



EcoCity CLEVELAND

IDEAS AND TOOLS FOR A SUSTAINABLE BIOREGION

\$2

Volume 6, Number 7 August 1999
Editor/writer: David Beach

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Five more years of unintended
consequences



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Good words

Spread across the land surface of the planet,
tuned to local environments,
with potential to renew the earth
and run on sunlight, species and individual
organisms are special creations
for the spaces they inhabit.

The loss of such diversity from the landscape
is very serious. But the loss of cultural
diversity across the land surface ... is also
serious. I suspect that we pay this
disappearing diversity such little respect
because of the *illusion*
that knowledge overall is more plentiful.

—Wes Jackson,
Altars of Unhewn Stone

Adventure today means finding one's way
back to the silence and stillness
of a thousand years ago.

—Pico Iyer

HIGHWAY IMPACTS

Impacts beyond the median: I-90 in Lorain County, prior to recent widening.

**Citizens groups in Ohio have complained for years
that our state highway department, ODOT,
does a poor job evaluating
the environmental impacts of its projects.
Now, there are signs that federal oversight agencies agree.**

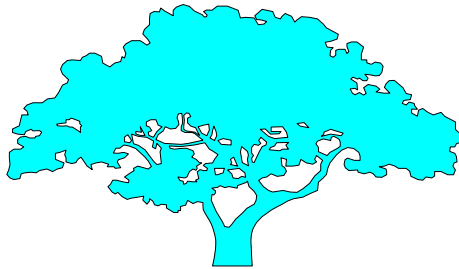
See us on the Web at www.ecocleveland.org

Visions for a movement

"If a movement needs visions, here they come," wrote syndicated urban affairs writer Neal Peirce in a recent column about the upwelling movement for smart growth in America. "Vivid illustrations just released in the Chicago and Cleveland regions contrast future landscapes likely under standard sprawl against smart growth alternatives."

We are proud that the Cleveland regional vision Peirce described to his national audience was our *Citizens' Bioregional Plan*. We released the plan on May 15, and its ideas for sustainable development patterns have gotten rave reviews from citizens, planners and elected officials. People keep telling us, "This makes great sense. Let's do it!"

So now we are working to implement parts of the plan. One immediate opportunity is to advance the concept of an Outerbelt Emerald Necklace, a major new open space and recreational amenity for Northeast Ohio. Another task will be to get the plan adopted as a framework for transportation planning in the region. We also will be working with partner organizations to refine the plan's analysis of development patterns, industrial land availability, forested lands, and other factors.



Web site

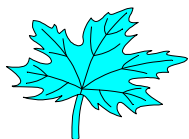
You can see the *Citizens' Bioregional Plan*—complete with interactive maps—on our Web site, www.ecocleveland.org. The site is improving all the time as we add new sections. Take a look—and tell us what you think! We hope the site will become the heart of a citizens' information network for the region.

Thanks

According to Neal Peirce, "Sprawl and growth touch our most vital issues—the way we've developed our continent for a half century, our relations race to race and class to class, our hopes for community and economic opportunity. The discussion is really about the kind of society we hope to be."

In agreement with Peirce, more members of the philanthropic community are realizing the importance of these issues. We see evidence of this in the growing diversity of funders supporting EcoCity Cleveland. In particular, we would like to thank a number of local foundations for grants received in recent months: the George Gund Foundation, Abington Foundation, Sears-Swetland Family Foundation, Nord Family Foundation, Raymond John Wean Foundation, and Nelson Talbott Foundation.

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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Published monthly, except for occasional double issues. Unless otherwise noted, all articles and photographs are by David Beach. Submissions from others are welcome, but please call first. We cannot be responsible for unsolicited materials.

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Supported by foundation grants, subscriptions and individual donations.

Printed at Orange Blossom Press in Cleveland on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper using soy-based inks.

ISSN 1084-0885

Jobs, growth...wherever

By Bradley Flamm

Earlier this year the Ohio General Assembly and Governor Bob Taft finished work on a \$40 billion, two-year state budget. Buried within its 1,000-plus pages was one of the most sprawl-inducing, environment-degrading provisions possible: a five-year extension of the state's Enterprise Zone program.

Several Northeast Ohio legislators, including Sen. Eric Fingerhut and Rep. Ed Jerse, worked hard but unsuccessfully to limit the program's extension to less than five years. Proponents of the extension argued that the Ohio Department of Development needed to assure business leaders of the state's "business-friendly" climate (there was even a bogus threat that GM's continued presence in the Lordstown area depended on extension of the program).

Originally designed in 1982 to encourage investment and job creation in Ohio's distressed, older cities, enterprise zones are now established in 86 of Ohio's 88 counties. Growing suburban communities like Twinsburg and Hudson are able to use the tax breaks allowed in enterprise zones to compete with Cleveland and Euclid. With greenfield locations, promises of "build-to-suit," and access to new highways, suburban and rural enterprise zones easily win out in the competition for business investment and job creation. As a result, farmland, open spaces and forests are converted to light industrial parks, big-box retail outlets and new subdivisions, while brownfield industrial

Tax breaks for rural industry: Contrary to the original intent of the program, rural and suburban Enterprise Zones in Ohio have attracted many more jobs than zones in distressed urban areas.

locations, older retail businesses and homes in our region's older communities are allowed to decay.

A growing body of research, including a recent study by Cleveland State University's Urban Center, indicates that enterprise zones have been unsuccessful in creating significant numbers of new jobs and businesses in the state. They have, however, promoted the relocation of businesses and jobs *within* our region and other metropolitan areas throughout Ohio.

Fingerhut and Jerse argued that renewing the program for a single year would have given the legislature time to study the true impact of the enterprise zone program on the state's economy. Ultimately, the state must understand that it matters *where* in Ohio economic development takes place.

From a statewide perspective, development officials see Ohio competing with Michigan, Kentucky and other states. They often don't see much difference between a job in Solon and job in Cleveland.

But there is a difference. If development strategies abandon our cities, unemployed people, and existing infrastructure, the entire region will be weakened in the long run. It's a matter of regional sustainability and social justice. □

For more information, see "In the zone: How enterprise zones have promoted urban sprawl in Northeast Ohio" in the *Moving to Cornfields* section of EcoCity Cleveland's Web site (www.ecocleveland.org).

Questionable enterprise

- Ohio's Enterprise Zone program is more elaborate than all other states examined in this study.
 - The program is weak from a policy vision and management goal perspective. This aspect seriously limits the ability to evaluate program costs, benefits and other impacts.
 - The program currently does not require regional coordination of zones within the same region.
 - The program produces a marginally positive net benefit to the state treasury and local governments, based upon analysis of program costs and benefits.
- Findings from the Cleveland State University study on the Ohio Enterprise Zone program

This Council believes that the current Enterprise Zone program may encourage the inappropriate use of tax abatement, displace businesses, jobs and residents from Ohio's older, developed communities, and facilitate continued urban sprawl thereby placing inequitable burdens on citizens, schools, and local governments whose taxes have not been abated.

— South Euclid City Council, in a resolution this June urging the Ohio General Assembly to reform the state's Enterprise Zone program rather than renew it for another five years

Highway impacts

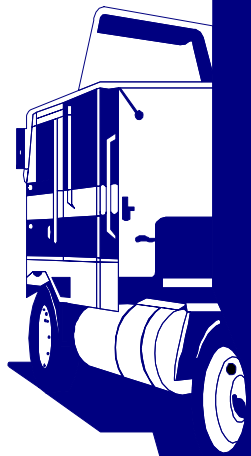
Citizens groups in Ohio have complained for years that our state highway department, ODOT, does a poor job evaluating the environmental impacts of its projects. Now, there are signs that federal oversight agencies agree.

At right is a recent letter from U.S. EPA to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) office in Columbus. The letter raises concerns that ODOT often performs quick and superficial assessments of projects and (surprise!) finds that there will be no significant impacts. Instead, ODOT should be performing more in-depth Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) that evaluate a wider range of potential impacts.

"For a state the size of Ohio with the magnitude of transportation projects, it's surprising that we're seeing almost no EISs at all," says EPA's Michael MacMullen, the author of the letter. "It's not the first time I've raised this issue."

MacMullen met with ODOT and FHWA officials in July to discuss several projects, including a major bypass road around Lancaster and the planned I-90 interchange at SR 615 in Mentor (which just received final environmental approval). In some cases, the concerns were simply a matter of insufficient paperwork, meaning that ODOT did the analysis but did not fully document the work. But in other cases, MacMullen says, the analysis was too narrow. Not enough thought was given to the possible alternatives to building the project or to the secondary impacts of the project, such as land use impacts on surrounding communities.

To be fair, Ohio is not alone among states failing to study the broader impacts of projects,



June 7, 1999

Mr. Michael Armstrong
Federal Highway Administration
200 N. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

As you know, in accordance with the applicable regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality, the Federal Highway Administration has the lead responsibility for assuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements concerning full disclosure of, and adequate assessment for, the environmental impacts likely to be associated with highway projects. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has a review and comment role in these matters, as set forth in both the NEPA and in Section 309 of the Clean Water Act.

I have previously expressed concerns to your office that some highway projects in Ohio may not have been adequately assessed for the full range of impacts which could attend project implementation activities. To be more specific, I think it likely that some projects involving potentially significant impacts on the human environment might be treated in Ohio as environmental assessment projects, whereas NEPA requires that those projects involving significant impact should be addressed within the context of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). I have several examples of situations where it appears that significant environmental impacts might be at issue for Ohio highway projects, but an environmental assessment has been prepared without subsequent issuance of an EIS. One such possible example was recently provided to me by a resident of Mentor, Ohio, who is concerned for the impacts of an FHWA-supported project to be undertaken in that area. There are other examples which should also be discussed.

I believe we should meet to discuss the issue of NEPA compliance in detail....If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 312-886-7342. I can also be reached by e-mail at macmullen.michael@epa.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Michael W. MacMullen
Senior NEPA Environmental Scientist
U.S. EPA Region 5

MacMullen adds. Such impacts are difficult to study and there's little agreement on methodology.

But here's a suggestion of how the process should work, using the recent widening of I-90 in Lorain County as an example. When ODOT studied the environmental impacts of adding lanes to I-90, it found none because the study focused narrowly on what was going to happen in the construction zone—the median of the existing highway. But that narrow interpretation of "impacts" ignored all the larger impacts of adding capacity to a major highway corridor at the edge of the metropolitan area. Instead, the study should have analyzed how the project might:

- promote greater urban sprawl in Northeast Ohio and contribute to the economic decline of older communities in the region;
- affect the quality of life of city residents;
- cause changes in regional patterns of land use and population density;
- promote more driving in the region in the long run, thus creating more air pollution;
- promote development of farmland and natural areas, thus affecting water quality and other natural systems).

In other words, the study should have paid as much attention to these larger impacts as it did to the impacts on wetlands and historic structures in the immediate path of a new road.

U.S. EPA's MacMullen says he is starting to work with ODOT and Ohio EPA on process to take secondary impacts into account. The key will be to incorporate broad environmental considerations into the early stages of transportation planning.

"As a society we need to get a better handle on the broader impacts," MacMullen says. "I'm optimistic that we will see changes in the next several years." □

High mileage moms

Mothers are spending more time behind the wheel than ever before, and this is leaving less time for the rest of their lives.

According to a new report on transportation and quality of life by the Surface Transportation Policy Project, on a typical day the average mother in America spends more than an hour driving, traveling 29 miles and taking more than five trips. Many of the stops along the way are to run errands or to pick up or drop off someone else.

A major contributor to increased driving is neighborhoods with few safe sidewalks or bike paths and poor transit service. Sprawling communities are compounding the problem by adding more distance between the places people want to go.

For a copy of the "High Mileage Moms" report, see the Web site www.transact.org.

And now a message from the highway lobby...

In recent months there's been a surge of concern about traffic congestion, air pollution, loss of open space, and the other problems caused by urban sprawl. Throughout America, people are asking why their communities are designed so everyone has to drive 10 miles to buy a loaf of bread. And many people realizing that compact, walkable neighborhoods with access to transit and a healthy mix of housing, shopping and workplaces can be convenient and attractive places to live.

Vice President Al Gore has jumped on this bandwagon by proposing a "Livability Agenda" to invest federal funds in helping create better communities and preserve open space. This, in turn, has brought a swift reaction from interest groups, such as highway contractors and users, who have a stake in preserving the status quo. They have geared up propaganda campaigns to promote the idea that Americans want to drive forever. They completely distort the livability agenda by implying that Gore and assorted enviro-crazies want to move people into squalid tenements. And they hold out the false hope that life will be fine if we just keep adding more lanes to the highways.

The following radio ad is a good example of the propaganda. It was produced by the American Highway Users Alliance and aired around the country.

[Voice of a working mother who lives in the suburbs]

VICE PRESIDENT GORE JUST PROPOSED SOMETHING HE CALLS A "LIVABILITY AGENDA." I LISTENED WHEN HE SAID HIS PLAN WILL GIVE US MORE TIME WITH OUR FAMILIES BY EASING TRAFFIC CONGESTION.

BUT WHEN YOU READ THE FINE PRINT, THE VICE PRESIDENT SAYS WE SHOULD LIVE IN APARTMENTS NEAR TRANSIT STATIONS. THAT MIGHT WORK FOR SOME, BUT NOT FOR ME AND MY FAMILY.

WE MOVED TO THE SUBURBS FOR THE SAME REASONS MOST PEOPLE DO: A HOUSE WE COULD AFFORD, A BACK YARD, GOOD SCHOOLS AND SAFE STREETS. FOR ME AND MOST WORKING MOTHERS, DRIVING'S NOT AN OPTION — IT'S A NECESSITY. IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN WORK FULL-TIME, RUN ERRANDS AND STILL HAVE TIME LEFT FOR MICHAEL'S BASKETBALL GAMES.

SURE THE ROADS GET CROWDED, BUT MAYBE INSTEAD OF TELLING US WHERE AND HOW TO LIVE, GOVERNMENT SHOULD FOCUS ON IMPROVING ROADS AND MAKING DRIVING EASIER. FOR EXAMPLE, I WASTE 10 MINUTES EVERY DAY GETTING ON THE HIGHWAY BECAUSE THERE'S NO MERGE LANE. FIXING THAT: THAT'S WHAT I'D CALL A REAL "LIVABILITY AGENDA."





ODOT to tip NOACA vote?

The governing board of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) has been wrestling with a controversial proposal to make ODOT an official voting member of the regional transportation and environmental planning agency. While ODOT has voting membership at other metropolitan planning organizations in Ohio, some NOACA board members have raised concerns.

Most importantly, ODOT representation on NOACA's board could upset a careful balance that ensures roughly proportional geographic representation. The 19 Cuyahoga County members of the NOACA governing board would no longer comprise an absolute majority of the current 37-member board, even though Cuyahoga County's population is over 65 percent of the five-county NOACA region.

This could be crucial because ODOT's views have often been at odds with the majority of Cuyahoga County representatives. A system of weighted voting can be used to ensure proportional representation on key votes, but this is a tactic that usually elevates tensions within the board.

\$170 million wish list

Northeast Ohio has so many aging roads, bridges and transit facilities that more and more of the region's transportation budget has to be spent just to maintain our existing transportation system. But once a year the region gets to propose a wish list of new projects that will expand the system.

These "major new capacity projects" compete with projects from around the state for a special pot of funds controlled by the Ohio Department of Transportation. It's an important competition because new capacity projects — often new or wider roads, new interchanges, or new transit facilities — do a lot to influence development patterns in a metropolitan area.

On August 13, the governing board of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) will vote on its proposal for 13 new projects for Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga, Medina and Lorain counties. It's a mixed bag of projects. On the one hand, a number of unimaginative road widenings in suburban locations are intended to relieve traffic congestion (but will probably lead to more congestion and automobile dependence in the future). On the other hand, proposed new transit centers could help create a more balanced transportation system that gives people more options for how to get around. Here are the projects under consideration (with the amount of funds requested):

- Widening and reconstruction of Front St. in Berea (\$11.7 million)

- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) to manage highway and arterial traffic (\$34.1 million).

- Network of RTA transit centers (\$17.6 million).

- Improvements to Cleveland Hopkins airport entrance and exit roads (\$16.5 million).

- Widening of Grayton Road, realignment of the Grayton Road ramps on I-480, and the relocation of a section of Brookpark Road (\$19.9 million).

- Widening of Bagley and Pleasant Valley roads in Middleburg Heights and Parma (\$25.6 million).

- Widening of SR 18 in Medina County (\$9.2 million).

- Railroad grade separation on London Road in Cleveland (\$3.8 million).

- Widening of SR 8 in Walton Hills (\$2.8 million).

- Widening of 1.5 miles of I-90 in Lorain County (\$1.3 million).

- Construction of a Crocker Road / Stearns Road connector from I-480 to Center Ridge in Westlake (\$17.6 million).

- Widening of U.S. 20 in

Painesville Township (\$7.7 million).

- Widening of SR 84 in Wickliffe (\$4.8 million).

During the past several months a NOACA committee culled this list of projects from 39 projects proposed by communities, county engineers, transit agencies and others in the region. The committee attempted to rank the projects objectively with a scoring system based on regional significance and planning principles — assessing which projects would contribute most to economic development, the redevelopment of older communities, environmental quality, and quality of life.

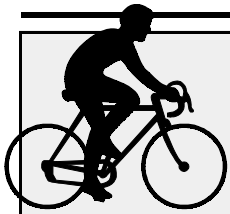
Originally, the committee recommended 10 projects with a total price tag of about \$140 million. But then politics intervened. Pressure from elected officials, such as Congressman Steve LaTourette, persuaded NOACA to add road widening projects in Lake County and a new Stearns Road connector in Westlake.

The current list of 13 projects totals about \$170 million, which represents over 50 percent of all expected funds statewide (the five-county region holds less than 30 percent of the state's population). It's likely, then, that some of the region's projects won't be funded. And it also means that ODOT's selection panel, the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC), will be setting priorities for our region.

On September 16 or 17, the TRAC will meet in Northeast Ohio (location not yet announced) for a public hearing on the proposed new projects. Call Michael Cull at ODOT for more information on the hearings (614-466-7170) or John Hosek at NOACA for more information about the list of priority projects (216-241-2414). □



Busy crossing: A portion of new capacity funds would help pay for a needed grade separation at London Road in Cleveland, where the recent railroad merger has increased train traffic.



Bike news

■ **Bike-friendly cities:** The cities of Oberlin, Avon Lake, and Mentor became Northeast Ohio's first official "bicycle friendly communities" in May. Among their bicycle-friendly accomplishments, Oberlin has completed a major section of the Kipton-to-Elyria bicycle path; Avon Lake has developed a 25-mile bikeway system of paths and lanes with the assistance of a federal Transportation Enhancements grant; and Mentor has integrated bicycle facilities development into its regular road maintenance and improvement program. The League of American Bicyclists qualifies cities that have met a set of bicycle-friendly criteria, including the establishment of bicycle safety policies and programs and minimum per-capita investments in bikeways and other facilities.

■ **East side bike route:** Other local communities are also starting to think about bike facilities. Six east side suburbs—Pepper Pike, Beachwood, Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, University Heights, and South Euclid—have designated a 14-mile on-street bike route. The route, which runs mostly along Monticello Boulevard, Belvior Road, and Shaker Boulevard, will tie into the all-purpose trail in the Cleveland Metroparks Euclid Creek Reservation. In the future, it could run from Chagrin Falls to University Circle.

■ **NOACA helps:** The region's transportation planning agency, NOACA, deserves credit for stepping up its efforts to promote bicycling as a legitimate form of transportation—one that deserves serious public investment. NOACA's Bicycle Advisory Subcommittee, under the leadership of Westlake planning director Bob Parry and NOACA staff member Sally Hanley, has sponsored educational conferences and has provided planning assistance to help communities improve quality of life with bicycle facilities. The subcommittee also reviews preliminary plans for road reconstruction and new capacity projects, looking for ways to improve designs for the benefit of bicyclists.

■ **Ohio bike award:** Congratulations to Cleveland bike advocate James Guilford for receiving the 1999 Horace Huffman Award for Service to Ohio Bicycling from the Ohio Bicycle Federation. In addition to contributing years of service to the OBF, Guilford edits and publishes *CrankMail*, a monthly journal for the Greater Cleveland cycling community, and the *Ohio Bicycle Events Calendar*.

Transportation action guide

The Ohio Sierra Club recently released *The Ohio Transportation Action and Resource Guide: A Handbook for Citizens*. The publication is a reference for citizens interested in "transportation policy, land-use planning, and economic development that is environmentally sound, safe, economical, and socially just." It's available on-line at www.sierraclub.org/chapters/oh/sprawl/handbook.html, or call 614-461-0734 to request a paper copy.

Munn Road interchange

After the death of a multi-millionaire resident, Bainbridge Twp. recently received a windfall of estate taxes. Trustees are considering whether to use the funds to ease traffic congestion on SR 306 by paying for a new interchange at Munn Road and U.S. 422 in neighboring Auburn Twp. Of course, that would promote even more development in the booming U.S. 422 corridor.

NOACA board officers

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) plays a big role in deciding how to spend hundreds of millions of transportation dollars in Cuyahoga, Lorain, Medina, Geauga and Lake counties. Officers for the 1999 NOACA Governing Board include:

- President: Jerry Hruby, Mayor of Brecksville
- Vice president: Hunter Morrison, Director of the Cleveland Planning Commission
- Secretary: Robert (Skip) Trimble, City Manager of Brunswick
- Asst. secretary: Thomas Gilles, Lake County Engineer
- Asst. secretary: Janet Novak, Geauga County Commissioner
- Treasurer: Jane Campbell, Cuyahoga County Commissioner
- Asst. treasurer: Roosevelt Coats, Cleveland Councilman
- Asst. treasurer: Erwin Odeal, Director of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Road rage

In early March the Surface Transportation Policy Project released its "Road to Rage" report, which concludes that aggressive driving deaths are higher in places with uncontrolled sprawl development. See STPP's Web site at http://www.transact.org/aggressivedriving99/report/rpt_text.htm for a copy of the full report.

Pothole madness

According to another study by the Surface Transportation Policy Project, motorists are spending twice as much to fix damage to their cars caused by bad urban highways than states have chosen to spend out of flexible federal funds available to fix those roads.

Passenger rail

Committees organized to study a



proposed Cleveland to Columbus rail link continue to meet in Columbus. Recently the operations committee met to consider passenger service options, including a recommendation for four round trips a day, using two sets of trains. Call ODOT's Matt Selhorst (614-644-7091) or the Ohio Rail Development Commission (614-644-0306) for more information.

Trains and more

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers is an effective nonprofit organization working to promote rail transportation—including light rail transit in cities, commuter rail in metro areas, and inter-city rail across Ohio. Memberships are \$15 through OARP, 2422 S. Patterson Blvd., Dayton, OH 45409. Or try calling the OARP's 24-hour news hotline at 614-470-0334.

Sprawl in full

Tom Wolfe's American landscape for the '90s

A Man In Full: A Novel by Tom Wolfe. Farrar, Straus, Giroux: New York (1998). 742 pp. \$28.95 hardcover.

by Robert Jaquay

When a topic from scholarly journals and op-ed pages suddenly emerges in a major work of popular fiction, attention is sure to be paid by those passionate about the subject. Such is true for me with Tom Wolfe's latest novel.

A Man In Full is set in contemporary Atlanta, which has been described by *Time* magazine as quite possibly "the fastest spreading human settlement in history." Wolfe's protagonist — the Man In Full himself — is Charlie Croker, a Georgia developer whose fortunes rose along with his wildly successful "edge city" office ventures around Atlanta.

Despite years of real estate experience and an unbroken string of wealth-generating developments, Charlie finally miscalculates the pace of Atlanta's regional dynamics (my term, not Wolfe's). He faces financial ruin after constructing a gargantuan, opulent project ("There it was, the tower, the mall, the cineplex, the hotel-apartment complex, the immense swath of asphalt...for parking.") beyond the most recent ring of exurban development and, even more crucial, outside the reach of the interstate highway system. "Croker Concourse" sits stranded in splendid, vacant and unprofitable isolation.

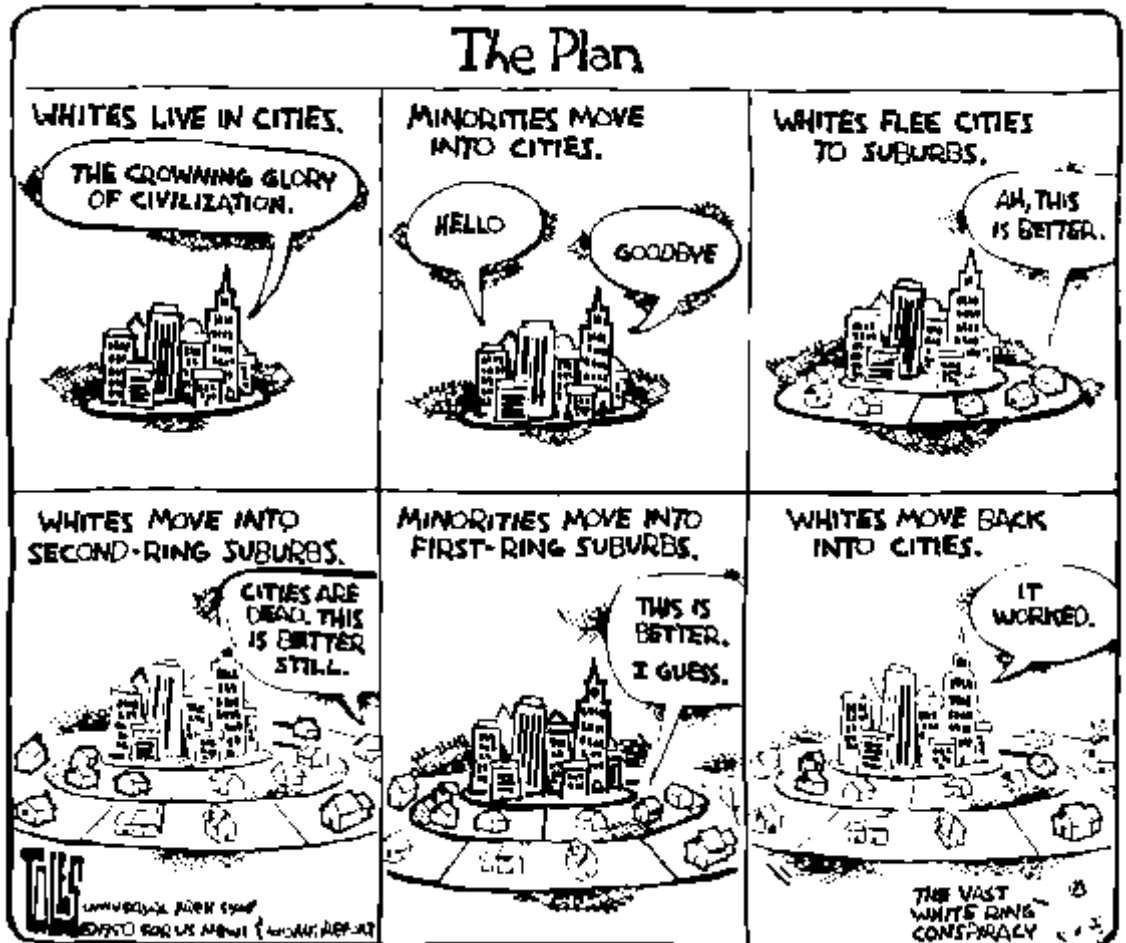
From this dilemma, concisely described in only a few pages, the rest of Wolfe's sweeping tale unfolds. As he did so masterfully in earlier novels — such as *The Right Stuff*, a chronicle of the Mercury astronauts during the Cold War, and

Bonfire of the Vanities, a depiction of one man's self-absorption during the greed-is-good 1980s — Wolfe captures the zeitgeist of an American decade.

A Man In Full also has many of the characteristics of a delightful Dickens novel. It's populated by a host of well-drawn, colorfully named characters, starting with Charlie. (I couldn't tell if Croker is supposed to sound like "croak" or "crock," but either would fit.) The parade of characters also includes his new wife and baby, their household servants, an ex-wife and teenage son, lawyers, bankers, Atlanta's mayor, plantation hands, blue-bloods, red-clay farmers, a college football star, his coach, an accountant, imprisoned (then escaped) felons, warehouse workers, and the flight crew on Croker's private jet. I grew to care about some, remained indifferent to others and even hoped a few

would suffer their richly deserved comeuppance.

As Dickens used London like an additional character — a dark, brooding presence exerting influence over all his human characters — Wolfe uses place (rather, many specific places in and around Atlanta) to shape the people he portrays and to convey mood, social stratification and other essential nuances. One example is "Turpentine", Charlie's beloved plantation refuge where quail hunting and horse breeding remain high art, more ornamental than useful. The reactions of visitors to the place mark them as old money, new money or striving middle class. Run by a small army of old retainers more attached to the land and its rituals than to Charlie, this bucolic throw-back is so expensive to run that continued existence of the place depends upon Croker's uninterrupted,



Tom Toles/Bufalo News

sprawl-generated cash flow. As financial pressures mount, the established order of the estate is threatened. Wolfe adroitly conveys these tensions and the resulting pseudo-serenity of Turpentine.

The plot moves on multiple, intertwining levels, shifting scenes, updating the reader on one person, then another, then back again. Somehow, it all ties up neatly by book's end. So, on the whole, this is an artful and entertaining novel.

Yet, I have lingering reservations. While reading about Croker Concourse and all of Charlie's difficulties that followed, the question "Would Cleveland shopping mall tycoon Dick Jacobs ever build this?" kept popping into my head. When Jacobs built his new mall in suburban Strongsville, he successfully lobbied for transportation improvements to be made

in conjunction with his project. And it has been reported that now he is exploring the possibility of *privately* financing an interchange off I-90 at Lear-Nagle Road for access to a shopping project he proposes to build in Avon. With his demonstrated understanding of the link between transportation and land use, Jacobs never builds too far ahead of infrastructure investments. Although Charlie's isolated Croker Concourse is a good plot device, it's clearly the stuff of fiction.

I also take issue with the book's tone regarding sprawl. Wolfe, in his descriptions of Atlanta's chronic outward push, is at best neutral, casting no value judgment on the ever expanding scene he conveys. He never confronts the effects, intended or not, that sprawl plays upon the racial divides, the regional economy or the environment of Atlanta. Despite all the vivid place descriptions — whether of Croker Concourse; Atlanta's grimmest slum; Turpentine; downtown Atlanta during Freaknik, the annual college spring break; the Mayor's suite at City Hall; or numerous other locales — Wolfe never conveys the sense that they truly connect, that the fate of one particular spot vitally affects all the others, let alone Atlanta as a metropolitan whole.

Further, Wolfe suggests that Charlie's faults as a developer are merely about timing. "Had to leapfrog the future, didn't you Charlie! A few years down the line somebody would make a fortune off what he had put together there, once the outer perimeter highway was built, but for now — *too far north, too far from the old city, Atlanta itself.* For now —"

It's revealing that Wolfe acknowledges by name only one expert on sprawl — Joel Garreau. Garreau coined the term and first described the phenomenon of "edge cities," the agglomerations of office parks and shopping malls that have suddenly sprung up on the outerbelt highways of American cities. In doing so, Garreau excessively lionized the exurban developer, underestimated the role of public investment in infrastructure that enables edge city development to occur, and gave short shrift to the negative consequences of edge cities on traditional downtowns, urban core neighborhoods or first-ring suburbs. Like Garreau, Wolfe ends up painting a partial — certainly not the "full" — picture of sprawl.

Perhaps it is unfair to critique this otherwise enjoyable book on such a narrow basis. *A Man In Full* is not about sprawl, per se, as much as it is about a driven man who creates it. Besides,

fiction is not a policy paper; some artistic leeway is allowed.

But it is important to consider how Wolfe's treatment will shape public opinion about sprawl. His book is a best seller, already vastly outselling any nonfiction work discussing sprawl and sustainability (and the paperback edition and inevitable movie version have yet to appear). Given Wolfe's vast audience and reputation for capturing the essence of an era, *A Man In Full* may well leave a lasting impression about urbanization and development on America's collective conscience.

And what might that notion be? Contrary to growth management advocates who believe that more sustainable forms of development are possible and desirable, Wolfe imparts the acquiescent message: Sprawl exists. So get used to it. □

In the early '90s, while with the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, Robert Jaquay wrote and frequently presented "Dynamics of the Cleveland Region," which framed the discussion of urban sprawl locally. He currently serves as associate director of The George Gund Foundation.

A Man In Full may well leave a lasting impression about urbanization and development on America's collective conscience — the acquiescent message that sprawl exists, so get used to it.

Atlanta under siege

Now that it's the poster child for urban sprawl with air pollution so bad that it will lose federal transportation funding, Atlanta is being forced to change its rampantly growing ways.

Earlier this year the state set up a new Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), a superagency with broad powers to veto road projects, build transit facilities and restrict development. The 15 members of the authority are appointed by Gov. Roy Barnes. Its objective is to overcome the divisions among local governments in the 13-county Atlanta region and forge a regional plan for growth and mass transit. The authority can withhold state money until the counties cooperate. (The joke in Atlanta is that GRTA really stands for "Give Roy Total Authority.")

Legislation to create GRTA sailed through the Georgia legislature with the surprising backing of business groups, such as the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. The fact that residents of metro Atlanta have longer commutes than residents of any other big city and spend more time stuck in traffic gridlock is creating a bad climate for business.

Every week, 500 acres of green space, forest, and farmland in the Atlanta region are plowed under to make way for new housing subdivisions, strip malls, shopping centers, and highways. Studies also are showing that sprawl-fueled growth is widening the gap between the region's haves' and have nots' by pushing people further and further apart geographically, politically, economically, and racially. Atlanta is the least dense of all U. S. metro areas with 1,366 persons

Pressure points

▪ **Sprawl guarantee:** The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) recently raised its mortgage loan limit from \$136,750 to \$208,800 in eight counties of Northeast Ohio. Given the distribution of housing prices in the region, the higher mortgage limit will allow more households to move out of older communities to more expensive suburbs.

▪ **Racial profiling:** Housing discrimination continues in Greater Cleveland. Audits conducted in the past year by the Metropolitan Strategy Group, a local fair housing organization, found that 51 out of 172 landlords showed signs of discriminating against nonwhite renters. The organization has filed complaints with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission against 14 repeat offenders. Problem communities include Mayfield Heights, Garfield Heights, Parma Heights, Middleburg Heights, and Westlake.

▪ **Edison Woods:** Conservation groups in Erie County are trying to preserve the Edison Woods, a 1400-acre parcel of beautiful woods, wetlands and upland plateau on SR 61 in Berlin Heights. The land is being sold by First Energy (Ohio Edison), which acquired it years ago for a nuclear power plant that was never built.

▪ **King's Woods:** Residents of the City of Lorain lost their battle to save the 75-acre King's Woods from being destroyed by construction of a new housing development. In addition to being a gem of a natural area in an urban setting, the mature woods near Lake Erie was recognized by local birders as an important resting area for migrating birds.

▪ **Buying the farm:** Folks in Yellow Springs, Ohio, value farmland and open space so much that they paid \$3.275 million to preserve the 930-acre Whitehall Farm north of town.

Instead of becoming a suburban subdivision, the farmland will now be protected with an easement that prohibits development. Much of the land will continue to be farmed by neighboring farmers.



▪ **Parma wetlands:** Parma is losing about 20 acres of the remaining wetlands in the Big Creek watershed to a new industrial park. The developer worked out a deal with Ohio EPA to preserve wetlands elsewhere to mitigate the damage in Parma. Wetland activists say it's ecologically unsound to make such trades. According to the Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan committee, which has targeted Big Creek for its first stream stewardship program, "It is important to recognize that mitigation of degraded wetlands, particularly high quality ones, should occur in the same subwatershed in order to minimize local impacts."

▪ **Visual pollution:** A few months ago highway beautification advocates were dismayed to hear that Cuyahoga Heights schools had signed a deal with Eller Media Co. to place three billboards on school property overlooking I-77.

▪ **Dividing us by phone:** Northeast Ohio has been split into three area codes to accommodate the need for more telephone numbers. And last year Ameritech proposed to divide the Cleveland area phone book into west side and east side volumes. The move was defeated by public officials, such as Cleveland Council president Jay Westbrook, who argued that separate phone books would promote divisiveness and make it harder for people to feel part of a single region.

▪ **Cincy sprawl:** The biggest land use issue in the Cincinnati area is how to manage growth in western Hamilton County. Many residents want to slow development and preserve the rural character of their communities, but county commissioners are under pressure to expand sewer service, widen roads and authorize another bridge over the Ohio River.

▪ **Unhealthy indicators:** Ohio ranks third in the nation for toxic emissions, Cuyahoga County has 25,000 children suffering from asthma, and in some Cleveland neighborhoods one in three children is poisoned by lead.

Boosting eco-politics

Environmental progress in Ohio depends on forging strong coalitions of environmentalists, public health interests, hunting and fishing groups and land preservation organizations. And the newly-formed Ohio League of Conservation Voters is aiming to mobilize such a coalition in order to hold elected officials accountable throughout the state.

The bipartisan league was founded by Sara Pavlovicz, a former Medina County commissioner, Joseph Sommer, former director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and former state Rep. Fred Deering. Michelle Park of the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association is assisting the organization. The national League of Conservation Voters provided \$10,000 seed money to get the Ohio group started.

The group will help build the grassroots power of the environmental movement by involving citizens in policy decisions, developing innovative campaigns and communication technologies, building pro-conservation coalitions, and training environmental leaders on how to be strategic and successful participants in the democratic process.

With term limits forcing rapid turnover in the General Assembly, citizens will need better information on candidates' positions on environmental issues.

For more information, call 614-895-2222.

Winners

■ **West Creek wins:** Thanks to the determined efforts of the West Creek Preservation Committee, Parma residents voted overwhelmingly last November to designate 160 acres of city-owned land along the creek as a park. A citizens advisory committee is now making recommendations for recreational uses compatible with the natural area and is seeking funding for park development.

■ **Hudson preservation:** The Hudson Land Conservancy is working to preserve the remaining natural areas in that rapidly developing city. It recently protected 45 acres of wetlands, upland forest and open field in the Mud Brook watershed.

■ **Sustainable Kent:** The Environmental Commission of the City of Kent has proposed a set of "Goals and Indicators of Sustainable Development" that will help the city evaluate economic development, environmental quality, activities and resources planning, and social and cultural development. For more information, call the city service department at 330-678-8105.

■ **Sustainable turf:** Our Lady of Elms School in Akron is trying to minimize environmental impacts as it develops new athletic fields on fallow farmland at the Crown Point Ecology Center in Bath. Ecological features will include turf maintained without synthetic chemicals, parking and driveway areas made of crushed stone instead of asphalt, minimal lighting, composting toilets, landscaping that maximizes the use of native wildflowers and trees, and a running track surface made with bits of scrap tires. All the features will provide opportunities for environmental education.

■ **E-mail action:** Environmental groups have set up an electronic system called SOAP (Sustainable Ohio Action Partnership) to clean up Ohio. The system sends e-mail alerts and makes it easy for members to send free, customized faxes about

important environmental issues to policy makers. To find out how to join, see the Web site www.actionnetwork.org and click on "Ohio SOAP Network." Or contact the Ohio Environmental Council at 614-487-7506.

■ **Oberlin building:** Oberlin College's Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies, the cutting-edge ecological building now under construction, recently won design awards from the American Institute of Architects and the Chicago Athenaeum. For information about the building, see the Web site www.oberlin.edu or the EcoVillage issue of our journal.

■ **Oberlin clean energy:** Oberlin Municipal Light and Power will soon be purchasing some of its power from the BFI landfill on the outskirts of town. Methane gas produced by decomposing garbage will be captured and burned to create electricity.

■ **Protecting the river banks:** Reacting to an agricultural tenant who cut down 314 trees in the Cuyahoga River floodplain, the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area is taking steps to protect the river corridor. New agricultural leases (the park leases land to farmers to preserve the historic working landscape of the valley) will require 120-foot setbacks from the river and major tributary streams.

■ **Saving native trout:** Spring Brook in Munson Twp. is the last remaining stream in Ohio with a self-sustaining population of native brook trout. The Geauga Park District recently purchased land around the stream to protect this rare resource. The park district also is working with University School and the Ohio Division of Wildlife to reintroduce the trout to Silver Creek in Russell Twp. Silver Creek, which flows through the park district's West Woods, is one of the only other cool, spring-fed streams in the region that has not been degraded by development and still holds promise of supporting a healthy brook trout population.

■ **Metroparks award:** The Cleveland Metroparks recently gave its Outstanding

Conservationist Award to the Earth Day Coalition. Earth Day organizes the annual EarthFest celebration, which is the largest environmental education event in the state.

■ **Natural gas buses:** Greater Cleveland RTA recently decided to buy 45 new buses that run on compressed natural gas (CNG). At one point the agency was leaning toward the purchase of diesel buses because a study said they would be cheaper to operate. But the RTA board reconsidered when informed of the many health and environmental benefits of clean-burning CNG buses, as well as the fact that the cost of diesel fuel is expected to rise more in coming years than the cost of natural gas.

■ **Student enviros:** Congratulations to the 11 local high schools who participated in the Earth Day Coalition's Student Environmental Congress this past year: Bay, Beachwood, Fairview Park, Glenville, James F. Rhodes, John Hay, John F. Kennedy, Magnificat, Mayfield, Revere, and Strongsville.

■ **Environmental research:** The Woodlake Environmental Field Station, a cooperative effort between Cleveland State University, John Carroll University, and the National Park Service, has opened in a farmstead along SR 303 in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area. The refurbished farmhouse has lab facilities and overnight accommodations to permit the universities to conduct research in the park and provide natural resource assistance to park management.

■ **Cincy EcoVillage:** It's Cincinnati vs. Cleveland to see which city can have the best EcoVillage development in Ohio. The Cleveland EcoVillage project, which is centered around the W. 65th Rapid Station in the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood, was described in our Winter 1998-99 issue. In Cincinnati, the Seminary Square Eco-Village in the Price Hill neighborhood is working to develop new housing, reduce energy consumption,

increase green space and promote transit use. For more information, call IMAGO at 513-921-5124.

■ **Eco-murals:** Local artist Daan Hoekstra has developed the Environmental Mural Initiative to create high-impact murals in high-visibility locations to raise public awareness of environmental and social issues. He is seeking to collaborate with local nonprofit groups. For more information, call 216-321-9282.

■ **Towpath expansion:** Since the 1996 designation of the Ohio & Erie Canal Corridor as a National Heritage Corridor between Cleveland and Zoar, more gaps in the Towpath Trail have been filled in. Recent developments include six miles of Towpath between Canal Fulton and Massillon, four miles north of Rockside Road in the Cleveland Metroparks new Canal Reservation, and two miles south of Bath Road in Akron.

■ **One less arena:** Conservationists cheered recently as the Richfield Coliseum was torn down. Seldom used since the Cavaliers basketball team moved to Gund Arena in downtown Cleveland, the Coliseum and its surrounding 320 acres might have been sold to developers of an outlet mall. Instead, the Trust for Public Land brokered a deal that will allow the land to be restored and incorporated into the adjoining Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area. So far, outlet mall developers have also been prevented from building on the east side of the park along SR 8. (Is there any more environmentally unfriendly retailing concept than outlet malls? They are predicated on getting people to drive from hours away.)



Remaking University Circle

Cleveland's University Circle has a world-class collection of museums, schools and other prominent institutions. But it's not a great *place* because of two big problems: the attractions are not linked together by high-quality public spaces and institutional development has bulldozed interesting residential streets. As a result, the Circle's urban life has been squeezed out by hostile streets and parking garages.

Now the organization that helped to run the bulldozers, University Circle Inc. (UCI), is trying to make amends. Under the new leadership of president David Abbott, UCI has embarked on a planning process to reshape the Circle and create "one of the premier urban districts in the country."

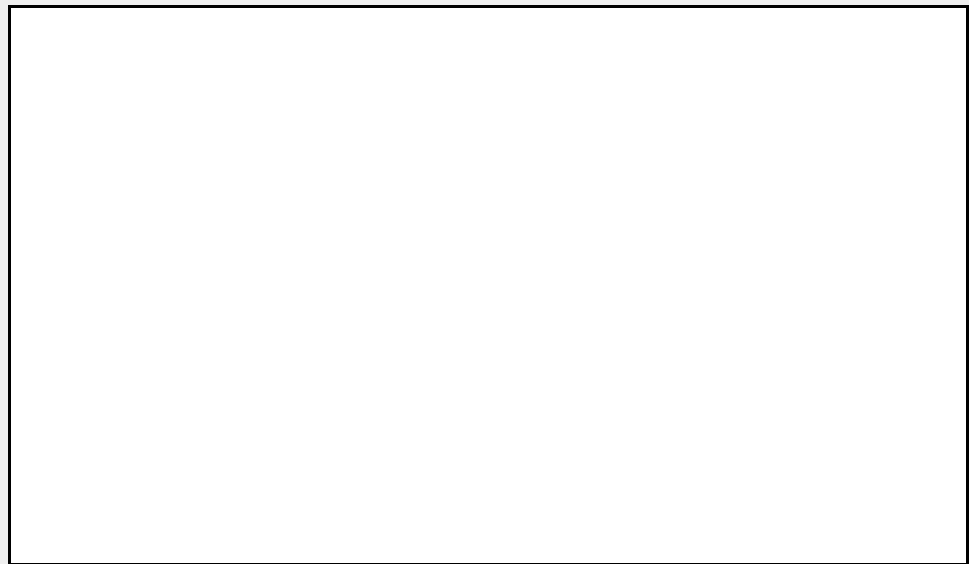
At recent public forums a number of themes have emerged:

- There is a need to create a sense of place in the Circle by increasing vitality; strengthening the residential and retail offerings; improving Euclid Avenue; making the Circle more user-friendly with attractive walkways, lighting and signage; providing better connections to the southwestern quadrant of the Circle by Cedar Hill; and eliminating real and perceived barriers between the Circle and adjacent neighborhoods.

- A balance must be struck between the desire to provide convenient parking and the desire to have a vibrant urban district that is not overwhelmed by parking lots. The solution will involve the promotion of alternatives to driving.

- A positive perception of University Circle should be created not only by increased marketing efforts, but by changing the reality of what exists through the development of new streetscapes, residential options, and retail establishments that will attract people.

For more information about the planning process, see UCI's Web site at www.universitycircle.org. or call 216-791-3900.



Cleared, leveled and stripped of topsoil: Development site next to Twinsburg City Hall.

Lament of the month

It seems that every week we get calls from citizens who are angered and saddened by the loss of a natural area in their community. Sometimes it's a wooded area, sometimes it's a wetland, or sometimes it's a creek. In most cases the destruction can't be stopped because it involves a developer who is following the building and zoning regulations of the community and has a legal right to proceed. But one still must question whether "progress" has to entail a complete destruction of the natural landscape.

The following message comes from Paul Buescher, who helped create Twinsburg's new Environmental Commission.

■

Has your hometown received the Tree City USA designation from the National Arbor Day Foundation? If so, do you really think that your hometown deserves this designation?

The Tree City USA designation promotes the thought of an environmentally conscious town full of lush woodlands and green space — a community striving together to preserve its natural resources. I have found, however, that this is not necessarily the case.

Here in Twinsburg, Ohio, we have been "awarded" the Tree City USA designation for the last three years. While it is true that the city has planted hundreds of trees during that time (mainly in tree lawns), it has also allowed literally hundreds of thousands of trees on hundreds of acres to be totally destroyed within the same time frame! The very environmental fabric of this city is being cut, ripped, shredded and torn apart at its seams, and yet the National Arbor Day Foundation has rewarded this city for environmental stewardship? This redefines the term naive!

How many other cities and towns across the region are equally guilty of promoting a charade such as this? How many folks are being duped into believing all is well in their hometowns when the exact opposite may be true?...[I recently witnessed the removal of thousands of trees] on a 50+ acre site behind the Twinsburg City Hall next to Tinkers Creek (the largest tributary of the Cuyahoga River). This is part of another 30 or so acre site that adjoins the city hall and also met the same fate. It is also across from yet another 30+ acres that met the same fate next to the Goodyear store on Darrow Road — the list goes on and on. This entire quadrant of the city contained some of the most majestic and truly old-growth woodlands that remained, and now they are gone forever. The situation is so out of control that the city has now resorted to having to place a \$10.5 million bond issue on the November ballot to purchase parkland outside of the city's border!

I hope to God that this fate never falls upon your hometown. The scenes that I have witnessed have been enough to force grown adults on their knees to cry. What makes this whole situation so sad is that I am the City of Twinsburg's Environmental Commission chairman. This advisory commission has been in existence since last December and even our cries have fallen on deaf ears.

Transitions

■ CleanLand Ohio, the urban beautification and tree planting group, has transformed into **ParkWorks**, and will be having a more prominent role in the improvement of parks in Cleveland. It's part of a growing appreciation of the importance of urban parks, public spaces and recreational opportunities.

■ **Andrew Baqué** is the new associate director of the Urban Design Center of Northeast Ohio. Formerly on the faculty of the School of Architecture at Louisiana State University, Baqué specializes in the revitalization of inner-city neighborhoods. The Urban Design Center is a program of the Kent State University School of Architecture and Environmental Design. This fall it will open an office in downtown Cleveland to assist in the redevelopment of the city's neighborhoods.

■ **Randy Brockway**, a landscape architect from New Jersey, will be the director of the new Northeast Ohio Center for Farmland Preservation, a project of the Western Reserve Resource Conservation and Development Council. The center will be a resource for communities that want to protect farmland with agricultural zoning, purchase of development rights and other land use programs. It also will work to make local farms more economically viable by promoting farmers' markets in towns throughout the region.

■ The **American Farmland Trust** is expanding its presence in Ohio by opening a Midwest Field Office in Columbus to help protect the region's best farmland.

■ SEED Ohio, the sustainable energy group, has a new executive director, **Carol Sahley**, and new program manager, **David Kriska**.

Supporting family farms

Northeast Ohio Family Farms (NOFF) is a new project working to support small farms through cooperative marketing and educational experiences that connect consumers with the sources of their food and fiber. The project has organized farm appreciation days where consumers can explore a family farm and purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, cheese, flowers and other products.

Upcoming farm appreciation days are August 7 (demonstrations of how to make pesto, goat cheese and zucchini recipes) and September 11 (demonstrations with draft horses, making salsa, shearing sheep and spinning wool) at Silver Creek Farm, 7097 Allyn Rd., off of SR 700 just north of Hiram. Hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information about NOFF, call 216-464-2618 or 440-834-0724.

■ Another way to support local farms is by joining a community supported agriculture (CSA) program. CSAs allow city folks to invest in a local farm in return for a share of the harvest. CSAs in Northeast Ohio include Silver Creek Farm near Hiram (330-569-3487) and the Crown Point Ecology Center in Bath (330-666-9200).

■ The Cleveland Botanical Garden and the North Union Farmer's Market have organized a series of lectures and food tastings to teach how gourmet chefs use fresh, locally grown ingredients in their cooking. On October 25, Deborah Madison, author of *The Greens Cookbook* and *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*, will speak on how putting locally grown food on the table sustains cultures and preserves the landscape. The program starts at 6 p.m. at the Botanical Garden in University Circle. Tickets are \$35. Call 216-721-1600 for reservations.

■ Each Saturday until October 23, local farmers will be selling their products at the North Union Farmer's Market at Shaker Square. Hours are 8 a.m. to noon.

Resources

■ **Health in neighborhoods:** The Sustainable Cleveland Partnership, which is coordinated locally by the Earth Day Coalition, has an *Environmental Health Action Guide* that provides local statistics, resources, and action tips to help neighborhoods address such environmental and health issues as childhood lead poisoning, asthma, air pollution, hazardous waste, safe drinking water, recycling, brownfields, and better nutrition. It's available in a printed format and online at <http://www.nhlink.net/enviro/scp/>. For more information, call 216-281-6468

■ **Business for smart growth:** The National Association of Local Governmental Environmental Professionals has released a study, *Profiles of Business Leadership on Smart Growth*, which reviews how business groups are working to reduce sprawl and make their metropolitan areas more economically competitive. Among the groups profiled is Build Up Greater Cleveland, a program of the Growth Association.

■ **Towpath nature:** Peg and Bob Bobel have written a great new guide to the natural history of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. The 152-page book, *The Nature of the Towpath*, is available at local bookstores, visitor

centers of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, or directly from the Cuyahoga Valley Association (where Peg is executive director) at PO Box 222, Peninsula, OH 44264. The price is \$14.95 (\$18.81 including tax and shipping).

■ **Lake Erie cleanup:** A report on the status of a lakewide management planning effort for Lake Erie is available at www.epa.gov/lakeerie, or fax information requests to the U.S. EPA at 312-886-7804.

■ **Environmental education:** Ohio state agencies and teachers' groups have released "Ohio EE 2000: A Strategic Plan for Environmental Education in Ohio," which outlines strategies for integrating environmental thinking into school curricula. One major problem is state competency testing. Unless the exams require environmental knowledge, many schools won't teach it. For more information, call Ohio EPA's Office of Environmental Education, 614-644-2873.

■ **Midwest mercury:** The National Wildlife Federation, Izaak Walton League and others have issued a "Midwest Mercury Report" that details extensive mercury contamination in lakes and streams in the upper Midwest. See the report at www.iwla.org or call 651-649-1446.

August 7
Program about the 30th anniversary of the **Cuyahoga River fire** and the current condition of the river, 2 p.m. at the Boston Store of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area.

August 8
Emerald Necklace bike tour featuring 10-, 25-, 50- or 100-mile rides through the Cleveland Metroparks. Call 216-371-6888 for registration information.

August 8
Walking tour of **sacred landmarks** in the University Circle area, 1-5 p.m. For reservation information, call the Cleveland Restoration Society at 216-426-1000.

August 8
Program by park rangers of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area about 19th-century **canal boating in the Flats** of Cleveland, 2 p.m. at Heritage Park on the east bank of the Flats.

August 9
Medina County Farmland Preservation Task Force meeting, 7 p.m. at the County Administration Building. For more information, call 330-725-4911.

August 13
Monthly board meeting of the **Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency**, 10 a.m. at a Lake County location to be announced. Call 216-241-2414 for more information.

August 13
Taste of the earth banquet and auction to

celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Crown Point Ecology Center, 3220 Ira Rd. in Bath. \$30 per person. Call 330-666-9200 for more information.

August 13-20
Nuclear-Free Great Lakes Action Camp, a week-long training camp in Michigan on issues of nuclear power and renewable/safe energy. For more information, call the Nuclear Free Great Lakes Campaign at 877-3NFGGLAC or see www.nirs/glac/glac/htm.



August 15
Four County Metric Bicycle Tour through parks in Cuyahoga, Lorain, Medina and Summit counties. For registration information, call the Lake Erie Wheelers at 440-331-0281.

August 15
Hike to explore the life of **Sanctuary Marsh**, 1 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks North Chagrin Nature Center.

August 19
Monthly meeting of sustainable energy group **SEED Ohio**, 6:30 p.m. at the Comfort Inn, E. 18th and Euclid Avenue in downtown Cleveland. A representative from the Ohio Consumers' Counsel will speak on electricity deregulation. For more information, call 440-526-9941.

August 20
Concert by Magpie, 7:30 p.m. at the Crown Point Ecology Center, 3220 Ira Rd. in Bath. Call 330-666-9200 for ticket information.

August 21
Hike to observe **birds and the plants** they depend upon, 7:30 a.m. at the Stanford Hostel in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area.

August 21
Tinkers Creek stream stomp, an all-day hike through the creek's gorge in the Cleveland Metroparks Bedford Reservation. Call 216-341-3152 to register.

August 21
Hike to discover **summer wildflowers**, 10 a.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks Brecksville Nature Center.

August 25
Monthly public program of the **Northeast Ohio Sierra Club**, 7:30 p.m. at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, 2600 South Park Blvd. in Shaker Heights.

August 26
Monarch butterfly tagging to help international scientific studies, 1:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks South Chagrin Reservation Old Field area. To register, call 440-247-7075. Also offered August 31.

August 26
Evening hike to observe **night wildlife**, 7 p.m. at the Geauga Park District's Rookery park. Call 440-834-1856, ext. 5420 for more information.

August 28
Hike to observe the **impacts of humans on the landscape** of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, 8 a.m. at the Wetmore Trailhead on Wetmore Road one mile east of Akron-Peninsula Road.

The owner's manual for the bioregion!

For nearly 20 years, EcoCity Cleveland's David Beach has been writing about urban and environmental issues in Northeast Ohio. Now, with the help of other local experts, he brings his years of experience together in one comprehensive resource.

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340 pages, trade paperback, illustrated
ISBN 0-9663999-0-0

August 28

Demonstration of netting and **tagging bats** for research, 8:45 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks North Chagrin Nature Center.

August 28-29

Grand opening of the Cleveland Metroparks new **Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation**, noon to 5 p.m. each day. The celebration will include exhibits, crafts, music and more. Located off E. 49th Street in Cuyahoga Heights. For more information, call 216-351-6300.

August 28-September 26

Coastweeks '99 celebration of Lake Erie, featuring beach cleanups, nature hikes, educational events, festivals and other programs. For event information, call the Ohio Lake Erie Office at 419-245-2514 or see www.epa.state.oh.us/oleo/.

September 7

David Kriska of SEED Ohio (Sustainable Energy for Economic Development) will speak on **utility deregulation** and efforts to develop renewable power sources. Brown bag lunch discussion, noon at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, 2600 South Park Blvd., Shaker Heights. Call 216-321-5935.

September 10-11

"Inhabiting the Land: A Conference on Culture and Ecology," the fifth annual **Buckeye Gathering** sponsored by the Buckeye Forest Council in the Hocking Hills. Featured speaker will be author **Wes Jackson** of The Land Institute. For more information, call 740-594-6400.

September 12

Hike-a-thon '99 hikes along **Doan Brook** and the Shaker parklands sponsored by Newman Outfitters for the benefit of the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes. For details, call 216-321-5935.

September 18

Paula Gonzalez, founder of EarthConnection in Cincinnati, will lead a workshop on **envisioning a sustainable future**, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Crown Point Ecology Center, 3220 Ira Rd. in Bath. Call 330-666-9200 for fees and information.

September 18

Geology walking tour of historic Lakeview Cemetery, 10 a.m. Call 216-421-2665 for reservations.

September 18-19

TASSLE (Tour Along the South Shore of Lake Erie) bike tour sponsored by the Lorain Lions Club.

September 19

Friends of the Crooked River canoe trip through the Pinery Narrows section of the Cuyahoga River. For details, call 330-666-4026.

September 21

Fall equinox celebration, 7 p.m. at the Crown Point Ecology Center, 3220 Ira Rd. in Bath. Call 330-666-9200 for more information.

September 24

Tour du Corridor '99 bike rally along the Ohio & Erie Canal Corridor. For details, call Ohio Canal Corridor at 216-348-1825.

September 24-26

1999 Biennial Forum on **Great Lakes Water Quality** in Milwaukee, sponsored by the International Joint Commission. For details, see www.ijc.org or call 202-736-9024.

September 25-28

Rail-Volution '99 conference in Dallas, the best national meeting on building livable communities with transit. For registration information, call 800-788-7077 or see www.railvolution.com.



Farm events

August 7

Farm Fest featuring products and

demonstrations from local organic farms, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Silver Creek Farm, 7097 Allyn Rd. north of Hiram. For more information, call Northeast Ohio Family Farms at 216-464-2618.

August 14

Farm ecology tour of Silver Creek Farm, a diversified organic farm in Geauga County, 1-4 p.m. Call 330-569-3487 for details.

August 15

Farm ecology tour of Sweetbriar Farm, a diversified organic farm in Portage County, 1-4 p.m. Call 330-527-5813 for details.

August 15

Farm ecology tour of the Stratford Ecological Center, a research center and demonstration farm in Delaware County, 2-5 p.m. Call 740-363-2548 for details.

September 11

Farm Fest featuring products and demonstrations from **local organic farms**, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Silver Creek Farm, 7097 Allyn Rd. north of Hiram. For more information, call Northeast Ohio Family Farms at 216-464-2618.

Board meetings of regional agencies

Here are the regular, monthly meeting times of agencies that are shaping our region. Call to confirm times and locations.

- **Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority**, 101 Erieside Ave. Cleveland, 241-8004. Friday of first full week at 10 a.m.
- **Cleveland Metroparks**, 4101 Fulton Parkway, Cleveland, 351-6300. Second and fourth Thursdays at 9 a.m.
- **Cuyahoga County Planning Commission**, 323 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, 443-3700. Second Tuesday at 2 p.m.
- **Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA)**, State Office Building, 615 Superior Ave. NW, Cleveland, 566-5100. First and third Tuesdays at 9 a.m.
- **Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)**, 668 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, 241-2414. Board meeting second Friday at 10 a.m. Transportation Advisory Committee third Thursday at 10 a.m.
- **Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District**, 3826 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, 881-6600. First and third Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.

**Natural vegetation
of Northeast Ohio
at the time of earliest
land surveys**

From the *Conservation Development Resource Manual* by the Countryside Program (adapted from a map by the Ohio Biological Survey)

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—David Orr, Oberlin College Environmental Studies Program

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