

Memorandum

November 12, 2024

To: Jordan Schwanke, Entities Specialist, Office of the Lieutenant Governor
From: Eric Albers, Public Policy Analyst, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute
CC: Mallory Bateman, Director of Demographic Research, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute
Subject: West Hills Amended Modified Feasibility Review

Introduction

By the October 31, 2024 request of the Utah Lieutenant Governor’s Office, the Utah Population Committee reviewed the area of West Hills in Summit 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 West Hills meets all requirements. This memo shares additional details of the review.

Results of Feasibility Criteria Review

West Hills meets all requirements for incorporation. On July 1, 2023, the estimated population of the proposed municipal boundary was 103 individuals.

Table 1: Initial Feasibility Requirements for West Hills Incorporation

Criteria	Meets Criteria?	Requirement by Statute	West Hills Details
Contiguity	Yes	Area is contiguous, does not have strip of land connecting geographically separate areas.	The proposed area meets contiguity requirements.
Population	Yes	To incorporate as a town, the population must be at least 100.	July 1, 2023 Population: 103
Population Density	Yes	Density must be 7 people per square mile or higher.	The proposed municipality has a population density of 18.1 persons per square mile.

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

Additional Information and Methodology

The estimate of West Hills’ population was made using the housing unit method of population estimation – one of the most widely used methods for sub-national population estimates. The method uses the 2020 Census as a starting point, then estimates population growth using building permit data.

Since West Hills’ boundary does not align with census blocks, adjustments need to be made to the population within each block. The population of each block is adjusted by the ratio of housing units that fall within the proposed municipal boundary to the total number of housing units in that block. The adjusted April 1, 2020 population for West Hills is 101 people.

The housing unit method of population estimation uses housing unit growth as a proxy for population growth. Housing unit growth is converted into population growth through assumptions about construction-lag times, completion rates, vacancy rates, and average household size. One housing unit was permitted and completed in West Hills since the April 1, 2020, leading to a July 1, 2023 population of 103.