

February 1, 2024

To: Jordan Schwanke, Local Entity Specialist, Office of the Lieutenant Governor
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CC: Mallory Bateman, Director of Demographic Research, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute
Subject: Benson Incorporation Feasibility Review

Introduction

By the January 17, 2024 request of the Utah Lieutenant Governor’s Office, the Utah Population Committee reviewed the area of Benson in Cache County to determine whether it meets the population, population density, and contiguity requirements for incorporation as a town as defined in Utah Code 10-2a-201.5. We determined that Benson meets these requirements. This memo shares additional details of the review.

Results of Feasibility Criteria Review

Benson meets the population, population density, and contiguity requirements in Utah Code 10-2a-201.5. Table 1 summarizes the criteria and their applications to Benson.

Table 1: Initial Feasibility Requirements for Benson Incorporation

Criteria	Meets Criteria?	Requirement by Statute	Benson Details
Population	Yes	To incorporate as a town, the population must be at least 100.	2020 Census Population: 739 July 1, 2023 Population Estimate: 751
Population Density	Yes	Density must be 7 people per square mile or higher	July 1, 2023 Population Density Estimate: 38.0 persons per square mile
Contiguity	Yes	Area is contiguous, does not have strip of land connecting geographically separate areas	Proposed boundary covers a contiguous area

Population data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census

Note: Requirements are summarized; Full statutory requirements are delineated in Utah Code 10-2a-201.5.

Additional Information and Methodology

We calculated an approximation of Benson’s 2020 Census population using block-level data. Using this value as a base, we then created a population estimate for July 1, 2023 using the housing unit method of population estimation – one of the most widely used methods for sub-national population estimates. This analysis uses a boundary shapefile based on Benson’s certificate of petition created by the Utah Geospatial Resource Center (UGRC).

2020 Census Population

Benson’s proposed boundary contains 38 blocks which are either fully or partially within the boundary. Using satellite imagery and parcel data, it was determined that two blocks contain some population within Benson’s boundary and some population outside. The population of these blocks were

adjusted using the ratio of occupied housing units within the boundary compared to those outside the boundary (see Table 2). These adjustments resulted in an approximate 2020 Census population of 739.

Table 2: Selected Population and Housing Data for Benson

Census Block	2020 Census Population	Occupied Housing Units within Benson Boundary	Adjusted Block Population
1050	92	2 of 3	1.3
2007	53	21 of 23	75.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census

Housing Unit Method

This method uses the approximate 2020 Census population as a base, then incorporates newly constructed housing units as a means of measuring population growth. Building permit data from Construction Monitor, a proprietary source of building permit data, are geocoded using a tool from UGRC. An assumed lag time of 6 months between permit approval and construction is used for single-family units. A total of four single-family units within Benson’s boundaries were completed between April 1, 2020 and July 1, 2023. This household growth is multiplied by the average household size of 3.09 for Cache County¹, resulting in population growth for Benson of 12 people. This results in a July 1, 2023 estimated population of 751.

¹ Average household size is calculated by dividing the 2020 Census household population by occupied housing units.