

Charlie A. Dooley
County Executive



Glenn A. Powers
Director of Planning

February 24, 2009

Boundary Commission, St. Louis County
168 North Meramec Avenue, Suite 240
Clayton, Missouri 63105

Re: Proposed Florissant Annexation – “Area 13” (BC0802)

Dear Commissioners:

This report represents St. Louis County’s analysis of the annexation proposed by the City of Florissant. Its submittal is in accordance with the 21 day written comment period provided by state statute. The report is a review of the proposed annexation from the perspective of St. Louis County Government.

Based on our review of the Plan of Intent, input from the public hearing on February 3, 2009 and subsequent public comment, we do not think there are compelling reasons to advance this annexation proposal. St. Louis County provides quality services at a reasonable cost to residents. At the public hearing, not a single resident from the annexation area spoke in favor of annexation nor did anyone from the annexation area write a letter in support of the proposal. This annexation would shift revenues from one jurisdiction to another without a clear indication that is what residents want. While the revenue loss to the County is not exorbitant, the continual erosion of our tax base and service efficiencies will have a negative impact. It is our belief that this annexation is not in the best interest of St. Louis County and the unincorporated constituents it serves.

Should the Commission require information in addition to what is contained in this report, we will make every effort to respond to your request in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn A. Powers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Glenn A. Powers
Planning Director

PROPOSED ANNEXATION BY THE CITY OF FLORISSANT (AREA 13)

**Report on BC0802
Prepared by St. Louis County Department of Planning
Submitted to St. Louis County Boundary Commission
February 24, 2009**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding a proposed annexation of 172.3 acres (.27 square miles) of unincorporated St. Louis County by the City of Florissant. This analysis is primarily based on a review of the Plan of Intent submitted to the Boundary Commission by the City of Florissant, as well as a comparison of City and County data.

B. History of Boundary Change Proposals in Area

Though the City of Florissant has submitted several proposals to annex portions of unincorporated St. Louis County in recent years, the area proposed for annexation (known as Area 13) has not been the subject of such a proposal.

II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A. General Description of the Area Proposed to be Annexed

The 172.3 acre area proposed for annexation is generally bounded by the city limits of Florissant and Coldwater Creek on the west and south; Old Halls Ferry Road and unincorporated St. Louis County on the east; and North Highway 67 and unincorporated St. Louis County on the north (except for one parcel, North County Golf and Sports Center, located north of North Highway 67 at Coldwater Creek). Basic data for the proposed annexation area are provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1

BASIC ANNEXATION AREA DATA	
Area ¹	172.3 acres (.27 square miles)
Population ²	721
Housing Units ²	389
Total Assessed Valuation ¹	\$7,861,807
Assessed Valuation Per Capita ¹	\$10,904

Sources:

¹ St. Louis County Department of Planning.

² Census 2000.

B. Existing Land Use and Zoning

The vast majority of the proposed annexation area is devoted to residential uses. The area includes three residential communities totaling 389 housing units: 194 single-family homes in Sunland Hills subdivision, 155 units in Spring Creek condominiums, and 40 units in Candlewyck Villas. The proposed annexation area also includes a bank, a construction/grading company, a driving range, and a church and school.

The proposed annexation area contains five zoning districts: NU, FPNU, R-3, R-6A, and C-2. Most of the area is zoned R-3 10,000 square foot Residence District. The exceptions to this zoning classification are as follows:

- Candlewyck Villas development is zoned R-6A 4,000 square foot Residence District;
- First Bank, located at the southwest corner of Old Halls Ferry and North Highway 67, is zoned C2 Shopping District;
- Schaefer Meyer Grading Company, a legal non-conforming use situated on a 15-acre site along Coldwater Creek, is zoned FPNU (Non-Urban District with a Flood Plain overlay);
- North County Golf and Sports Center, which encompasses 17 acres along Coldwater Creek, is zoned NU Non-Urban District and FPNU (Non-Urban District with a Flood Plain overlay).

C. Comparison of City and County Zoning

Only limited information is provided in the Plan of Intent regarding details of the City's zoning districts. The Plan of Intent states that all properties in the proposed annexation area will be reclassified from the existing St. Louis County zoning to the City's most similar zoning district and that there will be no impact from these changes. However, it should be noted that the City does not have a Flood Plain District. Therefore, the Flood Plain designation would be removed from both the Schaefer Meyer and North County Golf properties. Instead, these properties would be subject to the City's Flood Plain Ordinance.

D. Compactness and Other Boundary Issues

Florissant's Plan of Intent indicates that the area proposed to be annexed is 43.7 percent contiguous to the City. However, the addition of the proposed annexation area does not necessarily result in a more regular or natural boundary between the City and the County.

III. FINANCIAL IMPACTS OF PROPOSED ANNEXATION

According to the Plan of Intent, the City does not levy a property tax. The City's utility tax rate is currently 5 percent, which is equal to the St. Louis County rate. The City's sales tax rate is 7.075 percent, which is one cent higher than the unincorporated County rate of 6.075 percent. The City's additional one cent sales tax is dedicated in equal amounts to capital improvements and parks. As a "pool" sales tax city, Florissant receives sales tax revenue on a per capita basis except for the capital improvement and parks taxes which are collected on a point of sale basis.

A. Impact on Area Residents and Property Owners

Annexation by the City of Florissant would have a minimal financial impact on residents and property owners in the proposed annexation area. Property tax and utility tax would not change.

If the area were annexed by the City of Florissant, sales tax on any purchases made within the proposed annexation area will increase from 6.075 percent to 7.075 percent. Since there are no commercial retail properties currently within the area proposed to be annexed, there will be no effect on retail store purchases. However, sales tax on the purchase of a \$20,000 vehicle will increase by \$200 (without a trade-in) for residents in the proposed annexation area.

If annexed, residents in the proposed annexation area would experience a slight increase in expenses for trash collection services. St. Louis County's residential trash district program became operational on September 29, 2008. Basic service includes once a week trash pickup, once a week curbside recycling pickup, and two annual bulky pickups. The County has

contracted with IESI to provide service to District 1, which includes the proposed annexation area, at a monthly cost of \$12.09 per household for Year 1, \$12.63 for Year 2, and \$13.14 for Year 3. A 10 percent senior discount is available to those 65 years old or older. All households in Sunland Hills subdivision and Candlewyck Villas are included in the residential trash district program; however, Spring Creek condominiums are not included by virtue of being a multi-family development. Following the County's example, the City of Florissant recently awarded a three-year contract to Meridian for trash service. The new service will begin on March 30, 2009. The minimum level of service is once a week trash pickup, once a week recycling pickup, and once a month (January through October) bulk pickup. The cost for this service is \$13.60 per month for the first year with modest increases in the second and third years of the contract. A 50 percent senior discount is available to those 60 years old or older. As such, most households would pay an additional \$1.51 per month for trash service.

B. Impact on St. Louis County

The total annual revenue loss that County Government could experience as a result of the proposed annexation is estimated to be \$139,737. A breakdown of County revenue loss by funding source is provided in Table 2.

TABLE 2

ESTIMATED ANNUAL COUNTY REVENUE LOSS FROM THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION	
	Annexation Area
Sales Tax ¹	\$73,614
Utility Tax ²	24,032
C.A.R.T. ³	17,867
County Road and Bridge Tax ³	8,255
Cigarette Tax ⁴	2,303
Cable TV Tax ³	3,132
Fees & Fines ⁴	10,534
TOTAL	\$139,737

Sources:

¹ Estimate based on \$127.62 per capita less the County annexation adjustment.

² Assumes average annual utility bill of \$2,000 and a 5% utility tax for residential units; non-residential estimates are not accurate at a small area level.

³ Estimate by the St. Louis County Department of Highways and Traffic.

⁴ Estimate by the St. Louis County Department of Planning.

The cumulative annual revenue loss to the County as a result of recent annexations is conservatively estimated to be \$1,113,949. In all likelihood, the County's annual revenue loss is greater than this estimate since not all data pertaining to annual revenue loss could be recovered. Table 3 shows the estimated annual County revenue loss for each area that has been annexed since 2002.

TABLE 3

RECENT ANNEXATION HISTORY					
Year	Municipality	Annexation Area	Population²	Units²	Estimated Annual Revenue Loss⁶
2002	Florissant	Crest Aire Subdivision	587	213	\$118,951
2003	Ellisville	Polo Lake Subdivision	0 ³	6	--
2003	Florissant	Paddock Meadows/ Calavera (Area 12)	922	314	\$123,073 ⁷
2003	Florissant	St. Catherine/Parker Road (Area 10)	1,072	422	\$213,750
2004	Maryland Heights	Page Avenue Extension	1,596	924	\$321,344
2004	Pacific	State Prison	1,098	Group Quarters	\$115,613 ⁷
2004	Florissant	Grandview & I-270 ¹	0 ⁴	2	--
2005	Florissant	SW of Patterson & Halls Ferry (Area 6)	870	234	\$161,687
2006	Wildwood	St. Paul Road	74	67	\$42,996
2008	Ellisville	Old State Road	7 ⁵	4 ⁵	\$16,535 ⁷
TOTAL			6,226	2,186	\$1,113,949

Notes:

¹ Type of boundary change: Transfer of Jurisdiction.

² Source: 2000 US Census.

³ Population from the annexation area was counted as part of the City of Ellisville in the 2000 Census.

⁴ Population from the transfer of jurisdiction area was counted as part of the City of Florissant in the 2000 Census.

⁵ The St. Louis County Department of Planning estimated the population and number of dwelling units in the annexation area to be 124 and 43, respectively, at the time of annexation.

⁶ Source: St. Louis County Department of Planning.

⁷ Estimate does not include annual revenue loss from all sources.

C. Impact on Annexing Municipality

Table 4 compares the City's and the County's estimates of new revenues for Florissant if the annexation is successful.

TABLE 4

CITY AND COUNTY ESTIMATE OF FLORISSANT'S NEW ANNUAL REVENUES		
Source	County Estimated Amount	City Estimated Amount ⁶
Sales Tax ¹	\$92,014	\$95,713
Utility Gross Receipts Tax ²	24,032	43,500
Capital Improvement Sales Tax ³	45,243	45,243
State Road Aid ⁴	30,433	20,044
County Road and Bridge ⁴	8,255	8,255
Motor Vehicle Sales Tax and Fees ³	9,121	9,121
Cigarette Tax ⁵	2,303	2,307
Cable TV Tax ⁴	3,132	7,517
Sewer Lateral Insurance Fee ³	17,226	17,226
Business License Fees	150	150
Permits and Inspections ³	7,210	7,210
TOTAL	\$239,119	\$256,286

Sources:

¹ County estimate based on \$127.62 per capita.

² County estimate assumes average annual utility bill of \$2,000 with utility gross receipts tax rate of 5% for residential units; non-residential estimates are not accurate at a small area level.

³ City of Florissant estimate.

⁴ County estimate by the St. Louis County Department of Highways and Traffic.

⁵ County estimate by the St. Louis County Department of Planning.

⁶ Estimates from Florissant Plan of Intent, Fiscal Year One.

The County estimates that Florissant will receive \$239,119 from the area if annexed; the City estimates revenues of \$256,286. The difference between total estimates is \$17,167. This difference can be accounted for by the gap between the City and County estimates of utility tax revenues, state road aid and cable television taxes.

The Plan of Intent provides estimates on how the revenue generated from the area would be spent. The City's estimates are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

CITY ESTIMATE OF ANNUAL EXPENDITURES FOR THE AREA	
Service	Estimates for Expenditures
Administrative	\$27,600
Municipal Courts	5,900
Senior Services	1,500
Health Department	7,200
Parks, Recreation, Theater, Civic/ Community Centers, Pools, Golf Course	33,100
Public Works, Streets, Building, Engineering	33,000
Sewer lateral Insurance/Repair Program	6,500
Police	80,800
Capital Improvements	32,100
Park Improvements	28,500
TOTAL	\$256,200

Source: City of Florissant Plan of Intent.

The Plan of Intent states that the revenues received by this area will be adequate to provide all City services to this area in a first-class fashion. The Plan also states that three-year capital improvement projects for street repairs and improvements, sidewalks and ADA accessible curb cuts, and new street lights in the proposed annexation area are anticipated to proceed immediately after annexation

Given the revenues estimated by the County to be generated from the proposed annexation area and the cost of anticipated City services to the area, Florissant's expenses would exceed its revenues by \$17,081 per year as a result of annexing this area.

D. Traffic Generation Assessment

The proposed annexation area is within the New Halls Ferry Road Corridor Traffic Generation Assessment Road Trust Fund Area. The continuation of the Traffic Generation Assessment Road Trust Fund is integral in meeting the needs of area residents and the traveling public for road improvements in the area. The Plan of Intent states that the City does not have an ordinance prohibiting participation in these trust funds. The Plan of Intent also states that the City will continue to require any new development to participate in this trust fund.

IV. PROVISION OF SERVICES

A. Existing and Proposed Services

The provision of services to its residents is local government's primary responsibility and function. Currently, St. Louis County is the provider of a variety of municipal-type services to the proposed annexation area. If the annexation is successful, the services currently provided by St. Louis County would be transferred to the City of Florissant. Table 6 lists basic municipal-type services provided in the area proposed to be annexed and identifies their current and proposed provider.

TABLE 6
SERVICES

Service	Current Provider	Proposed Provider
Police Protection	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Fire Protection/EMS/ALS	Black Jack Fire Protection District	
Streets ¹	St. Louis County	St. Louis County and City of Florissant
Sidewalk Improvement and Repair	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Parks and Recreation	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Refuse Collection	IESI ²	Meridian ³
Street Lighting	Property Owner	City of Florissant
Planning, Zoning, and Subdivision Regulations	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Building Code, Mechanical Permits and Inspections	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Residential Occupancy Permits and Inspections	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Health Services-- Rodent Control, Mosquito Fogging, Animal Control	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Senior Services	St. Louis County	City of Florissant
Municipal Court	St. Louis County	City of Florissant

Notes:

- ¹ Some 4.30 miles of roads on the County Road System would be transferred to Florissant if the annexation occurs; however, the 0.76 miles of road on the Arterial Road System (Old Halls Ferry Road) would continue to be maintained by St. Louis County.
- ² The County has contracted with IESI to provide trash service through its residential trash district program.
- ³ The City has awarded a contract to Meridian to provide trash service beginning March 30, 2009.

Provision of County Services

St. Louis County currently is able to reasonably access the area proposed to be annexed via Old Halls Ferry Road and North Highway 67. St. Louis County provides quality efficient municipal services to the proposed annexation area and will continue to do so if the area remains unincorporated.

St. Louis County as a Service Provider

As one of the largest providers of local services in the state of Missouri, St. Louis County offers a full range of services to unincorporated residents (see Table 6). In North County, St. Louis County operates a North County Government Center staffed with more than 80 employees offering a variety of services. The area is also served by 120 commissioned officers in the North County (1st) Police Precinct, whose headquarters and five neighborhood stations are located in the area. There are 35 employees from the Department of Highways and Traffic who work out of the North County Maintenance Station maintaining more than 284 center line miles of local roads. The County has other employees who only work only in North County, such as inspectors from the Office of Neighborhood Preservation who routinely work in the same neighborhoods. North County also has 12 County park sites totaling over 1,150 acres, including the North County Recreation Complex. Other services are provided to by the Departments of Health, Human Services, Planning, and Public Works. For example, the County Older Resident Programs (CORP) provides quality service to Saint Louis County residents age 60 and over by addressing the needs of older adults with a wide variety of programs, services, and opportunities such as: transportation, home visits and telephone reassurance, home care and repair, legal assistance, information and referral, active aging, and much more.

St. Louis County-Neighborhood Partnerships

St. Louis County routinely works closely with neighborhood associations and residents to strengthen their neighborhoods.

Police

Table 7 indicates the number of calls for service and man-hours spent in the proposed annexation area for 2007 and 2008. The number of calls and hours spent responding to service needs in this area remained about the same for 2007 and 2008. A total of 501 man-hours were spent responding to directed calls for service.

TABLE 7		
CALLS FOR SERVICE		
Year	Calls for Service	Hours
2007	593	278
2008	598	223
TOTAL	1,191	201

Source: St. Louis County Police Department.

In 2008, there were 598 calls for service in the proposed annexation area. The 317 calls for service in the residential area were mainly for false alarm soundings and medical calls while the 281 calls in non-residential areas (including Old Halls Ferry Road and North Highway 67) were mainly for alarm soundings and traffic incidents. Crime in the proposed annexation area is relatively low, with 16 Part I crimes reported in 2007 and ten Part I crimes reported in 2008. Part I crimes reported in 2008 included one robbery, four burglaries, and five larcenies.

The Neighborhood Policing Officer (NPO) reported that several efforts have been made to form a Neighborhood Watch Program in this area, but there is no established group in the area. However, the NPO has been successful in working with individual residents to address specific issues.

Highways and Traffic

Some 4.30 miles of roads on the County Road System (residential streets) would be transferred to the City of Florissant if the annexation occurs; however, the 0.76 miles of road on the Arterial Road System (Old Halls Ferry Road) would continue to be maintained by St. Louis County.

The Department of Highways and Traffic rates the pavement conditions of streets throughout the County with ratings from 1-10 (poorest to best). The map on the following page shows pavement condition ratings in the proposed annexation area. Ratings are as follows: Galaxie and Invicta have the lowest ratings of 4; Le Sabre, Cordin and Davey are rated 5; Sunland and Belcroft are rated 6; Boeing and Evanaire are rated 7; and Old Halls Ferry is rated 8. All streets in the area received a crack seal program in 2003.

Neighborhood Preservation

The Office of Neighborhood Preservation conducted its annual house-to-house sweep of the neighborhood in 2008. The inspector also canvassed the neighborhood for violations on several other occasions. In 2008, two complaints were received and 14 tickets were issued (no cases were sent to court). Violations included litter and debris, unlicensed or derelict vehicles, peeling paint, high grass, deteriorated light post, and deteriorated soffit.

Neighborhood Preservation also conducted a property condition survey of the neighborhood in January 2009. The survey found property conditions in the neighborhood are generally good. There were a total of 31 violations, or 8.9 percent of the homes were in violation. As indicated in Table 8, the most common violation was trash, debris and litter.

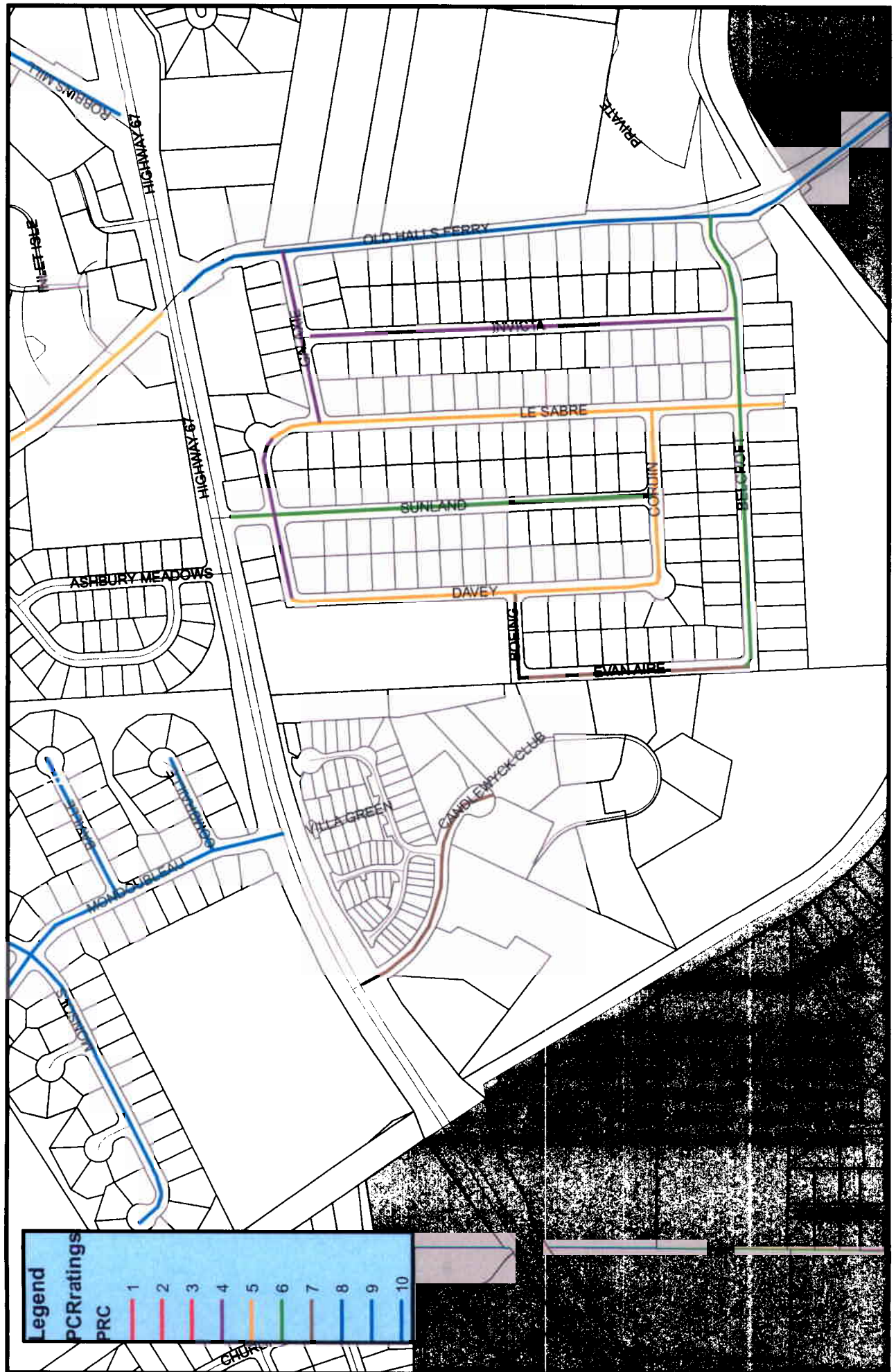
TABLE 8

PROPERTY CONDITION SURVEY RESULTS	
Violation	Number
Trash, Debris and Litter	13
Unlicensed Vehicles	4
Illegal Parking	2
Fascia Problems	4
Gutter Problems	2
Tie Wall Problems	1
Driveways	1
Peeling/Flaking Paint	1
Fence Problems	3
TOTAL	31

Source: St. Louis County Office of Neighborhood Preservation.

B. Services Not Affected

The area is serviced by the Black Jack Fire Protection District, which is an independent taxing jurisdiction that will not be affected by annexation. The Missouri-American Water Company and the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District will continue to provide water and sewer services, respectively. The area will continue to be served by the Ferguson-Florissant School District and the St. Louis County Library system. The services provided by these jurisdictions and their respective tax rates would not be affected by annexation.



V. CONCLUSION

St. Louis County believes that the proposed annexation is not in the best interest of the area to be annexed, the adjacent unincorporated areas, or the annexing city. Countywide, residents benefit from our economies of scale and expertise. St. Louis County provides quality efficient services at a reasonable cost to residents in the proposed annexation area and will continue its role as a willing and capable service provider if the area remains unincorporated. The proposed annexation has a negative financial impact on St. Louis County and the cumulative impact of annexations erodes the County's efficiencies and resource base. For these reasons, St. Louis County is opposed to the annexation.

