



EcoCity Cleveland

IDEAS AND TOOLS FOR A SUSTAINABLE BIOREGION

\$4

Special Double Issue

Volume 4, Numbers 11-12 Spring 1997

Editor/writer: David Beach

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Report and recommendations
of the Ohio Farmland Preservation
Task Force



Smart growth from
Maryland



Jeffersonian land use legacies



From farms to parks
in Medina County?



Bioregional calendar



Good words

We have just about run out of "theres" with
which to replace distasteful "heres."

We can no longer afford to maintain the
illusion of imaginary new frontiers
for imaginary settlers.

We have to begin conserving the massive and
substantial investments made by the real
settlers who built our cities in the first place.

We have to know that our need for efficiency
and our desire for comfortable lives
are not antithetical.

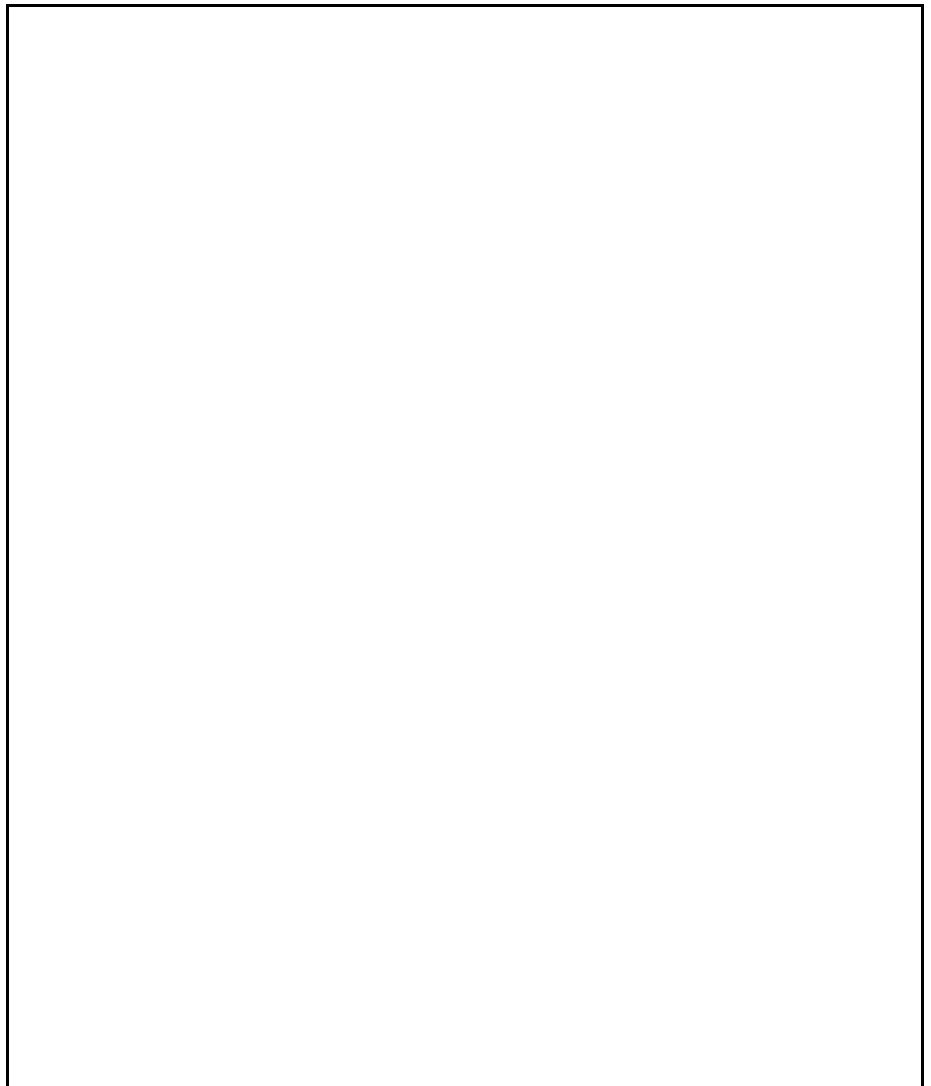
Mending our metropolitan cores
is the pathway to both.

—Elliott Sclar,
professor of urban planning,
Columbia University

The real voyage of discovery lies not in
seeking new landscapes, but in having new
eyes.

—Marcel Proust

CLEVELAND IN GREATER CLEVELAND



Defining a regional role for our central city

A report to Cleveland City Council by EcoCity Cleveland
See pages 12-19

Photo by Donn Nottage/City of Cleveland

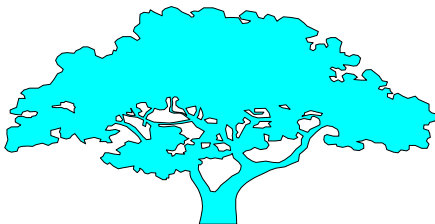
Open windows

In the past couple of years, we've witnessed an upwelling of civic concern about the future of the region. The overarching issue has been urban sprawl—the outmigration from older cities and the rapid development of the countryside—and the economic, social and environmental problems associated with sprawling land uses.

In this issue we highlight three windows of opportunity which could open ways to regional solutions. First, we reprint a report which EcoCity Cleveland prepared for Cleveland City Council last year. It describes the thought processes of a central city struggling to cope with its new role as part of a larger metropolitan region. And it offers insights for everyone in Northeast Ohio who is trying to "think regionally" and reach out to new partners.

Second, we provide extensive excerpts from the recent report of the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force. The recommendations from this report could lead to significant legislative reforms in the coming months.

And third, we describe Maryland's new "Smart Growth" initiative—a program which makes fighting sprawl a matter of fiscal conservatism. Could an Ohio version of "Smart Growth" become a major issue in the upcoming gubernatorial campaign?



Thanks

We give thanks to The George Gund Foundation for a recent grant which will enable us to continue our transportation reform program for the next two years. The funds will also enable us to embark on a new land use/transportation project which will involve citizen's groups in mapping out desirable development scenarios for Northeast Ohio. We're calling this project the "Citizens' Bioregional Plan," and we'll be writing a lot about it in upcoming issues.

Bradley Flamm will staff the projects. To receive his excellent, biweekly fax/e-mail bulletin on local transportation issues, call him at 216-932-3007.

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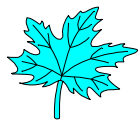
New fax number

EcoCity Cleveland's new fax number is 216-932-6069. Our regular phone remains the same.

Publication schedule

This double issue substitutes for February/March 1997 issue (Volume 4, Numbers 11-12). Summer issues will be out soon.

—David Beach
Editor



Mission

EcoCity Cleveland is a nonprofit, tax-exempt, educational organization. Through the publication of the *EcoCity Cleveland Journal* and other programs, it will stimulate ecological thinking about the Northeast Ohio region (Cuyahoga Bioregion), nurture an EcoCity Network among local groups working on urban and environmental issues, and promote sustainable ways to meet basic human needs for food, shelter, productive work and stable communities.

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Old farms, new parks

In the face of rapid growth and loss of farmland, Medina County officials are considering whether to place a tax issue for park development on the November ballot. If the county does not act soon, many of the best park opportunities will be lost forever.

By Bradley Westall

Although Medina County was, by historical account, considered "settled" by the mid-1800s, an entirely new wave of settlement is now happening. While clearing the wilderness was once the common challenge for farms, families and towns, it now seems that preserving open and unoccupied rural land has become the real challenge.

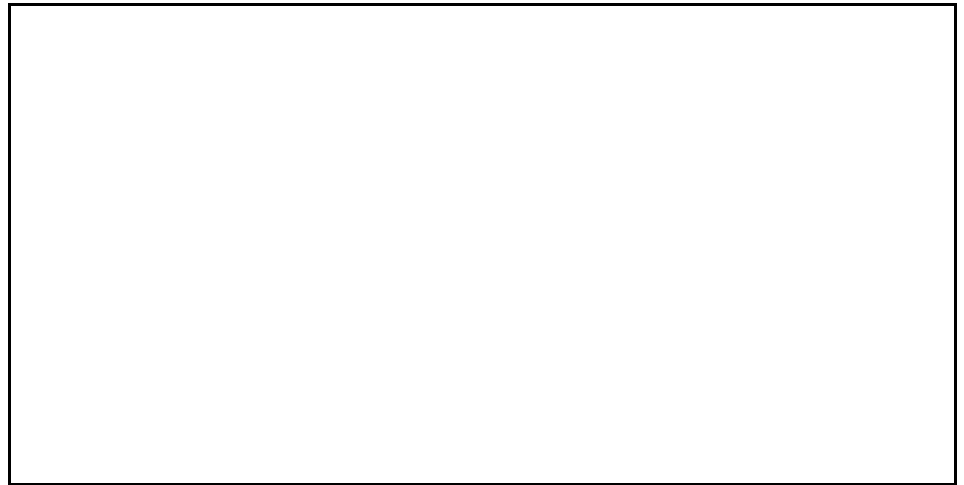
A few thoughts may be in order:

Medina County farms are becoming an endangered species. In order to become endangered, something must be ignored and its life-support system threatened to where survival is at risk. In the past, working, productive land was a family's chief asset, and success was measured in terms of barn size, draft animal health, and future family inheritance. Today, the market value of the farmland is the family's principal asset. Using a bulldozer, a backhoe and a dump truck, it now takes less than 60 days to subdivide and redevelop a farm.

The farm is the key element of our county's park system. Farmers have traditionally been the preservers of Medina County's open space and wildlife habitat. The farm by its very nature was a park with productive uses—the wood lot also functioned as a sugar bush, the meadow provided seasonal hay, the creek watered livestock, etc. This "rural park system" was large, diverse, and run informally by each landowner through the local community of the Grange hall, general store, township meeting or even neighbor to neighbor. Access was based on trust, and work was shared or bartered.

As of Fall 1996, every Medina County Park District site was, and in one case still is, a farm. These lands were placed in public ownership not only because of their beauty or location, but in large measure because their owners wanted to take a meaningful step towards preserving a legacy of stewardship and love of the land. Those were not easy decisions for them to make.

Medina County's current park system is too small. When a county seeks to measure its "quality of life," a key



Scenic sites in Medina County: New homes in Northeast Ohio's fastest growing county.

component of the yardstick should certainly be the status of its park system. For many decades, the "Emerald Necklace" park systems surrounding cities such as Boston, Chicago and Cleveland have been recognized as examples of wise land planning and attractive reasons to live in and near these cities. It is clear that in the 1920s, when those regions faced the development pressures now being exerted upon Medina County, they met the challenge head-on with a coordinated, far-sighted effort of public and private cooperation.

Painted in broad strokes, Medina County faces shortages of:

- Protected and accessible open space. Finite natural resources are being developed at an exponential rate. Hillsides, valleys and historic areas of high scenic value are being dotted with disturbances.

- Protected and accessible water resources. Chippewa Lake, along with most of its corresponding system of wetlands and forest, is still unprotected and privately owned. The five principal drainage systems of the county have no conservation easements or meaningful river corridor preservation programs.

- A cohesive system of greenways and trails. Medina County is, at present, one of the few areas in the entire seven counties in the Northeast Ohio region with no paved hiking/biking trails. As population density increases, so does the demand for environmental greenways to link towns, villages, schools and parks with safe, at-grade, scenic transportation corridors.

- A county-wide natural resource data

base. As the county engineer introduces computerized parcel mapping to our county, so must the database be used to build information systems for smart land use planning.

- A locally-designed environmental education program for youth and adults. The future quality of life in Medina County will depend on how well people have been informed and brought into the loop on preservation, planning and the environment.

A sense of place

Today, the Medina County Park District faces critical land acquisition choices, most notably in the Chippewa Lake region and Granger Township. In addition, virtually all existing park lands and nature preserves need increased buffer zones around their perimeters to protect their scenic and wildlife values. Even with our current parks, many residents travel outside the county to meet their recreation needs.

What is most troubling to long-time residents of Medina County is the speed with which their landscape is being changed—and the accompanying loss of uniqueness and identity. Parks and nature preserves will be, and rightfully should be, increasingly called upon to be the safe havens for this special sense of place. □

Brad Westall is a park designer for the Medina County Park District

Saving farms by saving cities:

Task force report calls for overhaul of state policies

Background

In our January 1997 issue, we reported on the extraordinary outpouring of interest at hearings of the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force. Although Governor George Voinovich gave the task force a narrow charge to propose voluntary incentives to help farmers remain on the land, people throughout the state sent the message that we can't save farmland without addressing (1) the unmanaged growth of urban areas and (2) the state programs which promote that growth.

In the end, the task force got the message. Its final report, submitted to the governor in June, includes the explicit recognition: "Preservation of a healthy agricultural economy and urban revitalization are two sides of the same coin. Strategic planning for one must incorporate the dynamics of the

other."

The report continues, "Farmland loss cannot be reduced without strong state support for redevelopment and maintenance of central cities and older suburbs, and for compact rural development. State government affects the conversion of agricultural land to other uses through land acquisition, development projects and financial assistance for public and private development, but no state plan currently exists to uniformly ensure that state actions do not irretrievably convert agricultural land to other uses when alternatives are available. In fact, ample evidence exists that many state program implementation policies undermine local objectives of farmland preservation."

To correct this situation, the task force recommends some potentially far-reaching changes for Ohio. It calls for all state agencies and policies to take farmland preservation and urban revitalization into account. It says that the state should encourage local governments to work together on regional land use plans that will preserve farmland. And it even talks about "urban service areas" as ways to limit the expansion of infrastructure.

Changing state culture

If the recommendations are carried out, state agencies like ODOT will have to overhaul many of their policies and activities. Instead of putting a highway through an agricultural protection district, for example, ODOT may have to pay more attention to urban bridges.

"If we let one state agency act in a rogue fashion, it will undermine

Agriculture is the keystone of our economic structure. The wealth, welfare, prosperity and even the future freedom of this Nation are based upon the soil.



Agriculture and urban growth in Ohio

Despite the fact that Ohio has more urban land area than any other state in the nation, with a concentration of 16 metropolitan areas each with more than 150,000 people, agriculture is Ohio's leading industry. Agriculture and food processing are a critical component of the state's economy, contributing \$56.2 billion annually and supporting one in six jobs. Virtually all of Ohio's agricultural production occurs in an urban-influenced environment—within statistical metropolitan counties or adjacent to such areas. The state's annual agricultural output places Ohio in the top ten states in the nation in the value of urban-influenced agriculture.

Regardless of the root causes of the rapid increase in growth beyond Ohio's cities, the effects of these phenomena are straining the economic and environmental fabric of rural communities. These communities are now facing development and social change, in many cases beyond their capacity to effectively address the situation.

The U.S. Census of Agriculture reports that between 1974 and 1992, Ohio lost 1.4 million acres of farmland. From 1954 to 1992, 28.7 percent of Ohio's "land in farms" has been converted to non-agricultural land use.

An indication of the effects of the increase in suburban growth on the economy and environment of Ohio can be seen in what is happening to farming and farmland in recent years in the state. The Ohio Agricultural Statistics Service reports that from 1992 through June 1, 1996, the number of farms in the state fell by 2,000 with a 100,000-acre decrease in land used for agricultural production.

While the decline in farming and farm acres in Ohio cannot be attributed entirely to urban conversion, it is clear that farming and farmland are being displaced by development and urban pressures.

According to the 1992 U. S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Resources Inventory, between 1982-1992, 472,000 acres in Ohio were developed to urban land. Of those 472,000 acres, 281,000 acres (59 percent) were farmland with prime or unique soils. This loss translates to 28,100 acres a year, or 77 acres a day.

Land use and

population trends in Ohio

Ohio's land area has a total of 26.3 million acres and is one of only four states in the United States that has more than 50 percent of its land classified as prime farmland.

Founded and established as agricultural markets, many of Ohio's metropolitan areas were located on prime soils for agricultural production. Today, expansion of Ohio's cities is competing for these prime agricultural soils.

According to the Ohio Department of Development's Office of Strategic Research, 81 percent of Ohio's population resides in the state's 39 metropolitan counties with the most rapid population growth occurring in the counties surrounding Ohio's largest cities. Projected growth for the period 1995-2000 shows that much of the expected population increases will occur in the metropolitan areas of Columbus, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Toledo.

While Ohio is not unique in the United States in its population growth trend, Ohio is among the top six states in the nation in land area consumption per citizen. Using data from U. S. Census reports, David Rusk, a national urban policy consultant based in Washington, D.C., compared the United States' rate

of growth in population to the rate of growth in urban land area for the period 1960 to 1990. Rusk created a ratio of the rate of growth in urban land area to the rate of growth in population. If the rate of growth in urban land area expands at the same rate as the growth in population, the ratio would equal 1.0. Rusk's conclusion for Ohio was that our state's population grew by 13 percent during this time period while urban land area grew by 64 percent. The ratio for Ohio is 4.7, meaning that growth rate in urban land use expanded 4.7 times the growth rate of population. Therefore, Ohio's urban land area increased almost five times as fast as the rate of population growth. The average rate for the United States is 2.3.

Growth trend reports from the Ohio Housing Research Network indicate that between 1980 and 2010, the five-county region surrounding Cleveland is expected to lose 3 percent of its population, yet witness a 30-percent increase in residential land.

A 1997 American Farmland Trust publication entitled, "Farming on the Edge: Farmland in the Path of Development," used U. S. Department of Agriculture's National Resources Inventory data to identify counties in Ohio with areas of higher than the state's

our other activities," said Rep. Gene Krebs (R- 60) at a task force meeting in April. "Farmland preservation should be part of the corporate mentality of the state."

In response, Lt. Governor Nancy Hollister said, "What if residents *want* a new road or a new steel plant in the country?"

That sort of exchange occurred again and again during task force debates. On one side were Krebs, Rep. Sean Logan (D-3), Sandra McKew of PKG Consultants, Denise Franz King of the Nature Conservancy and a few others who argued doggedly that it's in Ohio's long-term interest to manage growth so it doesn't sprawl all over the state. On the other side were Hollister and real estate and construction interests who want the state to keep opening up new land for development.

Krebs, a Republican farmer, was under extreme political pressure to back down. But he and the other members of what might be called the "smart growth" caucus refused to be intimidated. Their arguments and logic carried the day. The final task force report had much tougher language than the Voinovich administration wanted (which may be why the report was released without much fanfare or publicity).

Legislation

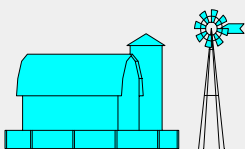
Krebs and Logan, an intriguing bipartisan team, are now translating the task force recommendations into a legislative program. Hearings in Columbus could begin in September. Everyone who cares about sustainable land use in Ohio should follow the process closely and lend support when necessary. It will take a grassroots effort around the state to realize the promise of farmland preservation. Finally, land use is on the political agenda in Ohio.

Because of the significance of this effort, we are reprinting substantial excerpts from the task force's report on pages 5-11. The report is also available on the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Web site at www.state.oh.us/agr/.

Farmland Task Force guidelines and objectives

- Keep decision making at the most local level possible so that implementation and goals are truly targeted to local realities.
- Provide recommendations that can achieve farmland preservation through adjustment of existing Ohio laws and policies.
- Consider legislative/regulatory parameters that "level the playing field" for agricultural communities, recognizing the need to address fair and needed development requirements while providing financial incentives for agriculture and for investment in agricultural lands in order to promote continued agricultural use rather than development.
- Provide a framework for a comprehensive approach to farmland preservation. Unless such an approach is taken, programs intended to preserve farmland will, instead, act as magnets for additional unnecessary urban expansion.
- Work toward preservation of farmland to ensure dynamic, productive agriculture for generations to come. Be aware that preserving land that is uniquely suited to farming honors the social importance of strong viable farms to families and farm communities; acknowledges the environmental benefits of land; recognizes the value of balancing land use to reflect Ohio's agricultural heritage and rural character; and strengthens and preserves Ohio's communities.
- Consider that community recognition of and support for preservation of farmland through a program of voluntary options is critical.
- Support programs that provide for profitable economic opportunities for farm operations. Be aware that governmental policies should minimize or reduce, not increase the cost of doing business. Provide farmers and farm operations the protection and freedom to expand or change their operations to remain competitive and profitable in the future.
- Encourage coordination of land use planning among governmental units. Promote local farmland protection policies that are applied and implemented by local decisions using goals, tools, resources, training incentives, and standards that are developed by the state program as guidelines.
- Structure farmland preservation programs to provide the opportunity for ownership to the farmers that work the land.
- Include in the coordination of statewide programs all groups affecting farmland preservation.

—Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force



average for prime and unique farmland and land development. Identified areas include all or most of the following counties: Allen, Auglaize, Butler, Clark, Crawford, Delaware, Fairfield, Greene, Henry, Marion, Medina, Miami, Morrow, Ottawa, Preble, Sandusky, Shelby, Union, Warren, Wayne, and Wood. While these counties are identified by American Farmland Trust as the most threatened, each county in Ohio will need to assess the status of farmland loss relative to the need for development.

Findings on the causes of farmland loss

Agriculture is Ohio's leading industry. Combined with its related support services, including processing, packaging, distribution and sales, agriculture employs one in six Ohioans, and contributes \$56.2 billion annually to the state's economy. As farms disappear, so do agriculturally related jobs. Although farmland conversion is a statewide concern for its leading industry, this concern is not necessarily reflected in Ohio's land use decisions and policies. Given current farmland conversion trends, economically viable farm communities will not exist in over 39 additional Ohio counties within 30 years.

As agricultural lands are suburbanized, a chain reaction of consequences occurs, including loss of productive farmland, a shift in population from central cities to suburbs, and haphazard outward growth. Unplanned growth adversely affects every community. For example, urban, suburban and rural highways become congested, the population shift empties urban schools and crowds suburban classrooms and the inner cities lose the tax base that supports basic services. City leaders cry out for help in rejuvenating brownfields and deteriorating neighborhoods, the suburban family yearns for more space, the township planners wrestle with the desire of city dwellers to become country land owners while demanding

ever increasing and expensive services.

In order to reverse the costs and consequences of farmland loss and unplanned urban growth, communities must have the tools they need to preserve agricultural areas and reinvest in our older communities. Communities need to grow as a result of informed and thoughtful decision making with regards to agricultural and urban resources.

Preservation of a healthy agricultural economy and urban revitalization are two sides of the same coin. Strategic planning for the one must incorporate the dynamics of the other. Even though there is farmland loss in growing rural counties, it is the loss of farmland on the edges of municipalities that threatens Ohio's agricultural and economic vitality as well as the fabric of Ohio's small towns and rural communities.

Incompatible land uses present a major problem for the agriculture industry. Agriculture is an industry that can be severely affected by adjacent residential development. This elemental incompatibility leads to nuisance suits and increases in land values and tax structures detrimental to farm economics. As incompatible land uses force or encourage the sale of farm

acreage, it becomes difficult to sustain the critical mass of farm acreage needed to support other agricultural-related businesses. This, in turn, accelerates the conversion of the farm community.

There appear to be certain situations to which voluntary incentive programs can be linked. These situations include: the landowners/operators who wish to retire and

access the equity in the land; the landowner/operator who wishes to retire but wants the farm operation to continue in the family; and the farmer who desires to acquire land for expansion of an existing farm operation or the beginning farmer who wishes to establish a new farm operation.

It is critical to "level the playing field" for the purchase of land for agricultural purposes as opposed to development and to encourage investment in existing urban areas. In order to fully understand the cost of any

In order to reverse the costs and consequences of farmland loss and unplanned urban growth, communities must have the tools they need to preserve agricultural areas and reinvest in our



farmland preservation program, the true costs of *not* preserving farmland must be determined. The costs of additional community services (schools, roads, fire protection, etc.) should be weighed against the revenue and other potential benefits of development.

Solutions must begin at the local level. However, counties, townships and municipalities that comprise a metropolitan area should work toward a common regional plan that will preserve farmland. The absence of adopted, enforced land use plans and supportive zoning undermines the predictability needed to encourage farm investment. If the availability of farm acreage is not reliable, farmers are unable to develop efficient, long-term operations.

Through voluntary incentives, state policy can encourage local discussion that will in turn inform and advise state lawmakers concerning tools and policies needed by local officials to implement plans for smarter growth. There are a number of effective land use tools used across the nation which, if given sufficient citizen support and appropriate legislative initiative, might be effectively applied to the development patterns upon the landscape, maximizing the public's investment in infrastructure. These tools can include: comprehensive land use plans, urban service areas, state cost sharing and technical assistance, prioritized capital investment strategies, model zoning codes, cost/benefit analysis, higher density cluster developments, local land banking, community reinvestment, cost sharing for agricultural planning, tax abatement revisions, and others. Successfully establishing and implementing these tools in Ohio is dependent upon grassroots education and support.

Farmland loss cannot be reduced without strong state support for redevelopment and maintenance of central cities and older suburbs, and for compact rural development. State government affects the conversion of agricultural land to other uses through land acquisition, development projects and financial assistance for public and private development, but no state plan currently exists to uniformly ensure that state actions do not irretrievably convert agricultural land to other uses when

alternatives are available. In fact, ample evidence exists that many state program implementation policies undermine local objectives of farmland preservation.

Studies suggest that nationally up to one third of all land in incorporated areas already having utilities and other infrastructure is vacant, unused or underutilized. In Ohio, this percentage is higher. Task Force subcommittee research revealed that current state policies encourage development on virgin land rather than redevelopment of land or development of vacant land in existing urban and suburban service areas.

the educational challenges of city schools; the state's welfare reform effort, geared toward helping people to gain productive employment; and the Ohio Housing Trust Fund, which has been created to help address the housing needs of low- and moderate-income Ohioans, many of whom live in distressed urban areas. Besides these urban initiatives there are also a number of very important rural economic development initiatives such as the Ohio Rural Industrial Park Loan Program, the Small Cities Downtown Revitalization Program, and the Urban and Rural Initiatives Program.

While many progressive initiatives have been undertaken, more action is needed to improve the quality of life in distressed urban areas. Making Ohio's cities attractive and safe places to live and work can reverse the outward flow of people that contributes to the problem of urban expansion. The key to future action is for state policy to shift its emphasis away from constructing unnecessary new highways and water and sewer systems in rural areas and toward maintaining, rebuilding, and fully utilizing existing infrastructure investments in urban areas.

Intelligent use of Ohio's land resource base is a very serious responsibility because of its profound impact on the fabric of society. The Voinovich-Hollister administration, through formation of the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force, has revitalized the land stewardship

debate in Ohio. This Task Force is an important first step. Wide public discussion must follow the release of the Task Force recommendations to discover what works at the local level. The discussion process, in the best sense, is democracy in action.

Key recommendations of the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force

- Make farmland preservation a *state priority*.
- Create an *Office of Farmland Preservation* within the Ohio Department of Agriculture.
- Create a menu of *voluntary options* to preserve farmland, as well to enhance the economic viability of agriculture in Ohio.
 - *State agencies* and programs should adopt guidelines, criteria and point systems to ensure all actions avoid the unnecessary conversion of farmland to other uses and encourage redevelopment of urban areas.
 - *Local governments* should prepare comprehensive land use plans to identify agricultural districts and areas which can be efficiently served by urban services and infrastructure. Recognize 25-year urban service expansion areas.
 - *County commissioners* should have a greater role in the coordination of local land use plans, infrastructure and regulation of septic systems.
 - More effectively utilize *existing infrastructure* in urban areas—encourage investments in cities, revise ODOT plans to reflect urban priorities.

Given the problems of land assemblage and environmental contamination, businesses find it easier and cheaper to invest outside urban areas and many people are following the jobs. If outward growth is to be slowed or curtailed, the public and private sectors will need to cooperate in order to address the problems that cause the decline of our central cities and older suburbs.

The State of Ohio has begun a number of initiatives to address the problems of distressed urban areas and to promote economic development. Some of these include: Jobs Bill III, a \$90 million commitment to help cities acquire and clean-up brownfields for private sector reinvestment in our central cities and older suburbs; Governor Voinovich's Urban Schools Initiative Agenda which focuses on

Recommendations

The recommendations of the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force are assembled below under the three subject areas: Voluntary Incentives, Planning and Infrastructure, and Economic Development and Urban Revitalization. Two recommendations have a bearing on the remainder and they are presented here:

Endorse a policy statement establishing that it is a priority of the State of Ohio to preserve the state's

Quotes from testimony to the Farmland Task Force

Oberlin needs help in developing a policy which will permit us to keep our agricultural space in and around the city. The dynamics that are creating the tax abatement/sewer and water district wars in the townships and municipalities of Lorain County are out of control. And short-term economic gains have been defining the character of the battlefield. The short-term gain of a few at the expense of the many—not to mention the inefficient, non-sustainable use of the land—is not right. Help us!

—Councilperson from Lorain County

Portage County is under seige from urban sprawl pressure from the Cleveland, Akron, Canton areas. Portage County had 2930 farms in 1950; 770 in 1996. Urban sprawl and speculators result in escalating property values so that farming is not a possibility to young, new farmers. We need a new, sustainable approach to land use that results in a win-win situation for residents, farmers, and developers.

—Citizen from Portage County

Perhaps the worst affect of annexation is what it does to carefully prepared zoning goals and the careful land use development that results from good land use planning. Today, annexation is used extensively to subvert zoning. Lands planned to remain agricultural or in forested open-state preserves become part of urban sprawl by a mere signature on an annexation petition.

—Bath Township Trustee,
Summit County

I am heartened by the number of citizens who come to speak to me about how to prevent urban sprawl, preserve our rural way of life, and create a more beautiful community in which to live. They often lament that Toledo and its suburbs are beginning to look like every place else in America. We should listen to their plea because both urban and rural communities will benefit if we make farmland preservation a priority. And we will create a region where people will want to live and work.

—U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur of Toledo

productive agricultural land and protect against its unnecessary and irretrievable conversion to nonagricultural uses. This statement of policy and intent provides a context and guidance for the recommendations presented below.

Create an Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) within the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The mission of the Office of Farmland Preservation will be to administer and coordinate a Farmland Preservation Program for Ohio. The office will:

- Work cooperatively with existing institutions, organizations and governmental entities to raise awareness of the importance of protecting agricultural resources.
- Develop a set of state guidelines and suggested criteria for the preparation and development of local comprehensive land use plans to encourage the preservation of farmland, the efficient use of public infrastructure investment, the application of zoning, including agriculturally-supportive zoning, and the managed expansion of urban and suburban areas.

- Develop and administer a Farmland Preservation Program at the state level to be coordinated and matched with local initiatives, including the development and coordination of an Agricultural Security Area Program.

- Administer a pilot Ohio Farmland Preservation Fund to leverage matching federal, local and private funds to preserve farmland.

- Develop and administer an Ohio Farmland Preservation Strategy to coordinate the planning and review of all state programs and actions with respect to their impact on farmland preservation.

- Prepare, with the Ohio Department of Development, a biannual report to the Governor on the progress of programs and activities to coordinate the preservation of farmland with economic growth and development for agriculture in the state.

Voluntary incentives for farmland preservation

At the core of the discussion of farmland preservation is the farm family and their land holdings. The land that supports farming is a source of equity for the farm family. The following are recommendations to provide voluntary incentives to farmland owners to protect the land and their equity.

Create an Ohio Farmland Preservation Program, which provides a menu of voluntary options to preserve farmland as well as to enhance the economic viability of agriculture. The focus of this program shall be to preserve agricultural land that is

capable of producing food and fiber crops, which are important to the people and economy of the state. Attention, in descending order, shall be given to productive farmland: large blocks of land, unique soils, microclimate regions, commercial woodlands, uniquely located farms, and open space/woodlots.

Continue support of the existing agriculture land use programs in Ohio's Agricultural District and Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) laws.

Create a new voluntary program of local and/or regional Agricultural Security Areas. These agricultural security areas would include the benefits of agricultural districts and CAUV within the local comprehensive land use plan.

Authorize the creation of a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program. A PDR program allows a farmer to voluntarily sell the right to develop farmland in return for accepting a permanent conservation easement on the affected land. Per an opinion of the Office of the Ohio Attorney General, authority does not currently exist for the state and localities to purchase or accept a gift of an interest in land for the purposes of preserving its agricultural use. Therefore, such legislative changes as are necessary should be advanced to allow such authorization. Once authorized, PDR programs could operate at any level of government. It's recommended that farms to be protected using any state farmland preservation funds shall be located in an Agricultural Security Area as identified in a local comprehensive land use plan.

Authorize the creation of a Lease of Development Rights (LDR) program. As an alternative to the sale of development rights on a permanent basis as in PDR, this option would allow a farmland owner to make a long-term commitment to protecting their farmland from development for a set time period. The implications of such an arrangement on future land contracts, mortgages and other existing liens should be studied. The minimum term for an LDR program should be no less than 30 years. At the end of the term of a lease, the current owner may elect to renegotiate the lease for another 30 years or more. Farms to be protected using any state farmland preservation funds shall be located in an Agricultural Security Area as identified in a local comprehensive land use plan.

Authorize the creation of local or regional Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs. The TDR program allows communities to direct development to their less productive soils and retain their higher productive ground for agricultural production



and at the same time compensating both areas of the community.

Consider the feasibility of a state 30-year Land Use Tax Credit (LUTC) program. To encourage the long-term stabilization of land in agricultural use, this program will offer eligible landowners a tax credit based on their property taxes in return for acceptance of a 30-year term easement on the affected land.

Consider the feasibility of creating a state or local interest buy-down program for farmland acquisition loans. To encourage the purchase of farmland for new or expanded farming operations, this program would subsidize the interest paid on farmland acquisition loans in return for a permanent conservation easement on the affected land. The OFP shall establish criteria to ensure that the program benefits active and viable farm operations.

Encourage state and local land acquisition agencies to consider the protection of land through the purchase of development rights or conservation easements, rather than fee-simple purchases. The purchase of land for such public purposes as park buffers, floodplain management and well-head protection may be more efficiently and economically handled by purchasing only the development rights or a conservation easement on such lands.

Purchasing only an interest in land reduces acquisition costs and future management costs, and maintains property tax contributions. In those instances where the affected land is active farmland, purchasing only a conservation easement will keep the land in, or available for, agriculture under private management.

Create a pilot state Farmland Preservation Fund to provide funding for voluntary incentives for farmland preservation. State seed funding is

essential to the creation of local programs to offer voluntary incentives for farmland preservation. Funding for farmland preservation programs would create an opportunity for the state or localities to apply for USDA Farmland Protection Program funds. Local access to the state Farmland Preservation Fund will require the successful completion and adoption of a local comprehensive land use plan, and

appropriate policies, that includes agriculturally-supportive zoning and agricultural security areas. In addition, access to state farmland preservation funds will require a local match.

Planning and infrastructure

Good planning and coordination of policies and programs at the state and local levels must support voluntary land-saving actions by individual farmers and landowners. Future planning and infrastructure decisions must take into account the goals of preserving farmland and maintaining agriculture as a viable industry in Ohio.

Establish an Ohio Farmland Preservation Strategy that coordinates and guides state policies, programs and actions so as to avoid and minimize the unnecessary and irretrievable conversion of productive agricultural land to nonagricultural uses. All state agencies should use a point system to encourage

redevelopment of urban areas and cohesive density of development (grid pattern, cluster developments, and other land conservation models) to eliminate duplication of infrastructure and use of state funds, subsidies and grants which fund it, unless it is determined that there is no feasible or prudent alternative. The Office of Farmland Preservation will coordinate the establishment of the Ohio Farmland Preservation Strategy.

Farmland loss cannot be reduced without strong state support for redevelopment and maintenance of central cities and older suburbs, and for compact rural development. State government affects the conversion of agricultural land to other uses through land acquisition, development projects and financial assistance for public and private development, but no state plan currently exists to uniformly ensure that state actions do not irretrievably convert agricultural land to other uses...In fact, ample evidence exists that many state policies undermine local objectives of farmland preservation.

In order to achieve the goal of protecting agricultural land in Ohio, it is essential to endorse the concept of *local* land use planning. It is important to the existing home rule structure that land use planning and zoning must be done at the local level *but within a statewide policy framework*. This approach would mitigate the current lack of coordination between counties, townships, and cities. Simply put, each county should be encouraged (with matching funds and time limits) to prepare a comprehensive land use plan that is tailored to its unique needs but contains consistent statewide elements addressing farmland preservation issues. At a minimum, the state should enable local governments to utilize a more complete range of tools to guide development and to ensure that new development does not impose an inappropriate financial burden on the general taxpayer.

Encourage local governments to prepare comprehensive land use plans. This would encourage: the preservation of farmland; the efficient use of public infrastructure investment; the application of zoning, including agriculturally-supportive zoning; and the managed expansion of urban and suburban areas, including the identification of urban service areas. This would also discourage unnecessary duplication of services.

The local comprehensive land use plan would identify areas of appropriate urban/suburban densities, lower density residential areas where clustering components minimize conflicts with agriculture, appropriate conversion easement areas, and agricultural zoning districts. Farmland areas would be identified through use of a uniform system and development of strategies would identify policies protective of farmland, e.g., PDR's.

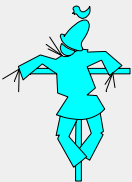
The Office of Farmland Preservation will develop a minimum set of land use plans, and will administer the planning grants program state guidelines and criteria for the preparation and development of local comprehensive land use plans.

Encourage local communities to utilize a cost/benefit methodology for financing capital improvements and services required as a result of the development strategy as proposed in local comprehensive land use plans.

Encourage farmland preservation and necessary urban expansion through higher-density residential development and well-planned industrial development, utilizing central sewer systems and other public

Members of the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force

- Lt. Governor Nancy Hollister (tri-chair)
- Fred Dailey, director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture (tri-chair)
- William Swank, executive vice president of the Ohio Farm Bureau (tri-chair)
- Sen. Grace Drake of Solon, 22nd Senate District, serving Medina and Wayne counties, as well as eastern Cuyahoga County
- Sen. Leigh Herrington of Kent, 28th Senate District, serving Portage and Summit counties
- Rep. Gene Krebs of Morning Sun, 60th House District, serving Preble County and portions of Butler County (a seventh generation farmer)
- Rep. Sean Logan of Lisbon, 3rd House District, serving Columbiana County
- John Casey of Columbus, tax and business lawyer with agribusiness clients
- James Ernst of Dayton, Ernst Development Co. and president of the Ohio Home Builders Association
- Dale Fallat of Maumee, attorney representing the Ohio Chamber of Commerce
- John Fisher of Worthington, vice president of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
- Tim Hansley of Dublin, city manager of Dublin and representative of the Ohio Municipal League
- Michael Juengling of Hamilton, director of development for Butler County and president of the County Planning Directors Association of Ohio
- Denise Franz King of Dublin, director of government and community relations of the Ohio Chapter of The Nature Conservancy
- Sandra McKew of Hudson, Pflum, Klausmeier & Gehrum Consultants
- Reed Madden of Spring Valley, president of the Greene County Commissioners representing the County Commissioners Association
- Bobby Moser of Dublin, dean at the Ohio State University College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences
- Nancy Patterson of Chesterland, owner/operator of Patterson Farms
- Gerald Potter of Ada, family farmer and Cessna Township trustee representing the Ohio Township Association
- Barbara Shaner of Westerville, legislative director of the Ohio Grange
- Thomas Spellmire of Lebanon, farmer and state director of the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Vince Lombardi, assistant director of the Ohio Department of Development (ex-officio member)
- Donald Schregardus, director of the Ohio EPA (ex-officio member)
- William Moody, assistant director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ex-officio member)



infrastructure. Urban service areas reflecting a minimum 25-year expansion area should be recognized.

Improve the ability of local governments to plan and manage land uses that are not incompatible with agriculture and necessary urban expansion.

Bring township zoning in coordination with the state's goal of farmland preservation by the following actions:

- All local governments should review existing zoning regulations and bring them into compliance with existing state goals and local comprehensive land use plans.

- All local governments should regularly review their zoning map and resolutions to be sure that they are in compliance with state goals and the local comprehensive land use plan with respect to the use of agricultural land.

- Zoning policies should not contribute to unnecessary urban expansion, but should promote necessary urban expansion within the local comprehensive land use plan.

- Zoning authorities should offer agriculturally-supportive zoning at the local level that encourages primary agricultural uses and should identify and preserve areas of farmland and farm economies.

Empower counties to reduce unnecessary duplication of infrastructure and services and ensure that development is consistent with county comprehensive land use plans in the unincorporated areas.

Enable county commissioners to participate more extensively in the planning and coordination of zoning matters, to more fully coordinate annexation and local comprehensive land use plans. Cooperation between all affected governments in providing needed infrastructure should be encouraged in any annexation decision.

Legislation should be adopted to allow counties and municipalities the permissive ability to regulate lot sizes and land divisions including acreage and health concerns within the context of an adopted local comprehensive land use plan.

The construction of new structures on rural lots, which will require expensive on-site septic systems or result in undercapitalized sewer systems, should be discouraged.

Wastewater treatment permit policies should be coordinated with efforts to

preserve farmland. Redirect authority for on-site septic system monitoring and regulation to county commissioners. Create consistent on-site wastewater treatment inspection and maintenance programs.

Allow counties to more effectively manage their transportation infrastructure needs and problems. Revise the Ohio Revised Code to allow county and township control of access management decisions. Require Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to coordinate with county planning departments prior to issuing access permits for state, county, municipal and township roads and streets. Alternatively, access permits should be issued by the governmental body having jurisdiction over the road.

Economic development and urban revitalization

A healthy and vibrant farm and non-farm economy is essential for the future of Ohio, its citizens and communities. It is important to recognize the contributions of agriculture—from individual family farms to value-added processing facilities—to the economic well-being of Ohio. Promoting the expansion of the farm sector within the economy will enable farmers to better provide for their families, while providing society with all the benefits of open, productive farmland.

Promoting and revitalizing Ohio's rich urban centers will not only benefit those cities and their residents, but also ease many of the identified causes of farmland loss related to unnecessary urban expansion.

Promote economic development programs and initiatives for agriculture at the state and local levels.

Reduce the influence and contribution of federal and state taxes on the conversion of farmland. State and federal capital gains taxes should be modified to promote housing and commercial investment and reinvestment in existing urban and older suburban communities. State and federal capital gains and estate taxes should be modified to promote farmland preservation and the continued ownership of farms within farm families. Distressed urban, suburban and rural areas should be given greater preference in state tax abatement statutes.

Support continued state funding for local land banking, including the

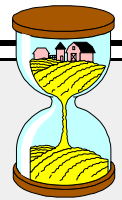
Voinovich-Hollister Administration's Urban Initiatives Programs. The land banking process would include property identification, purchase and assembly of the property, environmental mitigation, and site preparation.

More effectively utilize existing infrastructure in urban areas.

- Encourage new investments to utilize existing infrastructure in urban areas and brownfields.
- Revise the "Access Ohio" state transportation policy document to reflect farmland preservation goals.
- Allow for the reallocation of committed ODOT funds within the same area to reflect the goals of local comprehensive land use plans related to necessary urban expansion, farmland preservation or improvement of existing roads.
- Set the allocation of ODOT fund distributions to reflect priority needs of existing urban areas.
- Consider funding an allocation system that targets existing rural and urban transportation networks.
- Revise ODOT project ranking system to de-emphasize the impact of higher, preferred funding for private investment projects, unless the project is within a local comprehensive land use plan.
- Encourage the creation of Concentrated Infrastructure Districts, which capitalize on existing infrastructure, as they relate to funding or rezoning approvals to necessary urban developments and densities.

The Task Force would like to commend the Ohio House of Representatives for creating an Urban Issues Subcommittee to learn directly from urban officials what the problems, challenges, and opportunities are in the state's central cities, inner suburbs and other urban communities. Because of the interdisciplinary expertise needed to address these complex issues, we encourage the Ohio General Assembly to fully explore the issues facing Ohio's urban areas and the relationship between farmland preservation and changes in the urban environment. □

Farmland conservation terms



■ **Agricultural conservation easement:** A legal agreement restricting development on farmland. Land subjected to an ACE is generally restricted to farming and open space use. See also Conservation Easement.

■ **Agricultural district:** Ohio Revised Code Chapter 929, Sections 929.01-929.05 establishes a program of agricultural districts for the State of Ohio. Any person who owns agricultural land that in the previous three years was devoted to agricultural production or a qualified land retirement or conservation program; is composed of tracts, lots or parcels that together total at least ten acres; and, produced an average yearly gross income of at least \$2,500 during the previous three years, may enroll their land in an agricultural district for five years. Landowners who enroll in the program receive deferments from sewer and water assessments; some legal protections against nuisance suits and further review in the event government uses its powers of eminent domain to purchase the properties. There are penalties for early withdrawal from the program.

■ **Agriculturally-supportive zoning:** Zoning districts or areas in which agriculture is the primary land use. In support of farming, agriculturally related commercial and residential uses are encouraged.

■ **Comprehensive land use plan:** A regional, county or municipal document that contains a vision of how the community will grow and change and a set of plans and policies to guide land use decisions. Also known as a general plan or master plan.

■ **Concentrated infrastructure districts:** Geographic areas adjacent to existing urban and/or suburban areas that can be served by reasonable extensions of existing water, sewer and transportation facilities.

■ **Conservation easement:** Legally recorded voluntary agreements that limit land to specific uses. Easements may apply to entire parcels of land or to specific parts of the property. Most are permanent; term easements impose restrictions for a limited number of years. Land protected by a conservation easement remains on the tax rolls and is privately owned and managed; landowners who donate permanent conservation easements may be entitled to tax benefits.

■ **Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV):** Ohio Revised Code sections 5713.30-.98 establish a program that permits land in agricultural use to receive a tax savings equal to "the difference between the dollar amount of real property taxes levied in any year on land valued and assessed in accordance with its current agricultural use value and the dollar amount of real property taxes which would have been levied upon such land if it had been valued and assessed for such year in accordance with Section 2, Article XXII of the Ohio Constitution." The program establishes minimum eligibility standards, as well as penalties if the land is removed from agricultural use.

■ **Prime farmland:** Farmland that is best suited to the production of row, forage and fiber crops. Due to inherent natural characteristics such as level topography, good drainage, adequate moisture supply, favorable soil depth and favorable soil texture, this land consistently produces the most food and fiber with the least fertilizer, labor and energy requirements. These soils tend to be resistant to erosion and run-off.

■ **Unique farmland:** Farmland that is not classified as prime, but has a special combination of soil quality, location, topography, growing season and moisture supply necessary to produce high yields of specialty crops such as fruits, grapes and vegetables.

■ **Urban service areas:** A theoretical line drawn around a community that defines an area to accommodate anticipated growth for a given period of time, generally 15-20 years. Urban service areas are a growth management technique designed to prevent sprawl. They are often used to guide decisions on infrastructure development, such as the construction of roads and the extension of municipal water and sewer services.



Cleveland in Greater Cleveland: Defining a regional role for our central city

What is the role of a central city within its larger metropolitan region?

It used to be that a city such as Cleveland could feel that it *was* the region. As late as 1965 it had as many people as all the suburbs in Cuyahoga County.

But now the situation is dramatically different. Population, jobs and tax base have flowed out of the city. The political clout of the suburbs is growing. And the region is sprawling relentlessly into outlying counties. So the City of Cleveland is a smaller player in a much larger regional game.

How should the city adapt to this new regional reality? How should the city define and defend its interests when the major forces shaping its future—the economy, the housing market, transportation investments—are regional in scale? And, if it can't always act unilaterally, how can the city persuade the rest of the region that everyone's fate depends on maintaining a healthy urban core?

Cleveland City Council, under its president Jay Westbrook, has been studying these questions. Last year, Council leadership asked EcoCity Cleveland to help it think through the challenges of regionalism.

Excerpts from our report follow on pages 12-19. The report was written by EcoCity Cleveland director David Beach, with the assistance of Patricia Carey, a local consultant on regional issues.

Introduction

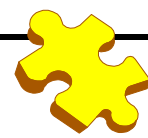
This study is part of an on-going effort by Cleveland City Council to discuss key issues shaping the city's future. Council leadership asked EcoCity Cleveland to conduct a series of interviews to explore how the city can play a more effective role in regional issues—such as suburban sprawl and outmigration from the central city—which are shaping the landscape of Northeast Ohio.

The interviews involved Council members, city administration staff, neighborhood leaders, academic experts on regional issues, and public officials outside the city. The following report distills the opinions and ideas raised in the interviews and adds insights from other recent publications of EcoCity Cleveland. In addition to summarizing differing perceptions of regionalism and information about the costs of sprawl, the report addresses:

- The constraints and political pressures which make it difficult for the city to think regionally.
- The need for the city to have a clear agenda on regional issues.
- Opportunities to use city assets to influence sprawl.
- Ways the city can participate more effectively on regional boards and commissions.
- The need for the city to reach out to new allies and work cooperatively with many other actors in new regional coalitions.
- What kind of message will work for the city.

The report is meant to inspire and provoke further discussion. It does not necessarily reflect the official positions of Cleveland City Council or the administration of Mayor Michael White. But, in a frank manner, it suggests ways the city can adapt to regional challenges.

A time for change



It is vital that the City of Cleveland enter these regional debates in a thoughtful, strategic manner—with clear knowledge of the city's interests and the city's role in the metropolitan citistate of Northeast Ohio. Indeed, many of those interviewed expressed a sense of urgency about acting on these issues. On the one hand, there is a perception that the city is starting to turn around and that the '90s present historic opportunities for redevelopment. On the other hand, there is the recognition that regional forces could continue to undermine the hard-won progress—and cause more loss of population and tax base and result in insurmountable concentrations of poverty.

Thus, it's a critical time for coming together as a region. In the past several years, we have seen a remarkable convergence of thought in Northeast Ohio—a growing understanding that our future depends on acting regionally. It's an understanding that many of our most serious environmental, social and economic problems are regional in scope. It's a recognition that our region's sprawling development patterns destroy communities and are not sustainable. And it includes a concern that—with our fragmented, hodge-podge of local governments—we have little ability to act regionally at present.

Perceptions of "regionalism"

When we asked people about their reaction to the concept of "regionalism," we encountered a few basic themes:

- Nearly all of those interviewed had at least a general understanding of how the city is affected by forces at the regional level. These forces include new housing development at the edge of the metropolitan area, expansion of highways and other infrastructure, the location of industry and commercial centers in suburban locations, as well as capital gain tax policies and other public incentives. It's clear that these forces are sucking population and tax base from the city.

- Our "region" includes at least the seven-county area—Cuyahoga County surrounded by Lorain, Medina, Summit, Portage, Geauga and Lake counties.

- There is growing appreciation of the region (or metropolitan citistate, to use urban affairs writer Neal Peirce's phrase) as the key geographic unit of analysis. As one neighborhood leader said, "Economic and political boundaries don't match up anymore. This area hangs together as a region."

- Nevertheless, most people still don't think regionally. "We're not a region of seven counties but seven separate counties that happen to be in the same region," observed one Cleveland Council member. Thus, in our politically fragmented metropolitan area, no institution or leader is acting at the regional level. No one is elected to represent "the region." (From the practical perspective of many Council members, the ward is their community, and the city is their region.)

- No one wants to talk about regional or metro government, especially African-American leaders who see regional government as a formula for diluting the political power base of minorities. Any discussion of regional forms of governance must take this into account—and clearly show how regional initiatives can promote greater opportunities for all.

- People *are* willing to talk about less formal forms of regional action—"a regional pattern of cooperation and coordination," as one person said. Many of those interviewed also saw the logic of regionalizing certain public services, in the manner that sewer and water are regionalized.

- Underlying issues of race and class contribute to many of our regional problems, such as the outmigration from the urban core.

Barriers to Cleveland acting regionally

Regional action in Northeast Ohio will require new forms of regional cooperation. This implies that the City of Cleveland cannot unilaterally have its way but will have to adjust to new forms of cooperative action and consensus building. The shifting balance of political power between the city and suburbs also will require the city to adjust.

Those interviewed for this study identified a number of barriers to overcome as the city prepares for this new role. (Many of these barriers are not specific to the city but affect the ability of political leaders throughout the metropolitan area to think in regional terms.)

Time and priorities: At City Hall, countless daily crises soak up time and energy. When asked about their priorities, Council members interviewed all pointed to a tall stack of phone messages from constituents. Whether it's a drug house in their ward or pressure to decide on the location of a new football stadium, Council members are always reacting to immediate issues. It's hard to free up time and "intellectual space" to think strategically about regional issues. And it's hard to spend the time needed to represent the city well at regional boards and agencies, such as NOACA.

Mayor White also has admitted how hard it is to focus on these larger issues. At a Sierra Club conference in November 1995, he discussed the need to stop the sprawling development patterns that are killing the cities, but he added, "What I have described today is a fight I wish I could take up, but I probably can't...I have to work

just to keep our town above water...If organizations like yours don't create this fight, sustain this fight and make a change, there will be hell to pay."

Another form of time pressure comes from the public and the media, who demand quick fixes to complex problems. Solutions to regional problems like land use could require a generation of sustained effort, but political leaders are forced to have short-term views.

Political limitations: The director of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), Howard Maier, is fond of saying that there are more political subdivisions in Northeast Ohio than there are sovereign nations in the world. This political fragmentation means that no one is elected to represent the region, even though many of our most serious problems are regional in nature. So we have a fundamental mismatch between the geographic scale of our problems and the scale of institutions able to respond.

City Council members face particular difficulties in acting regionally. They are held accountable for city services in their wards (even though they are not directly responsible for the delivery of those services), and have little political incentive to work on regional issues. They are unlikely to get credit for such work from their constituents.

To overcome such limitations, one Council member suggested that if several Council representatives were elected at large, they might be able to take a broader view of the city. In addition, reform proposals for Cuyahoga County government could help span the political gap between city and suburbs, as they might create a "County Council" with some districts spanning parts of the city and surrounding suburbs. Both suggestions, however, raise concerns about minority representation.

A unified voice: At a NOACA committee meeting last year,

"Economic and political boundaries don't match up anymore. This area hangs together as a region."

representatives were discussing state financing for the parking garage at the Great Lakes Science Center. City Planning Director Hunter Morrison stated the Cleveland's opposition to the deal. And then Willoughby Mayor David Anderson asked Cleveland City Council members at the meeting if they agreed with Morrison's position. Councilman Ed Rybka replied, "Are you asking because you assume we *don't* agree?" Everybody laughed, and Rybka assured committee members that on this issue Council and the administration were on the same page.

Anderson added that his question was not meant to imply criticism, for, as a mayor, he realized that mayors and councils don't always have the same ideas. In fact, that's the whole point of splitting government functions into executive and legislative branches—checks and balances. But somehow the debates between the mayor and Council in Cleveland are perceived as illegitimate and counter-productive. In part, this may be the result of media coverage of City Hall which emphasizes confrontation instead of dialogue. It also happens because the issues being debated at City Hall involve big projects and big money, so the stakes are high. (It would be interesting to see the result if the media spotlight were shined with such intensity on a suburban city hall as it allowed a new subdivision or industrial park to be built. What if that process were scrutinized for its regional implications? What if all the interlocking connections between developers, council members, city engineers, and zoning board members were exposed?)

The point is that, while debates within City Hall are necessary, it is important for the city to present a united front in regional forums. The city needs to know what it wants, and city representatives have to speak with one voice.

To help establish the city's agenda on regional issues, Economic Development Director Chris Warren has advocated that the City Planning Commission hold public hearings. The hearings could help do three things: raise the public profile of these issues, help develop city positions and strategies on these issues, and, if Council is a partner with the administration in the hearings, help develop a common understanding and message in City Hall. For example, the city could develop strategies with regional implications for urban land assembly, economic development, transportation policy, the airport, the city water system and tax base sharing.

Such hearings could show how regional issues *transcend* the many divisions within Cleveland—Mayor vs. Council, east side vs. west side, black vs. white, neighborhood vs. downtown. They could show all interests the benefit of speaking with one voice on regional issues. Indeed, regional strategizing could be a

Costs of sprawl

Northeast Ohio is in the unenviable position of having sprawl without growth. The region's population is stable, yet we keep developing more and more land area. The dynamic goes like this: Most new homes are built on the fringe of the metropolitan area. People with the strongest incomes move out to those homes. Suburbs grow. The core loses population and housing. The central city declines as poverty grows more concentrated and the tax base erodes. The decline spreads to inner-ring suburbs. Eventually the region's central county is in trouble.

The magnitude of the outmigration and decline is staggering:

- Between 1960 and 1990, the City of Cleveland lost 70,000 households. If trends continue, the city could lose another 30,000 households in the 1990s (although there are more recent signs that population is stabilizing, thanks to neighborhood redevelopment efforts).

- Between 1979 and 1991, Cleveland residential real estate lost \$1.5 billion (25%) of its value in dollars adjusted for inflation. Cuyahoga County lost \$2.9 billion (8%).

- Between 1979 and 1989, average household income in Cleveland declined 13% and declined 5% in inner suburbs. Meanwhile, average income grew 5% in outer suburbs.

- Cleveland is increasingly becoming the poorhouse of the region. The city's poverty rate jumped from 17.3 percent in 1970 to 28.7 percent in 1990. The number of "poverty" census tracts in the city (those with more than 20 percent poverty) grew from 64 to 147 during the same period. And the number of "hyper poverty" census tracts (those with more than 60 percent poor) grew from one to 21.

While sprawl does not cause poverty all by itself, it certainly helps to concentrate poverty in the inner city and magnify poverty's insidious impacts. In addition, sprawling development patterns contribute to many other social and environmental problems at the regional

level:

- **Duplication of infrastructure:** It's economically and environmentally wasteful to abandon existing urban areas and build new infrastructure in the country. In the long run, it is not fiscally responsible for the region.

- **Wasteful consumption of land:** Sprawling development destroys valuable farm land, open space, natural areas and streams. Suburban development is now one of the most serious water quality problems in Ohio.

- **Auto-oriented design:** Sprawl moves homes, work places and shopping farther apart, so we all have to drive more, burn more fossil fuel, create more air pollution, and waste more time in traffic. Low-density development makes mass transit impractical. Children, senior citizens and everyone else who can't drive or afford a car is disadvantaged.

- **Isolation:** Sprawl exacerbates economic and racial segregation, thus contributing to the dangerous polarization of our society. Suburbanites delude themselves if they think they can escape the social consequences by moving farther out.

- **Loss of place:** If we lose central cities, with their public spaces and historic neighborhoods, we begin to lose our sense of place and identity. We lose opportunities to interact with others.

- **Regional decline:** Decline from loss of population and tax base doesn't always stop in the central cities. It keeps on spreading, ultimately weakening entire regions. Some studies have shown that regions with small disparities between central city and suburban income levels are more economically successful than regions with large disparities, such as Greater Cleveland. As Larry Ledebur and William Barnes wrote in a 1992 report for the National League of Cities, "During the period 1988-91, metropolitan areas with greater internal disparities tended to perform less well economically than metropolitan areas with lesser disparities. It appears that the greater the disparity, the lower the economic growth in the metropolitan areas as a whole. The economic destinies of a central city and its suburbs are tied together."





Causes of sprawl

Despite the common belief that sprawl is just the natural result of the free market and Americans' supposed mass desire to move to the country, development patterns have been shaped by a number of public policies and subsidies. According to Henry Richmond, chairman of the National Growth Management Leadership Project and a founder of 1000 Friends of Oregon, these include:

- The location of infrastructure—new highways, sewers, water lines.
- Urban renewal and freeway construction, which destroyed thousands of urban homes and businesses.
- Mortgage insurance which supports single-family mortgages but not multi-family or mixed-use developments.
- The secondary market for single-family mortgages but not for multi-family or mixed-use.
- Federal tax policies that promote buying "up" and often "out" to suburban locations to avoid capital gains tax when a residence is sold.
- Local property taxes [and tax abatements] in which municipal disparities influence investment locations within regions.
- Exclusionary zoning—After numerous national and state policies encourage disinvestment from the core of regions, and focus beneficial investment in suburbia, municipal suburban zoning policy then excludes affordable housing.

"These examples," says Richmond, "show sprawl is the result of massive, and selective, government 'interference' in local land markets. America's patterns of development do not reflect preferences of 'sovereign consumers' voting with their dollars. Rather, people are responding quite rationally to the strong economic signals sent to them by a mass of policies that favor certain types of development over others."

In sum, these policies contribute to sprawl in two ways. First, they make development relatively easier in new suburban locations, which *pulls* people outward from the urban core. Second, they have helped create the disinvestment and conditions of concentrated poverty (crime, drugs, bad schools), which *push* people out of the core.

"natural bonding issue," as one administration official said.

In addition to cooperating on hearings, Council leaders and key administration staff could simply *talk* more often, perhaps at regular informal meetings.

When Cleveland's political leadership *does* speak clearly with one voice and a convincing strategy, it often is able to persuade leaders in outlying suburbs and counties that a particular project is important for the region, as well as for the city.

Making the city user-friendly:

Many of the participants in this study, especially those from outside the city, said that if Cleveland is to have an impact on regional issues, it first has to do more to help itself.

"The city has to get its act together," went the common refrain.

Such comments have overtones of blaming the victim, but they should be taken seriously. After all, perceptions count. The city is likely to get more cooperation at the regional level if other jurisdictions believe the city is doing all it can to help itself.

Therefore, the city must keep improving its image as a place that "works." This may start with basic improvements to streamline City Hall bureaucracy. Admittedly, the city is a complex development arena. There are more factors to consider—from politics to design within an existing urban context—and more hoops for any project to jump through. To justify the hoops, the city must continually articulate how they contribute to well planned and designed urban spaces. If we want to build unique communities of enduring value, it pays to have high standards. Suburbs may require fewer hoops, but, then again, much suburban development leaves a lot to be desired.

Ultimately, however, one must realize that the city can be the most user-friendly place in the world and can still be undermined by sprawl. All the progress in the city—from downtown redevelopment to new housing in the neighborhoods—is a necessary but not sufficient condition for success. The regional forces of outmigration are too powerful for the city to counteract alone. Regional approaches are required.

City/suburb competition: In an era of shrinking budgets, the city and suburbs are increasingly forced to compete for scarce resources. City and suburban officials often have very different views of the situation: On the one hand, city representatives feel that suburbanites take advantage of Cleveland's resources but

don't contribute much to the city's upkeep.

Suburbanites, on the other hand, see public funds being poured into Cleveland. Better information on the true costs of services and sprawl might help bridge these two perspectives.

Other barriers to regional

action: In addition to the local barriers which make it difficult for the City of Cleveland to have an impact on regional issues, there are more general barriers which prevent progress on urban sprawl. These barriers have hindered the debate on land use across the nation.

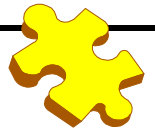
As growth management expert Henry Richmond says, "We can't fool ourselves. Moving this regional land use policy agenda will constitute one of the greatest challenges America will face in the years ahead. A lot must be overcome:

- Lack of clarity of issue.
- No national administrative home, no political party, no national leader focusing on land use.
- A public demand for immediacy colliding with the fact that long-developing problems can be dealt with mainly by solutions that can only pan out long-term.
- Black/white, city/suburb divides
- Fragmented, local jurisdictions overlaying unitary regional problems.
- State vs. local control.
- Federal vs. state/local control.
- Lack of coordination within federal agencies.

"Despite the political challenges, and despite the personal challenge of forming new alliances, the effort must be made because the stakes are so high for our neighborhoods, our cities, our countryside, and our very soul as a society.

"The stakes are high," Richmond continues, "because credible people are predicting America's already bad land use problems will get worse. According to Christopher Leinberger, managing partner of a large, national real estate advisory firm, between 1990 and 2005 some 70% to 80% of the 29 million new jobs created nationally and 80% of the new homes built nationally will happen in a new, even further out, 'Fifth Generation of Sprawl' in American metro regions.

"Without a new approach to land use policy in our country, 2,000 community development organizations and 1,000 land trusts and 1,000 local historic preservation groups will be swimming against a relentless, overwhelming tide of policy-supported suburban sprawl. The houses and retail stores built by community



development corporations will be islands in urban areas, even more undercut by disinvestment and even more distanced from suburban jobs. The open space you will be fortunate to save will be surrounded by an even more vast sea of sprawl."

Leveraging city assets

"Our idea of economic development in Northeast Ohio is stealing things from your neighbor...We don't recognize our interdependence."

—An observer of the local infrastructure scene

Cleveland is fortunate to have substantial civic assets which not only give it stature as the focal point of the region but also give it leverage in shaping patterns of development in the region. The challenge is to use the assets in a positive way to build a regional consensus on the importance of the city, not just use the assets as a club to wrench concessions from other communities.

In the late '60s and early '70s, the city's confrontational stance on water issues pushed suburbs to align against the city and go to court. This led to the transformation of the city's wastewater operations into the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and a court order governing operation of the Division of Water. Now, as population and political power have shifted further to the suburbs, the city must act even more carefully and strategically.

In this spirit, here are some comments on using city assets in a long-term, strategic way.

Division of Water: The decision to extend water service should be viewed as one of the most important strategic decisions the city makes. Except in a few cases, however, Cleveland's decisions to provide water are not part of a long-term redevelopment strategy for the urban core. Decisions seem to be based on the interests of the Division for revenue (in part to subsidize city users), not on the long-term consequences of extending water lines.

"We're not obligated to serve those outlying areas, but we are competing with other water systems. So why not bring the revenue to Cleveland?" said one water official.

The "other water system" is often the City of Akron. There have been cases where the two cities have raced to maximize their short-term water revenues while encouraging sprawl (which cuts their own throats in the long-term). This is a clear area where regional cooperation is needed. The use of water to promote compact development should be a goal of the entire region.

Hopkins Airport: Everyone recognizes the airport as a key regional asset. It's mostly thought of as a tool for economic development—as a transportation link for business travellers and air freight or as a prime development location.

But the airport relates to regional issues in another important way. Since it is located close to the urban core next to highways and transit, it is a bulwark against sprawl. One of the worst things that could happen to the region—in terms of sprawl and infrastructure costs—is for Hopkins to be replaced by a new airport out in the corn fields (the Denver scenario). It is in the region's long-term interest to keep Hopkins competitive where it is.

While some observers might not worry as much about the land use problems created by a new, greenfield airport, they would

still acknowledge Hopkins' economic importance. The question, then, is how to build regional support to improve a city asset. One suggestion was to regionalize control of the airport.

Regional attractions: The city—with Public Square, the Flats, the lakefront, Gateway, historic neighborhoods and other attractions—is the gathering place of the region, the heart of our regional citistate. It is what defines Northeast Ohio in eyes of the world. Thus, it's in the interest of the entire region to ensure the health of the urban core, not just so suburbanites can have a trendy place in which to play but for the economic future of the region. As

Neal Peirce writes, "Urban design, waterfront planning, streetscapes and historic preservation are powerfully important issues for a citistate's entire presentation to the world. By contrast, a trashy, graffiti-laden, uncared for city landscape can herald serious decline and telegraph a negative message world-wide."

As more people appreciate the significance of the urban core, the city can advance arguments for greater support—a regional taxing structure for major projects (The majority of Indians fans now coming from outside of Cuyahoga County makes a strong case for regional support.), regional tax-base sharing, a state urban policy to direct investment to cities, a federal urban policy which recognizes the citistate as the cornerstone of global competitiveness.

Development sites: If the full, regional costs of development in the country had to be paid, it's likely that development sites in Cleveland neighborhoods would

look relatively more economical than they do now, and the city might be able to attract more assistance for land assembly and brownfields cleanup. The city might even begin to argue for compensatory assistance for state investments at the edge of the region. For instance, a highway expansion which opens up rural land for development might call for a compensating investment to open up land in the city and offset the effects of sprawl.

For this to happen, the city must continue to advance sound strategies for assembling and marketing land based on the locational and infrastructure advantages of the city. Corridors such as E. 55th Street are already being looked at in this light.

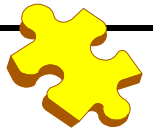
Neighborhood organizations: One of the city's greatest assets is its network of neighborhood organizations and nonprofit development corporations. The city should continue to support their capacity to leverage investments in the neighborhoods.

But neighborhood groups also can play another role. They can be mobilized to address regional issues—especially the sprawl which undermines their work. There is no greater concentration of organizers in the region. If they could devote a little of their attention and activism to regional issues, they could have a profound impact.

Media interest: While intense media scrutiny of City Hall often inflames issues unnecessarily, it is also an asset. It gives the city the opportunity to mount an effective communications strategy which talks about regional issues and the importance of the urban core for the entire region. With articulate spokespersons at City Hall, the city is well positioned to do this.

As a whole, the media in Greater Cleveland are just now being sensitized to the issue of urban sprawl and outmigration. We have not yet seen the in-depth treatment of the issue given by media in

Cleveland is fortunate to have substantial civic assets which not only give it stature as the focal point of the region but also give it leverage in shaping patterns of development. The challenge is to use the assets in a positive way to build a regional consensus on the importance of the city.



other metropolitan areas. Our daily newspaper, for instance, runs uncritical real estate stories about new suburban subdivisions and seldom mentions the fact that "growth" in one place means decline somewhere else in the region. City officials can use their bully pulpit to get the media to tell both sides of the story in a fair and consistent manner.

Effective participation on regional boards

A number of interviewees agreed that the city was not getting the most out of its participation on regional boards and commissions, such as NOACA or the Regional Sewer District. Such agencies decide how to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on infrastructure, which then shapes development patterns throughout the region. The long-term impact on the city is tremendous.

To participate more effectively on regional boards, the city could improve in a number of areas:

Strategy: The city must know what it wants—have a clear strategy and an understanding of how regional issues impact that strategy. The strategy should provide guidance and coherence for all of the city's representatives on various boards. The public hearings mentioned above could help develop such a strategy and agenda.

Articulation of a new regional vision: Planning Director Hunter Morrison has remarked that many of the region's infrastructure plans date to the 1960s or even earlier. So, for instance, we are still following highway plans drawn up in a different historical era and based on population projections which never came true. It's like generals blindly fighting the last war. City representatives can push all the agencies that plan infrastructure improvements to question their old assumptions and make sure they are following plans based on current needs of a region that is sprawling without growing. At minimum, all regional infrastructure agencies should have policies regarding the expansion of infrastructure and impacts on land use.

Accountability: Council and the Administration must encourage city representatives on boards and commissions to take their posts seriously and to do more than just show up for meetings. They must take responsibility for being articulate spokespersons and for reporting regularly to colleagues at City Hall.

Staff support: In many cases, city representatives would benefit from additional staff support. Some boards require a great deal of time and deal with technical matters. Representatives may only serve on a board for a couple of years and could benefit from expert assistance and orientation.

Training: The city should identify the years in which Cleveland representatives are slated to hold leadership positions on regional boards and should select and groom representatives with this in mind. The training could include not just information about issues but training in win-win negotiation techniques.

Tracking decision points: The city (and the region as a whole) must develop the capacity to identify, track and influence the multitude of decisions which contribute to sprawl. It must have the ability to see how the myriad of routine board decisions relate

to the city's overall strategy. (This capacity to track decision points should extend to environmental permits, such as permissions to expand suburban wastewater plants, or to suburban tax abatements.)

One caveat about participation on regional boards: effective participation does not always mean grabbing *all* the available resources for the city. When the city is perceived to do too well for itself, it generates a suburban backlash. There has to be a fine sense of balance—recognizing that the needs are great in Cleveland, yet placing those needs in a regional perspective. As one city representative said, "We don't want to be Mr. No. We need to get to another level where deals are instructed by where the region wants to go."

Building a coalition to slow outmigration

"One big stumbling block is selling suburban residents on the idea that sprawl will hurt their lives in the long run... Unless we pull these people in, the city won't win."

—A neighborhood leader

If Cleveland's goal is to tip the balance of regional development to favor the urban core, then the city is going to reach out to a broad spectrum of allies. The bad news is that the city lacks experience in working with many of these potential allies. The good news is that the potential allies exist, some are ready to work with the city under the right circumstances, and a broad coalition of sustainable-

community allies could be a powerful political force in the region.

Constituencies hurt by sprawl:

Who are these potential allies? They include all the constituencies now hurt by sprawl in the region:

- Residents of declining inner-city neighborhoods, with all their community development organizations whose hard work is being undermined by outmigration.
- Residents of older, inner-ring suburbs, who are also victimized by the spreading disinvestment (and who typically have fewer resources and amenities than the central city with which to stem decline). These communities are already organizing as the First Suburbs Consortium.
- Everyone who can't drive—children, senior citizens, people who can't afford a car.
- Institutions with fixed investments in the city—churches, schools, hospitals, arts

organizations, banks, utilities.

- Environmentalists working to protect natural areas and wetlands, save energy, and prevent air pollution.
- Transit and bicycle advocates.
- Fair and affordable housing advocates.
- The many ad hoc groups fighting Wal-Marts, highway interchanges and road widenings in their communities.
- Historic preservationists.
- Country residents who want their communities to remain rural.
- Farmers who want to keep farming without the threat of encroaching subdivisions.
- Business leaders who realize that their sprawling metropolitan areas will have a hard time competing with compact,

"Instead of making it an urban vs. rural issue, make it a taxpayer issue. Say it doesn't make fiscal sense to keep extending infrastructure to new areas when we're having trouble maintaining the infrastructure we've got. We can't afford it as a region."

efficient cities in Europe and Asia.

- Developers who are tired of fighting anti-development NIMBYs and who would like to see a consensus on where development is appropriate.

All these constituencies are united by a common interest in compact development patterns focused on the urban core. *But they are not yet organized.* They fight ad hoc battles in their own communities instead of uniting around a common regional vision.

While they probably can never be brought under one, centrally-controlled organizational structure—they form more of a loose social movement—they all could benefit from new patterns of cooperation, coordination and information sharing.

The city as a partner: The city can help build regional patterns of cooperation in several ways.

- Devote time and resources to building relationships.
- Enter regional discussions with a spirit of openness and cooperation, not as the domineering big city. Go the extra mile to invite dialogue and build trust.

- Think about cultivating allies on many levels—inner suburbs, county, other metro areas in state, and the nonprofit sector. In the absence of metro government, the nonprofit sector may play an increasingly strong role. As Neal Peirce says, we need to "undergird governance with strong citizen organizations for the citistate. I am thinking here of organizations like the Citizens League of the Minnesota Twin Cities area or the Citizens League of Greater Cleveland, but on a much broader basis, with thousands of members and strong representation from every city and suburb, class and race and income group. We need such broad-based organizations to assemble regionally-minded citizens to think through citistate-wide issues and propose the kind of thoughtful solutions we rarely get from the politicians who are locked into the tight little parochial boxes of their individual districts or municipalities."

- Help convene regional discussions as an equal partner, perhaps working with entities like NOACA, Build Up Greater Cleveland, the Catholic Diocese, local universities or nonprofit organizations. Support the initiatives of other organizations.

- Play a strong, supportive role in NOACA debates about setting transportation priorities.

- Promote studies on the costs of sprawl for the entire region.

- Have a long-term view. Many of the city's regional initiatives may not pan out for many years. They are necessary investments in the future.

The Akron issue: Finally, we must stress the importance of Akron. Cleveland and Akron have had their differences in recent years, but the sprawl issue gives them common ground they cannot afford to ignore. They both suffer from outmigration, and Akron has the addition problem of development in the Upper Cuyahoga watershed degrading its water supply.

Yet the cities are divided in many ways. For instance, they are covered by different transportation planning agencies (the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, NOACA, and the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study, AMATS).

If we are to unite all the constituencies who are now harmed by sprawling development patterns in the region, the two major cities must become better allies. Perhaps work on common projects like the Ohio & Erie Canal Corridor can help break down some of the barriers. (This same argument applies to the relationship between

Cleveland and the other older cities in the region—Lorain, Elyria, Medina, Chardon, Painesville, etc.)

The message

"These are not rational and technical problems. These are political problems. The people who have it good want to keep it that way."

—A Council member

The city is buffeted by regional forces which continually undermine the city's success. Another generation of sprawl and outmigration could severely limit the city's prospects.

"This is not just about dividing up the spoils at NOACA. We're saying we should stop giving the spoils to certain areas. Certain behaviors need to stop. We should have an intentional bias for the city."

—An Administration official

The quotes above reflect the sentiments of many people in the city. But one might question whether such quotes—however accurate they may be—convey a winning message. After all, the challenge here will be to persuade a majority of people in the region that their fates are linked to the fate of the core city. To be successful, the message must be inclusive, point out the regional benefits of a healthy core city, and emphasize the regional

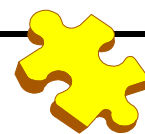
costs of sprawl and economic disparities.

In recent years, the city has worked hard to improve its image as an entertainment/recreation center. This is helping many people throughout Northeast Ohio feel a connection with the city (or at least with downtown). However, sprawl and outmigration still undermine the city's progress. So the regional connections and identities must be built on many more levels. We need campaigns to persuade people that *the entire region benefits in the long run when:*

- We build only the infrastructure that future generations can afford to maintain.
- Development is compact and the amount of driving is reduced.
- City/suburb economic and racial disparities are reduced.
- Jobs are located close to where people need them.
- Open space, natural areas and farmland are preserved.
- The urban core of the metropolitan citistate provides a high quality of life and unique regional character.

It's also important for the message to:

- Help people think regionally. (We are citizens of the Western Reserve and Cleveland is our capital.)
- Demonstrate that a majority of people will benefit from change.
- Build relationships across the region.
- Be pro-development. We want development, but it matters *where* the development occurs. (Presently, public policies distort the market and promote inefficient patterns of development which drive up costs for everyone and increase environmental damage.)
- Appeal to fiscal conservatism and common sense. As one administration official said, "Instead of making it an urban vs. rural issue, make it a taxpayer issue. Say it doesn't make fiscal sense to keep extending infrastructure to new areas when we're having trouble maintaining the infrastructure we've got. We can't afford it as a region."
- Talk about sustainable development rather than growth. In the 21st Century, successful regions will have a reputation for developing in *qualitative* ways (becoming more efficient,



protecting the environment, improving the quality of jobs and schools), while not growing in *quantitative* ways (not consuming more land, energy, nonrenewable raw materials, etc.).

Style: In addition to carefully crafting the content of the message, the city must pay close attention to style of presentation. In our interviews, terms such as "cooperative attitude" and "statesmanship" kept coming up.

The city is in a strong position to provide leadership on critical regional issues. It is the focal point of the region, commands media attention, has staff resources and articulate spokespersons. But, in order to win over diverse allies, it must be careful not to appear domineering or entirely self-serving. It must participate in a regional process that creates many winners.

Summary

We are groping toward regionalism in Northeast Ohio. In the absence of regional government or state mandates, we are struggling to discover new ways to cooperate and deal with our serious environmental, social and economic problems which are regional in scope.

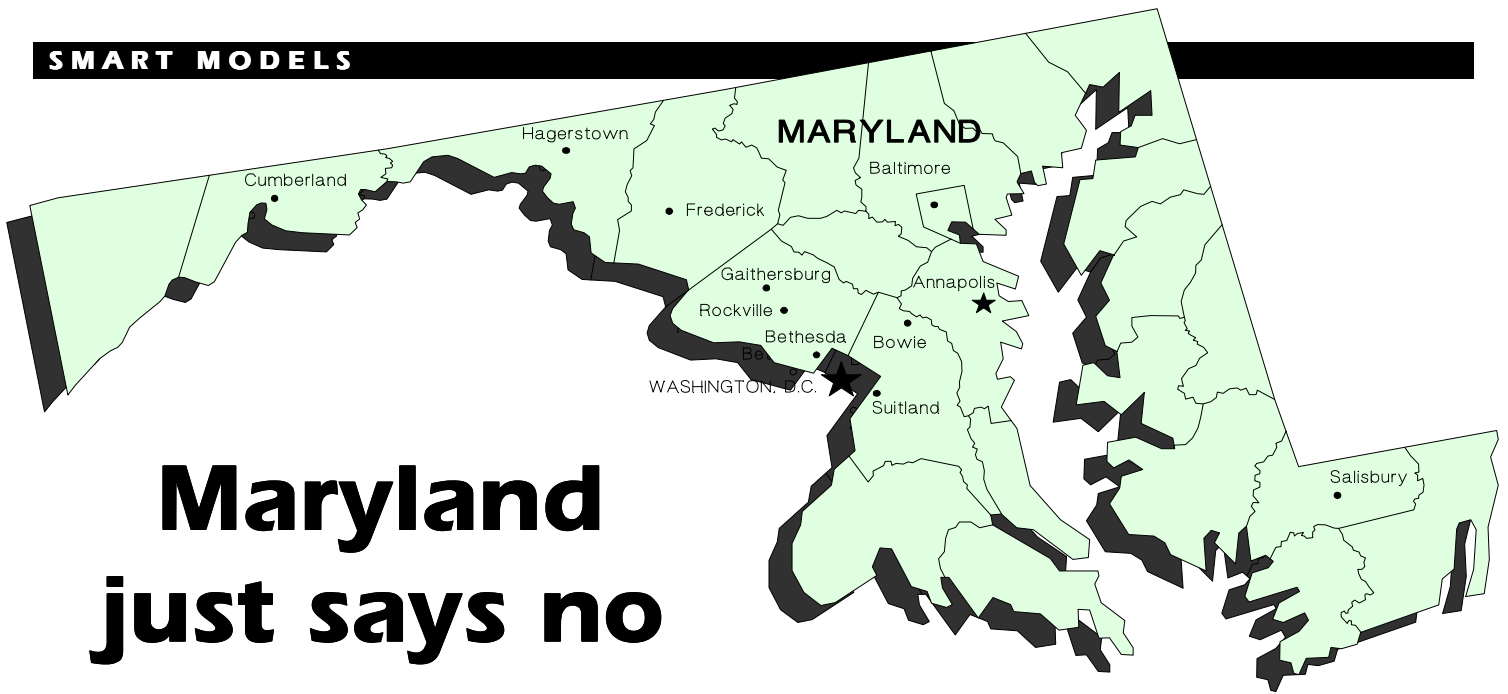
Defining the City of Cleveland's regional role will require teamwork between Council and the administration. It is essential that this happen. The city is buffeted by regional forces—forces which continually undermine the city's success. Another generation of sprawl and outmigration could severely limit the city's prospects.

The city can be a major partner in the emerging coalitions working to change the pattern of regional development in Northeast Ohio. To balance development and reduce disparities, we need a broad, political movement. As David Rusk says, "Sustained change will require a grassroots movement like the civil rights movement or the environmental movement...The crisis requires not just urban aid or even a true 'urban policy' but a commitment to a spirit of shared sacrifice and renewal. The crisis requires exchanging the old politics of exclusion for a new politics of inclusion. It will test whether or not the American people can develop a new spirit of community." □

Next steps?

The City of Cleveland can take a number of steps to become a more effective actor on regional issues. Here are possible opportunities:

- **Public hearings.** Hearings on outmigration and other regional issues could focus public attention on the costs of sprawl and possible solutions. They could be a catalyst for bringing together a broad coalition of actors, as well as local and national experts. And they could help the administration and Council define the city's interests and positions.
- **Using water.** Conduct a study of the potential for and legal limitations to using the city's water system to influence the location of development in the region.
- **Regional boards.** Develop clear strategies and systems of accountability for participating on regional boards and commissions. All regional infrastructure agencies should have policies regarding the expansion of infrastructure and impacts on land use.
- **Outreach to local elected officials.** Many elected officials around the region are ready to talk about managing sprawl. Open up lines of communication and information sharing, starting with the inner-ring suburbs.
- **Outreach to other Ohio cities.** Convene a "City Summit" to develop a common agenda for the state's major cities. It is particularly important to develop a sense of teamwork with Akron.
- **Outreach to institutions with fixed investments in the city.** Institutions with investments in the city—banks, utilities, hospitals, churches, arts organizations in University Circle—should be encouraged to speak out on regional issues.
- **Research.** Support research on the costs of sprawling development patterns in Northeast Ohio. Who wins? Who loses? What are the future costs?



Maryland just says no

Smart growth program cuts state subsidies for sprawl

Everyone looks to Oregon for models of land use planning and growth management. With urban growth boundaries around every metropolitan area, Oregon has gone further than any other state to limit sprawl, redirect development to existing urban areas and preserve the countryside.

But another state has been making growth management headlines this year—Maryland. With its new Smart Growth program enacted in April, Maryland has decided to take a dramatic step and stop subsidizing sprawl.

Led by Governor Parris Glendening, Maryland has realized that it can't afford another 25 years of growth like the last 25. Existing cities and towns can't take the losses of outmigration. The state can't afford to keep expanding roads and other infrastructure. The farm economy and the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay can't survive the continued paving of the countryside.

So Maryland has decided to just say no. Instead of serving every new subdivision out in the cornfields, the state will direct its funding and programs to improve the quality of life in existing communities. It's a simple, common-sense idea—a vote for sound maintenance, fiscal prudence and long-term sustainability

Smart growth package

Maryland's Smart Growth program includes two major initiatives which work together to revitalize older, developed areas and preserve rural areas:

- **Priority Funding Areas.** State funding will be focused in Priority Funding Areas, or "Smart Growth Areas" in local jurisdictions to support efficient and economical growth by encouraging the use

Here is a program that will promote reinvestment in existing urban areas, reduce transportation problems, move people closer to jobs, conserve farmland, protect the environment—and save money in the long run. What's not to like?

of existing or planned development infrastructure. The following areas would qualify as Priority Funding Areas: every existing municipality; areas inside the Washington Beltway and the Baltimore Beltway; and areas already designated as enterprise zones, neighborhood revitalization areas, heritage areas and existing industrial land.

The Smart Growth legislation also recognizes the important role local governments play in managing growth and determining the locations most suitable for state-funded projects. Counties may designate areas as Priority Funding Areas if they meet guidelines for intended use, availability of plans for sewer and water systems, and permitted residential density.

Counties are not required to designate Priority Funding Areas, nor is private

development restricted to such areas. But, beginning in October 1998, the state is prohibited from funding "growth related" projects outside of the priority areas.

State programs which typically encourage growth and development include highways, sewer and water construction, housing and economic development assistance. In addition, Maryland has a state school funding policy which encourages the rehabilitation of old schools in established neighborhoods rather than the construction of new schools in sprawling suburbs.

- **Rural Legacy Program.** The Rural Legacy Program will redirect existing state funds into a focused and dedicated land preservation program specifically designed to limit the adverse impacts of sprawl on agricultural lands and natural resources. The program will reallocate state funds to purchase conservation easements for large contiguous tracts of agricultural, forest and natural areas subject to development pressure, and fee interests in open space where public access and use is needed.

Local governments and private land trusts will be encouraged to identify Rural Legacy Areas and to competitively apply for funds to complement existing land conservation efforts or create new ones.

In addition to these initiatives, Maryland has adopted programs to encourage the redevelopment of urban brownfields (abandoned or underutilized industrial sites which may be polluted) and the creation of jobs in Priority Funding Areas. There's even a "Live Near Your Work" program, which provides grants to homebuyers who

move into targeted neighborhoods near major employers.

Watching for results

Proponents of the Maryland Smart Growth program know it won't be an instant cure-all. It took decades for government policies to underwrite sprawl and create the present land use problems in Maryland. And it will take many years—as well as many determined elected officials and citizen organizations—to begin to turn things around.

Loopholes in the present laws also must be watched carefully. The required densities of Priority Funding Areas might not be high enough. Certain sprawl-inducing transportation projects were grandfathered in. There is a process for declaring "exceptions" to the regulations.

In general, it will be interesting to see whether the state will have the political fortitude to keep saying no. Imagine the scenarios. Developers keep building new shopping malls and subdivisions in the country. Traffic congestion gets worse and worse. Local governments are besieged with complaints and run to the state Department of Transportation for help. Will state officials be able to turn their backs?

Sprawling Ohio

In Ohio, officials of development-related departments aren't faced with such conflicts. Our *de facto* state policy is to promote development everywhere and anywhere in the state—keep extending infrastructure like there's no tomorrow. Governor George Voinovich has paid some lip service to farmland preservation (see pages 4-5), but has shown no serious interest in effective growth management.

The Maryland Smart Growth model could make a great platform, however, for candidates hoping to succeed Voinovich next year. Here is a program that will promote reinvestment in existing urban areas, reduce transportation problems, move people closer to jobs, conserve farmland, protect the environment—and save money in the long run. What's not to like? □

For more information about Maryland's Smart Growth initiatives:

- Maryland Office of Planning, 301 W. Preston St., Baltimore, MD 21201 (410-767-4500 or on the Internet at www.mop.md.gov).
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation, 162 Prince George St., Annapolis, MD 21401 (410-268-8816).

Smart growth talking points

The following remarks about stopping sprawl and growing in more sustainable ways come from the January 1997 State of the State address of Maryland Governor Parris Glendening. These are not the words of some far-left enviro-nazi (as Rush Limbaugh might say). They are the words of a sensible governor who sees sprawl undermining the economic and social future of his state.

Unfortunately, they are not words we've heard from Ohio's Governor George Voinovich. One can hope, however, that Ohio gubernatorial candidates will consider the words in the coming year. It's time for Ohio land use planning to enter the 21st century.

■

...[L]et us work together to meet one of the most pressing challenges of our time—suburban sprawl. It is up to you and me to preserve for our children what is best about Maryland—the Chesapeake Bay, our agricultural heritage, our green fields and our open spaces.

Our good intentions alone are not enough. Good intentions will not save our existing neighborhoods. Good intentions will not stop suburban sprawl that sacrifices our environment. Good intentions will not keep farming a vital enterprise. And good intentions will not pay the tab for infrastructure improvements needed to support suburban sprawl.

We must take action!

We must take action today to protect our cities and our rural areas for tomorrow. That is what our Smart Growth/Neighborhood Conservation policy is all about.

Consider this: For at least half a century, government policies have supported sprawl. They have encouraged our citizens to leave already established neighborhoods and to build in the countryside. And they have made it seem as if moving out is, somehow or other, moving up. But this trend, this inefficient and costly pattern of development, has hurt us in three ways.

It has turned thousands of acres of fields where corn and soybeans and other crops once grew, has turned them into housing developments. We not only have lost the productivity of the farms but their rolling beauty as well.

Likewise, far-flung development has consumed thousands of acres of woodlands and wetlands. These are our natural buffers against man's many assaults on the air we breathe and on the water we drink. If we

continue at the current rate over the next 25 years we will lose over 500,000 acres of forests and farmland. Think about it. That is the size of Baltimore County and Baltimore City combined.

Meanwhile, we are leaving and losing our downtowns—not just downtown Baltimore, but downtown Cumberland, downtown Cambridge and downtown Silver Spring. As residents and employers flee to the suburbs, they leave behind boarded-up storefronts, the jobless poor, higher welfare caseloads and increased crime.

Together, these trends cost Marylanders hundreds of millions of dollars. As our constituents move further and further from the city centers, we are forced to use our money in our budgets to build more roads, new sewer and water systems, to clean up failed septic systems, to construct new fire and police stations and to provide other infrastructure demanded by development. We do this even as we abandon the roads, the sewer systems and our schools in established neighborhoods.

But we are changing. For example, we

changed the way we spend our money for school construction. Today we focus our funding on existing schools, renovating and expanding their capacity, or building at new sites only in areas designated by local governments for growth and development.

The new focus is cost-effective. It conserves human and natural resources. It

preserves and uses the existing infrastructure and tax base. And it results in families wanting to stay in established neighborhoods and enjoy modern amenities.

Yes, we have started to reverse the trend of abandoning our established neighborhoods. But it has taken us half a century to get to this point and we are not going to turn it around overnight—or even in a year or two. But we have started...

Our proposal is not a "no growth" or even a "slow growth" proposal. It is a smart growth proposal. It builds on the Growth Act passed by this assembly in 1992. Local jurisdictions have the authority for planning and zoning—as they should. Our proposal builds on that tradition. Counties still may direct growth where it makes the most sense to them. The state, however, will only fund projects in smart growth areas...

"Our proposal is not a "no growth" or even a "slow growth" proposal. It is a

Jeffersonian land legacies

Americans are said to have a hunger for a house with a yard, open spaces, land. It's interesting to trace some of the roots of this hunger to the formative experiences of the nation and to one of the nation's seminal thinkers, Thomas Jefferson. It's also important to wonder whether our 18th and 19th century ideas about land use will serve us well now that the frontier is closed and we face the global economic pressures and environmental constraints of the 21st century.

By Robert Jaquay

Thomas Jefferson endures as a cultural icon, well recognized for his wide-ranging genius and profound contributions to American life. Perhaps only Jefferson could mark his grave with such an awesome, yet (given his many accomplishments) humble epitaph:

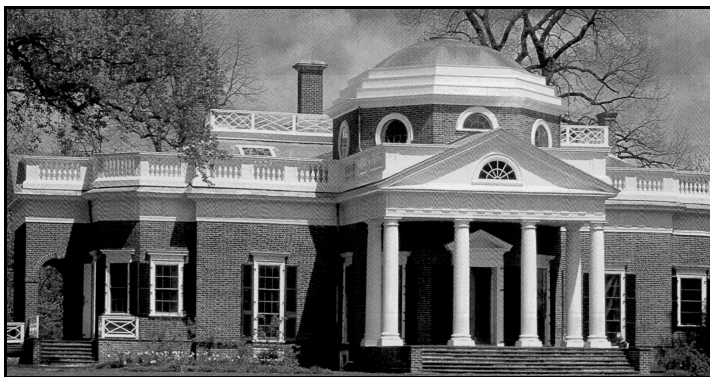
THOMAS JEFFERSON

Author of the Declaration of Independence,
Of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom
and Father of the University of Virginia.

John F. Kennedy reminded Americans of Jefferson's gigantic intellect with typical JFK wit. At a gathering of Nobel laureates, Kennedy stated that the occasion brought more native brilliance to the White House "since the nights when Jefferson dined alone." More recently, Thomas Jefferson has been the subject of a major motion picture and a PBS documentary by Ken Burns. "Thomas," the Internet Web site of the U.S. Congress was named in his honor.

Despite all his current vogue, we read or hear little about Jefferson's complicated legacy in one important area—the American use of land. Although not always appreciated, Jeffersonian ideas and deeds influence the design of our communities and today's questions of urban sprawl, sustainable development and wise use of resources.

Thomas Jefferson set in motion the expansionist, westward movement of early 19th century America, and his philosophy has been invoked to explain this century's push from central city to exurbia. Yet Jefferson also implemented designs for walking communities, advocated tightly grouped buildings and preservation of open spaces in cities, and practiced local manufacture and sustainable agriculture on his own property—



Self-reliant community: Monticello

ideas which have been refined and brought to contemporary application by today's "New Urbanism" school of planning and the sustainable development movement.

Sprawling America

On the banks of the Mississippi River at St. Louis stands the soaring steel ribbon known as the Gateway Arch. Designed by Eero Saarinen, this structure is dedicated to Thomas Jefferson, his Louisiana Purchase and those pioneers who passed through St. Louis en route to the great, new lands of the West. What exactly did Jefferson do to merit such a landmark?

He began building his expansionist legacy as a Congressman. An immediate question facing the new nation involved land beyond the borders of the original states. Prior to national independence, many American colonies received land charters from the British monarchy for territory stretching from Atlantic to Pacific. These grants were all rather ambiguously worded and often directly in conflict with grants bestowed upon other colonies.

Thomas Jefferson had long labored for the 1784 cession by Virginia to the United States government of his state's vast claims northwest of the Ohio River. Not only was Virginia's relinquished claim huge (covering what are now the states Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin), it was the first. All other states with old colonial grants quickly followed suit, including Connecticut which ceded all territorial area but our own Western Reserve in Northeast Ohio.

During that same year, Congressman Jefferson put forward the first definitive plan for governance within the western territories. He chaired the Congressional hearings on the plan, which patiently sorted through a wide variety of opinions on the subject. While this process did not lead to passage of a Jefferson-drafted bill, the way was paved for adoption of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

Once title to and governance of these lands was resolved, the flow of settlers and commerce soon followed. Though a big impetus to the country's western expansion, this work was mere prelude to the seminal events of Jefferson's first term as president.

Considering occurrences that followed, it is ironic that Jefferson proclaimed in his first inaugural address that the country, in 1800, possessed enough land "for our descendants to the hundredth and thousandth generation." By a treaty signed in 1803, the United States purchased from France the territory of Louisiana, nearly one million square miles stretching from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains, for a price of approximately \$15 million, or about 4 cents an acre. This acquisition, which doubled the physical size of the United States, was the highlight of Jefferson's first term.

The Louisiana Purchase was attractive to Jefferson primarily as a check on Napoleon Bonaparte's dreams of a new French empire on North American soil. But the deal did so much more. Another enormous tract was open to settlement, eventually attracting enough population to create numerous states. Not only were Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, North and

South Dakota, Nebraska and Oklahoma created from the Purchase, most of the land in Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana came from this transaction as well. Moreover, free navigation of the continent's internal waterways—the Mississippi River and its tributaries—and control of the vital port of New Orleans accrued to the United States.

Even before completing the Purchase, President Jefferson secured funds from Congress for exploration of the West. Jefferson was curious about a number of things: the location of unknown riches that would tempt new European colonization ventures; the cultures and languages of the various tribes found west of the Mississippi; whether a water route to the Pacific Ocean could be used for navigation; and details on the sorts of plants and animals found there.

To lead the mission, Jefferson appointed his secretary, fellow Virginian Merriwether Lewis, who in turn asked his army cohort William Clark to join him. From 1804 to 1806, the expedition moved from St. Louis up the Missouri River to the northern reaches of the Louisiana territory then westward to the Pacific. Their published journals gave valuable information to mapmakers and early settlers and seized the imagination of the nation. Crates of archeological artifacts were sent by the explorers to Jefferson who displayed them in the entry hall of his Virginia home, Monticello. Lewis & Clark opened the way to the Far West, even providing the initial basis for this country's claim to the Oregon country.

Farmers on the land

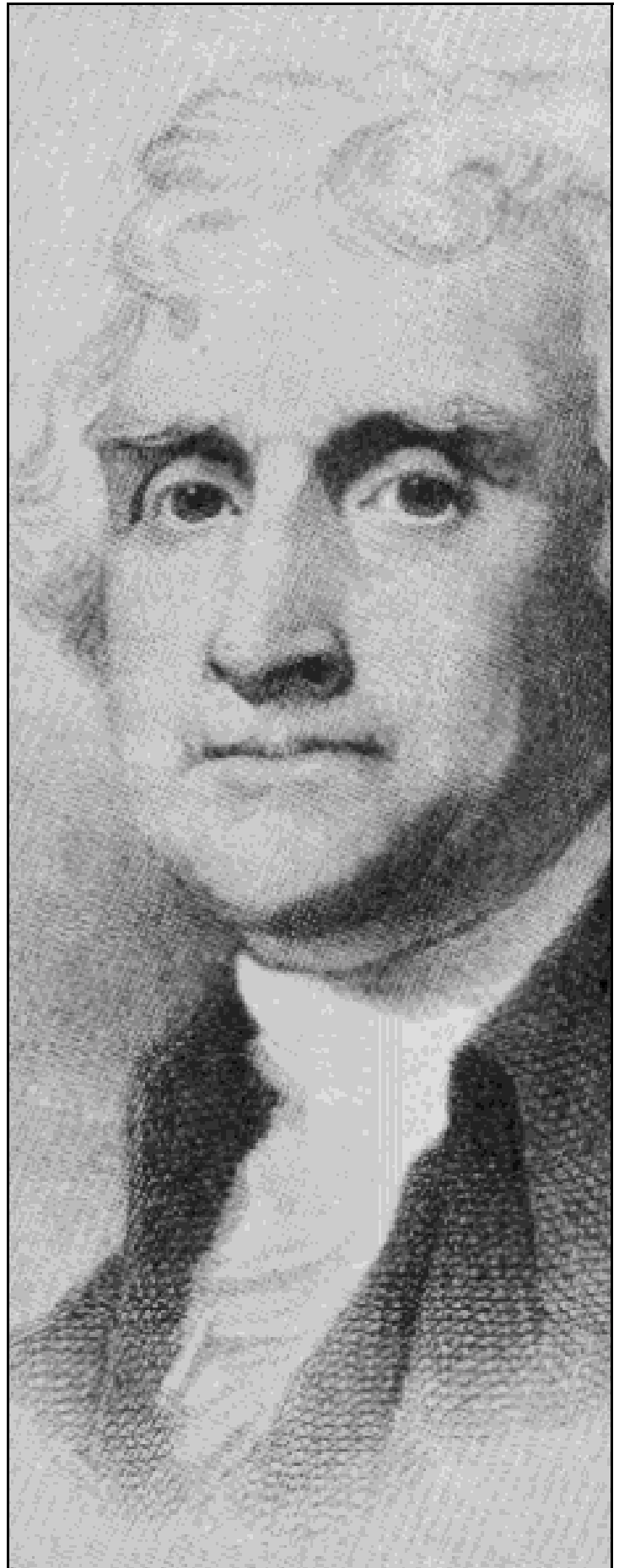
The expression of Jefferson's agrarian philosophy has as much to do with America's contemporary sprawling landscape as vast lands he helped to acquire. Essentially, Jefferson envisioned the United States developing into a nation of farmers. He distrusted the merchant class he saw developing in cities such as Boston and New York, believing that over-reliance on commerce would threaten political and economic independence of the common farmer he so valued.

His political career was built, in part, upon the principal of widely available, cheap land. In 1785, during the era he labored on state cession of lands and territorial governance, Jefferson wrote, "It is too soon yet...to say that every man who cannot find employment but who can find uncultivated land shall be at liberty to cultivate it, paying modest rent. But it is not too soon to provide by every possible means that as few as possible shall be without a little portion of land. The small landowners are the most precious portion of the state."

Jefferson not only distrusted the mercantile elite, he did not like cities. "I view great cities pestilential to the morals, the health and the liberties of man. True, they nourish some of the elegant arts, but the useful ones can thrive elsewhere, and less perfection in the others, with more health, virtue and freedom, would be my choice," Jefferson wrote to a friend during his first presidential campaign.

Obviously Jefferson's thinking about the future did not extend to today, when those common citizens seeking their "little portion of land" are not farmers but workers tied to the commercial economy he so distrusted. Nonetheless, those involved in today's debates on infrastructure policy and land use control hear variants of Jefferson's agrarian themes invoked by those defending ongoing suburban development.

Sustainable designs



The August 1997 edition of *E, the Environmental Magazine* features a story on the "Eco-Home." The piece illustrates contemporary residential design for energy efficiency and healthful living with photographs, including one captioned, "...a compact alternating stairway—from a design by Thomas Jefferson." Is it possible that the same man who set in place so many of the necessary conditions for 20th century urban sprawl also left examples needed to ameliorate sprawl's worst effects?

As we perceive contaminated brownfields to be an environmental health challenge in cities today, "disease causing vapors" were so seen in colonial times. During his presidency, Jefferson conceived of a building clearance and greening project for New Orleans for the purpose of introducing more healthy breathing space in that city just acquired from France. Though never applied in New Orleans, the concept was used in initial development of two then emerging towns, Jeffersonville, Indiana, and Jackson, Mississippi. The open squares in those towns, however, proved too great a temptation for developers, and the system of open space preservation faded in both places over a few decades.

While obtaining a classical liberal education at the College of William and Mary, young Jefferson was introduced to the subject of architecture generally and the designs of 16th century Italian architect Andreas Palladio in particular. This exposure kindled Jefferson's lifelong interest in design of both buildings and communities and initiated his taste for the Roman Revival forms of the Renaissance. He furthered his education on the subject through travel, especially to Europe, and by actual design and execution of projects which influence America's built environment to this day.

Monticello

Monticello, Jefferson's own home, features a central domed space and classical facade, reminiscent of ancient Roman villas. The internal spaces, loaded with ingenious devices like hidden dumbwaiters, alcove beds and hidden ventilation grates, were designed for comfort and privacy.

Long a work in progress, Monticello's final form took decades to complete. Jefferson noted, "Architecture is my delight and putting up and pulling down one of my favorite amusements."

While the main house differed greatly from the typical Georgian mansion, Monticello was much like other southern plantations in the sense that it operated as a small, self-contained economy. Not only did the place have vast gardens, orchards, a vineyard and a smokehouse, but also a complement of facilities to perform joinery, carpentry, barrel making, nailmaking and sawyering. "To be independent for the comforts of life, we must fabricate them ourselves," Jefferson is recorded as saying.

While observing remnants of Jefferson's vile and pernicious practice of slavery at Monticello, one also sees evidence of his cutting-edge farming—new plant experimentation, plowing to the contours of the land, crop rotation and invention of better

farm tools, such as a low-resistance plow. While never a great financial success, especially during Jefferson's long absences while in government, the place supported the owner's extended family, a number of free working families, generations of slaves and a steady stream of visitors.

House guests were often urged to visit Natural Bridge, a day trip from Monticello. Jefferson himself loved the 215-foot-high, 90-foot-wide span of rock, and petitioned the Crown for a grant of the Natural Bridge in order to prevent spoilage to it. For the price of 20 shillings, Jefferson successfully preserved the vista for posterity—and set an important environmental precedent.

Washington

Drawing on skills from the full range of his professional perspectives—as lawyer, politician, architect and philosopher—Jefferson helped create the city that not only houses the day-to-day activities of the national government, but intentionally symbolizes our democratic way of life. He influenced creation of Washington, D.C., with important interventions over a span of nearly 20 years.

First, he was instrumental in location of the Capitol along the Potomac River. Jefferson, while George Washington's

Secretary of State, cut a deal with fellow cabinet member Alexander Hamilton leading to consensus on passage of the 1790 Residence Act, which authorized President Washington to select the present site for the seat of national government.

He also greatly impacted the general tone and specific details of L'Enfants' famous city design. "Whenever it is proposed to prepare plans for the Capitol, I should prefer the adoption of some of the models of antiquity which have the approbation of thousands of years; and for the President's house I should prefer the celebrated fronts of modern buildings which have already received the approbation of all good judges. Such are the Galarie du Louvre, the Garde Meubles; and two fronts of the Hotel de Salm," Jefferson wrote, in typical fashion, to L'Enfant on April 10, 1791. Jefferson advocated tightly grouped government buildings and also suggested the addition of Pennsylvania Avenue to L'Enfant's plan for the city, as both functional road and symbolic connection between the President's House and the Capitol Building.

When L'Enfant was dismissed in 1792 for refusal to present drawings for any specific buildings, it was Jefferson who suggested the competition that led to the selection of William Thornton, designer of Capitol Building. A subsequent competition led to design of the White House by James Hoban. As president, he appointed Benjamin Latrobe as surveyor of Public Buildings of the United States, who was responsible for completion of the U.S. Capitol construction.

University of Virginia

The University of Virginia was the final pursuit of Jefferson upon his retirement from public office. The former president drew plans for not only the curriculum, but the campus as well.

"I view great cities pestilential to the morals, the health and the liberties of man. True, they nourish some of the elegant arts, but the useful ones can thrive elsewhere, and less perfection in the others, with more health, virtue and freedom, would be my

His "Academical Village" is anchored by the Rotunda, a half-scale interpretation of Rome's Parthenon, which served as library and public gathering space. Rotunda, student rooms, classrooms, faculty residences and gardens are tied together by garden paths and covered classical arcades. Jefferson personally oversaw construction according to his design in the last years of his life.

During this nation's bicentennial year, the American Institute of Architects proclaimed the Virginia campus as the nation's most significant architectural achievement to date. UNESCO also placed the site on its prestigious World Heritage List. Academical Village's highly functional, aesthetically pleasing whole forms the quintessential American walking community.

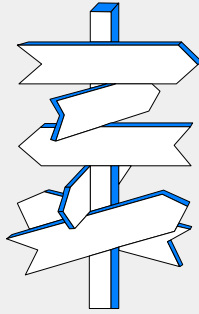
The right balance

In the development of his architectural legacy, Jefferson was inspired by European masters. Losing none of that tradition, he applied New World accents, adding fresh insight and strength in the process. Our challenge regarding development is similar, requiring a firm grasp of the planning and political practices we inherit along with the ingenuity and courage to adapt them to today's circumstances.

Thomas Jefferson personifies the whole of America's struggle to find the right balance between growth and sustainable development. If nothing else, this review reminds us that, like Jefferson's record, our present situation is extremely complex.

Prompted by the recent movie *Jefferson in Paris* and the Ken Burns documentary aired last spring by PBS, this nation is just beginning to effectively separate Jefferson's authorship of the documents outlining our liberties from his incongruous practice of slavery. Perhaps, in time, we can likewise assess the intricacies of his life regarding land, human settlements and sustainable economies. □

Bob Jaquay serves on staff of The George Gund Foundation. This is his second contribution to EcoCity Cleveland on historic figures that impact today's attitudes regarding land use and development. His short essay, "Suburban Visions: Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City," appeared in December 1994.



A more scenic Ohio

In recent months the old anti-billboard group, the Ohio Roadside Council, has been resurrected and reorganized as Scenic Ohio, an affiliate of Scenic America. The group will seek to protect and enhance the visual quality and scenic character of Ohio's communities and countryside.

According to a statement prepared by the group's organizers, Ohio's scenic character is being destroyed by uncontrolled urban sprawl, parking lots and strip development. Poorly controlled signs and billboards are creating visual clutter. (Ohio ranks high in the number of illegal billboards along highways.) Federal highway funds allocated for wildflower plantings along our Interstates are not being prudently spent, or in some cases, not spent at all. When our highways are landscaped, long-term maintenance of plantings is often neglected. Money is being wasted on mowing a natural landscape which could be beneficial to wildlife. And sound barriers are destroying the character of our cities and are often built with little regard to the wishes of citizens.

Scenic Ohio plans to work to eliminate illegal billboards, promote Ohio's Scenic Byway Program, and work with the Ohio Department of Transportation to create highway designs which are sensitive to scenic, cultural and historic values.

Christine Freitag of Akron is chairing the group's board, and Marian Vance recently became executive director. Offices are at 85 E. Gay St., Suite 702, Columbus, OH 43215 (614-228-3274).

State stops raiding nature funds

Since 1985, Ohio taxpayers have been able to donate a portion of their income tax refund to the Natural Areas and Preserves Fund, which was designated for the purchase of bogs, prairies, old-growth forests and other rare habitats. But in recent years \$3.6 million of the check-off money has been diverted to cover administrative expenses of the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. The fault lies with the Voinovich administration and state legislators, who have raided the division's budget and forced it to pay staff with funds intended for land purchases.

Questions from conservation groups and State Sen. Rhine McLin (D-Dayton), however, have shamed state officials into restoring much of the division's budget.

To find out about the 111 nature preserves the division has been able to protect, check out the new *Directory of Ohio's State Nature Preserves*, available for \$15 plus \$1.75 shipping from ODNR Natural Areas and Preserves, 1889 Fountain Square, Columbus, OH 43224.

Want more public lands in Ohio?

As part of a strategic plan for outdoor recreation, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is seeking public input about how recreational opportunities should be improved in the state—what are the emerging trends in recreational activities? what types of facilities are lacking? where should more money be spent? what types of cooperative partnerships could be developed between government agencies, private organizations and citizens?

Some citizens groups are calling for more public land for passive recreation, more urban parks, and more state support for regional trail networks. After all, Ohio ranks third in the nation for tourism in state parks, yet ranks 47th in public land available for recreation per capita.

To voice your concerns, write to Bill Daehler, ODNR Division of Real Estate and Land Management, Fountain Square C-4, Columbus, OH 43224. For more information call 614-265-6402.

Too much paperwork to save wetlands?

The Ohio EPA recently certified the Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 26, which gives the Corps authority to grant automatic approvals to destroy wetlands less than three acres in size. Ohio EPA's justification for granting the certification focused on the fact that Permit 26 is being phased out over the next two years (so developers will be rushing to fill wetlands now) and on the inability of its staff to handle the workload associated with denial of this most frequently used permit.

Ohio has already lost a greater percentage of wetlands than any other state except California. Much of the wetlands loss stems from the cumulative impact of many small developments—which apparently our regulatory authorities are unable to keep track of.

Great Lakes lose clout

Funding for Great Lakes protection programs will be difficult to obtain in the current Congress, Richard Munson of the Northeast Midwest Institute told members of the Great Lakes Commission at a recent commission meeting in Cleveland.

"The Great Lakes delegation is small and not strategically placed," he said. "We need substantial organizing and coalition building to make up for what we lack in numbers."

Since 1979, population shifts have caused the Great Lakes states to lose 13 percent of their Congressional representatives.

Targeting nonpoint sources

With improvements in municipal and industrial wastewater treatment, most of the pollution degrading water quality in Ohio now comes from nonpoint sources, such as

runoff from urban streets, suburban lawns and farm fields. Pollutants include sediment, organic materials, nutrients and toxins. Rivers and streams can also be degraded by physical alterations in the course or water flow.

As a result, only 49 percent of the monitored waterways in Ohio meet water quality standards. To obtain public input on strategies for reducing nonpoint source pollution, the Ohio EPA and Ohio Department of Natural Resources are conducting meetings around the state. For more information, call Jeff Van Loon at 419-281-2891 or Mark Bergman at 216-963-1200.

Lake Erie erosion fears

Heavy rains and snow in the upper Great Lakes have raised Lake Erie water level two feet above average. High waters can flood Ohio's low-lying western shoreline communities and cause erosion along bluffs in the central and eastern basins.

Lakefront property owners are calling for public assistance to prevent loss of land and pay for damages—more subsidies so a handful of people can keep building foolishly close the shore. Meanwhile, the state's new Coastal Zone Management Program, which seeks to discourage unwise shoreline development by mapping erosion hazard areas, has been fought by shoreline communities and real estate interests.

The best long-term strategy for taxpayers—and for coastal wetland ecosystems which are adapted to the dynamic rise and fall of lake levels—would be to stop futile attempts to armor the shore against erosion, withdraw development from sensitive areas, and let natural coastal processes prevail.

Or just wait a few years for the effects of global warming to kick in. Climate researchers are saying that lake levels could drop six feet by 2050!

"You can't own a beach"

While Ohio keeps tolerating private development along its Lake Erie shore, Oregon's coast is for everyone. The following comes from an advertisement by the Oregon Tourism Commission:

"You can't own a beach. It's like trying to own the morning, or the air, or the way seaweed smells. A beach should be for anybody, anytime, any part of any beach. From the road to the water. A beach belongs to the universe, the cosmos. That's how nature wants it. Besides, according to No. 390.610 of the Oregon Revised Statutes, it's the law."

Inventorying the North Coast

The Ohio Lake Erie Commission is compiling an inventory of critical resources for Lake Erie and its watershed. The inventory is part of a strategic plan for Ohio's coastal area and will help state officials prioritize properties for acquisition or enhanced protection/restoration.

Citizens are encouraged to suggest what resources should be included in the inventory. Write to the commission at One Maritime Plaza, 4th Floor, Toledo, OH 43604, or call 419-245-2514 for more information.

Plans for neighborhoods

The City of Cleveland is seeking new ways to improve community-based planning and development. Mayor Michael White recently appointed Mikelann Ward Rensel of the Cleveland Neighborhood Development Corporation to chair a 25-member Neighborhood Advisory Group, which will review public policies on tax abatement, infrastructure planning and funding, regional cooperation, labor force development and land assembly. It will also explore how the city and neighborhood-based

development organizations can be better partners.

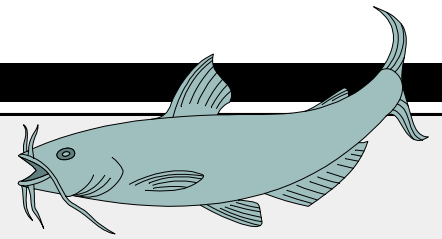
Text for neighborhoods

Three teachers at the Cleveland State University Levin College of Urban Affairs—Professor W. Dennis Keating, Professor Norman Krumholz, Director Philip Star of the Center for Neighborhood Development—have edited a new book, *Revitalizing Urban Neighborhoods*. The book collects original essays from leading scholars of urban planning and assesses community-led redevelopment efforts.

The Levin College supports neighborhood revitalization in Cleveland by training future leaders and through a number of programs—an internship program which places students at neighborhood organizations, technical assistance programs, the Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland program for top staff of organizations, and NeighborhoodLink, a computer network linking Cleveland residents to community resources (<http://little.nhlink.net/nhlink>).

Neighborhood green spaces

The Cleveland Neighborhood Development Corporation and the Trust for Public Land have produced an interesting booklet on the process of creating and restoring urban green spaces. The booklet, *Green Spaces, People Places*, summarizes five design charettes (intensive workshops) conducted last year in Cleveland neighborhoods. Copies are available from CNDC at 216-268-3130.



August 14

Home canning, a sustainable living workshop, 7 p.m. at the Crown Point Ecology Learning Center, 3220 Ira Rd. in Bath Twp. \$10. Call 330-666-9200 to register.

August 17

Dragonfly monitoring for the Ohio Dragonfly Survey, 9 a.m. to noon at the Cleveland Metroparks Brecksville Nature Center. Call 216-526-1012.

August 17

BugFest at the Cleveland Metroparks Garfield Park Nature Center, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 216-341-3152.

August 17

The story of corn and **Native American impacts on daily life**, a talk at the Hunt Farm Visitor Center on Bolanz Road, Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, at 2 p.m.

August 23

Trip to watch the **fall shorebird migration** along Lake Erie's western basin, 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., starting from the Lake Erie Nature and Science Center in Bay Village. Call 216-871-2900 to register.

August 23

Hike to explore **natural history along the Buckeye Trail** in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, 9 a.m. at the Boston Store on Boston Mills Road.

August 23

Singer/songwriter Roy Hurd's "**Walk on the Mountain**" show with songs and stories about the earth and its creatures, 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks Look About Lodge in Bentleyville. Call 216-247-7075 for reservations.

August 24

Four County Metric bike tour through

Organic farm tours

The Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association, the Innovative Farmers of Ohio and the Ohio Organic Crop Improvement Association are sponsoring a series of farm tours this summer. Tours include:

- Kline Farm, 8940 County Road 235 in Fredericksburg. Diversified Amish farm, discussions of shared labor and community, nutrient cycling, and the profitability of Amish farms. August 16, 2-4 p.m.
- Oberlin Farmers Market and Oberlin Sustainable Agriculture Project Farm, eastern side of Tappan Square in the middle of Oberlin. Discussions of involving students in farm research projects, partnerships with social service organizations, and community supported agriculture program. August 23, 1-3:30 p.m. Call OEFFA at 614-294-FOOD for more

scenic areas of Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina and Lorain counties. Call 216-779-8392.

August 24

Alien invaders, a hike to explore how exotic plant and animal species are invading native ecosystems, 1 p.m., Ira Trailhead of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, Riverview Road north of Ira Road.

August 24

Amish backroads bicycle tour, 2:30 p.m., Geauga Park District's Swine Creek Reservation Lodge, 16004 Hayes Rd. Pre-register at 216-834-1856 ext. 5420.

August 24

Emerald City Folk Festival, 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Reservation. Call 216-247-9846.

August 24

Hike to observe **wildflowers** in the Cleveland Metroparks' new Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation, 1 p.m. Call 216-341-3152 to register.

August 24

Heron hike, 1 p.m. at the Lorain County Metro Parks French Creek Nature Center in Sheffield Village.

August 27

Meeting of the **Sierra Club** Northeast Ohio Group, 7:30 at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, 2600 South Park Blvd. in Shaker Heights.

August 29

Critical Mass bike ride starting at 5:30 p.m. at Cleveland Public Square. Call 216-721-0992 for details.

August 30

Ohio Bicycle Federation summer meeting and Midwest Tandem Rally, 1 p.m. at the Wyndham-Dublin Hotel in Dublin, OH.

August 30

Fall warbler walk, 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Nature Center.

August 30

Hike through the **tallgrass prairie**, 1:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks Brecksville Nature Center.

September 2

Environmental brown bag lunch program, noon at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, 2600 South Park Blvd. Roger Gettig of the Holden Arboretum will speak about **land protection** and the need for regional planning. Call 216-321-5935.

September 2-6

National **Pedestrian Conference** in Washington, DC. For registration information, call the Campaign to Make America Walkable at 202-463-6622.

Lake Erie events

A major series of Lake Erie environmental programs will take place September 18-20 at the Great Lakes Science Center in Cleveland:

- September 18—Ohio Lake Erie Conference hosted by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and the Ohio Lake Erie Office.
- September 19—Lakewide Management Plan Workshop hosted by the International Joint Commission and focusing on human health and aquatic life issues.
- September 20—Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Forum focusing on Lake Erie's areas of concern (four of which are in Ohio on the Maumee, Black, Cuyahoga and Ashtabula rivers).

For more information about the programs, call the Ohio Lake Erie Office at 419-245-2514.

Coastweeks '97

The annual Coastweeks celebration of Ohio's Lake Erie coast, featuring nature walks, beach clean-ups, canoe trips and other water-related festivities, will take place August 30 through September 21. Call the Ohio Lake Erie Office for more information, 419-245-2514.

September 7-10

National right-to-know meeting and **toxics** release inventory conference in Washington, DC. Call 202-544-9586 for registration and scholarship information.

September 11-14

Great Lakes Bioregional Congress '97 in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, Minnesota. For more information, call 608-767-3931.

September 13

Workshop for environmental leaders on recruiting and **involving volunteers**, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Case Western Reserve University. For registration information, call the Institute for Conservation Leadership at 301-270-2900.

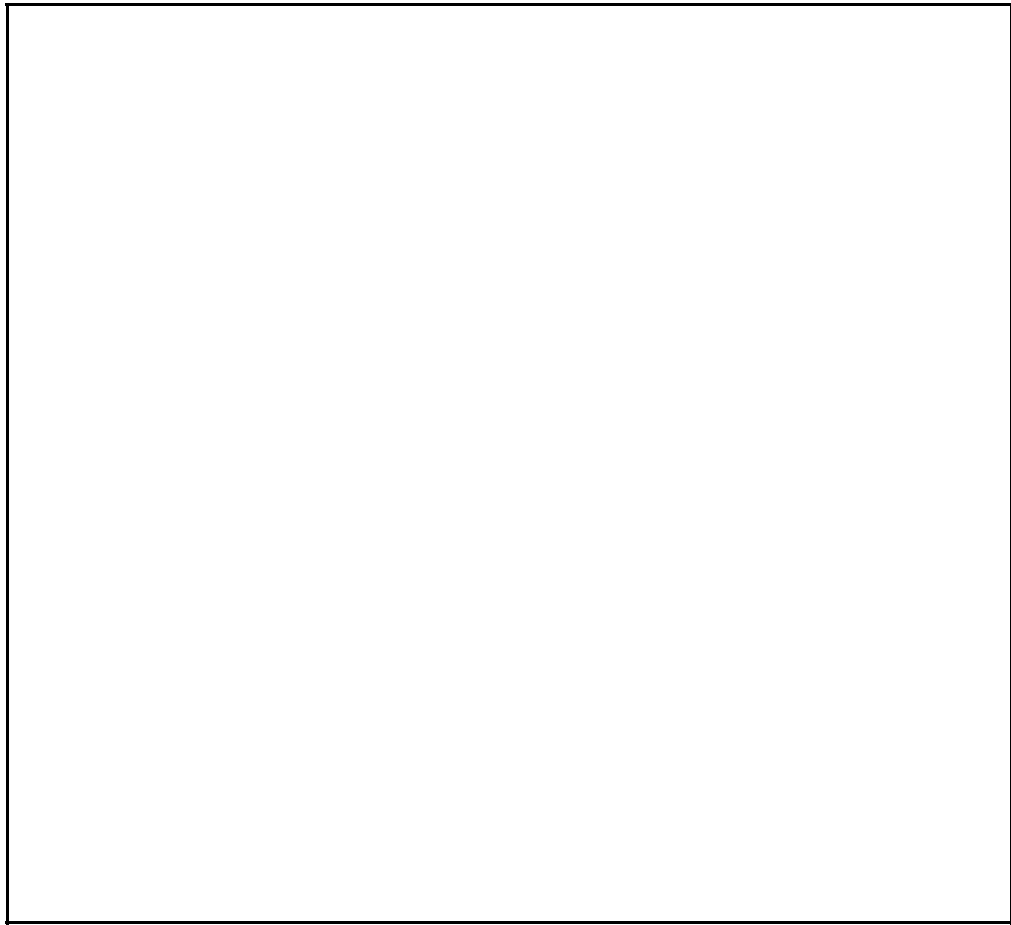
September 14

Earth & Sky Concert with **Susan Weber**, 2 p.m. at the Crown Point Ecology Learning Center, 3220 Ira Rd. in Bath. Call 330-666-9200 for ticket information.

Pedestrian-unfriendly places:

A five-lane road, a busy parking lot, and no sidewalk in the middle. The area around Cedar Center in University Heights and South Euclid is typical of shopping areas designed for cars, not for pedestrians.

See an environmental outrage? Send us your pictures, and we'll publish them in upcoming issues.



"Indispensable reading for those who want to know what's really going on in the region or what the headlines may be a decade from now."

—David Orr, Oberlin College Environmental Studies Program

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