

TO: Residents of the Village of Archbold and German Township

RE: Separation of Boundaries

DATE: September 26, 2016

The leadership of the Village of Archbold is issuing this public letter in order to help clarify the facts and possible misconceptions regarding the Village's petition for separation of boundaries between the Village and German Township.

The option to remove Archbold from German Township has been a topic of discussion in the past and revisited more seriously early this year. As with all decisions made by members of your Village Council, the best interests of our citizens and community is always a priority.

Following months of thoughtful discussion, Council unanimously voted to pursue changing the presently-overlapped boundaries of the Village of Archbold to be separate from German Township. Our request to "conform the boundary" (as the process is formally referred to) will allow the Village of Archbold and German Township to operate independently and ultimately better serve our respective constituencies.

Change and forward progress is often a difficult process that can elicit emotions in those who may not have a clear picture of the long-term benefits of change. We want to assure you that the factors leading up to the position on separation of the boundaries between the Village and Township were not made casually. Our decisions are always with your best interests in mind.

What are the benefits of separating the boundaries between the Village and Township?

Efficient Government

Eliminating an overlapping government structure and making the most efficient use of resources is the goal. While the structure may have served the public well historically (originated in the late 1830s), that is no longer the case. Ohio law allows that when a Village population grows to 5,000 or more residents, it becomes a "city" and is entitled to being granted its "conformity" request. While Archbold's population stands at 4,300 residents, thousands more come into the Village every day to join the workforces of numerous industries and business. The

reality is that the Village of Archbold must operate as a “city” without the formal designation. It’s simply time to officially be recognized as such.

Focused Representation

The conformity of boundaries permits Township Trustees to focus priority and attention to the voters they truly represent today - their 2,100 rural constituents, who make up 33% of the township population. In turn, Council can continue to serve the residents within the Village of Archbold (67% of the population). In an age when government leaders must work to collaborate, reduce redundancy in government and pursue improvements within our communities, this progressive leadership will ensure the most effective and efficient means of caring for our residents well into the future.

Let’s look-at the breakdown financially. Currently the combined Village/Township population of 6,400 residents elect 4 Township Officials who manage a \$600,000 budget. In contrast, 4,300 Village residents elect 7 Village Officials who manage a \$10,000,000 budget. After separation; 2,100 residents would elect 3 Township Officials who would manage a budget of approximately \$360,000.

Limited Taxation

Part of the property taxes Village residents pay to the Village of Archbold covers street and road repair within the corporation limits. In addition, Archbold residents are also taxed by the Township toward road repair and the Township general fund...none of which is invested within the Village corporation limits. While an argument can be made that Archbold residents use Township roads and should pay for using them...the opposite is also true....in that Township residents use Village roads, roads in Defiance, Napoleon, Wauseon and elsewhere, but don’t contribute to them by way of property tax. This added layer of taxation can be eliminated.

What’s the situation with the Fire Department?

Contrary to what you may have heard, the contract between German Township and the Village of Archbold to provide fire protection services is not part of the separation of boundary issue. While the arrangement between the entities to provide the highest quality service has been adequate for a long time, the arrangement is dated and also in need of change and improved efficiency.

The Village currently provides the fire department facilities, staff, payroll, insurances, etc., however does not have ownership and responsibility for the fire equipment and apparatus. The Village is simply looking to streamline the operation and management of the fire department, as we strive to responsibly do for every department within the Village. In addition, the Village is able to support the equipment through taxes that Archbold residents already pay into the Village general fund, eliminating the duplicative tax Archbold residents currently pay into two Township fire levies.

We look forward to working with the Township Trustees in hopes to purchase the existing equipment (factoring in that Village residents contributed over 66% of the original purchase investment), or to exchange the equipment for a fire contract with the Township.

The Archbold Fire Department will continue to provide the same high quality service to all Village and German Township residents as it has always provided. No one will see a change in that service. No one in the Township will lose fire protection services. The equipment will simply now be managed by the Village instead of the Township.

How does the separation tie into the CR 24 / SR 66 issue?

It doesn't. Some people have been misinformed and have unfortunately combined these two separate issues.

Traffic and safety has been a topic of discussion for over a decade, including how to make use of CR 24 for better handling emergency service equipment as well as industry and agricultural truck traffic. We are extremely fortunate to live in a community of successful industry and locally owned businesses. Growth within the Village has brought benefits of good jobs, quality schools, beautiful parks, and infrastructure upgrades that benefit citizens throughout the local community.

In 2011, the Village met with the Commissioner Boards of Fulton, Henry and Defiance Counties as well as the German Township Trustees, regarding increasing traffic concerns. As a result of that meeting, a letter was drafted asking for State support and funding to improve CR 24 to ODOT standards for truck traffic from US 20A to US 6. All parties present signed the letter that was sent to state and federal legislators.

Two years later, \$1.3 million in federal highway and ODOT funding was awarded to contract for a pre-engineering and environmental feasibility study for the potential project. As a result of the commitment from the commissioners and trustees, the Village was then made the lead local agency on the study and contributed \$200,000 toward the project. An additional \$49,000 investment was also made to include a study for an under/over pass to serve the west side of Archbold and the potential new road. Because of concerns raised by the downtown retail community, the Village of Archbold contracted with BGSU's Center for Regional Development (CRD) to conduct an economic impact analysis of the project. The study cost Archbold \$28,000, but was an important investment to make in order to better understand the potential impact for these local businesses. The results of these studies and proposed designs will be available for public review at an open house on November 15th with representatives available from the Village of Archbold, ODOT, Fulton and Henry Counties, and the consultant team from Tetra Tech. We encourage you to attend the open house to gain insights and ask your questions about this proposed project. Remember, the project has not been finalized, so your constructive input is welcome. We believe you'll be pleased with the learnings of the study and the opportunity for our region to be considered for an investment of this magnitude.

While we realize that this project has unfortunately generated some emotional conflict, we want to stress that Village Council wants nothing more than what will serve the best interests of the broader community.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. We are passionate about this community and want nothing more than to work together to keep it vibrant for the future.

Respectfully, Mayor Jeff Fryman and the Archbold Village Council

Council President, Kevin Morton
Councilman Vaughn Bentz
Councilman Kevin Eicher

Councilman Kenny Cowell
Councilman Ed Leininger
Councilman Brian Huffman