

**Criteria Questionnaire for Annexation**

**State Boundary Commission**

Office of Land Survey and Remonumentation

Bureau of Construction Codes/LARA

**SBC Docket # 14-AR-1 from LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP**

Proposed Annexation of Land in Litchfield Township

To the City of Litchfield, Hillsdale County

The term "unit" is used throughout this questionnaire and is intended to mean your township, city or village.

**POPULATION**

1. Total Population of your unit for each of the following dates:

1990: 957      2000: 969      2010: 1003

**POPULATION DENSITY AND LAND AREA**

1. Give the total number of acres or square miles and density for your entire unit.  
33.1 total square miles  
Density for 2010: 30.4 population/square mile
2. Give the total number of acres or square miles in the area proposed to be annexed.  
City of Litchfield – Wolverine Surveyors, Inc - sheet 2 of survey states 116.90 acres more or less  
verses the description in the petition which states 114.47 acres more or less.

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## LAND USE

1. Enclose a copy of the long range plan for your unit or larger area, e.g., comprehensive Master Plan, Land Use Plan, or Growth Management Plan. If there is not one for your unit of government, include county plan or other. Please list enclosures.

Land Use Plan – in process of update

2013 Litchfield Township Land Table Map

2013 Litchfield Township ECF Neighborhood Map

2014 Litchfield Township Proposed Land Use Map

2. Development

Does your unit provide special incentives, e.g., tax abatement, low interest rates to homeowners, builders, or developers to locate in your area? No

Give the quantity and location of any of the following types of development either planned, under construction, or completed within your unit during the last 3 years.

Apartment Buildings – None

Standard Housing Subdivisions – None

Condominium Subdivisions – None

Mobile Home Parks – None

Commercial Centers – None

Industrial Parks – None

Other – Litchfield Township is primarily agricultural. The agricultural community is continually expanding crop production through improvements in seed, fertilizer & irrigation.

Dairy farm & pork facilities are expanding with additional buildings and animal numbers.

## ZONING

1. Does your Unit have a zoning board or commission? Yes, the Planning commission is in charge of zoning and land conditional use changes. The supervisor issues zoning compliance permits and does site visits.

Public Act – Township Rural Zoning Act # 184 of 1943 Public Acts of MI

Michigan Zoning Enabling Act – Public Act 110 of 2006

Enclosed is a Litchfield Township Zoning Map & Zoning Ordinance. Zoning Compliance Permits & Conditional Use approval is required. Zoning Map Changes since 2006: Michael Burns property in NE ¼ Sec 14 from AG-1 to AG-2, Gordon Thomas property NW ¼ Sec 9 from AG-1 to AG-2. The last Zoning Ordinance revisions were March 8, 2010.

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2. Has the area proposed for annexation been zoned? Yes

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If Yes, for what purpose? Recreational Open Space and Agricultural 1

Is any portion of the area proposed for annexation being considered for rezoning?

No.

**STATE EQUALIZED VALUATION**

1. Give the S.E.V. of your unit for the last three years. Start with present year.

<b>Real Property</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
Residential.....	\$17,037,196.....	\$16,156,830.....	\$13,981,450
Commercial.....	\$904,677.....	\$842,249.....	\$857,074
Industrial.....	None .....	\$152,840.....	\$136,980
Agricultural.....	\$30,649,863.....	\$28,763,350.....	\$25,665,557
Developmental.....	None .....	None .....	None
Timber Cutover.....	None .....	None .....	None
Utilities .....	None .....	None .....	None
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$48,591,736.....</b>	<b>\$45,895,090.....</b>	<b>\$41,230,463</b>

<b>Personal Property</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
Residential.....	None.....	None.....	None
Commercial.....	\$218,187.....	\$214,034.....	\$272,929
Industrial.....	\$246,855.....	\$200,922.....	\$222,580
Agricultural.....	None.....	None.....	None
Developmental.....	None.....	None.....	None
Timber Cutover.....	None.....	None.....	None
Utilities.....	\$1,846,386.....	\$1,939,529.....	\$1,959,956
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$2,311,428.....</b>	<b>\$2,354,485.....</b>	<b>\$2,455,465</b>

2. Current equalization factor for your unit 1

3. Give the most recent year's state equalized value for the area proposed for annexation.

\$156,720 2014 Parcel 30-01-009-200-025-09-5-4 \$149,200  
Parcel 30-01-009-200-023-09-5-4 \$7,500

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**ALLOCATED AND VOTED MILLAGE RATES FOR THE LAST 3 YEARS**

		<b>2013</b>			
Unit Millage		County Millage		School Millage	
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Twp General.....	0.82110	Allocated.....	4.95520	Operating.....	18.00000
Fire Protection...	0.99970	All other.....	6.45600	1996 Debt.....	3.15000
Road Millage.....	1.99940			Sink Fund.....	0.75000
Dist Library.....	0.99570				
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>4.8159</b>	<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>11.41120</b>	<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>21.90</b>

		<b>2012</b>			
Unit Millage		County Millage		School Millage	
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Twp General.....	0.82140	Allocated.....	4.95520	Operating.....	18.00000
Fire Protection...	1.00000	All Other.....	6.50600	1996 Debt.....	3.15000
Road Millage.....	1.99980			Sink Fund.....	0.75000
Dist Library.....	0.99570				
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>4.8169</b>	<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>11.46120</b>	<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>21.90</b>

		<b>2011</b>			
Unit Millage		County Millage		School Millage	
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
TWP General.....	0.82140	Allocated.....	4.95520	Operating.....	18.00000
Fire Protection..	1.00000	All Other.....	6.45600	1996 Debt...	2.95000
Road Millage.....	1.99980			Sink Fund.....	0.75000
Dist Library.....	0.99570				
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>4.8169</b>	<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>11.4112</b>	<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>21.70</b>

Voted Millages – County	2013	2012	2011
Hillsdale ISD	0.26740	0.26740	0.26740
Hillsdale Spec Ed	3.00000	3.00000	3.00000
Hillsdale Vo Ed	0.89180	0.89180	0.89180
County Med Care	0.60000	0.60000	0.55000
2006 MCF Debt	0.42000	0.35000	0.35000
2004 Seniors	0.49680	0.49680	0.49680
2008 Seniors	0.50000	0.50000	0.50000
County Ambulance	0.25000	0.25000	0.25000
2006 Ambulance	0.15000	0.15000	0.15000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6.57600</b>	<b>6.50600</b>	<b>6.45600</b>

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**TOPOGRAPHY/NATURAL BOUNDARIES/DRAINAGE BASINS**

- 1. Check any unusual or restrictive topographic features which could inhibit the use or development of the proposed area to be annexed.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Feature</b>
Extreme Changes in Elevation – No	Wetlands – Yes
Perk Test Failure – in certain areas	Bedrock Near Surface - No
Flood Plain – Yes – see map	Prime Agricultural Land - Yes
Drainage Basin – No	Other – Yes – Open Space Recreational Land

- 2. How does this proposed annexation relate to natural boundaries and drainage basins? Include aerial map if available. See available map.

The St Joe River runs through the wooded section of the proposed annexation. The golf course currently draws its water for irrigation from this source. The Lampson & Mcilwain JT #245 drain services this property

**BOUNDARY HISTORY**

- 1. During the past 10 years, has your unit been involved in any proposed detachments, annexations, incorporations, or consolidations?  
No
- 2. Of those annexations accomplished, are these areas receiving all the city’s services?  
The City of Litchfield annexed property from Litchfield Township in 1968 when it first became a City and again when it required expansion for an Industrial Park & for City sewage lagoon expansion. There are residents who reside within the City limits who do **Not receive City water and sewer services.** In the late 1990’s an empty parcel of land which was used for agriculture was annexed in hopes of using the land for a factory placement. This did not happen and the land is not suitable for development due to the water table level. It remains under crop cultivation and is a loss of the Township’s tax base and agricultural business.

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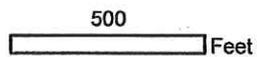
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NOT A SURVEY  
This map is for informational use only.  
Aerial Taken: April 2010  
Map Created: March 2014

- Does your unit have any joint policies or agreements with adjacent units of government?

Yes

Litchfield Township & Litchfield City has an intergovernmental agreement to provide fire services and equipment for fire protection. They provide equal financing to the Litchfield Fire Department. Yearly fire contracts for fire service are in place for the City, the Township and two other areas.

There is a Cemetery Use agreement in place between the City & the Township. The Mt Hope Cemetery is located in the Township and the agreement provides City residents with the same financial costs as the Township residents. The City pays a one-time ground maintenance fee for each City resident buried at Mt Hope. The Township is responsible for cemetery record keeping and maintenance.

### PAST AND PROBABLE FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- How many building permits for the following categories have been issued by your unit of government within the last 3 years?

Industrial – 0	Single Residential Units – 5
Commercial – 0	Multiple Housing Structures – 0
Buildings for Agricultural Use – 4	

- Business Development

New business in the last 5 years?	6
New jobs created?	20
Business expansion in last 5 years?	7
New jobs added?	15
Business reduction in last 5 years?	1
Jobs lost?	2
Business closed in last 5 years	1
Jobs lost?	2

- Have any special studies been conducted in your area regarding the general economic situation? No

- Which of the following developmental tools serve your unit?

Economic Development Corporation	– No
Local Development Finance Authority	– No
Tax Increment Finance Authority	– No
Downtown Development Authority	– No
Shopping Center Redevelopment Area	– No
Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community/Enterprise Zone	– No
Local Revolving Loan Fund	– No
Other – Region II Planning Commission	– Yes

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**NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SERVICES**

1. What additional services not presently available does your unit, residents and/or property owners feel are necessary in the area for proposed annexation?

The property owner, Laura J Brubaker Vaughn, has not approached the Township Board in person or by letter for any type of service. She has not indicated any dissatisfaction with the current police coverage provided by the Hillsdale County Sheriff Department. Her water is provided by private well and the restaurant has its own septic. The irrigation water for the golf course is obtained from the St Joe River which runs through her property. A copy of the letter requesting annexation is enclosed.

**PROBABLE EFFECTS OF PROPOSED ANNEXATION ON THE COST AND ADEQUACY OF SERVICES**

1. If annexation takes place, how will the change of boundaries affect the receiving unit of government?

The City boundaries will enlarge. The Taxable value & State Equalization valuation will increase by \$156,720. The City will receive additional local operating millage of 13.99570 including the library mill of 0.99570. Based on 2013 taxes the City would receive approximately \$2,210. They will gain the business of Litchfield Greens, the business of LaRays Restaurant with Class C Licensed Business with Dance-Entertainment Permit of the Liquor Control Code of 1998, an area of Open Space Recreational Land, and an area of Prime Agricultural Land.

2. If annexation takes place, and public services are improved in the area annexed, what additional cost will the annexed area incur and how adequate will those services be?

Police Coverage by the City of Litchfield can be provided with minimal cost & effort. There are no city water lines or sewer lines located on the property. It is approximately .3 miles from the edge of the City limits to LaRays Restaurant. City water: (residential connection fee \$1000.00) Commercial Connection Fee is equal to the cost of the material, labor, and equipment expended to extend service lines from water main to the lot-line of commercial premises and the City's acquisition cost of the meter required to supply water service. Monthly User Fee - \$4.30. Charge per 1000 gallons used - \$3.63. Sewer: (residential connection fee \$1500.00) Commercial Connection Fee is equal to the cost of the material, labor, and equipment expended to extend service lines from sewer main to the lot-line of commercial premises. Monthly User Fee \$8.33. Charge per every 1000 gallons used \$2.68.

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3. If annexation takes place, what will be the financial effect on the remaining area from which the annexed territory is removed?

Loss of the business known as Litchfield Greens, loss of the business known as LaRays Restaurant with a Class C Licensed Business with Dance-Entertainment Permit of the Liquor Control Code of 1998. Loss of Township Open-Area Recreational Space and Prime Agricultural Land. Loss of \$156,720 of State Equalized Value for 2014, loss of \$156,720 in Taxable Value. Loss of revenue for local millages consisting of fire protection, road & bridge maintenance, twp general operating money & the Litchfield District Library. Based on 2013 taxes this would be a local loss of \$765.80 for the 2 parcels. As the changes in the Personal Property Tax & its reimbursements will be based on the 2013 tax rolls, the loss of business will impact the Township's future reimbursements. 2013 Personal Property Tax totals - \$645.10.

4. If annexation takes place, what will be the financial effect on the annexed area?

Increase of taxes for the property owner. In 2013, the Township local millage was 4.81690 including the local library. The City local millage was 13.99570 including the local library, a difference of 9.1788 in mills, the approximate difference in cost of taxes - \$1460.00.

Cost of use of city water & sewer for restaurant – Water connection fee: will be equal to the cost of material, labor and equipment expended to extend service lines from water main to the lot- line of said commercial or industrial premises and the City's acquisition cost of the meter required to supply water service – this cost varies with each property. Monthly user fee of \$4.30, charge per 1000 gallons used of \$3.63. Installation of water meter for non-sewer usage: materials - \$285.00, First hour fee - \$30.00, time spent over one hour shall be prorated in one quarter hour increments at the rate of \$30.00 per hour, administrative charge - \$25.00.

Cost of city water for golf course irrigation – \$3.63 for every 1000 gallons used or \$6.00 per \$1000 gallons if this falls under 'other usage' such as water sold for pool fillings. Sewer – commercial hook up cost will vary and be equal to the cost of the material, labor, and equipment expended to extend service lines from sewer main to the lot- line of said commercial or industrial premises, inspection fee - \$10.00, monthly user fee -\$8.33, charge per 1000 gallons used - \$2.68.

Given the history of delinquent taxes by the property owner the Township does not feel an increase in taxes and other associated costs would be financially feasible for the property owner. As the property is currently for sale, an increase in the above mentioned costs, could adversely affect a sale.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **Public Water**

1. Does your unit provide public water service?

No

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**Sanitary Sewer**

- 1. Does your unit provide sanitary sewer service?  
No

**Fire Protection**

- 1. Fire protection for your unit is provided:  
By the Litchfield Fire Department which operates under an Intergovernmental Agreement by Litchfield Township & the City of Litchfield.
- 2. Underwriters rating: 5  
What is the composition of the fire department that provides fire protection to your unit?  
Number of fire fighters on force: Full time – 0 Volunteer – 16
- 3. How is the fire department financed?  
Service contract with each unit for a specific amount of money per year paid on a quarterly basis.
- 4. Who provides fire protection to the area proposed for annexation?  
Litchfield Fire Department Underwriters rating: 5
- 5. If annexation is approved, who would provide fire protection?  
Litchfield Fire Department
- 6. How near is the fire station now providing fire protection to the area proposed for annexation?  
Approximately 1 mile.
- 7. If annexation is approved, how near would the fire station providing fire protection be?  
Approximately 1 mile

**Police Protection**

- 1. Police Protection for your unit of government is provided by:  
Hillsdale County Sheriff Department and the Michigan State Police
- 2. What is the composition of the police department?  
15 Full Time Road Officers and 4 part time road officers
- 3. How is the police department financed?  
By allocated county millage

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4. Who provides police protection to the area proposed for annexation?  
Hillsdale County Sheriff Department & Michigan State Police
5. If the annexation is approved, who would provide police protection?  
City of Litchfield Police Department
6. How near is the police station which now provides police protection to the area proposed for annexation?  
The station is located approximately 18 miles from LaRays Restaurant. The Hillsdale County Sheriff Department patrols Litchfield Township a minimum of once a day. 911 would dispatch the closest car from either the Hillsdale County Sheriff Department or the Michigan State Police.

**Garbage Collection**

1. Does your unit provide garbage collection service?  
No, this service is provided by private arrangements between residents, businesses, and property owners with individual haulers.

**Street Lights**

1. Does your unit have a street light program?  
No

**Library Service**

1. Does your unit provide library service?  
Yes, the City of Litchfield & Litchfield Township tax payers each pay 0.99570 mill to support the Litchfield District Library.

**Name of School District**

The proposed annexed area lies in the Litchfield Community School District. The following districts also lie within Litchfield Township – Homer, Jonesville & Quincy School Districts.

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**OTHER SERVICES AVAILABLE TO YOUR UNIT'S RESIDENTS**

<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Furnished By</b>	<b>Method of Financing</b>
Annual Clean Up/Recycle Day	Litchfield Township	General Fund Money
Annual Road Brine Application	Service Contract	Road Millage
Road & Bridge Maintenance	Service Contract	Road Millage & General Fund
Cemetery Maintenance and Record Keeping – 4 cemeteries	Litchfield Township	Cemetery Revenue & General Fund Money
Litchfield Township Park	Litchfield Township	General Fund Money
Provide flags for Veteran gravesites	Litchfield Township	General Fund Money

**FINANCIAL ABILITY TO PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN SERVICES TO YOUR UNIT**

1. What major capital improvements have taken place in your unit in the last 5 years, and how were they financed?

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Financed</b>
Resurfacing of cemetery roads	Cemetery Revenue - General Fund
Upgrade to cemetery storage facility	Cemetery Revenue - General Fund
Purchase of excavator & dump truck for grave openings & closings	Cemetery Revenue - General Fund
Cemetery Tree Management Program and fencing to smaller cemeteries	Cemetery Revenue - General Fund
Twp Hall and Park parking lot expansion	General Fund
Township Park - removal of large grove of trees, grading, replanting & reseeding resulting in 3 acres of usable park area	General Fund
Residing & repair of park bathroom facility	General Fund
Annual brine application of 37 miles of gravel roads for dust control & road integrity	Road Mill - General Fund
Yearly ditching of gravel roads to improve drainage & gravel replacement for road integrity	Road Mill- General Fund

Restructure of Cronk/Sterling Road intersection with culvert replacement	Road Mill - General Fund
Resurfacing 2 miles of Mosherville Road	Road Mill - General Fund
Chip & Seal 1 mile section of Mosherville Road	Road Mill - General Fund
Large Culvert/Bridge replacement on McLain Road	Road Mill - General Fund
Chip & Seal, Paver Patch 1.08 miles of Anderson Road	Road Mill - General Fund
Chip & Seal, Paver Patch 2 miles of Sterling Road	Rural Task Force

- Does your unit of government have application for bonds before the Michigan Municipal Finance Commission?  
No
- Indebtedness related to annexation area.  
Does your unit of government have any bonded indebtedness in place or in process that affects the area proposed for annexation?  
No
- Has your unit incurred any other liabilities relating to the area proposed for annexation?  
No
- Has your unit signed any other contractual agreements affecting the area proposed for annexation?  
No
- Has your unit accumulated any assets attributable to the area proposed for annexation?  
No
- What percent of your total sanitary sewer, public water, storm drainage and other utility(ies) exist in the area proposed for annexation?  
% sewer – None                      % public water – None  
% storm drainage – None            % other – None

**GENERAL EFFECT UPON COMMUNITY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

- What is the position of your government officials on this proposed annexation?

The Litchfield Township Board opposes the proposed annexation of the property owned by Laura Vaughn Brubaker to the City of Litchfield.

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In the letter to the Township requesting annexation, the owner did not state she is seeking possible services the City could provide such as City water, sewer and police protection. Her request was only for annexation. She at no time indicated an agreement with the City to seek annexation which was signed at the time she received monies from the City/TIFA for financing purposes.

The majority of her property lies in the Township, 114.26 acres more or less, with 66.52 acres more or less being in the City. As per the aerial view of the property, the majority of the golf course known as Litchfield Greens, the restaurant known as LaRays lies within the Township. Loss of this property would result in a loss of the business of Litchfield Greens, loss of the business of LaRays Restaurant which holds the only liquor license in the Township. It would result in loss of Open Space-Recreational land & Prime Agricultural land.

Annexation of the property would result in a loss of \$156,720 in taxable value and state equalization valuation affecting state funding the Township receives. It would affect the amount of revenue the Township receives for local operation, fire protection mill, and road and bridge maintenance mill, based on 2013 Property Taxes - \$765.80, Personal Property Tax - \$96.34.

The property owner has a history of delinquent taxes. The 2011 Winter Property Tax, 2012 Summer and Winter Property Tax, and the 2013 Summer Property Tax were not paid until January 24, 2014. Personal Property Tax for 2011 Winter, 2012 Summer and Winter, and 2013 Summer and Winter were not paid until April 11, 2014. Monies for the payment of these taxes was provided by the Litchfield TIFA with an additional loan of \$70,000 in January of 2014 to be added to Laura Vaughn Brubaker TIFA initial loan of \$125,000 which included an agreement to annex the property to the City. The Township Board feels the TIFA and City are pressuring Ms Brubaker for the annexation due to the loans she has received. The Township Board also feels it was inappropriate for TIFA to have loaned money outside their district and the City limits. The Township local millage is a total of 4.81590, the City local operational millage is 13.99570 which would result in an increase of taxes of approximately \$1,500 per year. On a yearly basis, Ms Brubaker has requested the Township Board of Review for reduction in her property taxes. In 2013 through assistance by the Township the necessary paper work was completed to obtain a 27% agricultural reduction of the school 18 mill operational tax. One would question why a property owner who has difficulty paying tax bills would want to increase their tax bills.

Due to the large expense of providing city water & sewer to LaRays Restaurant, the board questions if this would ever be done.

The property, as it is composed of a large area of open recreational space, also provides a buffer area between the City and agricultural farm operations.

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As of July 2014, the property has been listed for sale by RE/MAX Preferred Reality. The Township Board feels the property should remain in the Township as the current owner as no plans to stay. The next property owner may well prefer a lower tax base for the majority of the property.

- 2. What is the position of the affected residents of the proposed area for the annexation towards this petition?

The Township Board sent a letter to those property owners regarding the annexation & our position of opposition. A comment sheet was enclosed. Of the 9 sheets returned, 1 had no position, 1 was in favor of annexation and 7 were opposed. Individual discussions with property owners indicated opposition to the annexation. Owners do not want their property adjacent to the City as they do not want to ever become a part of the City. The fact the Township allows hunting & the City does not was a concern to some. The negative financial impact & the trickle down affect to individual property owners for needed services is another concern.

- 3. What is the position of your constituents toward this petition?

Discussions with township residents indicate opposition to the annexation. Litchfield Township is largely an agricultural based community. Land preservation is important. Over the years the township has lost property to the City. Initially land was annexed so the Village could become a City. Further annexation was done for expansion of the Industrial Park and sewer lagoon expansion. Some of the annexations were of benefit to the community as a whole, but each time the Township lost agricultural land, lost tax base, lost tax monies that would been of benefit to Township residents. Township residents can see no benefit in this property becoming a part of the City. It is simply another loss for the Township.

**WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION TO ANY ESTABLISHED TOWNSHIP, VILLAGE, CITY, COUNTY OR REGIONAL LAND USE PLAN?**

The loss of the proposed annexation area would result in the loss of much of the Township's Open Space Recreational land and a loss of agricultural land.

List the people who completed this questionnaire:

Michael Burns.....Township Supervisor.....517-542-3869  
Patricia Shepherd.....Township Clerk.....517-542-2048  
Janet Childs.....Township Treasurer.....517-542-3589  
Thomas Beckner.....Township Trustee.....517-542-3705  
Addison Brooks.....Township Trustee.....517-542-3273

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Keith Blonde.....Planning Commission.....517-542-3613

Date Completed: August 1, 2014

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