

1996 Survey of Northfield Township Residents

A report presented to the Northfield Township Board of Commissioners and Planning
Commission

by

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Introduction

During the months of May and June 1996, a survey of Northfield Township residents was conducted to help inform proposed revisions to the Township's Land Use Plan.

The Urban Institute of Washington, DC, has concluded that surveys of citizens are "possibly the most, if not the only, efficient way to obtain information on ... citizens' opinions on various community issues. Such information can be very useful for local governments in setting priorities for resource allocation and the determination of actions to improve existing programs." The feedback provided by such surveys is more reliable, balanced, and comprehensive than that obtained through informal discussions, personal contacts, public hearings, or—often—even official ballot referenda.

Surveys can elicit information only on questions that are included in the questionnaire, however. If residents are provided little opportunity to help shape the survey, it could possibly fail to address matters of importance to them. Because of this concern, members of the Northfield Township survey development working group discussed the survey plan with the Chamber of Commerce, Whitmore Lake Elementary School Whitmore Lake Youth League, and Kiwanis Club, as well as with the Whitmore Lake School Board, Township Police Chief, and Township Planning Commission and Township Board. The final survey instrument was approved by the Township Board.

The survey was mailed to a random sample of 496 registered voters in the Township during the week of May 20, 1996. The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter from the Township Board Supervisor and Planning Commission Chairman and a postage-paid, pre-addressed return envelope. Approximately two weeks after the initial mail-out, a reminder postcard was sent to sample members.

A total of 242 residents completed and returned the questionnaire (49%) within the time frame of the study. This return rate is relatively high for a survey conducted by mail. The demographic profile of survey respondents matches the profile of the Township closely (as determined by 1990 U.S. Census data), except that the sample somewhat under-represented 18-35 year-olds and over-represented 36-45 year-olds. (See Table 1.) For the vast majority of items on the questionnaire, the age skew in the sample does not affect the results, because responses to the questions did not vary noticeably across age groups. For those instances in which age is related to response, the raw results were statistically adjusted to correct for the skew, and both the raw and adjusted results are presented in this report. Even in those few instances, the raw results and statistically adjusted results did not differ by more than a few percentage points.

Taking all of these considerations into account, the results of the survey may be interpreted as representing fairly the judgments and opinions of Township residents,

within the bounds of statistical confidence. The 95% confidence bound for estimated percentages based upon the survey is approximately plus or minus 6 percentage points; the 90% confidence bound is approximately plus or minus 5 percentage points. This means that with 95% confidence, had the entire population of registered voters in the Township been surveyed, the resulting percentages would have been within 6 points of the values obtained in the present study; and with 90% confidence, the percentages from a census of all registered voters would have been within 5 points of the estimates based on this study's sample.

Table 1. Comparison of 1990 U.S. Census profile of Northfield Township and characteristics of survey respondents (percentages).

	1990 Census	1996 Survey
Male	49	49
Female	51	51
Age		
18-25	14	4
26-35	28	18
36-45	23	32
46-55	13	18
56-65	10	14
66 and older	12	13
Own home	82	84
Pay rent (or something else)	18	16
Children age 17 or younger in household?		
Yes	38	42
No	62	58

Survey Findings

Land Use Plan Priorities

As shown in Table 2, responding Northfield Township residents as a group placed their highest priorities upon:

- preserving undeveloped natural areas (77% high or very high priority)
- preserving agricultural use of land in areas planned for such use (66% high or very high priority)
- improving the appearance of the downtown "hamlet" area (62% high or very high priority)

- providing more, and safer, sidewalks and bike paths (56% high or very high priority)
- providing a safe public beach on Whitmore Lake (54% high or very high priority).

Comparatively low on the list of priorities were:

- providing additional areas for golf course development (71% low priority)
- reducing lot size requirements in areas planned for agricultural use (59% low priority)
- offering public transportation to and from Ann Arbor (47% low priority).

Priorities differed occasionally across subsets of survey respondents. In particular, younger residents (and residents with children in the home) were more likely than older residents to place a higher priority upon sidewalk and bike path improvements, additional parks and recreation areas, and a safe public beach on Whitmore Lake, as shown in Table 3.

Table 2. “Residents have different ideas about what things are most important to consider in the Township Land Use Plan. In your opinion, what priority should the Land Use Plan place upon each of the following goals?” (Percentages)

	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Not sure
Encourage new commercial development in the downtown (hamlet) area.	23	28	32	12	4
Improve the appearance of downtown "hamlet" area -- make it more attractive and inviting to shoppers and visitors.	8	28	32	30	2
Encourage walking and bicycling by providing more, and safer, sidewalks and bike paths.	19	23	28	27	3
Improve vehicle traffic flow in the downtown area.	16	32	30	19	4
Improve traffic flow on and off US-23.	27	32	17	21	3
Extend or modify roads west of US-23 to improve traffic flow.	36	31	17	10	6
Extend or modify roads east of US-23 to improve traffic flow.	32	33	17	12	6
Offer public transportation to and from Ann Arbor.	47	24	12	10	7
Preserve undeveloped natural areas.	10	12	27	50	1
Provide additional public parks and recreational areas.	19	29	23	25	4
Set aside additional areas for golf course development.	71	11	9	3	6
Provide a safe public beach on Whitmore Lake.	25	17	27	27	4
Expand the sanitary sewer system.	26	29	19	17	9
Improve drainage in residential areas.	18	35	23	15	9
Provide additional space for light industrial and office development in the southern part of the Township.	38	29	18	8	8
Preserve agricultural use of land in areas planned for such use.	7	24	24	41	4
Develop regulations permitting residential development while still preserving rural character in areas planned for agricultural use -- such as clustered housing surrounded by natural areas.	22	27	26	20	5
Reduce minimum lot size requirements in some areas planned for agricultural use to permit additional residential development.	59	17	10	8	6

Table 3. Significant age group differences in land use priorities. (Percentages)*

Priority	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Not sure
Encourage walking and bicycling by providing more, and safer, sidewalks and bike paths.					
Age 18-35	22	15	20	43	0
Age 36-45	8	22	29	38	3
Age 56-65	23	29	35	12	1
Age 66 up	33	27	23	7	10
Raw total	19	23	28	27	3
Adjusted total	20	21	26	31	2
Provide additional public parks and recreational areas.					
Age 18-35	9	33	22	35	0
Age 36-45	15	24	21	38	1
Age 56-65	26	29	28	10	7
Age 66 up	29	32	19	6	13
Raw total	19	29	23	25	4
Adjusted total	17	30	23	27	3
Provide a safe public beach on Whitmore Lake.					
Age 18-35	9	22	33	33	2
Age 36-45	24	13	21	40	3
Age 56-65	30	16	34	17	3
Age 66 up	39	26	16	6	13
Raw total	25	18	27	27	4
Adjusted total	21	19	29	28	3

*Adjusted totals reflect a statistical adjustment to correct for the age skew in the sample of survey respondents relative to the 1990 U.S. Census profile of Northfield Township.

As shown in Table 4, Township residents collectively perceived little need for additional rental apartments or attached townhouses/condominiums. They did see some need for additional detached single family homes on large lots and for senior citizen housing. Additional senior citizen housing was particularly desired by older survey respondents (Table 5).

Table 4. What type of residential development could Northfield Township use more of?

	Do Not Need	Need somewhat	Need very much
Rental apartments	72	23	5
Attached townhouse/condominiums	63	32	5
Detached single family homes on large lots (5 acre minimum)	28	40	32
Detached family homes on smaller lots in subdivisions	43	38	19
Senior citizen housing	21	49	30

Table 5. Age group differences among survey respondents in perceived need for additional senior citizen housing development in Northfield Township. (Percentages)*

	Do not need	Need somewhat	Need very much
Age 18-35	22	64	4
Age 36-45	26	45	29
Age 56-65	19	48	33
Age 66 up	10	38	52
Raw total	21	49	30
Adjusted total	22	51	27

Rating Northfield Township Services and Amenities

As shown in Table 6, police, fire, and medical/rescue services received good to very good ratings, on average.

Although overall ratings of medical/rescue services did not differ appreciably by age of respondent among those who provided an opinion, younger residents were much less likely than older residents to know enough about medical/rescue service to offer a rating: fully 45% of 18-35 year-old respondents answered that they did not know enough about

medical/rescue service to rate it, as compared with 17% of respondents aged 46 and older. This may indicate that additional efforts to inform residents about the service may be in order.

Township residents rated street repair, availability of downtown parking, and vehicular traffic flow as fair to poor. "Convenient shopping for everyday items" was rated fair to good. Approximately one in five survey respondents had no opinion with regard to the sufficiency of area available in the Township for commercial, light industrial, or business development. Among those who offered opinions, they tended to be in the "fair" to "good" range.

Recreational opportunities in the Township for residents of various ages tended to be low-rated, particularly so with regard to opportunities for teenagers. Older respondents were somewhat less likely than younger ones to have an opinion about Township recreational opportunities, but among older respondents who offered ratings, their judgments did not differ appreciably from those of respondents in other age groups.

Table 6. Generally speaking, how would you rate Northfield Township in terms of...
(Percentages)

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Don't know
Police protection	6	15	32	30	8	10
Fire protection	2	9	31	24	13	21
Medical/rescue service	4	6	30	24	8	28
Street repair	52	25	14	4	1	5
Convenient shopping for everyday items	23	32	29	10	1	4
Downtown parking	40	27	18	6	1	7
Vehicular traffic flow	21	42	28	4	*	4
Sufficient suitable area for commercial business development	15	27	27	7	3	21
Sufficient suitable area for light industrial and business office development	13	25	32	7	3	21
Preservation of natural areas: woods, wetlands, open space	14	24	31	12	8	11
Recreational opportunities for children	39	21	17	5	3	15
Recreational opportunities for teenagers	45	20	13	4	2	16
Recreational opportunities for adults	36	25	20	4	2	13

* Less than 1%.

Tax Support for Township Improvements

Table 9 shows that a majority of surveyed residents indicated they would support (17%) or leaned toward supporting (45%) a property tax increase "if the money went for the sole purpose of improving roads and sidewalks in the Township."

On the other hand, only one-third indicated support (9%) or leaning toward support (24%) of an "additional tax for construction of a new building to house the Township police, fire department, and government offices."

Table 9. Northfield Township property owners currently pay \$5.64 per year for each \$1,000 of their property's taxable value to support the costs of Township government, medical/rescue service, and fire and police protection....

Would you support or oppose any additional tax if the money went for the sole purpose of improving roads and sidewalks in the Township? (Percentages)

Support	Lean toward support	Not sure	Lean toward oppose	Oppose
17	45	12	12	14

Would you support or oppose any additional tax for construction of a new building to house the Township police, fire department, and government offices? (Percentages)

Support	Lean toward support	Not sure	Lean toward oppose	Oppose
9	24	22	22	23

Development

As shown in Table 7, a majority—53%—of responding residents agreed (or agreed strongly) that "some increase in residential and business development would make Northfield Township a better place to live." At the same time, however, a substantial minority—46%—agreed (or agreed strongly) that "Northfield Township is fine just the way it is. We don't need any more development."

Table 7. Please mark the box that best indicates your opinion with regard to each of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Some increase in residential and business development would make Northfield Township a better place to live.	13	18	15	34	19
Northfield Township is fine just the way it is. We don't need any more development.	13	33	13	16	25

Residents indicated that the Township's "rural, small-town atmosphere" and "natural environment: woods, wetlands, open space" were very important reasons why they liked living in Northfield Township (see Table 8). Comparatively lower taxes were also cited by a majority of residents in the survey. Not surprisingly, residents aged 66 and older were much less likely to cite "convenient to job" as an important reason for them to live in the Township: 47% of them rated this as "not important at all," as compared with only 20% of younger residents.

Table 8. How important to you is each of these as a reason for living in Northfield Township?

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Not sure
Rural, small-town atmosphere	3	6	27	64	*
Lakeside recreation	6	18	25	30	1
Lower taxes than other areas	6	11	25	51	7
Convenient to job	23	15	29	32	2
Natural environment: woods, wetlands, open space	4	11	22	62	1

*Less than 1%

The results from this series of survey items, taken together with the overall pattern of survey results, indicate that Northfield Township residents see a need for limited, managed development (particularly with regard to improving the downtown area, streets, and traffic flow), but do not want development to occur at the cost of the small-town atmosphere and natural environment that are the Township's strengths.

Appendix: Written Comments from the 1996 Northfield Township Survey

I. Roads, traffic flow

- Need traffic light at 8 Mile coming from IGA and 8 Mile and Old Whitmore Lake Rd. by the gas station.
- I would strongly support a stop light on 8 Mile Road on and off the expressway. Also lowering the speed limit where 8 Mile meets Northfield Estates or making it two lanes. Extremely hazardous as is.
- Traffic lights on both ends of turn off the E-Way. We need to slow down the traffic flow through town. People drive too fast especially on rush time.
- Roads by post office are bad and over to the Shell Station and up over the bridge - parking behind Polly's is in bad condition. Some sidewalks need repairs a lot.
- Put 7 Mile through
- Five Mile Rd east of Dixboro is Salem Township. You should find out what they did to the road to make it the desirable country road that it is. It has been in great condition for at least a year now. With no extra maintenance to my knowledge.
- Traffic is heavy at 7:30-7:45am. A full traffic light at East Shore or Barker on Main might help. Also, somebody needs to facilitate new business in two empty stores on West side of Main between Margaret and Barker.
- We need better roads, sidewalks, parks and scenic areas for the people who live here. I haven't seen any of this and I have lived here all my life.
- Our dirt roads are the pits anytime of the year! Where is the extra tax money going?
- My biggest problem is with US 23's heavy traffic volume. Three lanes would easily solve the problem but that is not Northfield Township's problem.
- Please! Fix the roads!
- Better side roads such as paved roads. Speed limit enforcement on side roads that have children.
- Repave at least the Main St. and add sidewalks (safety issue).
- Roads, i.e. Main St. resurfacing without raising residents taxes. Traffic light on 8 mile bridge and Whitmore Lake Road.

- Roads need improving.
- Consistent service to gravel roads on scheduled basis.
- Condition of Barker Rd and downtown business/parking lots is embarrassing.
- Traffic light at Barker Rd. and Main, also Eight Mile and Whitmore Lake Rd., both North and South bound. Many accidents happen in these areas.
- Consider fixing dirt roads more often or dump some new stones down. Better yet pave the roads. Getting on US 23 going North is a death trap.
- Freeways, need work -- too many accidents.
- We would like gravel on our road.
- East Shore Drive should be a relaxing bike ride for children and safe for walkers with its scenic curves.
- We don't have the roads or traffic lights to accommodate this growth. I like having a small town, let's not try to connect with Brighton or Ann Arbor the way Ypsilanti did.
- We definitely need to connect the sidewalk by the tracks to the one at the entrance to the trailer park going to the elementary school. From town it is a nice 2 mile walk, but the Whitmore Lake walkers are walking on the side of the road. And when we take our 4 yr. old and one yr. old for a bike ride, we have to walk part of Barker Rd.
- Strongly recommend something be done to improve the safety and convenience of entering onto Main St. from Old 23 when leaving the shopping mall (Showerman's, etc.). Traffic is heavy there with the addition of people exiting and entering 23.
- I thought our gas tax is supposed to fix our roads in Whitmore Lake. We never see county trucks in town and the streets are terrible.
- Pave or repair East Shore

Township Services, Government, Taxes

- Improve township services: garbage pickup, sidewalks, street lights in Northpointe Estates.
- Make a law that the burning of grass clippings is forbidden.

- A burn ban is necessary, including Polly Market, they burn trash every night. Keep an eye on Woodbridge for airborne and solid toxins (when owned by Johnson Controls, polluted Whitmore Lake). Encourage city beautification.
- Township regulations enforced; such as junk cars, trash, dogs. Overall, the complete clean-up of the area.
- Township badly needs new fire-police-township buildings and offices. Promote cluster housing
- It is very interesting to me that there are so many new homes in my area which to collect more property taxes. Yet I do not see any improvement in township services.
- Living in Northfield Township and in the South Lyon school district, we receive very little for our tax dollars. Very little.
- No more taxes. We pay for sewer, garbage, old high school, skeleton police department, volunteer fire department, small library and our taxes are higher than those around us yet they have more!
- We need less taxes. And we don't need government telling property owners what they can do with their land or on their land.
- We do not want our taxes to go up. We moved here because it was cheaper.
- I am not against progress but here we go again - taxes up - up - up. We sure don't get what we pay for now.
- Make better use of the tax money already being collected.
- My taxes have been raised three years in a row since I bought my house and my house payment keeps going up because of that fact. Pretty soon I will have to sell and buy a cheaper house. Any tax for any reason I oppose, and whoever is appraising my property, I would gladly sell it to them at their price!
- Law abiding residents of the township should be treated with the utmost respect by the government of Northfield Township. Realize, also, that we are not Ann Arbor and most people who live here want to keep it that way. We are smaller, with less services, lower taxes, but our quality of life is higher because of it.
- I think the police department budget should be used to contract out with the Washtenaw county sheriff department for law enforcement. The township would get better services and in the long run it would be cheaper.

- We should get rid of the police department. They are costing us too much money and not getting anything in return.
- We need weekend police full time.
- Make police do their job by enforcing speed limits through town or get new ones who will.
- Implementation of codes for refuse piles in yards. Regular monitoring of drainage areas.
- The police protection is terrible. We had to call several times to get help for a woman screaming down the street. She is lucky she wasn't killed. I do not feel secure that if I had an emergency that I would get the help needed in time to save myself or my family. This is a serious issue discussed frequently in the community. This is not only my opinion but a concern of many of my friends and neighbors as well.
- Eight years of bad government is enough. Get rid of the police department. It is a disgrace to even say it is ours the last eight years.
- If the township has police authority in Northfield Estates they need to more visible to the residents of the park. Even if it is a drive through. Especially during the summer time when the kids are out of school. Mischief seems to be a problem during this period of time. I see teens up and down the streets during the period of 5-7 AM in groups.
- I do not support additional millage for police department because of all the arrests that have been overturned in court rulings resulting in lawsuits against the township.
- Better police department. New personnel.
- Our police department could be improved, do not be so easy. There are a lot of things overlooked that should not be.
- I feel that the fire rescue really needs to be looked at - a few weeks ago, on a Saturday night, we had to call 911 and it took fire 22 minutes to get to one home— Northfield Estates, off Barker Rd. I glad that we weren't dying or we'd have been dead by the time they got there.
- In a township as small as ours and with very limited financial resources why aren't the police and fire departments combined into a public service department under one department head?

Recreation, Parks

- Need recreation for children and teenagers. Also need to improve on and working with the schools for drug free community and also we need to restore the school spirit for the sports programs.
- We need a public park badly. Most of us are using the school's playgrounds. But we cannot use these during the school day. We need public access for swimming on Whitmore Lake very much. People comment on how nice it is to live in a town by a lake but it is so private, most of us just get to look at it.
- Would support additional taxes to develop recreational areas (beach, parks, etc.).
- New development should be assessed with fees to develop parks and recreational areas.
- Teens need a place to go for games, dance, etc., that they can walk to and not cost an arm and a leg. But be fun and safety for them. These kids here don't have a place to go within walking distance to have fun. Mini-golf, not just bowling and the lake. Some kids' family just don't have the extra money or way to get kids to different places. It would create jobs for teens too.
- Better control of summer and winter traffic on the lake itself from public launch site.
- Township needs recreational areas and business establishments that caters to teenagers.
- I would strongly support a playground (similar to the Brighton Mill ponds) in the Northfield township area.

Development, general

- It is obvious that population and community growth is on the increase. This seems to be unstoppable. Therefore, it should be the top priority of the local government to control and direct this growth to insure and protect the quality of the city. Care should be taken to not give in to developers with large sums of money. After all, Ann Arbor was once a nice city. After the development during the 70s and 80s and after all the politicians lined their pockets, the city went down the tubes.
- Good thoughtful questionnaire. If development must happen it would be best in the downtown area. We are here because of the rural character of the Township. Please protect it! Let's get some roads designated "natural beauty" roads so they can't get messed up. Thank you for asking!

- We moved here because of the nature areas and larger lots and farms. We would like to see the nature lands preserved and more park areas developed. We like to see more hiking and walking trails with a hook-up to the South Lyon Rail-Trail and a bike trail or lane to Ann Arbor. Please preserve the natural beauty of Northfield Township.
- Northfield Township is a wonderful place to live. We must keep the five acre minimum lot requirement for residential. Development should be limited to the downtown area. The size of government must be kept to a minimum. Areas presently zoned agricultural should stay agricultural.
- We like Northfield Township because of the quiet rural setting. If I wanted to live in the city I would have bought a home there.
- I love Northfield Township's peaceful, quiet atmosphere, please preserve it.
- We like Whitmore Lake because of the "small town" atmosphere. If the area were to be developed more, We feel we would lose that small town feel. Ann Arbor is so close. We like it the way it is. There are plenty of employment opportunities in the Ann Arbor area.
- Further develop the township with quality single family homes. We need to move into the 1990's, improving our educational system.
- No one wants higher taxes. My opinion is a township filled with 5-acre lots in the future will cripple the township.
- I don't think homeowners need a 5-acre parcel. I think 2 or 2.5 acres would be ideal for a homeowner. We have more land that is not being used now. Thanks for sending this survey.
- Whitmore Lake needs to grow with the times but I would not like to see it used as a connector for Ann Arbor and Brighton. I like the small town atmosphere and don't want it turned into a major city.
- We need much more industrial instead of homes for a tax base, and stop giving tax abatements.
- It is time this area grows. Bring the larger grocery chain stores, maybe a Big Lot or large department store. It would benefit with taxes and appeal to new residents.
- Get rid of 5 acre building ordinance. Expand our tax base so all expansion doesn't go to neighboring townships.

- I realize growth is inevitable, but if new houses are built allow them on large parcels—5, 10 acres or so. No subdivisions. I feel these huge homes on small lots are a benefit only to the builders building them. They decrease the value of houses already here and ruin the country atmosphere and natural surroundings.
- Do not reduce the acreage limit under 5 or we will be like Salem Township, overcrowded and I will do everything in my power to stop the zoning board like we did several years ago with Tom Monahan.
- Leave AR at minimum 5 acres. Additional development is good but only in a controlled atmosphere. There is no place left on Whitmore Lake for a public beach. Oppose any tax money going to public beach.
- Leave the 5 acre parcel a minimum requirement!
- No more subdivisions please.
- No more trailer parks!
- People moved here because of the laid back country atmosphere. And the first chance they get, they try to change it.
- Keep us small! Keep agricultural! No more housing! Preserve the open space!
- Nice pleasant place to live
- Whitmore Lake is fine as is. We do NOT need city or anything else to it.
- Very happy with 5 acre minimum to maintain rural atmosphere. Would support development of clustered homes surrounding natural area. Encourage larger homes (2500+ square feet).
- Keep expansion at a slow pace so that all affected services can grow accordingly. No industrial! Keep traffic volume down. Above all keep it rural.
- I thank you for sending out this form asking our concerns, etc. Please keep Mother Nature in all that you do.
- Any land use plan must address the technological proliferation pending due to the telecommunications act of 1996. If a policy of "technology" scarring the beautiful panorama that Northfield Township is allowed, the US 23 corridor east and west will soon become littered with towers. Limit their erection in residential and agricultural areas.

- We'd like to see a "themed" area developed for shoppers and visitors (i.e., German, Waterside Restaurant, Little Frankenmuth). Keep small town atmosphere but bring money into the township.
- I like being in rural atmosphere—open space.
- We need better access to utilities such as gas and water.
- I have lived here all my life and love this little town. But the biggest complaint I have is that I have lived on Seven Mile 21 yrs. and we have no sewers, do that we can do things to fix up our home or replace with a new one. And all these new homes and development came in and take right over. We feel like forgotten people over here and we pay our taxes too and try to commit to the community. Thank you for listening. One time we heard sewers were coming down Seven Mile, then there was not. IF we want to build or renew, we have to put in an artificial field which costs a small fortune. Then our luck the sewers would come down. We are stuck in the dark and don't know what to do.
- This very small survey seems to lean towards development and nothing but! Development can be good, but not if it only benefits the developers! Recreational parks are very big, as in people of all ages can use Kensington or Gallup Park, etc. I moved out here to enjoy rural-small town, ride my horses, go for long walks, bike rides. In having done this, I have met some terrific neighbors and right in the middle of all this wild life. Former Mayor Hubbard of Dearborn did that for his city, parks with pools, outdoor ice rinks, slides, volleyball, drinking water fountains, etc. These were positive improvements which gave people beautiful home life. Togetherness. Hubbard was just one special person. Voters or most are not dumb. Make this rural area the best rural area to be in. This place is a gold mine. Don't let some big time investor sell you false gold.
- Do not need any more multi-family dwellings or trailer parks. Need to keep the cost of schools down. Taxes already too high for senior citizens. Property assessments are going up too often and should be capped.
- Fifteen years ago we left the city for the beauty and peacefulness of the country. We have been very happy here. It is still one of the few country communities. Through the years our wetlands and wild creatures have been pushed aside for development. I believe we should respect and preserve some of those areas. Northfield Township is great just the way it is.
- Overall I support some light industry development and improvement of roads, sidewalks and business. However, I want to maintain the rural atmosphere, which is why I moved here.

- Our main reason for moving to Northfield Township was for the restricted five acre minimum. Unlike Salem, South Lyon, Lyon, etc., where they are building on top of each other. Let's try and keep Northfield from becoming another South Lyon/Novi in rapid development.
- Northfield's proximity to Ann Arbor is the best in Washtenaw County yet all the surrounding areas are getting quality and beautiful planned housing. My great-grandfather's era of farming has ended in Northfield! There is not enough money in farming to warrant the investment. People wonder why driving north out of Ann Arbor nothing is happening. It is time! Lovely planned housing on one acre lots with paved streets and utilities and good schools is what is needed and should be planned. Get some professional planners, quality builders from Ann Arbor, Saline, Brighton and Plymouth where wonderful things are going on. And get Northfield up to where it belongs - IN THE GAME - Living in Northfield Township because its cheaper is ridiculous!! If new life and new ideas can bring Northfield alive it will be a real gem for the future. It can be done and you have an awesome responsibility at the top to make this take direction. You Can Do This. Don't fail - Northfield Township deserves to grow, prosper and attract quality people! That is my opinion after 140 years in family ownership in Northfield Township. Thank you.
- No big industry, too close to our water supply. But business is encouraged. More housing, condos not apartments. More long term residents. More development on schools!
- We purchased our house in Northfield Township two years ago. We purchased the house to live for a few years and sell. We are disappointed that we and our subdivision have made several upgrades to our houses and the township will not make the necessary improvement to our town to make it more appealing for future building of nice homes and clean up this area. 1. New homes, subdivisions; 2. Lakefront clean up; 3. Road repair; 4. Existing home repair for unacceptable areas!
- I commend you for this survey, but wish you would have had one before Whitmore was so developed so fast the past 5 years.
- The downtown area could be improved to hold more businesses! There should be more parks or recreation areas for kids of all ages. We really don't need anymore big businesses built or more housing! We are going to lose the small town atmosphere.
- I strongly think that for the size of our town, our police, streets, fire department and all other services cannot support larger developments.
- Condemned buildings need to be torn down!!

- I've only been in Northfield Township for a short time, but chose it because it is more rural. Although some additional shopping conveniences would be nice, it is not very necessary. I oppose any new subdivision developments. More homes are not needed. I don't want to attract many more new residents (from new construction). Encourage new residents (prospectives) to move to the existing homes for sale. I lived in Novi when it was rural. I hate what development has done to it. It may have some positive aspects, but there are too many negative aspects to growing and building that much.
- Keep subdivisions down for natural resources (animal life). No road space for development. The government will prevail when the people do not want it to.
- Destroying our township with subdivision after subdivision (witness Brighton and Genoa townships to our north, Ann Arbor to our south) is INSANE! Myself (and I suspect many others) moved to an EXISTING home here to escape "yuppies" and the ridiculous pace of life of nearby "growing" areas. Leave this township rural, and witness its value 20 years from now when urban sprawl has ruined our neighboring townships!
- Let in more business and residential to get more taxes. Get some services, water, sewer, trash, post office, cable, and gas to outlying areas. We are living like the rural south here instead of the fastest growing area around.
- The quality of the roads/road maintenance near us (W. Joy/Whitmore Lake Rds) is quite poor. Unchecked development, particularly to the west and northwest is having a very negative impact: increases in traffic, roadside trash, vandalism, trespassing/poaching and other areas have become a major problem. This land is one of the only remaining agricultural/natural areas not yet developed around Ann Arbor. Increases in taxes and traffic will change this irrevocable. Do we really want the township to look like Lodi township (in the area west of the Ann Arbor airport) or Scio township out Jackson Rd (i.e., no trees, anonymous developments, auto body shops and trash everywhere)? Please consider the future in all ways and not simply in terms of rapid economic development. Thanks.
- The VERY MOST important priority is to lower property taxes. The VERY LAST priority should be towards developments of single family residential with lot sizes between one and five acres per unit. Only splits that allow parcels 10 acres or larger or less than half acre parcels each should be permitted. We should make a goal toward "farms and villages" and abolish "suburbia sprawl". In general the less governmental regulations, the better! Don't make the mistake that Brighton and Green Oak townships have made: forgetting who is the boss...THE RESIDENTS.
- Please preserve the rural, small town atmosphere, agricultural and natural areas.

- Additional parking downtown. Public park for kids. Movie theater, arcade, skating rink or something of that nature for teenagers. A modular home community where you can buy your lot, 1/2-1 acre.
- Our strong location (Ann Arbor and Brighton, Dexter, I-96, 14, lakeside community) has incredible potential! Downtown needs a major face lift and the rest will all fall into place. All the families in Northfield estates (children) have no play area.
- We very much need senior citizen housing and recreation for the young people.
- Prevent overcrowding! Keep the small town atmosphere
- Too many outsiders move in and want to make it more like a city. They should stay in the city.
- I support continued building restrictions in rural and agricultural areas with 5 acre minimum. I believe residents would benefit from some commercial development in the form of tax support. Some additional shopping, i.e. Walmart, would probably be well accepted.
- I have grown up on the Salem/Northfield Township line and have owned a home in Northfield Township for 14 years. At this time we have two new houses going up next to us. And across the road in Salem Township, they have sold four lots 2 acres each. This is all in less than 1/8 mile from our house. Please don't change the 5 acre minimum in Northfield township. Otherwise we will be like Plymouth, Novi, Northville. We like our space and so does many of our neighbors. Thank you for the survey.
- There are way too many building permits being issued, destroying the rural atmosphere of the township. The taxes are way too high compared to other rural communities in Southeast Michigan.
- Provide NO more space for mobile home parks.

Other

- Big need for resale shop or availability of Purple Heart pickup in this area. Also a need for a recycle station that will take all recyclables.
- More restaurants would be a plus and shopping. I do the majority of my shopping in Brighton.
- Large businesses need to build in the area such as K-Mart, Walmart, Target, Meijer, etc.

- Would like to see eyesore properties cleaned up or removed. Pet owners obey leash laws.
- Post office needs more parking places. Also Polly Market could use some more parking.
- We need a good grocery store like Krogers, Meijers, etc. , not another Showerman's or Polly's.
- We need a better supermarket.
- Make those residents who live like pigs, clean up their property. We really enjoy this area.
- I am so proud to live in Whitmore Lake. Raising our three children in such a fine community has met or exceeded all expectations we had when we moved here as newlyweds. Little did we knew what life had in store for us. You see our middle child was born with Down syndrome. The support we have received could not be measured. When we are out and about, he knows and everybody knows him. He truly has a sense of community! A great example of that was little league registration -- what a welcome!
- I would like to see the trailer parks pay their fair share of taxes to improve our town! I'd like to see the business clean up their parking lots. A lot of businesses are more of an eyesore than help to the community!
- There are areas that could get out of hand with greed, politics and hand outs at the expense of the residents. I would first have to see the strict resolutions and formats regarding these issues before moving on either.
- Friendly place.
- Too many bars in Northfield Township and I feel Rosie's Produce stand off of US 23 is a traffic hazard.
- We need to modify codes so people wishing to improve our homes may do so.
- The obvious neglect of restrictions for business owners to maintain a limited choice in exterior appearance. Lake frontage residents are paying for school taxes for the 1000 plus mobile home park.
- My child just graduated from Whitmore Lake High. The drug abuse and drinking are very high, so is unprotected teen sex. I know of four girls who have had abortions since January. I think we need to find things for the young people to do in this town, not in Ann Arbor or Brighton. They have too much free time. The trailer park is

infested with drugs. I was walking down Barker Road and there were several teenage boys smoking pot right next to the entrance. We need to help the young people of this town or it is not going to be a great place in 10 or 15 years.

- Need improvements to middle school/high school and would like to see a separate middle school. Need recreation facilities for children and high school students.
- The schools are very important. I have heard mixed reviews on the school system. I would like as much information as possible before I send my children to a private school. I would not mind higher taxes for this purpose.

May 1996

Dear Northfield Township Resident:

Your Northfield Township government is currently working to update the Township's Land Use Plan. This plan serves as a guideline for future development in the Township, including land use, traffic flow, downtown development, and zoning regulations. It affects the quality of life of all Township residents.

The thoughtful opinions and judgments of Township residents are an important element in updating the Land Use Plan—and this is where *you* come in. Your name was selected at random from the list of Northfield Township registered voters. In all, one out of every ten registered voters has been included in the sample, and each of you is being asked to complete a brief questionnaire.

The answers to the survey will be tabulated and reported to Township residents in summary form. These answers will also assist the Township Planning Commission and Township Board in their work.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary, but we very much hope that you will take a few minutes now to complete the survey and return it in the enclosed postage-paid return envelope. Please return your completed form by June 20, 1996.

Please note that this survey is entirely anonymous and confidential. Your name is neither required nor requested.

If you have any questions, please call Michelle Sanders at the Township offices at: 313-449-2880.

Thank you!

William Eskridge
Township Supervisor

Karl Ehnis
Chair, Planning Commission

