 1.7 RACE-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

Despite increasing black population in many cities, the gains of blacks in political power have come mostly since the civil rights legislation of the 1960's and 1970's. Where blacks constitute a sizeable proportion of the city's population or have gained a measure of political power, they are apprehensive of any proposal, such as an annexation, which could undermine their power base. Black residents may fear that adding large numbers of white suburban residents and decreasing the percentage of blacks in the city's population will reduce their voice in city government and their allocation of political patronage. Losing political power means re-establishing the black political agenda within a new government administration. Blacks, therefore, want full participation in the decision-making process to protect their interests. Without participation, Marshall notes, metropolitan reforms, including annexation, usually fail to improve services for minorities.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> John V. Moeser and Rutledge M. Dennis, The Politics of Annexation, Oligarchic Power in a Southern City, (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company, Inc., 1982), pp. 1-15 passim; William Winter (1981), p. 79; Jeanne Fox pp. 10-11; Robert Lineberry, pp. 694-95; Dale R. Marshall, "Metropolitan Government: Views of Minorities," in Minority Perspectives, Lowdon Wingo ed. (Baltimore: Resources for the Future, Inc., 1972), pp. 25-26.

In the financially troubled city, annexation benefits accrue to black residents by increasing tax revenues and reducing service spillovers which raise city taxes. Annexation also affords blacks greater access to former suburban areas and better quality housing because suburban zoning laws and other exclusionary land regulations can be removed. City pollution regulations reduce health hazards, and public transportation facilities can reach suburbanized employment opportunities. Black leaders can, consequently, fulfill political promises to provide better living standards.<sup>84</sup>

As a major city constituency, with equitable political representation, black residents can use their political power to mediate between other constituencies in the enlarged city. Black opposition to annexation, furthermore, may be no greater than traditional black antipathy to white city administrations which fail to address black concerns.<sup>85</sup>

Despite annexation's potential advantages for blacks, it is more likely to undermine their political gains than to help them. Blacks lose voting strength.<sup>86</sup> White officials

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<sup>84</sup> Dale Marshall p. 4; T. P. Murphy, pp. 181-91; Kevin Cox (1973), pp. 35-36.

<sup>85</sup> Dale Marshall, p. 17-18.

<sup>86</sup> Robert Lineberry, pp. 694-95; J. Moesen and R. Dennis, p. 1; Thomas Reed (1962), p. 122; Edward C. Banfield, "The Politics of Metropolitan Organization," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 77:1 (1957), pp. 86-87.

may not address the issues of greatest concern to black residents, or even consider these concerns important. Those proposing government reforms mistakenly believe the reforms are important to all metropolitan area residents when they are actually of greatest concern to middle-class residents. Annexation, for example, improves "physical services," such as pollution control and garbage disposal, which, while important, are generally less crucial for blacks than "social services," such as high quality job opportunities.<sup>87</sup>

Blacks are also likely to see their concerns postponed in favor of those of the newly annexed white, middle-class suburbanites. City officials traditionally offer suburbanites concessions to placate opposition to annexation.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, whites fear that increasing black political power will undermine their economic and social control of city resources. The white city administration often annexes predominately white suburbs to offset the increasing black population and their political power.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Dale Marshall, pp. 23-25; Jeanne Fox, p. 13.

<sup>88</sup> Betty Tableman, p. 12; Morton Grodzins, The Metropolitan Area as a Racial Problem, (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1959), pp. 14-15; Victor Jones, p. 46; Jeanne Fox, p. 30; T. P. Murphy, pp. 181-91.

<sup>89</sup> Morton Grodzins, pp. 14-15.

Blacks have sought federal assistance to investigate annexation which reduced their political representation. The U. S. Commission of Civic Rights intervened in numerous annexation suits between 1975 and 1980 to stop annexations that weakened black political power.<sup>90</sup> City officials complain that federal intervention greatly impedes annexations. Intervention delays annexation and interferes in the municipal government operations. The Southern Growth Policies Commission on the Future of the South recommends, consequently, that cities seek federal guidance and minority participation in planning annexations.<sup>91</sup>

#### 1.8 SUMMARY

Municipal annexation has been a prominent feature of urban geopolitics in the United States for the last two centuries. Four issues have traditionally formulated and affected annexation proposals: civic boosterism and community autonomy; the provision of public services and comprehensive planning; financial considerations; and race-related considerations. These issues have shown both the benefits and the problems which develop when cities attempt to annex land to

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<sup>90</sup> "Voting Rights Act Needs Extension," Nation Civic Review, 70:9 (October 1981), p. 535.

<sup>91</sup> "Board Studies Future of Southern Cities," Nation Civic Review, 70:7 (July 1981), pp. 364-65.

reduce the political fragmentation and to recapture the lost population and economic resources which have suburbanized.

With the tremendous population growth and suburbanization in this century, engulfing most metropolitan areas, and the rise of suburban opposition and restrictions on annexation statutes, annexation has become much less common in the last half of the twentieth century than it was earlier. Suburban residents generally prefer the low-density suburbs to the more crowded cities because of their affinity with small, local governments and their ability to maintain a more homogeneous, middle-class "family" environment in suburban communities. In addition, the availability of services and capital improvements, comparable to those of the city, gives suburbanites the same advantages city residents enjoyed.

Early literature on annexation strongly favored annexation as the most efficient, effective, and equitable solution to metropolitan political fragmentation and the provision of services. More recent articles, especially since 1950, have argued that annexation has not been the "cure-all" for metropolitan problems. In fact this literature has often argued that: (1) annexation could create greater inefficiencies by creating diseconomies of scale in the city; (2) intergovernmental cooperation through service districts or the provision of services by the county could would work

as well, and without strong suburban opposition. Annexation remains a viable geopolitical tool to reduce political fragmentation in small metropolitan areas where suburbs lack services and the enlarged city does not bring diseconomies of scale.

## Chapter II

### THESIS OBJECTIVES

The thesis has three major objectives: (1) to trace the evolution of four issues critical to annexation conflict--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and planning, financial considerations, and race-related considerations; (2) to assess the extent to which these issues played a role in one metropolitan area, Roanoke, Virginia, during the middle of the twentieth century; and (3) to show the interaction between the City of Roanoke and Roanoke County, the major actors in these suits, as an example of urban geo-politics.

#### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

Since the thesis objectives focus on Roanoke's historic use of annexation to expand its boundaries and involve geopolitical conflicts, I chose to fashion a methodology from historical and political geography to describe and analyze the historical and political processes--the evolution of the four critical issues as major factors in Roanoke's annexations and as generators of geopolitical conflict in the metropolitan region--which created the past and present geopolitical configuration in the Roanoke Metropolitan Region.

As a basis for the methodology, I borrowed Norton, Kovacik, and Guelke's ideas on historical geography and Prescott's ideas on political geography. Norton, Kovacik, and Guelke have described historical geography's purpose as reconstructing the scenario, or process, which formed a landscape. In a similar vein Prescott's concepts of the role of political geography focus on the landscape, or areal pattern, and the political processes which contributed to this pattern. This landscape then is the setting for such historic and political processes which not only created it but which also provided a setting on which subsequent events occur. Historical and political geography seek to understand these processes and the landscape form at those periods in the past which were significant both then and for their influence on the landscape's present configuration.<sup>92</sup> In this instance the landscape is the Roanoke Metropolitan Region and my inquiry centers on three annexations which occurred in 1943, 1949, and 1962, as well as those earlier and later

<sup>92</sup> William Norton, "Historical Geography as the Evolution of Spatial Form," in Period and Place, Research Methods in Historical Geography, Alan R. H. Baker and Mark Billinge, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 253; Charles F. Kovacik, "Applied Historical Geography and Landscape Studies," in Applications of Geographical Research, Harold A. Winters and Marjorie K. Winters, eds. (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University, 1971), pp. 53-54; J. R. V. Prescott, Political Geography, (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1972), pp. 1-2. Leonard Guelke, Historical Understanding in Geography, An Idealist Approach, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 13 and 48.



annexations which surround this time period.

Guelke's approach to historical geography and landscape studies also provided another useful concept for achieving my thesis objectives. Guelke terms his research approach "idealism."<sup>93</sup> The idealistic approach centers on understanding how the thoughts of the major actors governed their actions and activities in creating this landscape. I used Guelke's concept but applied it more restrictively--limiting it to the ideas which evolved through the public actions of the principal actors as public personae working in concert rather than as individuals. In this case the principal actors were city and county officials, the two groups whose actions set the agenda--the four issues--for these annexations. I restricted Guelke's "idealism" concept to only the public thoughts and actions of the two groups for two reasons. First, Virginia's annexation statutes restrict annexation suits to the actions of one or more groups, rather than to the efforts of an individual. Second, the statutes mandate that the need for annexation rests on the area's need for annexation. The support or opposition of individuals is sublimated to the need of the area as a whole. Annexation, therefore, is a corporate or group endeavor, and my thesis focuses on these two groups and their supporters

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<sup>93</sup> Leonard Guelke, p. 48.

rather than on the thoughts and actions of particular individuals within the groups.

This methodology provides a framework for recreating the history of Roanoke's thirteen annexation attempts, and for analyzing the relative importance of the major issues in these annexations. While my thesis considers Roanoke's entire annexation history, I focus on the annexations of 1943, 1949 and 1961 because these annexations occurred during the growing opposition to the city's annexation proposals. This opposition has had a strong and decisive impact on the city's annexations.

Because annexation is a legal process which has undergone several changes during Roanoke's history, I outlined the changes in the Virginia constitutions of 1869, 1902, and 1970, as well as in the statutory codes for 1874, 1883, 1904, 1950, and 1982, including subsequent revisions where indicated. These documents prescribe both the legal basis for annexation and the judicial procedure for affecting annexation in Virginia.

While Virginia's annexation procedures have been established since 1902, the General Assembly's modifications of these statutes and court decisions had a direct bearing on Roanoke's annexation suits. These changes reflected the evolving legislative, political, and judicial attitudes to-

wards annexation which would have a direct effect on Roanoke's annexations. These changes also clarify questions which arose as a result of the research on the city's annexation history.

Following the review of constitutional and statutory policy is a summary of Roanoke's thirteen annexation attempts. This establishes the background of the city's annexation history and details how opposition to annexation increased from 1930 to 1963. Opposition reached a point at which Roanoke County officials and residents opposed all the city's annexation proposals. The annexations of 1943, 1949, and 1962 comprise the change in attitudes towards annexation.

The public actions of the Roanoke City Council and the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors formed the nucleus of the historical and geopolitical conflict. These governments were what Guelke would call "principal actors" in the annexation suits, around whom coalesced support for and/or against the annexations. My goal has been to gain an accurate understanding of the public opinions, activities, and interactions of these two governments as legally constituted bodies, since these actions determined the course for each suit.

Because this thesis analyzes the relative importance of civic boosterism and local autonomy, services and planning,

financial considerations, and race-related considerations, as they evolved in the 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexations, I summarize the prominence of these issues throughout the entire annexation history, 1874-1984. In researching this thesis, I examined various archival sources, including the minutes of the Roanoke City Council and the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, Roanoke County Circuit Court documents from each annexation suit, and miscellaneous correspondences between the Roanoke City Council, the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, and the Vinton Town Council and the Salem Town Council, where appropriate. These documents formed the basis for researching in greater detail the more commonly known public actions of these government bodies in the annexation procedures.

While the city council and supervisors' minutes provide extensive coverage of most annexation proposals, they have two limitations. First, they do not cover the major events in Roanoke's history in the nineteenth century. They omit a description of each annexation's boundaries and offer little information on the terms and conditions of the legislation enacting the 1874 incorporation of the town of Big Lick, Roanoke's predecessor; the town's reclassification as an "independent city" in 1884; and Roanoke's 1882, 1890, and 1892 annexations under the city's charter revisions. As a

consequence, I had to consult the Acts of the Virginia General Assembly for those years to assess (1) the location of Big Lick's boundaries; (2) whether each charter revision included an annexation and get a description of the annexation boundaries; and (3) the compensation due Roanoke County in the 1890 and 1892 annexations.

The second limitation is in the nature of these minutes themselves. They report only the actions of the council and supervisors, usually omitting mention of the discussions prior to the final actions. I consulted the city newspapers,<sup>94</sup> The Roanoke Times and World News, to obtain a more detailed view of the council/supervisors' actions on annexation.

According to Morgan the local newspaper can provide insight into local affairs.<sup>95</sup> I found this true in the annexation suits. The newspapers highlighted conflicts within the council as well as local feelings towards these annexation suits, especially growing opposition to these annexation suits. In addition to their value as a source for public events, the newspapers also provided editorial commentaries highlighting the views of the paper. The newspaper has been

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<sup>94</sup> These newspapers merged into the Roanoke Times-World News in 1974.

<sup>95</sup> Michael Morgan, Historical Sources in Geography, (Boston: Butterworths, 1979), p. 134.

a major local institution as well as primary city civic booster and frequent annexation supporter. As one of the few institutions with regional influence, the city newspaper could mold public opinion. I was able to gain valuable insight into the views of this civic booster and its role in promoting Roanoke's annexation efforts and countering county opposition to annexation.

The newspaper research included issues dating from 1889 to the present, with extensive coverage of the council/supervisors' meetings; area response to the annexation proposals and annexation trials; the General Assembly's annexation debates bearing upon annexation in the region; and the effects of annexation on the region's development. Because the accuracy of newspaper articles is always open to question, I took care also to cross-check the articles, where possible, with government documents.

This thesis focuses on four issues which the literature has identified as historically important in annexations in the United States. These issues are--civic boosterism and community autonomy, the provision of public services and comprehensive planning, financial considerations, and race-related considerations. I use an historical and political geographic methodology to trace the evolution and the relative importance of the four issues in Roanoke, Virginia's

historic use of annexation. The thesis will focus specifically on Roanoke's 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexations because these occurred during the growing suburban opposition to annexation. Furthermore, it will note the conflicts between the two principle actors, the City of Roanoke and Roanoke County, in these annexation suits as was illustrative of urban geopolitics.

This historical-political geographic methodology focuses on the role of the four issues and their use by the two principal actors in their public activities in the annexations suits. These issues and their importance helped to create the geopolitical configurations of the Roanoke Metropolitan Region --the setting or landscape--for this urban conflict. Because the focus is on the two principal actors as public personae, Guelke's concept of idealism was altered slightly for use in this methodology. I did this because focus was on the public activities of the two actors as groups rather than on the individual members of the two groups.

The thesis will determine, therefore, not only the relative influence of the four issues and how they evolved throughout Roanoke's annexation history, but how they helped to define the public actions of the two principle actors and the outcome of each annexation suit. The four issues became

historically significant factors in the continuing geopolitical conflicts in the Roanoke Metropolitan Region as these conflicts were played out through thirteen annexation suits.



## Chapter III

### THE STUDY AREA

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter has two objectives. First, it describes the study area, the city of Roanoke, Virginia, and its relevance to the four key issues--described above. Second, it describes the legal environment of annexation in Virginia, including a summary of two major peculiarities in Virginia's annexation statutes: city-county separation and the "judicial process"; a review of the major changes in the annexation statutes in the twentieth century.

#### 3.2 ROANOKE, VIRGINIA AS A CASE STUDY

Roanoke, Virginia's experience with annexation provides an example of how one city has expanded its boundaries. A relatively young city, Roanoke has experienced periods of rapid growth since its incorporation in 1874. Annexations have always been an important growth mechanism which has helped Roanoke increase its population from the original 500 residents to a current population of over 100,000. As the city's growth consumed land, city officials sought to annex adjacent suburban areas. Because Virginia's laws mandate that municipalities annex predominately "urbanized" land,

Roanoke's annexation have brought in more developed than vacant territory. As a result, the city has annexed more often than it might have under different annexation statutes. The city has annexed in seven of the last twelve decades--1874-1985--and in five of the eight decades of this century. The amount of land annexed in each action was small, however, nine of the twelve successful annexations have included less than 2.5 square miles. In the decades when the city annexed, the city's population gains were among the greatest in the city's history, with the exception of 1960-70, when the city's population declined by 5.1 per cent despite three small annexations (Table 2).

While the city's population growth has been substantial, the Roanoke Metropolitan Area, remains a small to medium-size urban region, with approximately 225,000 residents.<sup>96</sup> Previous research on annexation has concluded that annexation tends to be most appropriate in such urban areas. Diseconomies of scale do not negate the potential benefits from annexation, as might happen in larger urban areas.

Roanoke remains one of the nation's smaller urban centers, although from 1890 to 1940, Roanoke was Virginia's third largest city. Roanoke continues to be the largest urban center in Virginia's southwestern region. These two

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<sup>96</sup> United States Census of Population, 1980, Virginia, Table 12, p. 29.

rankings, in addition to the city's early rapid development, created a strong climate of civic boosterism in the city. Examples of this boosterism were Roanoke's locally well-known two sobriquets, the "Magic City," and the "Star City of the South." City boosters competed with other state and regional cities for growth and prestige. This competition increased the city's willingness to achieve growth through annexation of suburban areas.

Because the state's legal environment has acted to frame the issues in the city's annexations, the importance of two issues--services and planning and financial considerations--have also been important. These two issues are among the criteria which the city must use to prove the need for annexation.

On one issue--race-related considerations--Roanoke is not typical of other settings in which racial concerns have been an issue. Located in southwestern Virginia, its black population, historically, has been small. Neither a northern industrial city nor a southern magnet for rural to urban migration of Blacks, Roanoke experienced relatively little in-migration of Blacks compared to cities farther north or farther south. In addition, the lack of effective political power until recent years permitted white politicians in both the city and suburban governments to ignore any concerns

black residents may have had regarding these annexations. As a consequence, the particular issues and concerns of and about Blacks were not addressed publicly during these suits.

### 3.3 THE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

Roanoke's historic experience not only provides a relevant study of these four issues in annexation, it also illustrates the influence that state annexation statutes bring to bear on all municipal annexations. Virginia's annexation statutes differ slightly from those in other states in two respects. First, Virginia is the only state in which the legal and jurisdictional separation of cities and counties is a state-wide policy. Although several cities--Baltimore, Denver, San Francisco, and St. Louis--are legally separated from any county, in Virginia this practice is mandated by the constitution. City-county separation evolved from the state's colonial period through various pieces of legislation rather than from a single act of the General Assembly. By 1887 the concept had become accepted as a formal legal policy by state officials. Because of this separation, annexations are usually problematic because counties actually lose territory, population, and economic resources. Since towns remain a part of the adjacent county, there is generally little or no opposition to annexation. The opposition

that may arise often results from county fear's that the town may seek city status after the annexation, thereby removing these valuable social and economic resources.<sup>97</sup>

This difference makes Virginia, a Southern state, resemble the states of the Northeast and Midwest where there are strong township governments. Annexations in those states also involve a "win-lose" situation between cities and townships. Cities in Virginia must compensate the county for its economic and population losses, similar to the compensation municipalities in the Northeast and Midwest pay to townships.<sup>98</sup>

#### 3.4 STATUTORY HISTORY AND PROCEDURES

The second difference in Virginia's annexation statutes is Virginia's practice of having the state circuit courts hear annexation suits. Virginia's sixth constitution, adopted in 1902, stipulated that the General Assembly would no longer pass special bills to extend or contract the corporate limits of cities and towns.<sup>99</sup> Instead the state statutory code was expanded to provide detailed regulations to

<sup>97</sup> Chester W. Bain, A Body Incorporated: The Evolution of City-County Separation in Virginia (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, 1967), p. 23; Chester Bain (1966), pp. ix-x.

<sup>98</sup> Frank Sengstock (1960), pp. 84-108 passim.

<sup>99</sup> Chester Bain (1966), p. 1.

govern annexation and contraction, or detachment.<sup>100</sup>

After much debate, the General Assembly enacted such statutes under which annexation would be affected through a court suit, giving rise to the label "judicial process."<sup>101</sup> Such changes were also imperative, given Virginia's practice of city-county separation and the resulting political conflicts. The judiciary's role as a nonbiased agency removed many of these potential political conflicts which might arise if some other agency, such as the legislature or a special annexation committee, were to decide annexations. Every city annexation, no matter how small, reduces county resources; therefore, if elected officials decided the merits of each annexation, they could be unduly swayed by political self-interests. As a result, the political effects would halt annexations where there was strong opposition. Annexations could have become infrequent, if not rare.<sup>102</sup>

Between 1904 and 1950 the General Assembly and the state's courts made several changes in the annexation statutes which clarified ambiguities in the statutes and/or enabled them to function more effectively.<sup>103</sup> One change

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<sup>100</sup> Constitution of Virginia (1902), Art. VIII, Sec. 126; Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 1014a, pp. 468-70.

<sup>101</sup> Chester Bain (1966), pp. 5-6.

<sup>102</sup> Robert G. Dixon, jr., p. 148.

<sup>103</sup> W. Martin and J. Buchholtz, p. 243.

came as the result of a series of court rulings from 1906 onward which clarified formerly vague language as to what the judiciary would accept as sufficient criteria establishing the "necessity for and expediency of" annexation and the "terms and conditions" for the future management of the area proposed for annexation. The result of these rulings was the "standarization" of much of the phraseology in the municipal petition, especially these two sections. City governments, consequently, adopted annexation ordinances enumerating all the major criteria which influenced the courts' decisions. In 1948 the General Assembly made these courts' rulings a formal part of the annexation statutes when these criteria were incorporated into the statutory code.<sup>104</sup>

Another change, made in 1924, increased the number of judges comprising the annexation court from one to three to include, a judge from the county circuit court, a judge from the city circuit court, and a judge from a circuit court outside the area. This broadening of judicial perspectives increased the court's impartiality.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Chester Bain (1966), pp. 40-41; Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1041, pp. 449-451.

<sup>105</sup> Chester Bain (1966), pp. 67-68; Acts of the Virginia General Assembly, 1928, Chapter 42, pp. 1076-78; Code of Virginia (1950), p. 440.

A third change was a Supreme Court decision, delivered in 1947 and referred to as the "Staples Doctrine," which mandated that the Virginia Constitution had established county governments for rural areas and city governments for urban areas; therefore, the state permitted cities to annex the county's urbanized sections in keeping with this constitutional principle<sup>106</sup>

A fourth change occurred in 1948 when the General Assembly enacted into law what was already a judicial precedent. The law required the court to consider the interests not only of the city, but those of the county, the area(s) to be annexed, and the remaining parts of the county after annexation.<sup>107</sup>

Finally, the General Assembly has taken on responsibility for studying the effectiveness of annexation and has sought ways to improve the statutes to meet changing circumstances. To this end the legislators appointed several commissions to study the annexation laws. The first two studies were done by the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council (VALC) in 1940 and 1944. In 1950, after revising the statutory code and mandating a two-year annexation moratorium, the Commission

<sup>106</sup> County of Norfolk v. City of Portsmouth, 186 Va. 1032, pp. 1044-45.

<sup>107</sup> Acts of the Virginia General Assembly, 1948, Chapter 332, p. 589; Chester Bain (1966), p. 88; Thomas H. Reed (1949), pp. 5-6.



to Study Urban Growth was directed to recommend changes in the statutes. These recommendations, which were incorporated into the 1950 statutory code revisions, increased the court's discretion (1) to set debt assumption; (2) to compensate for public improvements and provide public services; (3) to require "pre-trial" conferences; (4) to submit depositions by annexation experts; (5) to continue each annexation court for five years after the decree; (6) to empower the court to modify the decree with changing circumstances; and (7) to limit the court's annexation liability to once in five years.<sup>108</sup>

In 1959 the General Assembly adopted the VALC's recommendation that the state encourage consolidation as an alternative to annexation.<sup>109</sup> In the next fifteen years, the General Assembly instituted a series of moratoria: in 1962-64,<sup>110</sup> 1970-72, 1972-76,<sup>111</sup> and 1976-80,<sup>112</sup> during which time the VALC made extensive studies of the annexation statutes. Among the VALC's recommendations were to permit city judges

<sup>108</sup> Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1055; Chester Bain (1966), p. 35.

<sup>109</sup> Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1030, pp. 438-39.

<sup>110</sup> W. Martin and J. Buchholtz, p. 245.

<sup>111</sup> "Municipal Corporations, Annexations," Virginia Law Review, 58:7 (November 1972), p. 1303;

<sup>112</sup> "Municipal Corporations, Annexations," Virginia Law Review, 66:3 (April 1980), 329-30.

to sit on the annexation courts, to lower trial costs and the technical complexity, and to revise the pre-trial conferences. The General Assembly, however, did not enact any of these recommendations.<sup>113</sup> In 1980, the General Assembly gave annexation immunity to Roanoke County and eight other counties. The legislators also, (1) increased state aid to municipalities in those counties as compensation; (2) increased the time between "involuntary annexations" from five to ten years; and (3) established the Virginia Commission of Local Government to propose new procedures for affecting municipal boundary changes and to study all annexation suits prior to the hearing before the newly created annexation courts.<sup>114</sup>

Until the General Assembly made its last major revision to the annexation statutes in 1950, the annexation laws had tended to favor the municipalities, while seeking to protect the interests of the counties and the remaining county residents. Beginning in 1950 and subsequent revisions, the General Assembly gradually reduced the pro-city "slant" of the statutes. This occurred because of the growing influence of the suburban legislators and their county allies; the increasing number of government functions, especially in the

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<sup>113</sup> Chester Bain (1966), pp. 31-32.

<sup>114</sup> "Municipal Corporations, Annexations," Virginia Law Review, 1980, pp. 329-30.

area of services and capital improvements that the counties were permitted to undertake; and the increasing popularity of alternative forms of county government allowing for a county manager, a county executive, and most recently, the status of an "urban county." These forms of county government now permit counties which are part of one of the state's metropolitan areas to avoid further city annexations.<sup>115</sup> Despite this loss for the cities, one liberalization in the law during this period has been the recognition that a city may annex to "expand its tax resources, including real estate and personal property tax base."<sup>116</sup>

### 3.5 ANNEXATION PROCESS

The procedure for annexing territory since the 1902-04 statutory revisions consists of a court suit conducted by a special session of the county circuit court in which the annexation initiator resides. The suit, nonetheless, is heard like any other civic suit in Virginia, according to the state's legal practices and procedures. It involves the following sequence of events.

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<sup>115</sup> "Municipal Corporations, Annexations," Virginia Law Review, 1964-85; Code of Virginia (1950), Secs. 15.1-945.1-15.1-977.21., pp. 78-82 passim.

<sup>116</sup> Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1041, pp. 449-52. This change codified a criterium which Roanoke officials had used in several of their annexation suits to justify the city's annexation.

### 3.5.1 Initiation

Although Virginia's annexation statutes allow four parties to undertake annexations, by far the largest numbers of annexation suits are initiated by cities.<sup>117</sup> City officials pass an ordinance petitioning the circuit court to grant their annexation. The ordinance states, (1) the metes and bounds of the proposed annexation area; (2) "the necessity of or expediency for" the annexation;" and (3) "the terms and conditions" for the annexation, including the city's plans for the area's future "management and improvement."<sup>118</sup> The council must notify the officials of all affected counties, and serve public notice that all other affected parties may become co-defendants.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> The other three parties are: residents of areas outside a municipality; officials of a county adjacent to a municipality; and town officials seeking annexation to an adjacent city or town. Code of Virginia (1950), Secs. 15.1-1033-34, p. 449; Chester Bain (1966), p. 34.

<sup>118</sup> Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1033-34, p. 449; Chester Bain (1966), pp. 34-35.

<sup>119</sup> Code of Virginia (1904), Sec. 1014a., No. 2, p. 468; Adjusting Municipal Boundaries, Law and Practice, pp. 308-09; Chester Bain, "Recent Developments in the Virginia Annexation System," Virginia Law Review, 46:5 (June 1960), p. 1030.

### 3.5.2 The Three Annexation Provisions of the Court Suit

The annexation petition's three provisions become the basis for the court suit. The "metes and bounds" of the proposed annexation area indicate "the location of the boundary lines of the territory by giving their courses, terminal points, and angles."<sup>120</sup>

The "necessity of or expediency for" annexation justifies the annexation as the only legal remedy to present conditions in the city. Four conditions are required to justify annexation: (1) "the crowded and congested conditions within the city"; (2) the areas to be annexed are urbanized and should be administered by the city's government; (3) a strong "community of interest" must exist between city residents and the annexation area residents; and (4) it must be shown that the county government has failed to implement adequate regulations to promote present and future "orderly growth and development" in the urbanizing suburbs.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Chester Bain (1966), pp. 36-37; W. Martin and J. Buchholtz, pp. 262-63; National League of Cities, p. 308.

<sup>121</sup> Chester Bain (1966), pp. 42-46; Code of Virginia (1950), Secs. 15.1-1041, p. 449-50. Thomas Reed (1949), p. 6; Joseph R. Mayes et al., "Securing a Valid Annexation in Virginia: State and Federal Requirements," University of Richmond Law Review, 10:3 (Spring 1976), pp. 561-62; M. G. Woodroof III., "Systems and Standards of Municipal Annexation Review: A Comparative Analysis," The Georgetown Law Journal, 58:743 (1970), p. 773.

The "terms and conditions" prescribe the city's plans for the area's future management following annexation. City officials include financial provisions for the proposed services and capital improvements. Since the annexation often is a heavy financial burden, the court looks closely at the city's financial situation and its ability to raise revenues.<sup>122</sup>

Under city-county separation, annexation transfers population, land, and economic resources from the county to the city. The city must reimburse the county for public facilities, land, and equipment located in the annexed area; and assume a proportion of the county's bonded debt attributable to the annexed area's property.<sup>123</sup>

While cities may not petition to annex an area simply to increase revenues, the courts have not prevented an annexation because it reduced county's revenues either. Annexation is supposed to stimulate urban development in the county so that any revenue losses will be regained "in only a few years." A city must, nonetheless, compensate the county for its losses, ameliorating the effects of the annexation

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<sup>122</sup> W. Martin and J. Buchholtz, p. 243; Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1034, p. 444; Chester Bain (1966), p. 134; Thomas Reed (1949), p. 6.

<sup>123</sup> Chester Bain (1966) p. 161; National League of Cities, p. 310. Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1042, pp. 452-56.

during redevelopment.<sup>124</sup>

### 3.5.3 The Court's Decision

The outcome of an annexation trial depends upon weighing of the support for the proposal and opposition to it. Unopposed annexations are easy to justify, since the judges must grant the annexation when the city determines that the evidence supports the "necessity of or expediency for" annexation. When strong opposition exists, on the other hand, the trials often become long, complicated, and costly for all parties.<sup>125</sup> Traditionally the courts favor the city's need for annexation, though this alone is not sufficient for proving the "necessity of or expediency for" annexation.<sup>126</sup>

The judges delineate the boundaries of the annexed area insuring that the area is (1) "reasonably compact," (2) "adapted to city improvements," and (3) "needed in the "rea-

<sup>124</sup> Warwick County v. City of Newport News 120 Va. 177 S.E. 644; Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1042, pp. 453-56; Chester Bain (1966), p. 132-33.

<sup>125</sup> Chester Bain (1966), p. 100; W. Martin and J. Buchholtz, p. 243; Weldon Cooper and Thomas R. Morris, Virginia Government and Politics, (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, 1976), pp. 354-55.

<sup>126</sup> Chester Bain (1966), pp. 98-99; Patrick M. McSweeney, "Local Government Law in Virginia, 1870-1970," University of Richmond Law Review, 4:2 (Spring), pp. 246-47; County of Norfolk v. City of Portsmouth, 186 Va. 1032, pp. 1039-42; Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1033, p. 443.

sonably near future" for city development. The courts have ordered cities to annex land not necessarily considered "compact" to avoid creating irregular tracts in the county, unsuited for later development. Courts have, likewise, included additional land when the city petitioned to annex only the most desirable suburban areas in a county, excluding areas with lower property values, to achieve a more "equitable arrangement" for all parties.<sup>127</sup> To avoid economic loss, city officials often delay annexation until assured of the area's continued development.<sup>128</sup>

Although the annexation statutes and court precedents have standardized certain aspects of the annexation procedure, two factors make each suit unique. First, each court emphasizes some criteria more than others in a suit. Second, each annexation suit has its own particular circumstances. These factors tend to limit the value of a case as a precedent for later cases; consequently, each suit is meaningful only in light of the judicial tradition surrounding annexation.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Code of Virginia (1950), Sec. 15.1-1042, pp. 449-51 and pp. 454-55; W. Martin and J. Buchholtz, p. 263; National League of Cities, pp. 17-18. Chester Bain (1966), pp. 140-42; County of Norfolk v. City of Portsmouth, 186 Va. 1032, pp. 1048-51; Thomas Reed (1949), pp. 5-6.

<sup>128</sup> Norfolk County v. City of Portsmouth, 186 Va. 1032, pp. 1042-43.

<sup>129</sup> Chester Bain (1966), p. 94.



## Chapter IV

### ROANOKE'S ANNEXATIONS, 1874-1926

This chapter briefly traces the history of annexation in Roanoke from the city's incorporation in 1874 to 1926. The period saw rapid economic development and population growth which established Roanoke as a major state and regional urban center and prompted the city to annex six times. Furthermore, this chapter also establishes the major constellation of actors for these and succeeding annexations, links the actors to the annexation issues, and briefly discusses and analyzes the importance of the four issues--civic boosterism; public services, planning and capital improvements; financial concerns; and race-related considerations--in these six annexations. While suburban opposition to the city's annexations was minimal in this period, it greatly increased in succeeding years. This chapter, consequently, provides both a summary of the city's early annexation history and a basis for comparing the events, the actors, and the importance of these four issues between Roanoke's early annexations and the latter ones.

#### 4.1 INCORPORATION AND EARLY ANNEXATIONS, 1874-1904

The city of Roanoke was originally chartered and incorporated as the town of Big Lick in 1874. At that time the town contained fewer than five hundred residents and an area of only 0.5 square miles (map 2).<sup>130</sup> Big Lick became a prosperous railroad transportation and industrial center during the next eight years,<sup>131</sup> and in 1882, the General Assembly rechartered Big Lick as the town of Roanoke and annexed 2.46 square miles to the municipality.<sup>132</sup> (map 2). Two years later, 1884, Roanoke's population had climbed above 5,000, and the General Assembly reincorporated Roanoke as a second class city.<sup>133</sup> Roanoke's boundaries, however, were not changed.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Virginia General Assembly, Acts and Joint Resolutions (1873-74), Chapter 80, p. 71.

<sup>131</sup> E. B. Jacobs, History of Roanoke City and History of the Norfolk & Western Railway Company, in George S. Jack, History of Roanoke County, (Roanoke, VA: Stone, 1912), pp. 94-96.

<sup>132</sup> Virginia General Assembly, Acts and Joint Resolutions (1881-82), Chapter 57, pp. 52-53; Harland Bartholomew (1960), p. 1; E. B. Jacobs, p. 95.

<sup>133</sup> A population of 5,000 is the minimum for qualification as a second class city in Virginia. Code of Virginia (1873), Chapter 45, Sec. 1, p. 424.

<sup>134</sup> E. B. Jacobs, p. 95; Virginia General Assembly, Acts and Joint Resolutions (1883-84), Chapter 70, pp. 87-88.

With further growth, the General Assembly permitted Roanoke to annex 2.33 square miles in 1890<sup>135</sup> and 0.19 square miles in 1892,<sup>136</sup> as part of the city's charter revisions. Roanoke's population continued to grow, but the economic "boom" of these years subsided after 1892.<sup>137</sup>

These early annexations were handled by the General Assembly. Cities and towns included boundary adjustments with charter revisions and other special legislation. Legislators rarely debated these local issues.<sup>138</sup>

Special annexation legislation was used by most states until the end of the nineteenth century, when the states began to modify their annexation statutes. The Virginia General Assembly, however, did not change the state's annexation statutes to their present form until 1904. All annexations since then have followed this procedure. In 1900 the legislators declared an annexation moratorium while

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<sup>135</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, January 7, 1890, Book 2, pp. 235-36; January 14, 1890, Book 2, pp. 245-46; Virginia General Assembly, Acts and Joint Resolutions (1889-90), Chapter 130, pp. 178-79; Harland Bartholomew (1960), p. 3.

<sup>136</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, January 8, 1892, Book 2, pp. 474-75; E. B. Jacobs, p. 96; Harland Bartholomew (1960), p. 1; Acts and Joint Resolutions Virginia General Assembly, (1891-92), Chapter 200, pp. 302-03.

<sup>137</sup> E. B. Jacobs, pp. 98-99.

<sup>138</sup> Chester Bain (1966), p. 1; W. Cooper and T. Morris, pp. 353-54;

they enacted the new statutes. When the moratorium ended in 1905, cities and towns resumed annexing territory.<sup>139</sup> Roanoke, however, did not annex under the new statutes for almost ten years.

#### 4.2 ANNEXATIONS, 1905-1926

The years around World War I brought Roanoke more economic growth, similar to the earlier boom period.<sup>140</sup> The city took advantage of this economic prosperity to annex three more times--2.32 square miles in 1915,<sup>141</sup> 1.41 square miles in 1919,<sup>142</sup> and 1.05 square miles in 1926.<sup>143</sup> Like the three earlier annexations, these were undertaken to keep pace with the region's development. These annexations generally incorporated most of the current suburban development into the

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<sup>139</sup> Constitution of Virginia (1902); Code of Virginia, (1904), (1950), and subsequent revisions; Chester Bain (1966), p. 1;

<sup>140</sup> S. Makielski, and D. Temple, p. 22.

<sup>141</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, November 5, 1915, p. 6; Harland Bartholomew (1960), p. 3; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 5, 1915, Book 9, p. 3653; Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2.

<sup>142</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 9, 1919, Book 1, pp. 271; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, November 28, 1919; Roanoke Times, November 23, 1919, Sec. B, p. 2. Harland Bartholomew (1960), p. 1;

<sup>143</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, September 18, 1925, Book 5, p. 87; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Order, November 30, 1925; Roanoke Times, December 6, 1925, p. 13; Harland Bartholomew (1960), p. 1.

city, keeping municipal boundaries coterminous with most of the surrounding urbanized area. The annexations also reduced the need for suburban residents to seek separate incorporation to gain needed services and capital improvements that the county did not provide.<sup>144</sup>

#### 4.3 THE ACTORS

During these early years, 1874-1926, one of the city's most active annexation periods, the major constellation of actors emerged. City officials, Roanoke business and industrial leaders, and most city residents supported these annexations. In opposition, at least formally, were county officials. The county officials acted more as public guardians of the county's interests than as vigorous opponents of Roanoke's annexations. Their chief concern was to insure that the county received adequate compensation for county economic losses in the five annexations which followed Roanoke's transition to city status in 1884.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Roanoke Times, December 30, 1915, p. 2; January 19, 1919, p. 14; November 21, 1919, p. 2; August 25, 1925, p. 17; December 6, 1926, p. 3; Wylie Kilpatrick, pp. 303-25 passim; S. Makielski and D. Temple, p. 14-19 passim.

<sup>145</sup> Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, October 18, 1915, Book 4, p. 204; October 15, 1919, Book 5, p. 1; October 19, 1925, Book 5, p. 527; Roanoke Times, November 21, 1919, p. 2; December 6, 1925, p. 3.

County residents were divided by the annexations. Most county residents, especially those living in the city suburbs, supported the city's six annexations. They saw annexation as providing many benefits and few disadvantages. Other county residents, particularly farmers and some company officials, opposed their annexation because it would have brought them few benefits but inevitably higher taxes and property assessments.<sup>146</sup>

#### 4.4 THE ISSUES

Throughout this period only three of the four issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, and public services and planning, and financial considerations--were very important.

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<sup>146</sup> Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2; November 21, 1919, p. 2; December 1, 1925, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, January 7, 1890, pp. 235-36; October 4, 1919, Book 1, p. 268; October 9, 1919, Book 1, p. 271; August 28, 1925, Book 5, p. 59; October 16, 1925, Book 5, p. 109; E. B. Jacobs, pp. 93-99 passim.

#### 4.5 CIVIC BOOSTERISM AND COMMUNITY AUTONOMY

Civic boosterism provided the initial motivating force behind the city's six annexations. These six annexations occurred during two of Roanoke's most prosperous and most rapid periods of growth, 1874-1900 and 1910-1930. The city's population increased by 4,200 per cent between the incorporation of Big Lick in 1874 and 1900, and by an additional 220 per cent between 1910 and 1930 (Table 1). This rapid development created a demand for a larger city to accommodate this growth. The city government, the commercial-civic elite, and most city residents were eager for Roanoke to become a major regional and national urban center. City officials and the business community cooperated to plan these annexations, especially in the nineteenth century.<sup>147</sup> In their view, Roanoke's growth was the primary reason for suburban development--city growth "spilled over" into the suburbs. Suburban residents had close economic and social ties with Roanoke, constituting a strong "community of interest" between the city and its suburbs. These annexations were designed to incorporate this growth into the city. In addition, city officials recognized the advantages of annexing commercial and industrial sections as well as residential suburbs whose residents would bolster the city's middle

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<sup>147</sup> Roanoke Times, December 6, 1915, p. 3; November 21, 1919, p. 2; December 1, 1925, p. 1.

class population.<sup>148</sup>

Although Roanoke's annexations proved an apt vehicle for and probably encouraged civic boosterism, Roanoke County civic boosterism was largely absent in this period. A major result was the absence of strong opposition to these annexations. County officials in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were constrained by a decentralized county government structure which tended to focus each county supervisor's attention on his individual magisterial district rather than on the county as a whole.<sup>149</sup> Roanoke County also remained primarily rural with agriculture the predominant activity. County officials were less concerned with the loss of these suburbs since their primary interests lay in meeting the needs of the largely rural constituency; consequently, they were not strongly opposed to losing suburban areas which placed greater and more costly demands on the county government and its limited fiscal abilities.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Roanoke Times, December 15, 1915, p. 1; January 19, 1919, p. 14; September 19, 1919, pp. 1-2; November 21, 1919, p. 2; August 25, 1925, p. 17; August 29, 1925, p. 10; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, September 20, 1919; Clare White, p. 75.

<sup>149</sup> S. Makielski and D. Temple, p. 13; Report of the Virginia Commission on County Government, 1940, pp. 20-22; W. Cooper and T. Morris, pp. 344 passim; County Government in Virginia, A Symposium Wylie Kilpatrick, p. 591-92; Patrick McSweeney, pp. 190-92.

<sup>150</sup> Roanoke Times, December 6, 1925. p. 13.



Another reason for this subdued civic support and opposition to annexation derived from the support that most suburban residents gave to the city's annexation proposals. Often these residents would negotiate with city officials even before the city seriously considered an annexation, forming joint study committees with city officials to plan the annexation. Suburban support for annexation was in large measure due to their perceptions of annexation as being overwhelmingly beneficial for them and their communities. Furthermore, many suburban residents considered themselves part of "Greater Roanoke;" annexation was, consequently, more of a legal formality than a change in their political allegiance.<sup>151</sup>

Although most suburban residents supported these annexations, there was some opposition, centered primarily on farmers and on officials of several development companies who feared higher taxes, and city regulations. Some also believed that annexation was inappropriate for their properties. The courts obviously agreed with these claims because in two annexations, 1915 and 1919, the judge excluded the property of those opposed to the annexations. The city, too, was sensitive to these arguments, excluding land parcels belonging to several persons who had petitioned the city not

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<sup>151</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, September 20, 1919, Book 1, p. 258; Roanoke Times, November 28, 1925, p. 2.

to include their property in the annexation. This willingness to abide by the wishes of suburban residents was short-lived. In later annexation the city would not acquiesce to such demands because suburban opposition to annexation had become widespread and would stop any annexation.<sup>152</sup>

#### 4.6 PUBLIC SERVICES AND PLANNING

Public services, capital improvements, and planning played an increasing role in justifying the city's annexations. In the nineteenth century, city services, planning, and capital improvements were few. One reason for this was that the technology to provide these government functions was still being developed.<sup>153</sup> Another reason was that some services, such as paved streets, were not as essential as they would become in later years. Other public functions, such as planning, had not yet been introduced. Despite these limitations, Roanoke did offer more and better urban services than did the county.<sup>154</sup> The city spent many years

<sup>152</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 4, 1919, Book 1, p. 268; October 9, 1919, Book 1, p. 271; August 28, 1925, Book 5, p. 59; October 2, 1925, Book 5, p. 100; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2; November 21, 1919, p. 2; E. B. Jacobs, pp. 93-99.

<sup>153</sup> Howard Rabinowitz, pp. 115-16;

following the 1892 annexation upgrading services and constructing capital improvements which had failed to keep pace with Roanoke's recent and rapid growth.<sup>155</sup>

After the General Assembly changed the annexation statutes in 1902-04, services, capital improvements, and comprehensive planning became major reasons justifying annexation. Roanoke officials argued in the 1915, 1919, and 1926 annexation suits that the city's services, capital improvements, and urban planning were superior to what the county government offered suburban areas and that annexation was necessary to upgrade these functions. The city claimed that it was more experienced providing these functions for urbanizing areas than was the county government with its traditionally rural orientation. The city noted, furthermore, that it already provided many county residents with services, such as those used by suburban commuters without compensation.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Roanoke Times, December 27, 1891, p. 3; December 29, 1891, p. 1.

<sup>155</sup> Roanoke Times, June 18, 1892, p. 13; August 7, 1892, p. 1; E. B. Jacobs, pp. 98-99; Clare White, Roanoke, 1874-1982, (Roanoke: Roanoke Valley Historical Society, 1982), pp. 75-76.

<sup>156</sup> Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2; November 21, 1919, p. 2; December 6, 1925, p. 3; Wylie Kilpatrick, pp. 92-95 and 113-18.

The city planned these annexations in accordance with its program to supply services and capital improvements, such as including all land in an annexation proposal which was coterminous with the areal drainage patterns for sewer and water lines. In addition, as part of the annexation petition, the city promised to undertake large public works projects after annexation to remedy poor conditions in the suburban areas.<sup>157</sup>

The county government was not prepared to refute the city's claims of its superior services, capital improvements, and planning functions. The county was handicapped by several obstacles, including constitutional and statutory codes which restricted the county government's ability to provide services other than drainage ditches, roads, and public schools; by a small and widely dispersed population; and a limited financial base. The decentralized county government structure, furthermore, re-enforced the government's traditional concern for its predominately rural constituency, most of whom needed few services and capital improvements.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Roanoke, City Council Ordinances Nos. 3637 and 3638, April 5, 1915; No. 281, October 9, 1919; No. 1876, September 18, 1925.

<sup>158</sup> S. Makielski and D. Temple, pp. 14-19; Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2; November 21, 1919, p. 2; December 6, 1925, pp. 3 and 13.

While the county was restricted by constitutional constraints and a limited economic base, the city's suburbs continued to develop. These suburbs were increasingly the site for Roanoke's newer growth.<sup>159</sup> These increasingly urbanized communities, with their rising service demands, burdened the county's limited functioning. Many suburban residents already used city services. Some sent their children to city schools, while others bought water and services from Roanoke. This arrangement was generally satisfactory except that the city levied nonresident fees on education. Annexation was, consequently, a means for suburban residents to avoid these fees, while securing a better quality education for their children. Annexation reduced the county's service obligations as well. For these reasons, it was understandable that suburban residents often took the initiative to seek annexation, and why county opposition was minimal.<sup>160</sup>

This opposition, as stated earlier, was greatest among farmers and the officials of several land companies. These two groups opposed annexation because it would bring them few benefits but many disadvantages, chiefly higher taxes.

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<sup>159</sup> Roanoke Times, November 21, 1919, p. 2; December 6, 1925, p. 13.

<sup>160</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 4, 1919, Book 1, p. 268; July 31, 1925, Book 5, p. 42; August 28, 1925, Book 5, p. 59; September 4, 1925, Book 5, p. 65; November 27, 1925, Book 5, p. 142; Roanoke Times, August 29, 1925, p. 10; November 28, 1925, p. 2.

They were satisfied with the limited services and capital improvements that the county provided. They argued that their properties were rural and essentially unsuited for city development, including urban services and improvements.<sup>161</sup>

#### 4.7 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The other two issues--financial considerations and race-related considerations--were less important than they would become later. Financial concerns were insignificant during the early annexations for several reasons. First, until 1884, Roanoke was a town in Roanoke County. The territory that Roanoke annexed remained in the county; consequently, the city was not required to compensate the county. Second, the suburban areas had few capital facilities for which the city had to reimburse the county. Finally, these annexations were small--none exceeded 2.5 square miles. The county's compensation was lower than what it might have been had the annexations been larger.<sup>162</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 4, 1919, Book 1, p. 268; Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2; November 21, 1919, p. 2; December 1, 1925, p. 1;

<sup>162</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, 1915, p. 18; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, 1919 pp. 4-5; City of Roanoke, v. County of Roanoke, Order, 1925 pp. 10-11; Roanoke Times, December 12, 1915, p. 1; December 17, 1915, p. 2; December 29, 1918, p. 3; November 30, 1919, p. 1; December 6, 1925.

Despite these lower costs, the frequent annexations did impose continuous and long-term financial obligations on the city. Compensation for four annexations--1890, 1915, 1919, and 1926--would amount to more than \$440,000 in 1984 dollars<sup>163</sup> (Table 2). These expenses forced the city to float bonds and increase city expenditures to pay for capital improvements and increased services, especially the increased school enrollments.<sup>164</sup> The city was also frequently required to spend more on capital facilities when it found suburban facilities in worse condition than estimated.<sup>165</sup> While these expenses were a burden for the city, the city did acquire several economically valuable suburban areas whose taxes helped to offset the annexation expenses.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> The annexation costs were calculated in terms of their current values using the Statistical Abstract of the United States, pp. 474-75 and the Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970, "Consumer Price Indexes," Series E: 135-166 and 166-173, for each annexation.

<sup>164</sup> Roanoke Times, November 21, 1919, pp. 1-2; November 25, 1919, pp. 1-2; December 7, 1919, p. 1; January 29, 1925, p. 1; December 1, 1925, p. 1. Roanoke, City Council Minutes, January 7, 1916, Book 9, pp. 3673; April 30, 1916, Book, 9, pp. 3698; August 7, 1920, Book 2, p. 35; April 9, 1921, Book 2, p. 216.

<sup>165</sup> Roanoke Times, December 30, 1915, p. 2; September 29, 1918, pp. 1-2.

<sup>166</sup> Roanoke Times, January 19, 1919, p. 14; November 30, 1919, p. 1; August 25, 1925, p. 4;

The city's economic gains from the annexations, despite the cost of services and capital improvements, removed valuable economic resources from the county-territory, public facilities, and residential, commercial, and industrial properties and the revenues they generated. County officials did not strongly oppose these annexations when they were assured of adequate compensation.<sup>167</sup> At least once, and probably more often, the city and county negotiated the terms of compensation prior to the court hearing. In this way the county could make its financial demands known to city officials who were then made aware of the potential cost of the annexation. The county's remaining population benefitted from these annexations indirectly. Even though the county lost economic resources, with adequate compensation, the county could recover most of these losses. In addition, the county could direct its remaining resources to other areas of the county needing more improvements. These annexations lowered county expenses since they removed suburbs where services and capital improvements were both most needed and more expensive to provide, since they had to serve a larger and more densely populated area.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, October 18, 1915, Book 4, p. 204; October 15, 1919, Book 5, p. 1; October 19, 1925, Book 5, p. 527; Roanoke Times, October 18, 1915, p. 1; November 21, 1919, p. 2.

<sup>168</sup> Roanoke Times, December 15, 1915, p. 13; November 21,



The suburbanites, farmers, and company officials who opposed annexation argued that not only would annexation bring them few benefits, but they resented paying higher property taxes as city residents when county services met their needs, and they could retain the county's lower tax rates.<sup>169</sup>

#### 4.8 RACE-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

Neither city nor county officials made any public references regarding annexation to the concerns affecting the city's black community. The county's black population increased slowly until 1880, then declined until the 1940's. Although the city's black population increased throughout this period, the percentage of blacks in the city population decreased between 1890 and 1930<sup>170</sup> (Tables 2 and 3). A ma-

1919, p. 2; December 6, 1925, p. 13;

<sup>169</sup> Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2; October 10, 1919, p. 1; November 21, 1919, p. 2; November 23, 1919, Sec. B, p. 2; December 1, 1925, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 4, 1919, Book 1, p. 268; "Demurrer and Answer of the Evergreen Development Company, Inc. to Said Proceedings," Circuit Court of Roanoke County, Virginia, November 20, 1919;

<sup>170</sup> Tenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1880), (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1883), Table 2, p. 83; Table 3, p. 360 Thirteenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1910), (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1911), Table 1, p. 956; Table 5, p. 400; Fourteenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1920), (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office,

major reason for this trend was the city's annexations. These annexations brought in predominately white residential suburbs, part of a conscious city policy which sought to annex economically valuable suburban areas to broaden the city's tax base and diversify the city's economy, and to increase the city's white, middle class population. The city excluded most of the predominately black residential areas which did not offer these economic advantages.<sup>171</sup> (Table 1).

The state's racial laws effectively excluded blacks from exercising any significant political power.<sup>172</sup> The feelings of Roanoke's black residents toward the city's annexations were not, consequently, publicized. These annexations reduced the size of the city's black population in proportion to the city's population. This action undermined the political power that Blacks might have gained as their population increased. Roanoke's white political establishment prevented Blacks from gaining political influence. Further-

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1921), Table 9, p. 1071; Table 13, p. 1079; Table 53, p. 651; Fifteenth Census of the United States, Virginia, (1930), (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1931), Table 2, p. 1119; Table 4, p. 1129; Table 11, p. 1158; Table 21, p. 1203.

<sup>171</sup> Roanoke Times, December 12, 1915, p. 1; January 19, 1919, p. 14; September 19, 1919, p. 1; October 5, 1919, p. 1; August 25, 1925, p. 4; December 1, 1925, p. 1; Roanoke World News, January 19, 1925, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, September 4, 1925, Book 5, p. 65.

<sup>172</sup> V. O. Key (1953), pp. 100-01; Joseph Mayes et al., pp. 566-68.

more, the frequent annexations would focus white concerns on the newly annexed areas and their needs rather than on the less affluent black neighborhoods.<sup>173</sup>

#### 4.9 SUMMARY

The city of Roanoke undertook six annexations in the city's first fifty-two years. These annexations differed primarily from those attempted later in their lack of strong county opposition, the fewer services and capital improvements which were needed, and the lower costs for each annexation. These differences were due mainly to the lower urban population in the city's suburbs and the lower level of services and capital improvements that residents needed.

Annexations during this period were a response to the city's rapid and sustained economic growth and rapid population increases. The city annexed land to incorporate suburbanization which resulted from both this urbanization and the scarcity of vacant and developable land in the city.

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<sup>173</sup> W. Cooper and T. Morris, pp. 58-59 and 80-82; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 9, 1921, Book 2, p. 216; Roanoke Times, December 17, 1915, p. 2; September 29, 1918, pp. 1-2; November 30, 1919, p. 1; December 1, 1925, p. 1.

## Chapter V

### ROANOKE'S 1943 ANNEXATION, 1927-43

The 1943 suit culminated several years of geopolitical conflict and negotiations between the city of Roanoke and Roanoke County. This annexation also marked the rising opposition to annexation among many county residents. While civic boosterism proved to be the prime motivator for both proponents and opponents of annexation, other arguments centered on services and to a lesser degree financial considerations.

#### 5.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Roanoke did not attempt to annex any land in Roanoke County between 1927 and 1943 for several reasons. First, the 1926 annexation encompassed most of the developing suburbs.<sup>174</sup> Second, there was little additional support for annexation, since the only petition received in council, lacked support, and the issue was dropped.<sup>175</sup> Finally, the Great Depression brought limited economic growth and curtailed enthusiasm for annexations.

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<sup>174</sup> Harland Bartholomew (1949), p. 5; (1960), p. 1.

<sup>175</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, January 2, 1931; Book 7, p. 279; Roanoke Times, January 3, 1931.

By 1937, Roanoke was in a better fiscal situation; however, the city's growth was lagging behind that of the rest of the metropolitan area. This was a great concern for the council and an important stimulus to seek annexation.<sup>176</sup> Between 1937 and 1941, the city council considered several annexation proposals. The proposals ranged from 2.7 to 20.56 square miles. All council members supported annexation. They split between those favoring "modest" annexations and those favoring more "comprehensive" annexations. Their arguments centered on three of the four issues, civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and planning, and financial considerations, but the financial considerations dominated their discussions.<sup>177</sup>

City officials were keenly aware that most of the metropolitan region's recent population growth and economic development was occurring in the city's suburbs in Roanoke County. While Roanoke had achieved impressive population growth in the 1920's of over 22 percent, the city's popula-

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<sup>176</sup> "City Government Reports," Script No. 10, March 23, 1941, pp. 3-8;

<sup>177</sup> W. P. Hunter, "Letter to the Roanoke City Council," July 26, 1937, p. 2; Roanoke World News, October 13, 1938, p. 11; January 29, 1939, p. 11; March 9, 1939, p. 11; Editorial, March 19, 1941, p. 9; September 25, 1941, pp. 1-2; November 27, 1941, p. 1; Roanoke Times, May 9, 1939, p. November 8, 1939, p. 4; July 2, 1940, p. 4; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, March 27, 1939, Book 12, pp. 378-79.

tion growth in the 1930's was a mere 0.1 percent (Tables 2 and 3). The city was losing population as well as businesses and industries to the county as suburbanization gained momentum. Even though many people preferred suburban communities, the city still provided suburban commuters with public services and capital facilities.<sup>178</sup>

Those supporting a comprehensive annexation argued that it would greatly increase Roanoke's population gains for the decade in the 1940 census and foster Roanoke's image as a thriving urban community. Postponing the annexation would only increase costs. The alternative view held that massive annexation would strain city finances.<sup>179</sup>

City newspaper editorials promoted a broader view. They noted that Roanoke had suffered population stagnation and loss of potential tax revenues. The county government, in turn, faced increasing demands for public services and capital facilities as increasing suburbanization caused a dramatic change in the traditionally rural county. While the county might oppose a comprehensive annexation, it was probably amenable to an annexation which would relieve it of

<sup>178</sup> "City Government Reports," pp. 1-2; Harland Bartholomew (1949), pp. 5-12 passim; Editorial, Roanoke World News, May 9, 1939, p. 9; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, May 8, 1939, Book 12, p. 425; March 17, 1941, Book 14, p. 396.

<sup>179</sup> The Roanoke World News, October 13, 1938, p. 1; March 25, 1939, p. 11; Roanoke Times, March 10, 1939, p. 4; March 12, 1939, p. 1; March 21, 1939, p. 4;

some of the demand for services and capital improvements.<sup>180</sup>

The council discussed these issues for almost two years, with the council vacillating between the two positions.<sup>181</sup> Finally the city hired consultants who convinced the council that not only was a comprehensive annexation the most feasible proposal, but recommended that the city annex nearly twenty-one square miles. The council adopted a petition in September 1941 to annex 20.56 squares, including most of the urbanized areas around Roanoke. This proposal was the city's most extensive annexation to date.<sup>182</sup>

While Roanoke County officials had expressed little open opposition to Roanoke's six earlier annexations, by the mid 1930's they became increasingly more opposed to annexation and supported legislative measures which would restrict municipal annexation, primarily for cities, and grant the counties greater protection from such annexation suits.<sup>183</sup> This changing attitude reflected the increasing civic boosterism

<sup>180</sup> Editorials, Roanoke World News, March 11, 1939, p. 9; October 14, 1938, p. 9.

<sup>181</sup> Roanoke Times, May 9, 1939, pp. 1 and 11; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, July 25, 1940, Book 14, pp. 48-49; March 17, 1941, p. 396; "City Government Reports," pp. 3-5.

<sup>182</sup> Harland Bartholomew (1943), p. 5-12; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, September 15, 1941, Book 15, p. 129; Roanoke Times, September 16, 1941, p. 4;

<sup>183</sup> Roanoke County Board of Supervisors' Minutes, February 21, 1938, Book 8, p. 107.

among county officials. They were becoming increasingly hostile to any attempt to reduce the county's territory and economic development.<sup>184</sup>

A major reason for this change was the county's efforts to expand present services and to add new ones in an attempt to provide for an increasingly urbanized population.<sup>185</sup> The cost of these services was, however, a heavy financial burden for the county government.<sup>186</sup> The continued suburbanization worsened this situation,<sup>187</sup> but the increasing commitment of the county to its residents provided county officials with greater justification for opposing annexation.<sup>188</sup>

Like the county government, many county residents remained loyal to the county and opposed the city's annexation. They voiced their satisfaction with county services and capital facilities, arguing that they had purposefully

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<sup>184</sup> Roanoke County Board of Supervisors' Minutes, April 17, 1939, Book 8, pp. 115-16; Roanoke Times, April 18, 1939, p. 4; April 2, 1941, p. 5; May 23, 1941, p. 4; September 24, 1941, p. 5.

<sup>185</sup> Roanoke Times, May 23, 1941, p. 5; September 24, 1941, p. 5.

<sup>186</sup> Roanoke Times, September 20, 1941, p. 5.

<sup>187</sup> Editorials, Roanoke World News, October 14, 1938, p. 9; March 11, 1939, p. 9.

<sup>188</sup> Roanoke Times, July 23, 1941, p. 5; September 24, 1941, p. 5.



chosen to live in Roanoke County. Many also cited higher city taxes with few additional benefits as the price they would pay for annexation.<sup>189</sup> County industrial leaders, like county residents, opposed annexation. They cited many of the same arguments on the few services, capital improvements, and the higher taxes that annexation would provide.<sup>190</sup>

While the city and county planned their legal strategies in preparation for the court suit, the United States was being drawn more and more into the world war. The formal entry of the United States into the war in December 1941 forced city officials to negotiate with their county counterparts. The war brought on rationing, and shortages became inevitable.<sup>191</sup> There were also attempts, though unsuccessful, by Roanoke County legislators to gain a wartime moratorium on annexation.<sup>192</sup> In addition, many local residents became opposed to annexation as unpatriotic and divisive

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<sup>189</sup> Roanoke Times, April 7, 1939, p. 5; April 18, 1939, p. 4; "Center Hill Home Owners Resolution," April 15, 1939.

<sup>190</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 17, 1939, Book 12, pp. 400-02; Roanoke Times, April 19, 1939, p. 4.

<sup>191</sup> Roanoke World News, August 15, 1942, p. 1; September 29, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>192</sup> Roanoke Times, January 19, 1942, p. 1; January 27, 1942, pp. 1 and 9; February 11, 1942, pp. 1 and 4; Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, January 26, 1942, Book 9, p. 313.

during this national emergency.<sup>193</sup> The annexation negotiations lasted from the end of 1941 until a final compromise was reached in October 1942.<sup>194</sup>

The city-county compromise permitted the city to annex just 4.173 square miles of county territory which both county and city officials agreed was "without adequate defense."<sup>195</sup> The county would drop its opposition, but the compromise permitted other parties to intervene as co-defendants.<sup>196</sup> The intervenors included farmers, industry officials, and residents and various property owners. Farmers and the property owners testified that their land was unsuited for urban development. In addition all the intervenors argued that they were satisfied with county services and capital improvements, that annexation would bring higher taxes and consequently, they would not benefit from annexation but would be burdened by it.<sup>197</sup> The farmers and indus-

<sup>193</sup> Roanoke County Board of Supervisors' Minutes, January 19, 1942, Book 9, p. 307.

<sup>194</sup> October 5, 1942, Book 15, p. 498. "Memoranda of Agreed Recommendations," Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors, February 6, 1942; "Resolution," Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, January 19, 1942; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 13, 1942, Book 14, p. 344; February 2, 1942, Book 15, p. 274; September 28, 1942, Book 15, p. 488.

<sup>195</sup> "Stipulation No. 1," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, November 2, 1942;

<sup>196</sup> Roanoke Times, October 6, 1942, p. 4.

trialists also argued that city regulations would either restrict their operations altogether or raise the costs.<sup>198</sup>

The court reduced the size of the city's award to 4.093 square miles, excluding sixty acres of farmland. The city was to pay Roanoke County \$62,000 (\$370,000)<sup>199</sup> as compensation for the loss of territory, as a prorata portion of the county's debt, and as a prorata portion of the county road bonds.<sup>200</sup> The city gained 2,965 residents, including 265 black residents<sup>201</sup> and property valued at \$3.1 million.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Roanoke World News, October 28, 1942, p. 11.

<sup>198</sup> Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>199</sup> A calculation of the annexation costs at the dollar's 1984 value using the Statistical Abstract of the United States, pp. 474-75 and Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970, "Consumer Price Indexes," Series E: 135-166 and 166-173.

<sup>200</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Order, November 5, 1942, pp. 20-21.

<sup>201</sup> Roanoke Times, February 23, 1943, p. 4.

<sup>202</sup> Roanoke Times, November 4, 1942, p. 4; November 5, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.

## 5.2 THE ACTORS

The constellation of actors and the resulting geopolitical conflict changed from the earlier annexations. City officials and Roanoke's commercial-civic elite pressed hard for this annexation, with city residents also supporting annexation, as they had in earlier years.<sup>203</sup> At this point the county government had become a vigorous opponent of this annexation, a strong contrast to its more passive posture in all earlier annexations, when it sought primarily to protect the county's financial interests.<sup>204</sup>

The county was joined by most residents, civic associations, and the county's industrial and commercial leaders.<sup>205</sup> One reason for this increasingly hostile stance was the win/lose situation created by the statutory separation of cities and counties. A second reason was the county government's emerging role as an active agency seeking to meet the needs of its residents and to preserve the county's present population, territory, and economic resources.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, January 29, 1939, p. 9; March 9, 1939, p. 11; March 25, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>204</sup> Roanoke Times, April 18, 1939, p. 4.

<sup>205</sup> Roanoke Times, May 9, 1939, pp. 1 and 11; Roanoke World News, May 9, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>206</sup> Roanoke Times, May 23, 1941, p. 4; October 10, 1941, p. 15; October 24, 1941, p. 5.

### 5.3 THE ISSUES

Continuing a trend established in the six earlier annexations, three of the four issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, the provision of public services and planning, and financial considerations--remained most important during this period.

### 5.4 CIVIC BOOSTERISM AND COMMUNITY AUTONOMY

City officials recognized the effects of slow population growth and the suburbanization of the city's commercial and industrial interests as indicative of a stagnating city. Historically Roanoke had been a city with rapid population growth (Table 2) and a prosperous and expanding economic base. The trend towards suburbanization which had begun as early as the 1920's, posed a serious threat to Roanoke's continued prosperity while expanding the county's development and population.<sup>207</sup> Unlike earlier decades, the 1930's was the first decade of slow population growth for Roanoke. The city, as a result, stood to lose not only its position as Virginia's third largest city but also its role as the metropolitan region's largest political unit.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, May 9, 1939, p. 9; "City Government Reports," March 23, 1941, p. 1; Harland Bartholomew (1943), pp. 6-9.

<sup>208</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, March 11, 1939, p. 9.

This role as the region's center was indicative of the Roanoke civic boosters' geopolitical perspective. Rather than view their city as one of four "components" in the greater metropolitan region, city officials and their allies tended to see the city as the region's "core," whose economic development had generated the region's development. The metropolitan region's prosperity, according to this view, could only be maintained by preserving the city's prosperity. Annexation could promote Roanoke's prosperity by recapturing the population and economic resources, such as businesses and industries which had relocated to Roanoke County.<sup>209</sup>

Roanoke's commercial-civic elite and most city residents strongly concurred with this viewpoint. They were avid supporters of the comprehensive annexation for two reasons. First, they argued that the comprehensive annexation would raise Roanoke's population closer to 100,000. With this population, Roanoke would join a group of major national cities which companies often chose as regional offices. Annexation could promote Roanoke's image as a major southern and national business center. Second, most local businessmen and industrialists associated a healthy city economy with local business prosperity. Conversely, a city whose

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<sup>209</sup> Roanoke Times, April 18, 1939, p. 4; November 3, 1942, p. 4; Editorial, Roanoke World News, May 13, 1941, p. 9.

population was stagnating showed outside companies that the region's economy was declining.<sup>210</sup> City residents, too, strongly supported this annexation, as they had earlier annexations. They equated the annexation with progress and as a sign of the city's continued development.<sup>211</sup> For these reasons an editorial in the Roanoke World News called the annexation a "profitable investment" for both the city and the annexed areas.<sup>212</sup>

Although county officials had taken a passive stance towards the city's six earlier annexation suits, exhibiting little civic boosterism, these officials reversed this position and offered a vigorous defense of the county's territory, population, and its economic resources.<sup>213</sup> They also argued that despite Roanoke's earlier successes, the outcome of this suit was not a foregone conclusion.<sup>214</sup> They promised county residents to oppose all city efforts to annex any county territory unless area residents supported their annexation.<sup>215</sup>

<sup>210</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, May 9, 1939, p. 9; October 13, 1938, p. 11; March 25, 1939, p. 1; Roanoke Times, March 12, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>211</sup> Roanoke World News, October 23, 1941, p. 3.

<sup>212</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, March 11, 1939, p. 9.

<sup>213</sup> Roanoke Times, September 24, 1941, p. 5.

<sup>214</sup> Roanoke Times, April 2, 1941, p. 5.

County officials focused their efforts on both the local and state levels. At the local level, their tactics included protesting the city's employment of outside annexation consultants, planning a strong legal case against the city's petition, and refusing to cooperate with the city in the reciprocal use of each governments documents.<sup>216</sup> County residents as well as officials of both Vinton and Salem lent their support to the county's efforts to defeat this suit.<sup>217</sup>

County officials labelled the state's annexation statutes "anachronistic" now that the General Assembly had enacted legislation permitting the counties to provide most of the same urban services and capital improvements that cities provide. They defended Roanoke County as among the state's most progressive counties, primarily because of the county government's efforts to provide for the needs of its rapidly increasing suburban population through expanded public services, comprehensive planning, and the construction and upgrading of capital facilities, while maintaining low tax-

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<sup>215</sup> Roanoke Times, May 23, 1941, p. 4.

<sup>216</sup> Roanoke Times, July 8, 1941, p. 5; July 23, 1941, p. 4. Roanoke, City Council Minutes, July 7, 1941, Book 16, p. 52.

<sup>217</sup> Roanoke Times, June 18, 1941, p. 5; October 21, 1941, p. 7.



es.<sup>218</sup>

County officials also refuted city accusations that a strong "community of interest" existed between the city and the suburban areas. They contended that such ties were no stronger than those between these suburbs and the rest of Roanoke County.<sup>219</sup>

While county officials were organizing their defense for the upcoming court hearing, they were also seeking to stop the city's suit through external means. Since the mid 1930's Roanoke County officials had given strong support and encouragement to passage of more restrictive annexation statutes which were introduced by Roanoke County legislators and their allies in other county delegations.<sup>220</sup> The county government continued to support such legislation throughout this period. As the nation was drawn more and more into the World War, these efforts focused on gaining a moratorium on all annexations until the war ended.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Roanoke Times, October 24, 1941, p. 5.

<sup>219</sup> Roanoke Times, March 18, 1941, p. 5.

<sup>220</sup> Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, February 21, 1938, Book 8, p. 107.

<sup>221</sup> "Letter from Benjamin E. Chapman, Delegate to Virginia House of Delegates," Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, March 16, 1940, Book 9, p. 31; Roanoke Times, January 27, 1942, p. 1.

In the city's early discussions of the merits of the "modest" versus the "comprehensive" annexation proposal, county residents had likewise argued the merits of the pending annexation. Initially some county residents would support their annexation as part of a comprehensive proposal which included both large and small suburban communities but they resented being singled out for annexation while large suburban communities were excluded.<sup>222</sup> As the annexation issues were discussed further, it became increasingly clear that, unlike earlier annexation suits, few county residents would finally support the city's suit. It was apparent from their opposition that "loyalty to Roanoke County" and strong partisanship had become the predominant attitude of most county residents. Many residents criticized the city officials' civic boosterism for showing no concern for the county's welfare and the interests of county residents who had no desire to become Roanoke residents.<sup>223</sup> One county resident even wrote the Roanoke Times comparing the city's annexation to Hitler's recent invasion of Poland.<sup>224</sup> For these

<sup>222</sup> Roanoke World News, March 11, 1939, p. 11; May 9, 1939, p. 1; Roanoke Times, April 16, 1939, p. 39.

<sup>223</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, March 14, 1939, Book 12, p. 352; R. H. Wampler, "An Open Letter to the Roanoke City Council," March 17, 1941; Roanoke Times, April 6, 1939, p. 5.

<sup>224</sup> J. W. Cates, "Letters from Times' Readers," Roanoke Times, September 25, 1941, p. 6.

reasons, most county residents and the suburban civic associations became strong supporters of the county's defense efforts.<sup>225</sup> Several residents became co-defendants, and many civic associations issued resolutions declaring that it was in their "best interest" to remain county residents because they were already provided with many public services and capital facilities and annexation, consequently, would bring few benefits but many disadvantages.<sup>226</sup>

#### 5.5 PUBLIC SERVICES AND PLANNING

City officials argued that the county suburbs needed city services, comprehensive planning, and various capital improvements because the county government had failed to provide them; this failure justified the city's annexation. City officials proposed to expand services, construct and upgrade existing capital facilities, and institute a comprehensive urban development plan for the annexed areas.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>225</sup> Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, November 10, 1938, Book 8, p. 252; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 19, 1942, Book 16, p. 2; Roanoke World News, October 28, 1942, p. 11; Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, pp. 1-2; November 5, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>226</sup> "Resolution of the Bluefield Heights Residents," April 15, 1939; "Resolution Adopted by the Home Owners of Center Hill," April 15, 1939, "Arthur H. Garst et al., Petition," City of Roanoke et al. v. County of Roanoke et al., Roanoke County Circuit Court, November 1942.

<sup>227</sup> "Stipulation No. 1," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, November, 1942; Roanoke World News, November 27,

City officials and the commercial-civic elite noted that with recent and sustained population growth and general urbanization, the county government faced increasing demands for public services and capital facilities from residents. The county government had traditionally been rural oriented and had little experience providing services and capital facilities for an urban constituency. As a consequence, the county had laxer standards for services and capital improvements; nor was there a planning agency.<sup>228</sup> In contrast, Roanoke was experienced in providing high quality services and capital improvements. The city offered more services; and its services were superior to those the county offered.<sup>229</sup> For example, city fire-fighting and police protection were full-time rather than voluntary services.<sup>230</sup> Roanoke's planning agency had been cited in earlier years as being among the best agencies in Virginia.<sup>231</sup> Annexation would permit

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1941, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, May 8, 1939, Book 12, p. 425.

<sup>228</sup> Editorials, Roanoke World News, October 14, 1938, p. 9; January 29, 1939, p. 9; March 11, 1939, p. 9; Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>229</sup> Roanoke World News, July 27, 1937, p. 1. Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, pp. 1 and 4; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, May 8, 1939, Book 12, p. 425; "Stipulation No. 1," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, November 2, 1942, pp. 2-3.

<sup>230</sup> Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, p. 4.

<sup>231</sup> Wylie Kilpatrick, pp. 92-95.

the city to provide uniform service standards for most of the urbanized area, including the present city and its suburban periphery. The city could implement services, capital improvements, and planning more effectively--eliminating the current "hodge-podge" development standards which prevailed in the various suburban sections.<sup>232</sup> The city noted that experience had shown it to be cheaper and easier to correct improperly planned subdivisions prior to full development, and listed numerous problems the city had encountered in earlier annexations trying to correct substandard capital facilities. This occurred because the county had less stringent standards for such improvements than did the city.<sup>233</sup>

Another aspect of the service issue was that the city provided services to county residents who paid few, if any, taxes to support the services and facilities. County commuters used Roanoke's streets and were protected by city police and fire departments. Many suburban residents enjoyed city parks and recreation facilities and other service "spillovers."<sup>234</sup> The city also provided water and sewer services to suburban residents who did not have to pay a nonre-

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<sup>232</sup> Roanoke Times, April 18, 1939, p. 4.

<sup>233</sup> Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, p. 4.

<sup>234</sup> Roanoke Times, April 11, 1939, p. 4; May 9, 1939, p. 1.

sident fee. City officials argued that without annexation those receiving city services lacked a voice in how these services were provided to them.<sup>235</sup>

Finally the city argued that the county faced increasing overcrowding in its schools<sup>236</sup> and overusage of other capital facilities which would soon necessitate expanded services.<sup>237</sup> The annexation, by transferring these sixteen thousand residents to the city, eliminated the need for additional facilities, solving many of the most pressing and costly problems. The county would save money, and it would also receive compensation payments for its losses with which to construct new facilities to serve the remaining population. Furthermore, this annexation would stabilize city-county boundaries so that the laborious process of shifting school attendance zones and mapping new service zones would not reoccur for many years.<sup>238</sup>

County officials countered the city's arguments by noting that in recent years the county had made great strides to provide public services and capital improvements commensurate with a growing suburban population. The county under-

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<sup>235</sup> Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, p. 4.

<sup>236</sup> Roanoke Times, November 4, 1942, p. 4.

<sup>237</sup> Roanoke World News, March 11, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>238</sup> Roanoke Times, March 12, 1939, p. 3.

took this program after the General Assembly passed legislation permitting the state's counties to provide a wide variety of public services, comprehensive planning, and capital improvements through the establishment of service districts.<sup>239</sup>

Once the county was permitted to expand its functions, county officials gradually introduced comprehensive planning and more than forty public services since the 1930's. The county planned to add additional services and capital facilities as funding became available, or unless this annexation disrupted these plans. Because of its expanded functions, county officials argued that there was little need for continued city annexations when they could offer many of the same services the city provided. The county's program foretold a county government on par with the city. The county, consequently, could offer many of the city's advantages, but without many of the city's disadvantages, such as higher taxes and greater congestion.<sup>240</sup>

County residents supported the county's efforts to provide expanded packages of services and capital improvements. Various civic groups sent the city council resolutions dec-

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<sup>239</sup> Roanoke Times, October 24, 1941, p. 5; S. Makielski and D. Temple, pp. 21-30 passim.

<sup>240</sup> Roanoke Times, May 23, 1941, p. 4; September 24, 1941, p. 5; October 24, 1941, p. 5;

laring their satisfaction with present county services and arguing that annexation would provide few, if any, such benefits for them. In addition they argued that they had alternatives to city annexation. They could contract with private service providers, such as the Williamson Road Water Company, to get those services the county did not provide, or that their communities could tax themselves to get capital improvements such as a sewage system or sidewalks or recreation areas.<sup>241</sup> Farmers and company officials stated that they were satisfied with present services and did not need the wider range of services that city officials required.<sup>242</sup>

The city-county compromise settled this dispute because the city annexed those suburban areas which the county conceded were in need of city services and capital improvements.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> Roanoke Times, April 6, 1939, p. 5; "Resolution of the Center Hill Home Owners," April 15, 1939.

<sup>242</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 17, 1939, Book 12, pp. 400-02; Roanoke World News, November 3, 1942, pp. 1-2; November 4, 1942, pp. 1 and 3; Roanoke Times, April 19, 1939, p. 4; September 20, 1941, p. 5; November 3, 1942, pp. November 4, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>243</sup> "Stipulation No. 1," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, November 2, 1942; Roanoke Times, November 4, 1942, pp. 1 and 4; November 5, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.



## 5.6 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The third of the three most important issues, the financial considerations, entered the discussions of the annexation suit early when city officials argued over the "modest" versus the "comprehensive" annexation. Their discussions centered on the cost of the annexation-compensation to the county for loss of property and public facilities, economic resources, and assumption of a prorata portion of the county debt, plus the cost of public improvements and services in the annexed area, while taxes in the annexed areas remained at the county rates for five years after the annexation, and in a segregated account for use in making capital improvements in these areas.<sup>244</sup> Those arguing for the modest annexation had noted that the city would gain only a small amount in tax revenues from the annexation, but the city could expect budgetary problems during the five years following the annexation. These future economic difficulties had convinced many council members that the city could only afford a modest annexation of four square miles.<sup>245</sup> While those arguing for the "comprehensive" proposal conceded that the annexation costs would be greater than in a modest annexation, they argued that a comprehensive proposal was less expensive

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<sup>244</sup> Roanoke Times, March 9, 1939, p. 1; March 11, 1939, pp. 1 and 4; April 10, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>245</sup> The Roanoke Times, April 18, 1939, p. 4.

than a modest annexation. The city would need to annex again in only a few years, when the annexation costs would likely be greater.<sup>246</sup> Furthermore, the comprehensive annexation would incorporate most of the economically valuable suburban areas south and west of the city into Roanoke. These economic gains would ameliorate the annexation costs, expand the city's commercial and industrial base, and add vacant land for future development.<sup>247</sup> Eventually, the city adopted the comprehensive annexation proposal which included most of the major and most economically valuable suburbs.<sup>248</sup> The city excluded Vinton and the surrounding suburbs, because these communities lay outside this area.<sup>249</sup> After its adoption, the city's economic arguments for annexation replicated many of the arguments used by city officials who had supported the comprehensive annexation.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, October 13, 1938, p. 8.

<sup>247</sup> Roanoke World News, March 12, 1939, p. 3; Roanoke Times, September 29, 1942, p. 4.

<sup>248</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, January 29, 1939, p. 3.

<sup>249</sup> Roanoke World News, October 2, 1941, p. 1.

<sup>250</sup> Roanoke World News, October 13, 1938, p. 9; "City Government Reports," March 23, 1941, p. 3; Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, pp. 1 and 4; November 5, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.

County officials argued that the annexation proposal was an even greater threat to the county's continued economic viability than earlier and more modest proposals. County officials feared that the loss of these economic resources, the reduced territory, and smaller population would make it difficult for the county to function adequately and to provide services and capital improvements on par with those offered prior to annexation. County officials worried that they might have to double taxes and that county residents would strenuously oppose such tax hikes; as a result, county services, especially schools, would suffer.<sup>251</sup> The compromise proposal, however, excluded many of the more economically valuable industrial and commercial sections. These exclusions lessened county opposition to the annexation.<sup>252</sup>

County residents echoed these fears of drastically higher taxes and poor services as a result of the annexation losses. Many county residents also considered annexation economically inequitable because the city would gain public improvements that they had financed at no cost; suburban residents would then pay twice for these facilities--once as county residents and a second time through city taxes to

<sup>251</sup> Roanoke Times, April 2, 1941, p. 5; September 19, 1941, p. 4; September 24, 1941, p. 5; October 21, 1941, p. 7.

<sup>252</sup> Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, p. 1 and 4; November 5, 1942, pp. 1 and 4; Roanoke World News, November 5, 1942, pp. 1-2.

compensate the county for its annexation losses.<sup>253</sup> In addition all those included in the annexation--suburban residents, farmers, and company officials--wanted to avoid Roanoke's higher taxes. They also claimed that the city would incur great expense to provide services and capital facilities as the city promised.<sup>254</sup>

The city-county compromise settled the financial conditions for the annexation. The city gained real estate, personal property, and public utilities valued at \$3.1 million.<sup>255</sup> This was 10.3 per cent of the county's total assessed tax values amounting to \$30.3 million.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Roanoke Times, April 6, 1939, p. 5; October 28, 1941, p. 5; "Resolution of the Center Hill Home Owners," April 15, 1939; Roanoke World News, May 9, 1939, p. 11.

<sup>254</sup> Roanoke World News, October 28, 1942, p. 1; November 4, 1942, pp. 1-2; November 5, 1942, p. 1. Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, pp. 1 and 4; November 4, 1942, pp. 1 and 4; "Arthur H. Garst et al., Petitioners," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, November 1942;

<sup>255</sup> The Roanoke Times, November 4, 1942, p. 4; November 5, 1942, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>256</sup> T. Coleman Andrews, "Summary of Assessed Values and Debt to be Assumed," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke: Exhibit A Roanoke World News, November 5, 1942, p. 1.

## 5.7 RACE-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this period black residents of this region had little influence over the events of the 1942 annexation suit. The city's comprehensive annexation proposal, covering 20.56 square miles, had included the suburban areas adjacent to the city's black neighborhoods.<sup>257</sup> The city-county compromise, however, excluded these suburbs adjacent to the black sections.<sup>258</sup> The result was that of the 2,965 residents annexed to Roanoke in 1943 only 1.3 per cent, some 39 annexed residents were black.<sup>259</sup>

Although the issue of black residents was not discussed publicly by either city or county officials, the city was seeking to annex the most economically valuable suburban areas. These suburbs were located west and south of Roanoke, outside the areas where most black residents lived. In addition, there were very few black residents in the Roanoke metropolitan region. In 1940 the region's black residents numbered approximately 16,147, only 14.4 per cent of the region's 112,184 residents. Of this number the city's black

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<sup>257</sup> Roanoke Times, September 19, 1941, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>258</sup> Sixteenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1940), (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1941), Table 22, p. 188; Table 28, p. 249; Table 30, pp. 255-56; "Roanoke Metropolitan Area Census Tracts," p. 2. Roanoke Times, November 3, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>259</sup> Roanoke Times, February 23, 1943, p. 4.

population numbered 12,812 and represented 79.3 per cent of the black population<sup>260</sup> (Table 1).

While black suburban neighborhoods undoubtedly needed city services and capital improvements as much as any county suburban area, these neighborhoods lacked the economically valuable properties that the city sought to annex. In addition, Blacks generally had little political influence. They constituted only 18.5 per cent of Roanoke's population, and Virginia's laws effectively excluded Blacks from political participation.<sup>261</sup>

The annexation did, however, have the effect of reducing the percentage of Blacks in the city's population while increasing this percentage in the county population. This result probably pleased city officials who had seen the city's black population rise while the city's white population fell. In fact the city's 0.1 per cent population growth in the 1930's could be attributed in large measure to the city's increasing black population,<sup>262</sup> since many of the Roanoke's white residents had either relocated to the

<sup>260</sup> Sixteenth Census of Population, Virginia, (1940), Table 22, p. 188.

<sup>261</sup> Harland Bartholomew (1949), pp. 5-12; Roanoke Times, September 15, 1941, pp. 1 and 5; Sixteenth Census of Population, Virginia, (1940), Table 22, p. 188; V. O. Key, pp. 78-79.

<sup>262</sup> United States Census of Population, 1940, Virginia, pp. 48-12.

county suburbs or left the region entirely.<sup>263</sup>

#### 5.8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The 1943 annexation caused great geopolitical conflict between city officials and their supporters and county officials and residents. While there were many similarities with preceding annexations, there were also several changes which greatly influenced the roles of the four issues. Two similarities were the city's traditional arguments that this annexation was necessary to provide services and proper planning for the county suburbs and to gain more vacant parcels for Roanoke's future growth needs. They noted that the suburbs had become urbanized and required many services which the county government could not provide, basically the same arguments they had used to justify earlier annexations. In addition, the city's development was depleting the amount of vacant and developable property within, causing the city to lose population and businesses and industries to the county where such land was readily available. A major difference from earlier suits was the city's argument that the annexation was necessary to boost the city's population. Earlier annexations had often resulted partly because the city's population was increasing rapidly. With the recent

<sup>263</sup> Harland Bartholomew (1949), pp. 5-24 passim; Roanoke Times, August 14, 1943, p. 1.

slow growth of the 1930's and the accompanying loss of economic assets, Roanoke's civic boosters promoted the 1943 annexation in part to reverse these trends. Their goals were a more diverse economic base and an eventual city population of 100,000.

The second difference was the growing opposition to annexation in the county. Instead of acquiescing to the city's proposal, county officials made great efforts to stop the annexation. County officials were worried about the financial consequences if the city annexed those economically valuable industrial, commercial, and residential properties. In their efforts to defeat the annexation, county officials fought it locally through their court defense and by encouraging residents and business interests to become co-defendants against the city; and in the General Assembly, by enlisting their local state legislators to support more restrictive annexation statutes and other measures to stop this suit. These efforts were partly responsible for the compromise. City officials realized that the General Assembly might halt all annexations in the interest of the war effort. Furthermore, the war rationing and related shortages limited the city's capacity to provide services and capital improvements following the annexation.



The General Assembly encouraged opposition to annexation when it passed legislation permitting counties to establish service districts. Counties could then provide services and capital facilities similar to those that cities offered; this change expanded the choices of suburban residents by offering alternatives to annexations.<sup>264</sup> County officials, for example, noted that in recent years it had instituted some forty services and capital improvements comparable to those offered by the city of Roanoke. These services foretold a county government on par with the city. The county, consequently, then offered many of the advantages of the city without many of its disadvantages, such as higher taxes.

County civic pride, which had heretofore lain dormant because of the county's inability or disinterest to offer urban amenities, emerged with passage of this legislation and caused growing opposition to annexation. County residents, who preferred to live in Roanoke County, voiced opposition to this annexation. The residents passed resolutions expressing satisfaction with the county government and its services and declared their support for county's defense efforts. These activities signaled a change from earlier annexations when most county residents supported annexation,

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<sup>264</sup> S. Makielski and D. Temple, pp. 14-19 passim.

or at least did not oppose it.

Another change from earlier annexations was the increased financial burden annexation entailed. This annexation was larger than prior annexations, and it included 10.3 per cent of the county's economic resources, totalling \$3.1 million (\$14.3 million).<sup>265</sup> The region's development, increasing population, and capital facilities had raised the economic value of the suburban areas.

As in earlier annexations, race-related considerations were not discussed, at least openly. The city's black population remained small, and most of the city's black population lived segregated in Roanoke's older sections, north of the central business district rather than in the suburbs which the city was most anxious to annex. While the original annexation proposal, encompassing 20.56 square miles, included land adjacent to these sections, the compromise removed all but a very small parcel from there. The post-annexation census counted fewer than 40 black residents out of a total annexed population of nearly 3,000 residents. These figures support evidence that city efforts to annex the more economically valuable suburbs sections worked to reduce Roanoke's black population, and consequently, any chance that

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<sup>265</sup> Equalent value in 1984 based on tables found in the Statistical Abstract of the United States and Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970.

city Blacks would gain sufficient political power through an increasing population to make the white political establishment aware of its concerns. The city's annexation, as in many city annexations, undermined the political power of the city's black population.

## Chapter VI

### ROANOKE'S 1949 ANNEXATION, 1944-53

When the five-year interval for initiating an annexation expired in January, 1946.<sup>266</sup> city officials reinitiated plans to annex the suburbs excluded in the 1943 city-county annexation compromise.<sup>267</sup> The city undertook this suit to capture suburban growth which occurred since 1943, and to resume attempts to gain those suburbs excluded by the 1942 city-county annexation compromise. Opposition to the city's annexations remained strong. Three issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services, planning and capital improvements, and financial concerns--were most prominent.

#### 6.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although it had been only a few years since the last annexation the council was eager to extend Roanoke's boundaries to the limits of the region's urbanization. All the council supported the comprehensive annexation which included the territory excluded by the 1943 annexation compromise

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<sup>266</sup> The Code of Virginia barred city officials from initiating an annexation suit more than once in a five year period.

<sup>267</sup> The Roanoke Times, March 19, 1946, p. 4

as well as the suburbs which were developed since 1943.<sup>268</sup>

Although the council agreed that the annexation should be comprehensive, they split over Vinton's inclusion in the annexation proposal. Those arguing against Vinton's inclusion stated that Vinton offered few economic assets.<sup>269</sup> Other city officials countered that despite Vinton's marginal value, the court would find its inclusion more equitable than annexing only the more economically valuable suburbs north, west, and southwest, while leaving the county burdened with less affluent areas like Vinton.<sup>270</sup> The court would likely find this to be a more equitable settlement. In addition, Vinton's inclusion would add about 3,500 additional residents to the city and raise Roanoke's population to one hundred thousand, the goal of many of the city's most ardent civic boosters, the commercial-civic elite.<sup>271</sup>

Following several months of discussion, the council voted unanimously in April 1947, to annex 20.71 square miles, including Vinton and the surrounding suburbs.<sup>272</sup> The city's

<sup>268</sup> Roanoke World News, December 24, 1946, p. 1; Roanoke Times, January 10, 1947, p. 4.

<sup>269</sup> Roanoke Times, December 14, 1946, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>270</sup> Roanoke Times, January 10, 1947, p. 4.

<sup>271</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 21, 1947, Book 19, p. 320; Roanoke Times, April 22, 1947, p. 4.

<sup>272</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 14, 1947, Book 19, p. 312.

goals in undertaking this annexation were first to add sufficient suburban population to the city to reverse recent slow population growth of the 1930's. Second, city officials sought to regulate growth through expanded city control of suburbanization. The annexation would make Roanoke's boundaries basically coterminous with the urban region surrounding Roanoke.<sup>273</sup> The city could institute comprehensive planning on a metropolitan scale as well as provide city services and capital improvements.<sup>274</sup>

At the court hearing, the city repeated its goals and explained the city's need for annexation. City officials, as they had in earlier discussions, noted that the city's increasing industrial and commercial development since World War I had transformed many of the city's older residential neighborhoods into commercial and industrial zones, forcing residents to relocate to the surrounding suburbs in Roanoke County.<sup>275</sup> Much of the remaining city housing was older and less desirable than suburban housing. The results were decreasing population density in the older neighborhoods and a

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<sup>273</sup> Roanoke Times, May 22, 1948, p. 3.

<sup>274</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times, September 7, 1947, p. 6; Roanoke World News, December 24, 1946, pp. 1 and 4; Roanoke Times, November 7, 1946, p. 4; December 14, 1946, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>275</sup> Roanoke Times, November 7, 1945, p. 4

general decline in the city's population growth.<sup>276</sup> Roanoke County's suburban areas were growing at 7.9 percent annually, but Roanoke's growth was only 0.1 percent annually.<sup>277</sup> (Tables 2 and 3). In addition, residential, commercial, and industrial construction during the period 1930-48 had lagged behind construction in the rest of the metropolitan region.<sup>278</sup>

City officials also enumerated the usual list of services that were already provided or would be extended to residents of the areas to be annexed. They noted, as in earlier suits, that county residents used city services but did not pay taxes to support them.<sup>279</sup>

In addition, city officials explained that it was financially able to afford the annexation. City officials detailed their plan to finance capital improvements and services, to compensate Roanoke County for its annexed capital facilities and revenue losses, and to assume a prorata por-

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<sup>276</sup> Roanoke Times, November 7, 1945, p. 4; June 3, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; May 21, 1948, p. 4.

<sup>277</sup> Sixteenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1940), Table 22, p. 188.

<sup>278</sup> The Roanoke Times, May 19, 1948, p. 1; May 21, 1948, p. 4; May 22, 1948, p. 3.

<sup>279</sup> Roanoke Times, May 22, 1948, p. 3; May 26, 1948, pp. 1 and 7; May 28, 1948, pp. 1 and 12; May 29, 1948, pp. 1 and 11.

tion of the county debt.<sup>280</sup>

Following the city's presentation justifying annexation, the county offered its defense. County officials attacked this annexation as unnecessary and unjustified. The county would lose valuable economic resources and population.<sup>281</sup> The county termed the city's proposed improvements "speculative." The city lacked the fiscal resources to undertake annexation.<sup>282</sup> Furthermore, county officials argued that this annexation threatened intergovernmental cooperation such as the proposed regional sanitation authority.<sup>283</sup>

Various other parties, including Vinton, residents of several surrounding suburbs, industry officials and farmers, testified against the annexation. Opposing annexation, Vinton officials sought to preserve their town's political independence. They noted that Vinton already provided adequate services and most capital facilities the city planned to provide. The officials also argued paradoxically that the annexation was an attempt to offset economic gains by adding resource poor communities like Vinton yet they noted that

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<sup>280</sup> Roanoke Times, June 9, 1948, pp. 1 and 13; June 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; July 9, 1948, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>281</sup> Roanoke Times, July 9, 1948, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>282</sup> Roanoke Times, June 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; June 12, 1948, p. 3; July 10, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>283</sup> Roanoke Times, March 27, 1946, p. 4.



annexation would add Vinton's \$500,000 real estate assets to Roanoke with only a \$130,000 debt.<sup>284</sup>

Like Vinton, other county residents opposed annexation because it would destroy their community's uniqueness. They argued, as did several farmers and company officials, that they were satisfied with present services and would not benefit from annexation. In addition they feared higher city taxes which would be an economic burden.<sup>285</sup> The farmers stated that their farming activities were incompatible with city regulations. As a consequence their properties were unsuitable for annexation.<sup>286</sup>

Despite a vigorous defense the court awarded Roanoke 11.83 square miles of Roanoke County territory, fifty-four percent of the city's original petition. This was Roanoke's largest annexation to date. The city gained 16,000 residents and 31.0 percent of the county's economic assets totalling \$13.5 million. The court ordered the city to pay Roanoke County \$780,000: \$180,000, representing (\$3.4 mil-

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<sup>284</sup> Roanoke Times, May 19, 1948, pp. 1 and 4; June 19, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; June 23, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; July 9, 1948, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>285</sup> Roanoke Times, May 12, 1948, p. 5; June 24, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; June 27, 1948, pp. 35-36; July 9, 1948, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>286</sup> Roanoke Times, June 23, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; June 24, 1948, p. 5; June 26, 1948, pp. 1 and 3.

lion)<sup>287</sup> 59.0 percent of Roanoke County's \$300,000 debt, and \$600,000 for six public schools, one fire station, and accompanying property, and equipment (Table 2). The court excluded the county's short-term debt totalling \$35,000.<sup>288</sup>

The city gained many economically valuable suburban areas including both residential, commercial, and industrial sections.<sup>289</sup> As the county had predicted, the city was soon straddled with heavy financial obligations, and numerous suburban demands for capital improvements and public services. The city failed to meet these demands as quickly as it had anticipated.<sup>290</sup> Subsequently, one suburban section, Kenwood Addition-Idlewild Park, sought de-annexation from the city only a few weeks after the conclusion of the annexation suit.<sup>291</sup> When the city would not de-annex the section, resi-

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<sup>287</sup> The equivalent amount at the dollar's value in 1984 using the Statistical Abstract of the United States, pp. 474-75 and the Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970, "Consumer Price Indexes," Series E: 135-166 and 166-173.

<sup>288</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, July 30, 1948, 16-18; Roanoke Times, July 15, 1948, pp. 1 and 13.

<sup>289</sup> Roanoke Times, July 15, 1948, pp. 1 and 13; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, July 30, 1948, pp. 18-19.

<sup>290</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, January 3, 1949, Book 21, p. 240-January 26, 1953, Book 26, p. 464 passim.

<sup>291</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, July 26, 1948, Book 21, p. 10; Roanoke Times, July 27, 1948, p. 1; October 26, 1948, p. 2.

dents appealed to the General Assembly.<sup>292</sup>

City officials defended their situation in the General Assembly while they continued to negotiate with these suburban residents. The city refused to de-annex the sections because it would mar the city's civic image. Several council members argued that de-annexation would hamper future annexation efforts and might lead to secession by other recently annexed suburbs.<sup>293</sup> After the General Assembly defeated a bill to de-annex Kenwood Addition-Idlewild Park,<sup>294</sup> the residents returned to efforts to persuade city officials to ameliorate their situation or de-annex their section.<sup>295</sup> Eventually the city and the Kenwood-Idlewild residents settled their dispute when residents accepted the city's plans to provide the requested services and capital improvements.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 25, 1948, Book 21, p. 97; Roanoke Times, October 26, 1948, p. 2.

<sup>293</sup> "Letters from the Wildwood Civic League," Roanoke, City Council Minutes, January 10, 1949, Book 22, p. 100; October 30, 1952, Book 24, p. 95; September 10, 1951, Book 25, p. 124; July 28, 1952, Book 26, p. 137;

<sup>294</sup> Roanoke Times, March 8, 1950, p. 5.

<sup>295</sup> "Letter from the Wildwood Civic League," Roanoke, City Council Minutes, March 19, 1951, Book 24, p. 346.

<sup>296</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, October 8, 1951, Book 25, pp. 163-64.

## 6.2 THE ACTORS

With only slight changes, the same constellation of actors which had formed in the 1943 annexation re-emerged. City officials and Roanoke's commercial-civic elite led the campaign for annexation, with most city residents also supporting this annexation. These community leaders as well as city residents, continued to equate Roanoke's annexations with the city's progress and prosperity.<sup>297</sup> Some city residents were less persuaded by the arguments that annexation would benefit the city. One person denounced this "bigger is better" mindset, alluding to the many problems facing the nation's larger cities. He questioned whether city residents really wanted Roanoke to expand in the face of evidence that a larger city would not necessarily be a better city.<sup>298</sup>

County officials and county residents joined together as they had in 1943 to oppose this annexation.<sup>299</sup> Since Roanoke had included Vinton in its annexation proposal, the town played a much larger role in the county defense efforts. Despite this role, Vinton officials were concerned primarily

<sup>297</sup> Roanoke Times, March 19, 1946, p. 1; January 10, 1947, p. 4; Editorial, September 7, 1947; January 1, 1949, p. 1; May 19, 1948, pp. 1 and 4; May 22, 1948, p. 3;

<sup>298</sup> "Letters to Times' Editor," Roanoke Times, August 3, 1948, p. 6.

<sup>299</sup> Roanoke Times, March 4, 1947, p. 4.

with preserving the town's independence. Their alliance with other county interests was related to Vinton's fears of higher county taxes should Roanoke annex most of the territory it wanted, even if Vinton were excluded.<sup>300</sup> Like Vinton, other county interests, such as the Kenwood Addition-Idlewild Park section and the Williamson Road communities,<sup>301</sup> several company officials, and farmers had become co-defendants to preserve their particular interest against annexation.<sup>302</sup> The county government retained its role as the traditional guardian of all the county's interests.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> "Answer of the Town of Vinton," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke Roanoke Times, April 10, 1946, pp. 4 and 15; April 22, 1947, p. 4; "Letters to Times' Editor," Roanoke Times, October 13, 1947, p. 6; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 21, 1947, Book 19, p. 320.

<sup>301</sup> Roanoke Times, March 27, 1946, p. 4; March 4, 1947, p. 4; "Williamson Road Messenger," Issue No. 1, March 1947.

<sup>302</sup> Roanoke Times, May 12, 1948, p. 5; May 19, 1948, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>303</sup> "Answer of Roanoke County," City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, March 20, 1948.

### 6.3 THE ISSUES

Three of the four issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and planning; and financial concerns--continued to play important roles as they had in the last several annexations. The increasing importance of financial concerns was, however, one major difference, between this annexation and earlier ones. These three issues continued to be important after the city won its suit when the Idlewild Park-Kenwood Addition deannexation controversy erupted.

### 6.4 CIVIC BOOSTERISM AND COMMUNITY AUTONOMY

Since the war had led to a compromise in the 1943 annexation, the emergence of strong civic boosterism after the war brought another annexation by 1948. City officials and the commercial-civic elite were not content with the gains from the 1943 annexation. They sought to annex 20.76 square miles to maintain Roanoke's boundaries coterminous with the surrounding urbanization. This goal had been an "unofficial" policy since the city's first annexation in 1882.<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Roanoke Times, December 14, 1946, pp. 1 and 4; April 22, 1947, p. 4; May 21, 1948, p. 4; Roanoke World News, December 24, 1946, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 21, 1947, Book 19, p. 320.

City officials justified this extensive annexation as founded on their perception of the city's development underpinning that of the other parts of the metropolitan community. They argued that the city's industrial and commercial expansion had produced the suburbanization.<sup>305</sup> This link established the close "community of interest" between Roanoke and the Roanoke County suburbs, including Vinton.<sup>306</sup>

City officials also sought to gain sufficient vacant and developable land to reverse the increasing decline of available land within the city. Their goal was to increase the city's desirability as a center for new and/or expanded industrial and commercial development. With this accomplished Roanoke could compete better with Roanoke County and Salem for economic development.<sup>307</sup>

Another objective of the city's civic boosters was to maintain the city's state ranking as Virginia's third largest city, with their ultimate goal to achieve a population of 100,000.<sup>308</sup> For this reason, city boosters had argued for

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<sup>305</sup> Roanoke Times, May 21, 1948, p. 4; May 22, 1948, p. 3; June 3, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; Editorials, September 7, 1947, p. 6; July 15, 1948, p. 6.

<sup>306</sup> Roanoke World News, December 24, 1946, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 21, 1947, Book 19, p. 320.

<sup>307</sup> Roanoke World News, December 24, 1946, p. 1; Roanoke Times, December 14, 1946, pp. 1 and 4; May 19, 1948, p. 1; May 21, 1948, p. 4; May 22, 1948, p. 3; June 3, 1948, pp. 1 and 5.

Vinton's inclusion, despite the town's dubious economic value for Roanoke. Vinton's population numbered 3,500 and pushed the estimated population in the areas proposed for annexation to approximately 22,500.<sup>308</sup>

The local newspapers, traditionally strong proponents of Roanoke's annexations, defended the city's right to annex and supported the court's decision afterwards. They reiterated city officials arguments of the suburban social and economic ties to Roanoke. Editorials remarked that the suburbs were simply extensions of the city's urbanization and that the political divisions which divided the metropolitan region were artificial rather than natural boundaries. The editorials also hailed the court's decision granting the annexation as confirmation of "the city's manifest need for expansion...."<sup>310</sup>

County government officials and their partisans argued the county's defense and exclaimed its virtues just as forcefully as the city and its allies had for the city. County officials called the annexation inequitable and unfair given the county's progress to meet the needs of its

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<sup>308</sup> Roanoke Times, May 19, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>309</sup> Roanoke Times, January 10, 1947, p. 4; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, April 14, 1947, Book 19, p. 312.

<sup>310</sup> Editorials, Roanoke Times, July 15, 1948, p. 6; September 7, 1947, p. 6.



residents. The county faced the loss of nearly 48 percent of its territory, 30 percent of its population, and more than 10 percent of its economic resources.<sup>311</sup>

After annexation the county government would be hard pressed to provide for the remaining county residents at its pre-annexation functioning level. County officials resented the city's periodic annexations and the problems these annexations created, especially since county officials believed that they had achieved a high standard of government functioning. They wanted protection from the city's annexations. They denounced the annexation as proof that Roanoke failed to function as effectively as the county.<sup>312</sup>

They also argued that city officials were wrong to claim that the city's population rank and its prosperity alone attracted new economic investment. County officials noted that companies now look at the metropolitan population ranking; the Roanoke metropolitan area's population totalled more than 112,000 in 1940.<sup>313</sup> In short, county officials believed that the county's present and future development should not suffer simply to enhance the city's development.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Roanoke Times, June 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; July 4, 1947, p. 4.

<sup>312</sup> Roanoke Times, June 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>313</sup> Population of Roanoke, 1977, p. 40.

<sup>314</sup> Roanoke Times, June 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; July 10,

Because Vinton was included in the city's annexation proposal, Vinton officials and town residents intervened as co-defendants against the city.<sup>315</sup> Vinton officials pleaded for their town's exclusion from this annexation. Their arguments repeated much of what they had discussed in earlier meetings with the Roanoke City Council prior to the council's adoption of this annexation proposal as well as in public statements made during this suit and in the public discussions of earlier years. Vinton officials pleaded for their town's exclusion from any city annexation. Vinton was a prosperous, independent community with both a strong local identity and strong civic pride. Residents were proud of the town and its accomplishments. Annexation would eliminate the town's unique qualities as well as its character.<sup>316</sup> To back up their arguments they noted that city officials had conceded that Vinton lay outside the path of Roanoke's growth. As a consequence, annexing Vinton ran contrary to the city's annexation goals. Vinton's independence was being sacrificed to increase the city's population.<sup>317</sup>

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1948, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>315</sup> Roanoke Times, May 11, 1948, p. 4.

<sup>316</sup> Roanoke Times, June 19, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; June 23, 1948, p. 1; "Answer of the Town of Vinton," pp. 2-4.

<sup>317</sup> Roanoke Times, June 23, 1948, p. 5. "Answer of the Town of Vinton," pp. 6-9 passim.

Like County and Vinton officials, county residents used many of the same arguments to justify their exclusion from this annexation. Their main arguments were their satisfaction with the Roanoke County government; incongruity of their properties with city regulations; their purposeful decision to trade city living for the advantages of country living; and resentment at being forced to rejoin the city which would destroy these advantages.<sup>318</sup> Some suburban residents threatened to move back to the county if their community were annexed. They noted that they were "county people" who identified more closely with a rural-oriented government like Roanoke County than a city government like Roanoke.<sup>319</sup>

#### 6.5 PUBLIC SERVICES AND PLANNING

The city reviewed the services and capital improvements that city residents enjoyed which would be extended to those areas annexed to Roanoke. This litany contained many of the same arguments the city had used in the 1943 annexation suit and in earlier suits, too.<sup>320</sup> City officials continued to assert that the county government faced increasing demands

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<sup>318</sup> Roanoke Times, May 12, 1948, p. 5; June 23, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; June 26, 1948, pp. 1 and 3; June 27, pp. 35-36.

<sup>319</sup> Roanoke Times, June 24, 1948, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>320</sup> Roanoke Times, May 20, 1948, p. 4; May 26, 1948, p. 7; May 29, pp. 1 and 11.

for services and capital improvements as the development around Roanoke intensified<sup>321</sup> furthermore, the city had had more experience providing urban public services than the county had. The city offered a wider range of services, and city services were superior to county services. County planning ordinances were lax. Several suburban areas, especially the Williamson Road community were poorly developed with irregular street planning and subdivision designs.<sup>322</sup> The city needed control over land usage beyond the extent of its water and sewer services, such as in the vicinity of the municipal airport and the Carvin's Cove reservoir, to insure proper planning for industrial zoning and subdivision developments.<sup>323</sup>

The city planned to integrate existing services and capital facilities into a single, metropolitan system. The city would expand its park and recreation facilities to accommodate the addition of population,<sup>324</sup> replace the inadequate fire-fighting services offered by Vinton and the volunteer

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<sup>321</sup> Roanoke Times, December 14, 1946, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>322</sup> Roanoke Times, December 14, 1946, pp. 1 and 4; Roanoke World News, December 24, 1946, p. 1.

<sup>323</sup> Roanoke Times, May 29, 1948, pp. 1 and 11; May 30, 1948, pp. 35-39; June 2, 1948, pp. 1 and 4; June 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5; June 9, 1948, pp. 1 and 13.

<sup>324</sup> Roanoke Times, May 26, 1948, p. 7.

companies<sup>325</sup> and upgrade and expand the water and sewage treatment facilities.<sup>326</sup>

Since most of the proposed annexation area was within the city's natural drainage basin, the city's plans included the extension of water and sewer lines into the county as well as upgrading existing sewer and storm drainage network in the Williamson Road community, Garden City, Washington Heights and in the southeast suburbs, the most needy areas. The city would expand the system into the other annexed areas later.<sup>327</sup> This program, the city believed, would eliminate much of the water pollution problem as well as the periodic threat of depletion of the water supply that had plagued many county communities. In addition, annexation would give the city control over many suburban industries who had located in Roanoke County because of its less stringent county air quality standards, but whose exhausts polluted the entire region's air.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> Roanoke Times, June 2, 1948, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>326</sup> Roanoke Times, May 29, 1948, pp. 1 and 11.

<sup>327</sup> Roanoke Times, May 30, 1948, p. 39; June 2, 1948, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>328</sup> Roanoke Times, May 22, 1948, p. 3; May 28, 1948, pp. 1 and 12; May 29, 1948, pp. 1 and 11.

County officials refuted these arguments by noting that the number of services and capital improvements that it offered were constantly being increased. The city exaggerated the condition of county services. The county suburbs were less densely populated than city sections so that county services and capital improvements were adapted to suburban and rural environments rather than an urban environment. They believed that city services and capital improvements would be impractical for these non-urban areas. County officials also declared that they had proposed intergovernmental agreements with the city and other valley governments to provide services more efficiently, such as the proposed sanitation authority. Such regional facilities and other cooperative service agreements would go far to provide all residents with services and capital facilities no matter where they lived in the metropolitan region and with less expense.<sup>329</sup>

Vinton officials argued that their town provided most of the same services and capital facilities that Roanoke did; consequently, Vinton would not gain from annexation. The town had recently added several public buildings including a civic center and recreation facilities. Furthermore, most Vinton residents were satisfied with town services and op-

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<sup>329</sup> "Answer of Roanoke County," pp. 10-16 passim.

posed annexation. Roanoke officials, in fact, were forced to concede that the town had provided most of the services the city planned to offer.<sup>330</sup>

Other Roanoke County residents made similar statements expressing satisfaction with county services and questioning city allegations that their communities needed city services and capital improvements. They noted that their communities were served by private water companies and private garbage collection services to supplement county services, and they had already built many public improvements for their communities that the city proposed to construct.<sup>331</sup> Residents of a southeastern suburban area denied city contentions that their community faced health hazards because it lacked a sewer system. These residents claimed that their community had a low population density which would permit individual septic tanks or even "outdoor plumbing." The city's sewer services, therefore, were not needed.<sup>332</sup>

Several farmers expressed their beliefs that their farms did not require city services and that it would be too costly to offer the services and and capital improvements as the

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<sup>330</sup> "Answer of the Town of Vinton," pp. 3-7 passim; Roanoke Times, June 2, 1948, pp. 1 and 4; Roanoke City Council Minutes, April 21, 1947, Book 19, p. 322.

<sup>331</sup> Roanoke Times, July 10, 1948, p. 5; "Williamson Road Messenger;" "Answer of Roanoke County," pp. 9-10.

<sup>332</sup> Roanoke Times, July 23, 1948, p. 5.

city had proposed. The farmers also criticized city regulations as inappropriate for farming.<sup>333</sup> They denied that their main opposition was to city planning regulations which would thwart their land development schemes. The officials of several companies, repeating many of these same arguments, proclaimed their skepticism that they needed any additional services which county did not already provide.<sup>334</sup>

#### 6.6 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In earlier annexation suits, financial considerations had been an important issue for both the city and county. The financial aspects of this annexation became one of the most pressing concerns. This suit was the largest annexation suit to date and the financial costs for the city would have been enormous, totalling about \$7.4 million dollars.<sup>335</sup>

The city offered the following financial stipulations as part of the suit: (1) spend \$1.7 million, an amount equivalent to twelve percent of the annexed areas' real estate value in the first two years after annexation, permitting the city to levy the municipal tax rate as early as 1951; (2) pay county \$1.5 million as compensation for lost revenues; raise

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<sup>333</sup> Roanoke Times, May 12, 1948, p. 5.

<sup>334</sup> Roanoke Times, July 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>335</sup> Roanoke Times, June 12, 1948, p. 3.



personal property taxes 25 percent in 1949 and real estate assessments 25 percent in 1951, exclusive of industries and public utilities; (3) assume Vinton and the county's bond debts totalling \$410,000; (4) allocate \$1.5 million from the annexation revenues for upgrading and/or constructing capital facilities; (5) spend \$1.4 million to compensate Roanoke County for public improvements, buildings and equipment, and property.<sup>336</sup>

The city would raise some of this money by issuing bonds totalling \$1.9 million. Their financial plans also included a \$900,000 allocation for the city's General Fund to meet an anticipated deficit in the annexed areas in the first two years following annexation. In 1951, the city would impose its property tax rate which should produce a surplus.<sup>337</sup> Although city officials were prepared to spend \$6.1 million for capital improvements in the annexation area, they were legally committed to spend just \$1.5 million. The city listed other proposed capital improvements it intended to make in coming years. These included sewage treatment facilities; a medical center; construction and/or repair of several bridges and viaducts; expanding and upgrading parks; constructing thirteen schools; and miscellaneous capital im-

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<sup>336</sup> Roanoke Times, June 9, 1948, pp. 1 and 13.

<sup>337</sup> Roanoke Times, June 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5.

provements. These projects totalled \$4.5 million, exclusive of the \$1.5 million the city would spend in the next two years for capital improvements.<sup>338</sup>

The county placed Roanoke's financial commitments at \$21.3 million. County officials arrived at this figure by including not only the \$7.4 million for these annexation expenses and the \$4.5 million for miscellaneous capital improvements, but also \$9.4 million for pre-existing capital projects to which the city was already committed.<sup>339</sup>

This annexation would take many of the county's most valuable residential, commercial, and industrial properties. These losses would have made it difficult to provide services and capital improvements at existing levels after the annexation.<sup>340</sup>

Despite compensation for the loss of schools and other county facilities, the county still had to build new schools and facilities to replace those annexed.<sup>341</sup>

Not only was the county facing an inequitable loss, but county officials argued that this annexation was too large for city resources. The city's total area would expand by

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<sup>338</sup> Roanoke Times June 12, 1948, p. 3

<sup>339</sup> Roanoke Times, July 1, 1948, p. 4.

<sup>340</sup> Roanoke Times, June 18, 1948, p. 7.

<sup>341</sup> Roanoke Times, July 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5.

some 150 percent and the population by 30 percent. This large increase in the city's size and population would strain the city's financial resources even with increased revenues.<sup>342</sup>

To these arguments Vinton officials and residents of the adjoining southeastern suburbs added that they believed they were being used as "economic pawns" in the city's power plays. The city was seeking their annexation, as economic liabilities, to reduce the county's resentment for the loss of so many economically valuable areas. They labeled the city's actions unfair and likely to create an economic hardship for them when they faced higher city taxes.<sup>343</sup>

#### 6.7 RACE-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

The number of black residents in the metropolitan area remained low through this period. While the city's black population remained small, it had increased slightly in the last two decades, but the percentage of blacks in the city's population was almost static at about 18.5 percent. The county's black population rose slowly throughout this period too, although the percentage of blacks had fallen--from 12.8

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<sup>342</sup> Roanoke Times, June 12, 1948, pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>343</sup> Roanoke Times, June 17, 1948, pp. 1 and 3; June 23, 1948, p. 1; July 1, 1948, p. 4; July 9, 1948, p. 4; July 10, 1948, pp. 1 and 5.

per cent in 1920 to 7.8 per cent in 1940<sup>344</sup> (Tables 2 and 3).

The city's annexation proposal included the county suburban neighborhoods adjacent to the city's black sections as well as Vinton, with the third largest concentration of blacks in Roanoke County. Nonetheless, of the estimated 22,500 residents in the city's original petition, only a small percentage were black. While an official census was not made after the 1949 annexation, the 1950 census counted only 14,592 (15.9 per cent) blacks in the city's population. This was an increase of 1,763 residents since the 1940 census counted city's black population as 12,812 (18.5 per cent). The percentage of blacks in the city's population had declined from 18.5 per cent in 1940 to just 15.9 per cent in 1950. This decline provided evidence that there were only a small number of black suburban residents living in the areas annexed to Roanoke.<sup>345</sup>

In the same period the county's black population totalled 3,335 in 1940, 7.8 percent of the population; but the number of blacks living outside of Salem and Vinton was just 2,337. The 1950 census counted 3,516 black residents in Roanoke

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<sup>344</sup> Sixteenth Census of Population, Virginia, (1940), Table 22, pp. 188; Table 28, p. 249; Table 30, pp. 255-56.

<sup>345</sup> Seventeenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1950), Table 34, p. 55.

County, a slight increase for a decade when Roanoke annexed some 20,000 county residents in two separate annexations. The percentage of blacks in the county's population rose from 7.8 percent in 1940 to 8.5 per cent in 1950. One must conclude from these figures that of the 16,000 county residents annexed in Roanoke's 1949 annexation, the overwhelming majority, as in the 1943 annexation, were white residents. Without this annexation, the percentage of blacks in the city's population would have increased, but the percentage of black residents in the county's population would have decreased.<sup>346</sup>

Since city officials had been concerned about arising black population in the city and a declining white middle-class population, this annexation, especially in conjunction with the 1943 annexation, helped to alleviate this "problem." The census figures proved that the city's quest for an increased white middle-class population was very successful. The increased population of white middle class residents also illustrated how the city's annexation plan to gain the most economically lucrative suburbs worked to exclude the county's black suburban neighborhoods. The black population was poorer; consequently, the economic gains from these su-

<sup>346</sup> Sixteenth Census of Population, Virginia, (1940), Table 22, p. 188; Table 30, pp. 255-56; Seventeenth Census of Population, Virginia, (1950), Table 4, p. 8; Table 5, p. 11; Table 34, p. 55; Table 38, p. 67.

burban neighborhoods would have been less lucrative. The city's great economic gains from this annexation, totalling \$13.5 million, could only come by minimizing the number of poor communities the city annexed.<sup>347</sup>

Race-related considerations were ignored in this annexation suit, at least publicly, by both city and county politicians. If one assumed that Roanoke County's black neighborhoods received few services and had few funds to contract with private service companies for those they lacked, or to pay for capital improvements for their neighborhoods, blacks had much to gain from annexation. The city was required to spend 12 percent of the annexed area's real estate values in these areas to total \$1.7 million; but planned to spend \$6.1 million eventually. The black suburban communities stood to gain from this annexation more than the more affluent white suburbs.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> Roanoke Times, July 15, 1948, pp. 1 and 13; July 30, 1948, pp. 1 and 3; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, July 30, p. 17;

<sup>348</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, July 30, 1948, pp. 12-13; Roanoke Times, June 12, 1948, p. 3.

## 6.8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The 1949 annexation was an attempt not only to acquire the areas proposed in the 1943 annexation, but also to add Vinton and several recently developed suburban areas. This was the first proposal to include Vinton and most of the eastern suburbs. Roanoke's goal was a "comprehensive" annexation of all surrounding suburbs. The prior annexation had proven to the council that county opposition to annexation would not disappear. The council, consequently, made no attempt to compromise. City officials realized that suburbanization had changed the city's pattern of urban growth. Annexation was now a primary technique to increase population and further development. To achieve these goals, the city needed vacant and developable areas to attract businesses and industries and the middle class suburbanites to underwrite the cost of services and capital improvements. Only when the city had this vacant land could it compete successfully with suburban areas for new economic investments.

County officials had no illusions about the city's economic objectives. County officials, among the county's staunchest boosters, were firmly committed to the preservation of the county's territory, population, and economic resources. These officials were certain that they could defeat annexation by providing numerous government functions,

such as comprehensive planning, as well many public services and capital improvements. Their defense efforts centered on convincing the court that the county was committed to providing those services and capital improvements needed by a rapidly growing suburban population. County officials were certain that the quality and range of county services and capital facilities equalled those that city residents received, but at a lower cost to taxpayers.

While county officials had hoped that their legislators would get a bill passed halting this annexation suit, the bill met defeat. The only legislation that affected the city's suit involved the de-annexation efforts of Kenwood Addition-Idlewild Park residents, and in this controversy the city prevailed. As a consequence of this failure to get a legislative bill to stop the annexation suit, county officials were forced to rely primarily upon their court defense and the co-defense efforts of county residents and local civic associations, Vinton officials, and county industrial and business interests.

As in the previous annexation suit, county residents expressed their loyalty to Roanoke County and their strong opposition to this annexation. With the county government's commitment to providing better services and related urban amenities, they argued that annexation would bring few bene-



fits. Furthermore, suburban residents, knowing of the disadvantages of suburban living, purposefully chose it and willingly parted with the cities amenities. Suburbanites believed that less crowding and congestion were more valuable.

Despite the county's defense efforts and those of its allies, the city gained more than 11.8 square miles and some \$13.5 million in county economic resources--30 per cent of the county's assessed property values. This was the city's largest annexation to date. The city's economic objectives, consequently, were largely successful because much of this property included numerous industrial and commercial sections as well as a sizable number of residential sections. With these gains the city hoped not only to expand services and undertake the proposed \$6.0 million capital improvements program but to keep tax rates competitive with those of Roanoke County. Ironically, as the county had predicted, the city was not financially able to annex this much territory without straining the city budget. This annexation became a burden for the city for several years after the annexation. The city was forced to spend much more money on capital improvements and services than it had originally estimated.

In addition to the economic gains, the city gained about 16,000 new residents, many of whom lived in middle class suburban neighborhoods. The addition of the large population

worked to reverse the increasing number of black residents in the city. Historically, city officials had sought to maintain a predominately white, middle-class population. The city's slow population growth in the previous decade had started a trend towards a larger population of blacks and the poor. City officials hoped that these two annexations, which brought more than 20,000 residents into the city in less than ten years would end this trend.

## Chapter VII

### ROANOKE'S 1962 ANNEXATION, 1954-1963

Ten years after the 1949 annexations, Roanoke undertook another annexation in 1962. The city's objectives, as in the 1949 suit, were to gain those suburbs which had developed in the intervening period to maintain the city's boundaries coterminous with the urbanized area. The city's commitments from the 1949 annexation carried over into the next decade, and the city was burdened by the capital improvements and services it had promised to make under the terms of this annexation. The 1962 suit, like its predecessor, was long and involved. Three issues--civic boosterism, services, capital improvements, and planning, and financial concerns--were again important. The fourth issue--race-related considerations--finally emerged publicly as an issue which both city and county officials discussed, though briefly.

#### 7.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The 1950's was an era of continued growth in the Roanoke metropolitan area. This growth centered on suburbs north, west, and southwest of Roanoke, with little growth around

Vinton or the city's eastern suburbs.<sup>349</sup> The county's population increased by 48.7 per cent, from 41,486 in 1950 to 61,693 in 1960. Despite the county's rapid growth, the city experienced a more modest growth rate of just 5.6 per cent<sup>350</sup> (Tables 2 and 3).

This rapid urbanization created numerous problems for the Roanoke County government. The county remained primarily rural-oriented, and it was not prepared to provide many public services that residents demanded. In addition, county officials operated with limited funding which restricted their ability to service suburban areas without neglecting the rural ones.<sup>351</sup>

In 1958 residents of several subdivisions in the Roanoke-Salem "corridor" proposed to incorporate as the town of Lakeside.<sup>352</sup> These residents had various reasons for seeking incorporation. Some sought to gain better services and needed capital improvements, others faced a potentially serious water pollution problem, and still other residents wanted to

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<sup>349</sup> Roanoke Times, August 10, 1958, p. 6.

<sup>350</sup> Seventeenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1950), Table 4, p. 8; Table 34, p. 55; Table 38, p. 67; Eighteenth Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (1960), Table 28, p. 53; Table 25, p. 65.

<sup>351</sup> Roanoke Times, July 27, 1958, Sec. B, pp. 1-2.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

avoid city water and sewer surcharges. They abandoned these efforts when Salem announced plans to annex this area.<sup>353</sup> When Salem's final annexation excluded several of these subdivisions, the remaining residents reinitiated plans to incorporate,<sup>354</sup> although some favored annexation either to Salem or to Roanoke as a better alternative.<sup>355</sup>

Roanoke officials studied this situation. Most city officials were receptive to the suburban annexation inquiries, hoping that Roanoke would eventually annex these economically valuable suburbs. The suburbs were predominately residential, but contained several industrial and commercial sections as well.<sup>356</sup> Most city officials hesitated to propose another annexation when the city still had to complete many capital projects from the 1949 annexation. The possibility that Salem would eventually annex all of these suburbs, however, motivated city officials to initiate a study of this and several other suburbs north, west, and southwest of Roanoke.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>353</sup> Roanoke Times, July 20, 1958, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>354</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, July 28, 1958, Book 32, p. 97.

<sup>355</sup> Roanoke Times, July 27, 1958, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>356</sup> Roanoke World News, August 13, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>357</sup> Roanoke Times, September 4, 1958, pp. 1 and 4; September 7, 1958, p. 6.

From this study the council proposed to annex 3.6 square miles west of Roanoke. This proposed area contained several major, industrial sections, with total property assessed at \$2.8 million and a population of 3,200.<sup>358</sup> Those favoring a more comprehensive proposal termed it "shortsighted," since city growth would fill the area in just a few years, necessitating another annexation. In addition they argued that it was more difficult to justify a "modest" than a "comprehensive" annexation. Failing to resolve their differences, the council voted for another study.<sup>359</sup>

The second study recommended the largest annexation to date. This proposal totalled 31.2 square miles and included all suburbs north, west, and southwest of Roanoke. The proposal contained some 17,500 residents. It was considered the maximum annexable area, given the city's present fiscal situation. Those arguing for its adoption noted that the proposal reflected the city's growth trends, that these areas were already economically adapted to city planning and development, and that they would become the site for increasing commercial, industrial, and residential development as Roanoke's older sections continued to decline.<sup>360</sup>

<sup>358</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, December 22, 1958, Book 32, p. 292; Roanoke Times, December 20, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>359</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, December 29, 1958, Book 32, p. 298; Roanoke Times, December 30, 1958, p. 13.

The council voted five to two to petition the court to annex this area. Supporters of the proposal, who included most city officials and Roanoke's commercial-civic elite, argued the proposal's economic and social advantages.<sup>361</sup> Opponents countered that the proposal was fiscally unrealistic given the city's present financial commitments from the 1949 annexation and other financial problems, such as declining tax revenues, caused by the recent national recession. In addition the dissenters questioned whether the city had enough support from city residents to pose a likely bond issue.<sup>362</sup>

At the court hearing, the city explained that it needed the annexation to bolster lagging population growth, to halt the declining economic development, and to add additional vacant, developable land in the suburbs to reverse the dwindling supply of such parcels in the city and prevent economic "strangulation."<sup>363</sup>

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<sup>360</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, September 28, 1959; Book 32, p. 101; Roanoke Times, January 10, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>361</sup> Roanoke Times, November 3, 1959, p. 1; January 10, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, November 9, 1959, Book 33, p. 176.

<sup>362</sup> Roanoke Times, October 21, 1959, p. 17 Roanoke, City Council Minutes, November 9, 1959, Book 33, p. 176-77.

<sup>363</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 8; February 16, 1961, p. 1; March 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

To this need for additional territory the city repeated its now familiar litany detailing how it could provide more and better services for suburban residents than they were receiving from the county government.<sup>364</sup> City officials also contended as they had in 1943 and 1949, that there was little to distinguish the suburbs from the city; both were urbanized. Roanoke provided suburban residents with many services, but they contributed little to these costs. The use of city services and participation in Roanoke's economic and social sectors created a strong "community of interest" between the city and these suburbs.<sup>365</sup>

County opposition to annexation centered on arguments that the annexation proposal was too large to carry out, given the city's financial situation.<sup>366</sup> The county would lose thirty-nine percent of its tax revenues totalling \$40.6 million, but just twenty-eight percent of its population outside Salem or Vinton.<sup>367</sup> It was unfair for the city to annex so much of the county's prime developable territory, economic resources, and population when the county was

<sup>364</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 8; February 9, 1961, p. 15.

<sup>365</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 8; March 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>366</sup> Roanoke Times, January 10, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>367</sup> Roanoke Times, October 1, 1959, p. 15; February 12, 1961, Sec. B, p. 2.



well-run and county residents were satisfied with the county's services and capital facilities.<sup>368</sup> Although there had been initial interest in annexation in several county suburban communities, most county residents and officials of various companies now opposed annexations. They were skeptical that annexation could provide any additional benefits.<sup>369</sup> In addition officials of the Roanoke County Sanitation Authority feared that annexation would take away so many of their customers that their operations would be impractical or too costly to continue.<sup>370</sup>

The county also reviewed the range of public services, including comprehensive planning, as well as the numerous capital facilities it had added since 1949 which were offered to county residents, such as the Roanoke County Sanitation Authority. The authority was formed to deal with pressing water and sewage treatment, when the city and county failed to establish a joint sanitation district after the 1949 annexation.<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>369</sup> Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, September 15, 1958, October 20, 1958, November 17, 1958, Book 15, pp. 132, 146, and 216; Roanoke Times, September 19, 1959, p. 1; January 14, 1960, pp. 1 and 4; January 29, 1960, p. 13; February 3, 1960, p. 13; February 21, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>370</sup> Roanoke Times, May 8, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>371</sup> Roanoke Times, April 16, 1960, pp. 1-2.

County officials also argued that the city had erroneously labeled most of the suburbs as "urban" when they were primarily "rural" or "suburban" communities.<sup>372</sup> In addition there was no closer "community of interest" between the suburbs and the city than between the suburbs and the rest of the county.<sup>373</sup>

Even before the city's suit went to trial, city and county officials had negotiated a compromise annexation.<sup>374</sup> These negotiations were boosted by the court's insistence that the city was not proving a substantial need for more territory. The judges enlisted the aid of city and county consultants to reverse roles and recommend for each, areas from the vantage point of the other, which the court could most easily award the city. The county consultant, on behalf of the city, recommended some 16.4 square miles, while the city consultant, acting on behalf of the county proposed a 3.7 square mile area.<sup>375</sup> The city and county each offered several proposals, with the city's final proposals ranging

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<sup>372</sup> Roanoke Times, March 11, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>373</sup> Roanoke Times, February 9, 1961, p. 15; March 9, 1961, pp. 1 and 5; March 15, 1961, p. 13.

<sup>374</sup> Roanoke Times, September 15, 1960, p. 15; March 16, 1961, p. 1; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, November 14, 1960, Book 34, p. 121; November 21, 1960, Book 34, p. 134.

<sup>375</sup> March 17, 1961, pp. 1 and 4; March 6, 1963, p. 13;

from twelve to fifteen square miles and the county's final proposals ranging from five to twelve square miles.<sup>376</sup>

Though Vinton was excluded from the city's annexation proposal, the town intervened as a co-defendant to protect its independence. Town officials feared that Vinton might be included, without its consent, in some compromise annexation to resolve this suit, as the court repeatedly urged the litigants to do.<sup>377</sup>

The court eventually rejected all these compromise proposals and ruled unanimously against the city, granting Roanoke no territory. The court accepted county arguments that the city still had sufficient vacant and developable lands; Roanoke was not financially able to undertake the annexation; that a "community of interest" between the city and suburbs did not exist and that much of the proposed annexation was farmland and inappropriate for urban uses; that the city profited from those county customers who used its water and sewer services; that the city acted contrary to the region's interest by refusing to accept new county customers under the city-county sewage treatment agreement; that eighty-nine percent of the county voters opposed annexation, and city residents and some city officials also opposed this

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<sup>376</sup> Roanoke Times, May 4, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>377</sup> Roanoke Times, March 18, 1961, p. 2.

suit; and this proposal included more territory than Roanoke's present size and contradicted earlier recommendations to undertake more modest proposals.<sup>378</sup>

City officials appealed this decision to the Virginia Supreme Court based on a "writ of error." The majority of the justices ruled against the city, upholding the circuit court decision. The minority opinion would have permitted Roanoke to annex the territory included in a proposal submitted by a county consultant.<sup>379</sup>

Following the Supreme Court's decision city officials redirected their attentions to alternative development schemes with annexation no longer an option for the city. County officials directed their energies to needed and long-delayed public improvements.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke et al., Decision, March 19, 1961, pp. 2-9 passim.

<sup>379</sup> Roanoke Times, October 10, 1961, pp. 1 and 4; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke et al., March 5, 1963, p. 4.

<sup>380</sup> Roanoke Times, March 5, 1963, p. 14.

## 7.2 THE ACTORS

The constellation of actors was refigured in this annexation suit from earlier trials. The city council, traditionally unified once the members adopted their petition, remained divided as to the scope of annexation. A majority favored the comprehensive proposal including 31.2 square miles, but a minority would support only the first and more modest proposal of just 3.6 square miles. City residents were likewise divided, with the commercial-civic elite supporting the council majority, and most other city residents either favoring the modest annexation or none at all. The division of actors in the city centered on the economics and legalities of this suit.<sup>381</sup>

The county government and its partisans remained united in their opposition to annexation.<sup>382</sup> Officials of the Roanoke County Sanitation Authority joined this alliance, seeking to protect their own interests.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke et al., Decision, March 19, 1961, pp. 5-6.

<sup>382</sup> Roanoke Times, October 1, 1959, p. 15; January 29, 1960, p. 13; February 7, 1961, p. 1; Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, September 15, 1958-January 19, 1958, Book 15, pp. 132-216 passim;

<sup>383</sup> Roanoke Times, February 19, 1961, Sec. B, pp. 1-2.

Vinton officials, maintaining their traditional concern for the town's independence sided with neither party. Their primary concern was first and foremost to keep Vinton from being included in this suit as part of a compromise agreement, and secondly to assist county officials in defeating this suit. Their interest in this instance related to fears of higher taxes should the city be granted a large amount of territory, population, and economic resources.<sup>384</sup>

### 7.3 CIVIC BOOSTERISM AND COMMUNITY AUTONOMY

Initially three of the four issues were most important. Civic boosterism, as it had historically, provided the initial motivation for city officials to seek annexation. City officials and Roanoke's commercial-civic elite, supported annexation. They saw annexation as reversing the city's recent slow population growth and economic development of the 1950's.<sup>385</sup> The 1950's resembled the 1930's, another period of slow growth. In the 1950's the city had grown by a mere 5.6 per cent, while the county recorded a 48.7 per cent population increase.<sup>386</sup> The 1950's were also a reversal of the

<sup>384</sup> Roanoke Times, February 18, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>385</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, July 22, 1958, p. 9; Editorials, Roanoke Times, September 7, 1958, p. 6; May 2, 1959, p. 6; "Letters to the Roanoke City Council," Roanoke, City Council Minutes, February 9, 1959, Book 32, pp. 355-56;

gains Roanoke had made in the 1940's when the city had annexed twice. City officials concluded that annexation was a necessary tool to promote the city's development despite the financial obligations it would entail.<sup>387</sup>

These Roanoke boosters continued to insist that the city needed a population of 100,000 to expand city business and to put Roanoke in a select group of national and regional urban centers.<sup>388</sup> Their goal remained a legacy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' civic boosterism, common to many cities like Roanoke,<sup>389</sup> and of the city's long-term status, as Virginia's third largest city. This annexation could propel Roanoke back to that position and maintain it for many years.<sup>390</sup>

In addition to this population goal, this population gain and the annexation itself would signal to outside business interests that Roanoke had a strong "community spirit." The

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<sup>386</sup> Census of Population, Virginia, (1950), Table 4, p. 8; Table 6, p. 14; Census of Population, Virginia, (1960), Table 25, p. 45; Table 28, p. 53.

<sup>387</sup> Harland Bartholomew (1960), pp. 3-10 passim; "Letters to the Roanoke City Council," Roanoke, City Council Minutes, February 9, 1959, Book 32, p. 355-56; Editorial, Roanoke Times, February 4, 1959, p. 6; January 10, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>388</sup> Roanoke Times, January 10, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>389</sup> Howard Rabinowitz, p. 115; Blaine Brownell, pp. 150-51.

<sup>390</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times, September 7, 1958, p. 6; August 7, 1959, p. 11; September 29, 1959, p. 13.

city's commercial-civic elite expressed their beliefs that this community spirit was a positive sign of community prosperity and a willingness to work for the city's further development. It also proved that Roanoke's civic boosters were not content to allow their city to stagnate.<sup>391</sup>

The city boosters viewed Roanoke as the center of the metropolitan region with the suburban areas being an economic and social extension of Roanoke's development. The political boundaries which had created each community were artificial rather than a natural division. There was no clear distinction between city and suburban development. In their view, Roanoke's growth was essential to the region's vitality, and Roanoke's annexation would strengthen the metropolitan region and its components--Roanoke County, Salem, and Vinton. Conversely, the city's decline would eventually harm the other parts of this metropolitan community, despite their current prosperity.<sup>392</sup>

For these reasons, the majority in the city government and among the commercial-civic elite had held out for the most comprehensive annexation to date. The business community rallied around this proposal, recreating the traditional

<sup>391</sup> "Letters to the Roanoke City Council," Roanoke, City Council Minutes, February 9, 1959, Book 32, pp. 355-56.

<sup>392</sup> Roanoke Times, March 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 4; "Letters to the Roanoke City Council," Roanoke, City Council Minutes, February 9, 1959, Book 32, p. 356.



alliance.<sup>393</sup> In addition these boosters realized that one of the city's gains would be approximately 17,500 new residents, most of whom were white and middle class. This would offset the increasing number of poor, elderly, and black residents in Roanoke, a population composition which could deter potential new economic investment from settling in the city.<sup>394</sup>

These potential gains fueled by the civic boosterism of this alliance, discouraged compromise. Civic boosters, having won their battle against those opposing this annexation in the city council, felt confident that they could gain a large, comprehensive annexation. Their compromise proposals, ranging from 18 to 12 miles were not too far afield of the county's offers ranging from 12 to 8 miles.<sup>395</sup> It was unlikely that, given the city's experience in the 1949 annexation, the city would compromise. The civic boosters and Roanoke officials were confident that the court's award would be larger and more economically valuable annexation than any possible city-county compromise. The city civic boosters also feared that Salem's recent annexation in the

<sup>393</sup> Roanoke, City Council Minutes, February 9, 1959, Book 32, pp. 355-56.

<sup>394</sup> Roanoke Times, January 10, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1; March 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 4; Population of Roanoke, pp. 8 and 47-49; Harland Bartholomew (1960), pp. 3-6.

<sup>395</sup> Roanoke Times, March 6, 1963, p. 13.

Roanoke-Salem "corridor" area would be followed by other annexations which would eventually extend the town's boundaries into all of these desirable suburbs, halting Roanoke's western expansion. The city boosters also worried that these annexations would increase Salem's competitive status against Roanoke and cause the city to fall behind in the race to gain industrial and commercial development.<sup>396</sup>

Despite the push for for this comprehensive annexation, a new configuration of actors opposed this large annexation. These dissenters included two city council members and some seventy per cent of the city's residents, according to court testimony.<sup>397</sup> This group opposed the large annexation proposal as fiscally unrealistic and lacking in the community support necessary to finance annexation costs. These dissenters were skeptical that the court would grant this much territory and that the city could comply with the various stipulations the court would likely impose should the petition be granted. While they wanted to see Roanoke's progress and were even willing to support a more modest annexation, they believed that capital improvements in the present city took precedence over any annexaton proposals. They

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<sup>396</sup> Editorial, Roanoke World News, July 22, 1959, p. 9; Roanoke Times, July 27, 1958, Sec. B, p. 1; September 4, 1958, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>397</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, Decision, March 19, 1961, pp. 5-6.

contended that maintaining Roanoke's current high living standards which would in itself attract economic investments.<sup>398</sup>

The county government and its partisans opposed annexation. The loss of so many county assets would undermine the county's future development. They were especially bitter about the inequitable loss of a greater portion of the county's economic resources than population, especially the number of school children who would remain in the county after annexation.<sup>399</sup>

Any compromise for county officials meant sacrificing one part of the county for another, a difficult task for those charged with protecting the interests of all county residents. While a compromise might have saved the county from losing more territory than the court would have awarded, those residents who would have faced annexation would have felt betrayed. Any compromise, therefore, worked against the political aspirations of county officials.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> Roanoke Times, October 21, 1959, p. 17; November 3, 1959, p. 1; March 8, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>399</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, p. 8; February 12, 1961, Sec. B, p. 2.

<sup>400</sup> City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke et al., Decision, March 19, 1961.

The county's adamant stance against the annexation was encouraged by the local pride among county residents and the commercial-civic elite. This alliance asserted that county residents were satisfied with the county government, and that annexation would raise taxes without community improvements. From some 4700 signatories to anti-annexation petitions in 1959, the anti-annexation sentiment increased to include at least 89 per cent of the county's population. Even residents who sought annexation as a solution to their service problems, chose not to support the city's annexation proposal.<sup>401</sup>

#### 7.4 PUBLIC SERVICES AND PLANNING

City arguments on public services, capital improvements, and comprehensive planning remained much the same as in earlier suits. City officials noted that despite the county's efforts to increase services and provide capital facilities, both services and capital improvements remained inferior to those the city provided its residents.<sup>402</sup> In addition, they observed that county growth, as it had for several decades,

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<sup>401</sup> Roanoke County, Board of Supervisors' Minutes, September 15, 1958-January 19, 1958, Book 15, pp. 132-216 passim; Roanoke Times, January 29, 1960, p. 3; February 3, 1960, p. 13; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke, et al., Decision, March 19, 1961, p. 8.

<sup>402</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, p. 1; February 9, 1961, p. 15.

continued to strain the county government's efforts to provide needed services and capital improvements.<sup>403</sup> For example, the suburban communities in the Roanoke-Salem "corridor" were plagued by a serious water pollution problem because residents lacked water and sewer lines, relying on individual wells and septic tanks. These residents had discussed annexation with city officials and even considered separate incorporation as possible solutions to this worsening problem.<sup>404</sup>

Even where the Roanoke County Sanitation Authority had installed sewer lines, the city was under contract to treat the effluent. City officials, in fact, characterized this authority as a "stop gap" until a metropolitan water and sanitation system was established.<sup>405</sup> The city noted too, that the authority's operations were not county-wide. Many suburban residents continued to contract directly with the city for water and sanitation services.<sup>406</sup>

Since this annexation would incorporate all the "urbanized" and "urbanizing" suburbs into the city, the city would be able to extend its services into the entire urban region,

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<sup>403</sup> Roanoke Times, July 27, 1958, Sec. B, pp. 1-2.

<sup>404</sup> Roanoke Times, July 20, 1958, Sec. B, pp. 1-2.

<sup>405</sup> Roanoke Times, February 17, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>406</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, p. 1.

except for Salem and Vinton, and design a single, comprehensive plan for providing suburban areas with services and capital improvements to provide a single, high quality standard of services and capital improvements for the entire region, eliminating the incongruities and unevenness. Roanoke's plan, consequently, would create a more orderly program for providing services and capital improvements than the historically haphazard development schemes which had "urbanized" these suburbs. Annexation would accomplish this for all services whereas service districts like the Roanoke County Sanitation Authority did this for only one service. City officials predicted that this would eventually lower services and capital costs, as well as promoting greater efficiency.<sup>407</sup>

City officials also predicted that annexation would speed suburban development. Once city services were available, people would be inclined to move to the annexed suburban areas. This would greatly benefit city residents who wanted to move to the suburbs but hesitated because they did not want to give up city services.<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> Harland Bartholomew (1960), pp. 16-17; Editorial, Roanoke Times, May 2, 1959, p. 6.

<sup>408</sup> Harland Bartholomew (1960), pp. 16-19; Editorial, Roanoke Times, September 7, 1958, p. 6; February 7, 1959, p. 2; May 4, pp. 1 and 4; February 9, 1961, p. 15; Roanoke, City Council Minutes, May 4, 1959; Book 32, p. 462.

City officials also argued that annexation would reduce city expenses to provide for commuters and for service "spillovers." County residents used city services when they commuted to their jobs in the city. Many county residents used city parks and recreational facilities but did not pay taxes to support these facilities. Furthermore, when the city provided services to county residents, this undermined city efforts to annex these areas. Once county residents got the needed services, a primary reason for them to support annexation was eliminated. City officials, paradoxically, accused the county government of a failure to provide services for county residents because they had easy access to city services, such as recreational facilities and libraries.<sup>409</sup>

County officials repeated their arguments that county services and capital improvements were satisfactory. The county government had made a continuous effort to upgrade services and capital facilities as the county's population had increased and as development had expanded.<sup>410</sup>

One example of these efforts was the Roanoke County Sanitation Authority. The authority was organized in the early 1950's to remedy a potentially serious pollution problem in

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<sup>409</sup> Roanoke Times, February 7, 1961, p. 1; February 18, 1961, pp. 1 and 2.

<sup>410</sup> Roanoke Times, February 9, 1961, p. 15.

several suburban areas as well as a means to integrate existing and planned sewer lines into a comprehensive systems to accomodate present and future suburban growth. The authority was then in the process of acquiring additional lines, as well as constructing new ones to expand its operations into a greater portion of the county. Eventually the county hoped to construct a sewage treatment facility, although the county was satisfied at present with the city-county sanitation contract.<sup>411</sup>

A second example of the county's commitment to meet residents' needs was the newly established planning department which would supervise county subdivision regulations and street and road layouts. No longer was there any validity to city arguments of the lack of comprehensive planning in the county. Finally, county officials noted that there had been few complaints from county residents in recent years of poor services or capital facilities, despite city accusations to the contrary.<sup>412</sup>

County officials stated that they had sought to cooperate, whenever possible, with the city to provide needed services and capital facilities for the region's welfare. They

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<sup>411</sup> Roanoke Times, April 16, 1960, pp. 1 and 2; May 8, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>412</sup> Roanoke Times, February 9, 1961, p. 15; March 9, 1961, pp. 1 and 5.



cited such cooperation in the city-county sanitation contract. In fact the city had invited the county, Salem, and Vinton to participate in this service rather than constructing their own facilities. There were other city-county agreements covering fire-fighting and law enforcement.<sup>413</sup>

These cooperative ventures had benefited both the city and the county. County officials were, consequently, upset that the city had declared a moratorium on new sewer hook-ups while this suit was in progress. The city's justification was that it wanted to minimize the amount of compensation it would have to pay the county for lost revenues as a result of annexation.<sup>414</sup> County officials, however, called this action arbitrary and contrary to the welfare of the metropolitan region. The moratorium had virtually stopped all current county construction projects.<sup>415</sup>

Where the county did not provide services and capital improvements for county residents, they had several options. They could construct their own facilities to serve their neighborhoods or themselves individually. There were several private service companies providing water services and garbage collection and disposal. In some of the southwest su-

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<sup>413</sup> Roanoke Times, March 9, 1961, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>414</sup> Roanoke Times, July 27, 1960, p. 13.

<sup>415</sup> Roanoke Times, December 29, 1960, p. 17.

burban communities, residents had undertaken to provide one or more capital improvements for their neighborhoods. As a consequence these county residents saw little need for city annexation. In addition, as many had argued in previous annexations, they resented the city being able to annex their capital improvements without cost as part of the annexation award. Where residents had paid taxes to construct facilities, they resented being forced to pay again for these facilities when they became city residents.<sup>416</sup> Many county residents argued that the city's proposals to provide capital facilities and services were impractical in many county areas because of the terrain and/or low population density. They also worried that the overcrowding in city schools would worsen with the influx of children after annexation.<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> Roanoke Times, January 14, 1960, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>417</sup> Roanoke Times, February 21, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1; March 7, 1961, p. 1.

## 7.5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Roanoke officials, since the first annexation, had sought to annex the most economically valuable suburban areas. The city too, at least in recent annexations, had tried to avoid annexing those sections which would be an financial drain on the city's budget. The city's aim was to recapture industries and businesses which had relocated to the county suburbs. This economic goal would help broaden the city's tax base, permitting the city to provide more services and capital improvements while keeping taxes low.<sup>418</sup> In addition, the objectives were even more crucial to the city when city officials and the commercial-civic elite had pushed for the inclusion of many suburban residential areas, which paid low taxes relative to their service demands, to boost the city's population to 100,000. These considerations were the major reason that the city had opted to annex suburbs north, west, and southwest of Roanoke, while excluding Vinton and the adjoining eastern and southeastern suburbs. Not only were these latter suburbs less economically valuable than than the former suburbs, but they were areas of little recent urban growth. In fact many of the region's industries had relocated from the eastern suburbs to areas southwest of Roanoke. The city's objectives were, in part, an attempt to

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<sup>418</sup> Roanoke Times, August 13, 1958, p. 3; February 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 8; February 17, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

gain these new industrial and commercial areas.<sup>419</sup>

In addition to the policy of economic feasibility, the decreasing availability of desirable land in Roanoke for city businesses and industries as well as new economic investments from outside the city, caused the city to include a substantial number of low-density areas in the annexation proposed to remedy this situation. City officials recognized that the county and Salem had been much more successful in gaining economic investments. Their success was due in part to the greater availability of vacant land.<sup>420</sup>

These economic arguments were the primary reasons why city officials split over the "modest" versus the "comprehensive" annexation proposal. Their arguments were similar to those of city officials in the 1943 annexation. Then as now, those supporting the "modest" annexation argued that recent changes in the annexation statutes had increased costs for county compensation, debt assumption, and capital projects and services. In addition, there were the financial obligations remaining from the 1949 annexation. These considerations limited the scope of any annexation to 3-4 square miles at the most.<sup>421</sup> Furthermore, the city would

<sup>419</sup> Roanoke Times, September 4, 1958, pp. 1 and 4; Alfred Stuart, p. 28.

<sup>420</sup> Roanoke Times, August 13, 1958, pp. 1 and 9; September 4, 1958, p. 4; Editorial, September 7, 1958, p. 6.

need to issue bonds which meant a tax hike and a further reduction in the city's economic competitiveness.<sup>422</sup>

Those supporting the "comprehensive" proposal called these arguments groundless when one considered the economic gains the city would realize from this annexation.<sup>423</sup> These advantages would offset any increased expenses and should help alleviate current fiscal problems as well.<sup>424</sup> The city's tax base would expand by some \$5.0 million, and the city would also gain many vacant properties which would expand the tax base further as they were built upon. One had only to recall the positive economic role that annexation had played in Roanoke, to recognize its long-term benefits for the city, despite the immediate costs.<sup>425</sup>

City officials proposed that Roanoke spend at least \$5.0 million, in addition to the \$11.5 million that the annexed areas' revenues would bring in, the first five years following this annexation to provide the annexed areas with services and capital improvements, to pay increased personnel

<sup>421</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times, December 21, 1958, p. 6  
December 30, 1958, p. 13; October 21, 1959, p. 17.

<sup>422</sup> Roanoke Times, February 3, 1959, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>423</sup> Roanoke Times, December 30, 1958, p. 13; February 3, 1959, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>424</sup> "Letters to the Roanoke City Council," Roanoke, City Council Minutes, February 9, 1959, Book 32, pp. 355-56.

<sup>425</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times, May 2, 1959, p. 6.

costs, and to reimburse the county for seven schools and other public facilities, totalling \$1.5 million. The city would assume a portion of the county's debt totalling \$190,000.<sup>426</sup> In addition the city would assume the Roanoke Sanitation Authority's debt amounting to \$540,000<sup>427</sup> and spend \$1.3 million to upgrade and expand the sewer system.<sup>428</sup> The city planned to issue bonds, raise existing taxes, and/or add new taxes to finance these costs. While capital costs would decline as improvements were made, city officials expected personnel and service costs, to total 11.1 million in five years, and to rise annually afterwards, as the city workforce expanded to meet increased demands from this larger territory and growing population.<sup>429</sup>

County officials warned that this annexation was a potential economic disaster for the county. It would remove 40 per cent of the county's assessed real estate values totalling \$39.0 million, but take only 28 per cent of the county's population, excluding Vinton and Salem, as well as just 28 per cent of county's school population. The county, consequently, would retain 72 per cent of its population but just

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<sup>426</sup> Roanoke Times, February 17, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>427</sup> Roanoke Times, May 8, 1960, Sec. B, p. 1.

<sup>428</sup> Roanoke Times February 8, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>429</sup> Roanoke Times, February 17, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

60 per cent of its revenue base. This would make it exceedingly difficult for the county government to function at pre-annexation levels while providing services and capital improvements for an expanding population. County officials put the annexation costs for the city at \$9.2 million to \$15.2 million, and cautioned that the city's \$5.0 million cost projection was much too low.<sup>430</sup>

They argued that the city lacked the fiscal resources to finance this annexation when there were numerous capital projects remaining from the 1949 annexation.<sup>431</sup> The county estimated that these projects would cost \$15.0 million.<sup>432</sup> The county also noted that the city's revenue base was heavily dependent upon business and merchant taxes, and in recent years the city had incurred a budget deficit despite reduced appropriations for education, capital projects, and public service. In short county officials accused the city government of using this annexation to shore up city finances.<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>430</sup> Roanoke Times, February 12, 1961, Sec. B, pp. 1 and 4; Henry Chenault, Roanoke Times, February 16, 1961, p. 5.

<sup>431</sup> Roanoke Times, March 7, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>432</sup> Roanoke Times, February 8, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>433</sup> Roanoke Times, February 17, 1961, pp. 1 and 4; March 7, 1961, p. 1; City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke et al., Decision, March 19, 1961, p. 4.

The county would face a \$5.0 million revenue loss in the first five years after annexation. County officials reminded the court that while this annexation might boost the city's economy, the county would lose many industrial and commercial sections; consequently, the county would become less economically diversified, with the county retaining a larger proportion of suburban areas needing many services and capital improvements, but yielding low tax revenues.<sup>434</sup>

The county government would have to rely more heavily on residential property taxes so that present tax rates might double as a result. There was certain to be less support for educational expenditures in the face of higher taxes. Furthermore, the county would lose much of its prime developable land and its attractiveness for new investment.<sup>435</sup>

#### 7.6 RACE-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

The city's annexation policies, as mentioned earlier, continued to focus on annexing the economically valuable areas. These tended to be primarily industrial or commercial sections, or if residential, predominately white, middle-class neighborhoods where few black residents lived. In addition, the county's black population decreased throughout

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<sup>434</sup> Roanoke Times, February 12, 1961, Sec. B, p. 4.

<sup>435</sup> Roanoke Times, February 17, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.



the period from 2,590 in 1950 to 2,483 in 1960, with the percentage of blacks in the population dropping from 8.5 per cent in 1950 to 6.0 per cent in 1960. While the black population was declining, the county's total population increased by more than 48.7 per cent<sup>436</sup> (Tables 2 and 3).

The city's black population increased by 1,950 residents, from 14,592 (15.9 per cent) in 1950 to 16,542 (17.0 per cent) in 1960, while the city's total population increased by 5,189 (5.6 per cent). The city's black population growth was more than twice that of the city's total population growth rate, a 13.4 per cent increase for blacks, versus 5.6 per cent for the total population<sup>437</sup> (Tables 2 and 3).

This population increase for blacks worried city officials even though the black population remained small. While the two most recent annexations had "diluted" the city's black population, nonetheless, the increasing black population in the 1950's reversed this trend.<sup>438</sup> The 1962 annexation would have boosted the proportion of white residents with the addition of 17,500 residents, the overwhelming ma-

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<sup>436</sup> Census of Population, Virginia, (1950), Table 4, p. 8; Table 6, p. 14; Table 34, p. 55; Census of Population, Virginia, (1960), Table 25, p. 45; Table 28, p. 53.

<sup>437</sup> Census of Population, Virginia, (1950), Table 4, p. 8; Table 6, p. 14; Table 34, p. 55; Census of Population, Virginia, (1960), Table 25, p. 45; Table 28, p. 53.

<sup>438</sup> Census, 1960, Virginia, p. 48-23.

majority being white and middle class.<sup>439</sup>

The increasing black population in Roanoke as well as the city's economic goals were two reasons the city refused the county's compromise proposal which had included two small, poor, black neighborhoods southwest of the city. These neighborhoods would have been an additional economic liability for the city. It was also possible that children from these neighborhoods, would have integrated the local white city schools, a major issue at that time.<sup>440</sup>

#### 7.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite the boom in the 1940's, the 1950's brought another era of slow growth for Roanoke while the county continued to develop rapidly. In addition city officials feared that Salem's recent annexation would soon be repeated, excluding Roanoke from gaining these valuable western and southwestern suburbs. As a consequence city officials proposed another annexation, their most extensive to date. The city, nonetheless, was still burdened with many capital projects which it had promised to make in the 1949 annexation suit. These obligations had created serious financial problems for

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<sup>439</sup> Roanoke Times, March 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>440</sup> Roanoke Times, February 17, 1961, pp. and 4; March 7, 1961, pp. 1 and 4; March 11, 1961, p. 1 and 4; August 8, 1964, p. 3.

Roanoke.

The city's earlier justification for annexation--to provide planning, public services, and capital improvements in the suburban areas--was less plausible now. The county government had made great strides to provide services comparable to those of Roanoke. The county had organized a sanitation authority in 1954 to provide sewer services in many suburbs. While there were still serious water and sewer problems, notably in the Roanoke-Salem "corridor," the sanitation authority was a major step to remedy this situation.

The city's annexation proposal was met with strong opposition from both county officials and residents. Facing a third annexation in two decades, county officials were aware of their options to defeat the annexation. The 1950 revisions of the Code of Virginia weakened the statutes' traditionally pro-annexation orientation, and county officials were, in this instance, successful in their defense to stop this annexation.

City officials, who with great civic boosterism, had pushed forward with this suit, later conceded that they had been unwilling to compromise and that the 31.2 square mile annexation proposal was probably unrealistic, given the city's financial situation. Many city residents and officials, though strong civic supporters too, had opposed this

annexation because they thought the costs too great. This split among the city's traditional alliance of civic boosters seriously weakened the city's case for annexation. This defeat, then, was a serious blow to Roanoke's tradition of a strong civic booster spirit. The defeat stopped, at least temporarily, the city's historic drive to expand through ever larger annexation proposals. The size of the 1962 annexation territory was one-third larger than that of the 1949 annexation proposal; it was even 5 square miles larger than the city's current size of 27.6 square miles. The court was skeptical of such a grandiose proposal and the plan to finance it.

This annexation, then, illustrated the increasing importance that financial considerations were playing in the city's annexations, especially this suit, and as they had in 1949, and to a lesser extent in 1943. With the increasing cost of capital facilities, the increasing density of suburban development, and the resulting revenue base in Roanoke County, any annexation, except a very small one, would entail a large financial outlay. The three most important factors in these financial considerations--the changing statutory demands which placed a greater financial burden on the annexing municipality, the sheer size of this suit which included 17,500 residents, 40 per cent of the county's re-

venue base, and 31.2 square miles, and the city's fragile fiscal situation--caused the court to conclude that Roanoke could not afford this annexation. The irony was that these additional obligations would increase taxes and make the city less competitive with the other valley governments. With increasing taxes, the city would be an even less appealing site for economic investment.

While this defeat proved that the county's efforts to provide urban amenities were a success, it also underscored the city's changing rationale for seeking annexation. While services, planning, and capital improvements remained important criteria for seeking annexation, these were less justified in light of county efforts to meet the needs of the suburban area. Greater emphasis was now placed on both the need for more land for future growth and the need to maintain an economically viable tax base. Such arguments, common in other cities' suits, were noted in the 1971 Stuart Commission's report on metropolitan development and incorporated into the annexation statutes.<sup>441</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> Joseph R. Mayes, et al., 1976, p. 565; "Metropolitan Virginia: A Program for Action," The Report by the Virginia Metropolitan Areas Study Commission, 1967, pp. 16-17; Code of Virginia (1950), 1983 Cumulative Supplement, Sec. 15.1-1041, pp. 449-50.

Race-related considerations, the least important issue in all previous annexations, surfaced briefly during the court hearing. One of the annexation proposals that county officials offered as a compromise included two small, poor, and predominately black subdivisions, located southwest of Roanoke. Both neighborhoods had no services and had much to gain from annexation. City officials rejected this proposal because of looming integration and their low economic worth. County officials had offered the two neighborhoods because they wanted to remove the threat of integration to nearby county schools. City officials has similar fears. In addition, the annexation of these two neighborhoods contradicted the city's economic objectives for this annexation. Nonetheless, this was the first instance in which the issue of black residents was openly discussed in an annexation suit.

## Chapter VIII

### ROANOKE'S LATTER ANNEXATIONS, 1964-1985

After the 1962 annexation defeat, Roanoke's growth remained sluggish for the next ten years, 1964 to 1976. Roanoke County became increasingly the site for most suburban development. This chapter provides a brief discussion of the importance of the four issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and planning, financial considerations, and race-related considerations--in the later years of Roanoke's annexation history. During these latter annexations all four issues were drawn into the city's annexations as major factors around which the constellation of actors played out these suits. This chapter, consequently, establishes the postscript to the now permanent opposition of most county residents and officials to annexation. The chapter also provides a basis of comparison between the 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexation suits and those in the later period.

## 8.1 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Only a short time after the city's defeat in the 1962 annexation suit, Roanoke became involved in three small annexations which together contained about one-half square mile of Roanoke County territory (Table 1). The first of the three annexations took place in 1965; the city, as a defendant, annexed 0.20 square miles.<sup>442</sup> This pattern was repeated under similar circumstances in 1967 with the annexation of 0.06 square miles,<sup>443</sup> and in 1968 with the annexation of 0.29 square miles.<sup>444</sup> The city's territory expanded to 27.23 square miles (Table 1) with the addition of these sections. The three annexations included some 520 residents. The court ordered the city to pay a total of \$365,000 (1.8 million)<sup>445</sup> to Roanoke County for the loss of territory and tax revenues, public improvements, and a portion of the county's

<sup>442</sup> W. Franklin Angle et al., v. City of Roanoke and County of Roanoke, Order of Annexation, September 14, 1964. Roanoke Times, August 8, 1964, pp. 1 and 3;

<sup>443</sup> Henry Adam S. Davis et al. v. City of Roanoke and County of Roanoke, Order of Annexation, July 16, 1966. Roanoke Times, July 16, 1966, pp. 1 and 4;

<sup>444</sup> W. C. Williams et al. v. City of Roanoke and County of Roanoke, Order of Annexation, May 16, 1967. Roanoke Times, pp. May 17, 1967, p. 13;

<sup>445</sup> The equivalent value of this compensation in 1984 dollars using the Statistical Abstract of the United States, pp. 474-75 and the Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970, "Consumer Price Indexes," Series E: 135-166 and 166-173.



debt. In addition, the city was to make various capital improvements and extend city services to these communities.<sup>446</sup>

While the city was involved in these suits, various civic groups explored the consolidation of the four valley governments--Roanoke, Roanoke County, Vinton, and Salem--into one metropolitan government. After negotiating several years, Roanoke, Roanoke County, and Vinton agreed to hold a referendum on the consolidation proposal.<sup>447</sup> Salem, however, declined to participate in this referendum. City voters approved the referendum overwhelmingly, but the measure lost by a slight margin in Roanoke County, and in Vinton voters completely rejected it. Consolidation was dead.<sup>448</sup>

Concomitant with the 1965, 1967, and 1968 annexation suits as well as the 1969 consolidation referendum were the emergence of five more annexation suits which would draw all four valley governments into a long and controversial annexation battle. In two of these suits, the petitioners were seeking annexation to Salem, while petitioners in two other suits were seeking annexation to Roanoke. In addition, the

<sup>446</sup> Roanoke Times, August 8, 1964, pp. 1 and 3; July 16, 1966, pp. 1 and 4; May 17, 1967, p. 13.

<sup>447</sup> Roanoke Times, August 28, 1969, pp. 1 and 2; August 28, 1969, p. 6.

<sup>448</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times, November 6, 1969, p. 6; November 5, 1969, pp. 1 and 14.

city petitioned the circuit court in 1969 to annex all of Roanoke County, including Vinton, following the defeat of the consolidation referendum. Because several of the suits overlapped, the court consolidated them into one suit.<sup>449</sup>

City officials undertook this comprehensive annexation suit for several reasons. First, the city wanted to consolidate the four other suits which could then be heard together. Second, this suit could conceivably merge the four governments into a single, metropolitan government. Third, the city could acquire substantial suburban territory, reversing its 1962 annexation defeat. Despite the city's proposal to annex the entire county, city and Salem officials secretly agreed to divide the county. Roanoke would annex the eastern half and Salem, the western half.<sup>450</sup>

The court dismissed both suits seeking annexation to Salem, the "Roanoke-Salem corridor"<sup>451</sup> suit and the "Glenvar" suit,<sup>452</sup> Both groups withdrew their suits after the consolidation agreement was defeated. Neither group wanted to leave Roanoke County but had sought annexation to Salem only

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<sup>449</sup> Ivan R. Young et al. v. County of Roanoke et al.

<sup>450</sup> Roanoke World News, April 16, 1974, p. 13; Roanoke Times, April 23, 1974, pp. 17 and 19.

<sup>451</sup> Styled, Ivan R. Young et al. v. City of Salem.

<sup>452</sup> Styled, Robert Willis et al. v. City of Salem.

to avoid consolidation with the city.<sup>453</sup> The court dismissed the city's suit to annex all of Roanoke County,<sup>454</sup> but then awarded the city 0.435 square miles from the "Windsor Hills" suit<sup>455</sup> and 2.16 square miles of the "Airport-Crossroads Mall" suit.<sup>456</sup> Together the two awards totalled 3.595 square miles. Being dissatisfied with this verdict, the city appealed its award to the Virginia Supreme Court. The court upheld the city's appeal, granted Roanoke all 2.33 square miles in the Windsor Hills suit, and ordered this suit reheard by the circuit with the stipulation that the court award Roanoke a "substantially larger" amount of territory.<sup>457</sup>

While the second circuit court refused to divide the county between Roanoke and Salem, it did award Roanoke 15.83 square miles of territory, the city's largest annexation to date. The city gained 16,500 residents. The court ordered the city to pay Roanoke County a total of \$13.8 million (\$25.2 million).<sup>458</sup> The city was to pay \$4.2 million, repre-

<sup>453</sup> Roanoke Times, June 1, 1971, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>454</sup> Styled, City of Roanoke v. County of Roanoke Roanoke Times, April 30, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>455</sup> Styled, Blanche Weddle et al. v. City of Roanoke.

<sup>456</sup> Styled, Roy C. Kinsey et al. v. City of Roanoke.

<sup>457</sup> 216 Roanoke and Salem v. Roanoke County, 214 VA 231-34; Roanoke Times, August 31, 1973, pp. 1 and 10.

senting 22.6 per cent of the county's \$18.6 million bond debt; \$72,000 for miscellaneous public improvements, property, and equipment; and \$9.6 million for the loss of net tax revenues (Table 2). Roanoke had to undertake numerous capital improvements totalling \$10.2 million and provide public services in the annexed areas.<sup>459</sup>

In 1980 the county gained immunity from further city annexations. Annexations, consequently, are now limited to those which suburban residents initiate.<sup>460</sup>

## 8.2 THE ACTORS

Because of the number and particular circumstances of these eight suits--the three suits from 1965 to 1968 and the five suits within the 1971-76 consolidated suit--the constellation of actors tended to differ with each suit. Suburban residents initiated the annexations in the first three suits--1965, 1967, and 1968--and in four of the five suits comprising the consolidated suit, Ivan R. Young et al.

<sup>458</sup> The equivalent amount at the dollar's 1984 value using the Statistical Abstract of the United States, pp. 474-75 and the Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970, "Consumer Price Indexes, Series E: 135-166 and 166-173.

<sup>459</sup> Ivan R. Young et al. v. City of Salem et al., Decision, pp. 3-11 passim.

<sup>460</sup> Virginia Municipal Code, 1981 "Letter to the Mayor and Members of the City Council of Roanoke, Virginia, February 24, 1981.

v. City of Salem et al., The city assumed a "passive" role in the first three suits because it was barred by the five-year statutory restriction on annexations. Despite the restriction, city officials testified on behalf of the residents' petitions and indicated the city's willingness to annex all the territory that the court would award Roanoke.<sup>461</sup>

After defeat of the consolidation agreement in 1969, the city returned to its traditional role as an "initiator" and undertook to annex all of Roanoke County. In reality Roanoke was allied with Salem, with the two cities agreeing to split the county between them. Even with the alliance, Roanoke became a defendant against Salem in the "corridor" suit, after the circuit court awarded Salem the 3.91 square miles, in an earlier hearing in 1968. The city appealed this decision to the Virginia Supreme Court to halt its execution and to gain part of this economically valuable "corridor."<sup>462</sup>

Amidst all of these suits, city officials, the commercial-civic elite, and city residents joined together to support the city's annexation efforts. There was little opposition to the four proposals. In the latter suit, Roanoke

<sup>461</sup> Roanoke Times, August 8, 1964, pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>462</sup> Roanoke World News, April 16, 1974, Sec. 2, pp. 13-16; Ivan R. Young et al. v. City of Salem.

civic boosters had overwhelmingly supported the consolidation proposal, giving credence to their support for the city's plan to annex the entire county.<sup>463</sup>

Roanoke County maintained its position as defendant and opposed all eight suits, from the 1965 suit to the consolidated suits of 1971-1976. When the county did not appeal the 1974 circuit court decision, Salem did, hoping to gain at least some territory which the circuit court had denied the city. Salem's appeal was, however, rejected by the Virginia Supreme Court. The denial finally put an end to the consolidated suit.<sup>464</sup>

The county's opposition to those suits initiated by area residents contrasted with the county's traditional position that it would not oppose any which residents supported. The county was also allied in the city's 1965, 1967, and 1968 suits, with residents who opposed their communities' annexation, and in the consolidated suits with both county residents and Vinton officials.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>463</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times, December 13, 1970, p. 6.

<sup>464</sup> William S. Hubard, "Letter to the Mayor and Members of the Roanoke City Council," December 15, 1975; Roanoke Times, June 10, 1975, pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>465</sup> Roanoke Times, August 7, 1964, p. 1; July 15, 1966, p. 3; May 16, 1967, p. 1; February 7, 1970, p. 2; October 10, 1974, p. 1.

### 8.3 THE ISSUES

While all four issues had some importance in at least one of these suits, only three issues--civic boosterism; public services, capital improvements, and comprehensive planning; and financial considerations had a great impact. Race-related considerations were gaining influence, but the issue remained a much less crucial to these annexation suits than were the first three issues.

### 8.4 CIVIC BOOSTERISM

Civic boosterism, historically the motivator for Roanoke's annexations, again induced city officials to support annexation for Roanoke, both in a passive role as a defendant against residents seeking annexation to the city and as an initiator of a suit to annex all of Roanoke County. In the "passive" role city officials actively encouraged suburban residents to seek annexation to Roanoke and assured them of the city's willingness to accept their communities and to provide services and capital facilities for them.<sup>466</sup>

The city's defeat in the 1962 annexation suit had undermined the willingness of city officials and their allies to propose an annexation. While they remained loyal to Roanoke and eager for the city to grow, they were now more cautious

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<sup>466</sup> Roanoke Times, August 7, 1964, p. 1; July 15, 1966, p. 1; May 16, 1967, p. 13.

and circumspect in proposing increasingly more expansive and costly annexations. The city's gains from the 1965, 1967, and 1968 annexations, the city's fears of Salem's possible annexation of all the suburbs between the two municipalities, the city's continued slow population growth, and the strong support that city residents had shown for the consolidation proposal, despite its defeat, all combined to reinvigorate the city's strong civic boosterism. Furthermore, the defeat of the consolidation referendum convinced city officials and the commercial-civic elite that only another comprehensive annexation would realize their long-held goal of a single, metropolitan government.<sup>467</sup>

Until the 1943 annexation, the city's civic boosterism had been matched in a large degree by pro-Roanoke boosterism among many suburban residents. While this pro-Roanoke attitude was never as strong again, the 1965, 1967, 1968, Airport-Crossroads Mall, and Windsor Hills suits marked a return to the suburban support that the city had enjoyed in the earlier annexations. The suburban residents supporting annexation to Roanoke noted that their economic and social ties to the city had created a strong "community of interest" between their community and Roanoke.<sup>468</sup> City officials

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<sup>467</sup> Roanoke Times, October 6, 1974, Sec. B, p. 5.

<sup>468</sup> Roanoke Times, June 1, 1971, Sec. C, p. 2; June 27, 1971, Sec. A, pp. 1-2.



supported these small annexations for two reasons. First, these were middle class residential communities which the city had historically sought as the most desirable sections for annexation. Second, the residents, themselves, had taken the initiative to seek annexation.<sup>469</sup>

The city's boosterism initially clashed with Salem's plan to annex territory in the corridor area. Later, the city allied itself with Salem to split the county. This was the first instance of such cooperation.<sup>470</sup> Since Salem had become a city in 1968, Salem and Roanoke were in similar situations.<sup>471</sup> The city's civic boosters saw this cooperation as a chance for the city to realize at least part of its long-standing goal of gaining a metropolitan government for the region. The "two-city" plan was more economically feasible while achieving the same basic objective--a larger and more economically diversified city.<sup>472</sup>

The county's civic boosterism remained strong throughout this period, despite the loss of support among those residents seeking annexation to Roanoke. County officials main-

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<sup>469</sup> Roanoke Times, August 7, 1964, p. 1; July 16, 1966, p. 4; May 16, 1967, p. 13.

<sup>470</sup> Roanoke Times, April 25, 1971, Sec. C, pp. 1-2.

<sup>471</sup> Roanoke Times, April 28, 1971, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>472</sup> Roanoke Times, May 2, 1971, Sec. C, pp. 1 and 4; "Editorial," May 2, 1971, p. 6.

tained that the county government was meeting the needs of its constituents and that the county's welfare should not be sacrificed for Roanoke's growth.<sup>473</sup> One reason for this attitude was the lack of support for the consolidation proposal. County officials found that residents were happy with Roanoke County and wanted to preserve its independence and autonomy.<sup>474</sup> Even if residents supported their annexation, as they did in 1965, 1967, 1968, and in two of the suits in the consolidated suit, the county believed that the city was coercing these residents to seek annexation. Furthermore, county officials supported residents in these areas petitioning for annexation, who opposed the annexation. In the 1965, 1967, and 1968 annexations the county's defense was largely ineffective. The court did reduce the territory in each of these suits, whenever possible, to exclude the property of those opposed to the annexation.<sup>475</sup> A second reason for their defense was their belief that loss of these economic resources would create difficulties for the county government. The county was initially successful in proving loss of the airport and Windsor Hills areas would impose economic hardships. The Supreme Court, however, dismissed

<sup>473</sup> Roanoke Times, June 30, 1971, pp. 1 and 2.

<sup>474</sup> Roanoke Times, October 15, 1974, pp. 1-2.

<sup>475</sup> Roanoke Times, June 1, 1971, pp. 1 and 5; June 23, 1971, pp. 1 and 5.

this argument in the city's appeal.<sup>476</sup>

While the county government's concerns included all county sections, Vinton officials were concerned primarily with the town's interests, particularly the town's independence. Vinton had a long history of strong civic boosterism which had emerged in several of the city's earlier annexations. In those suits and in the present one, Vinton officials and town partisans sought to avoid annexation and to preserve the county's economic base from annexation too.<sup>477</sup>

Some county residents supported annexation to Roanoke, although most county residents opposed it. Generally, county residents were strong civic partisans. They were satisfied with the county government and its functions. They had overwhelmingly defeated the proposed government consolidation agreement, preferring the county's continued preservation. After defeating the consolidation agreement, those who had petitioned for annexation to Salem withdrew their suits. Residents wanted to remain in Roanoke County and had sought annexation only to escape annexation to Roanoke. Similarly, residents of the three communities seeking annexation in 1965, 1967, and 1968, had intervened as co-defen-

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<sup>476</sup> Roanoke Times, June 25, 1971, pp. 1 and 5; October 15, 1974, pp. 1-2; Roanoke and Salem v. Roanoke County, 214 VA 216, pp. 229-30.

<sup>477</sup> Roanoke Times, October 3, 1974, pp. 25-27.

dants with the county to oppose their communities' annexation. Their efforts were largely successful in the 1965, 1967, and 1968 suits because the court had redrawn the boundaries of each suit to exclude their properties when possible.<sup>478</sup> The Supreme Court, however, refused similar requests when it granted the Roanoke's appeal in 1973.<sup>479</sup>

### 8.5 PUBLIC SERVICES AND PLANNING

City officials presented evidence in all four suits--1965, 1967, 1968, and 1971-76--to prove Roanoke's ability to provide more services and capital improvements to suburban areas than the county could. City officials noted that despite the county's continued efforts to expand services and make various capital improvements, city services and capital improvements remained superior to those which the county provided. The city provided water and sewage treatment services for many county residents--individually or through separate contracts with the county sanitation authority and Vinton. In addition, the city also cited the numerous service "spillovers" and commuter costs that the city underwrote for county residents. The circuit courts

<sup>478</sup> Roanoke Times, August 8, 1964, p. 1 and 3; July 16, 1966, pp. 1 and 4; May 17, 1967, p. 13.

<sup>479</sup> Roanoke and Salem v. Roanoke County 214 VA 216, pp. 214-15; Roanoke Times, March 28, 1970, p. 3; June 23, 1971, pp. 1-2.

accepted these arguments when they permitted the city to annex the three small communities in the mid-1960's<sup>480</sup> and later when the Supreme Court upheld the city's appeal in the consolidated suit.<sup>481</sup>

Although most county residents had argued in the 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexation suits that they were satisfied with county services, part of the new configuration which emerged after 1962 reflected a change in the attitudes of some county residents towards city services. The 1965, 1967, and 1968 annexations were brought primarily because residents of those small communities sought to gain city's services and capital improvements for their neighborhoods, especially water and sewer services. They contended that only the city could provide these services satisfactorily. Their arguments gave additional credibility to the city's statements concerning its ability to provide superior services.<sup>482</sup>

The county, of course, argued in opposition that it was making continual efforts to improve services and capital improvements, especially water and sewers. The sanitation au-

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<sup>480</sup> Roanoke Times, August 8, 1965, p. 1; July 16, 1966, p. 1; May 16, 1967, p. 13;

<sup>481</sup> Roanoke and Salem v. Roanoke County 214 Va. 216, p. 228; Roanoke Times, September 20, 1974, p. 21.

<sup>482</sup> Roanoke Times, August 8, 1965, pp. 1 and 3; July 16, 1966, pp. 1 and 4; and May 16, 1967, p. 13.

thority had not only expanded services into most areas of the county's suburbs, but it now operated several sewage treatment facilities similar to city facilities.<sup>483</sup> County officials believed that not only were their services equal to those of the city, but several services, especially education, were superior to the city's programs.<sup>484</sup> While county officials believed that residents had little to gain from any annexation, their arguments carried little weight with the court when suburban residents petitioned for annexation.<sup>485</sup>

County residents opposed to the city's annexation concurred with the county's arguments on the quality of its services and their satisfaction with them. They noted also that annexation would bring few additional benefits. Likewise, Vinton officials were quick to note that the town had had a long history of providing satisfactory public services and that the city had recognized this for many years.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>483</sup> Roanoke Times, June 24, 1971, p. 5.

<sup>484</sup> Roanoke Times, April 30, 1971, pp. 1 and 3; June 24, 1971, pp. 1 and 5; October 6, 1974, Sec. B, p. 5; October 10, 1974, pp. 1-2.

<sup>485</sup> W. Franklin Angle et al., pp. 3-4; W. C. Williams et al., pp. 3-4; Henry Adam S. Davis et al., pp. 2-3.

<sup>486</sup> Roanoke Times, October 3, 1974, pp. 25-27; October 10, 1974, pp. 1-2; October 17, 1974, pp. 2-17.

## 8.6 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The 1965, 1967, and 1968 annexations comprised primarily small, middle class residential communities with few additional economic assets, despite Roanoke County's protests to the contrary. City officials, consequently, took great effort to point out that Roanoke faced continued economic stagnation unless it was permitted to annex a large amount of county territory.<sup>487</sup>

With the advent of the 1971-76 annexation suit, city officials resurrected what had become a major economic argument for the city since the 1943 annexation. City officials recalled that Roanoke's last large annexation had occurred in 1949, some twenty years earlier. Since then, and especially in the 1960's, Roanoke had lost increasing numbers of businesses and industries, and its middle class population to the county suburbs. City officials attributed this economic decline primarily to the city's inability to provide enough large, land parcels for development. The city was seeking not only to annex the suburbanized economic resources it had lost, but also to gain additional vacant and developable parcels to promote Roanoke's attractiveness for further economic investment and to enhance the city's competitiveness with Salem and Roanoke County. These economic

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<sup>487</sup> Roanoke World News, September 27, 1974, p. 17.

gains would also offset the costs of providing services for city residents as well as county commuters.<sup>488</sup>

City officials realized the financial obligations that this annexation would entail. They had proposed to spend \$81.0 million in 1971 for services and capital improvements in the annexed areas, but increased the financial proposal to \$109.0 million to account for inflation.<sup>489</sup> If the city annexed all of the county, then it would have to assume the county's debts but there would be no liabilities for lost revenues or public facilities. A similar situation would occur if Roanoke and Salem split the county.<sup>490</sup> The court granted Roanoke only part of the territory it petitioned to annex, reducing the total compensation to \$13.8 million.<sup>491</sup>

The county mounted a vigorous defense of its preservation, contending that the city could not afford this large an annexation. These were arguments similar to those the county had used in the 1949 and 1962 annexation suits. The county noted that it had been able to expand services and capital improvements while keeping taxes low. County offi-

<sup>488</sup> Roanoke World News, September 27, 1974, p. 17; Roanoke Times, April 25, 1971, Sec. C, pp. 1-2; April 29, 1971, pp. 1 and 5; September 26, 1974, p. 13.

<sup>489</sup> The Roanoke World News, September 24, 1974, p. 21.

<sup>490</sup> Roanoke World News, April 16, 1974, Sec. 2, pp. 13-16.

<sup>491</sup> Ivan R. Young et al. v. City of Salem et al., Order of Annexation, 1975, pp. 15-16.



cials charged that Roanoke was simply using this annexation to bolster its fiscal situation and should not be given additional territory when it could not carry out the provisions of this large annexation. Furthermore, the county argued that by transferring its economic resources to the city, the annexations made it more difficult to provide for the remaining county residents.<sup>492</sup>

County residents joined in this defense. They also believed that the 1971-76 annexation would burden Roanoke with enormous debts--to pay compensation, to assume a portion of the county's debt, and to--make capital improvements and provide public services. The city, they feared, would have to increase taxes drastically to finance these obligations. They resented being economic pawns in Roanoke's attempt to shore up its economic situation and being made to pay for county public improvements their taxes had bought.<sup>493</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> Roanoke Times, June 22, 1971, p. 1; June 25, 1971, p. 5; October 15, 1974, pp. 1-2.

<sup>493</sup> Roanoke Times, October 12, 1974, pp. 2-17.

## 8.7 RACE-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

City and county officials rarely discussed the issues and concerns of black residents publicly in most of the city's annexations. In the years following enactment of the civil rights laws, however, racial issues became major points of suburban opposition.<sup>494</sup>

The first instance of this opposition appeared in the 1965 annexation suit. Both the city officials and white residents petitioning for annexation asked the court to exclude two small, poor black neighborhoods adjoining their community. These two black neighborhoods were the same ones that county officials had offered to Roanoke as part of an annexation compromise proposal in the 1962 suit. In the 1965 annexation these neighborhoods were excluded ostensibly because they were "rural" and lacked a strong "community of interest" with Roanoke. Despite these allegations, both the white residents and city officials feared that inclusion of these two neighborhoods would lead to integration of the nearby white elementary school. The black residents, however, pleaded with the city to annex their neighborhoods. The two black neighborhoods lacked even the most rudimentary public services and capital improvements. They, rather than the white communities, had the most to gain from annexation.

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<sup>494</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times, April 18, 1975, p. 6.

tion.<sup>495</sup>

Racial issues became a major reason for suburban opposition to annexation in the consolidated suit. Roanoke began its school busing program in 1971, and many of the suburban residents, as well as numerous white city residents were anxious to avoid the busing issue.<sup>496</sup> By 1975 the Department of Justice had begun to review annexation suits, especially in the South.<sup>497</sup> The city had to get federal certification that the annexation was not discriminatory.<sup>498</sup>

Despite the increasing importance of the race-related concerns, none of the four annexations suits--from 1965 to 1976--included many black suburban residents. The first three annexations involved only white suburban communities, except for the two small black neighborhoods excluded in 1965. Of the 16,457 residents annexed by Roanoke in the 1976 annexation, only 325 (2.0 per cent) were Black.<sup>499</sup> The annexation, characteristically, included numerous economically valuable residential and non-residential areas where

<sup>495</sup> Roanoke Times, August 8, 1964, p. 1; August 6, 1964, p. 13;

<sup>496</sup> Roanoke Times, May 30, 1971, Sec. C, p. 1; June 23, 1971, p. 1; Editorial, April 18, 1975, p. 6; June 11, 1975, p. 13;

<sup>497</sup> National Civic Review, pp. 364-65.

<sup>498</sup> Roanoke Times & World News, July 23, 1975, pp. 1-2.

<sup>499</sup> Roanoke Times & World News, July 23, 1975, pp. 1-2.

few Blacks lived. The largely white annexed population reduced the percentage of Blacks in the city's population. In 1976 Roanoke's total population was 104,898, but the black population numbered only 18,925 residents (18.04 per cent). The city's 1970 population had been 92,115, of which Blacks number 17,948 (19.48 per cent). While the annexation increased the number of Blacks in Roanoke's population by 325, the increase in the number of white residents decreased the percentage of Blacks from 19.48 to 18.04 per cent.<sup>500</sup>

#### 8.8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Roanoke reversed the defeat it had suffered in its 1962 annexation suit in the four annexations after 1963. These annexations were accomplished prior to the county's receipt of annexation immunity from forced annexations. These four annexations provided Roanoke with some 16.3 square miles of additional territory, much of it vacant and developable. In these four annexations, only three of the four issues were important throughout. Civic boosterism, as it had in most previous suits, provided the initial "push" to seek, or at least encourage, annexation. While services and planning and financial considerations also played important roles in each of these four suits, race-related considerations did

<sup>500</sup> Population of Roanoke, Department of City Planning, Roanoke, Virginia, 1977, Part II, pp. 62-68.

not became a controversial public topic until the end of the 1960's. Integration and equitable representation for Blacks were now factors which the city had to consider in all annexation matters.

As in all city annexations, the boundary expansions were a response to the city's current social and economic situation. The city had entered a period of population decline in the 1960's reversing even the modest growth of the 1950's. City officials were concerned not only with this trend but generally believed that Roanoke faced further economic stagnation without additional territory. The four annexations were, consequently, major responses to this economic stagnation, a major reason for city annexations since the 1930's. In two important measures of Roanoke's urban development--local economic development and population growth--these final annexations carried on the annexation pattern of the city's 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexation suits. In the city's early history, the annexations from 1882 to 1926 were a basic response to rapid city population growth and urban development. By the 1943 annexation, annexation had become instead the city's primary response to slow or stagnant population growth and economic development. The annexations from 1943 to 1976 were the city's attempts to respond to this trend of population growth and sluggish economic development.

These latter four annexations--1965 to 1976--were, consequently, a new phase in Roanoke's annexation history. There was both suburban support for each of the annexations, as in the city's annexations between 1882 and 1926, and suburban opposition to them, as in the 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexations suits.

These four annexation also continued the county's opposition to Roanoke's annexations, a trend which had begun by the 1930's. While the county had traditionally stated its belief that annexations should only be permitted where residents supported it, in these four annexation suits there was support from the area residents despite county opposition. The county argued vigorously against each of these annexations as posing a threat the county's continued economic viability. The county ultimately gained its objective--to stop any and all annexations--when the General Assembly granted its petition for an annexation moratorium. This situation continues today and represents another phase in the city's annexation history and the geopolitics of the metropolitan region.

## Chapter IX

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Annexation has been a productive, but controversial and expensive undertaking for Roanoke. In thirteen annexation attempts, twelve of which were successful, the city expanded from 0.5 square miles to over 43 square miles, in one hundred years (Table 1). Early annexations were neither complicated nor expensive. As the region developed, and became more populated, opposition to annexation increased. Today Roanoke County is immune from any annexation, unless initiated by residents or county officials.

In the nineteenth century and into the first three decades of the twentieth century, Roanoke officials had strong support for annexation. Both the city's population growth and economic development were rapid (Tables 2 and 3). Most of this growth was concentrated within a short distance to the city. The 1882, 1890, 1892, 1915, 1919, and 1926 annexations incorporated most suburban growth, even though none of the six annexations exceeded 2.5 square miles. These annexations kept the city's boundaries basically coterminous with the urbanized area. They provided vacant, developable land, which sustained city growth well into the 1930's, a consequence of annexation common to many larger cities as

well.<sup>501</sup>

In the decades after World War I, especially after 1930, the city's population growth fell behind metropolitan growth. Metropolitan growth became more dispersed than in earlier decades. The city failed to annex most suburban areas, despite three "comprehensive" annexation proposals. In fact, these annexations each sought a progressively larger area, overlapping earlier proposals--from 20.56 square miles in 1943 to 20.71 square miles in 1949 to 31.2 square miles in 1962--all in the city's attempt to acquire territory excluded from prior suits and to gain newer suburban developments as well. These annexations, like the previous six, were a response to the region's growth pattern.

Although Roanoke's boundaries failed to keep pace with the emerging growth, Roanoke, did at least acquire a significant amount of territory in 1943 and 1949. The city showed a substantial population gain in the 1940's as a result. These gains reversed the slow growth the city experienced in the 1930's, a period without any annexations. The 1950's, however, was another decade of modest population growth. City officials proposed another comprehensive annexation in 1962, hoping to halt the trend. The court rejected this annexation because of Roanoke's fiscal difficul-

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<sup>501</sup> R. D. McKenzie, pp. 191-93; Howard Rabinowitz, pp. 115-16.



ties and the large amount of vacant land still available for development. With this defeat, Roanoke's growth remained stagnant through the 1960's, despite three small annexations in 1965, 1967, and 1968. Roanoke's slower growth after the 1940's was characteristic of many cities that were unable to annex suburban developments.

After Roanoke's defeat in 1962, the city annexed three small parcels, all less than one square mile in 1965, 1967, and 1968. In 1976, Roanoke annexed 15.83 square miles, after petitioning to annex all of Roanoke County. This annexation increased the city's total area to its present size of 43.07 square miles. The 1976 annexation, Roanoke's first major expansion in twenty-five years, proved beneficial for the city, despite the financial obligations. It has provided enough land to spur the city's growth in the last ten years, reversing the previous slow growth and population decline. This annexation and the resulting development confirmed Roanoke's long-held claims that the city needed vacant land to support further development.

The constellation of actors during these annexations tended to divide between the city and its civic supporters and the county and its supporters. This constellation reflected each group's position relative to a particular suit. City officials, the commercial-civic elite, and to a lesser

extent city residents, had formed an alliance early in Roanoke's history. Through this alliance the city proposed thirteen annexations, twelve of which were successful. City officials and their allies repeatedly promoted their concept of Roanoke as the center of the metropolitan region. This alliance maintained a more or less consistent policy which saw annexation only in terms of its benefits for the city while discounting its costs--compensation to Roanoke County for lost revenues, debt assumption, and reimbursement for public facilities--and the effects upon the county afterwards.

Like the city, the county government had allies among the county's industrial-commercial interests, county residents, and the officials of the towns of Salem and Vinton. The county and its allies took a different view of the region's growth. They saw the city's annexation goals within the context of the competing goals of Roanoke County, Salem, and Vinton. The region's prosperity should, therefore, be balanced among these four governments and their respective interests.

Although the constellation of actors resulted from the geopolitical viewpoints of the two principle actors and their opposing objectives, the four crucial issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and plan-

ning, financial considerations, and race-related considerations--set the annexation agenda and created the geopolitical conflicts. One of the four issues--civic boosterism--was a major force behind most of the thirteen annexation suits. The city's civic boosterism precipitated all the annexations except for the annexations of 1926, 1965, 1967, 1968, and two of the suits in the 1976 annexation.

The push for annexations under the wishful prodding of city officials and civic boosters was a typical of their strong pro-Roanoke patriotism and booster spirit. Boosterism was an historic characteristic of many American cities and towns, especially in the South in the last one hundred years. Roanoke officials had strong ties with the city's commercial-civic elite, the group whom Brownell noted were among the most vocal proponents of city growth in the South.<sup>502</sup>

Because these civic boosters in Roanoke as elsewhere dominated the annexation activities, they were able to press their goals of ever-larger annexations to gain the increasingly spatially dispersed suburban region surrounding the city. They justified their pro-growth stance with claims that these suburbs were merely "extensions" of the city's growth rather than autonomous communities and that Roanoke's

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<sup>502</sup> Blaine Brownell, pp. 142-44.

expansion was both the city's destiny and a sign of community progress. They argued that annexation indicated a progress civic spirit, a quality which many businesses and industries sought before locating in community.<sup>503</sup> It was not surprising, therefore, that the editorials of the city newspapers consistently urged city annexations as necessary for Roanoke's expansion and economic prosperity.

Despite the potential costs, county opposition, and the enormous time expended to wage the comprehensive annexation suits, city civic boosters supporting the "comprehensive" annexation proposals repeatedly won the intra-government debates over the objections of other officials who supported smaller annexations. These victories confirmed the strength of Roanoke's commercial-civic elite and their pro-growth platform.<sup>504</sup> The civic boosters' strategy was to incorporate the majority of the metropolitan region's urban development, outside Vinton and Salem, within the city's boundaries. This would give Roanoke control over present and future development, regain the city's historic growth pattern of ear-

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<sup>503</sup> Blaine Brownell, pp. 150-51.

<sup>504</sup> Despite these victories, it must be realized that such annexation strategies were common among many Virginia cities. Chester Bain noted that frequently cities proposed such large suits because they realized that the court would not award all of most suits they would propose. The larger their proposals, the greater the likelihood that the final award would be large. Chester Bain (1966), p. 121-22.

lier decades, and recapture commercial, industrial, and residential areas lost to the suburbs for lack of sufficient developable land. These arguments comprised a litany which the city stated repeatedly in the 1943, 1949, 1962, and 1976 annexations.

The city's strong boosterism was eventually met by equally strong county opposition which had remained quiescent, if it even existed, in early annexations. County officials could offer only token opposition to annexation, while the county government could not provide residents urban services and capital facilities comparable to those the city could provide. County officials could do little to disprove the city's contentions that the suburban areas needed city services, which was the case in many urban areas until the 1920's or later.<sup>505</sup>

Like county officials, many county residents were also loyal to their community and the county. Nevertheless, the inadequate services and capital facilities in most suburban areas, and the inability of the county to meet their needs, made annexation the only option. Increasing suburban opposition, therefore, paralleled the county government's expanding role as a service provider for an increasingly ur-

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<sup>505</sup> Chester Bain (1966), p. 89; S. Makielski and D. Temple, p. 23; Report of the Virginia Commission on County Government, House Document No. 9, Richmond, 1940.

banized constituency.

The county's early rhetoric had accepted annexations, especially those supported by local residents. The county's opposition increased as Roanoke continued to annex county territory. Eventually the county opposed all city annexations, including those supported by area residents, as threats to the county's existence and economic prosperity. In the face of this growing opposition city officials concluded that county opposition was stronger and more widespread than anticipated. After 1926, they abandoned an early policy excluding those opposed to annexation. The city otherwise had only two alternatives--greatly reduce each suit by excluding those opposed to it or abandon annexation altogether in the face of overwhelming county opposition.

Even though civic boosterism has continued to play an important role in each of these thirteen annexation suits, two other issues--public services and planning, and financial considerations--became increasingly important factors in annexation suits and in the increasing suburban opposition to annexation. Because the state's statutes forbade cities from annexing territory solely to gain population and to boost their standing and because improved services and capital improvements were essential to promote a healthy urban environment, Roanoke had made the provision of services and planning important reasons to justify annexation.

Cities had been the first communities to provide many public services, especially paved streets, sanitation facilities, street lighting, and education. Most suburbs, around Roanoke and other cities, continued either to lack most services or to have services which were substandard to those the city provided. Suburban residents, consequently, saw more advantages than disadvantages to annexation because annexation brought genuine improvements despite higher city taxes. Annexations were mutually beneficial to the annexed suburbs and the city--improving suburban living conditions and enhancing the city's status.<sup>506</sup> Roanoke officials were quick to point to these mutual benefits because the statutes mandated services as a major reason for annexation. The city continued to insist, as late as the 1970's, that it could provide better services. The Supreme Court accepted these contentions in its reversal of the lower court's 1971 annexation award.

By the 1930's the county government was providing more services and capital facilities for its rapidly developing suburbs. Undertaking such responsibilities, however, undermined the city's arguments that it should annex the suburban areas to provide needed services.

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<sup>506</sup> Howard Rabinowitz, pp. 115-16.

With the decreasing, though still, important emphasis on services to justify city annexations was the growing influence of financial considerations as a critical issue. In the nineteenth century annexation costs were low because there were few public facilities and land was inexpensive (Table 1). These costs rose with increases in land values, urbanization, population, and the expansion of county public improvements. Each successive annexation carried with it the obligation to provide services and capital improvements. The city floated bonds to cover these costs, although the bond payments increased taxes.

City officials sought sufficient economic assets to offset the cost for services and capital improvements. Berman and Bollens and Schmandt observed that cities usually passed over the less economically valuable areas in favor of the more economically lucrative suburban sections.<sup>507</sup>

Roanoke's annexations followed similar economic considerations. The city sought affluent residential subdivisions and industrial and commercial zones in the suburbs north, west, and southwest of Roanoke. The city avoided Vinton and the adjacent eastern and southern suburbs which could provide many fewer economic assets. State annexation statutes imposed various payments to compensate for county losses and

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<sup>507</sup> David Berman, p. 194; J. Bollens and H. Schmandt, p. 242.



local financial considerations included a broader revenue base to fund services and pay county compensation while keeping taxes low for city residents. Only in 1949 and 1976 when the city proposed to annex Vinton and the eastern suburbs did city officials permit civic boosterism to triumph over economic considerations. Civic boosters had pushed for several decades for Roanoke to reach a population of 100,000, even though this goal conflicted with<sup>o</sup> economic considerations. The consequences of this rivalry were the pre-annexation debates in 1943 and 1962, with the council splitting over economics versus boosterism in the latter suit.

Race-related considerations were the least important of the four issues. Since the 1890's Roanoke has had the largest black population in the metropolitan region; nevertheless, the black population has remained small relative to Roanoke's total population (Tables 2 and 3). Until the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, Virginia's laws discriminated against Blacks and their concerns, a practice repeated elsewhere in the South.<sup>508</sup> City and county officials, consequently, could ignore black concerns and until the 1970's failed to address these concerns publically in their annexation discussions. For these reasons Blacks had a neg-

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<sup>508</sup> Howard Rabinowitz, pp. 115-122; Blaine Brownell, pp. 145-56 passim.

ligible role in most annexation suits,

Race-related issues received their first public discussion when county officials included two small, poor black neighborhoods southwest of the city as part of a compromise proposal in the 1962 annexation suit. Nonetheless, it was not until the civic rights legislation that Blacks could halt further erosion of their emerging political power. As a consequence, Roanoke was forced to gain approval from the Justice Department prior to the 1976 annexation. The annexation, which brought an influx of white residents, altered Roanoke's current racial composition.<sup>509</sup>

Despite the initial change in the city's racial composition, the city's black population soon rebounded with the continuing exodus of white residents to the county suburbs. Roanoke's black population increased from a pre-annexation total of 17,948, or 19.5 per cent of the city's population, in 1970<sup>510</sup> to 22,040, or 22.0 per cent of the city's population, in 1980.<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>509</sup> Joseph R. Mayes et al., pp. 570-75 *passim*.

<sup>510</sup> Population of Roanoke, pp. 58-59 and pp. 77-78.

<sup>511</sup> Census of Population of the United States, Virginia (1980), Table P-7, p. 14.

### 9.1 FURTHER CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the city's thirteen annexation suits the city repeatedly affirmed the belief that these annexations promoted the greater good of the metropolitan region, in reality, the county's point of view was closer to this objective. The county favored cooperation with the city rather than loss through annexation to provide needed services for its suburban areas, such as the joint city-county sanitation agreement. The city, however, used such agreements to bolster its case for annexation--arguing that it provided services for county residents.

County officials took a different view of the region's geopolitical construct. They argued that the city was only one of four political units in the metropolitan region, and the city's economic health was no more important than that of Roanoke County. They further declared that the county's development should not be sacrificed to help the city prosper when the county government was meeting the needs of its constituents, and the constituents were satisfied with the county's efforts.

The county government's more aggressive and responsive roles gave credence to this position and re-enforced county opposition to Roanoke's annexations. After all, the county residents demanded services, and the county needed an eco-

conomic base to provide them. The city argued in rebuttal that the county's response was contrary to the state's traditional mandate providing municipal governments for urban areas and county governments for rural ones.

The city's 1962 annexation defeat signalled to many city officials the uncertainty of future annexations. Annexations had become more difficult to win for several reasons. First, the General Assembly had revised the annexation statutes making them more restrictive--less favorable for cities. Second, the county government had become less rural-oriented as it became increasingly concerned with the suburban areas and more willing to provide services and capital facilities to meet suburban needs. The state's enabling legislation now permitted counties, such as Roanoke, to establish service districts to provide a variety of services, planning, and capital improvements which traditionally only cities had furnished. This legislation permitted counties to address the needs of increasingly urbanized areas, and gave counties and county residents alternatives to annexation.<sup>512</sup> The result was the emergence of the "urban county" with a full array of public services and its willingness to provide services and capital improvements. These changes were indicative of the evolving philosophy of local

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<sup>512</sup> Patrick McSweeney, pp. 201-02.

government in Virginia--the county was assuming an increasing number of functions previously provided by cities for suburban or urban areas and the increasing opposition to city annexations. Third, Roanoke County was gaining more and more businesses and industries. These firms increased the county's tax base providing greater financial resources to fund urban amenities, promised by county officials.<sup>513</sup>

The city, consequently, had greater difficulty proving its traditional claim that Roanoke County's suburban areas needed the services and capital improvements which it provided. The city's response to these changes was two-fold. First, the city argued more strongly that even with expanded county services, planning, and capital improvements, the quality of these services was inferior to those offered by the city. Second, the city placed greater emphasis on annexation's role in promoting Roanoke's economic vitality. City officials claimed that continued urbanization decreased the amount of land available for economic development, and the transition of older city neighborhoods to nonresidential uses had reduced the supply of available housing stock. These two factors were causing the loss of population and economic resources to the county suburbs, which made it more

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<sup>513</sup> Alfred W. Stuart, "The Suburbanization of Manufacturing in Small Metropolitan Areas: A Case Study of Roanoke, Virginia," Southeastern Geographer, 8 (1968), pp. 28-31.

difficult for Roanoke to provide services and capital facilities. The city, consequently, claimed that it needed economically lucrative suburban areas and more vacant land to bolster Roanoke's shrinking economic base, to help finance the cost of services and capital improvements, and to offer more areas for potential residential, commercial, and industrial investments.

Annexation was used increasingly to justify the city's need to expand its tax base, especially from the 1943 annexation onward. City officials often cited the numerous industrial, commercial, and residential areas Roanoke had gained as proof of annexation's economic benefits. Despite these benefits, each comprehensive annexation was a heavy financial burden for Roanoke. Financial considerations were a primary reason for Roanoke's 1962 annexation defeat.

Roanoke's economic gains reduced the county's economic base accordingly. The county argued that annexation was a financial menace--forcing the county to relinquish some of its most valuable resources and territory to the city. Despite compensation, the county then struggled to provide services and capital improvements and to perform other administrative functions with a diminished tax base. County officials feared that the city would default on the financial obligations imposed by these large annexations leaving

the county in a more serious financial dilemma. The court usually agreed with at least some of these arguments because the judges consistently reduced Roanoke's annexation awards. The city's 1962 annexation defeat was a complete victory for the county's defense.

Annexations have not been very beneficial to the black community. The long-term obligations to which the city committed itself in each annexation probably postponed many city efforts to upgrade services and capital facilities in the black sections. In addition, most of the annexations encompassed primarily white neighborhoods which brought an influx of white residents and a corresponding fall in the percentage of black residents. The continual influx of whites stifled the political influence of blacks because the percentage of Blacks in the community remained low. Without annexation, Roanoke would now contain both a larger absolute black population and a much larger percentage of Blacks. The city might, in fact, have become a predominately black community which would have provided a forum to address black concerns in the region and the state as well.

## 9.2 OPINION

Roanoke's six annexations between 1874 and 1926 benefited both the city and suburban neighborhoods. The city acquired a larger population and economic base while suburban residents gained needed services and capital facilities not available from the county government or too expensive or impractical for their neighborhoods to construct. Roanoke was justified to annex these communities when it did. There was strong support not only within the city but also in the suburban communities. In fact residents' inquiries preceded several of these annexations even though it was the city which petitioned the court for annexation.

The increasing responsibility of the county government for the suburban areas, growing suburban opposition, and increasing costs for compensation, capital reimbursement, and debt assumptions, created greater difficulties for the city in the next three annexations. These costs increased not only because of the general rise in land prices, denser population, and greater numbers of capital improvements, but also because the city's 1943, 1949, and 1962 annexation proposals were from ten to twenty-five times larger than the preceding six annexation proposals. Comprehensive annexations were an attempt to gain suburban development which city civic boosters deemed either part of the city's urban-



ized area or necessary for future development. World War II necessitated a compromise of 4.09 square miles in 1943, but city officials were eager to annex again when the war ended. The 1949 annexation, like the 1943 suit, encompassed all the city's suburbs, both newly developed and those excluded by the 1943 compromise. The county was successful in limiting this annexation to 11.85 square miles, about half the original proposal. This award seems reasonable given the city's large and long-term annexation debts and the problems related to the Kenwood Addition-Idlewild Park de-annexation controversy.

The extent of these financial commitments surfaced in the city's 1962 annexation suit when the city sought some 31.2 square miles encompassing all suburbs surrounding Roanoke. The judges rejected the city's annexation petition, noting current financial obligations remaining from the 1949 annexation suit, related fiscal problems, and the presence of adequate developable land, despite city assertions to the contrary. City officials rightly blamed themselves for this defeat, citing their failure to compromise with the county. The city should have either gone ahead with the first proposal encompassing 3.5 square miles or accepted one of the county's compromises. A compromise would have given the city some additional territory, population, and economic re-

sources, but minimized the negative effects of the annexation for both the city and county.

I trace the defeat to the city and its civic boosters and their arrogant and unrealistic attitude towards the county and to their persistent belief that the court would at least award Roanoke half of its proposal as the judges had done in 1949. Roanoke's civic boosters traditionally viewed the city as the center of the metropolitan region, with the city's economic and social needs paramount. The increasing sophistication of the county administration and the city's financial burdens destroyed their unrealistic plans.

The 1962 annexation defeat sobered Roanoke's civic boosters, at least temporarily. The city was more cautious in the next decade even with the addition of three small but affluent suburban annexations. These modest successes and continuing rivalry with Salem revived Roanoke's boosterism. Roanoke proposed to annex the entire county, but agreed to split it with Salem. Roanoke eventually annexed 15.83 square miles in this suit. This award has benefitted the city, providing an expanded middle class population, additional developable land, and a more diverse economic base which produced an economic revival and lowered taxes.<sup>514</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> Roanoke Times & World News, May 24, 1984, Sec. B, p. 11; Population of Roanoke, 1977, pp. 69-78 passim.

Because of the 1962 defeat, Roanoke was justified to annex again. While Roanoke might have annexed the entire county, the Roanoke-Salem agreement to split the county was a more pragmatic and workable solution. Even with annexation, Salem would have remained an independent political unit within the city. Furthermore, Roanoke officials conceded that it was less costly for Salem than Roanoke to provide services for the western half of Roanoke County. The two-city proposal would have divided both the county's assets and liabilities, minimizing the annexation costs for both Roanoke and Salem. A two-city metropolitan region would also reduce the current political fragmentation while promoting competition and efficiency in government administration. A recent article in the Roanoke Times & World News, however, suggested that while there is increasing support for political unification through consolidation, the two-city concept is less popular than the present four governments.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Roanoke Times & World News, January 20, 1985, Sec. A, p. 12.

### 9.3 FORECAST

When the county was granted immunity from annexation in 1980, a new era began in city-county geopolitical relationships. With annexation no longer an option for Roanoke, the city and its boosters had to find alternatives to further the city's development. Another Roanoke Times & World News article noted that the city's success attracting economic investments could be attributed in large measure to the gains from the 1976 annexation, which increased the amount of vacant land in Roanoke by about 40 per cent,<sup>516</sup> and added several shopping centers, new industries, and housing developments.

Despite these gains, the city may face a return to its pre-1976 economic problems in the future as the vacant land is used up, unless there is an increase in the density of development and/or redevelopment of older, more sparsely developed sections. Roanoke's situation resembles that of many of the nation's older cities where annexations are no longer an option and where growth comes through increased density and redevelopment. One can, therefore, understand the city's enthusiasm to consolidate with other valley governments. Consolidating the Roanoke metropolitan region is not a new idea. It was first seriously considered in the late

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<sup>516</sup> Roanoke Times & World News, May 24, 1984, Sec. B, p. 11.

1930's,<sup>517</sup> although the idea dates to the 1890's.<sup>518</sup>

While the 1980 annexation moratorium halted further annexations, it has not brought Roanoke County the relief and prosperity many county officials and county residents had hoped it would. One reason for this situation has been the county's slow recovery from the losses it suffered in the 1976 annexation, despite the city's compensation payments. Regardless of the city's arguments that the annexation was only a "transfer" of territory, population, and economic resources between two political units, the city's gains were county losses.<sup>519</sup>

A second reason is the consequence of continued population increases and urban development, and the resulting demands for more and better services and capital facilities.<sup>520</sup> Despite county arguments to the contrary, Roanoke's annexations reduced some county expenses. The annexations not only removed the densely developed suburbs, sparing the county the costs of providing services and capital improvements there, but the city paid the county compensation for these losses. With the county now immune from annexation,

<sup>517</sup> Roanoke World News, July 8, 1938, p. 1.

<sup>518</sup> Roanoke Times, November 14, 1891, p. 2.

<sup>519</sup> Roanoke Times & World New, May 24, 1984, Sec. B, p. 11.

<sup>520</sup> Editorial, Roanoke Times & World News, August 14, 1985, p. 6.

the county administration faces increased service costs with no prospect of relief through city annexations.

While county officials have initiated at least one exploratory proposal and one supervisor has stated his public support for consolidation, city officials remain the most enthusiastic supporters of consolidation. Skeptical county officials are inclined to see consolidation as the city's way to gain greater control over the metropolitan region. Many county officials fear that consolidation will either eliminate their jobs or make them subordinate to the ranking city officials. Furthermore, county residents might believe that without some kind of ward or district representation, the city, the largest political unit, will be able to set the policy-making agenda.

School issues might also present problems. School intergration and busing, major controversies in the 1976 annexation, could be barriers to consolidation. Some residents may fear that lower quality schooling will result from consolidation and that a consolidated school system will be too large and impersonal to be effective. They prefer their present school districts.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> "Jeff Hunt Show," WVTF-FM Radio 89.5, Roanoke, Virginia, August 21, 1985.

A further problem is the status of Vinton and Salem. Both Vinton and Salem residents have opposed annexation and consolidation with Roanoke. Vinton might seek city status to avoid consolidation. Salem might refuse to join the consolidation study as that city did in the last consolidation study in 1969. Political unification would be incomplete should Vinton and Salem remain independent. Geopolitical divisions would persist.

Civic boosterism and community allegiances remain strong. Social and economic differences among the four jurisdictions persist--middle class and affluent subdivisions in Roanoke County and Salem, working class neighborhoods in Vinton, and an increasing minority population in Roanoke--making political unification more difficult. Roanoke's black community and its political leaders, for instance, are unlikely to yield their recent political gains to a predominately white, consolidated, political power structure. Merger may be possible only when the costs of duplicated services and government inefficiencies become unbearable.

It is noteworthy that the Roanoke Metropolitan Region's political fragmentation is lower than in other urban regions of similar size. Roanoke's situation seems unusual for two reasons. First, the four jurisdictions share one valley with no topographical barriers separating them. Second, as

the largest urban agglomeration in southwestern Virginia, the close proximity of four governments is unusual in an otherwise sparsely populated region.

#### 9.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As this thesis has explained, four issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and planning, financial considerations, and race-related considerations--have been important and conflict-laden issues in the city of Roanoke's thirteen annexation suits. Although the first three issues were always important to the outcome of these annexations, the fourth issue--race-related considerations--emerged as a crucial issue only in the latter annexations, especially the 1976 annexation. The racial climate in the South during most of this period prohibited or seriously hindered the expression of black political power in many southern cities. The principal actors in Roanoke's suits--the city and the the county--did not publicly address the race-related concerns. Despite this ostracism, Rabinowitzs notes that many of the black elite were themselves often vigorous civic boosters even with the problems that annexation may have caused the black community.<sup>522</sup>

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<sup>522</sup> Blaine Brownell, p. 140.



The South is the region with the largest black population and where annexation has been and continues to be widely used. The black migration to southern cities occurred at approximately the same time as southern cities expanded and began to annex frequently. The historic attitudes and responses of the black community to annexation, especially on a case-study basis, seems to be an unexplored but important topic for explaining a major group's attitudes towards this historical and political topic in urban geography.

A second area for exploration raised by this study is the role of influential individuals in the constellation of actors. This thesis focused on the public activities of two groups--the city and county and their allies as public personae--using Guelke's idealistic approach. Guelke's idealist approach has, however, generally been applied to the ideas and activities of individuals. Research on the role of important local residents might yield a greater understanding of how single actors exert strong influence on the actors as public personae within the constellation of actors in similar studies.

A third and related area for future research on annexation in Virginia, is the question of geopolitical conflicts in town annexations. The separation of cities and counties is a major reason for annexation conflict between these two

types of political units, but the absence of this legal separation should make town annexations routine. When there are conflicts in town annexations, the formation of the constellation of actors as both individuals and public personae is a question for future research. The research could clarify some of the other issues, such as the importance of civic boosterism or services, that explain the differences between the geopolitical conflicts or lack thereof in city versus town annexations.

Finally, while this thesis found many consistencies between the historic experience of the city of Roanoke with annexation and the annexation literature, there is a lack of case studies focusing on the historic experience of annexation in individual cities. This lack of study needs to be addressed by future research comparing and contrasting other cities with Roanoke's experience and the role of the four issues.

## 9.5 FINAL SUMMARY

This thesis has focused on the evolution of four issues--civic boosterism and community autonomy, public services and planning, financial considerations, and race-related considerations--crucial to the city of Roanoke's historic use of annexation with specific emphasis on the annexations

of 1943, 1949, and 1962, the period of increasing opposition to Roanoke's annexations. The emergence of strong opposition to the city's annexations was the result of both emerging county civic boosterism and the county government's increasing responsibility for its suburban areas. The ensuing annexation conflicts were played out by two principal actors--the city and county as public personae. Three of the four issues proved important throughout Roanoke's annexation history, while the fourth--race-related considerations--became crucial only after the 1960's. The evolution and relative importance of these four issues, therefore, goes a long way towards explaining the agenda for each annexation suit and its outcome.

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Appendix A  
TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1

## Roanoke's Areal Growth

<u>Year of Annexation</u>	<u>Size of Annexation (sq. miles)</u>	<u>City's Size Post-Annexation (sq. miles) (percentage)</u>	<u>Compensation (1984 dollars)</u>
1874	(incorporation)		
1882	2.46	2.96 (492%)	None
1890	2.33	5.29 (78.7%)	\$1890 (\$23,000)
1892	0.19	5.48 (3.6%)	Unknown
1915	2.32	7.80 (42.3%)	\$11,000 (\$114,000)
1919	1.41	9.72 (18.1%)	\$37,400 (\$234,000)
1926	1.05	10.77 (11.4%)	\$12,000 (\$70,000)
1943	4.09	14.86 (39.9%)	\$62,000 (\$370,000)
1949	11.83	26.69 (82.4%)	\$780,000 (\$3.4 M)
1961	none	26.69 (0.0%)	n/a
1965	0.20	26.88 (0.7%)	\$145,000 (\$500,000)
1967	0.06	26.94 (0.2%)	\$200,000 (\$620,000)
1968	0.29	27.23 (1.1%)	\$20,000 (\$60,000)
1976	15.84	43.07 (58.2%)	\$13.8 M (\$25.2 M)

Sources: Harland Bartholomew (1960), Table 1; Roanoke Land Usage Inventory and Analysis (1975), Table 5, p. 9 Statistical Abstract of the United States, pp. 474-75; and Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970, "Consumer Price Indexes," Series E: 135-166 and 166-173.



TABLE 2

## City of Roanoke's Population Growth

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Population Increase</u> (%)	<u>White</u> (%)	<u>Black</u> (%)
1874	500	n/a	n/a	n/a
1880	669	(33.8)	n/a	n/a
1890	16,159	15,490 (2,315)	11,218 (69.4)	4,941 (30.6)
1900	21,495	5,336 (33.0)	15,654 (72.8)	5,841 (27.2)
1910	34,874	13,379 (62.2)	26,945 (77.3)	7,924 (22.7)
1920	50,842	15,968 (45.8)	41,499 (81.6)	9,331 (18.4)
1930	69,206	18,364 (36.1)	56,834 (82.1)	12,372 (17.9)
1940	69,287	81 (0.1)	56,475 (81.5)	12,812 (18.5)
1950	91,921	22,634 (32.7)	77,329 (84.1)	14,592 (15.9)
1960	97,110	5,189 (5.6)	80,568 (83.0)	16,542 (17.0)
1970	92,115	-4,995 (-5.1)	74,167 (80.5)	17,948 (19.5)
1980	100,220	8,105 (8.8)	77,494 (77.3)	22,040 (22.0)

Sources: Census of Population, Virginia, (1880), Table 3, p. 360; (1900), Table 28, p. 75; (1910), Table 1, p. 956; (1920), Table 9, p. 1071; Table 13, p. 1079; (1930), Table 11, p. 1158; (1940), Table 22, p. 188; (1950), Table 34, p. 55; (1960), p. 28, p. 53; (1980), Table 7, p. 14; Population of Roanoke, 1977, p. 77.

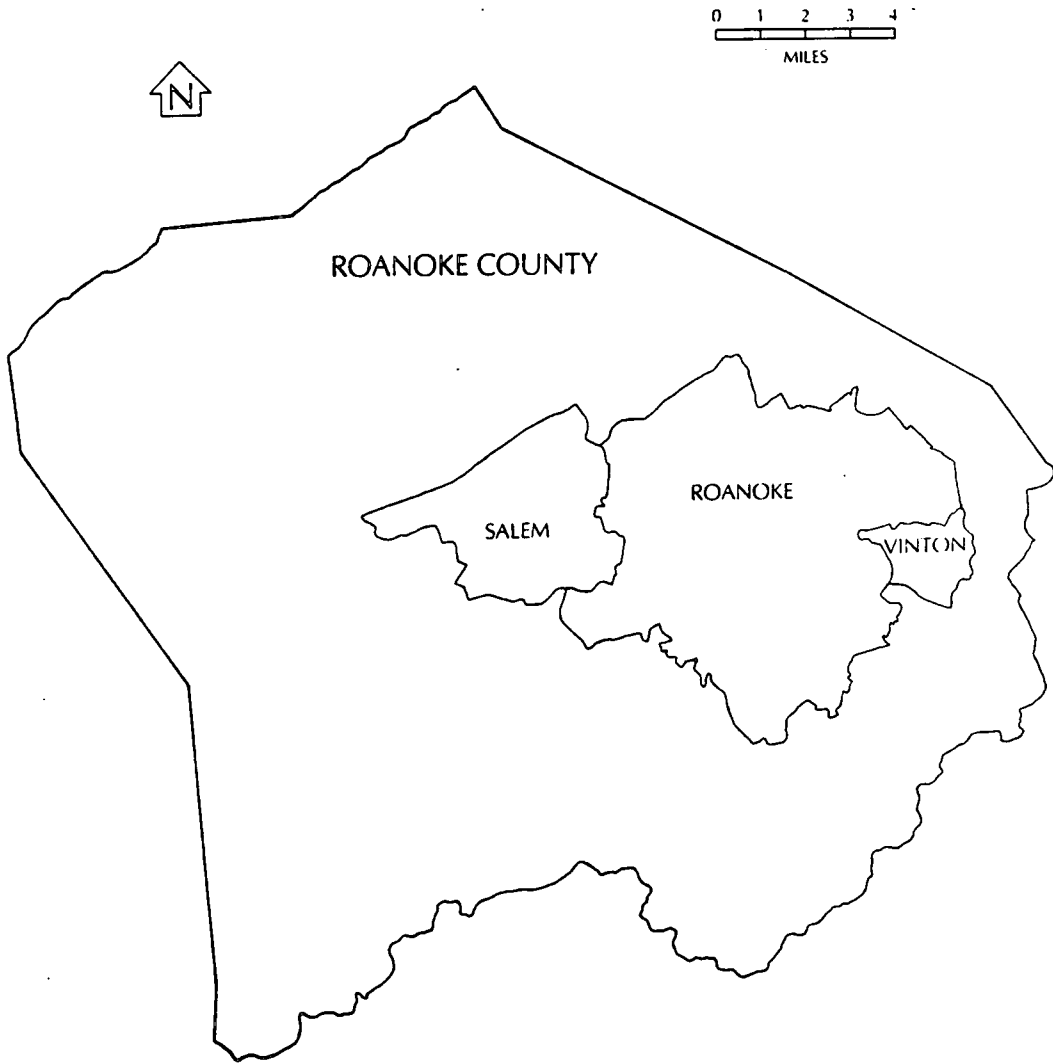
TABLE 3

## Roanoke County's Population Growth

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Population Increase (%)</u>	<u>White (%)</u>	<u>Black (%)</u>
1870	9,350			
1880	13,105	3,755 (40.2)	8,273 (63.1)	4,828 (36.9)
1890	13,942	837 (6.4)	9,864 (70.8)	4,076 (29.0)
1900	15,837	1,895 (13.6)	11,991 (75.7)	3,845 (24.3)
1910	19,623	3,786 (82.0)	16,097 (82.0)	3,525 (18.0)
1920	22,395	2,672 (13.6)	19,517 (87.1)	2,877 (12.8)
1930	35,289	12,994 (58.3)	32,012 (90.7)	3,269 (9.3)
1940	42,897	7,608 (21.6)	39,561 (92.2)	3,335 (7.8)
1950	41,486	1,141 (-3.3)	37,970 (91.5)	3,516 (8.5)
1960	61,693	20,207 (48.7)	58,011 (94.0)	3,662 (5.9)
1970	89,321	27,628 (44.8)	86,197 (96.5)	3,124 (3.5)
1980	72,945	16,376 (-18.3)	70,877 (97.2)	1,685 (2.4)

Sources: Census of Population of the United States, Virginia, (188) Table 5, p. 412; (1910), Table 1, p. 956; (1920), Table 9, p. 1071; (1930), Table 11, p. 1158; (1940), Table 28, p. 249; (1950), Table 5, p. 11, Table 6, p. 14, Table 34, p. 55; (1960), p. 28, p. 58; (1980), Table 7, p. 14; Population of Roanoke, 1977, p. 77.

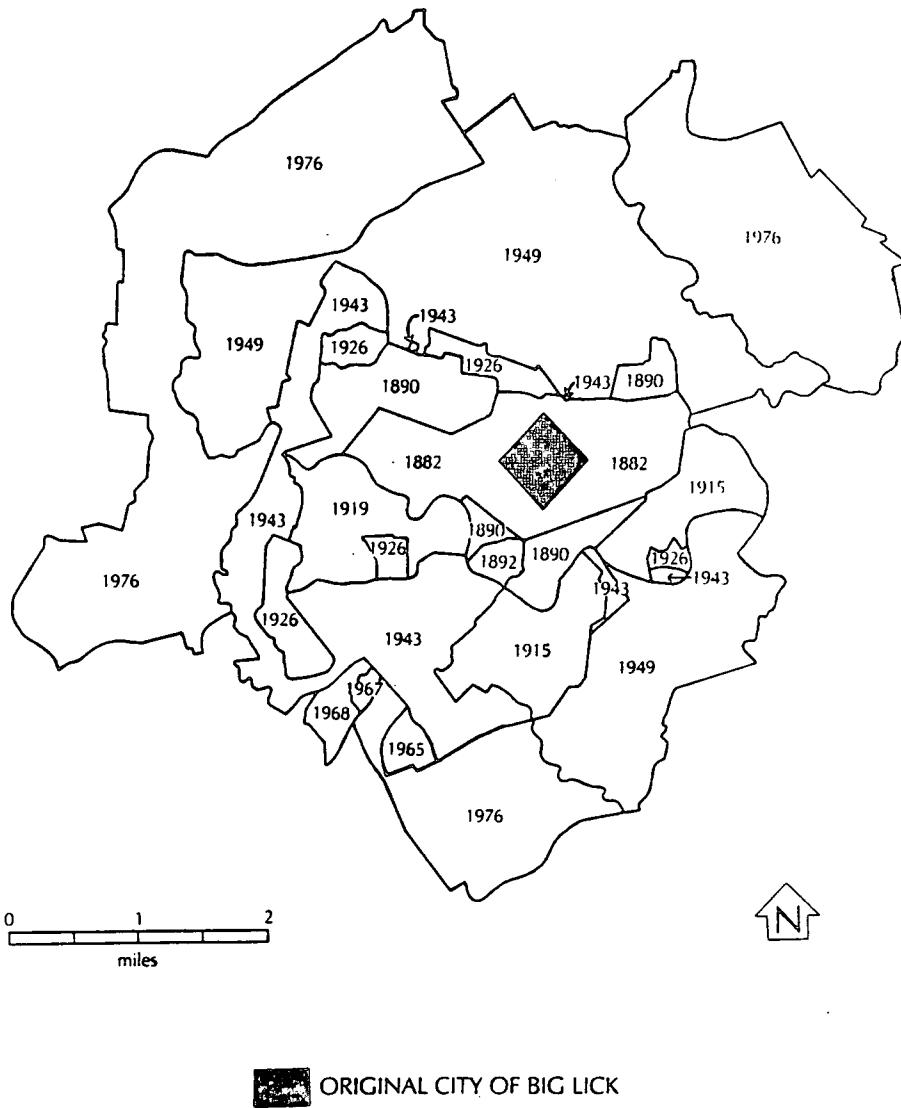
# POLITICAL UNITS OF THE ROANOKE METROPOLITAN REGION, 1985



SOURCE: VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Figure 1: Political Units of the Roanoke Metropolitan Region, 1985

# CITY OF ROANOKE ANNEXED AREAS 1874-1985



SOURCES: CITY OF ROANOKE ENGINEERING DEPT., JAN. 1959 CITY OF ROANOKE DEPT. OF PLANNING, JUNE 1975 & DEC. 1977

Figure 2: City of Roanoke, Annexed Areas 1874-1985

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