



- Are the other 'swiss cheese' areas due to businesses we have attracted and the tax abat that exist. As is, it seems that we are picking on Geist exclusively. Also, you ements associated with this? You need to explain the various other pockets should address the amount of funds that these businesses supply to our economy.

None of the "Swiss Cheese" areas are due to tax abatements. Fishers has granted very few tax abatements as part of its economic development program but all of the developments that have warranted a tax abatement are inside the corporate limits of the Town. Most of the areas that are surrounded by the Town or which share substantial contiguous borders with the Town, are subdivisions that were developed before Fishers grew around them. As development activity has occurred over the last several decades, most of the new subdivisions and their developers have sought annexation BEFORE development activity has occurred. The commercial development in and around the Town are extremely important to our tax base. The Town has undertaken a number of studies to try to understand what it takes to maintain "tax sufficiency." In other words, a proper balance between residential and commercial growth is critical to keep property taxes as low as possible.

- There have long been questions as to why Fishers is still a Town rather than a city. For instance, Noblesville has less population, but has a Mayor. Can you explain the advantages of one versus the other? (AND, would this add more fuel to the annexation efforts?)

Several years ago, the Town Council asked that the question of whether Fishers should remain a Town or become a city on the ballot as a referendum. The overwhelming majority of the citizens who responded expressed a desire that the Town remain a Town. Indiana law does not impose a population test on becoming a city. The Town form of government has been an efficient way of keeping focus on providing low cost, high quality government services rather than focusing on any one individual's political agenda. No doubt the question of "city vs. town" will continue to come up and there may be another referendum in the future.

- We read an article that says that my taxes will go up (yet again) at least 5% to pay for schools that have been shorted by State funds. We agree that the schools need more money and are willing to accept an increase to continue the quality of education our children deserve.

As you know, your property taxes are divided between the school corporation, the Town, your township, the library, the county and the State of Indiana. Each of those taxing districts is charged with setting budgets which they believe best respond to the needs and expectations of the taxpayers. The school corporation has faced many challenges, not the least of which has been the state legislature decisions regarding the distribution formula. The Town of Fishers continues to have the lowest municipal rate of any city or town in Hamilton County.

- BUT, didn't Fishers tax dollars pay for Geist Elementary? (along with State funds, I'm sure). It seems that we shouldn't have even built or funded such a project if it

came from our tax funds. AND, we have a problem with accepting an increase in property tax to pay for this and other schools.

All of the school buildings in the Hamilton Southeastern School District are paid for by all of the taxpayers within the district. That includes all of Fall Creek, Delaware and Wayne Townships. There are no distinctions between taxpayers within the school district whether they are in or out of the Town limits.

- As far as the funding of our parks, will we need to charge a fee for use of these facilities in the future? For instance, Noblesville charges a fee for use of the Forest Park pool. Thus, they employ a pay-for-use option.

The Town may consider adopting a user fee policy in connection with its parks and parks programs along with other Town services that are used by those outside the Town limits. As the Town has developed over the last several decades, the Town Council adopted a policy of providing a level of service to all residents of Southeastern Hamilton County because of the high growth rate. It may well be time to look at the need for user fees in a more critical fashion with regard to those areas that are developed and outside the Town limits that routinely benefit from Town parks, public safety services and road construction and maintenance.