Executive Summary

This report is a collective presentation of the studio process undertaken by the University of Cincinnati’s School of Planning 2010 Spring Comprehensive Workshop. The focus of the workshop was the Mill Creek Watershed, a 166 square mile area in southwestern Ohio. The Watershed has reached a critical state due to a multitude of both internal and external factors including industrial flight, environmental degradation, building vacancies, unemployment, auto dependence, and a worsening national economy. While numerous organizations construct and implement plans for the future of the Watershed, a lack of regional collaboration often results in little progress.

Over the past century, the Mill Creek brought industry and increased population to the Watershed area. Today, the Mill Creek still remains a valuable natural asset. Urbanization has taken its toll, however, and both water quality and riparian corridor health have suffered. Another area of concern is the loss of population in the City of Cincinnati, and corresponding redistribution to the suburbs. Limited transportation options have worsened this outmigration by encouraging auto dependence. Social and environmental justice issues coincide with declining economic and environmental conditions in the Mill Creek Watershed.

Due to its uncertain future, planning in the Mill Creek Watershed requires the consideration of multiple possibilities for how the area will transform. This Workshop used the scenario planning approach to establish four plausible outcomes for the Watershed. Scenario planning seeks to open discussions about how things may unfold, providing the opportunity for individuals and organizations to look beyond their individual plans and concerns for the future.

The scenarios were created around an axis meant to delineate four combinations of two circumstances, the state of the national economy and regional governance and cohesion. Choice of these circumstances was driven by the results of deliberation sessions whereby students represented various actors and stakeholders in the Mill Creek Watershed. The horizontal axis represents the national state of the economy, ranging from worsening to improving economic conditions. The national economy is an external variable that cannot be controlled by individuals or organizations in the Watershed. The vertical axis represents the level of regional governance and collaboration within the Mill Creek Watershed. This variable is internal to the Watershed since organizations can influence the extent of collaboration by their
actions.

Based on the axis, four scenario teams were established to represent each of the four combinations. The four teams are “Green Phoenix,” “Factions Speak Louder than Words,” “The Queen is Dead,” and “Kindness in Crisis.” Each team created a statement of conditions of the Watershed in 2030, with differing outcomes depending on the scenario’s particular position on the axis. Fictional characters and narratives were created to portray each scenario in a relatable way. In addition, each team produced a comprehensive plan extending to 2050, based on 2030 scenario assumptions.

The baseline scenario team looked to 2020 and assumed no change in current conditions over the next ten years. This group also created the templates for the final report and poster designs. Also, they compiled the reports from each scenario team to create this comprehensive document.

The four scenarios portray varying pictures for the state of the Mill Creek Watershed in 2030. These scenarios give residents and organizations an opportunity to envision plausible futures, rather than moving forward passively. Since the Watershed crosses over multiple jurisdictional boundaries, a regional approach to governance is needed. Interestingly, regional collaboration is the common circumstance shared by “Green Phoenix” and “Kindness in Crisis,” the two scenarios that indicate more hopeful futures for the Watershed. Thus, with regional collaboration, the Mill Creek Watershed has the potential to come together in a united effort to positively shape its future.
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Acknowledgements

This Comprehensive Planning Workshop would like to thank the following for their efforts in bringing this project to fruition:

Robin Corathers, Executive Director of the Mill Creek Restoration Project and Guest Reviewer

Terry Grundy, Adjunct Faculty and Guest Reviewer

Susan Hilvert, for her expertise in film and claymation

Niehoff Studio and Staff, for tolerating us all twelve weeks

And the countless number of people interviewed for their opinions and local expertise
The story of disparate, divided communities is a timeless one. Rudyard Kipling, Charles Dickens and others have related stories of when “East is East and West is West” and “A Tale of Two Cities.” Social, economic, and cultural divides may be prevalent in our literature, but they need not guide our lived experiences. Divisiveness is not a predetermined fate. Communities, like the Mill Creek Watershed, retain the power to control and influence the direction of their own futures.
INTRODUCTION

The story of disparate, divided communities is a timeless one. Rudyard Kipling, Charles Dickens and others have related stories of when “East is East and West is West” and “A Tale of Two Cities.” Social, economic, and cultural divides may be prevalent in our literature, but they need not guide our lived experiences. Divisiveness is not a predetermined fate. Communities, like the Mill Creek Watershed, retain the power to control and influence the direction of their own futures.

The Watershed is currently at a crossroads and faced with an uncertain future. It has steadily declined throughout much of the twentieth century, but through the efforts of many committed governmental and nonprofit organizations, the Watershed can grow in a positive direction. The following report provides an understanding of the current state of the Mill Creek Watershed and outlines four plausible futures. These scenarios are not predictions, rather they are meant to be thought provoking and allow the residents and stakeholders in the Mill Creek Watershed to consider the future of this area, and by translation their own future.

History of the Mill Creek Watershed

The Mill Creek Watershed (shown in Figure 1 below) occupies 166 square miles within Butler and Hamilton Counties. It includes 43 of the City of Cincinnati’s 52 neighborhoods, several jurisdictions in Hamilton County, the southeast portion of Butler County, and is home to the Mill Creek, one of the most polluted and endangered urban rivers in the United States (Mill Creek Restoration Project). The Mill Creek is not a source of drinking water for the Watershed’s population; however, it empties into the Ohio River, which is one of the Watershed’s primary sources of drinking water. The current state of the Watershed evolved over time, requiring a brief overview of the history of the area in order to gain a full understanding of the existing conditions and the planning process conducted in the Comprehensive Workshop.

The earliest settlers of the Mill Creek Watershed utilized the area for agricultural purposes and saw
and gristmills. In order to build the mills, large trees were cut down; this resulted in deforestation and destroyed 85 percent of the original woodland by 1881 (Hedeen 1994, 30). The early economic development of the Watershed also required transportation. The Watershed was an ideal location for river transportation due to its river access and flat topography.

Cincinnati’s location on the Ohio River, the advent of the steamboat, and the construction of the Miami and Erie Canals in 1829 helped spur industrial development. The introduction of the canal system to the Watershed increased the Mill Creek’s flow by 35 percent, improving the river’s advantage for transportation and industry. In the 1870s and 1880s meat packers moved closer to the Mill Creek, and in the early 1900s distilleries were built in the same area. At approximately the same time Procter and Gamble built its Ivorydale plant in St. Bernard. The Mill Creek was seen as an ideal location for these industries as the waste they produced could be dumped in the river without polluting the city’s water supply.

Like many North American cities, Cincinnati’s competitive advantage for river transport and manufacturing contributed to its early economic strength and population growth. In 1871, the Union Stockyard Company formed to set up a more efficient stockyard complex. By the 1880s nearly all Cincinnati’s slaughterhouses and many of the packing and processing companies were located at the Union Stockyards in Camp Washington. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, however, railroads began to compete with river transport as the nation’s primary mode of transportation. During this transition, Cincinnati’s economic growth began to taper off. By 1863 the city’s canals were obsolete and the city began to focus on rail transit, but it was too late for Cincinnati to compete with other mid-western cities that had adopted rail transit early on, such as Chicago (Giglierano, Overmyer & Propas, 1988, 83 & 246).

In the early to mid-twentieth century the automobile emerged as the dominant form of transportation. This prompted a highway construction boom in the Watershed, including the creation of Queensgate I and II and the Mill Creek Expressway (I-75). An auto-centric society and economy contributed to the trends of declining population and reduced the dominance of manufacturing in the central portion of Cincinnati. Older industrial plants that had relied on rail transportation in the past, found their locations ill suited to modern truck transportation. The construction of new roadways also afforded city residents access to cheaper land in the suburbs and prompted their outmigration as well. As residents relocated and the City’s population declined, a number of retail shops were abandoned and moved to the suburbs (Kaplan, Wheeler & Holloway, 2004, 135). Consumer/business services and professional workers followed.

Urban Renewal began in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s. The movement was marked by large construction projects, slum clearance initiatives, and the displacement of many low income and minority communities. Large public housing projects were built to house displaced populations and became a visible symbol of poverty (Kaplan, Wheeler & Holloway, 2004, 232). In Cincinnati, much of the primarily Black population of West End was displaced. Most residents from West End and other targeted neighborhoods were relocated to Over-the-Rhine, Avondale, Corryville, Walnut Hills, Evanston and Mt. Auburn—all neighborhoods within the Watershed. This displacement, combined with the flight of affluent populations to the suburbs, and the construction of I-71, I-74 and the
Norwood Lateral contributed to suburban growth and concentrated poverty in the City (Giglierano, Overmyer & Propas, 1988, 105).

Outmigration had dire consequences for the City of Cincinnati. Its tax base dropped sharply as people, industrial plants, and commercial activities moved to the suburbs. As a result a disproportionate share of low income residents were left behind in the central city. Old buildings, left vacant and in disrepair, poorly maintained streets, archaic and leaking sewage and water pipes, and the lack of viable public spaces left many of the older neighborhoods desolate. The central city declined rapidly as the area became linked with high rates of crime and vacancy, homelessness, and lack of economic opportunity. The decline of the City and outmigration to the suburbs have continued to the present-day, laying the foundation for many of the current issues faced by the Mill Creek Watershed. Although history plays a central role in the current state of the Watershed, the circumstances to date are dynamic, placing the residents of and those who are planning for the area’s future in a pivotal position.

**Scenario Planning and the Comprehensive Studio Process**

The uncertain future of the Mill Creek Watershed requires a planning strategy that incorporates multiple possibilities for how the area will transform. Scenario planning is not about predicting the future. Rather, it uses existing trends to imagine plausible alternative outcomes. These trends are framed between those issues that are internal to the control of a place and external to its control or influence. Scenario planning requires the use of imagination to generate thoughts and ideas about how the future will unfold (Hopkins and Zapata 2007). The scenarios allow individuals to move beyond present-day concerns, to open discussions about the direction of a place, such as the Watershed, and to consider the possibility that future conditions may not be consistent with past trends. Scenario planning also provides an opportunity for organizations to imagine the effect of events that are beyond their control, including economic crisis and natural disasters.

This Comprehensive Planning Workshop chose to use scenario planning to develop plausible visions for the future of the Mill Creek Watershed. Before the scenarios could be created, the Workshop spent two weeks researching the economic, environmental, and social conditions of the Mill Creek Watershed, planning efforts, and major stakeholders. The Workshop was divided into five groups, each of which focused on a specific geographic portion of the Watershed or topical area. Four of the groups analyzed the City of Cincinnati, the northern portion of Hamilton County outside the City, the southeast portion of Butler County, and the Watershed region as a whole. A final group collected quantitative data on the entire Watershed.

The task of the four groups was to create a compendium of plans and actors within the Mill Creek Watershed and to determine overlapping issues, areas of concerns, and potential for improvements. Each group also conducted personal interviews with relevant players, either in person or by telephone. The Quantitative Analysis group collected and analyzed data to determine which indicators best described the economic, environmental, and social conditions of the Watershed.

Each group produced a report and presented its findings to the Workshop. This was followed by two days of deliberations during which students acted as representatives of major stakeholders in
the region. These deliberations sought to discover the major issues that affect each representative and each community across the Watershed. The common themes that came from these discussions focused on the health of the national economy and the limited cooperation existing between key stakeholders in the region.

The two themes of the national economy and regional cooperation were placed on a set of axes (see Figure 2). The horizontal axis represents the national economy, an external force ranging from economic depression to prosperity. The national economy was chosen for this study, but external forces in the scenario planning process can refer to any actions that are beyond the control of actors in the study area. External forces could have also included natural disasters or political decisions made at the national level.

The vertical axis represents the internal force of regional collaboration and cohesion in the Watershed, ranging from inter-jurisdictional cooperation to divisiveness. Internal forces include actions that are within the control of the study area stakeholders, and could have also included crime, education, or public health. Regional collaboration refers to mandated regional governance and cohesion in the study area, such as the Sacramento Area Council of Governments in California’s Sacramento Valley or the consolidated Louisville-Jefferson County Metro Government in Kentucky.

The axes became the basis for five different scenario teams, each with a project manager, graphic designers, writers, and editors. The scenario teams are as follows:

**Baseline Scenario** – Assumes a static condition and linear projection of trends in the Mill Creek
Watershed, including continued sprawl and traffic congestion, environmental degradation, economic instability, and disconnected political governance.

**Kindness in Crisis** – Regional governance and cohesion combined with worsening economic conditions. In this case, individuals, communities and city government are brought together by a troubled economy in an effort to create a sustainable future for the Mill Creek Watershed. **Green Phoenix** – Regional governance and cohesion combined with improving economic conditions. This scenario is characterized by the creation of a centralized government in Hamilton County, along with increasing population resulting from green industry investment. Further positives include improved education and declining poverty.

**Factions Speak Louder than Words** – Lack of regional governance and cohesion combined with improving economic conditions. In this scenario, strong economic growth at first conceals the detrimental effects of lacking cooperation among municipalities. Eventually, limited economic growth and civil unrest are the results.

**The Queen is Dead** – Lack of regional governance and cohesion combined with worsening economic conditions. This scenario is characterized by negative trends in the economy, transportation, the environment, and social progress. Physical evidence of this downturn is seen in the degradation of urban infrastructure and continued environmental decline.

The scenario planning teams (excluding the baseline scenario team) looked twenty years into the future, to 2030. While each scenario involves speculation, the events must be plausible over the time period. Each group wrote a statement of conditions in 2030, produced multiple fictional characters portrayed in a narrative form, and developed a comprehensive plan for the year 2050 based on the assumptions of its scenario in 2030.

The team charged with creating the baseline scenario developed a narrative describing the state of the Watershed in 2020. This effort assumes the existing trends do not change. In this scenario, the positive trends continue and the negative trends intensify. This group also produced an existing conditions report for the Watershed based on the reconnaissance efforts and reports produced by the teams during the first part of the workshop and compiled all the scenario planning materials into one all-inclusive report.

In addition to creating written materials, each scenario team presented its vision for the future in graphic form, capitalizing on the power of strong images to tell a story. A master graphics team coordinated with each group’s designers to develop icons for the various scenarios and a template for the final document and related posters. Two groups explored the use of media to describe their scenario and created short videos. Finally, a website was created to be a digital, public access point for all the materials developed throughout the planning process.

In order to completely understand the four scenarios developed by the comprehensive workshop teams, one must first understand the existing conditions within the Watershed. Based on the information and research gathered about the Watershed, an existing conditions analysis providing a synopsis of the current circumstances of the Mill Creek Watershed follows. Reviewing this existing conditions report and the Baseline Scenario, will provide a clear understanding of the current state of the Watershed and elucidate the point from which each created scenario evolves.
Our study area includes the neighborhoods of Cincinnati that fall within the boundaries of the Mill Creek Watershed, including the cities of Norwood, St. Bernard and Delhi Township. The study area stretches north from the Central Business District to Hartwell, and is bounded by Westwood and Riverside on the west and Hyde Park and Pleasant Ridge on the east. The Mill Creek cuts the area in half and is bordered by major expressways and railways.

Source: http://www.millcreekwatershed.org/assets/images/MCjurisdictionmap.jpg
EXISTING CONDITIONS AND BASELINE SCENARIO

I. INTRODUCTION

The Mill Creek Watershed is located in the Cincinnati Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA). The CMSA consists of 13 counties in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky. Many of the counties, cities, municipalities, and neighborhoods in the CMSA have conflicting priorities for community and economic development, environmental preservation, and land use. The Watershed is located within this patchwork of jurisdictions, cutting through the center portion of the CMSA. The lack of regional collaboration can prohibit the implementation of broad-scale plans designed to affect the entire Watershed. Various regional players attempt to fill this void, including a number of nonprofit organizations as well as state and federal agencies. Their efforts to work with local jurisdictions have been met with varying degrees of success.

The following report outlines the existing state of demographics, the economy, social conditions, transportation, land use, and the environment in the Mill Creek Watershed. These sections are followed by a synopsis of current planning activities being conducted in the Watershed and their future implications.

II. DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

The population of the CMSA is 1,863,505. The Mill Creek Watershed has a high population density relative to the rest of the CMSA (see Figure 1). Hamilton County, which includes the City of Cincinnati, contains approximately two-thirds of the Watershed and is the most populous county in the CMSA. The remaining one-third of the Watershed’s population lies in Butler County, which is the fastest growing and second most populous county in the CMSA (see Figure 2).
Between 1990 and 2000, the CMSA experienced a 19.2 percent growth rate. In contrast, both Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati declined in population between 1990 and 2000 by 2.4 percent and 9.1 percent, respectively. This decline in population made Hamilton County the only county in the CMSA to lose population during this time.

As indicated in Figure 3, the populations of both the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County declined over the past three decades, while the population of the entire CMSA experienced a 19 percent increase. These divergent population trends are occurring because many residents of Cincinnati and Hamilton County are moving to neighboring counties. Figure 4 illustrates this contrast by showing the percent population change of individual jurisdictions in proportion to the CMSA from 1990 to 2000.
The projected population for the Mill Creek Watershed for the year 2030 is 821,859, representing an increase of 73,534 between 2008 and 2030. This data was obtained by finding the mean of five different regression models for population projections, shown in Table 1. Population projections of this nature estimate the size of the future population, which facilitates planning for future infrastructure and service needs. The Cincinnati CMSA grew at a rate of 8.9 percent between 1990 and 2000. This was slow as compared to neighboring CMSAs: Lexington, Kentucky had an 18 percent growth rate, and Indianapolis, Indiana had a 16 percent growth rate. According to CensusScope, the national population growth rate between 1990 and 2000 was 13 percent, substantially higher than that of the Cincinnati CMSA. The population growth rate in Ohio between 1990 and 2000 was 4.7 percent, showing that Cincinnati has a substantially higher population growth rate than the state as a whole.

Table 1: 2030 Population Projections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Linear (Regression)</th>
<th>Exponential (Regression)</th>
<th>Exponential Modified</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>811,149</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>777,455</td>
<td>776,164</td>
<td>310,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>714,741</td>
<td>815,825</td>
<td>782,130</td>
<td>780,625</td>
<td>822,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>820,500</td>
<td>719,417</td>
<td>786,806</td>
<td>785,112</td>
<td>725,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>825,176</td>
<td>791,481</td>
<td>832,444</td>
<td>789,624</td>
<td>832,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>829,851</td>
<td>796,157</td>
<td>844,562</td>
<td>794,163</td>
<td>844,562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Age and Sex

Figures 5, 6, and 7 illustrate the 2008 populations of the jurisdictions within the Watershed—Hamilton County, Butler County, and the City of Cincinnati—broken down by age cohort. In Butler County and the City of Cincinnati, the largest percentage of the population is between the ages of 20 and 29. In Hamilton County, the greatest percentage of the population is between the ages of 40 to 49. Understanding the age composition of the populations within the Watershed is integral to determining the current and future needs of the population living in the Watershed. For example, the population between the ages of 22 and 34 is referred to as the entrepreneurial cohort. This cohort makes a large contribution to the economic prosperity of a particular region because it is entering its peak working years (Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission). Further, the percentage of children can indicate the needed educational infrastructure. In order to ensure that the needs of the Watershed’s population are met, an understanding of the age composition of the population of the Mill Creek Watershed is essential.

**Hamilton County Age Chart in 2008**

**Total Population: 850,869**

- 0~9: 4.30%
- 10~19: 5.70%
- 20~29: 12.90%
- 30~39: 14.40%
- 40~49: 12.40%
- 50~59: 15.50%
- 60~69: 12.60%
- 70~79: 7.90%
- 80+: 4.70%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2006-2008; Note: Based on total population of 850,869

Figure 5: Hamilton County Age Chart in 2008

**Butler County Age Chart in 2008**

**Total Population: 357,386**

- 0~9: 2.90%
- 10~19: 4.70%
- 20~29: 13.80%
- 30~39: 14.60%
- 40~49: 13.20%
- 50~59: 15.40%
- 60~69: 12.90%
- 70~79: 7.90%
- 80+: 14.60%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2006-2008; Note: Based on total population of 357,386

Figure 6: Butler County Age Chart in 2008
The population pyramids below show how the composition of the population in Hamilton County has changed from 1980 to 2000. The population pyramids indicate the largest cohort of the Hamilton County population in 2000 is composed of those age 40 to 45 year olds. This age cohort will reach retirement age by the year 2020 and require new or altered services and infrastructure to meet its needs. The population pyramids are also broken down by sex. Similar to age, the proportion of the population that is male or female dictates the types of services and infrastructure needed in the future as the population ages and grows.

Race and Ethnicity

The racial composition of the Mill Creek Watershed varies by jurisdiction. In 2008, the Hamilton County and Butler County populations were predominantly White, with 72 percent and 90 percent of the populations identifying as White alone, respectively. The City of Cincinnati has a more
diverse racial profile; 52 percent of the population was White and 45 percent of the population was Black or African American in 2008. African American and White are the two predominant racial groups in the Mill Creek Watershed. The Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission notes the County’s racial diversity has increased over the past three decades. This corresponds with a steady decline in the White population in the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. Generally, the White population is afforded mobility and can move out to the suburbs, while the Black population often has lower income levels, limiting mobility and forcing them to remain concentrated in portions of Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati. The U.S. Census data for the CMSA indicate geographical racial segregation in Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati. Figure 9 utilizes a segregation index to delineate areas of low and high segregation. Census tracts of low segregation are those that have populations of different races within the census tract, while those of high segregation have a population that is predominantly one race. Segregation in the Mill Creek Watershed will be discussed in more detail in the Social Conditions section of this report.

![Population Segregation Map](image)

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. U.S. Census Bureau.; Note: Level of geography is census blocks.

Figure 9: Population Segregation Map

III. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The Cincinnati CMSA has a strong economic standing in the Midwest. It is home to six Fortune 500 companies (see Table 2) and an employment base of 940,084 (Economics Center 2004).

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1 The Cincinnati CMSA data is used instead of the Mill Creek Watershed data utilized in some of the analyses above, because the Mill Creek Watershed dominates the economy of the CMSA. Therefore the CMSA numbers reflect what is happening in the economy of the Watershed.

2 Due to the recent economic crisis, the total employment figures presented in the tables and information in this report have likely changed. The Cincinnati CMSA has experienced a similarly sharp rise in unemployment as the nation in this recession and had an unemployment rate of more than ten percent in the first part of 2010.
### Table 2: Fortune 500 Companies Headquartered in Cincinnati

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Fortune 500 Rank</th>
<th>2009 Revenue ($ billions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proctor &amp; Gamble</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroger</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macy's</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Third Bancorp</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western &amp; Southern Financial Group</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Financial Group</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fortune 2010

Much of the CMSA’s employment is concentrated in four established economic sectors (aerospace, automotive, chemistry & plastics, and financial services) and four emerging key sectors (advanced energy, consumer products, information technology, and life sciences). Employment in the CMSA is detailed by two-digit NAICS code in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAICS Code</th>
<th>Industry Sector Description</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Cincinnati MSA</th>
<th>Location Quotient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Forestry, fishing, hunting, and agriculture support</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Transportation &amp; warehousing</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Finance &amp; insurance</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Real estate &amp; rental &amp; leasing</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial activities (52 &amp; 53)</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Professional, scientific &amp; technical services</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Management of companies &amp; enterprises</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Admin, support, waste mgt, remediation services</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional and business services (54,55,56)</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Health care &amp; social assistance</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education and health services (61 &amp; 62)</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Arts, entertainment &amp; recreation</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Accommodation &amp; food services</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leisure and hospitality (71 &amp; 72)</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Other services (except public administration)</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Auxiliaries (exc corporate, subsidiary &amp; regional mgt)</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3: Employment by Industrial Sector (2001)
Cincinnati has an advantage over the United States in any industrial sector where the location quotient is greater than one. A location quotient greater than one indicates a local economy can satisfy its own employment needs and become an exporter of goods or services in a particular industry. The four strongest sectors are wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, management, and auxiliary services.

These strengths replace Cincinnati's formerly dominant economic sectors. Table 4 demonstrates these changes, showing dramatic alterations in the CMSA's employment composition from 1990-2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Group</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Employed persons, 16 years &amp; over</td>
<td>872,258</td>
<td>982,727</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining</td>
<td>12,985</td>
<td>4,643</td>
<td>-64.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>51,517</td>
<td>65,953</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>181,917</td>
<td>171,949</td>
<td>-5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing</td>
<td>57,663</td>
<td>72,973</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and other services</td>
<td>128,864</td>
<td>239,976</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational, health and social services</td>
<td>143,513</td>
<td>183,451</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>28,676</td>
<td>35,085</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Identification of Industry Clusters for Guiding Economic Development Efforts in Cincinnati USA

Table 4: Cincinnati CMSA Employment by Industry Group (2001)

There was a substantial decline in the agricultural sector and a modest decline in manufacturing employment during this period in Cincinnati. The 2010 Regional Economic Outlook Report published by the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce projects the loss of manufacturing jobs in the city will continue and will contribute to economic stagnation as the area attempts to recover from the recent recession.

The CMSA's losses in manufacturing were compensated for by large gains in service sector industries (i.e. professional services, finance, insurance, real estate, and education). This transition follows the general path of the nation, which has shifted from a manufacturing to a service economy over the past several decades. An increased service sector presence has contributed to the expansion of the Cincinnati CMSA's gross domestic product (GDP). In 2001, the GDP for the Cincinnati area was $10.1 billion. This grew to $13.8 billion by 2007 (Cincinnati Economic Development Department). Some areas saw more benefits from this growth than others and continue to see service sector and high-tech development as critical to their future economic growth. West Chester Township in Butler County, for instance, is now home to several major industries including GE Aviation, Proctor and Gamble Beckett Ridge Technical Center, and BAE Systems. The population of West Chester more than doubled every ten years from 1960 to 1990 and continues to grow approximately 35 percent a decade.

West Chester and other affluent communities in Butler and Hamilton Counties have the resources and land to support an expanded service sector presence. This has come at a cost to the City of
Cincinnati, which has been struggling to maintain a competitive advantage over its surrounding suburbs. The suburbs can offer newer buildings with plentiful parking as well as other advantages. As a result, vacancy rates for office space have been increasing in the city. In 2000, the city accounted for 52.4 percent of the MSA’s occupied office space; this decreased to 47.1 percent in 2006 (RCLCO 2010, GO Cincinnati 2008). The City of Cincinnati is not growing as fast as the region due in part to its trouble competing for new freestanding industrial space. From 2003 to 2008, the metropolitan area outside the city limits added 2.5 million square feet of industrial space while the city added only 360,000 square feet (RCLCO 2010, GO Cincinnati 2008).

With the changing economic climate and the shift from the city to the suburbs, every jurisdiction in the Mill Creek Watershed prioritizes economic development, either to gain a competitive advantage, to maintain fiscal stability, or to sustain itself. Some wealthier areas, like West Chester, Blue Ash, Wyoming, and Springfield Township, leverage their strong commercial and tax bases to accomplish economic development. Their strategies include attracting major industries, providing business incentives, or gaining enterprise zone status, which allows companies to receive real and/or personal property tax abatements of up to 60 percent for up to ten years. These affluent areas stand in contrast to struggling communities such as Lockland and Lincoln Heights, which have low area median incomes and fewer public and private resources. These communities struggle with poverty, lack of job opportunities and issues of social decline. Limited job opportunities and high unemployment rates can exacerbate poverty rates and lead to neighborhood concentrations of poverty.

IV. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Concentrated poverty has been and continues to be an issue facing many jurisdictions within the Mill Creek Watershed. The history of the Watershed has led to concentrations of poverty today. The Official Plan of the City of Cincinnati, created in 1925, notes the majority of the affluent residents had relocated to the outer hills and the African American population was concentrated in West End and in the Mill Creek Valley. The Metropolitan Master Plan of 1948 noted the neighborhoods of the Mill Creek Valley were in need of redevelopment. Beginning in the 1950s, Urban Renewal exacerbated concentrations of poverty. The Urban Renewal efforts in the City of Cincinnati marked the third largest slum clearance in the nation, destroying 3,700 buildings and forcing African Americans to relocate to the Mill Creek Valley neighborhoods of Over-the-Rhine, Avondale, Corryville, Walnut Hills, Evanston, and Mount Auburn, while the affluent populations continued to move out to the new suburbs. The Cincinnati neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty historically are also those experiencing concentrations of poverty today.

Large concentrations of poverty exist within the City of Cincinnati and portions of Hamilton County (see Figure 10). Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati have 13.6 and 25.7 percent of people living below the poverty level, respectively. The map below illustrates concentrations of poverty in Hamilton County for the year 2000; all the census tracts with 30 percent or more of the population in poverty are located within the City of Cincinnati. The city neighborhoods within the Mill Creek Watershed with concentrations of poverty include: Lower Price Hill, English Woods, South Cummins ville/Millvale, Over-the-Rhine, Winton Hills, and Fay Apartments. These neighborhoods
all have a majority of individuals and/or families living below the poverty level. Certain jurisdictions within Hamilton County (outside the City of Cincinnati) are experiencing concentrated poverty; this stands in stark contrast to the more affluent neighborhoods within the County. Higher income communities like Blue Ash, Sharonville and Wyoming are adjacent to low income neighborhoods including Arlington Heights, Lincoln Heights, and Lockland. The localities with concentrations of poverty have low area median income relative to the area median income of the wealthier jurisdictions.

Concentrations of poverty, without strong public policy interventions, can often lead to neighborhood decline, high crime rates, and low educational attainment. The City of Cincinnati has the highest concentration of crime incidents in the Mill Creek Watershed, with 332,608 crimes in 2008 (see Figure 11). The rest of Hamilton County has the second highest number of crimes with 62,498 offenses in 2008. The graphs below illustrate the disparity in crime rates between jurisdictions within the Mill Creek Watershed. Crime is concentrated in the same areas where concentrations of poverty were identified in the above discussion: the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.³

Low educational attainment is often also an issue associated with concentrations of poverty. According to data from the American Community Survey for 2006 to 2008, 45 percent of those below the poverty level in Cincinnati have less than a high school education (see Figure 12). Five out of seven of the schools in the City of Cincinnati with the highest dropout rates are located in neighborhoods within the Mill Creek Watershed. Low educational attainment results in a cyclical pattern of unemployment and poverty, sustaining and, in some cases, exacerbating existing concentrations of poverty.

³ The correlation between concentrated poverty and crime concentration does not reflect that those in poverty are more likely to commit crimes, as the crime data only documents where the crimes take place and not where the people committing the crimes live. Instead, this graph is meant to illustrate the correlation between high poverty rates and high rates of criminal activity.
V. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation plays a large role in the character of the Mill Creek Watershed, affecting the region’s land use, commerce, and public health. The watershed contains 2,000 linear miles of roads, over 300 miles of railway tracks, as well as sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways. These highways include Interstates I-75, I-71, I-74, and I-275. The Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky and Dayton International Airports provide another transportation option for the Cincinnati CMSA.

The four interstates and the many state, county, and local roads in the region accommodate a growing number of commuters each year. According to the 2008 OKI 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, 398,465 of Hamilton County residents commuted somewhere for work in 2000; 15.6 percent of these residents traveled outside Hamilton County for these purposes. This percentage has increased since the 1970s, when only 10.1 percent of commuters left the county. Butler County has also experienced a change in its commuting habits over this period, as the percentage of commuters leaving the county has increased from 27.9 to 43.6 percent. The total number of commuters within the two counties has increased from 424,574 in 1970 to 558,779 in 2000.
The increase in traffic has led to congested roadways, longer commute times, and limited pedestrian movement, or walkability. Walkability is measured by the straight-line distance between a municipality’s geographic center and neighborhood amenities such as stores, schools, and libraries. This analysis shows the southern and eastern areas of the Watershed, consisting of Cincinnati and its surrounding suburbs, have more opportunities for pedestrian-based movement than the northern and western areas (see Figure 13).4

The current response to the increase in automobile traffic is to widen existing roadways and increase the number of access points to highways. These improvements have occurred on major roads such as State Route 4 in Fairfield, State Route 42 in West Chester, I-75, Cincinnati-Dayton Road, and the Butler County Highway. Mass-transit options in the Watershed are limited to the Southwest Ohio Regional Transportation Association (SORTA) bus system, which serves Hamilton County and parts of the surrounding counties. SORTA provides 29 million passenger trips annually (OKI).

Passenger-based railway transportation is largely non-existent in the Mill Creek Watershed, as Amtrak services the Queensgate-based Union Terminal station only twice each day. While passenger-based rail transportation is limited, freight-based rail transportation holds a larger presence in the area, with large rail companies such as Norfolk Southern and CSX operating out of the Mill Creek Valley. Some initiatives are attempting to address other modes of transit, such as the

4 The walkability of the Watershed was assessed using Walkscore.com, which does not account for connectivity; making some areas seem more walkable than they are.
proposed streetcar project and pedestrian/bicycle paths and greenways that have been installed in areas along the Mill Creek.

VI. EXISTING LAND USE

The Mill Creek Watershed occupies 166 square miles within Butler and Hamilton Counties. The floodplain along the Mill Creek varies in width, and is twice as wide in the upper Mill Creek in Butler County as in the lower Mill Creek. In the Watershed, residential properties, public facilities, and industrial land holdings occupy 35 percent, 12.5 percent, and 10 percent of current land use, respectively (see Figure 14). This distribution of land usage affects the Watershed’s environmental quality and has implications for the area economy and those who live and work in the region.

Single family residential is the most common residential parcel type in the Watershed. According to the demographic analysis tool Social Explorer, Hamilton and Butler Counties had 469,872 occupied housing units in 2000. Of these units, 62.9 percent were owner occupied and 37.1 percent were renter occupied. The 469,872 occupied housing units made up 93.4 percent of the housing units available in the area, leaving the remaining 6.6 percent (33,314 housing units) vacant. When it comes to building vacancies, there is a distinct contrast between jurisdictions; numbers range from Lockland at 11.4 percent to 1.4 percent in Evendale (Cincinnati Area Geographic Information Systems Consortium (CAGIS) 2009).

![Figure 14: Land Use Distribution. Source: CAGIS](image)

Most of the industrial sites are adjacent to the Mill Creek and the I-75 corridor, due to the highway’s
capacity for freight traffic. The major corporate stakeholders in the area occupy large tracts, including CSX Railroad (49 properties), Norfolk Southern Railroad (23 properties), Procter and Gamble (23 properties), and General Electric (14 properties).

Industrial occupancy has made a lasting impact on the Watershed. While industries still exist in the area, many industrial parcels are now vacant. About 22 percent of industrial parcels in Hamilton County are vacant, over 50 percent of which are located in the Mill Creek Watershed. Vacant industrial sites can pose challenges for redevelopment due to the potential for contamination from prior occupants. The majority of these contaminated sites (brownfields) are small and scattered, located mostly along the I-75 corridor (CAGIS 2009).

Building vacancies along the Mill Creek have resulted in land use changes. Environmental groups, such as the Mill Creek Restoration Project, have acquired vacant properties and are returning them to a more natural state. Their work includes removing existing structures, tilling and aerating the soils, and installing area-appropriate plantings.

Numerous parks exist within the Mill Creek Watershed, including neighborhood parks (active – athletic fields, bike paths, playgrounds; passive – nature areas, wilderness areas, picnic grounds), recreation areas, nature preserves, and conservation areas. Hamilton County Parks District manages the largest portion of parks in the Watershed, at approximately 14,656 acres. The Cincinnati Parks Board manages over 5,000 acres, while Butler County Metro Parks manages 3,200 acres. The Land Conservancy of Hamilton County manages over 70 acres.

**VII. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

The natural environment of the entire Mill Creek Watershed is in some state of degradation due to the urbanization process and resulting loss of natural systems. Certain locations suffer higher levels of water and air pollution than others, depending on their proximity to the Mill Creek’s confluence with the Ohio River. There are numerous ways in which urbanization has harmed and continues to harm the Mill Creek and the entire Watershed, many related to the combined sewer system and the amount of impervious surface cover. Stream channelization also contributes to negative environmental conditions. The degraded environmental conditions translate directly to public health and environmental justice concerns as well, especially in the lower half of the Watershed.

**Water Quality**

The Cincinnati/Hamilton County portions of the Mill Creek Watershed are the most highly degraded due largely to the combined sewer system. During rain events, combined sewers fill with both stormwater and sewage, often at such a volume as to risk bursting the pipes or backing up into basements. To prevent this from happening, over 16 billion gallons of untreated sewage output are released from Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) locations directly into the Mill Creek each year (see Figure 15).
As a result of the pollutants released during these CSO events, the water quality, stream habitat and aquatic systems of the Mill Creek are impaired. The Metropolitan Sewer District, in conjunction with Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati, is currently working under a Consent Decree with the Ohio EPA to remedy the combined sewer situation. As a result of the consent decree, MSD must produce a plan by 2012 that will reduce at least two billion gallons of CSO overflows by 2018. By 2017, MSD must also produce a progress report outlining how they will undertake a larger-scale project to eliminate 85 percent (14 billion gallons of annual output) from the combined sewer overflows.

Large areas of impervious surface cover (i.e. roads, sidewalks, roofs, and parking lots) also contribute to the poor environmental conditions in the Mill Creek Watershed. Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces results in pollutants such as oil, gasoline, fertilizers and pesticides being carried directly into the Mill Creek. Water flows faster over pavement and rooftops and is less able to filtrate through the ground. This results in a larger proportion of stormwater ending up in the combined sewer, increasing the likelihood of CSO events. Higher levels of impervious surface area also result in increased volumes and velocity of stormwater, leading to stream erosion and sedimentation.

The MSD Sewershed is currently covered by approximately 40 percent impervious surface. Figure 16 displays a percentage breakdown of impervious surface categories along with the pervious cover in the Sewershed. A watershed with as little as eight percent impervious surface cover is compromised in its ability to maintain good stream quality (Weiller 2009, 29). Any stream with more than 25 percent surrounding impervious surface cover is classified as non-supportive for most natural life and serves primarily as a channel for stormwater. Industrial land use has the highest level of impervious surface cover of all land use classifications. The substantial industrial property
adjacent to the Mill Creek further contributes to the degraded stream quality (see Figure 16 for existing land use in the Watershed).

![Figure 16: Pervious vs. Impervious Land Use in MSD Area](source)

![Figure 17: Existing Land Use in the Mill Creek Watershed](source)

Source: Mill Creek Watershed Greenway Master Plan. www.millcreekrestoration.org/greenways.php#map

Source: CAGIS 2006; Butler GIS Data

Figure 16: Pervious vs. Impervious Land Use in MSD Area

Figure 17: Existing Land Use in the Mill Creek Watershed
Channelization also contributes to the environmental degradation of the lower eight miles of the Mill Creek. This is the result of flood control measures undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers in the 1980s and leaves no chance for healthy aquatic life in the stream unless the channels are removed. Some of the upper stream segments have also been channelized by individual communities or jurisdictions, again to address issues of flooding.

Overall, most stream segments suffer from soil erosion, nutrient enrichment, altered habitats, sedimentation and flow alterations. The northern segments in Butler County have higher stream quality, but are still impaired due to the same urbanization factors existing in Cincinnati and Hamilton County. In addition, runoff from pastureland and agricultural land contribute to water quality impairment in the Upper Mill Creek area. Population increases over the last 40 years have led to corresponding increases in impervious surface cover.

Environmental Justice

The combination of industrial sites and I-75 along the Mill Creek lead to elevated emission levels in the Watershed. The Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services tracks air quality in five locations, four of which fall within the Mill Creek Watershed (see Figure 18). For Hamilton County, there are five chemicals of concern (acrylonitrile; benzene; 1, 3-butadiene; carbon tetrachloride; and chloroform) (Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services). The sources of these chemicals are industrial, gasoline, or combustion related, except for chloroform, which is a byproduct of chlorine. The four Mill Creek Watershed testing sites, Carthage, Lower Price Hill, Reading, and Winton Place have excess cancers per 100,000 people of six, four, four, and three, respectively. This indicator directly links urbanization to air quality, and, in turn, air quality to compromised public health.

Source: 2007 Air Toxics Report, Hamilton County, Ohio.

Figure 18: Air Quality Testing Sites

The Reading testing location was closed in 2007.
Environmental justice is concerned with the proximity of residents to industries that are potentially harmful, either through air, water or noise pollution, or by direct impact such as pedestrian traffic casualties. Two indicators of environmental justice are toxic-release facilities and solid waste sites. As seen in the Figure 19, there is a disproportionately large population of low-income residents living near such facilities in the Mill Creek industrial corridor. These residents are exposed to a higher level of harmful emissions by virtue of their housing locations. Similarly, Figure 20 displays more than a dozen solid waste facilities throughout Hamilton County, including landfills, incinerators, and waste transfer stations, many falling within low-income portions of the Watershed.

http://www.communitycompass.org/v2/reports/16/16_7.pdf
Figure 19: Low Income Residents and Location of Toxic Release Facilities
VIII. THE STATE OF PLANNING IN THE WATERSHED

Planning by Location

The geography of the Mill Creek Watershed crosses county, city, and neighborhood boundaries. This requires that numerous jurisdictions plan simultaneously to address broad issues such as transportation, community and economic development, environmental protection, land use, and urban design. The level and type of planning undertaken in each sector varies by level of governance, geographic location, age of the community, and socioeconomic status. The findings below were based on extensive analysis of the plans and actors in the region by the entire Mill Creek Watershed Reconnaissance team. See Appendices A and B for summaries of plans and actors in the region.

The Region

Regional planning in the Watershed typically focuses on restoring the Mill Creek, transportation, land-use planning and preservation, and economic development. These plans affect the entire Watershed and require the efforts of multiple actors at the national, state, county, and neighborhood levels, but no single regional governing body exists. Many of the city- and region-wide plans recognize the importance of having such a body, and make regional coordination a requirement of implementation, but no plans mention strategies for developing a shared implementation mechanism or offer specific steps to achieve regional coordination. The plans also do not take neighborhood-level efforts into consideration and do not account for the fact that many neighborhood-level plans do not prioritize regional coordination. As a result, many plans created...
at a regional level conflict with others. This can cause unnecessary competition for scarce resources and policy gridlock.

Along the Mill Creek, for instance, various parties have outlined plans to remediate sources of pollution and runoff, restore native habitats, and manage flooding. Pollution and runoff control are being addressed by MSD’s Project Groundwork and by projects that increase permeable surfaces to absorb stormwater. Some groups, such as the Mill Creek Restoration Project, focus their efforts on acquiring vacant lands around the Mill Creek, restoring them to their natural state and creating greenways for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Regional planning efforts in the Watershed also focus on making improvements to existing highway and transportation infrastructure, developing long-distance passenger rail networks, making recommendations for future land use policies, restoring brownfields in industrial areas, revitalizing housing stock, and preventing foreclosures in low income neighborhoods.

The City of Cincinnati and its Neighborhoods

Due to its size and influence in the area, the City of Cincinnati’s planning projects differ from the projects in other, smaller communities in the Mill Creek Watershed. Cincinnati’s planning focuses on creating a multi-modal transportation network, fostering an atmosphere for regional collaboration, addressing the problems facing the Mill Creek, and confronting issues of environmental and social justice in the City. Prominent plans include the Hamilton County 2030 Plan, the Climate Protection Action Plan, the Cincinnati Parks 2007 Centennial Master Plan, the Bicycle Master Plan, the 3C Commuter Rail Study, and the Cincinnati Streetcar Feasibility Study.

Some city plans attempt to be regional in scope, but many are written at the neighborhood level and are highly localized to address the proximal needs of each community. Some themes, including economic development and addressing the problem of vacant and declining industrial stock are consistent throughout all the plans. Each plan’s vision and goals emphasize improving the quality of life for Cincinnati residents, but the plans propose different implementation strategies to accomplish such improvement. Again, the absence of a unified set of interests for the entire city poses a challenge for planning efforts on a broad scale.

The need for economic renewal and development is consistent throughout all the neighborhood plans. The strategies used vary in scale and type based on the neighborhood. Economic development is undertaken, in part, to help a community promote its individual competitive advantages while minimizing its weaknesses. Each neighborhood plan includes strategies for identifying new economic opportunities, mainly by focusing on revitalizing and retaining the commercial components of the neighborhood. Several neighborhoods (i.e. West End and Camp Washington) have plans that focus on creating or maintaining a neighborhood business district. Other neighborhoods (i.e. Sedamsville and South Cumminsprisingly Millvale) focus on attracting new businesses and industry to the community to spur revitalization.

Neighborhood plans also frequently mention the problem of declining, vacant industrial and
residential housing stock in the Mill Creek Valley. Some plans identify these sites as potential locations for new industry while others suggest the abandoned sites be re-claimed for residential space. The neighborhood plans often note the revitalization of residential housing stock must be connected with the revitalization of abandoned industrial sites to successfully revitalize the entire community.

**Counties, Townships, Villages, and Small Cities**

The many individual villages, towns, and cities in the Mill Creek Watershed each have different planning priorities. Certain themes run through most of these plans, including land-use planning, economic development, community identity, and transportation planning for a growing population. Many of these themes, however, depend upon the economic state of the community, as planning in lower income communities differs from planning in higher income communities. Higher income communities in Hamilton and Butler Counties have undertaken comprehensive plans, while lower income communities have relied more on day-to-day incremental planning.

Due to the continuing increase in area businesses and population, planning in communities in Butler County focuses on growth management and traffic expansion. Land consumption for new businesses and residences in Butler County has ensured that planners examine and address this rapid growth. Economic and urban decline have affected local communities across Hamilton County, a situation exacerbated by the economic recession. While the policies of these programs vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, plans for economic development appear in many of these communities, from high income suburbs to low income communities. Despite the economic problems facing numerous communities, many still plan for roadway expansion, anticipating a growing population and economy.

Creating a distinctive community identity is another focus of many municipalities. Suburban development in both Butler and Hamilton Counties has resulted in auto-dependent communities that lack a cohesive core. Efforts to develop a sense of place, through the creation of walkable downtowns and unique amenity provisions have become popular planning options in many communities. These amenities include parks and other green spaces, along with non-motorized transportation options such as pedestrian and bicycle paths to simultaneously improve community perception and address roadway congestion.

**Planning by Area of Focus**

Planning at the regional, local, and neighborhood levels requires different priorities and areas of focus. Despite these different priorities, certain topics cross these levels of governance and incorporate economic, social, and environmental concerns. Changes in population, socioeconomic climate, and land use make these issues pressing concerns for the Watershed and necessary topics of many plans. The following sections summarize how the plans address key issues in the Watershed and why these issues play an integral role in the future of the region.

**Infrastructure and Transportation**
As stated in the report above, the population in the City of Cincinnati is declining, but there is growth in the surrounding areas. This growth places new demand on the Watershed’s existing infrastructure. Nearly all plans suggest building new infrastructure or maintaining and expanding existing infrastructure to support the needs of an expanding population. In transportation, the need for improved and expanded infrastructure is particularly apparent. Transportation planning in the Watershed is multi-modal in scope, ranging from major highway improvements to improving trails for walking and biking. The multi-modality presents opportunities for a range of transportation planning activities to complement each other but also presents challenges that call for regional collaboration as transportation corridors often cross jurisdictional lines.

In general, transportation planning for the Watershed suggests methods for alleviating congestion on the roadways. The population in the Watershed may be out-migrating to the suburbs, but it remains dependent on the City for many commercial and economic uses. Without a sufficient public transportation system, people remain auto-dependent. This puts substantial strain on the road and highway network and creates traffic congestion. To alleviate this problem, some plans suggest new modes of transportation, including a passenger rail network connecting Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland (3C) and a light rail system to serve the uptown and downtown areas of Cincinnati. Other plans focus on improving and expanding existing infrastructure through methods such as widening roads and building more highway access points. The Revive I-75 Plan, in draft stages at the time of this report, will take the latter approach. The transportation plans that focus on highway improvements are necessary given the Watershed’s outward residential growth pattern. By making it easier for residents to undertake lengthy journeys to work and live far from the city, however, plans encourage continued sprawl and could work counter to transportation plans such as the streetcar, which encourages high density downtown redevelopment.

**Beautification and Urban Design**

Many plans in the Watershed focus on enhancing urban design to improve the aesthetic quality of the area’s jurisdictions. Urban design within the Watershed is generally a localized issue and is often undertaken to make a community more attractive to residents or businesses. It is rarely considered in regional planning activities for the entire Watershed.

Improving community identity and character is an important rationale for urban design planning. In the City of Cincinnati, for instance, many communities struggle to overcome their negative public images, often as run-down areas ridden with crime. These perceptions can create hesitation among business owners to invest in the neighborhoods. Neighborhood business district revitalization programs, therefore, are using design standards to cater to commercial needs. They promote high density, walkable spaces that are easily accessible to foot and automobile traffic. They also encourage mixed-use development (shared business and residential space) to create 24-hour active streets and deter crime.

Several neighborhood plans mention utilizing the Mill Creek and any future trails created there to enhance the image of their community. For example, the Camp Washington Industrial Plan cites the
possibility of increased walking and bike access to the Mill Creek as a key contributor to attracting and retaining businesses in the area. The Mill Creek is also mentioned as a means of creating connectivity between neighborhoods, and therefore improving their image as walkable community-oriented places. The draft Revive I-75 plan on the neighborhoods of the Mill Creek Valley notes the potential of the Valley to become a major open space corridor. This has potential to improve the image of the neighborhoods within the Mill Creek Valley, as green space is often associated with a friendly environment and a vibrant community.

Outside the City, urban design is often used for different purposes. Suburban development is typically low density and auto-dependent and features separation between residential neighborhoods and commercial space. Planning for neighborhood business districts sometimes promotes density within commercial areas, such as the Neighborhood Commercial Pod concept in West Chester. The Pod concept aims to reduce the length of individual automobile trips to meet everyday needs by locating commercial land uses in areas that are more accessible to residential developments. Overall, rapid population and economic growth in many suburban areas over the past 30 years has prompted a desire in many plans to preserve rural character, promote a sense of community, and minimize a generic feel. These priorities dominate many of the urban design plans in areas like Butler County.

**Housing, Crime, and Education**

Some of the reviewed plans focus on issues of housing, education, and public safety. Improved housing stock and reduced crime levels make an area more attractive for new residential development. Similarly, strong education systems contribute to residential and commercial investment in a neighborhood. Plans developed for the City of Cincinnati cite the need to improve the public school district while plans outside the city in affluent areas like Butler County focus on maintaining a high quality public school system. Most areas recognize the need for a strong school district to build a well-educated, well-trained workforce. This workforce will then carry on economic development efforts into the future and help to further revitalize the area. These issues are addressed primarily at a localized level with the intent of improving quality of life for residents. However, with the exception of education, these issues are not dominant planning priorities and receive substantially less attention than more macro-level development such as transportation and infrastructure improvement.

**Parks and Open Space**

Parks and open space are a primary land use priority across the Mill Creek Watershed. The plans for parks and open space make mention of both revitalizing defunct green spaces, and preserving existing functional open spaces. Revitalization and reclamation are the primary focus in the more developed areas of the Watershed, while preservation is more important in the rural areas. A consistent priority across the plans is to create or maintain parks and open spaces that facilitate recreation and active lifestyles.

**Environmental Quality**
The issue of environmental quality is addressed in the majority of the plans reviewed for this report. The primary issues affecting environmental quality in the Mill Creek Watershed stem from continued development and growth within the Watershed. The plans to improve environmental quality focus on restoring the Mill Creek waterway and making it safe and aesthetically pleasing for recreational use (i.e. the Mill Creek Greenway Master Plan). Environmental quality initiatives also include the replanting of trees throughout the watershed, where tree cover has been decreased due to continued development. Finally, many of the plans for environmental quality in the Watershed focus on increasing the capacity of the sewer system by implementing green infrastructure projects in order to decrease the risk of CSOs.

Community Services and Community Relations

The provision of community services and community relations is a highly localized process. Relating to and creating a plan for a community requires significant knowledge about its history and issues. Therefore, the plan author must have a close and concomitantly localized relationship with the community. Local authorities who understand the needs of the community generally author the plans addressing community services. Plans for the provision of community services often have a narrow focus, because local agencies and community participants contribute to them. With the exception of the most recent Revive I-75 initiative plan, Revive Cincinnati: The Neighborhoods of the Mill Creek Watershed, plans providing community services focus on the needs of a specific locality, largely ignoring how the locality’s needs fit into the region.

Land Use

The majority of the plans analyzed for this report identify current and future land use as a priority. Many of the plans are comprehensive and, therefore, inherently discuss issues surrounding the current land use in the Mill Creek Watershed and future plans for the use of the Watershed’s land. Several of the plans address the redistribution of population from the city center to the outer suburbs as a key factor in land use. Due to this population redistribution, many of the plans for the areas immediately along the Mill Creek address the need to revitalize vacant or abandoned residential and industrial properties. In the portions of the Watershed with undeveloped greenfields, the plans focus on developing those spaces to accommodate population and economic growth.

Much of the discussion surrounding land use is focused on identifying the best and highest use of land for the economic development of the Mill Creek Watershed. For example, many of the plans read for this report discuss available land (both undeveloped and abandoned properties) that can be developed for commercial or industrial uses, building the economic base of the area. The common thread tying all of the land use plans together is the discussion of the optimal land uses for economic development.

IX. CONCLUSION

The jurisdictions discussed in the report above are not unified by their common location in the Mill
Creek Watershed. Each prioritizes its individual interests with little regard for regional collaboration. They do, however, share a common set of planning priorities including: economic development, transportation, place-making, and concern for the natural environment. Within the Watershed there are multiple interpretations of how to achieve these ends. This results in competition for limited financial resources and policy gridlock.
The Baseline Scenario

Summary:
The following scenario reflects the state of the Mill Creek Watershed in 2020. The narrative assumes the conditions explained above follow the same trends over the next ten years. Pivotal to this scenario is continued auto-dependence and corresponding traffic congestion, increased social and economic disparity, an emphasis on individual community identity, flight of commercial and industrial activity from the city to the suburbs, and the continued struggle to meet water quality standards. These assumptions produce a Watershed where West Chester thrives and the City of Cincinnati struggles. This creates a region divided, with each jurisdictional entity protecting and competing for its own interests.

Narrative:
Braden Crawford, an executive at Procter and Gamble, begins his commute from the company’s headquarters in downtown Cincinnati to his home in West Chester Township. As he walks to his car, he thinks about his day, reflecting on his business lunch with a client at Mitchell’s Fish Market at Newport on the Levee. The only downside of the lunch was the view of the unfinished project at The Banks across the river. The development is stalled once again despite the efforts of young professionals attempting to revitalize downtown. An empty casino shuttle passes him by catching his attention. He is reminded of how the once well supported casino failed to attract tourism and new business development as promised.

Braden reaches his car and drives out of the parking lot heading home. He inches along in bumper-to-bumper traffic. The only people he sees are also in their cars. Public transportation has never materialized in any meaningful way in Cincinnati, despite the City’s ongoing efforts to develop it. The buses are now few and far between and have become so inconvenient that the people who are forced to ride them need three to five transfers to reach their destinations.

Braden’s journey takes him through the depressed neighborhoods of West End, Camp Washington, and South Cumminsville. He recognizes these neighborhoods by the excessive signage that denotes each community. He reflects on the identity of his own prosperous neighborhood and considers the disparities that exist in the communities he sees each day while driving from south to north along the Mill Creek. Some of the neighborhoods, like Over the Rhine, have been transformed by 3CDC’s revitalization efforts throughout the past ten years. Braden has witnessed the success of this work as a member of the Proctor and Gamble Philanthropic Committee. 3CDC’s efforts have not reached the entire city, however. Many neighborhoods in the lower portion of the Watershed still look the same—empty and neglected. In these areas vacancy rates have increased over the past several years. Many of those who remain live in dilapidated homes adjacent to vacant residential and industrial properties.

Braden usually enjoys driving with his windows down on sunny days, but today he rolls them up to avoid the poor air quality; he notices everyone around him doing the same. He continues his commute and passes the never-ending construction for the Revive I-75 project. This initiative was intended to relieve traffic congestion, but has only added to it for the past ten years. Braden crosses a bridge and turns to see the Mill Creek, which is completely channelized in this location and contains only a pool of stagnant, discolored water. Looking at this concrete river reminds him of an
article he read in the newspaper that morning entitled *Sierra Club Against Butler County Ordinance Threatening Mill Creek*. Braden recalls the body of the article, which discussed limiting the height of new commercial structures to three stories. The Sierra Club warned that this would prompt developers to expand the width of their buildings, increasing impervious surface cover. Excessive impervious surfaces could contribute to the degradation of the Mill Creek in Butler County, as it has in the lower two-thirds of the Mill Creek Watershed.

Braden continues north to pick up his son at lacrosse practice at Lakota High School. He looks forward to tonight when he will take his youngest daughter to her first tee ball game of the season at Voice of America Park. After a 45-minute commute he reaches his home inside the exclusive gated community of Weatherington. He drops off his son, picks up his daughter and they head to the park. During the game he sits next to another team parent and friend, Travis, who happens to be a local developer. Travis mentions his latest acquisition of the last agricultural tract in West Chester. He hopes to partner with the local government to attract another Fortune 500 company to build on the land. Braden was familiar with this potential project, but was unable to attend the community meeting pertaining to the issue last week. He mentions this to Travis, who explains that the project had received overwhelming public support. Braden asks his friend if the City of Cincinnati is also competing for the same company. “Yes,” Travis said, “but West Chester’s taxes are lower and there’s more land available. Plenty of parking too.” He notes the schools are better and the crime rates are lower in West Chester as well making it a more attractive location for the highly skilled employees and their families who may want to relocate there.

Braden and Travis are interrupted by parents sitting down beside them waiting for the next game. They move over in the bleachers to make room. Travis comments, ten years ago when his and Braden’s sons were in tee ball, the games were never scheduled back to back. There were only enough children for a handful of teams in all of West Chester. The Township’s population experienced a large increase over the past ten years and created more competition for the use of public spaces like the tee ball field.

On the way home from the game, his daughter tells him about her class field trip the next day to the Mill Creek to collect fossils. Luckily for residents of West Chester, walks along the Creek are possible because acceptable water quality and green space have been maintained through the Township’s preservation efforts. Further south this is not the case. It is dangerous to play near the Mill Creek due to the continuing combined sewer overflow (CSO) problem and highly polluted stormwater runoff. The Metropolitan Sewer District in Hamilton County has spent over ten years attempting to fix the CSO problem. Still it has only accomplished slightly more than ten percent of its goal.

When Braden arrives home, he sits down on the back porch with his wife, Katherine. Katherine serves on the board of directors of the local library. She tells Braden about a summer reading program she is organizing called Book Buddies, where the West Chester library will partner kids with children from a branch of the Cincinnati/Hamilton County public libraries. She believes the program will help combat low educational attainment resulting from the declining City public school system. Low educational attainment within the City has been a consistent problem over the past ten years and has worsened as disinvestment in the City increased. Braden tells her it’s a great idea and offers to bring it to the Philanthropic Committee at Procter and Gamble for funding.
Exhausted Braden and his wife go to bed. As he drifts off to sleep, he listens to the news announce the reelection of the local congressman for his sixth consecutive term. The phrase *business as usual* pops into Braden’s head as he shuts his eyes.

**Key Assumptions:**

**Regional Collaboration and Civic Participation**
- Limited regional collaboration
- Civic participation will be relegated to one’s own community
- Individual interests continue to be promoted above the regional greater good

**Economic Situation**
- Continued flight of industries and businesses from the City to the suburbs
- Increased economic disparity between the rich and the poor
- Continued industrial site vacancies concentrated in the Mill Creek Watershed with available land in the northern suburbs being developed

**Mobility and Accessibility**
- Continued auto-dependence
- Increased traffic congestion
- Limited public transportation

**Infrastructure and Land Use**
- Building stock continues to decline in the central city
- All available land developed in the northern suburbs

**Environmental**
- More impervious surfaces
- Worsening air quality
- Progress is slow on the CSO consent decree compliance
- Increasing brownfields sites in the center city
- Greater environmental injustice

**Social Issues**
- Concentrations of poverty continue in the City of Cincinnati
- Public health endangered by worsening pollution and water quality
- Increasingly low educational attainment
- Rising crime levels
- Population redistribution to suburban communities
The scenarios allow individuals to move beyond present-day concerns, to open discussions about the direction of a place, such as the Watershed, and to consider the possibility that future conditions may not be consistent with past trends. Scenario planning also provides an opportunity for organizations to imagine the effect of events that are beyond their control, including economic crisis and natural disasters.
The Queen is Dead

Scenario summary

After more than 20 years of total decline The Mill Creek Watershed borders on the verge of condemnation. In 2030 the City of Cincinnati resembles Detroit, while the outlying fourth ring suburbs fare comparatively well, though not unscathed. The significant decline in all facets of the regional urban structure share a reciprocal relationship. While some issues may share a tighter cause and effect relationship, they are all interconnected to the point that one weak link carries significant implications for the health and viability of the regions mechanical and social cells. This narrative suggests a plausible scenario for the economic, transportation, and environmental and social climate of the Mill Creek Watershed in the year 2030. Each category claims a subset of issues, all of which simultaneously unfold and collapse into one another.

I. Point of view scenario

Death of the Everyman

The Queen Is Dead Character Synopsis – JOHN DOHN

On a damp, cold day in December 2030, John Dohn sits in his poorly heated FEMA trailer wrapped in a blanket, wondering how he ended up in such a place. Unemployed, he worries about his children’s futures; the expectations of the holiday season leave him nostalgic for his former life.

Figure 1 - Fema Trailer. Source: http://blog.lib.umn.edu/whee0113/architecture/images/fema%20trailerthumb.jpg
Twenty years ago, despite the continuing sluggishness of the economy and loss of manufacturing jobs in the region, John was looking forward to a bright future. He was rising in the marketing department at Kroger, and his wife Jayne was in finance at Fort Washington Investors. In their early thirties they bought a home in Sharonville and were expecting their first child.

Following heavy rains, sewage would backup in their neighborhood’s homes. The Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati’s (MSDGC) voluntary Water-In-Basement (WIB) program worked with their insurance company to cover the costs of cleanup and repairs. MSD assured them they would deal with the sanitary sewer overflows (SSO) in their neighborhood.

By 2013, the Dohn’s had grown disillusioned with MSD: the economic slowdown, budget cuts, and cost overruns had delayed the promised improvements. Failure to meet Global Consent Decree deadlines led to fines, then layoffs at MSD. The same year, Fort Washington Investors closed their offices in the Great American Tower (which had opened with a 50 percent vacancy). Jayne - pregnant again and juggling a toddler, a job, and an increasingly difficult commute to downtown – gladly took a severance package, intending to return to work after the baby was born.

MSDGC was not alone in experiencing fiscal shortfalls and cutbacks. Streetcar construction was still underway, but the Metro bus routes were cut by 20 percent, leading to higher automobile use and reduced air and water quality in the city. Faced with budget deficits, the city laid-off 400 fire and police personnel, and cut other basic services. Residents, business owners, and community leaders began to question the city’s ability to deal with problems, let alone promote an economic turnaround.

After the voluntary WIB program was discontinued in 2014, the Dohn’s bought a high-premium, high-deductible flood insurance policy. At the same time their water bill increased, although the water quality suffered due to continuing overflow problems and uncontrolled dumping by industries along the Mill Creek. Sick of dealing with raw sewage in their home, the Dohn’s put their house on the market and started looking for homes near West Chester. They were attracted by the Lakota and Fairfield School Districts, which unlike Cincinnati Public Schools were still receiving high ratings, since businesses (and their tax revenues) continued to migrate to Butler County. John and Jayne were willing to lose money on their house, but no one was willing to buy it, especially with the increasing number of foreclosures in Hamilton County.

After the children developed rashes and chronic respiratory problems in early 2016, an inspector
found the house riddled with mold. The Dohn’s decided to just get out at any cost. Abandoning
their house, they rented while looking for a new home. They tried to sue MSDGC, but the suit was
set aside when MSDGC declared bankruptcy.

Jayne was hired at a small accounting firm in West Chester, but housing there was expensive and
the traffic was terrible. The rural character of Liberty Township was appealing, and they found a
home in a subdivision off Lesourdesville-West Chester Road. A tributary of the Great Miami River
was 1000 feet away, but they were out of the 100-year flood plain.

Despite the loss of their home and the ongoing recession, the Dohn’s were optimistic; though their
real earnings were lower than expected, they were better-off than most. After walking away from
their house, they stripped their retirement funds and had Jayne’s parents cosign the new home loan.
The Lakota schools were good, Butler County Water System was solvent and safe, and they’d re-
build their savings.

Their subdivision and the outer suburbs grew, particularly West Chester, as businesses and residents
continued to leave the urban core. This left vacant parcels and brownfields, and destroyed the city’s
tax base. Continuing cuts to Metro left many residents reliant upon public transportation without
access to employment or basic services like groceries and healthcare. Meanwhile, decreased wa-
ter quality at MSDGC led to a cryptosporidium outbreak that killed seven people and hospitalized
nearly 100. In the city, tensions grew as cooperation diminished. Following a race riot in Price Hill,
most who could afford to move outside the city did. Cincinnati became the second most segregated
city in the state.

With the completion of the Brent Spence Bridge and Interstate 75 expansions, John expected his
commute to improve. However, the failure of the 3C Rail project to reach Cincinnati left it uncon-
nected to other regional cities. Combined with continuing decreases in service at the airport and
Metro, automobile dependency increased nearly tenfold. The highway system remained at failing
capacity while fuel costs continued to rise.

Businesses also struggled with transportation. Unable to consistently restock the store shelves with
fresh food, Kroger customers faced shortages and longer drives. As the dominant local grocer, the
growing food deserts were blamed on Kroger; John’s marketing department had trouble positively
spinning the problem. His job became increasingly stressful and his work hours longer. Kroger
wasn’t the only corporation in dire straights. The divestment from downtown and the lack of a high-
skilled labor force had already resulted in Macy’s relocation to
West Chester and Chiquita’s departure. Factions between
neighborhoods and groups within the city grew as the economy
worsened, and cooperation between municipalities and
organizations declined. Meanwhile, West Chester became the
dominant economic node in the
watershed.
One casualty of this fragmentation was the Mill Creek Restoration efforts, which completely broke down. The Army Corp of Engineers (ACE) stepped into the void, resurrecting their earlier plans for channelization. Due to the high costs, plans for deep channelization were abandoned in favor of building cheaper concrete ditches with high walls.

The ACE aggressively pursued this until the EPA penalized them for dredging a contaminated section of the Mill Creek. Collecting increased runoff from impervious surfaces, the channels greatly increased the volume and speed of water in the Mill Creek. Flash flooding became commonplace, and overflow problems increased significantly. By 2021, the EPA had become concerned with the flooding, and its impact on the Ohio River system. Despite this, the Dohn’s were comforted knowing that their home was beyond the 100-year floodplain.

They were completely unprepared for February 2021. The flooding above the Mill Creek was worse than originally predicted, breaching all flood walls. The Great Miami River far exceeded its 100 year flood plain. The Dohn’s never made it out of their house before the flood waters reached their home. Though they escaped with their lives, their home was destroyed. The Dohn’s moved into a FEMA trailer while they tried to rebuild their home. Delays in assessing the damage and providing funds for rebuilding were followed by a halt to all reclamation projects while the Army Corp of Engineers reevaluated the 100-year flood plain. When boundaries were redrawn, many homes slated for reconstruction were not approved; funds were offered to families to encourage them to move, but they were inadequate for most families’ needs. A class-action lawsuit was filed in attempt to retain both properties and reconstruction funding. Growth and progress in the suburbs was halted.

Within Cincinnati, council proposed “right-sizing” to reduce costs related to infrastructure and emergency services, “shuttering” neighborhoods where vacancies exceeded occupied residences.
Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority planned to demolish housing in Millvale and English Woods. The city again raised taxes to cover costs, causing another wave of people to leave, including those with housing vouchers. Poverty concentration within the city reached an all-time high, as did racial and economic segregation. The Cincinnati Public Schools were taken over by the state and reduced to minimum education requirements, making it very difficult for graduates to attend college. As the base of high-skilled workers decreased, unemployment in the urban core rose to over 20 percent.

The shift of public housing to the suburbs led to unemployment tied to inadequate public transportation options. Years of uncontrolled road-building had diminished green space and agricultural land and decreased walkability. The flood damaged many of the roads, further increasing travel times. School bus routes could take nearly two hours each way.

In 2025, on John’s 48th birthday, the news of Kroger’s bankruptcy broke. John lost his job in the restructuring, and has been unable to find another permanent position. Jayne held onto her job, but only because her company started part-time job-sharing without benefits. Both adult children still live with them: their daughter works as a waitress, helping out as much as she can; their son attends community college part-time.

Despite continuing rises in unemployment and flooding, the local news continues tossing around terms like “regional cooperation” and “economic renaissance.” A new plan has been announced, touted as a chance to reclaim a lost future, but as the wind rattles the thin plastic walls of the trailer, John has little energy left for hope.

II. Generic scenario narrative

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- 25.39% Finance & insurance
- 14.81% Information
- 13.16% Professional, scientific & technical services
- 10.97% Health care and social assistance
- 12.84% Accommodation & food services
- 15.08% Educational services
- 26.45% Management of companies & enterprises
- 31.03% Retail trade
- 31.90% Arts, entertainment & recreation
- 38.74% Wholesale trade
- 42.99% Real estate & rental & leasing
- 62.06% Manufacturing
- 65.01% Transportation & warehousing

Murder Rate per 100,000 people
The Queen is Dead

After more than 20 years of total decline the Mill Creek Watershed borders on the verge of condemnation. In 2030 the City of Cincinnati resembles Detroit. The outlying fourth ring suburbs fare comparatively well, though not unscathed. The significant decline in all facets of the regional urban structure share a reciprocal relationship; while some issues may share a tighter cause and effect relationship, they are all interconnected to the point that one weak link carries significant implications for the health and viability of the regions mechanical and social cells. This narrative suggests a plausible scenario for the economic, transportation, and environmental and social climate of the Mill Creek Watershed in the year 2030. Each category claims a subset of issues, all of which unfold and collapse into one another.

The Economy is Dead

The declining national economy combined with the lack of export-oriented industries in the Mill Creek Watershed has led to continuing economic decline in the area. The Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce, in their 2010 Regional Economic Outlook Report, projected general economic stagnation with neither a large collapse nor strong recovery. However, because the national economy failed to recover from the 2008 recession, job loss in Cincinnati has followed the 2010 projections, and the watershed has been further negatively affected due to the concentration of manufacturing jobs.

The lack of private investment and economic growth within the watershed during the first decade of the millennium devolved into widespread decline and the flight of industry from the area. In 2012 the Great American Tower was completed, though opened at 50 percent vacancy and witnessed a
short tenure of significant tenants. Major tenants closed their offices within eight months and only three major businesses were able to stay open. The proposed expansion of Proctor & Gamble’s Winton Hill office complex stalled and was never finished. In addition, fallout from the 2008 merger of Delta and Northwest persisted, resulting in a reduced flight schedule and the relocation of corporate headquarters for Macy’s Inc. and Chiquita Brands International.

Even as industry relocated to the suburbs (West Chester), the situation in the city eventually forced cooperation in the area. Much like metro Detroit a decade ago, the surrounding communities felt and feel the consequences of proximity to the city. Even after 20 years, rating agencies see the situation in Cincinnati as a liability for the suburbs and assign more risk to the area, thereby increasing debt cost.

In 2010, many believed that unemployment rates had reached their highest levels (10.6% in March 2010, Bureau of Labor Statistics) and were bound to drop. Job recovery, however, did not follow the economic indicators assuring us that the economy bottomed-out. In 2010 the unemployment rate in the Cincinnati MSA region was relatively stable at 15.3%. A closer look at the statistics presents an even nastier situation. During the past 20 years unemployment in the City climbed to nearly 25%, a rate that grew to nearly 30% before the mass population exit following the bankruptcy of the Kroger Company. For years, the City fell behind in competition with the surrounding suburbs over business attraction, thus the disparity in unemployment rates.

Neighborhood development efforts and central business district development efforts that looked promising following the 2010 Cincinnati Comprehensive Plan proved ineffective due to competition and lack of collaboration. As businesses and people left the area, the city’s tax base declined, further limiting funding and therefore increasing competition for city funding. The outmigration of entire communities increased auto oriented traffic ten-fold. High gas prices presented and still present a problem for commuters; some can simply not afford to fill their tanks for the daily commute. Traffic congestion reduced the flow of goods and services in and out of the CMA.

Land use in the Mill Creek Watershed is historically defined by a concentration of industrial uses along the Mill Creek Valley. These industrial areas were surrounded by mainly low-density residential uses, including a significant amount of public housing projects and Section 8 units in the lower Mill Creek Watershed. The flight of businesses from the area resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of vacant parcels, especially in industrial areas where brownfield conditions limited potential use. Funding from the Port of Cincinnati Development Authority came to a halt, and the Authority shifted its focus to development-ready land as opposed to the expensive brownfield-remediation work they previously utilized.

In order to attract private investment, the city reduced land use regulations in the area, allowing for free reign in the undeveloped areas of the watershed. Parcels reserved for greenways were used by the remaining businesses. The amount of vacant land prompts some council members to call for “right-sizing” in the city to reduce city spending on infrastructure. However, regional fighting and conflict over neighborhood “shutting” stalled the process. Without a public transportation system to support denser communities, there was little support for the shutting of neighborhoods and the relocation of residents who still remain in the largely abandoned parts of the city. In addition, the amount of vacant land created the opportunity for agricultural use in the city. However, due to a lack of cohesive support from the city, urban agriculture projects are sporadic and small scale, and
are restricted due to contaminated land near the creek.

**Transportation is Dead**

In 2010 Ohio ranked 40th in national public transportation studies. The previous two years witnessed an overall decline in public transportation and levels of ridership. Over 500 public transit-related jobs were cut and it appeared that additional jobs are on the chopping block. The State of Ohio continued to lose federal funding and responded to the overall state budget crisis by pulling public transportation dollars. The decline in Cincinnati’s public transportation system—chiefly the Metro Bus System, exceeded the decline felt throughout the state of Ohio. Since 2002 Ohio has cut transportation funding by 75 percent with less than one percent of ODOT’s budget being spent on public transportation, this amount is less the expenditures related to cutting grass along Ohio’s interstate. Today, it 2030 the transportation system is ranked 49th.

The flight of industry and business to the suburbs increased car ridership as people had to travel longer distances to employment centers, consequential increases in the amount of highway spending and a continued decline in public transportation. As industries moved further out population density decreased. Bus routes did not expand with the new urban boundaries and the growing car ridership spurred a congestion and space consumption epidemic. The remaining few bus routes are stressed by two peak periods of public ridership with the majority of operating hours faced with minimal ridership. The system does not generate enough income to cover its operation costs. When available, federal funding supported highway infrastructure and the stresses of increased automobile usage. Land formerly designated for greenspace, recreation or multi-modal forms of transit has been consumed by the need to widen roads and thoroughfares. The number of cars have degraded air and environmental quality and the impervious coverage (streets, roads, highways) exacerbated stormwater runoff and degraded natural habitats. Social segregation is became seemingly more evident as families with money either located in top tier school districts or could afford the commute to top tier schools while lower income areas suffered isolation due to complete lack of mobility.

By 2030, the 3C-corridor rail still does not stop in downtown Cincinnati. In accordance with preliminary plans, a temporary Cincinnati stop was built on the outskirts of the watershed in Sharonville. However, due to regional infighting and conflicting interests, local governments failed to agree on liability sharing agreements with the private railroads that own the tracks. Therefore, neither the alternative Lunken Station nor a final Union Terminal Station were ever built. This has left rail service to Columbus and Cleveland impractical and tantalizingly out of reach for the majority of the watershed’s residents.

Despite widening efforts in the early 2010s, Interstate 75 quickly reached capacity and reverted to failing status. The completion of the Brent Spence Bridge replacement in 2020 increased traffic demand from Kentucky and other outlying regions. Without a holistic focus on multi-modal transportation alternatives I75, I71, and I-275 became even more overwhelmed with traffic and remains at “Failing” capacity. The traffic conditions along these corridors now resemble the frustrating situation of Los Angeles or Atlanta at the turn of the millennium.

The highly touted Cincinnati streetcar remained crippled by lack of funding and procedural disputes for over a decade. The failure of the streetcar project leaves the urban core of the Mill Creek Water-
shed without viable high frequency mass transit. Important revitalization projects along the streetcar route like Uptown Commons and the Brewery District stagnated, as developers cannot proceed without the needed infrastructure upgrades.

**The Environment is Dead**

Due to increased costs combined with decreased revenue, the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MSDGC) failed to comply with the Global Consent Decree that was filed on December 4, 2003. Failure to comply with EPA guidelines had led to 20 years of costly lawsuit; the MSDGC claimed bankruptcy and major projects funded by MSDGC were terminated. The taxpayers and service customers within Hamilton County absorbed the costs generated by the suspension of federal funding. Increased taxes negatively impacted the desirability of home and business ownership within the County.

Originally designed to deal with sewer overflows that affected private property, the Water-in-Basement (WIB) program was unable to keep pace with repair costs. Problems neglected prior to the 2008 recession exacerbated the growing financial and infrastructure stresses. Consequently, private property incurred irreversible damage and the concentration of residential overflows has had serious implications for public health. (WIB ran a 24-hour help line, assessed damages related to sewage overflows within homes, and covered the costs not already covered by home insurance, including deductibles.) Rising homeowner insurance and clean-up/repair costs continued to drive down the value of homes in the affected neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that could afford to correct the problem themselves did so; but most residents choose to relocate rather than deal with sewage overflow related damages and costs.

In the face of declining residency, discord between community groups, and decreased funding for local non-profit organizations, inter-community consensus and organizational efforts around the Mill Creek Watershed fell apart and the Army Corps of Engineers resumed floodwater management within the watershed. The negative effects of the new administration were evident in the Army Corp’s aggressive push to complete the channelization of Mill Creek, which had previously been rejected by watershed communities. However, as in 2005, the severe cost of implementation was considered to be prohibitive. To alleviate costs, the Army Corps decided to return to their original plan of building high walls along significant portions of the Mill Creek as part of concrete channeling.

The addition of cement walls in tandem with the existing concrete lining initiated a spike in water temperatures. Rising temperatures choked out a number of fish and wildlife species, eradicating vital links in the Mill Creek ecosystem. Streamside erosion also degraded much of the natural riparian buffers and trees located along the creek. The removal of the natural canopy eliminated all possibility of plant and animal life returning to the creek. The fortress of high walls also meant that the creek became an inaccessible feature. Greenway trail development located along Mill Creek was abandoned and existing trailways either became underutilized or destroyed as a result of the channelization process. The dredging of the Mill Creek removed over half a million cubic pounds of contaminated sediment, adding clean-up costs to the already mounting expenditures.

Channelization increased the amount and speed of the Mill Creek water flow; heightening the
likelihood of flash flood conditions. The process also magnified the biological impacts of combined sewer overflow (CSO) on the entire downstream, spreading the chance of disease over a broader geographical area. Flash flooding also increased the likelihood of flood conditions on both the Ohio and Great Miami Rivers downstream from the Mill Creek. The Great Miami, which tends to flood whenever the Ohio floods, effects many of the communities in the northern third of the Mill Creek Watershed: the cities of Hamilton and Fairfield, and Liberty Township, which is a FEMA-designated flood plain for the Great Miami River.

Social Issues: Is Everything Dead?

By 2030 Public Health is in disrepair, most adversely affected by the declining economy, marginal public transportation system and the continued overflow and breakdown of the sewer system. The instability of the local economy and continued loss of jobs overwhelmed the local school system as homeowners fell into foreclosure and failed to pay property taxes. The revenues for school districts also declined as property values fell. More importantly, many families could and can no longer afford parochial schools and moved their kids to the public system. This migration forced educators to stagger school days and reduce the annual number, as there was not enough space or materials to accommodate the almost doubling in enrollment in just 10+ years. Already struggling urban schools were most affected. Standardized test scores in CPS and several other districts have fallen to the point that the State of Ohio placed sanctions on them.

The lack of political will for transit projects paired with the expansive road building and failure of multi-modal systems has wreaked havoc on public health. Despite the additional lanes and better ramps on I-75, the interstate continues to be plagued by wrecks as the amount of truck and car traffic continues to increase. In just 5 years after its completion, the density and flow of traffic on 75 was no better than when the project started. Only now the magnitude of the problem is much greater. The level of particulates, ozone, noise, stress, and spatial gradients in socioeconomic status increased, and the effects are most evident among children in low-income areas such as Lockland, Cumminsville, and the West End. The CMSA has averaged 10 ozone alert days a year for the period, and the local news media are no longer jumping on the story of the occasional Children’s Hospital’s diversion due asthma exacerbations filing their emergency rooms. The failure of MSD also has significant implications for public health. Overflows of untreated sewer and contaminated water resulted in an outbreak of the waterborne disease cryptosporidium, which sickened thousands and claimed seven lives.

With public health at high risk along with the sharp decline of previously mentioned issues poverty rates endured exponential growth. The initial increase in poverty directly connects to the out migration of businesses and consequential job loss. Spatial mismatch contributes to the growing poverty levels and concentration of poor communities. Many of the jobs located outside of the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area. Since Metro routes fail to extend beyond the CMA, those without cars (primarily low-income people) cannot access jobs in the suburbs. Moreover, decline in the school system has caused the lack of high trained workforce, which in turn has to led to higher concentrations of poverty.

The increase in poverty rates is also visible in segregation patterns, particularly racial segregation. Downtown revitalization projects have been unsuccessful and people who were and are able,
move from the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods to the suburbs. Index of dissimilarities for Mill Creek Area increased from 74.8 to nearly 90, making the area the second most segregated region in the country. There is a drastic population decline in the City of Cincinnati; a phenomenon that actually began in early 2000. Now, in 2030 the city mirrors the Detroit of 2005-2010 and the devastating decline witnessed at the beginning of the collapse and reorganization of the automobile industry. The difference between Cincinnati and Detroit is that Cincinnati suffers a number of issues that have contributed to its decline while the single biggest factor in Detroit was the loss of the automobile industry.

**Conclusion: Dead**

All of the issues facing the Mill Creek Watershed in the year 2030 share a common thread of economic decline and consequential insecurity and degradation of urban infrastructures. The decline of the exports industry, lack of private investment and inability to recover from economic recession and negatively trending arteries of the natural and built urban environment ensnare the existing systems and institutions into an apocalyptic matrix of despair. Whereas before the strength of other urban appendages could compensate for weaknesses of another and remediate failing areas; the fragility of all areas creates a domino effect.

**III. Indicators and timeline**

**Indicator 1: Unemployment**

Unemployment rates did not recover from the 2008 recession, instead climbing steadily higher in the watershed and experiencing dramatic increases within the city limits. The rate within the MSA experienced a leap along with the economic crisis in 2013, affecting the city more than surrounding suburbs. After climbing to nearly 30% by 2025, unemployment in the city dropped to 25% in 2030, mostly as the result of population migration after The Kroger Company experienced financial distress and finally bankruptcy.

![Chart 1 - Unemployment Indicator.](image)
Indicator 2: Change in Industry by Sector and Employment

The unemployment crisis affected the manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, and real estate rental and leasing sectors the most. The losses in manufacturing and warehousing were the most apparent in the watershed. Service industries like information, finance and insurance, and professional and technical services experienced increases in their shares of the economy, with most of these jobs moving away from the CBD to suburban business centers like West Chester.

![Chart 2 - Change in Industry Indicator](image1.png)

Indicator 3: Percent of MSA Population Living in the City

The population of the watershed and the city have declined, while the overall population of the metropolitan area has increased slightly from 2010 to 2030. This slight difference represents the effects of further migration to the suburbs, as the population followed the jobs out of the city and the watershed.

![Chart 3 - Population Indicator](image2.png)
**Indicator 4: Vacancy Rates**
Vacancies have steadily increased in the watershed. The flight of businesses from the area has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of vacant parcels, especially in industrial areas where brownfield conditions limit potential use. In addition, flooding, crime, and disinvestment have turned some neighborhoods into ghost towns, leading the city to consider shuttering abandoned tracts of land.

![Vacancy Rates Chart](chart4.png)

**Indicator 5: CSO Overflow**
As MSD continues to be noncompliant with the consent decree, the amount of CSO and SSO overflow continues at the 2010 rate. The numbers increased after the 2022-year flood because of backup in the system, but then leveled off. Though CSO overflow did not increase significantly during this time, trends from 2010 to 2030 reversed the decline in overflow that took place in the preceding decade due to MSD’s work to expand sewer lines to accommodate the volume of overflow.

![Combined Sewer Overflow Chart](chart5.png)
Indicator 6: Murder Rate

The crime rate has steadily increased from 2010 to 2030. As unemployment continued to rise, government services were cut, and residential segregation increased, crime followed. Riots resulted when a black man was shot by a police officer in 2018. That same year, a protest at Government Square resulted in the death of four innocent civilians at the hands of the police. The murder rate has increased steadily as the result of drug-related incidents and escalations of petty crimes. The city rivals Detroit as the most dangerous in the country, and crime has slowly spread from the inner city to the suburbs.

![Murder Rate Chart](chart6.png)

Chart 6 - Murder Rate

Indicator 7: Property Values

From 2010-2030, suburban residential properties increased in value. At the same time, the percent of the population living in the suburbs increased by 10%. Urban and first suburb communities continued to lose population and saw decreases in the median home values as a result of this population loss and subsequent disinvestment.

![Property Values Chart](chart7.png)

Chart 7 - Property Values.
The Queen is Dead Timeline

2010: Local economy fail to recover from 2008 recession, watershed affected due to concentration of manufacturing jobs, Metro slashes program and projects additional cuts.

2010-2015
- no recovery, unemployment persists
- office vacancy
- city shortfall, basic service cuts

2015-2020
- industrial/commercial vacancy
- Chiquita move out of region
- transit cuts
- traffic congestion
- MSD fails decree, service cuts
- WIB cuts

2020-2025
- concentrated unemployment
- Macy’s move out of City
- Kroger inefficiency
- Tax-base loss
- CVG cuts
- more transit cuts
- limited mobility
- MSD bankruptcy
- Army Corp takeover
- Channeling
- MSD quality lapse
- Water-borne disease

2025-2030
- Kroger struggles
- urban right-sizing and shuttering
- more transit cuts
- highway and suburban gridlock
- 3C Sharonville
- Erosion, degradation, flooding
- floodplain redraw
- low-skilled labor force
- concentrated poverty
demolition, public housing projects

2030: City of Cincinnati releases new comp. plan to remedy urban apocalypse
Preliminary actions to improve existing conditions

2025: Kroger declares bankruptcy, major layoffs, Metro routes to closed Kroger stores are shut down
Army Corps redraws floodplain, demolition of vacant buildings

2020: Macy’s moves out, EPA halts Army Corps channelization, 3C rail ends in Sharonville, Streetcar discontinued
I-75 completed

2015: MSD fails compliance, flights cut at CVG
WIB program at a loss

2010: Local economy fail to recover from 2008 recession, watershed affected due to concentration of manufacturing jobs, Metro slashes program and projects additional cuts.

Flood national disaster, looting and violent crime
Virtually all jobs in CBD move to suburbs
Riot in Price Hill, Army Corp takes over

2025: Kroger declares bankruptcy, major layoffs, Metro routes to closed Kroger stores are shut down
Army Corps redraws floodplain, demolition of vacant buildings

2010-2015

Economic
• The national economy has failed to recover from the 2008 recession, job loss has continued in Cincinnati, and the watershed has been affected more due to the concentration of manufacturing jobs.
• Great American Tower is completed but it starts at 50% vacancy, several major tenants close their offices within eight months, Queen City Square becomes greatly underutilized.
• Unemployment in the CMSA increases as industries move out to other cities and the suburbs.

Transportation
• Metro transportation budget suffers significant cuts, despite the promise of funding for the Uptown Streetcar.
• Number of Metro routes available in 2010 cut by 20 percent.
• Reliance upon the automobile exponentially increases, effecting air and water quality
• Traffic congestion results in extended commute times and increased rate of traffic related accidents

Environmental
• The MSD continues to fail to comply with the Global Consent Decree; Cincinnati faces fines, lawsuits and legal cost. As a result MSD begins to lose revenue, cutting benefits and firing 100 employees, MSD services and assistance to customers becomes limited.
• Increased failure in ability to monitor manufacturing industry along Mill Creek leads to increased illegal dumping
• WIB Program unable to keep up with the cost of demands, the voluntary pilot program is eliminated. As a rising homeowner insurance and clean-up/repair costs continued to drive down the value of homes in the affected neighborhoods.
Social

- Downtown Cincinnati residents, businesses and stakeholders are speculative of city effectiveness in creating future downtown attractions, development, transportation and infrastructure improvements.
- Cincinnati City Council is placed in an impossible position, as the city’s budget is virtually unable to cover the cost of basic goods and services.
- As homeowners continue to fall into foreclosure and fail to pay property taxes, the school districts in the most affected areas lose money. Unable to afford parochial schools, many families move their children to the public school system. The swell in the public school system forces educators to stagger school days and cut materials cost.
- To keep up with budget costs, 200 Police and 200 fire personnel are laid off thereby increasing the likelihood of violent crime and civil unrest.

2015-2020:

Economic

- Due to the worsening national and local economy, the CVG airport becomes an even less attractive option for the airlines. Delta cuts flights to less than 100 a day.
- Chiquita moves its headquarters to Chicago, and many smaller corporations follow suit.
- As businesses and residents leave the area, the city’s tax base declined, further limiting funding and therefore increasing competition for city funding.
- Flight of businesses from the area has resulted in a dramatic increase in number of vacant parcels, especially in industrial areas where brownfield conditions limit potential use.
- Reduced flow of goods and services in and out of the CMSA, affects quality of food stuffs sold by Kroger and other grocery stores.
Environmental
• MSD declares bankruptcy, sewer overflows continue, worsening water and air quality
• Army Corps assumes leadership of Mill Creek Watershed, aggressively pursue channelization and builds high cement walls along the creek.

Transportation
• Number of METRO routes available in 2010 decreases by 30% forcing many to either carpool to work or seek ride share alternatives, and further isolating the carless population.
• Metro endures additional staff cuts- mainly reflected in the number of employed Bus Drivers and Mechanics.
• Reduced transportation routes lead to increased unemployment in underserved areas; individuals no longer have affordable access to basic amenities such as school, healthcare and food.

Social
• A weakened MSD begins to experience lapses in the quality of treated water. Nearly 100 cases of the waterborne disease cryptosporidium are reported. Seven people die as a result.
• The race fueled riot in Price Hill is the undoing of previous community development efforts
• Fearing worsening social and economic conditions, families who can afford to move do so and the Index of Dissimilarity jumps from 74.8 to nearly 90 percent, making the Cincinnati CMA the second most segregated region in the state

2020-2025:

Economic
• Macy’s moves HQ to Westchester.
• City councilmember proposes “right-sizing” to reduce city expenditures on infrastructure.
• Fighting over neighborhoods to “shutter” ensues and no consensus is reached. Instead, services are cut and taxes are raised, causing another wave of people to leave the city for the suburbs
• Still an enterprise zone, West Chester becomes the most powerful economic jurisdiction in the watershed.

Environmental
• Army Corps channelization efforts stall following dredging of contaminated section of creek bed. The incomplete channelization causes severe environmental decline as the number of fish and wildlife species decrease
• Streamside erosion in conjunction with channeling also degrades much of the natural riparian buffers and trees; Mill Creek Greenway Project abandoned.
• The increased flash flooding has also increased the likelihood of flood conditions on both the Ohio and Great Miami Rivers downstream from the Mill Creek.
• EPA is wary of frighteningly high Mill Creek and Ohio River water levels following significant rainfall. A warning is issued that massive flooding could be imminent.
• Flash flooding on the Mill Creek exacerbates already high floodwaters on the Ohio River, causing flooding along the Mill Creek, the lower Ohio, and the Great Miami River that exceeds the 100-Year Floodplain boundaries.
• The Great Miami floods as well, affecting several of the Butler County communities in the Mill
Mill Creek Watershed communities as well, including the cities of Hamilton and Fairfield, and the northern part of the Liberty Township, which is a FEMA-designated flood plain.

Transportation
- Without funding for improvements to rail infrastructure in the city, the Sharonville station becomes the terminus for the 3C rail.
- Metro routes available in 2010 are now at 50 percent, discussion of whether to continue Metro is brought to the table.
- With the eventual completion of the much-delayed Brent Spence Bridge replacement by 2020, traffic demand from Kentucky and other outlying regions has increased.
- Existing highways remain at failing capacity.
- Public transportation is non-existent in the suburbs. The suburbs can afford to privately fund expanded thoroughfares, paving over the remaining greenspace and agricultural land to widen highways and inner suburb roads.
- During and following the flood the suburbs are finally faced with a transportation disaster. The roads are not navigable and sections of roads cannot handle the flood pressure; sections wash away.
- Children spending around 4 hours per day in transit.

Social
- Many people who are working at Macy’s are now jobless, and unemployment rate is increasing to over 20% in the urban core.
- Poverty concentration in city center continues to increases as well as racial and economic segregation.
- Nonprofits step in to provide services that the city has abandoned. With little funding or coordination from the federal/state/local levels, these efforts are small-scale.
- Housing problems become drastic and much of CMHA supported housing is in disrepair or abandoned. Faced with more and more people using vouchers to move to the suburbs and pressure from those jurisdictional governments, CMHA plans to demolish housing in Millvale and English Woods and uses abandoned houses for public housing.
- Current conditions of Cincinnati public schools are among the poorest in terms of graduation rates, test scores and school conditions. Many students are not able to matriculate to a four-year college, resulting in a low-skilled work force and reduction in state minimums.
- Army Corps redraws floodplain thereby forcing hundreds of residents and businesses to vacate within 60 days.
- With West Chester as one of the closest urban centers with jobs, population continues to migrate to the suburb.

2025-2030:

*Preliminary actions taken in order to improve upon existing conditions; Cincinnati, in dire straits, realizes that it must develop a comprehensive plan through direct collaboration from urban leaders, residents and remaining businesses; A series of public meetings are held in order to understand major reasons for decline.

Economic
• Kroger is in severe financial trouble (clarify this according to AJ)
• Massive layoffs cause further population loss.
• Environmental
• Likelihood for severe flooding becomes commonplace.
• Transportation
• Existing bus routes to transport low-income individuals to the closing Kroger’s work place are discontinued as a result of the job losses.

Social
• Job loss causes increase in unemployment and poverty. The city struggles to feed its population. Vacant parcels are taken over by small grassroots groups of urban farmers. The city tolerates this movement but has little funding to back it up.

2030: After two years, City of Cincinnati releases a comprehensive plan to remedy massive urban problems; Plan is approved by city council

IV. Fictional character perspectives

a. Brain drain

Jessie and Li moved to Cincinnati from Boston in 2015. The area’s affordable housing and opportunities for Li’s career as a scientist attracted this couple in their early 30’s. Li had just finished her doctoral degree in genetics at Boston University. Jessie has an MBA from Harvard and was a market analyst at a top firm in Boston. They moved so that Li could begin a fellowship at the University of Cincinnati. With a baby on the way, they also realized it was time to settle down somewhere. Both immigrants from China, they had spent most of their lives moving and were looking for a place to call home.

Knowing no one in Cincinnati, and moving in haste, they chose to live in a new subdivision in Fairfield. Jesse worked at Great American downtown, while Li was working at UC’s uptown medical campus. They found day care for their new daughter at a church in West Chester, and were able to occasionally ride to work together. However, changes in Jessie’s job required him to travel more
often, while the construction on I-75 regularly delayed both of their commutes. He was becoming increasingly tired of the daily grind. Meanwhile, by 2019 Li had finished her fellowship at UC. She was contemplating a job offer at Kroger doing quality and safety control on their store brand products. However, she was hearing rumors that Kroger was “not doing well” after a lawsuit and negative media coverage. UC made several offers, but she decided to pursue work in the more lucrative and less stressful private industry to allow Jessie to work at home as a consultant.

By this time, Jessie and Li’s daughter was 4 years old, ready to begin Montessori school. However, Jessie and Li were also looking farther into the future when she will start elementary school. They wouldn’t settle for anything but the best for her education. The schools in Fairfield seemed OK, but were not top-ranked in the Metro area and were vastly less impressive than the premier schools Jessie and Li grew up in. Though they are happy parents, Jessie and Li were still not as satisfied as they imagined. They had made some friends in Cincinnati, mainly in the Asian community and through church. They had several friendly neighbors, but generally didn’t interact with them. The stresses of their jobs and daily routine were also wearing on them. They came to a crossroads.

While travelling on a major crossroads - the Super Street intersection on Tylersville Road - Jessie was involved in a car accident. Though only slightly injured, he was really shaken by the incident. He can’t imagine what would have happened if his daughter was in the car at the time. He and his wife were also very frightened by images in the news of riots downtown. Meanwhile, Li learns that she's been offered the job at Kroger’s. However, her salary would be less than expected and she would not receive benefits, since they’ve offered her only a contract position. Undergoing major restructuring and fiscal tightening, Kroger was apparently trying to reduce long-term obligations to its employees. Jessie, in talking with some friends on the west coast, learns of a tremendous executive opportunity. Li has become pregnant again. She’s rethinking the idea of being a working mom. Despite the higher cost of living, Seattle holds tremendous possibilities for this young couple. With the recent spate of events, and having no major connections with Cincinnati, they decide to head west.
c. **Bus Stop Blues**

Victoria Richards has lived in Mt. Auburn her entire life. She is a 30 year-old single mother of three. She works as a receptionist at University of Cincinnati’s Raymond Walter’s College. One of her job benefits guarantees free college tuition for her three children. She herself is taking one class each quarter, capitalizing on tuition remission. She is proud of her job and the opportunity it affords her, especially because neither her parents nor siblings attended college. She has been an employee for four years and a student for three and has another year and a half to complete an associate’s degree in radiation technology. She has completed research on this degree and understands that with her grades and the demands for the field she will be able to support her family a lot better.

Victoria’s children attend Taft Elementary and Hughes High School, both in the Cincinnati Public Schools system. Both schools start at 7:30 am. Victoria depends on her eldest son Trey to walk the other two children to school. Mt. Auburn is not the safest neighborhood and this arrangement helps keep everyone safe. The children also are not eligible for student bus service because they leave within two miles from the school; because of this Trey can’t take advantage of bus transportation. This responsibility is also the reason Trey is always between 20-25 minutes late to his first bell. Victoria has to catch two buses to get to work. The second bus only runs once every hour starting at 6:15 am, and it arrives at the college at 7:15. But to get that last bus she has to catch her first bus at 5:55 in order to her connection at 6:10. Victoria doesn’t have to be at work until 8:00 am. She could really use that extra thirty minutes to walk the two younger children to school instead of burdening Trey; she feels guilty for putting such responsibility on him. But, she has no alternative, because of the limited bus schedules otherwise she would be late to work. Chronic lateness would result in getting fired and losing the ability to feed and care for her family. She tries to get Trey extra help outside of school so that he understands the material in his first bell math class.

Meanwhile with the decline of the city and discussions of cutting more routes and increasing transportation fares, Victoria is starting to be unsure about her future and that of her children. There is also more talk about shutting down another Cincinnati public school and bus services in another round of major budget cuts. Taft Elementary, where her youngest children are enrolled is seriously being considered as one of the schools to close down. If Taft closes, those students will have to be bused to neighboring schools, either Fairview or Fredrick Douglass Academy. Either option would require extensive daily travel time, not only just for Victoria’s children but also for all the other students that
attend Taft Elementary. With all these challenges and a limited income, Victoria has nowhere to turn as watches her fate played out in the decisions the community leaders make. She is hoping and praying that transportation will be available to her for another year and a half, and that the decision to close the school will be put off so that she will be able to maintain her job not interrupt her children’s education. If not, she will have to quit her job and therefore school.

**d. Empty Nest**

Helen Purvis is a seventy-year-old woman who lives in the community of Winton Place. Her neighborhood is suffering from severe dilapidation and blight. Today, in 2022 there has been a 37 percent in decline with projections that this trend will continue. There is expected to be a 65 percent population decrease by the year 2030. Given the population decline in the neighborhood, the city has proposed to remove all public emergency services to that part of town. With the city strapped for funds, the comprehensive plan says it is rational to level this community and others like it, rather than to continue to draining the city’s budget.

Helen owns her home and car, which is fairly remarkable since she lives off a meager fixed income. She stays active by walking and volunteering. She raised her family in this community, but now her son and a daughter live out of state with their own families. Helen’s husband died ten years ago. Helen’s children try to convince her to come live with them, but she feels rooted in her community where she drives ten miles to a citizen’s group where she has built and maintains solid relationships. She doesn’t take the children up on their offer because she can’t afford to abandon her home, nor does she want to; it would be difficult to build the same types of community around herself that she has done here at home.

**V. Plan (Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Policies/Projects)**

*Mill Creek Watershed 2050 Plan*

**INTRODUCTION**

The Mill Creek Watershed 2050 Plan (The 2050 Plan) addressed the necessary goals, strategies and policies to improve conditions in and around the Mill Creek Watershed. The purpose of the 2050 Plan is to determine the weaknesses and strengths of Mill Creek Watershed Area and to determine development strategies. This document considers the major issues, challenges and opportunities
facing the region in the next 20 years. This report also acknowledges and discusses many of the negative circumstances, which led to the watershed’s overall decline over the past 20 years.

Ultimately, the 2050 Plan strives for an optimistic future, while recognizing several difficult choices that must be made as a result of metropolitan Cincinnati’s economic decline and lack of regional cooperation. The 2050 Plan adopts a regional approach that aims to enhance collaboration among local governments as a response to the current crisis. With a more unified regional mentality, the Mill Creek Watershed can attempt to regain sustainability on a social, economic and environmental level.

The 2050 Plan addresses goals and policy recommendations in five major policy areas. These focus areas include economic development, social equity, environmental sustainability, transportation and mobility, and regional collaboration.

1) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE

Goal: “Right sizing” struggling neighborhoods

At the turn of the 21st century, several struggling Midwestern cities embarked upon a new strategy called “right sizing.” This term refers to a technique for mitigating the negative effects of significant population loss and vacancy rates. Declining municipalities demolished their most underperforming and blighted sections in the hope that their remaining population would concentrate itself in their most vibrant and economically sustainable districts. This will reduce short-term budget deficits and set the stage for eventual revitalization. The right sizing strategy gained fame and controversy with cities such as Youngstown, Flint, and Detroit.

The Mill Creek Watershed has struggled with significant economic decline for the last 20 years. Although this decline was influenced by problems in the national economy, several unique local conditions contributed to the region’s economic stagnation. Since the region was dominated by manufacturing, the watershed suffered from greater job losses than national trends. Lack of private investments and the flight of the industry from the area caused increases in unemployment rates and poverty. The number of vacant parcels has been increased due to the flight of the industry from the area. Furthermore, jobs have moved from downtown to the suburbs, which has deepened the economic decline in the heart of the Mill Creek Watershed.

Policy: Identify neighborhoods that have become economically unsustainable

Although the entire Cincinnati region has been struggling due to general economic decline and a lack of regional cooperation, some neighborhoods have suffered much more than others. The candidate neighborhoods for right sizing are now suffering from vacancy rates in excess of 30%, and they have specific blocks with vacant and blighted lots representing well over 50% of individual streets.

These neighborhoods include several within the City of Cincinnati such as Lower Price Hill, Fairmount, South Cumminsview, Millvale, Hartwell, East Westwood, Avondale, and Corryville. Additionally, several suburbs are suffering from similar blight, such as, Saint Bernard, Elmwood Place, North College Hill, Mount Healthy, and segments of Springfield.
and Delhi Townships. These underperforming areas tend to be concentrated along the hillsides of the Mill Creek Valley, and they are correlated to the unchecked concentration of poorly managed Section 8 apartments, which began dominating these neighborhoods around 10 to 20 years ago.

**Policy: Fund targeted demolitions of vacant structures in decaying neighborhoods**

Since vacancy rates have skyrocketed in many of the watershed’s neighborhoods, some streets have become so depopulated that they cannot provide enough tax revenue to justify continued infrastructure maintenance. In areas with extreme abandonment, the tax base has eroded so much that the city or neighborhood must physically shrink itself to continue providing services to viable sections. By demolishing areas with the most severe blight, utilities and infrastructure maintenance can be diverted to sustainable communities, staving off financial disaster and promoting healthy density in surviving areas.

**Policy: Use eminent domain and targeted relocation to consolidate residents into sustainable districts.**

The most controversial aspect of right sizing is that many residents do not wish to relocate from dying neighborhoods. Even in neighborhoods dominated by empty lots and blighted vacant structures, some residents want to stay. This was epitomized 15 years ago in Detroit. Although this right sizing policy will likely create similar scenarios in Cincinnati’s most disadvantaged neighborhoods, the overall condition of the watershed has simply deteriorated too much after two decades without regional plans or collaboration. Coupled with the bad economic situation, many communities are ultimately left with no other choice but to accept right sizing plans.

**Goal: Promote economic redevelopment within the remainder of the region**

Although several neighborhoods will have to endure demolitions to ensure economic variability, other areas will serve as focal points for attempted revitalization efforts. Revitalization of city center will be one of the most critical steps in the economic growth of the region. Successful downtown revitalization has several potential benefits, such as increased city tax base, reviving socially and environmentally sustainable neighborhoods, and creating new jobs that are accessible to the underemployed.

**Policy: Encourage mixed-use walkable development**

Encouraging mixed-use development in city center will promote sustainable development. There is diversity of functional land uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and those related to transportation. Mixing uses ensures that many services are within a reasonable distance, thus encouraging cycling or walking. In addition, mixed use of space can renew life in many parts of the city and in turn enhance security in public spaces for disadvantaged groups. Mixed land use indicates the diversity of functional land uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and those related to transportation.

**Policy: Subsidize high technology and high wage firms expanding into the region.**
High technology and high wage firms are efficient tools to develop workforce. Although high technology industries require longer training time for employees, they are good tools to increase the income in the area.

**Policy: Promote infill development in targeted neighborhoods**

As attention focuses on the negative effects of continued development on the metropolitan fringe, redevelopment of vacant land or abandoned buildings in the central city becomes a more critical public policy goal. In addition, infill development is seen as a way to expand their tax base, attract more middle-class residents to the city, and build more affordable housing.

Although infill is proposed as a partial solution for a multitude of suburban and inner-city problems, addressing all the problems to be effective at reducing the rate of suburban growth, city residential projects must be seen as a viable alternative to potential suburban sprawl. In Cincinnati, the level of amenities, parking and safety can be improved in order to increase the willingness of people to move to the center. By infill development, also tax revenue for the city government can be increased.

2) SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Goal: Promote Affordable Housing**

Over the past 20 years, Cincinnati’s predominant development pattern consisted of low density suburbs, long hours of suburban driving, air pollution, and the decline of viable housing in the city center. Even as thousands of blighted buildings sit vacant, there remains a severe shortage of affordable, livable structures in the places where low income residents need them most.

After the latest devastating flood, significant portions of the housing stock in the Mill Creek Watershed was damaged. Many people lost their homes. Low income residents were disproportionately affected by the flooding, which mostly occurred in areas that were already struggling. As a result, the quantity and quality of affordable housing should be increased to improve overall quality of life in the watershed.

**Policy: Promote high density housing in targeted neighborhoods**

Density and housing type affect sustainability through differences in the consumption of energy; materials; and land for housing, transportation, and urban infrastructure. High density and integrated land use not only conserve resources but provide for compactness that encourages social interaction. As density increases, automobile ownership declines, and automobile travel. Similarly, transit use increases with density.

**Policy: Improve the condition of subsidized housing**

Since the national crisis affected the local economy, municipalities within the Mill Creek Watershed Area could not afford to maintain the quality of many services. Housing is one
of the many areas, which has suffered, and the current condition of low income housing such as Hope VI and Section 8 Housing needs to be improved. Additional municipally managed housing sites for should also be provided along convenient transportation routes to connect these housing areas to employment centers. Physical upgrades, transportation accessibility, and managerial improvements should be part of a unified goal administered throughout the watershed by a regional housing authority.

**Goal: Promote Workforce Development**

Promoting workforce development requires to recognize the local workforce as an economic development asset. Developing a highly-skilled, qualified and competitive workforce, with the education and training needed for today’s jobs. Partnering with regional workforce leaders and academic institutions to co-convene best practice forums on the vital linkages between world class economic development and globally competitive workforce and education systems is crucial for workforce development.

The region must develop a strategy to create, attract and maintain a globally competitive workforce to mitigate the Mill Creek Watershed’s declining industrial base needs and stimulate business development. A skilled workforce is essential for an economy to sustain and enhance its competitiveness. The workforce development strategy will offer activities and resources for new workforce development within the context of supporting companies’ needs and efforts to train employees. Identifying and prioritizing businesses services, talent retention, and worker skill upgrade strategies is essential for upgrading the qualifications of the workforce.

**Policy: Develop university and industry partnerships**

Developing university and industry partnerships is a good tool to attract investments. Besides these type of partnerships and developing research-development departments will improve efficiency of the industries.

**Policy: Introduce Employer Incentives to Encourage Education and Training**

Given the need for improved awareness of existing skills deficits and the need to ensure alignment between employee training and employer needs, the region should offer employers a state tax credit to subsidize post-secondary education. More specifically, employers would receive a credit subsidizing their tuition costs for employees to pursue certificates and associate’s degrees at select educational institutions.

**Goal: Reduce spatial mismatch**

Poverty is one of the most important social and economic problems in the region. One of the biggest consequence of poverty in an increasingly suburban region is spatial mismatch. Spatial mismatch occurs when public transportation declines and employment centers spread out, Low income residents who can not afford to maintain cars are unable to reach the job opportunities which are increasingly in suburbs. Therefore accessibility to employment declines, and poverty becomes entrenched in areas with poor accessibility.

**Policy: Create employment opportunities suited to the local labor group**
Since the unemployment is the main cause of poverty, some policies should be adopted to reduce unemployment rate. Creating employment opportunities that are convenient for the local labor is an efficient tool to deal with unemployment, because this policy reduces the length of training process for new jobs, and unemployed people could find jobs that matches to their skills more easily.

**Policy: Support small business development, expansion, and retention**

Although flight of big employment centers has created unemployment problems, reducing number of small businesses also has caused unemployment. To achieve economic sustainability, retaining of small businesses is very important.

3) **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**Goal: Bring the Metropolitan Sewer District in compliance with combined sewer overflow guidelines**

Continued overflow and breakdown of the sewer systems has caused the loss of leadership and resources from the Metropolitan Sewer District. As a result sewer system has reached it carrying capacity. Therefore, water pollution has become a big problem. Over the past 20 years, many people have been infected from polluted drinking water as a direct result of the continued sewage overflow into the watershed.

Unfortunately, the Metropolitan Sewer District still does not have sufficient funds to construct expensive new sewage and drainage pipes. With continued infighting among Hamilton County municipalities and townships, it is unlikely that the various governments will agree upon cost sharing programs for such an expensive project at this point in time. Consequently, the 2050 Plan focuses on ways in which local governments can collaborate in a less expensive and more politically feasible way like reducing overall stormwater runoff. This includes implementing coordinated permeability requirements, reduce minimum parking requirements, green roof ordinances

**Policy: Establish permeable surface requirements throughout the watershed.**

The local governments of the watershed should adopt a consistent permeable surface ordinance. This ordinance will provide standards for permeable pavement and maximum lot coverages.

**Policy: Reduce minimum parking requirements**

Additionally, the local governments of the watershed should collectively revised their outdated minimum parking requirements. Almost all the municipalities and townships retain boilerplate parking codes that provide for an unnecessarily high amount of surface parking throughout the watershed. By reducing or even eliminating parking requirements in certain areas, the amount of damaging runoff will be severely reduced, as will the number of combined sewer overflow events.

**Policy: Establish a model green roof ordinance**
Green roofs are another valuable system, which reduces overall stormwater runoff. A variety of model green roof codes could be adopted based on the existing physical characteristic of an individual community. The ordinance can be incentivized with tax credits and the community or county level.

If local governments implement these policies, the subsequent reduction in stormwater runoff should help reduce or eliminate the Mill Creek Watershed's annual combined sewer overflow events, and finally put Cincinnati in compliance with the District Court's compliance order after over 20 years.

**Goal: Enhance general environmental conditions in the watershed.**

Since air and water pollution is a significant cause of health problems, some policies to deal with pollution should be developed. This is particularly true because of the large population of low income residents who live near current or former heavy industrial sites. These neighborhoods are more likely to suffer from contamination and overall health problems.

**Policy: Promote green industry**

Green jobs represent employment opportunities associated with a clean, as opposed to a pollution-based, economy. The Industrial Revolution brought a shift from human labor to machines and a drastic increase in pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. As we look for ways to reduce our contribution to climate change, minimize waste streams, and conserve natural resources, there is great potential for job creation. As discussion of green jobs attracts more attention at the regional level, green industry jobs should be created.

**Policy: Promote LEED construction and renovation standards**

The city of Cincinnati still offers limited tax abatement for LEED construction and rehabilitation. However, these standards have not been updated for over 25 years. Many of the smaller suburbs and township within the watershed do not offer any LEED or sustainable construction incentives at all.

**4) TRANSPORTATION / MOBILITY**

**Goal: Improve Public Transportation**

Due to significant cutbacks over the past 20 years, Cincinnati’s bus system has been reduced to a small system that runs solely within the Cincinnati city limits. Given the declining conditions of public transportation system, connectivity of the different neighborhoods has become a big problem. Most importantly, people who can not afford to have a car are not able to reach suburbs anymore. Since the poverty is concentrated in the city center, and most of the jobs have been moved to suburbs, spatial mismatch of job and housing locations has become an important issue.

**Policy: Reconstitute SORTA as a regional transit authority and expand bus service**
The transit system must attract regional funding and cooperation to expand beyond Cincinnati city limits. A reconstituted SORTA with support from the suburbs can increase the number of routes and buses will enable low income people to access the jobs which are presently located out of their reach.

To fully reduce spatial mismatch, connectivity between the employment locations and residential areas should be increased. Since the public transportation of the region highly dependent on the limited bus system, an alternative transportation mode is needed, even if bus routes are successfully expanded.

**Policy: Bring back unrealized rail-based mass transit proposals**

Over the past 20 years, several promising rail systems were proposed in the Cincinnati region. These proposals included streetcars, light-rail, commuter rail, and 3C Corridor intercity passenger service. Most of these proposals failed due to regional infighting over startup costs, route alignments, and operational expenses. The only service to come into the Mill Creek Watershed was the 3C Corridor passenger rail, and that system failed to attract local riders due to its ineffective suburban terminus in Sharonville.

With SORTA pushing for a unified mass transit agenda, the communities of the Mill Creek Watershed can benefit from an influx of federal dollars for transit projects. These projects include revived versions of the canceled streetcar, light-rail, and commuter rail services, which have routes that run through the majority of the watershed.

**Goal: Address Increased Traffic Congestion:**

Even as Cincinnati core population has declined, traffic congestion has drastically increased, particularly on the region's Interstate highways. This is because an increasing percentage of the total metro population is spread out among the suburbs. People are also having to drive farther to reach a limited supply of jobs. Consequently, traffic jams on the highways are increasing in severity, and several widening projects failed to alleviate traffic demand.

**Policy: Promote ride sharing**

Many thriving regions promote ride sharing with carpool and high occupancy vehicle lanes. The widened Interstate 75 corridor is a prime candidate for the installation of HOV lanes. In high demand traffic situations, HOV lanes will garner extensive use and provide for a significant reduction in the total number of vehicles on the road. In some high traffic cities, commuters even develop informal ride sharing systems with designated pick-up spots, so office workers can mutually benefit from HOV zones.

**Policy: Increase connectivity**

Another major cause of Cincinnati's traffic problems is the limited availability of alternative commuting routes. The majority of commuters are funneled only a limited number of arterial routes, which leads to increased traffic jams during peak hours. Regional actors should collaborate with OKI to adopt a model connectivity ordinance similar to Virginia's highly successful policy. Over time, this ordinance
5) REGIONAL COLLABORATION

The 2050 Plan advocates a collaborative regional approach, which has been absent from the Mill Creek Watershed for several decades. In order to solve the watershed's considerable problems, future attempts to promote economic development, environments sustainability, and infrastructure improvements must be approached from a regional context.

The right sizing initiative will have to serve as a springboard for regional cooperation in the watershed. Several Cincinnati suburbs such as Lockland, Lincoln Heights, Golf Manor, Delhi Township and North College Hill are suffering from the same extreme blight typically associated with the traditional inner city. With their deteriorating population bases, these small municipalities, and several others in similar situations will have to look toward collaborations with the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County in order to initiate their renewal efforts.

This new found collaboration is not occurring under ideal circumstances. In many respects, formerly feuding and competing municipalities are being forced into cooperation because they have lost their ability to function alone.

Most of the policies promoted by the 2050 Plan require additional funds that most the region’s municipalities simply do not posses in the current economic climate. Consequently, the region must rely upon increased cooperation among various local governments in order to pool their funds. Additionally, increased Federal support might be the only viable funding option for many projects. The Mill Creek Watershed’s various governments will be more competitive for these limited Federal Funds if they learn to speak with one large-scale regional voice.
I. Summary

The last twenty years have been a time of incredible economic and population growth in the watershed region as the Mill Creek became a strategic location for green-product manufacturing. The communities within the region choose to work independently, fighting with one another to attract the new industry to their borders. Only the locations that were adjacent to the Mill Creek were able to experience the economic prosperity, thus drawing residents away from the non-industrial communities. This triggered a great population shift across the region, creating major disparities between the jurisdictions. The economic success of the region masked significant social, environmental, and regional issues that plagued the region during this time.

II. Narrative Retrospective

As he prepared his high school history project on Cincinnati’s recent past, Chad, a sophomore at Norwood High School, class of 2032, discovered an odd document on an old Hamilton County website. The text mentioned a “new, regional, cooperative approach” to governance. Chad clicked on all the hyperlinks on the site but they were all dead. Chad knew the jurisdictions in Hamilton didn’t get along at all. So one day, after class, he asked his teacher, Mr. Dean, when the communities had considered a regional government, and why had it failed.

Mr. Dean took a deep breath. “Well,” he started, “there was the Great Recession in the late 2000s. The economy was terrible, and many thought that by working together, the communities of Hamilton County could improve their condition. Politicians discussed the possibility of creating a regional government that would help solve the major problems communities were facing, including shrinking revenues, expensive services and high regional unemployment. There was some progress, and in 2012, the Hamilton County Commissioners prepared legislation for a regional governance scheme. I think this may be the website you found. But by the time the legislation was ready for a vote, an economic report showed that the recession had actually ended months ago. Unemployment dropped steadily, credit loosened and investment became widespread. The county’s cities decided the new regional power structure was unnecessary; the legislation was defeated and each municipality focused on pursuing its own growth. Or decline, in some cases.”

As they walked along the gray, concrete playground outside the school, Chad’s mind raced. There were few trees or grassy areas around the school’s property. “I thought the economy is bad right now - how did it change?”

Mr. Dean responded, “The watershed entered a period of strong growth, but factionalism and individualism between the towns reached new heights. The boom effectively hid the problems presented by the total lack of cooperation, which only recently showed their effects: civil strife, inequality and a stagnant economy. Communities are beginning to recognize the dire situation the watershed is already entering due to their inability to cooperate, and are also identifying trends that have been
going on since the mid-2010s that have predicted the trouble.”

Chad reflected on what he suspected some of those trends were. In his environmental science class, he learned about the divergence between the environments of Hamilton and Butler County. Because industrial suburbs in Hamilton County continued to rely on green industrial development due to agglomeration economies and the chemical and heat pollution damaged the southern reaches of the Mill Creek and the watershed. Density and competition for land insured there was little green space in these parts of the Mill Creek, meaning fewer greenways and recreational land use along the banks. Decreases in water and air quality meant increased incidents of public health conditions - Chad knew many of his friends had asthma.

“Mr. Dean, the environment has suffered, hasn’t it?”

Mr. Dean nodded. “To protect the new industrial development from possible flooding, the Army Corps of Engineers constructed high retaining walls and channelized the entire Lower Mill Creek back in 2015. This restricted use of the creek to nothing more than a gutter for industrial use. In contrast, the environment in Butler County retained a high quality, with no channels or pollution.” Chad couldn’t believe that things were that bad. “Haven’t there been any good effects from the boom, sir? It can’t all be so...negative.”

Mr. Dean stopped walking at the edge of the playground. He paused for a second, staring at the trees, dead and naked in early winter, and the gray buildings and streets, pockmarked with potholes. He said, “Strong economic growth lead to several benefits for the infrastructure networks that support the watershed. Higher tax revenues and demand for municipal bonds insured the funding necessary to complete the Cincinnati street car, making it an effective means of transportation within the city limits. In fact, many affluent communities constructed their own rail-based transportation networks, providing cheap, green and efficient transportation. Development along these routes boomed, contributing to the growth.”

Chad turned to face Mr. Dean. “But you can’t take a streetcar from here to Blue Ash or Springdale – you have to hop off and change lines at Lockland and Arlington Heights!”

“Right - because of the fragmentation, communities did not coordinate their projects and there were no agreements about standardized scheduling, right-of-way or rail track gauge, meaning no regional rail network – only multiple unconnected units. The lack of regional cooperation on this issue curtailed the future economic growth of the region, leading to the stagnant economy of today. A large-scale transportation network is necessary to fuel the competitiveness of the region. By failing to plan at the regional scale, the watershed actually weakened itself for the future.”

Chad had never realized the depth of the issues facing his community. He bid farewell to Mr. Dean, slightly disturbed. As he walked home, he noticed the new banners and flags lining the street with Norwood’s seal and motto fluttering in the breeze. He also noticed the fliers for the many local civic organizations centered in Norwood. The individualism of different communities was a good thing, Chad thought to himself. He knew that the actions of these organizations did a
lot of good in his community, and increased the pride he felt as a citizen of Norwood.

When he mentioned this to his mother, Amanda, later at home, she disagreed. “Its tribalism, honey!” she told him. “What do you think started the riot where dad got his arm broken?” Chad remembered the feud at the Lockland-Wyoming football game where his father, Matt, had tried to break up a fight between teenagers from each school. The riot, which broke open longstanding tensions between the two communities, led the family to their decision to move to Norwood.

“Sorry Mom, I’m just trying to understand the feelings running throughout these communities. I know voter participation rates are up, and public meetings for planning projects are getting record attendance. Isn’t that positive?”

Amanda calmed down. “There are positives and negatives, honey, to any situation. The key is to try and preserve the positives, while working to fix the negatives.”

After dinner, Chad went to his room to think. Thinking of his father reminded him of the recent job trouble his dad, a manager at a construction company, had suffered. Everyday, it seemed, his father came home and complained about different projects getting delayed or cancelled because the County and the host jurisdiction couldn’t reach an agreement, or a competing jurisdiction sabotaged the application of its rival community. Until Chad had thought about it, these lost jobs were abstract potentials: hospitals, university expansions, new housing tracts. But his mind fitted them into a deeper trend. He fell into a dreamless sleep.

Chad awoke and prepared to spend his Saturday volunteering at one of Norwood’s many soup kitchens. Though his mother pressured him into volunteering early on (going to college was important in the stagnant economy) he came to enjoy the opportunity to serve others and meet new people. Still troubled, he asked Marcia, the manager of the kitchen, what she thought about the relationships between the different cities in the area during a lunch break.

“Hmm.” She thought carefully, putting down her sandwich. “The improved economy left winners and losers, Chad. Some towns saw huge investments and wage increases. The districts experiencing the most growth, especially the townships in Butler County suburbs, incorporated into wealthy enclaves with jobs and high quality of life, depriving the rest of the township of tax base and economic support. Jobs and lifestyle amenities in these new cities deprived other areas of development, leaving inhabitants outside of the enclave poorer than before. Though the economy boomed and unemployment overall decreased, the people left out became much worse than before. Unfortunately, the communities with the heaviest concentration of needy people do not have enough resources to adequately take care of their citizens. Nobody in this region wants to share their wealth with those who need it most.”

Chad asked her, “But I thought the economy was strong, why were there still people who were needy?”

Marcia took a bite and chewed thoughtfully. “Although the economy in the region was strong, wealth grew more segregated. Those jurisdictions which were located on the Mill Creek itself were
the most attractive due to the importance of the river to these new industries. As industry began locating in these jurisdictions, growing the local tax base, it led to other advantages, including resources, facilities, new infrastructure. Also, it increased the ability to effectively leverage financial incentives or lenient environmental regulations to further the economic growth. The attractiveness of these jurisdictions created a flight from the other jurisdictions that, not being located directly on the Mill Creek, were not able to attract new industry and have a strong tax base with which to provide services and amenities for their citizens. Individual neighborhoods within Cincinnati shared this fate, as the non-industrial communities reaped the benefits of the city’s newfound wealth, while the industrial neighborhoods and workforce housing became disconnected from this general economic growth.”

Chad looked at the dozen homeless men and women eating lunch and lounging in the soup kitchen. He saw in their faces the failures of elected officials, and the public at large, of planning for the future benefit of Hamilton County. Something negative had infected the municipalities of the Mill Creek watershed, he realized. The excitement of the end of the recession and the abundance of the economic boom turned them all into grasshoppers, with no planning ahead for the inevitable bust that would follow. With no ants in the watershed, the problems of winter quickly overwhelmed the region. Chad realized with sadness that the initial effort at regional organization would have gone a long way in preventing the current situation. If only they had looked ahead, the watershed could have reaped the benefits of the boom while providing for all of the region’s members. Chad was not resigned to the fact that things would always be this way – he had to do his part to fix the problems of his region and create a better future.

“Marcia, we have to do something about this,” he said. “Where do we start?”

**III. Scenario Narrative**

During the Great Recession of the late 2000s, politicians and policymakers spent significant time and energy discussing the potential benefits of regional consolidation in the alleviation of the eroding tax bases, shrinking services and high unemployment plaguing the communities of the Mill Creek watershed. Progress was made, but in 2012, as the Hamilton County Board of Directors prepared to take up legislation that would enact unprecedented regional collaboration, a report from the National Bureau of Economic Research showed that the recession had given way to one of the most intense economic booms in US history. Unemployment plummeted, credit and investment soared, and disparate communities, on the cusp of establishing a new regional order, backpedaled; the legislation was defeated, and each municipality focused on its own affairs.

The watershed entered a period of strong growth, but factionalism and individualism amongst the municipalities reached new heights. The boom effectively hid the problems presented by the total lack of cooperation, which only recently have begun to show their effects: increased civil strife and inequality, and limits on overall economic growth. Communities are just now beginning to recognize the dire situation the watershed is facing due to their inability to cooperate, and are identifying the trends that have led to this situation.
The environments of Hamilton and Butler County diverged significantly. Because industrial suburbs in Hamilton County continued to rely on green (industrial) development due to agglomeration economies, chemical and heat pollution continued to damage the southern reaches of the Mill Creek and the watershed. Density and competition for land insured there was little green space in these parts of the Mill Creek, meaning fewer greenways and recreational land use along the banks of the Mill Creek. Decreases in water and air quality meant increased incidents of public health conditions such as chronic asthma. At best, individual jurisdictions maintained their own green space, with little connectivity between towns. However, this was rare, as each jurisdiction filled its green space with valuable industrial development in order to capitalize on the economic boom.

To protect the new industry from potential flooding, a resurgent Army Corps of Engineers constructed high retaining walls and had channelized the entire Lower Mill Creek by the year 2015. This restricted the use of the Mill Creek to strictly industrial purposes. Due to its access of land, townships in Butler County were able to develop industry away from the Mill Creek, thus retaining a high quality due to its lack of channelization and pollution sources. In the northern reaches of the watershed, flora and fauna found comfortable homes. In Butler County, the water of the Mill Creek remained clean and recreational options in the Creek multiplied. However, greenways and other recreational opportunities suffered from a lack of connectivity and remained fragmented through jurisdictional borders.

Strong economic growth lead to several benefits for the infrastructure networks that support the watershed. Higher tax revenues and demand for municipal bonds insured the funding necessary for the Metropolitan Sewer District to adequately separate the Combined Sewer Overflows. Additionally, the first (and several subsequent expansions) of the Cincinnati street car were built, making it an effective means of transportation within the city limits. In fact, many affluent communities constructed their own rail-based transportation networks, providing cheap, green and efficient transportation. Development along these routes boomed, contributing to the growth.

However, because of the fragmentation, communities did not coordinate their projects and there were no agreements about standardized scheduling, right-of-way or rail track gauge, meaning no regional rail network – only multiple disconnected units. The lack of regional cooperation on this issue curtailed the future economic growth of the region, because a large-scale transportation network is necessary to fuel the competitiveness of the region. By failing to plan at the regional scale, the watershed actually weakened itself for the future. Additionally, competing infrastructure and services have reduced efficiency and increased redundancy in local service delivery, increasing taxes and further limiting future growth.

Federal and state highway funding did not change, as OKI and ODOT retained their hierarchical power over the region in the allocation of federal and state transportation dollars. However, factional power struggles meant projects took longer to plan and complete, costing more and reducing efficiency. Although the interstate rail plans were implemented, the region was not able to take advantage of state and federal funding opportunities because of its lack of cohesive plans and partnerships.

Increased economic production and reduced regional cooperation resulted in both benefits and
costs for the communities of the Mill Creek watershed. Benefits, besides the obviously desirable characteristics of an economic boom (low unemployment, increased consumer spending and credit, and increased lifestyle amenities from strengthened tax bases) included increased civic participation and pride in individual communities. This resulted in improved voter turnouts and increased interest in local politics, planning and quality of life. Additionally, many formerly faceless, repetitive suburbs developed cohesive characteristics of urban life, including public squares, mass transit and town identity.

On the other hand, a lack of regional cooperation and highly individualistic actions by jurisdictions also presented serious social problems to the communities of the Mill Creek watershed. Primarily, social cohesion across jurisdictional boundaries suffered as citizens lost their regional-metropolitan identities and replaced them with specific, sectarian identities. This resulted in the creation of inter-jurisdictional conflicts at lower levels, in the form of ‘turf battles’ between youths from different communities, especially between communities marked by class differences and inequality (i.e., the Lockland-Wyoming border). It also was manifested in the form of increased civic rivalry and competition, which became especially vicious in the realm of development and business attraction, as communities sabotaged each other’s efforts at economic development.

Additional trends have also become apparent. For example, many regional-scale investments and development projects, such as sports stadiums, the Banks, the new casino, and the highway upgrades, were the result of regional cooperation and funding. The ability to secure more of these large-scale investments was seriously jeopardized by a lack of regional cooperation and funding mechanisms: consequently, Cincinnati lost the 3C rail connection due to the inability to pay its operating costs. The region also suffered from the devolution of power from the Hamilton County government, which could no longer afford to provide services such as important regional planning, development and funding. This created a cap on economic growth during the late 2020’s, when regional transit and governance became a necessity.

Finally, increased individualism led to a difficult environment for the area’s poor and needy. Districts experiencing rapid economic growth, especially the townships in Butler County suburbs such as West Chester, incorporated into wealthy enclaves with jobs and high quality of life, depriving the rest of the township of tax base and economic support. Employment opportunities and urban growth agglomerations in these new cities deprived other areas of development, leaving inhabitants outside of the enclave poorer than before. Though the economy boomed and unemployment overall decreased, increased ‘enclavism’ created economic winners and losers around the watershed. Despite the economic success of the industrial jurisdictions, the housing patterns were very segregated, with large pockets of workforce housing near the industries, disconnected from the wealth and prosperity being experienced in the region. Quality of life for most second ring and some first ring suburbs increased overall, but at a very high cost to future social cohesion and equality.

By the year 2030, green collar industries, in conjunction with traditional industry and light manufacturing, became the major basic sector of the local economy. These industries produced new, energy-efficient technologies and products. The jobs, while well-paying and stable sources of employment, required predominantly low- to medium skills. Most of these jobs were created in low-
income neighborhoods in the Mill Creek Valley where infrastructure from heavy industry existed. The increased efficiency of the products and processes of the green industry made overall production increasingly sustainable and cost effective. Over the long run businesses saved money and reinvested in their operations. The rise of these new industries, and their supporting business and commerce, led to an increase in the tax base of many jurisdictions. As aforementioned, with the growth in revenue the communities were able to invest in further economic development projects and infrastructure upgrades, such as streetcar systems and brown field re redevelopment.

Although the economy in the region was strong, wealth grew more segregated. Those jurisdictions which were located on the Mill Creek itself were the most attractive due to the importance of the river to these new industries. As industry began locating in these jurisdictions, growing the local tax base, it led to other advantages, including resources, facilities, new infrastructure. Also, it increased the ability to effectively leverage financial incentives or lenient environmental regulations to further the economic growth. The attractiveness of these jurisdictions created a flight from the other jurisdictions that, not being located directly on the Mill Creek, were not able to attract new industry and have a strong tax base with which to provide services and amenities for their citizens. Individual neighborhoods within Cincinnati shared this fate, as the non-industrial communities reaped the benefits of the city’s newfound wealth, while the industrial neighborhoods and workforce housing was disconnected from this general economic growth.

Poverty likewise declined overall throughout the region, but it remains a prevalent issue for many poverty-intensive communities that did not rise with the economic tide. Affordable workforce housing was developed near the sites of the new industries, which provided for the rising population of low- and medium-skilled industrial employees, but simultaneously segregated those lower income and working class populations in the industrial areas. This unequal distribution of affordable housing contributed to growing social inequity and unrest.

Public health has decreased in many communities due to the lack of recreation and open space resulting from the heavy industrial and residential development accompanying the economic growth. With few walkable communities, obesity and respiratory problems are common, especially in the lower income and industrial areas. The socio-economic system has led to the development of three basic classes: affluent populations that live in the desirable areas farther away from the industries; a middle or working class population mainly concentrated around the industrial sites; a concentrated poor population located primarily in communities on the outskirts of the watershed, without access to the employment base or quality public services.

Segregation exists on multiple levels. Lower income populations are concentrated in the less desirable residential areas, such as those communities experiencing little or no economic growth or those areas in close proximity to the industries, many of which are along the Mill Creek. Traditionally lower income or poverty-stricken communities, often with high concentrations of minority populations, are also further isolated and left out of the economic rebound. Low-income and blighted communities arise alongside gentrified neighborhoods and wealthy gated communities. Education follows a similar pattern of uneven economic and social development. Those jurisdictions and communities that have participated in the economic growth are able to provide resources and staff for quality education whereas others are barely able to provide basic education and services.
The uneven distribution of economic growth and an increase in competitiveness among the separate jurisdictions has resulted in a “dog eat dog” atmosphere and a severe lack of regional cooperation and identity. The working class and low-income populations are the backbone of the new economy, but are unable to utilize the very products they create, such as solar panels or green roofs. Social unrest and gangs of unsatisfied youth are common, and Cincinnati experienced its first race riots in 21 years during the Riots of 2022.

Many neighborhoods and communities in the Mill Creek watershed forgot about their regional aspirations as soon as the Great Recession started to end. A booming economy, strong labor markets and easy credit erased the memories of fear and panic, as well as the discussions of a stronger regional governance structure. Now, by 2030, the consequences of ignoring the recession’s lessons are just becoming apparent: inequality on an unprecedented scale has gripped the region, as wealthy gated communities and suburban enclaves turn their backs on the plight of the losers of the region’s economic boom. The social problems facing the people of the watershed, as well as the damaged environment and future economic storm caused by the limitations of regional planning and growth management, predicts a dark future awaiting the watershed if it continues on its current path.

**IV. Timeline, Indicators, Policies**

![Figure 1 - Timeline of Events](image-url)
Timeline of Events

Over the course of the last twenty years, several significant events have taken place that serve as examples of the challenges and successes of the Mill Creek Watershed region over that time horizon. These are by no means exhaustive, but rather representative of what has been going on here since 2010. The events also illustrate the complex and interrelated issues that have been taken place. The primary issues that have dominated the watershed have been economic, environmental, social, and regional cooperation. However, infrastructure and mobility issues also come into play during this time.

The earliest event of significance that happened in the watershed was the completion of the first line of the Cincinnati Streetcar in 2012. They laid the foundation for the urban renaissance that would follow, built largely around dense communities and transit oriented development. By 2018, Cincinnati’s streetcar system had expanded to include several other routes, and was so successful that other cities began creating their own streetcar lines to enhance their attractiveness to urban dwellers. Also, in 2014, a Bikeshare program was launched in Cincinnati, that eventually was expanded all throughout the region. This program allowed people to rent bikes in one location, ride along the bike paths and trails, and return the bike at another destination. This program greatly contributed to the city becoming a desirable destination for people to live.

In conjunction with the enhanced mobility and urban amenities in the region, the economy began to pick up in the mid-2010’s. Green Product Manufacturing firms began locating along the Mill Creek because of its strategic location for inputs and a strong industrial cluster was formed. Due to this industrial boom, the lower Mill Creek, south of I-275, became fully channelized by 2015. The creek was no longer seen as a recreational amenity or natural habitat, but rather as a vitally important industrial input. This economic growth was so significant, that by 2017 Cincinnati was ranked by the Wall Street Journal as a Top 5 location for Green Product Manufacturing. As the lower Mill Creek was relegated to strictly industrial purposes, the upper Mill Creek was not overwhelmed by industry and became a focus of conservation, natural habitat preservation, and recreation. In late 2016, a National Scenic Preserve was established along the banks of the creek.

The Upper Mill Creek was preserved largely because the townships in Butler County had room to locate the new industrial facilities elsewhere, while still maintaining the strategic location advantage. West Chester in particular was able to achieve conservation of the creek while also experiencing the economic boom that came with the industry. By 2019, West Chester had a large enough population and economic base to incorporate into its own city, leaving the rest of Liberty Township with a weakened tax base. The growth of West Chester coincided with the deterioration and decline of the remaining Butler County townships that fall within the watershed region.

Due to the strategic advantage of the Mill Creek for the new industry, every community that had land adjacent to the creek was able to attract industry, thus growing its tax base and public services. This had a great impact on formerly poor, failing school districts. In particular, William H. Taft Elementary School, part of the City of Cincinnati school district, went from receiving an ‘Academic Emergency’ grade in 2010, to earning ‘Blue Ribbon’ status as a top tier school in the year 2020.
However, as some communities were rapidly improving as a result of the economic boom, other communities were bearing the brunt of the externalities of the new industry. In the year 2024 there was a toxic spill at one of the industrial sites located in the neighborhood of Camp Washington. This was a community that had a concentration of industry and workforce housing for the "green-class" workers. Although the toxic spill was largely contained to this area, it had terrible public health effects for the residents of this neighborhood, including a sharp increase in cancer rates and birth defects.

As the economic and economic base of the region continued to grow, it led to a major population redistribution.
Map 4 - Population Map in 2025
2030 Mill Creek Watershed Population Map

Source: US Census Bureau, CAGIS

Map 5 - Population Map in 2030
Jurisdictions that had access to the Mill Creek and the related comparative advantages grew rapidly, while population emptied out of the jurisdictions that were not able to attract the new industry and grow their tax base. This affected the political landscape, and in preparation for the 2022 elections, the Congressional districts were redrawn to account for the population shift. The phenomenon of upper-class, wealthy suburbanites re-populating the urban core of the region was exemplified in 2028 when Over-the-Rhine was ranked as the #1 most affluent National Historic District in the county. The population changes for each jurisdiction are summarized on map 6.

Map 6 - Mill Creek Watershed Population Change Map

In addition to the population shifts, the region became increasingly more segregated by income
Although there were pockets of severe poverty, the poverty rate as a whole decreased due to the employment opportunities created by the new industry. However, there was a significant bifurcation between the high-income and low-income wage earners. This disparity contributed to rivalries and tensions between neighboring communities. This spilled over in 2026, as an incident at a high school football game sparked riots and ‘border skirmishes’ between the neighboring communities of Lockland and Wyoming. Although the communities that had industry were better off than those who did not, many of them were still only working class communities, with little housing options other than the workforce housing that was built around the industries. These communities spent a significant portion of their resources attracting and retaining their industrial base. Additionally, due to the poor jurisdictional cooperation, service delivery and infrastructure was very inefficient and costly. This became a major problem when, in 2023, a local bridge collapsed in Lockland, killing six people and injuring twenty-two.

The economic boom fueled the growth of this region all throughout the 2010’s and early 2020’s. However, there were many social, economic, and environmental problems simmering under the surface, previously masked by the economic prosperity, which began to stifle the regional growth starting in the mid-2020’s. The region believed strongly that it had achieved a status among the county’s elites, and decided to once again submit a bid for the Summer Olympic Games. The city was targeting the 2036 games, and submitted a proposal highlighting all of the great achievements and amenities it had to offer. However, the Olympic Selection Committee eliminated this region during its first round of reviews because of its severe lack of regional cooperation – a characteristic vital to Olympic Host City success. This defeat left regional leaders very forlorn, and for the first time in 20 years, they began to question their fragmented approach and consider the value of regional cooperation.

Policies

Throughout the last twenty years, as issues arose in the Mill Creek Watershed region, and various events unfolded, the political leaders implemented various policies in response to what was happening. Some policies served to continue the trends that were taking place, both positive and negative trends, and other policies aimed at fixing obvious problems were not successful. In particular, there were eight key policies that were either implemented or attempted during this period of time. Regardless of the policies’ objectives or outcomes, it is clear that the leadership was playing a role in the events and issues taking place in this region.

Early in the 2010’s, there was a movement toward a regional governance structure to help pull the region out of economic recession. However, just as the county was preparing to put this issue before the voters, the economy turned around, and citizens no longer saw the need for such a regional structure. The issue went to ballot, and was resoundly defeated by a margin of nearly 2-1. No longer focusing on regionalism, each jurisdiction sought to build their economic base by attracting new business and industry. The City of Cincinnati was the leader in these attempts, and they implemented historic legislation offer significant tax incentives for Green Industry. This was largely in response to national cap and trade legislation that triggered the demand for green industry. In addition to the tax and financial incentive packages, the regional EPA also was pressured into lowering
its standards for point source pollution in order to create an environment welcoming to economic development and industrial location.

As the economic base grew and people began moving back into the city, Cincinnati finally gained enough support to change zoning codes to implement Form-Based code. These new codes mandated mixed-use development and TODs around the thriving streetcar lines. These policies continued the urban revitalization and repopulation that had already begun. In addition, Cincinnati had a strong enough tax base to enact policies aimed at historic preservation of the urban neighborhoods. They began offering grants for façade easements and landscape improvement programs to encourage continued redevelopment and investment in the urban core. As the population shift and income segregation became of increasing concern, Cincinnati created inclusionary zoning policies that provided financial incentives for developers to build mixed-income housing. However, developers did not choose to take advantage of these incentives, as it was more profitable to just build high-end residential units since the demand was so high.

Hamilton County recognized the declining transportation infrastructure throughout the region, and established a Transit Improvement District in order to strategically focus and leverage resources to improve the regional transportation infrastructure. However, this district had very tacit support from several influential jurisdictions, and was largely a failure due to the lack of cooperation. The Ohio Department of Education began to notice the large disparity between school districts across the Mill Creek Watershed region. Education reform was moved through the Ohio legislature, and had strong support from many local leaders in this region. However, once this reform became law, its implementation was very difficult due to the fragmented structure of the region. Despite strong support at all levels of government, this reform was largely ineffective because of an environment that was not conducive to successful implementation.

Policy Summary Chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati adopts Form-Based Code</td>
<td>Create Mixed-use and TODs</td>
<td>Successful due to the vibrant streetcar system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Government Structure</td>
<td>Regionalism</td>
<td>Rejected by Voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Incentives for Green Industry</td>
<td>Attract industry in response to national cap and trade legislation</td>
<td>Provided competitive advantage for industrial location, resulting in significant economic growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Preservation Grants</td>
<td>Stimulate investment in historic structures</td>
<td>Revitalization of urban neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower pollution standards</td>
<td>Encourage Economic Development</td>
<td>Deterioration of regional water and air quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Reform</td>
<td>Fix inequalities in education system</td>
<td>Ineffective due to poor cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Transit Improvement District</td>
<td>Improve transportation infrastructure</td>
<td>Lacked support from critical cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusionary Zoning Incentives</td>
<td>Create mixed-income housing</td>
<td>Developers did not take the incentives because it was more profitable to build high-end housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indicators

As the events of the last twenty years have unfolded, it is now possible to look back and identify key indicators that predicted the problems that the region now faces. There are many ways to examine the way in which things have unfolded in this region, but there are five key indicators that, in hindsight, revealed what was taking place throughout the region. These indicators are the Environmental Index, Public Health Index, Economic Index, Population Distribution, and Income disparity.

Environmental Index – This is an index comprised of measurements of air quality, water quality, soil quality, and biodiversity. Each component is equally weighted, and a falling index signifies a worsening environment.

Public Health Index – This is an index comprised of measurements of Asthma, Cancer, Obesity, and Diabetes. Each of these components are equally weighted, and a rising index indicates declining public health.

Economic Index – This is an index comprised of the employment rate, regional GDP, and educational attainment levels. The GDP component is weighted at 50%, and the other two are weighted at 25% each. A rising index illustrates a stronger regional economy.

Population – This simply tracks population increase or decrease over time. It will be used for analysis at both a regional scale, and individual jurisdictional scale.

Income Disparity – This indicator will be measured using the Gini Coefficient, to understand the wage rate between high-income earners and low-income earners in the region.

![2010 Population Distribution](image1.png)

![2015 Population Distribution](image2.png)

Figure 3 - 2010 Population Distribution

Figure 4 - 2015 Population Distribution
From 2010 to 2030 there is a significant population shift within the Mill Creek. As the area gains national recognition for its large green industrial manufacturing capabilities, population begins to relocate from non-industrial communities within the watershed to industrial communities bordering the Mill Creek where this corridor of green industry has been established.

This population shift is especially good news for communities such as Evendale, Lincoln Heights, Reading, Lockland, and Saint Bernard because it reverses half a century’s worth of population decline and shrinking tax base. While these formerly struggling communities benefit from an expanding tax base and demand for working class housing, other communities upstream such as Wyoming, Woodlawn, and West Chester continue to thrive thanks in part to an increasing demand for high-end housing from executives and managers in the green industry field. Overall, the percentage of population in the watershed living in industrial communities rises from around 60% in 2010 to almost 80% in 2030 while the population in non-industrial communities falls from around 40% in 2010 to barely 20% in 2030.
Economic-Environmental Index Graph

Beginning in 2010 the environmental and economic indices were opposite each other indicating a strong and healthy environment but a struggling economy. Over the next 10-15 years the economic index and the environmental index cross paths in 2023, just before the peak of the economic boom. At this time the economy begins to plateau while the environmental index slowly continues to worsen. This disparity in the indices is a result of relaxed environmental regulations designed to attract more businesses and industries into the watershed.

Public Health Index Graph

Much like the environmental/economic indices, the public health index also corresponds positively with the state of the economy. There is a steep rise in the index beginning around 2015 and reaching
a plateau between 2020 and 2025. The overall decline of public health includes cases of environmentally linked sicknesses such as asthma, increased cold symptoms, bronchitis and pneumonia, lung cancer, heart arrhythmia, and coronary disease. Notice however that although the index in the upper Mill Creek index correlates with that of the lower, it is by a fraction of the levels of the lower areas. This is a result of relaxed environmental regulation and an increase of industrialization along the lower Mill Creek watershed while areas to the north and in Butler County have remained relatively undisturbed.

Population Distribution Graph

![2010 Income Distribution](image1)

![2030 Income Distribution](image2)

Figure 10 - 2010 and 2030 Income Distribution

By 2030 the income distribution of the Mill Creek watershed will become increasingly uneven. Al-
though there are few people in extreme poverty, there is an overall drop in the percentage of middle class incomes while the wealthiest income brackets and the low-income wage earners all increase.

Gini Coefficient Graph

The Gini Coefficient measures the inequality of a variable in a distribution of its elements. It compares the Lorenz Curve (line of inequality) with a line of perfect equality. As you see in the graph, a 45 degree line equals perfect equality, and the further the curve dips below this line, the greater the inequality. In 2010 inequality certainly existed, but was relatively minor compared to the inequality in 2020 and 2030 which increased to more than double the levels of 2010.

V. Fictional Character Perspectives

The Campaign

Michael didn’t quite know how to handle the question; it seemed that every voice in the sweltering gymnasium was stilled, every eye focused on him. He cleared his throat. “Well, ma’am, I don’t think it’s positive to look at it in terms of taking power; it’s about cooperation, working together to solve problems. Jurisdictions in Hamilton County have been following their own agendas for decades, and we’ve seen the results. We are right in the middle of another bust. We can do better! I won’t lie to you; sacrifices for the common good from all jurisdictions will be needed. But the result will be a stronger, better Hamilton County.” He knew he hit it out of the ballpark when even Steve Lambert, one of his competitors in the election, reluctantly applauded, along with nearly everyone else in the room. He breathed a slight sigh of relief and called on a young woman in the fifth row.

Later, after the campaign event in Princeton High School, Michael Thorpe, candidate for Hamilton County Commissioner, gave a weary grin as reporters from the Cincinnati Enquirer, the Westchester
Daily and MetroCincinnati Online plied him with questions. “Mr. Thorpe, why do you think your experience as Mayor of Lincoln Heights translates into something appropriate for Hamilton County?” asked one reporter.

Ignoring the veiled insult to his hometown, Thorpe replied coolly, “Lincoln Heights turned around through cooperation. Economies of scale saved our budget when we made police, fire and EMS deals with Lockland. A lot of acrimony between our towns vanished, and development became much easier with the joint financing and space we provided together. Lincoln Heights isn’t perfect, but it’s significantly better off. This model can work in Hamilton County, and can solve a lot of problems around here. A stronger, regional Hamilton County can work better with Butler County too.”

A second reporter interjected. “Mr. Thorpe, isn’t running a small community of 2,000 quite different from becoming the commissioner of –“

“Now look here. There is a need in this county for new ways of thinking. You know as well as I do that the newly incorporated towns are not going to help spur development, only fuel competition. I know we can improve things, if we would let go of our old ways of thinking and focus on new methods that can really improve things.”

Michael knew his campaign needed to get moving for the next event, so he quickly ended the impromptu press conference. Robin, his campaign manager, walked up to him through the departing reporters, and once they were out of earshot, joked, “You know what tomorrow’s headline will be: ‘Thorpe, out of ideas’”.

Michael only nodded. “One generation, this community will realize the benefits of cooperation. Let’s go make sure it’s this one.”

The Bank

Cynthia Falls faced many challenges in her youth. Caring for her elderly grandmother during college made classes very difficult, but support from her neighbors and the community of Madisonville helped her pull through. After graduating from college in 1997 with honors, she decided to give back by becoming a small business owner, providing a wide variety of general financial services to the people of Madisonville. Cynthia spent nearly a decade investing in her small business, an accounting and tax firm, located in Madisonville’s business district. She had extremely low rates for the members of her community who she knew to be less fortunate, and did quite a bit of her work pro bono.

The recession of the late 2000s seriously disrupted Cynthia’s ability to stay in business, and in 2010 she considered bankruptcy. But when she discovered that a proposal for an expansion of the city’s new streetcar went right through the Madisonville business district, she decided once again to stick it out for a while longer.

The gleaming new streetcar brought hordes of new customers to the businesses in Madisonville.
Combined with the economic boom, new shops began to open, windows and businesses were cleaned and new trees and flowers reflected the growing investment in the area. Cynthia was so overwhelmed by the flow of customers that she hired two new junior accountants and a clerk to deal with the workload.

One day, after settling down with a fat actuary folder, Cynthia realized that the prosperity that had come had left out the most destitute in Madisonville. After years of doing their taxes and finances, she knew exactly what would help. In 2016, along with other business and community leaders, she opened the region’s first micro-loan bank, right in Madisonville. The bank provided start-up funds to dozens of her neighbors, and began to show a very small profit by 2024. By sticking with Madisonville, Cynthia Falls was able to help countless members of the community over the course of her business career.

The Pandemic

The sun beat down relentlessly on the bustling street below the 8th story window. Dr. Jean-Baptiste Ado looked down at the people on the street below from his air-conditioned doctor’s office. The pedestrians clotted thickly at street corners and crosswalks. Over his years of practice at his downtown office, he had seen the revitalization and explosion of development downtown positively at first, and eventually with some exasperation: planning and growth management had not kept up with the development. He was also becoming disturbed by other consequences of economic growth, evident with the young guest in his office and the expectant mother, waiting for a diagnosis.

“Ms. Tompkins, where does your family live? What part of town?” he said, still staring out the window.

“I told you Dr. Ado, I am quite sure we live within the coverage zone; I know the different towns have made it quite difficult to seek healthcare outside of their own borders, but I have checked several times to make sure you are within our –”

“I’m not worried about that, Ms. Tompkins.” He paused for a moment and turned to face her and her sick son, Andrew. “Please remind me where you live.”

Ms. Tompkins sighed impatiently. Andrew coughed, embarrassed. “We live in Arlington Heights, Dr. Ado. I don’t see how that…” She continued to talk for a few moments, but Dr. Ado turned again; his mind was engaged, piecing together a puzzle. Right downstream from the Chemworks spill.

“Ms. Tompkins, I suspect your son has been exposed to some contamination from a chemical spill. No, don’t worry, he’ll be fine. I know exactly what to diagnose; my colleagues and I have found something of a miniature pandemic around the area where the Chemworks spill occurred. I will write you a prescription, but please tell your son and his friends to avoid any contact with groundwater in the area, especially the Mill Creek.”

After a grateful Ms. Tompkins and despondent Andrew left the office, Dr. Ado sat down at his tablet.
He had an hour until his next appointment. He began composing a letter to the city health director, the state environmental director, and the local FEMA agent.

The House

The work bell strikes at exactly five o’clock at the General Electric windmill plant in Lockland. Brody is exhausted and slowly follows the rest of his co-workers into the locker room. As Brody places his hardhat and goggles in his locker he caught a glimpse of the many photos hanging inside. Almost all of them were of his wife, Elizabeth, and his son, Bailey. Each picture represented a different aspect of how his life unfolded in Cincinnati. There was a picture of Elizabeth at work, a receptionist at the hospital; a picture of Wesley wearing his little league uniform. But one photo in particular struck him the hardest: a family photo that radiated happiness with the Hales standing in front of a beautiful brick house with a white picket fence. Brody couldn’t stand it; he slammed his locker and stalked out of the locker room.

Everyone at the factory could empathize with Brody. The beautiful house in the picture was the Hale’s first home in Wyoming, along the Wyoming – Lockland border. Both Brody and Elizabeth worked very hard, saving every dime they had to put a down payment on that house. To watch as his house burnt down in the line of fire was like seeing half his life washed down the drain.

It is true that communities in the Mill Creek watershed benefited greatly from strong economic growth. With a strong economy, unemployment rates dropped dramatically, consumer spending skyrocketed, with increased civic participation and pride in individual communities. However, there was a lack of regional cooperation and highly individualistic actions made by jurisdictions, which presented serious social problems to the communities. Primarily, social cohesion across jurisdictional boundaries suffered as citizens lost their regional-metropolitan identity and replaced it with clannish loyalties to their own community. This was manifested in the form of increased civic rivalry and competition, creating an environment where communities sabotaged each other’s efforts at economic development. As a result, ‘turf battles’ between youths from different communities were commonplace, especially between communities marked by class differences and inequality. The Hales’ house got caught in the crossfire; as it went up in flames, so too did the region’s hopes for cooperation and mutual understanding.

The Scarf

Nathan, a single father finally arrived home after a long day of work. He opened the door to find his 8 year-old daughter, Francesca, running full force to greet him. Nathan was excited to see Francesca as well, but her greeting almost knocked the wind out of him. Maria, a widower, Francesca’s babysitter and a recently retired schoolteacher, stood behind, waiting to greet Nathan as well. The three of them chatted for a while before Maria had to leave for an event that her church was organizing. Before Maria left, Francesca ran after her to return the beautiful turquoise scarf she had let Francesca play with. Maria said, “Thank you, Francesca, this scarf is very dear to me and I cannot image losing it. It was a gift from my husband.” Maria gave Francesca a hug and went on her way.

After dinner, Nathan and Francesca decided to watch a movie in celebration of Francesca’s recent little league victory. As Nathan prepared the movie, Francesca went into her room to put on her pa-
jamas. Nathan grabbed the remote and turned on the television and discovered the local station’s breaking news coverage on a bridge collapse in North College Hill.

A news anchor was standing nearby the scene of the accident; debris, bricks and twisted steel beams were strewn on the ground. “It’s been confirmed the collapse has resulted in three fatalities. Apparently, the bridge had not been inspected for nearly four years. Bridge inspections should be done annually, according to our government source, but with North College Hill’s constrained budget, the bridge conditions went unnoticed.” As Nathan watched the news broadcast, he heard Francesca calling him, “Daddy, Daddy, I need your help. I can’t find my jammies…” Before he turned away from the TV, he saw a turquoise scarf behind the news anchor, half pinned under a pile of concrete, the same exact scarf Francesca had been playing with earlier today.

### VI. 2030-2050 Watershed Regional Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional Governance</td>
<td>Create regional identity</td>
<td>Region marketing and branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create service delivery efficiencies across the region</td>
<td>Public education campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce auto emissions and land consumption caused by sprawl</td>
<td>Establish a regional governing body</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage clean energy practices</td>
<td>Jurisdictional revenue Sharing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Influence consumer behavior towards sustainability</td>
<td>Increase consumer awareness</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support local businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grow the Economy</td>
<td>Build on existing economic base</td>
<td>Develop economic opportunities outside of Mill Creek Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diversify economy</td>
<td>Expand green industry to service sector</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workforce development</td>
<td>Conduct target sector analysis study</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide tax incentives and policies to attract targeted sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create Safe, Healthy, and Equitable Communities</td>
<td>Create mixed-income neighborhoods</td>
<td>Mandatory inclusionary zoning practices</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lower environmental health hazards</td>
<td>Stricter industrial pollution standards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uniform quality of public services</td>
<td>Require or subsidize air and water scrubbers for industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect Regional Transportation Networks</td>
<td>Link individual streetcars into one regional transit system</td>
<td>Regional standards of service delivery applicable to all communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multimodal transit linkages at hubs</td>
<td>Services funded through regional revenue sharing system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance Stewardship of the Natural Environment</td>
<td>Create an additional 20% of connected urban greenspace</td>
<td>Conversion of brownfields to greenspace</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restore ecological integrity of the Mill Creek</td>
<td>Re-forestation of Mill Creek Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transform grey infrastructure using eco-friendly channelization techniques</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Incentivize conservation easements throughout the region</td>
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</tbody>
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Figure 12 - 2030-2050 Plan Overview
Goal 1: Establish Regional Governance

Currently the jurisdictions within the Mill Creek Watershed are severely disconnected and in competition with one another. This fractured regional character has resulted in widening income disparity, economic and social segregation, environmental injustice, inefficient use of public funds and uneven delivery of services. In order to achieve a more equitable and unified region, it is critical to form a stronger regional identity, coordinate spending and development among all governments and establish regional governance to foster and direct this increased multijurisdictional cooperation.

It is imperative that we create a regional identity in order to increase citizen and community pride and stakeholder investment in the Mill Creek Watershed as a whole, rather than limiting identification with individual municipalities. Only when a regional identity and character is achieved can a successful level of cooperation and regional governance be realized and implemented. This can be accomplished through implementing a regional marketing and branding campaign with the goal of creating a community image that is recognizable by and reflective of the citizens and characteristics of the Mill Creek Watershed. A public education campaign can be undertaken as a compliment, which will illustrate the benefits of regional cooperation and governance. Underlying each of these initiatives will be data and research that will demonstrate the costs and benefits of regional governance versus continuation of the existing disconnected governance.

The goal that follows regional governance is maximization of service delivery across the Mill Creek Watershed, made possible by increased coordination and more equitable distribution and use of public resources. This objective has two separate components: regional revenue sharing and the establishment of a regional governing body that would oversee the allocation of public funds. By synchronizing funds and services on a regional scale, greater efficiency can be achieved through economies of scale. Moreover, leveling the funding playing field, so to speak, would decrease regional disparities in the availability and quality of services.

Goal 2: Reduce the Mill Creek Watershed’s Carbon Footprint to 30% below 2005 levels

Although the economic growth of the past decades has benefited many communities within the Mill Creek Watershed, it has also led to declining air quality and rising consumption of energy and land. In an effort to reduce the region’s Carbon Footprint and minimize the impacts of rapid urban and suburban growth, policies must encourage and guide more efficient industrial production and compliance, in addition to the development of a connected transportation system that will reduce automobile emissions and environmental awareness among the general population.

Urban sprawl continues to be a major issue throughout the region despite the rise of Transit Oriented Development (driven by the many streetcar systems that have been built throughout the watershed). However, there is an overall lack of coordinated design and infrastructure development that results in fragmented, land-intensive urban and suburban growth in the fringe areas of the Mill Creek Watershed. The creation of an urban growth boundary—beyond which development is prohibited—in conjunction with the establishment of a regional governing body is one way to address
this issue. An urban growth boundary will limit unnecessary expansion of utilities, roads, and other infrastructure into the region’s dwindling natural and rural lands. It will also contribute to more efficient government spending with regards to construction and maintenance.

Another step in reducing the region’s carbon emissions is to encourage clean energy practices within among the industries that comprise the economic base of the region. Reducing energy use and emissions levels will help to lower health risks associated with poor air quality as well as increase the efficiency of current industrial activities by lowering costs and encouraging new investments and businesses. To accomplish this objective, we must foster bi-product synergy partnerships among existing and future businesses and industries. Bi-product synergy encourages the use of waste products from one industrial process as the primary resource in the activities of other industry. Thus, the amount of industrial waste is greatly reduced and the cost of transporting materials is cut.

Promoting sustainable consumer choices is the last step necessary in order to meaningfully reduce the region’s environmental impact. Increasing consumer awareness begins by making the available range of sustainable commerce options clear. An understanding of local resources and sustainable alternatives will lead to better informed decision-making on the part of the citizens in the region, which serves as the foundation of a strong, locally based and efficient economy. Supporting local businesses not only strengthens the local economy, but also reduces the amount of energy used, time and distance traveled, and emissions produced through the production and delivery goods and services. Supporting local business includes the support of local agriculture, alongside services and non-agricultural retail.

Goal 3: Grow the Economy

A healthy economy is a critical component of the region’s future. It generates the revenue necessary to provide high quality goods and services to residents and visitors, as well as the productive capability to remain competitive and viable compared to other areas. The past two decades have been prosperous, but it will be important to build on existing strengths and find new opportunities for growth and development. This not only includes diversifying the economic base, but also finding creative and efficient ways of harnessing the local workforce.

Much of our recent economic growth to date has been driven by the dynamism of green industry located along the Mill Creek Valley. Green roof manufacture and installation, nanotechnology production and investment in biofuels are just a few representations of those activities that simultaneously earn profits, create jobs and protect the planet. Given the ubiquity of the sustainability paradigm, we are fortunate to be anchored by such enterprise. We have reached a point where scientific and economic evidence overwhelmingly encourages sustainable technology. Economic policies will continue embracing this trend, but we will look outside the Mill Creek Valley to establish new regional loci of green industry. In addition, efforts to transition into a green service sector applying new ecological principles and green technology will be made.

Diversifying the economy is another important economic growth strategy guiding future action. The
Great Recession of the 2000s provided many examples illustrating the danger of enclave economic development, such as the collapse of auto manufacturing in the Rust Belt. Economic diversification is the key to preparedness and resilience. As such, conducting a target sector analysis study is one way to enter untapped markets and capitalize on new opportunities. Leveraging financial incentives such as tax-breaks to attract desirable sectors or businesses would be one course of action upon completion of the study. Ultimately, the global economy moves at such an accelerated pace that complacency can lead to devastating unintended consequences.

Workforce development is the final element of the plan’s economic growth objective. Our labor force is an important source of capital—human—that yields returns and must be wisely invested. Unemployment in the region has consistently remained below state and national levels, but it will not be possible to maintain the stability of our workforce unless individuals who possess the skills and desire for employment can be matched with appropriate opportunities. Unlike previous generations, today’s job market offers many opportunities for highly specialized, skilled labor. It is an important development that is much more inclusive than older, knowledge-centric employment markets. Implementing specialized and vocational job training programs on a broader scale is one way to ensure maximum returns on our human capital, as we are investing in the structural opportunities that allow certain individuals to learn concretely today how to perform the jobs of tomorrow.

Goal 4: Create safe, healthy, equitable communities

The complex interrelationships between the physical and social environments of a city largely determine whether or not that city is a desirable place to live. The 2030 plan seeks to enhance the livability of the watershed by improving housing, environmental quality and community services in order to promote social inclusion, public health and equity.

With a few exceptions, many of the region’s neighborhoods are segregated by race and income. Although self-selection has contributed to this dynamic, current zoning practices have helped to create a housing market that deprives many low- and moderate-income families of neighborhood choice and denies them access to the city’s best schools, community services and stable employment networks. Social segregation also limits awareness, tolerance and celebration of diversity. The creation of mixed-income neighborhoods is one strategy to challenge the status quo and facilitate meaningful, mutually beneficial integration. This goal can be accomplished through the adoption of inclusionary zoning, whereby developers are required to devote a percentage of new housing stock to affordable housing. It is an important compliment to federal housing programs such as HOPE VI or the Housing Choice Voucher program, both of which recognize the fundamental importance of and justification for social mixing.

Lowering environmental health hazards is another major objective of the 2030 plan. While the abundance of green industry in the Mill Creek Valley has generated the double dividends of economic development and sustainable products, the industry’s practices have inevitably caused some environmental degradation. Industrial pollution compromises the quality of air, water and land; all of which can be manifested through public health indicators such as asthma rates or cancer risk.
Unfortunately, the burden of environmental risk falls disproportionately on the communities living closest to industry. In order to correct this imbalance and more adequately protect public health, it will be necessary to enact stricter industrial pollution standards and require air and water scrubbers for all industries.

Providing uniform quality of public services is the final objective of the 2030 plan in terms of creating safe, equitable and healthy communities. Community services and institutions are critical to quality of life at all stages as they provide educational, recreational and aesthetic benefits. Due to the uneven income distribution throughout the city and the region, vast disparities exist among tax bases that have a profound impact upon the quality and availability of public services and facilities such as schools, libraries and parks. In other words, the quality and availability of public services is bifurcated between high- and low-income communities. By setting a high regional standard for these services and funding them through a regional revenue sharing system, we will be better able to meet citizens’ needs in an equitable manner.

**Goal 5: Connect Regional Transit Networks**

At present, each of the region’s existing streetcar lines is operated by a separate political jurisdiction. Although the streetcar plan implemented in 2015 has been very successful in each neighborhood, the fact that the lines are not connected is a major limitation. For instance, inter-county streetcar travel is not yet possible, which prohibits commutes between Cincinnati and its surrounding suburbs—a transit dilemma that affects thousands of citizens each day. Overall, the inconvenience created by this fragmentation is generating increased public criticism as evidenced by numerous complaints filed.

The issue of connectivity must be addressed. The inefficiencies of the current system can only be overcome by linking the independent streetcar routes into one coherent regional network. Although it will take a great deal of regional collaboration, synchronizing individual streetcar schedules and extending existing tracks to permit inter-county travel can achieve this objective.

Beyond connecting the streetcar lines among themselves, we must consider opportunities for linkage with other modes of transportation such as busses, bike paths and pedestrian walkways. This will contribute to a robust multimodal transit network that facilitates public transit usage, walkability and biking to the highest degree. Further enhancements can be made, such as placing bike racks on busses. Ultimately, multimodal transit networks most thoroughly discourage automobile use by collapsing together all transit alternatives into one seamless system. To the extent that physical connectivity yields social connectivity, a multimodal transit network will bring the public closer together and provide both more numerous and sustainable routes to those destinations where we live, work and play.

**Goal 6: Enhance stewardship of natural environment**

The final objective of the 2030 plan is to enhance stewardship of the natural environment. Our environment is a constant backdrop to our daily lives, conditioning our social, economic, political
and physical development. Conserving our natural resources is critical to ensuring not only that future generations are able to utilize what they need for subsistence, but also so that humans today and tomorrow are able to reap the available recreational, aesthetic and natural systems benefits. Beginning in 2030, we plan to create an additional 20% of connected urban greenspace. The primary component of this initiative would be to develop an extensive greenway infrastructure of natural, multiuse trails that connect to the watershed’s parks and natural preserves. Concurrent efforts to preserve fauna and flora, wildlife habitats, floodplains and other natural systems will also take place.

The reasons for supporting such a project are manifold. First, an integrated greenway contributes to a higher quality of living, providing scenic areas for recreation. Also, increased plant life contributes to better air quality in addition to filtering stormwater and slowing flooding. Finally, connected greenspace, better preserves species biodiversity, providing animals a larger space in which to breed without the risk of crossing dangerous human corridors.

Current parklands will continue to be conserved, while efforts will be made to convert former industrial sites (brownfields) back to their natural state. Reforestation projects are a way to increase the greenspace and plant life within the watershed.

A final distinction must be made between conservation and restoration. While conservation of current parklands and natural areas will be a high priority, we must also remediate those areas that have lost their ecological integrity due to industrial pollution, and other human interferences. Projects such as brownfield remediation and eliminating channelization of the creek will take place alongside development of the watershed’s greenway. Incentives for implementing conservation easements are one way that County, State, or Federal governments can make environmental objectives economically feasible for landowners.
VII. Factions Speak Louder than Words Appendix
I. Scenario Summary

The Mill Creek Watershed region continues to suffer economically for a period of roughly fifteen years, from 2010-2025. This economic downturn, however, provides the region with the opportunity to explore the different benefits of community collaboration and regional cohesion. The struggling economy not only brings neighbors and communities together, but it eventually brings city governments together to share services and revenue in order to enhance the sustainability and viability of the watershed region.

II. Point of View Scenario

Straight from the Suburbs - 2010

“Hey sweetheart, do you wanna help me mash the potatoes?”

“Yea Mom, that’s my favorite part!”

It was Thanksgiving morning, and 8-year-old Nathan Clarke was ecstatic about spending his favorite holiday with both of his parents. He started the day by helping his mom prepare the Thanksgiving Day feast and then finished it off by helping his dad rake leaves off of their lawn on an unseasonably warm November day.

The Clarkes’ large five-bedroom home in West Chester, Ohio was located in an affluent neighborhood with tree-lined cul-de-sacs that were packed with modern homes and large backyards. Both of Nathan’s parents spent most hours of the day at their high-pressure jobs. Michael, Nathan’s dad, worked as a mechanical engineer at General Electric, while his mother, Katrina, worked as a mid-level accountant at Proctor and Gamble. He rarely got to spend time with his parents during the week, but this was a special day.

Change in Scenery – 2012-2015

“Stop watching TV and get out that door Nate! You’re gonna miss your bus!”

It was on this note that Nathan Clarke, now ten years old, was hurried out the front door by his father. As the crowded school bus began to leave, Nate peered out the back window to watch him hop into his SUV and speed away. His dad had at least an hour-long commute ahead of him, and he was leaving much later than usual. He had recently heard his dad complaining about his lengthy commute. “Traffic just inches along…I’m having to leave earlier and earlier just to be on time!”

Recently, in the evenings, Nate had also been hearing his parents argue more and more. Almost every night, when they thought he was asleep, he could hear them shouting at one another, and while he didn’t understand what they were yelling about, he kept hearing the same words over and
over again; DOWNSIZING. CUTBACKS. MORTGAGE.

Nate awoke on the morning of April 15th, 2015 not to the sound of his alarm, but to the sound of his father’s voice. This early Friday morning his Dad was not in his usual shirt and tie, but instead was dressed casually, as if it were a Saturday. He was bringing news that would drastically change Nate’s lifestyle, shaping his future in an unexpected and astonishing way. “I no longer work at the plant pal…and your mom and I have decided that it’s best if we move into the city…we just can’t afford to live out here anymore.” Nate noticed that his dad, who had always been invincible in his eyes, was beginning to tear up. “It’s gonna be alright buddy. You’ll like the city, there’s a lot to do there.” His dad muttered as he slowly left the room.

At 13 years old, Nate was smart enough to understand what was happening. It had been all but impossible to avoid the news of the continually crashing economy. This, along with the fact that seemingly every week a new family was moving out of his neighborhood, had made his father’s announcement less than surprising. Even at his young age, he already knew as much about unemployment, foreclosures and poverty as most adults. It was only now, however, that it was actually having an effect on his life. He was surprised, nervous, and saddened by the news, but not completely disappointed. He had only been in the city a couple of times to see a Bengals game, but had enjoyed it while he was there. The more he thought about it, the more he began to look forward to a fresh start and a chance to meet new friends.

City Life - 2018

“Hey Nate! Are we still playing basketball after school?”

“Yeah man, see ya there.”

Three years later, 16-year-old Nathan Clarke was six inches taller, 50 pounds lighter, and living a completely different life than the one he had previously led in West Chester. Having to walk 10 blocks to and from school everyday had significantly impacted both his health and confidence, and his relationship with his parents was slowly changing as well. He was bonding with his dad more than ever, and since taking a part-time job as a mechanic, they had dinner together at home almost every night. Nate’s mother, however, was often not at home in the evenings. While she had been lucky enough to retain her job at Proctor and Gamble, she had been demoted several times and was having to work in the late evenings and on the weekends.

Nate knew that his parents were struggling financially, but he was happier living in the city. He liked the fact that he could walk wherever he wanted to go, and that he actually knew his neighbors. Although he was more active, his asthma had worsened since moving to the city. Traffic congestion was still a major issue, and the air quality was declining annually, forcing him to carry his inhaler with him wherever he went. He was not alone in this however; overall health in the city was on the decline.

Homelessness and poverty were becoming a problem as well. Many of the city shelters had shut down during the economic downturn, and as Nate walked to and from school he was increasingly
confronted by panhandlers. Increasingly more people were living on street corners, and the city was seeing an increase in theft and robberies. These problems, however, did not stop at the city limits, the suburbs were grappling with the same issues. Abandonment and vacancies brought with them crime and poverty, and suburban municipalities were struggling to fund basic infrastructure projects due to their dwindling tax base.

Nate’s school wasn’t immune to the effects of this economic turmoil either. Many public schools had consolidated, and as a result his classes were becoming overcrowded while the number of teachers remained the same. On a class field trip to the nearby Mill Creek he became fascinated by the city’s clean-up efforts and the impact they were having on the region. In 2018, the Metropolitan Sewer District had completed its first phase of their sewer overflow repair project and Nate had witnessed the impact of this firsthand. After the completion of the project, he immediately noticed that the creek was visibly cleaner, and that after a rainstorm the reek of sewage failed to linger throughout the day as it had so many times before. These experiences with city issues such as poverty and homelessness, along with Nate’s involvement in the Mill Creek clean-up efforts, sparked a passion for civic engagement in him that would last for years to come and would prove to have a profound impact on his life.

An Education - 2020

In May of 2020, Nathan Clarke graduated high school and headed off to college. Getting accepted to Ohio State University was an accomplishment that had not come easy, in fact, it almost didn’t happen. Due to the economic chaos of recent years, many national and local scholarships had been eliminated and most banks were now much more cautious when handing out loans. Eventually though, his Dad’s boss co-signed on a loan and Nate was able to pack up and head to Columbus for an opportunity that would change his life.

While the regional economy continued to struggle in the years that Nathan was away, a geographic shift in local industry occurred, causing a shift in both employment and residential location. As the price of oil continued to rise, many companies began relocating into the city in order to be closer to rail and river transit. With this industrial shift came an increased tax base and a stabilized city economy. However, what was a positive for the city became a negative for the surrounding region. While the city’s problems began to level off, the suburbs continued to suffer from numerous economic and social problems. The affluent neighborhood where Nate had celebrated Thanksgiving in 2010 was now a poverty stricken community with high crime rates and increasing abandonment.

Change is in the Air - 2025

“Oh honey, welcome home! It’s so nice to have you back.” Nate’s welcome home greeting from his mother was bittersweet. He had spent almost five years at Ohio State getting a degree in public policy, and had graduated at the top of his class. Yet here he was living back at his parent’s house with no job prospects. Although the economy was showing some signs of life in the city, it was still an extremely tough environment to embark on a job search.

His neighborhood had experienced some subtle changes while he was away. He noticed that
there were less homeless on the street, and that the community seemed both cleaner and safer. Throughout his time in college, he had come back to visit the neighborhood only on holidays, and it was during these visits that he had noticed a slow shift in the resident’s attitudes. It wasn’t until he was back living in the community, however, that he was able to pinpoint what had changed.

Over the last couple of years, the residents had begun to come together as a community to help change the face of the neighborhood. There were now community clean-up programs, and Nathan’s parents had worked with neighbors to form a neighborhood watch group. While there were still problems in the neighborhood, he was amazed by what they had accomplished simply by working together. This was an inspirational moment for Nathan, and he began to think about what else could be accomplished through community collaboration.

As his struggles to find a job continued, Nathan began volunteering with different civic groups around the city. The theme was the same in every neighborhood throughout the city: Community Collaboration. It was rapidly becoming a popular and effective way to improve neighborhoods. Because of the economic shift, people of different socioeconomic backgrounds were now living among one another in densely populated areas, and once they began to work together as one community change happened fast. Nathan was smart enough to recognize this shift in attitude, and he wanted to capitalize on it as best as he could. Through his volunteer work, he began to hear about a newly formed organization that was capitalizing on this momentum. It was called the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments (MCWCG). Nathan quickly became a board member and began to work on bringing the city together on some of the key issues.

Over the next five years, MCWCG began to create plans based on the need for walkability and multi-modal transportation. While the region as a whole was still dependent on the automobile, the general attitude of the city had shifted away from this. As part of these plans, the group began extending bus routes, drafting a comprehensive light rail plan, and building wider sidewalks and more bike lanes. As all of this was happening, for the first time discussions about a comprehensive regional land-use plan begin to take place. By 2030, this shift in attitude was beginning to reshape the city and its neighborhoods.

While all of this was happening, the suburbs continued to struggle. The local governments, however, recognized this and began to work with the city and each other on different ways to increase the efficiency of the region. For the first time, discussions began to take place regarding shared services such as utilities, fire, and police. Also, the suburban municipalities began discussing the benefits of a regional tax sharing system. As Nathan took part in the historic discussions, he began to think about his old home in West Chester. He recalled a time when knowing your neighbor was rare and walking to a local store was impossible. But now, 20 years later, here he was helping to lead a region towards change. He now not only knew his neighbors, he was working with them to help create a more sustainable future.
III. Scenario Narrative

Leading Up to 2030

The Mill Creek Valley region never recovered from the 2008 economic crisis and the national economy continued to worsen, having negative effects in areas such as: poverty, homelessness, foreclosures, vacancies, transportation, industry and economic development in both the city and the surrounding suburbs. Although some projects already in progress were completed, many of the important details were not carried out.

The I-75 plan was implemented and the four major intersections outlined in the plan were also completed by 2020. There were, however, several problems that arose after its implementation. The budget ran dry and a lot of the smaller connective arterials outlined in the project were unable to be developed. Also, some of the major intersections were not as popular as previously envisioned. The Revive I-75 interchange opened connectivity to different neighborhoods, but the development of business districts remained unrealized due to the continuing economic recession. The Cincinnati streetcar never came to fruition, even after the Cincinnati’s City Council voted in favor of funding the project. The 3C Corridor was created and functional by 2020, but the station was located outside of the city limits. This had a negative effect on development plans situated around Union Terminal. The first phase of the court mandated Municipal Sewer District (MSD) project was completed in 2018, as scheduled. The completion of this project added many benefits to the Mill Creek's water quality.
The environmental state of the Mill Creek worsened before it got better. The economic collapse resulted in less funding for cleaning efforts, water quality monitoring, and greenway construction. The majority of watershed residents began to focus more on personal issues and the worsening economic recession. After the completion of the first phase of the MSD project, however, the water quality of the Mill Creek improved. Less raw sewage and stormwater made its way into the waterway via the overflow valves. As the economy lagged, so did industrial development. Many industries along the Mill Creek closed, leaving more brownfield sites, but also assisted in improving the water quality of the Mill Creek. Impervious surface cover increased from 2010-2015, but tapered off as development ceased in the region. Air quality slightly improved between 2010-2015 with the closing of factories in the watershed, but worsened in the city as many industries moved closer to rail and river transit after 2015.

The tax base of both the city and suburbs faltered between 2010-2015, causing school levies to fail, and creating an environment of crumbling infrastructure. Poverty increased alongside of unemployment, leaving social services strained. Crime rose steadily as the economy worsened until communities began to cooperate after 2020. The cost of living in the suburbs became unbearable for residents and industries alike. As the price of oil continued to rise, industries began to move back into the city after 2015 to take advantage of the re-emerging rail and river transit, as well as the prevalence of vacant properties in these areas. Industries recognized that more and more of its employees were relocating to the city in search of more affordable housing and shorter commutes.

By 2020, the region also experienced a drastic demographic shift as the baby boomers aged and a new generation of young professionals emerged. These young professionals began to demand a more vibrant and livable city. The culture shifted from their dependence on the automobile and neighborhoods of low-density to one demanding multi-modal transportation. This demand helped to spur more flexible zoning laws within the City of Cincinnati that led to the creation of cohesive, dense communities. Adaptive reuse, mixed-used, infill development and the conservation of green space began to be recognized as the route to a more sustainable future.

Along with the generational shift, the demographics of city neighborhoods also began to change between 2015 and 2025. More affluent families from the suburbs slowly moved closer to the city in search of more affordable housing and more reasonable commutes. This relatively quick change in demographics caused tension in the beginning. The original low-income residents of the neighborhoods were not open to the new changes, and both parties were very distrusting of the other. It took several years of continuous economic struggle for the new neighbors to recognize the importance of community cohesiveness. Eventually, neighbors began helping neighbors, and communities came together to solve the problems around them that their government lacked the funds to address.

During the ten years leading up to 2020, housing prices dropped dramatically and the rate of renters increased while homeownership hit a record low. Due to the national economic crisis, the Mill Creek Watershed region could no longer remain dependent on federal dollars. This, in turn,
eliminated the possibility of any new development and forced industries to reuse older buildings in an economically and environmentally efficient manner.

The price of oil continued to skyrocket throughout the 20 years leading up to 2030. Residents began to think twice before driving even short distances. Summer vacations all but ceased and the region experienced a new influx of local tourism as families began searching for attractions close to home. The region also began to see the food prices in grocery stores increase as food producers were forced to raise prices with the increased shipping costs brought on by high fuel prices. These increased food prices started somewhat of a “food revolution” in the Mill Creek Watershed. Agriculture land was reclaimed and homeowners added small family gardens to their backyards. Farms also looked at ways to contribute to the larger economy by setting up wind generators on their land and becoming examples and sources of renewable energy.

As middle income households began moving back into the city and the gap between the rich and poor increased, the gap between the middle and lower class decreased. This forced the two groups to not only live together in one community, but to begin working together to improve their communities. They no longer faced different obstacles and they now had to break through the same barriers together. The two groups began to use existing infrastructure to form community-based institutions, thus creating a sense of community and togetherness. As this was occurring, the city’s schools improved, the tax base in the City of Cincinnati increased, and the local economy slowly began to stabilize. The suburbs, however, were a different story. They continued to struggle with poverty, vacancies, crime and homelessness. This led to a situation in which the surrounding suburban communities needed and wanted to form a regional government with the city.

_Conditions in 2030_

By 2030, an organization (The Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments) was formed to oversee and coordinate all stakeholders within the Mill Creek Watershed. The mission of the organization is to provide a forum for all stakeholders to communicate their concerns, needs and priorities with one another and to facilitate cohesive decision-making. The organization was formed in order to address important issues in the region including: land use, environmental issues, socio-economic issues and transportation.

The Mill Creek Watershed is now in a position to potentially adopt a comprehensive plan. With limited growth opportunities, the different municipalities are more willing and able to negotiate how their land is used. The cities and municipalities within the Mill Creek Watershed now recognize the importance of flexibility in their zoning regulations and therefore density within the city is higher than in the past. Parks now serve as nodes and central meeting places for communities and the desire for a “walkable” environment continues to increase. There are plans for more greenways and even more parks. This, along with industrial vacancies within the watershed, has increased environmental awareness and quality. The air quality, however, has not seen much improvement as residents still depend on the automobile to move around the region.

In general, the environmental health of the region has improved since 2010. Combined sewer
overflow into the Mill Creek is no longer a major issue and the water quality of the river is much
improved. Impervious surface cover has not increased nor has it declined. The new regional
organization now sees the environment as a key factor in recovery and recognizes the importance
of incorporating equity, environment and economic development into future plans. As such, they
are working with communities and residents to incorporate environmental quality into all future
plans. This change of attitude has also begun to shed light on the issue of environmental injustice
that exists in the region.

Social injustices still exist within the region, but these injustices are now affecting a more diverse
population. More middle class residents now live within the limits of the City of Cincinnati.
Industries are also beginning to relocate into the city in order to be within close proximity to rail
and river transit. Although this shift in industry benefits Cincinnati and its residents, it hurts the
suburbs. This shift in jobs and tax base causes change throughout the region. Foreclosures and
vacancies remain high in the suburbs, but are static within Cincinnati, while unemployment and
poverty rates are leveling off in the city, but continue to rise in the suburbs. Regional income levels
become concentrated within the low and very high levels of the spectrum, thus lessening the gap
between the poor and the middle class.

Due to the lessening of this gap, social programs receive more funding and there is more empathy
for the poor. A sense of community has emerged from this increased empathy and it is being
used as a springboard by the regional organization for regional cohesion advocacy. Crime is
decreasing and is expected to continue to decrease as the cohesion of the region is emphasized.
Police officers and fireman are working closely with neighborhood citizens to protect themselves
and set up volunteer programs to help reduce crime in the Mill Creek Watershed region. Many
communities now have neighborhood watch organizations, which has helped to bring down the
high crime rates in many city neighborhoods.

Brownfields are being reexamined as possible industrial sites. Corporations are now seeing the
advantages of adaptive reuse and green technology and the potential economic benefits involved
with each. The price of oil continues to skyrocket, giving the region even more motivation for
creating an economy that incorporates green technology and green jobs. This also motivates the
region to create a diverse portfolio of transportation modes.

High oil prices, and the organization’s ability to mediate between cities, helped the region to
recognize the importance of multiple modes of mass transit. The region is still dependent on the
automobile, but the general attitude of the public has shifted away from the auto-centric mindset of
the past. Currently, planning has begun to revitalize and extend bus routes throughout the region.
They also hope to make the 3C Rail Corridor more efficient and add on a new stop at Union
Terminal. Walkability is also one of the organization’s major focuses, as more and more residents
are demanding bike lanes and sidewalks in their communities. As a long-term goal, they want to
device and implement a light rail system that connects the entire watershed.

While the watershed continues to struggle in many ways, there are signs of hope for the future. The
economic turmoil of the last 20 years has forced many residents and businesses to change their
day to day lifestyle. The cost of living and doing business in the suburbs has forced many to move into the more densely populated areas of the city. In turn, this has created a state of community collaboration wherein residents and local businesses are working together to solve neighborhood problems. In 2030, the primary goal of the Mill Creek Council of Governments is to capitalize on this attitude in order to expand the notion of collaboration throughout the entire watershed.

IV. Indicators, Timeline, Proposed Policies

Over a period of twenty years (2010-2030), there will be several signs that will indicate that the “Kindness in Crisis” scenario is evolving. These identified indicators allow government officials and residents alike to act quickly to combat problems that arise. Table 1 identifies each indicator, the policy implemented to address it, and the final outcome of the policy’s implementation.

**Kindness in Crisis Scenario Indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M10 Creek water quality continues to decline</td>
<td>Legislation allowing for the disconnection of downsputs from houses</td>
<td>Unintended consequence: More instances of flooded basements and homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal funding to region declines</td>
<td>Consolidate existing funds</td>
<td>Falls: Arguments occur as to which projects are funded and little is accomplished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher commercial and industry vacancy rates</td>
<td>Create more tax incentives for industry and business retention</td>
<td>Falls: Tax incentives not enough to keep many businesses in region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment increases</td>
<td>Dedicate more funding to social services and job creation</td>
<td>Falls: Not enough funding for social services and they become overwhelmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher rates of migration into the City of Cincinnati limits crumbling infrastructure</td>
<td>Attempt to capitalize on city migration by making parking laws more flexible to encourage mixed use</td>
<td>Unintended consequence: Lower land value in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergence of cross-community collaboration and cohesion</td>
<td>Regional government body emerges under stress of economic depression</td>
<td>Successful: region rallies around organization and begins to codify the emergence of a regional plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industries begin to move into city</td>
<td>Encourage remediation of brownfield sites by industries with tax incentives</td>
<td>Successful: EPA streamlines remediation process and businesses take advantage of tax incentives and cheap land on brownfield sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crimes have increased in both the city and the suburbs as a result of increased poverty and homelessness</td>
<td>Neighborhood watch programs are voluntarily put into action throughout the region</td>
<td>Successful: Crime continues to decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand for walkability and mass transit</td>
<td>Build more sidewalks and extend bus routes</td>
<td>Successful: Communities become more walkable, bus routes more efficient and widespread, spurs conversation about potential for light rail</td>
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Table 1. Scenario indicators, policies and outcomes over the twenty years leading up to 2030.

Another important tool that can be used to anticipate the evolution of the “Kindness in Crisis” scenario is the timeline displayed in Figure 2. This timeline identifies key events that occur between 2010 and 2030.
These indicators can be measured using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The first major warning sign that the scenario is unfolding will be continued economic decline in the region. After this occurs, population density, environmental quality (air and water), vacancy rates, industrial movement, crime and poverty should be monitored closely in order to identify important trends. Qualitatively, information about the attitudes of residents as to community collaboration and regional government will paint an important picture of the political and social climate in the region. In addition, public opinion polls about transportation preference will help to gauge the region’s attitude about mass transit and walkability. It will be important to measure all of these factors in order to identify key indicators as early as possible within the evolution of the Kindness in Crisis scenario.
V. Fictional Character Perspectives

The Clarke Family

In 2010, the Clarke family, dad Michael, mom Katrina, and their son Nathan, age seven, lived in the Cincinnati suburb of West Chester, a thriving community of over 60,000 residents and 3,000 businesses located between Dayton and Cincinnati. It was an All-American community with weekly festivals during the summer months, ice cream socials, and many cultural, recreational, entertainment, and sports activities were available to them regionally. Nathan attended the second grade at Union Elementary School.

Nathan’s parents were very successful in their careers. His mom worked as a mid-level accountant for Proctor and Gamble and his dad was a mechanical engineer at General Electric. Growing up in working class communities instilled within them values that made them driven and hard working.

On a normal day Nathan’s parents would wake up at 6:00 a.m. to get ready for work. Typically at 7 o’clock, Katrina would head out to work while Michael would wake Nathan up and get him ready for school. After a typical breakfast of Captain Crunch and orange juice, Nathan would grab his backpack and head for his dad’s Jeep Grand Cherokee.

On his way to school this spring day Nathan asked, “Dad, how come I can’t walk to school? You and Mom did when you guys were little.”

Michael explained that he had lived much closer to his school and there were a lot of kids walking together on sidewalks with crossing guards at intersections, so it was safer. “Sorry buddy, I don’t think it’s safe for you to walk here because people drive too fast.” As he let Nathan out, he reminded him to do his homework so that they would have time to play some tennis on the Wii before dinner.

After school, Nathan went home with one of his classmates whose older sister was there to watch them until their parents got home from work. Katrina picked him up on her way home. On a typical day, everyone pulled into the driveway at the same time – 6:30 p.m.

When Michael inquired about how everyone’s day went, Katrina asked him if he would chaperone Nathan’s class on a field trip to the National Underground Railroad Railroad Freedom Center in two weeks, he also reminded him of the upcoming parent-teacher conferences.

Michael sighed heavily, “No, I can’t go on the field trip. They just had another round of layoffs at work. I don’t want to put myself on the chopping block.”

It was pizza as usual before heading to school for the parent-teacher conference. Katrina mentioned that she had news, as Michael interrupted and said that he also had some news. As Katrina announced that they are expecting their second child, Michael quietly muttered that he had been laid off.
“I guess we won’t be ordering pizza for a while,” Michael said. Katrina told him not to worry, that it probably won’t be for long and that Nathan was starting to get a little pudgy anyway. At the school, she saw photos of his classmates pinned to the boards on the wall and noticed that a quarter of them were overweight with a few being obese. She mentioned it to his teacher who told her about the Lakota Sports Organization. “It offers recreational level sports that I think would be really good for him. There is also a district-wide nutrition class for parents.” She explained.

Katrina told her that they would talk to him about joining, but she couldn’t see it in the near future with Michael out of work. She turned the subject to Nathan’s schoolwork. The teacher told them that Nathan’s homework assignments were not always completed and that he was making simple mistakes. She suggested setting some time aside as soon as he got home from school for him to do his homework.

The economy stayed poor for much longer than the Clarkes anticipated. Michael’s unemployment benefits ran out and they were struggling to pay their mortgage on one paycheck.

Because Katrina would have to be off of work for maternity leave, they were going to have to make some tough decisions. As companies started to move back into the city, Michael and Katrina decided to move as well so that Michael would have a better chance of finding work. They didn’t want to move, but felt that they would have to go back to the city if Michael wanted a better chance of finding work. But, since they bought their house in an over-heated market, home values had plunged and they couldn’t sell it for what they paid. They not only lost the equity that they had expected, but they also lost original down payment that they had saved for years to accumulate. With heavy hearts they decided to bite the bullet and put the house on the market for its current value rather than lose it to foreclosure.

Back in the city, they had no money for a down payment so they decided to rent their new home. After six months of searching, Michael found a replacement position, though it was only a part-time, temporary position. He was overqualified for it, but happy to be working. The rent, utilities, two car payments, and gas were becoming overwhelming.

The Daniels Family moved back to Michael’s mother’s neighborhood of College Hill in Cincinnati. Living close to Grandma allowed Nathan to walk to her house after school where she made sure his homework was completed and checked before he went outside to play with the neighborhood children. She helped with the daycare burden of the new baby, Jamal, and made sure Nathan’s after school snack was nutritious.

As time passed, the boys were leading different lives. Nathan became interested and involved in changes that were happening within the Mill Creek Watershed, while Jamal had only lived in College Hill and was oblivious to things being any other way.

Eventually, industries began relocating back into the city and the boys’ father was able to find full-time work in his field. The boys continued to do well in school with help and supervision from Dad.
and Grandma. In 2020, Nathan and his family were finding it difficult to find the financial means so that he could attend college.

After Nathan finished college, he was forced to move back in with his family as the economy still hadn’t rebounded. Significant policy changes were happening in the region as a result of the poor economy and community collaborations.

By the time Jamal was ready to go to college, the benefits of regional cooperation were visible. His parents, Michael and Katrina, were once again in a financial position to purchase a home in the suburbs, but decided that they were happy with their life in College Hill. They were excited to see the results that this newfound collaboration would have on the region.

*Jessica Rodriguez - 2010*

Meet Jessica Rodriguez, she is a 28-year-old business owner from California. She moved to Cincinnati after she graduated from Berkeley College with her MBA. While at Berkeley, Jessica took a class in progressive economies and found a list of cities that were developing into vibrant and thriving economic centers. She noticed Cincinnati on the list, and found it appealing due to its low cost of living and opportunities for small business development and growth. Jessica set off to Cincinnati with only a small loan and an idea for her business.

Jessica was not sure what she wanted her business to be until after she came into the Prospect Hill section of Mt. Auburn and moved into an apartment on Pueblo. She was immediately impressed by the eclectic character of the neighborhood. It was filled with small thriving businesses, and after finding a spot on Vine Street she decided to open a bicycle shop. Obtaining the permit for the business was going to present a challenge because the area she was considering was zoned for residential use. The building she had in mind for her business was unoccupied at the time; she proposed to the city that the area become zoned for commercial use. She met with the City of Cincinnati and showed them her business plan, forecasted earnings and expenses, and the expected tax revenue the company could potentially generate for the city.

Additionally, Jessica’s business would also benefit from the streetcar the city was planning to implement into the mass transit system. This would provide the small businesses in Mt. Auburn an opportunity for business growth because the streetcar would serve the Mt. Auburn area. The city’s zoning committee was impressed with what she offered. However, they did not have the final say in zoning regulations, and they had to take her proposal to city council. Typically it only took three months to hear proposals like this one, but in Jessica’s case it took longer. Due to the multitude of city projects that were in the works it took a year for the council to hear the case.

In the meantime, Jessica did everything she had to do to make sure that her permit and proposal request would be granted. That meant that she did her homework. She saw that the economy was still on a spiral downwards and she was not sure if her business would boom or bust because of it. She figured that construction on The Banks project, I-75, and the 3C Rail Corridor were all going to allow more people to connect from other parts of Ohio and Indiana to her area economically. She
knew that an increase in economic development meant a successful business.

Opening up a bike shop in the area seemed like a good move because the city and nation were looking to create more walkable neighborhoods, efficient public transportation, and bike trails as an alternative to the heavily used automobile. Parking in the Central Business District (CBD) downtown was increasing in cost by the day and many people were relocating in the Mt. Auburn and Clifton area because of the University of Cincinnati and its central location to the city. Her target consumer was the university student or the business professional that did not want to deal with traffic, parking, and congestion.

In 2011, Jessica was awarded her small business permit. She started the construction process right away. She estimated that her expenses would total about $50,000 per year, and this included the mortgage, fees, utilities, salary, and supplies. Jessica planned on breaking even within two years, by the time The Banks project was finalized and the streetcar plan was implemented. These were two highly anticipated projects that were being promoted not only as public service projects, but as ways of generating economic growth through tourism and attracting young professionals into the area. There was a one-bedroom apartment above her business, and in order to save money she decided to move in there.

Her first year she did not hire anyone because business was slow and not many people were interested in renting or buying bicycles for various reasons, one being that they did not have extra income to afford the bikes. Her main customers were students from UC and residents from the neighborhood. Jessica’s income for the year reached $60,000, just enough to cover her expenses and $1,000 in profit. The park in her neighborhood was beginning to become a social meeting place for UC students and Mt. Auburn residents. People rented their bikes to ride in the park and moms held brown bag lunch meetings with their kids. Jessica decided to keep her business open because when she held meetings in the park to pitch her ideas to investors, she smiled whenever she saw someone riding a bike purchased from her shop. She was relieved to be able to serve the small percentage of customers she had because they were satisfied with their bikes.

By 2015, Jessica’s bicycle shop remained in business even after the big hit financial hit it took when the streetcar project was canceled in 2012. She managed to sustain her customer base and make a little more than what her expenses covered. Jessica managed to save $50,000 in profit over the first four years of her operations by only spending money on the things she really needed. With the extra savings, she hired a student from the University of Cincinnati as an intern. She figured that a full-time employee would be more expensive and the intern would get credit for working and be an asset to her business.

Jessica had thoughts of leaving and going back to California, but she had invested time and hard work into her business and did not want to abandon her dream. She continued to serve the community even though her business was not doing as well as she had hoped. She heard talks of cohesive governance and regional cooperation in her business meetings with political leaders, but by 2020 many business owners were skeptical of what the future would hold. In 2025, Jessica was pleasantly surprised by the formation of the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments. She
finally felt like things might turn around and that her business had hopes of continuing into the future. The security of her future, however, will be contingent on what happens next.

The Scott Family

It is May 5, 2030, and the Scott Family is downtown celebrating Cinco de Mayo with friends. Sitting in the patio area, while the children are trying to get her attention, Miranda Scott remembers when she barely had enough time for the kids, let alone herself. When Miranda was working as a receptionist during the day and a bartender at night, she only saw her kids in the morning for breakfast and at night when they were asleep in their beds. Miranda definitely did not miss those days.

* * *

In 2010, Cincinnati was not a very attractive place to live. The city had major traffic and environmental issues, and the economy seemed to be in an endless downward spiral. Due to the recession starting in 2008, well-paying jobs were scarce, and jobs for people that only had high school diplomas or trade skills were few and far between. Miranda was fortunate enough to find a job in the city as a secretary, but had to travel two hours to get to and from work each day because the bus that came through her neighborhood was slow and inefficient. Although she was often late to work due to the unreliable transportation, Miranda’s boss sympathized with her and refused to fire her because he knew that she desperately needed the money.

After five years of steady decline, the economy took a turn for the worst in 2015. While almost every job sector was suffering, construction work was becoming almost non-existent and Jason, Miranda’s husband, lost his steady construction job in September of 2015. Suddenly, Miranda found herself the sole provider for herself, her husband, and her two children, Peter and Melissa.

Jason kept busy during the days looking for work and fixing up their three-bedroom home in Lower Price Hill. Over the course of the next year, he began to notice the demographics in Lower Price Hill change. His neighborhood was traditionally a generational neighborhood where those who grew up there stayed there to raise their own families, but Jason saw more and more unfamiliar faces walking their dogs and driving their cars down his narrow street. At first, the new, often more affluent, community members and the original, low income residents clashed with each other. The Scotts saw many of their friends lose their houses to the new, more affluent members of Lower Price Hill.

Jason also noticed that major environmental issues were also ignored because the city continued to reduce funding for the Mill Creek. Eventually, he had to forbid his two children from playing in the local streams for fear that they would contract some sort of dangerous disease. These trends continued throughout the next several years and Jason was witness to all of it. Just when he thought there was no hope for positive change, a new movement took root in his own backyard.

In 2023, many of the wealthier residents decided to raise money for efforts to clean the Mill Creek. Their efforts were successful and community projects, such as planting trees and neighborhood clean-ups, started up and increased the interaction between the low income and middle class.
residents. Little by little Jason gained confidence in the movement and even spent a few of his afternoons and weekends volunteering with his neighbors to clean up the banks of the Mill Creek. He met several of his new neighbors and found that he actually had a lot in common with them. Miranda was a little slower to warm up to the idea of being friends with the outsiders, but one cookout with the Johnson’s next door finally brought her around.

By 2025, Jason and Miranda were reading about the formation of a regional organization in the local newspaper. They were still struggling to make ends meet, but felt hopeful about the future. Jason was able to find a steadier job working to reclaim brownfield sites lining the Mill Creek, and Miranda was happy because she heard rumors about the transformation of the bus system. The Scotts spent their time working, playing with their children and meeting with their neighbors whenever they could. Life sure had taken a strange turn over the past two decades, but it was one that the family could now appreciate.

* * *

Peter, rubbing his eyes and worn out from the day’s activities, slowly leaned in towards Miranda. His mother picked him up, put him into her lap, and let her youngest child sleep while Jason talked to Melissa. Miranda took another minute to ponder all of the changes that had occurred over the past two decades. It was amazing what collaboration and cooperation had done to revitalize the attitude of her neighborhood and region. “But the best thing,” she thought. “Is that this bus will bring us home in only twenty short minutes.”

VI. Plan (Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Policies/Projects)

Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments (MCWCG)

To: All Governments within the Mill Creek Watershed
From: MCWCG Planning Commission - Aritra Banerjee, La’Kisha Girder, Elad Mokadi, Aaron Olson, Jameshia Peterson, Shannon Quinn, Sara Jo Shipley, and Kevin Wright

Subject: 2050 Regional Plan

Over the last 20 years, the Mill Creek Watershed has suffered economically. This economic turmoil has created a geographic shift that restructured the region’s socioeconomic structure. This transfer of power has, in turn, created an opportunity for community collaboration at both the neighborhood and the regional level. Over the past five years, the City of Cincinnati has seen a drastic increase in civic engagement while their economy has begun to stabilize. Conversely, the surrounding suburbs have lost population and continue to suffer both economically and socially. This plan is concerned with capitalizing on the heightened levels of collaboration within the city by creating regional policy that fosters partnership on a number of levels.

In time, regional cooperation will then put us on the path towards economic, social, and environmental change within the region. The goals outlined within this plan are in place to help the Mill Creek Watershed region achieve a unique sense of community while improving environmental quality and expanding its economic base in a way that assures equal distribution.
of the benefits of development. The plan below is organized into a “goal, plan, action” format in order to layout what policy changes will be made and how they will be carried out.

Social/Community Development

**Goal**: To continue to capitalize on the heightened levels of civic engagement and low levels of segregation while promoting public health and social equity.

**Policy**: Provide more authority and assistance to Community Development Corporations (CDC’s) throughout the region in order help increase the existing levels of civic engagement and community pride.

**Action**: Over the past 20 years CDC’s have been created in communities throughout the watershed. These neighborhood organizations have mostly been operated by the residents of the neighborhoods in which they are located, thus giving them specific knowledge of neighborhood needs. The Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments recognizes the importance of these organizations, and therefore in the future will give these groups more authority and decision making power. This will, in turn, grant more power to the residents of all communities, giving them a much needed and deserved voice in government policy and decision making. The CDC’s will also be responsible for making the most of what little government funding is available. They will work with the local government to decide how this funding is to be used within their community. Programs, such as neighborhood clean-up programs, crime watch programs, environmental education programs, and youth outreach programs, will continue to be run by the CDC’s. They will also continue to use existing infrastructure such as schools and churches to help establish neighborhood centers as a place for people of all demographics to come together as a community.

Land Use/Zoning

**Goal**: To increase mixed-use as it pertains to existing infrastructure. Also, to increase residential density within the city and agricultural land use throughout the region.

**Policy**: The creation of a comprehensive land-use plan, and the elimination of unnecessary separation of uses that exist according to the current zoning codes.

**Action**: First, modifications must be made to the current zoning code. Separations of office, commercial, and residential uses must be eliminated from the code because they are outdated and unsustainable for our region as it exists presently. These uses are not incompatible and therefore must be eliminated. Also, the zoning code must be changed in a way that encourages building up instead of building out. Minimum requirements for parking spaces must also be eliminated.

A regional land-use plan must be created in order to help achieve the zoning goals previously mentioned as well as to create a region that is efficient and self-sustainable. The plan will mandate that certain brownfield sites be used as industrial, while areas with rich soil are used for agricultural purposes. The plan will also mandate where transportation infrastructure is built and expanded.
upon. Connectivity will be a key component to this portion of the land-use plan.

**Policy:** Ensure that urban gardens are appropriately located, protected, and utilized in order to help meet needs for local food production and community health.

**Action:** Employ community education and garden-related job training to enhance and promote preservation of green space. Community education and training programs, like the *MCWCG Urban Gardens Program*, will train communities how to determine the best places to garden within their communities. The urban garden sites should be located in a way that represents the highest and best use for the community. The current zoning code must be changed to allow for more flexibility when it comes to agricultural use within urban areas.

### Transportation

**Goal:** To reduce the region’s dependence on the automobile, thereby creating an environment that is both economically and environmentally sustainable.

**Policy:** Create roads that will accommodate drivers, mass transit users, bicyclists and pedestrians.

**Action:** Through SORTA, create transportation routes that will connect Cincinnati to other jurisdictions in Hamilton County. With the help of ODOT, find ways to decrease the region’s reliance on the automobile and continue to encourage the development of bike paths and the promotion of bicycle safety through various educational programs. Encourage Ohioans to share roads with all modes of transportations through “Complete Streets.” The strategy will include extensive study sessions with local corporations in order to determine how to increase ridership amongst employees. While we do need to move away from an auto-dependent mentality, we will consider ethanol as an affordable solution to temporarily provide economic relief. Our increased agricultural land use in the areas surrounding the city will make ethanol a viable option in the years to come.

**Policy:** Create and expand bus routes in order to create a more efficient public transit system.

**Action:** Conduct a study that examines where people live compared to where they are employed. Following the results of this study, SORTA will be mandated to expand existing bus routes in order to achieve maximum efficiency. This will, in theory, make it easier for residents to get to their place of employment without using an automobile.

**Policy:** Create a light rail system by expanding on existing rail infrastructure.

**Action:** In addition to the 3C Rail station that currently exists in Sharonville, this new policy will mandate the construction of a light rail station at Union Terminal. This will provide a more efficient way for residents to travel to and from the city. It will also help the region cut down on congestion as well as improve its air quality.
Policy: Create transit-oriented developments (TOD’s) that make the most of expanded bus routes and the new light rail system.

Action: Coordinate light rail stations, bike paths, greenway trails and newly expanded bus routes in a way that gives residents multiple modes of transportation when commuting to and from their daily destinations.

Environmental/Natural Resources

Goal: To improve environmental conditions within the Mill Creek Watershed in a way that promotes economic development and social equity.

Policy: Increase water and air quality levels throughout the Mill Creek Watershed by encouraging smart development and growth.

Action: Reduce air and water pollutants by putting financial incentives in place that encourage the reuse of vacant properties, the use of green infrastructure, more permeable surfaces, and increased use of alternative energies. It will also be necessary to begin the strict enforcement of Federal EPA guidelines for environmental quality that are already in place.

Economic Development

Goal: Capitalize on existing vacant infrastructure, as well as railroads and river transit, to attract more industry to city neighborhoods with high unemployment rates and vacant properties.

Policy: Increase industrial development and the number of small businesses in our region, while also attracting college graduates and new technologies to the region.

Action: Put financial incentives in place that helps to attract new industry to the region. Also, provide tax incentives to local entrepreneurs who are looking to start their own business. These incentives, coupled with progressive city policy and smart growth, will in turn begin to attract college graduates and young professionals to the region.

Regional Collaboration

Goal: Take advantage of existing community collaboration, the current political climate, and the needs of the surrounding municipalities in order to combine services throughout the region.

Policy: Continue the process of expanding the responsibilities of the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments (MCWCG) by combining specific services and revenue.

Action: Expand the powers of the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments by allowing their board to deliberate and vote on issues of revenue and service sharing. The MCWCG board should
include representatives from all municipalities in the region, thus letting everyone’s needs and concerns be heard. The group will start the process by deliberating on issues such as tax revenue sharing, along with the sharing of services such as police/fire and utilities. The ultimate goal of this group, however, will be to form a comprehensive regional government in order to help the area grow in a sustainable fashion.

**Goal:** To combine the responsibilities of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana (OKI) Regional Council of Governments with the responsibilities of the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Governments (MCWCG) in order to create one large and efficient organization that handles all aspects of regional planning.

**Action:** Begin combining funding and board members of OKI and MCWCG.

**Policy:** By 2032, OKI and MCWCG will be merged into one organization known as MCWCG. This organization will work towards regional governance and collaboration on all levels.

**Goal:** Encourage other government bodies, regional planning organizations, non-profit organizations and community development centers to collaborate with different organizations for projects.

**Action:** Give priority to projects that have multiple organizations collaborating to achieve one goal.

**Policy:** Create a rubric in which projects are awarded points for having elements of regional collaboration and public support before the project is approved.
I. Scenario Summary

In 2030, the Cincinnati area is an ideal place to live, work, and play. Nicknamed the Green Phoenix, Cincinnati rose from the proverbial ashes of economic decline and inter-jurisdictional fracture by embracing the land upon which the city makes its home. The area provided an ideal climate for businesses looking to capitalize off the clean energy movement. As those companies prospered, so too did the region. In addition, the area gained national recognition for its innovative, regionally-minded form of government called the Cincinnati Regional Collaborative (RCR).

II. Point of view scenario, 3rd person fictional narrative account of scenario

Dianna Prince – Age 49. Married. White. Member of the CRC.

Dianna Prince was born at Good Samaritan Hospital in June 1981. She grew up in the traditionally conservative Colerain Township, a suburb to the City of Cincinnati. From a young age, Dianna knew that she wanted to be a nurse. Whenever her and her two sisters had free time, she would insist on making them her patients while she administered a litany of fake medical tests. She watched E.R. religiously from the first episode, just months after her 13th birthday.

It surprised nobody when Dianna enrolled in Xavier University's nursing program in the fall of 1999. Her stellar performance led her into a fantastic job upon graduation, in the hospital in which she was born. From 2004 to 2010, Dianna’s life seemed to be all that she wanted.
But in 2010, something clicked inside Dianna. At that time, the United States was just pulling out of the Great Recession, but the collective American psyche had not yet healed from the trauma of the worst economic decline since the Great Depression. The poor economic times had triggered a discontent within the conservative faction of the country, and in an attempt to mobilize these voters, a group called the Tea Party emerged. They preached small government, lower taxes, and greater personal freedom. Dianna was not inherently a politically-minded individual. She didn’t even vote in the 2008 elections, which set records for the number voters under the age of 30. Something, though, about the Tea Party’s message resonated within her. Perhaps it was the fact that the first eight years of her life were under the Reagan administration, or the dinner conversations with her father’s Glen Beck-style rants, but in Dianna there was a planted a seed of political activism that just needed a spark like the Tea Party to germinate it.

The more Dianna engaged with the Tea Party, the clearer her vision got about how to reform an inefficient government. She found their cries for smaller government rang hollow without concrete examples of how to accomplish that. Intrigued on how she could make a difference, Dianna secured a position on the Hamilton county Government Reform Task Force, whose primary purpose was to determine whether alternative forms of operating county government. From 2010 through 2012, the Task Force debated alternative forms of government until finally developing the Cincinnati Regional Collaborative (CRC).

Now she was hooked. Seeking to generate as much of an impact on government reform as possible, Dianna volunteered for pro-CRC campaign during the 2013 elections. Once it passed, Dianna knew that her passion had shifted from nursing to government. Knowing that she wanted to work for the new CRC, Dianna enrolled in Northern Kentucky University’s Master of Public Administration (MPA) program in the fall of 2014. Upon completing her studies in 2016, Dianna went to work for an at-large member of the CRC. From 2010 to 2015, Dianna’s work contributed to her boss’s focus on governing from a regional perspective.

Dianna began in the CRC office as a legislative aide, by the end of her boss’s first five-year term, Dianna was Chief of Staff and making a name for herself. Though her interest in the Tea Party led her to the public realm, after working for several years Dianna realized that their extreme viewpoints could be better applied by running for office on her own without their affiliation. Instead of following in the footsteps of her mentor, Dianna decided to run for the CRC position representing where she grew up, the northwest quadrant of Hamilton County. She won the 2020 election, and began her term in January 2021.

Together with the CRC officials representing the northeast and southwest quadrants, Dianna championed an effort to place intense focus on the Mill Creek watershed. She recognized that the majority of economic development, clean manufacturing, and community building were centered along the Mill Creek, and therefore focused her efforts there. Given that the watershed crossed the boundaries of the quadrants of the CRC, the geographic scope of the watershed provided the perfect test to see how the still relatively new CRC would handle regional issues. Focusing on this particular geographic scope was a way to capitalize off the economic and social growth of the watershed, and direct its future development. By the time she took office in 2021, businesses that
focused on research and development of green technology, as well as its production were clustering along the Mill Creek. With the success of the consolidated and improved CRC-wide school district, educational attainment levels were increasing, particularly in the newly popular neighborhoods along Mill Creek. Dianna saw these trends and determined that her efforts would focus on the burgeoning area.

Dianna furthered the environment of cooperation that the CRC was meant to breed. By choosing to focus on the watershed, she embraced the CRC regional atmosphere.

In the decade of 2020, Dianna spearheaded efforts to make the CRC even more efficient and responsive to the needs of her constituents. Once the Metropolitan Sewer District met the requirements of the consent decree to eliminate the combined sewer and storm water systems, she led a CRC-wide effort to reduce the cost of water and sewage services. Working closely with the CRC commission for emergency planning to analyze crime and safety data, Dianna found ways to better allocate resources and save the taxpayers money. The neighborhoods with the largest drops in crime tended to fall within the Mill Creek, indicating to her that the decision to focus her efforts there paid off.

In 2025, the CRC effort to relaunch its successful tree planning program from the decade before. Plant 2025 planted over 30,000 trees in the fall and winter of that year. Dianna lobbied with her colleagues to ensure that at least 75% of those new trees would be planted in the Mill Creek watershed. The influx of trees greatly increased the aesthetic and the air quality there, supported community development, and bolstered the CRC’s economic development efforts. Doing so allowed Dianna to help make the Mill Creek watershed a great place to live, work, and play.

III. Generic scenario narrative

In 2010, Cincinnati was at a crossroads. Much like the national economy, Cincinnati demonstrated little promise for growth at that time. Duplicative layers of government coupled with petty squabbling between the jurisdictions inside and out of the county made decision-making very difficult. Transportation focused on the dominance of the automobile, wide disparities in quality existed between schools, the production of energy was killing the environment, and people could have been happier. However, all that began to change toward the end of 2010.

At that time, economists warned that the cost of oil was on the rise, and that unless something changed soon, the world would run out of oil far too fast for anybody to react. In 2008, the state of Ohio enacted a renewable portfolio standard, or RPS, which required that at least 25% of all electricity sold in the state is renewable by 2025. Several programs and policies were enacted at the local level in Cincinnati in an effort to assist in this effort. Local strategies were bolstered by the
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which allocated about $112 billion nationally to green technology, of which Cincinnati and Hamilton County received $8.4 million.

Bolstering the clean energy revolution, the city began an initiative to plant over 10,000 trees in 2010 and 2011. This plan, called Plant 2010, gave the city a facelift by strengthening the urban tree canopy. In addition to the cosmetic benefits, the trees increased the natural carbon storage of the Cincinnati area by more than 5,000 tons per year, cleaning the air and making the region a more desirable place to live, work, and play.

The November 2010 elections proved to be a bellwether for how the region would develop over the next 20 years. Democratic candidate for Hamilton County Commissioner Arnold Grammer campaigned on the idea that the city and the county must work together better. At that time, the county had recently commissioned the Hamilton County Government Reform Task Force, whose mission was to develop strategies for the county to become more efficient. Grammer, who championed the ideas of the task force, received widespread support from liberals and conservatives alike for his desire to save taxpayer dollars through government collaboration. Over
the ensuing years as a commissioner, Grammer worked to strengthen support for changing the form of government in Cincinnati and Hamilton County.

By 2012, it was clear to economists that the price and demand for oil were at their peak. The price for a barrel of oil vacillated between $180 and $270, double to triple the price it was in 2010. Seizing the opportunity to regain economic prosperity, Cincinnati began to target those companies that would become the economic engines of the twenty-first century clean energy revolution. Using the cost of oil as a catalyst, the city and the county both lure in companies that conduct research into clean energy production and innovation. Those three fields experienced growth nationwide, but the growth in the Cincinnati area far outpaced the national average. The city of Cincinnati, the county, and the miscellaneous jurisdictions within the county all offered financial assistance to those companies who were willing to either startup here or relocate to the area. However, the jurisdictions began realizing that they were competing with one another for regional assets, and began warming up to the idea of a regional government to coordinate their efforts.

2012 also saw the completion of two important transportation changes to the area. The streetcar connecting downtown to uptown through Over-the-Rhine began operation in April, allowing greater pedestrian circulation through the urban core and sparking economic reinvestment in a traditionally financially struggling area. Toward the end of the year, upgrades to existing tracks
statewide were complete, allowing service to start on the 3C passenger rail. This line connects Cincinnati to Columbus and Cleveland, and was the predecessor to the high speed rail service along the same route that began several years later, in 2020.

In the beginning of 2013, the state of Ohio was sued because of the level of economic, racial, and achievement differences that existed in the school districts of Hamilton County. The courts ruled that the individual school districts in the county be abolished, replaced by one county-wide district called the Hamilton County Public School District (HCPSD) by 2015. The creation of one school district that spanned the county allowed a more equitable distribution of resources, including greater control over where the best teachers go. Instead of creating a handful of nationally-renowned schools and letting the others suffer, the HCPSD places emphasis on having an equal quality of education for all schools. Doing so had the added benefit of removing school choice from family’s decision on where to move. Once the schools were more equitable, young families began repopulating urban areas that once were abandoned in part because parents did not want to send their children to dead-end schools.

The school lawsuit, coupled with the momentum for the ideas that the Government Reform Task Force, made it seem as though the time would be right to propose a change in government. The county placed on the ballot in 2013 the option to adopt a smaller and more responsive regional government that would deliver high quality decision making while greatly reducing bitter inter-jurisdictional infighting. Citizens voted overwhelmingly to abolish the existing government, replacing it and each of the individual political jurisdictions with one comprehensive governing body called the Cincinnati Regional Collaborative, or the CRC. The changes to the government were phased in from 2013 until 2015, when the transformation to the CRC was complete.

The CRC was the first of its kind in the country. Its structure represents the acknowledgement that the future of the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County are inherently tied to each other's successes and failures. The unique, fourteen-member board uses a centralized, regionally-focused governing model. Each member of the board has an equal voice, but only half of the members have the ability to vote. One representative from each of the seven counties that borderer Hamilton sits on the board to ensure that it has a regional perspective. The remaining seven members all have voting powers, and all are elected from Hamilton County. Three of these voting members are from the entire county, and they represent the county as a whole. The remaining four members each represent two adjacent quadrants of the county, ensuring representative has two quadrants and each quadrant has two representatives. This system fosters an environment ripe for regional collaboration.

The regional nature of the CRC allowed an increased focus on the environment. Following the success of Plant 2010, the new regional government began an initiative called Plant 2015 in that year with the goal of planting 20,000 new trees region wide. Upon completion, these new trees increased the carbon storage of the regional tree canopy by 7,869 tons per year. The CRC also used its regional mindset to begin investments into a smart-electric grid. This system transfers the electricity more efficiently than the older grid, and therefore, the quality and price of electricity began to drop. The cleaner air, streamlined government structure, and efficient delivery of electrical services made the Cincinnati area the ideal place for green business.
The year 2015 also saw several changes to the transportation system. SORTA, the non-profit that operated the bus system, expanded their service and changed several routes to better meet the demands of a changing population. They kept the hub and spoke system with the majority of routes leading into and out of downtown, but added several lines that run west and east to better connect the region. Interstate 75 was also revamped to include light rail lines, alleviating vehicular traffic on the roadway. Furthermore, several bike lanes emerged along the major corridors of the city, helping to foster the mentality that Cincinnati is a multi-modal city.

In 2018, the CRC created a Gross Regional Happiness Index (GRHI) for the purpose of having a measurable indicator of good development and a good society. Modeled after the Gross National Happiness measure created by the country of Bhutan, Cincinnati came up with eight categories and an 80 point scale by which to measure the happiness of the region. Every three years the CRC collects information via direct surveys and statistical measurements of all its constituents to compile a total happiness for the region. The eight categories are as follows: Economic Wellness, Environmental Wellness, Physical Wellness, Mental Wellness, Workplace Wellness, Social Wellness, Political Wellness, and Individual Wellness. Each category is measured on a scale of one to ten and averages for the region are compiled to come up with a total GRHI. The data is also analyzed by the CRC to break down data by age, sex, race, socioeconomic status, and other groupings to keep track of the happiness of various societal groupings.

Also in the year 2018, the CRC created protected areas in the outlying portion of the county, saving more than 13,000 trees from development. In 2020, the CRC established stricter regulations for tree preservation and development standards, increasing the carbon storage per year to more than 11,000 tons. Additionally, by 2020 the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) fulfilled the consent...
decree mandating that they eliminate the combined sewer and storm water systems. A two billion
gallon reduction in annual overflows was achieved through specific pilot projects and capital
improvements at the sub-basin level of the Mill Creek. Though this undertaking was expensive,
federal and state assistance, coupled with the cost savings on maintenance actually produced
a lower cost to the consumer in addition to the environmental benefits. Revamping the system
went a long way toward cleaning up the Mill Creek, which was a good thing, as the majority of
development for the new green economy focused on that area. These businesses contributed to
the regional economy, but they also helped to fulfill the CRC’s goal of generating 15% of its energy
from advanced, non-carbon sources by 2020.

In 2020, the school system, HCPSD, gained national accolades for the level of racial and economic
integration they were able to achieve. Additionally, the increase the graduation rates from high
school, and increased the rate of local students staying local to pursue a college degree or a job
(See Figure 6).

Transportation options continued to increase. The Brent Spence Bridge carrying traffic from I-71 and
I-75 across the Ohio River to Kentucky was completed in 2020. That same year, construction began
on a light rail line along I-71 connecting downtown Cincinnati to Blue Ash. By 2025, other light rail
routes connecting the eastern portion of the county to downtown were under construction as well,
greatly increasing the mobility options for residents within the CRC.

2025 was a hallmark year for the Cincinnati area. The CRC relaunched its tree planning program
with Plant 2025, planting over 30,000 trees in the fall and winter of that year, greatly increasing the
aesthetic and the air quality. Increased transportation options, the presence of stronger schools, and
the ever increasing number of clean energy businesses along the Mill Creek continued to create strong, safe, and clean neighborhoods. 2025 was the sharpest decline in crime rates in the area’s history, allowing the CRC to allocate less funding to police and instead funnel those funds into other projects. The CRC also helped the state of Ohio to uphold its clean energy commitment, with the region achieving its 25% clean energy goal that year.

![Figure 7 - 2025 Issues Map](image)

By the year 2030, the region continued to invest in its assets. The new tree plantings placed the annual carbon storage capacity for the area at more than 17,000 tons per year, making Cincinnati’s air some of the cleanest in the country. The carbon storage increases were coupled with the fact that local demand for oil fell faster than the national rates, which were also dropping precipitously. The CRC’s streamlined governing structure and regional outlook allowed faster and less expensive delivery of basic services like traffic control, police and fire response, trash collection and sewer systems, and road and transportation maintenance. Furthermore, the investments in green businesses allowed the region to achieve the first 40% clean energy market share in the country.

Overall, the changes made to the watershed in the past 20 years have been vast. The positive changes to the region have increased livability and workability for all residents. As the years continue to pass there is no doubt that the watershed will continue to thrive and give all residents a area to live, work, and play.
IV. Indicators, timeline

Six indicators:

1. Renewable portfolio standard—adopt standard that requires 25 percent of region’s energy is “advanced” (at least half of which are renewable such as solar, wind, geothermal, biomass;
no more than half of which maybe nuclear, clean coal) by 2025; 40 percent of region’s energy “advanced” by 2030; 80 percent “advanced” by 2050
2. Tree canopy—an urban forestry measurement that captures reduction of air pollutants, decrease in energy costs (reduces heat islands), stormwater mitigation, carbon storage and sequestration, and increased property value
3. Municipal service efficiency—a measurement that calculates how much money the average household saves by the government’s decision to combine services.
4. Happiness index—modeled after the Gross National Happiness measure created by the country of Bhutan, the region came up with eight categories and an 80 point scale by which to measure the happiness of the region; these categories include economic, environmental, physical, mental, workplace, social, political, individual
5. Education; graduation rates—will measure the high school and college graduation rates, as well as the rates of graduates at both levels who choose to stay in the area
6. Public transit ridership—total ridership. Also calculated the share of transit ridership vs. the share of personal vehicle trips (See Figures 3, 4, and 9).

Timeline:

2010
2010 (baseline)—$70-$90 a barrel of oil; 86m b/d.

2010 elections, Arnold Grammer won the vacant seat for Hamilton County Commissioner, strong support for the ideas of the task force. Cincinnati faced a $51 million budget shortfall.


City of Cincinnati Climate Protection Plan created June, 2008. Cincinnati’s emissions reductions goals are to reduce net greenhouse-gas emissions by 8 percent below baseline emissions by 2012; 40 percent by 2028; and 84 percent by 2050.

Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati approved for approximately $8.4 million for federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant.

2010: Plant 2010, an initiative to plant over 10,000 trees in the City with federal funds starts in fall of 2010. Total carbon storage in tons per year is 5078.

2011
2011: Spring 2011, Plant 2010 trees are completely planted.

2012
Peak oil (catalyst)—$180-$270 a barrel of oil.

Peak oil (catalyst)—drives exponential increase in renewable energy jobs, research, and
innovation.

The streetcar begins operation between Downtown and OTR along Vine street.
3C rail line complete (low-speed), following the path of the Mill Creek.

2013
November 2013, citizens of the county voted to approve a gradual restructuring of the government.
Ohio sued for segregation of districts in Hamilton County.

2014
2014-Region begins to combine services such as garbage removal, fire and police, water and sewer with the birth of the CRC.

2015
Plant 2015 is started to plant 20,000 trees across the region. Total carbon storage in tons per year is 7869.

With a continually booming economy, the CRC make investments into a smart grid system, helping reduce use and rates for electricity.

By the end of 2015, citizens of Hamilton County were entirely governed by the CRC. Deadline given for individual districts in Hamilton County to become HCPSD. By 2015 the Hamilton County Public School District (HCPSD) was up and running.

Cincinnati and Hamilton County, under umbrella of CRC undertake the Ohio RPS goal of 25 percent “advanced” energy by 2025 for the local region.

Metro has expanded their bus service by creating more east west lines in 2015, as per their plan MetroMoves.

Widening of I-71 begins in 2015 with expanded car lanes, and light rail. Construction of Bike lanes on major roadways within the city.

2018
Gross regional happiness indicator starts measuring every 3 years.

2018: Initiative to create preserves in outlying areas of the county passed saving over 13,000 trees from development.

2020
Output of conventional oil peaks on a “business as usual” basis—renewable and clean energy a must.
2020: The CRC requires stricter tree preservation and restoration standards for new development within the regional jurisdiction. Carbon storage in tons per year is now at 11,235.

After fulfilling all requirements from the Consent Decree, the city is able to cut rates for water and sewage to below average costs for large MSA’s.

HCPSD is nationally acclaimed.

15 percent of CRC region energy is “advanced”

The Brent Spence Bridge has been replaced. Revive I-75 and construction of mill creek expressway is completed. Construction of first light rail line begins connecting downtown with Blue Ash along I-71. 3C rail line is high speed.

2025

2025: CRC re-launches planting program with Plant 2025, planting over 30,000 trees in the fall and winter.

Stronger neighborhoods within the Mill Creek see significant drops in crime rates, region able to spend less funding on public safety.

25 percent of CRC region energy is “advanced”. Light rail construction begins on the “Oasis” line, running from Milford to the Cincinnati riverfront, through Railroad Freedom Center.

2030

Demand for oil drops well below 89m b/d.

2030: Carbon storage is at 17869 in tons per year.

Continued savings from more efficient distribution of services leads to continued investment and a more desirable place to live. Less traffic, pollution, etc.

40 percent of CRC region energy is “advanced”

V. Fictional character perspectives

Alan Scott – Age 28. Single. White. Railroad Engineer (Trans-National Railways, Inc.)

May 12, 2030 - It’s 8:42 A.M. and Alan Scott is hurrying to finish his oatmeal and coffee. He rushes outside and hops on his bike, racing from his Clifton neighborhood apartment toward the offices of his employer, Trans-National Railways Inc., located downtown just across the street from The Banks development along the Ohio River. As Alan cruises effortlessly down the roads of Cincinnati, his mind can’t help but wander back to his childhood growing up in a city that bears little resemblance
to ride their bikes along Cincinnati’s streets. The danger and recklessness of drivers made it nearly impossible for anyone to bike to work. This lack of useful pedestrian and bike lanes led to Cincinnati overloaded with traffic congestion.

A streetcar rushes past Alan, snapping him back to reality. He notices that it is nearly full as it heads towards downtown and thinks that it was one of the best investments the city made, even though the project was hotly debated in the early parts of the century. The streetcar route has lined the streets with businesses, offices, and restaurants that were not there when cars ruled Cincinnati.

Alan passes by one of his favorite restaurants located in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood and notices it is oddly busy for such an early hour. He wonders what all the interest is about and
contemplates stopping quickly, but notices he is now becoming later and later for work.

As he zooms down the streets of Over-the-Rhine, he finds it more and more difficult to remember how this neighborhood was when he was born. Stories of abandoned buildings, crime, and drugs seem nearly impossible as he passes small shops, restaurants, and pedestrian commuters along the streets. He finds himself unusually grateful for the efforts of the community’s strong leaders back in 2015 when the Cincinnati Regional Collaborative (CRC) was created, making most of the redevelopment and strong investment back into his hometown possible. He thinks to himself how he wishes he would have paid more attention to the efforts made by the communities involved, but eventually laughs it off thinking that at 13 years old, he wasn’t interested in much more than if LeBron was going to bring another title to the Cleveland Cavaliers. He now knows though that the creation of the CRC wasn’t just an ordinary event that took place during his childhood. Its creation was ground-breaking, gaining national attention putting Cincinnati legitimately on the national map.

Now closing in on his office, Alan weaves through the small amount of cars on the streets and passes another streetcar making a stop to pick up riders. The downtown of the city is another area that Alan finds it harder and harder visualize differently than its current dense and thriving state. No longer do residents have to travel north to the suburbs to buy a pair of shoes or pants, which he remembers distinctly from his childhood. Unfortunately, memories of car rides to West Chester to buy new school clothes with his screaming younger sister and mother listening to her Taylor Swift CD on repeat are things that Alan cannot find hard to remember. He shutters. Never again, he thinks to himself, never again will a child be subjected to car rides to West Chester in search of measly school clothes. Thankfully, the thriving downtown of Cincinnati is now an area that people can go to find almost everything they need. He smiles.

Arriving at his office, he quickly parks his bike outside the building and rushes up the stairs hoping that his boss hadn’t noticed him being later than usual. Luckily, after being informed by the front secretary that his boss is out of the office today he can breathe a bit more easily. Settling into his office, he looks out his window and notices the light rail running along the banks of the Ohio River. To Alan, the light rail was a very personal project. Growing up in Northside, Alan recalls seeing the development of the property near his house become a light rail stop. This project, which began in
his early teens, shaped his career path forever pushing him into the job he has today. The light rail development is something that will always be one of the most influential projects in Alan’s life.

Suddenly, Alan’s coworker, Ana bounds into the room interrupting his nostalgic moment. Ana, knowing that Alan is a bike enthusiast, explains that she has found a wonderful new bike trail along the Mill Creek that he may be interested in. Embarrassed, Alan admits that he had not yet gotten the chance to ride along any of the new bike trails, but has heard that the Mill Creek is much more pedestrian friendly than it had been in their youth. Ana quickly begins to explain that the creek has been 100% cleaned up in the past decade and no longer has the toxic muck running along its banks. She explains that trees and shrubs now line the banks and the trails making it a beautiful place to bike. Ana states that the creek even has paths that run all the way up to Butler County which they should ride together one day. Alan thinks it’s a great idea and they quickly make plans with to explore the area during the upcoming weekend.

As Alan settles in for the day he begins to look at the high speed rail plans for the Washington D.C. to Chicago that will run directly through Cincinnati. He wonders to himself if this high speed rail will have the same significant impact that the previously completed high speed rail connecting Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland had. He wonders if the current efforts by the CRC will continue to develop the region in a positive way. He wonders if Cincinnati will continue to thrive as it has for the past 15 years. As Alan continues to sift through plans and upcoming projects he finds himself proud of the transition that the city has made in his lifetime and hopes that it continues to grow into the place where he lives, works, and plays.

**Selina Kyle – Age 43. Divorced. Latina. Custodial worker, Cincinnati Library**

Walking into an empty building Selina Kyle prepares to begin her long night at the Cincinnati Public Library. Employed by the library for the past 20 years, Selina has seen many changes in her life. Changes not only to the library itself, but more importantly to the city she’s lived in for the past
As she begins to empty the trash cans throughout the first floor of the library, her mind wonders to the bills that she must pay by the end of the week; $100.00 for electric, $150.00 for gas and water, and finally $650.00 for her one bedroom apartment. Shaking her head she realizes she’s not even accounting for food or travel expenses to and from work.

Rhonda, a fellow coworker, rushes to Selina and informs her that management has decided to not provide the pay raise promised to employees a month ago. This news is a huge blow to Selina’s already shrinking bank account. Rhonda, offering little consolation to Selina, states it’s not a big deal to her; it just means she can’t buy the new T.V. she was hoping for. Selina cringes at this statement knowing that the lack of the pay raise means much more to her than just not being able to buy a new T.V.

Needing to get away from Rhonda’s “terrible” life, Selina immerses herself in monotonous work for the next 8 hours. Sweeping, dusting, emptying trash cans, picking up trash are tasks Selina knows all too well. Some days she becomes bitter after finding the irony in cleaning up after people attempting to advance their lives through education, while she chose to marry young, forgo any education, and take an unfulfilling job, eventually becoming divorced. She remembers it all too well.

Moving from her home in New Harmony, Indiana to Cincinnati with her then fiancé Rick back in 2010, they sought some sort of financial and employment relief during the Great Recession of 2008-2010. Rick was able to find work at a packaging company while Selina, without any education to fall back on, found her current job cleaning the public library at night. The eventual creation of the Cincinnati Regional Collaborative (CRC) along with the boom of the economy in 2015 made Rick and Selina believe that putting down roots in Cincinnati would provide them with many new opportunities as the city began to develop. Unfortunately, the development of Cincinnati did not provide them with the opportunities that they had hoped.

After Selina and Rick, married they quickly found out the hard way that a booming economy and major development does not help all people, or as Selina has stated to her co-workers on many occasions, “I guess a rising tide does not lift all boats” referring to the old economic development adage. Gentrification, due to the major redevelopment of the city’s neighborhoods, eventually forced Rick and Selina out of their Mt. Auburn home and into a smaller but still expensive apartment in Corryville. The stress of paying mounting bills due to the rising cost of living in the city along with a lack of satisfaction from both of their jobs eventually ruined their marriage. Rick eventually filed for divorce and abruptly moved to Wheeling, West Virginia with dreams of hitting it big at the race tracks. Selina, with nowhere to turn, stayed with her job at the library and began carrying the financial burden of paying a rising rent along with maintaining a self-sufficient lifestyle, one she still deals with today.

It’s now 3 a.m. and Selina is finishing up work. Another day, another dollar she thinks to herself as she walks outside hoping to catch a streetcar or one of the elusive busses. Walking down Vine Street
looking into the closed up boutique shops and the bright lights of the restaurants and bars she again begins to wonder if she’ll be able to pay all of her bills for the month. She can’t help but begin to feel sorry for herself over the news of no pay raise as promised, but quickly snaps herself out of it. Tough times and worrying about bills are nothing new for Selina; it’s something she’s been dealing with since her move to Cincinnati way back when.

A bus finally arrives at one of the stops that will take her back to her Corryville apartment. Even for 3 a.m. it is unusually empty on the bus, she thinks to herself. Wondering where everyone could possibly be, she notices a poster on a bus wall for the new recreation activities along the Mill Creek just north of the city. Bike trails, pedestrian trails, and parks are just some of the attractions that the Mill Creek has to offer. Selina rarely ever gets a chance to enjoy any recreation time as she usually picks up as many shifts as possible at the library when they are available. Again Selina begins to feel sorry for herself. Perhaps it’s the lack of joy she has in her life, perhaps it’s the eerie emptiness of the bus, or perhaps it’s knowing that while everyone around her is able to take advantage of the booming economy and new developments of the city she will never be able to.

Suddenly the bus driver, noticing Selina’s fatigued and sorrowful expression, calls back to her asking why she looks gloomy. Selina, stunned by the driver’s outreach, since drivers very rarely strike up conversation, tells the driver that she is just tired since she just got off work and it is 3 a.m. Believing that this semi-rude and sarcastic response would satisfy the driver’s interests, she quickly finds that this could not be further from the truth. The bus driver, or “Hal” as Selina comes to find out after the first few minutes of his rambling, begins to tell her that it is nearly impossible for someone to be so gloomy in such a great city these days. Hal states that even he, a “lowly bus driver” as he puts it, is living the proverbial “dream” in the Queen city. Obviously, this is not what Selina wants to hear after a long day of work. First she had to hear about Rhonda’s great life and now she gets to listen to Hal’s.

No longer feeling like she can stomach Hal’s ramblings, she snaps that she’s sick of hearing about how great the city is since it hasn’t done a damn thing for her in the past. Although Hal is completely puzzled by the outburst, he doesn’t stop his rant. He begins in on her about how people these days have no reason to complain about their situation. The creation of the CRC is a greatly resource if used correctly, he states. Selina, aggravated but still willing to listen, asks Hal if he believes the CRC has the ability to change people’s lives what she should do then to improve hers. Half believing that Hal doesn’t really know what he’s talking about, Selina is stunned to hear about how he himself went to one of the CRC members who were able to connect him with job training programs which eventually led to the job he has now. Embarrassed for actually never thinking about contacting the CRC or looking into its resources, Selina actually begins to think that Hal may have a good idea.

It’s finally her stop. Hal stops the bus and rummages around under his seat for a pen. He scribbles a name and address down on a piece of paper and hands it to Selina as she walks off the bus. He tells her to get in contact with the lady, explaining that it could truly change her life. Selina smiles, wishes him a good night and walks off. The bus pulls away and leaves Selina alone in the street light. She looks down at the piece of paper and reads “Dianna Prince, 801 Plum Street”. She
decides that for once in her life she’ll take a chance a creating a better life for herself. She decides to go to the CRC offices the next morning and begins to dream of bigger and better things for herself in the city that has given so many people the opportunity to live, work, and play.

Landon Morales – Age 13. Latino. 7th grade student.
Elliot James – Age 13. African-American. 7th grade student.
Cooper Holland – Age 13. White. 7th grade student.

A ruler slams on a chalkboard snapping Landon Morales, a 13 year old 7th grade student from Wyoming, Ohio, back to reality from his daydream. “Landon! I asked you what is the difference between mass and volume?” booms Mrs. Johansen, the rickety 7th grade science teacher. Caught completely off guard, Landon begins shuffling through his notes hoping to find the answer to Mrs. Johansen’s question. “Landon, were you even paying attention to the class today?” Mrs. Johansen asks. “Um, one second, I know I have the answer here somewhere” Landon responds. Feverishly, Landon continues to ruffle through pages of notes, most of which have doodles of Landon and his friends riding their bikes and going off ramps along the Mill Creek. The bell rings. Its 3:00 pm, the day is over and Landon is saved. “We’ll continue this lesson on Monday, have a good weekend” squawks Mrs. Johansen.

The kids hustle out of the room excited to start their weekend. Elliot, another 7th grader in the science class and one of Landon’s closest friends, catches up to Landon in the hall. “Geez, Landon you need to pay attention. Mrs. Johansen is going to load you up with homework if you continue to pull stuff like that in class”. Landon laughs, “Calm down man, she’s not going to anything like that and besides I almost had the answer. The bell just rang before I could get it out”. The boys, along with the rest of the middle school, burst through the middle school doors to their weekend and freedom. As the boys head over to where their bikes are chained, they notice one of their other friends, Cooper, unchaining his bike. “School was brutal today” Cooper states. “Mr. Fogle loaded us up with history homework over the weekend”. This is not the statement Landon and Elliot were hoping for to start the weekend. The boys have big plans for the next two days. “Dude, you’re still going to be able to go camping with us this weekend right?” Landon asks. Cooper nods his head, “Oh yeah, I’m not missing this weekend just because Mr. Fogle wants us to read some stupid book on the Roman Empire. We’ve had this stuff planned for a week”.

The boys hop on their bikes and head toward their favorite place to hang out, the Mill Creek. The three boys have enjoyed the riding their bikes, and fishing along the Mill Creek since they were young. This weekend is a new adventure for the 13 year olds, as they have planned their first camping trip along the banks. “Are you sure we’ll be alright down along the banks, Landon?” asks Elliot. “Oh yeah, I talked to my parents about it and they said it’s safe down there now” says Landon. “What do you mean it’s safe their now?” responds Elliot. “I dunno, but my parents said that the Mill Creek used to be pretty nasty and unsafe. I guess it used to be filled with sewage and trash, but it’s been cleaned up in the past couple years. All I know is that, it’s always been safe since we’ve been hanging out down there so don’t worry about it” Landon says. “So you’re sure it’s safe for us to be out there at night?” asks Elliot. Suddenly, Cooper rushes up to the other two. “Sorry guys. I got caught up talking to that one Jill girl from our math class” he states. “Hey man, tell Elliot that he
has nothing to worry about down at the Mill Creek tonight” Landon says. “Oh yeah, we’ll be fine. Elliot, you know how my uncles a cop right? Well he’s always talking about how the Mill Creek has changed so much since he started working with the police. He says that the homeless people that used to sleep along the Mill Creek down south towards Cincinnati have all gone away from the area and that safety is really not an issue anymore. He also says that they used to have to chase kids away from playing in the creek and that trash and sewage build up was awful in some places. Besides man, we’re down there all the time riding around and hanging out, you know it’s safe”. Elliot nods, “I guess you’re right. I just get nervous staying down by the creek all night”. The boys peddle towards their favorite part of the creek.

Finally arriving at, Caldwell Park located in Carthage, the boys pick out a spot to set up camp. Surrounded by picnic benches, bike trails, and a bustling creek the three boys settle in for the afternoon and eventually the night. First thing on their list; set up their tent, followed by one of their favorite activities down at the creek, swimming. “Hey,” Cooper says with a teenage grin, “maybe Jill and her friends will want to come swimming with us later. I’ll give her a call.”

VI. Plan 2050

Introduction

Plan 2050 serves as a guide for the promotion of a sustainable future that will integrate renewable energy, smart growth, creative food systems, updated transportation, a growing tree canopy, and an increase in municipal service efficiency. All of these improvements along with a renewed focus on creating an appropriate housing stock, raising graduation rates, and increasing the Gross Regional Happiness Index (GRHI) will lead to a high quality environment for the Cincinnati region.

The framework for achieving these priorities is laid out in Plan 2050 in nine sections. All of these sections contain goals, strategies and policies, and a tracking progress section to describe who will be responsible and when progress can be expected.

Issues and Indicators

Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)

Goal statement

To provide at least 80 percent, in a given year, of the region’s electricity supply from renewable sources; no more than half of which may be from nuclear, and at least half of which must be from wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, or other renewable “advanced” energy sources. The goal here is to meet statewide 80 percent RPS and also to support the CRC climate commitment to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions 84 percent from baseline emissions by 2050.

Strategies and specific policies

Implement property tax exemption and credits (corporate and residential) for energy
efficiency, green building, and other “dirty” to clean energy conversion projects; a total exemption for any “zero impact/off the grid” properties, facilities, and businesses; utility abatement programs (to reduce energy demand; financial incentive).

Create green building and retrofitting standards for all construction that will help alleviate energy demand.

Ohio Department of Development Advanced Energy Program Grants should be utilized as a financial incentive.

State loan Energy Conservation for Ohioans ECO-link program should be utilized as a financial incentive.

Smart grid, interconnection, and metering standards and development implemented. Create partnerships with Green Power Network, Green Energy Ohio, Weatherization Assistance Program, and Wind Powering America.
Tracking progress

CRC Department of Renewable Energy (DRE) is charged to implement planning strategies and specific policies. As of the year 2030, 40 percent of CRC region energy is from “advanced” sources. CRC DRE is to continue to progress the region’s RPS to 80 percent by 2050. This results in the general trend of a two percent increase in RPS annually. Reducing energy demand allows for overall energy offset. CRC DRE is responsible for publishing a triennial RPS progress report.

Smart Growth

Goal statement

To guide future growth and redevelopment opportunities in a way that is coordinated with all involved interests and stresses mixed uses, pedestrian preference, and sustainable practices.

By 2010 the City of Cincinnati had begun pursuing the use of form-based codes as a way to grow smartly and plan developments within the context of individual neighborhoods. By 2030, this concept had evolved and the implementation had been expanded to encompass mandatory compliance within the traditional city limits and optional compliance outside of the central city. This plan seeks to further the components of Smart Growth by introducing further zoning reform and collaboration within different departments in the CRC.

Strategies and specific policies

Implement preservation measures for rural and undeveloped assets within the CRC.

Development patterns should have adequate access for pedestrian and mass transit options.

Development must adequately protect the surrounding environment and reduce impact on the environment.

Development must be constructed to increases energy and environmental sustainability.

Updates and expansion of regional Form Based Code in order to ensure smart development patterns.

Continue to research and stay on top of smart growth ideas and standards for use in Cincinnati development.

Tracking progress

The first indication of progress will be a complete review and rewrite of the existing zoning ordinance. Although Form-based Code has been adopted for many neighborhoods within the Cincinnati region, many of these reforms have not yet made progress in the other regions of Hamilton County. Once that has been accomplished indicators for measuring job creation and employment, housing occupancy and tax revenue generated can be used. These indicators will be measured in a yearly report that will encompass development activity throughout the entire region.
and individually by neighborhoods.

Coordination efforts, although not measurable in the traditional sense are also good progress indicators. The completion of a collaborative authority within the CRC would help further the goal of Smart Growth and achieve one of the key strategies outlined in this plan.

**Food systems**

*Goal statement*

To provide a region in which food and agricultural systems contribute to personal, environmental, community and cultural health; to increase support and funding for programs and organizations that (1) increase the supply, demand, quality, and accessibility of sustainably produced foods; (2) make our food system more sustainable and/or (3) improve environmental stewardship, diet and health, and viability of communities. (Goal statement based on Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders values and definition of sustainable food systems [http://www.safsf.org/who/values.asp](http://www.safsf.org/who/values.asp))

*Strategies and specific policies*

- Local farm-to-table incentive program.
- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders grants
- CRC Department of Food Systems (DFS)
- Community outreach and food-systems literacy
- Neighborhood grocer and market tax incentive

  This would create a tax abatement for grocers and food markets that participate in local farm-to-table incentive program and locate in a neighborhood district identified as without a local grocer or market.

- Regional food waste reclamation and composting collection-to-biomass energy
- Urban farm and farmland restoration land use and tax incentives

  This initiative will coordinate with regional land use planning to encourage preservation of rural farmland and utilize incentives to encourage urban farming in appropriate locations.

*Tracking progress*
CRC Department of Food Systems (DFS) is responsible for publishing a triennial RPS progress report. Report will include measure of farm output, amount of land devoted to urban farming and number of new neighborhood grocers selling locally grown produce.

**Transportation**

**Goal statement**

To expand transportation options to the Region through adequate access and reliable options which include rail, bus, bike, pedestrian and automobile.

Cincinnati is well on its way to becoming a Midwestern hub for high speed rail travel. The 3C rail program has been a proven success and efforts should be maintained to publicize the railway and increase ridership. In addition to the 3C rail program, Cincinnati is eager to partake in efforts to create the proposed high speed rail line from Washington DC to Chicago, running directly through Cincinnati.

**Strategies and specific policies**

The city will need to research possible routes and perform feasibility assessments to demonstrate to the Washington DC/Chicago rail creators that Cincinnati is an opportune place for the line to run through.

Assessments should include a study of the interaction between businesses in the area and ones in the Washington DC and Chicago areas.

At Your Service Rail Cars is a possibility for both the 3C rail way and the proposed Washington DC to Chicago route. These cars have proven successful in Portland and in the San Francisco Bay Area and provide multiple services to their riders. They attract business professionals with cars outfitted with internet access, copiers and electric outlets. There are also cars with stationary bikes for the active rider, and movies for children.

The city should market the proposed railway to citizens in the area to create support and enthusiasm for the project. The rail developers will need to see a city ready and excited about the opportunity.

**Tracking Progress**

The City Planning Department will be in charge of information collection, as well as all reports and assessments. The whole project will be overseen by the Cincinnati Regional Collaborative to ensure that the entire region is considered. A final document is expected by mid 2031 to keep with the Washington DC/Chicago rail timeline of breaking ground in 2035.

**Goal statement**

To develop affordable housing within proximity of adequate mass transportation options.
A spatial mismatch is occurring in the region whereby there is a lack of affordable housing located near many of the area’s largest employers. One of the key goals of the public transportation system is to be able to connect residents to their places of work and play at an affordable rate.

**Strategies and specific policies**

- The routes of public transit should be constantly studied to assure that routes are taking people where they need and want to go.

- Companies in the area should be approached about creating partnerships with the public transit agencies. Companies that are willing to partially subsidize their employees fare could be given a reduced per person rate. This would save the employees money and make the company more attractive to potential employees.

**Tracking Progress**

SORTA is in charge of all public transit in the area. SORTA should constantly track ridership to ensure that routes are being utilized to their full potential.

**Tree Canopy**

**Goal statement**

To further enhance and protect the urban forest; the natural asset must be disturbed with minimal impact and integrated further into the urban fabric.

The Urban Tree Canopy indicator has tracked a tremendous expansion of the urban forest over the past twenty years. Indicators project this growth to continue with further sustained tree planting activities. Studies from the CRC Parks Department claim that most city street tree lasts for seven years. The goal is to have the CRC maintains an aggressive tree planting policy and requirements for tree planting and preservation in new development projects, so that we will continue to see expanded canopy growth.

The benefit of trees in the urban environment has been well documented. Among the obvious benefits to property value, they also enhance safety by calming traffic, shading houses thus reducing energy consumption, and assisting in providing storm water absorption, further reducing the stress on storm water and sewer infrastructure.

**Strategies and specific policies**

- Further enhancement of tree planting initiatives by the CRC.

- Enhanced Urban Forestry maintenance. This will help with identifying problem trees early and removing and replacing trees.

- Tree planting must take into account surrounding environment. The right tree should be
used for the appropriate location. (i.e. short trees under power lines, salt resistant trees for street tree planting.)

Continue to pursue grant opportunities for tree planting projects.

Tracking progress

Progress will be tracked by using existing measuring methods provided by i-Tree. I-Tree is the UFORE model that as of 2030 has been adopted nationally and refined over the past two decades to be the most reliable method for determining the amount of carbon (and other greenhouse gasses) the tree canopy is removing from the regional atmosphere.

Municipal Services Efficiency

Goal statement

To continue to make affordable power, water, sewer, and waste removal a priority for the citizens of Cincinnati by continuing use of smart growth development techniques.

In recent years the CRC has been able to combine municipal services like police, fire fighting, and emergency medical on a county wide level. This has led to reduced costs for tax payers and an elimination of problems with crossing jurisdictional boundaries. The region has also seen a drop in crime rates across the board. Going forward the region would like to continue to see cooperation and reduced costs for all citizens within the CRC.

Strategies and specific policies

Cooperation between police and planning departments to encourage development to be geared towards crime prevention techniques.

Continue to incorporate the latest technology to help police and fire departments to operate more efficiently and effectively.

Look for opportunities to create public private partnerships that will prevent blight in at risk areas.

Create incentives to encourage renewable energy be made available in the region for the purposes of creating competition between energy providers and moving toward sustainable power sources.

Promote small scale implementation of renewable energy sources for individual homes and businesses.

Update citizen education programs for water and power saving techniques.

Tracking progress
The CRC Municipal Services Oversight Department (MSOD) will continue to be in charge of documenting the progress made towards achieving these goals. It is their responsibility to monitor costs, cooperation, and new developments for reporting back to the CRC. The primary method of measurement is tracking the percent of household on income on these services.

**Gross Regional Happiness Index (GRHI)**

*Goal statement*

To continue to improve residents quality of life; workplace wellness and satisfaction with city services and opportunities.

Since its inception in 2015, the Gross Regional Happiness Index (GRHI) had been steadily increasing in all categories. That is until the report published in 2024. The 2024 and 2027 reports showed a slight decline in the GRHI in the areas of economic wellness and workplace wellness. Even though the reports show that happiness in the region is still increasing as a whole, they also indicate that the rising costs of food, housing, and a lack of affordable housing near job locations, have led to a decline in the happiness in these two categories especially for middle to low income residents. The city would like to see efforts made to correct these problems and see a return to an increasing GRHI in all categories.

*Strategies and specific policies*

The creation of the CRC Department of Food Systems (DFS) should include responsibilities for maximizing affordable food options in middle and low income areas.

**Neighborhood grocer and market tax incentive**

Creating a tax abatement for grocers and food markets that participate in local farm-to-table incentive program and locate in a neighborhood district identified as without a local grocer or market)

**Urban farming and small farm preservation land use and tax incentives**

**Mandate affordable housing options in necessary neighborhoods**

**More affordable housing strategies**

*Tracking progress*

The CRC will continue to be in charge of tracking the GRHI at three year intervals for progress related to these goals. In addition, the Cincinnati Regional Planning Department will be responsible for having affordable housing written into code requirements. The CRC DFS will be overseen by the
CRC for assurance that efforts are being made to raise happiness where needed.

**Graduation Rates**

**Goal statement**

To improve academic achievement for students at all levels of education.

**Strategies and specific policies**

- Establish and maintain school climates and facilities that are safe, orderly, nurturing, and supportive of quality teaching and learning;

- Provide services to enhance the management, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the school division;

- Implement policies, procedures, and programs to promote the recruitment, professional development, and retention of a quality workforce; and,

- Promote strong home, school, business and community relationships that support student achievement.

- Closing attainment gaps for groups of students who have been underrepresented in higher education.

- Meeting the expanding need for a well-prepared and adaptable workforce such as green workforce and other specialized technological areas.

- Continue to prepare students with the cutting edge skills needed to compete in a global marketplace.

**Tracking Progress**

Tracking this goal will require constant yearly monitoring of existing indicators such as attendance, enrollment, retention rates and graduation rates. Test scores are also crucial since they are an indicative measure of a student's success in post-secondary education.

**Housing**

**Goal statement**

To increase home ownership in the region as well as continuing to focus on creating a diverse and balanced housing stock in all communities within the region.
**Strategy and specific policies**

The newly created Department of Housing in conjunction with a housing task force should study and evaluate the housing needs of the city and devise a plan that addresses those needs.

Encourage the development of balanced residential communities. Take into consideration income categories of the city’s population, housing density, multiple-family versus single-family, rental versus ownership and support for positive economic and community development goals.

Focus on creating work force housing near major employment centers. Conduct a cost/revenue analysis to determine the fiscal impact of various types and prices of housing units in the city.

Place a ceiling on the percentage of public and privately owned assisted rental housing complexes in the city at 9.75%; and, allow an additional 1% to provide additional assisted housing for elderly, handicap and other special needs populations on the Millcreek Valley Redevelopment and housing Authorities waiting list.

Distribute public and assisted housing in small concentrations in neighborhoods to minimize their impact. Reduce the size of newly acquired publicly owned or subsidized family housing projects to small clusters which can blend into the community, instead of building large projects.

Regularly inspect all project based Section 8 units to insure they are well maintained. Institute a program of non-financial incentives and requirements, such as awards and recognitions for public housing residents to maintain their homes and yards in order to encourage pride and enforce standards.

Institute a program of incentives, for middle-income owner occupants, to renovate their homes.

**Tracking progress**

The Department of Housing (DOH) under the CRC will study the housing stock to determine needs in the area. By mapping commuter routes, and comparing locations of housing to employment centers, the DOH will be able to make recommendations to the CRC for development changes to shorten commutes. The study can be completed by 2035 and updates will be expected at five year intervals thereafter.
Conclusion

Coming together through regional governance can be viewed as a means to diminish individualism and build a sense of community. What motivates collaboration can range from environmental to economic concerns. The “Green Phoenix” and “Kindness in Crisis” scenarios described in this report underscore the power of collaboration and regional governance in the Mill Creek Watershed. They even suggest regional governance may be a more powerful force than the state of the national economy—a force external to the Watershed’s control. Stakeholders can view this point as uplifting, as they do have the power and capacity to develop formal means of regional governance. They only need to provide the collective will.
We have recently witnessed some events in American history that exemplify the importance of planning for unpleasant possible futures. At the time of this report, BP was struggling to clean up the largest oil spill in American history. BP has fielded a lot of criticism about its failure to plan for the possibility and fallout of an explosion and a spill. A few years earlier, the financial and housing industries nearly collapsed. Similar to BP, firms like AIG, Lehman Brothers, and Bear Stearns were heavily criticized for failing to plan for the possibility that the housing bubble might pop.

These events directly influenced the lives of many people. Tragically, if they were considered as possibilities, then they may have been prevented or mitigated in scope. The potential fallout was something very few people wanted to acknowledge, choosing instead to maintain the status quo until they were forced to react. Now regulations will undoubtedly be put in place to prevent the exact same disasters from unfolding again, but we still appear largely unwilling to plan proactively for the possible outcomes we have not experienced or not considered.

The value of scenario planning is that it forces organizations and communities to distinguish between the forces that are external and internal to their control; here they can imagine multiple ways the future might unfold. Some of the scenarios may be unpleasant or uncomfortable, but they should prompt conversation and inspire thinking about the control communities have over the course of their futures.

Scenario planning can engage stakeholders in a common dialogue about the potential benefits of being proactive and pursuing certain courses of action over others. It uses fiction writing and other forms of media, including music and film, to capture and hold interest in a subject typically considered boring or reserved for experts. Fictional narratives are also used because they provide a distance from reality. While the scenarios are not predictions, it is important to remember they are not science fiction either. Like a good book or a good movie, each of the scenario narratives should contain some elements that resonate with the reader and enable a connection on a personal level.

The scenarios presented above show 2010 is a critical time for the Mill Creek Watershed. Residents and stakeholders can continue passively, without change, if that is the easiest course of action. But, as seen in the baseline scenario, preserving the status quo and continuing existing trends does not necessarily pave the way for an ideal future. Allowing divided individualism to occur in place of collaboration and cohesion paints a distressing picture as well. However, as evidenced by the scenarios “Green Phoenix” and “Kindness in Crisis,” communities that are willing to come together to chart a positive course for their own futures can foster hope and inspiration.

Coming together through regional governance can be viewed as a means to diminish individualism and build a sense of community. What motivates collaboration can range from environmental to economic concerns. The “Green Phoenix” and “Kindness in Crisis” scenarios described in this report underscore the power of collaboration and regional governance in the Mill Creek Watershed. They even suggest regional governance may be a more powerful force than the state of the national economy—a force external to the Watershed’s control. Stakeholders can view this point as uplifting, as they do have the power and capacity to develop formal means of regional governance. They only need to provide the collective will.
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MILL CREEK WATERSHED DATA INDEX: COMPENDIUM OF PLANS

Plan ID 2
Full Title of Document/Plan: 2008 Regional Bike Plan
Print/post date: 2008
Physical/Web location: http://www.oki.org/transportation/bike.html
Name/address of provider: N/A
Collected by: Marc Von Allmen
Collection Date: April 7, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues
The plan was completed by OKI.

Plan vision statement:
It is the vision of the Regional Bicycle Plan that vehicular travel by bicycle become an integral mode of travel, both by its inclusion in OKI’s regional transportation planning process, and by its consideration as a choice for trip-making by residents of the OKI region.

Plan goals or objectives:
1. Develop a regional bicycle system that is integrated with other transportation systems.
2. Promote an active and supportive bicycle culture in the Cincinnati region.
3. Secure adequate funding for bicycle improvements in the region.
4. Encourage and support bicycle safety, education and enforcement programs.

Key Projects:
Major projects include linking major bike paths throughout the region to create a regional network, as well as on street bikeway improvements.

Implementation and funding:
Funding is available through a wide variety of federal and state programs geared towards bicycle and pedestrian transportation improvements (SAFETEA-LU).

Plan ID 3
Full Title of Document/Plan: 2030 Regional Transportation Plan
Print/post date: June 2008
Name/address of provider: N/A
Collected by: Marc Von Allmen
Collection Date: April 7, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues
Conducted by OKI for the eight counties of the Greater Cincinnati Area (Hamilton, Butler, Warren, Clermont, Boone, Kenton, Campbell, and Dearborn)

Plan creation and public involvement:
To respond to the region’s transportation needs and create the plan’s recommended multi-modal improvements, OKI evaluated all proposed transportation improvement projects using an iterative quantitative and qualitative process. The starting point for this plan update was the project listing from the 2004 plan. Added to the 2004 plan list were locations identified through the Congestion Management Process and all amendments made to the plan since 2004. Amendments reflect recommendations identified by several corridor studies completed since 2004. An initial draft
list was distributed to local communities with the request that they provide a local prioritization (high, medium or low) for all of the projects located within their communities. They were also asked to provide suggestions for new projects. Staff then applied the project scoring process to a list of over 500 multi-modal projects. The prioritization process assigns numerical scores for 16 criteria based on the plan’s goals. After much review by the OKI Board of Directors, Intermodal Coordinating Committee (ICC), public, and OKI staff, a project list and draft document were developed. Finally, the plan is adopted by the OKI Board of Directors. Projects included in the plan are eligible to advance to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) once a sponsor and funding is identified.

OKI held 12 open houses in each of the eight counties to garner public input.

Plan vision statement:
The OKI 2030 Regional Transportation Plan 2008 Update serves as a blue print for transportation projects in the OKI region through the year 2030. It addresses current and future needs created by growth and development. At the same time, it responds to Federal Highway Administration and Clean Air Act requirements to mitigate congestion and to address air quality and other environment, social and financial issues.

Plan goals or objectives:
- Improve travel safety
- Improve accessibility and mobility options for people and goods
- Protect and enhance the environment
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system
- Promote efficient system management and operation
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system
- Support economic vitality
- Consider regional security
- Strengthen the connection between infrastructure and land use

Implementation and funding:
The OKI region’s transportation system is complex. It includes roads and rails, highways and bridges, transit and freight, and other alternative travel modes. Transportation options must be reliable, flexible and affordable enough to safely connect people to each other, to their workplaces, to the institutions that matter to them and to the services on which they depend. The system also must support the region’s economic vitality and development demands. This plan works to address these public interests and travel demands to result in a coordinated regional roadmap for guiding transportation improvements for the next 20 years and beyond.
US Rt. 42 corridor of West Chester (Pisgah). The 3.3 miles that connect Butler-Warren Road in Mason and Fields-Ertel Road in Sharonville.

**Primary Issues:**
Marketing the community, improving neighborhood appearance, promoting a strong sense of community, and making Pisgah a place people want to raise families.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
The Citizens Property Owners Association is a private organization formed in 2002 to provide a forum for citizens of West Chester. Since 2002, members researched road improvements in conjunction with a 2003 ODOT study on safety. It draws heavily on two of the goals from the 2004 West Chester Comp Plan: the neighborhood “Pod” concept and decreasing commercial creep.

**Plan vision statement:**
N/A

**Plan goals or objectives:**
Improve pedestrian connectivity within the Pisgah 42 Corridor and sidewalks; Decrease utility clutter to improve the streetscape by moving utility crossovers underground; Preserve and protect the property values of businesses and homes; Maintain a small town/neighborhood character; Control growth; Brand the Pisgah 42 Corridor with a unified identity; Create signature community identifiers to improve appearance; Create a Strong Sense of Community; Enhance the built environment; Preserve green space and promote landscaping; Enhance health, safety, and quality of life for residents; Encourage pedestrian-accessible family activities; Place historic markers; Be a watchdog for zoning violations.
A safe, secure, efficient, well-maintained, transportation system; Equal access and system quality (steady-state) to all Ohio citizens and businesses; Interconnected transportation modes allowing for modal choice and a smooth transition for people and goods moving between regions within Ohio and to other states and nations. Goal 1, Transportation Safety, ODOT will continually reduce the number and severity of crashes. Goal 2, Economic Development and the Quality of Life, ODOT will support transportation improvement opportunities which promote Ohio’s economy, foster economic development, and enhance the quality of life. Goal 3, Efficient, Reliable Traffic Flow, ODOT will reduce traffic congestion and improve travel reliability. Goal 4, System Preservation, ODOT will plan and sustain a manageable and predictable schedule of existing transportation system maintenance within an $825 million annual system preservation budget. Goal 5, Resource Management ODOT will efficiently manage resources to execute core business functions while maintaining the highest-possible levels of quality and productivity.

Strategies:
1. Existing, published ODOT Mission Statement, values, goals, objectives, strategic Initiatives, the ODOT business plan, ODOT policies, and protocols.2. Responses to ODOT’s 2002 statewide surveys conducted by the University Of Cincinnati Institute Of Policy Research of 1,031 ODOT customers and 646 transportation professionals including elected and appointed officials; and an ODOT Division of Planning survey of 731 Ohio high school junior and senior students. ODOT plans to conduct the customers’ and transportation professionals’ surveys each two years. 3. A synthesis of the goals and objectives published in Ohio’s MPO long range plans. 4. Consideration and integration of Federal planning factors and priorities.

Key Projects:
3C rail system, Jobs and Progress Plan: Ohio’s Transportation Improvement Strategy (August 2003) 2010 ODOT Business Plan, I-75 Mill Creed Expressway project, Thru the Valley, the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor, Ham East/West Express, I-75 Butler/Warren reconstruction

Implementation and funding:
ODOT has established performance measures known as Organizational Performance Indicators (OPIs). OPIs are the basis for measuring the department’s efforts to achieve its goals, objectives, and mission. They include quantitative measures for all areas of the department. ODOT employees are expected to do what is necessary to achieve the goals that have been set by the OPIs. The OPIs are linked to ODOT’s five goals. The OPIs are used to: Identify measurable “targets” toward which ODOT is working, establish funding levels needed to reach these targets, Evaluate ODOT’s success in achieving the vision and goals. See tables for funding information

Plan_ID 6
Full Title of Document/Plan: Bicycle Master Plan
Name/address of provider: City of Cincinnati
Collect by: Tharini Jeyaprakash
Collection Date: 04.01.10

Authorizing organization:
City of Cincinnati (not sure if it is ODOT information not mentioned anywhere)

Time frame:
5 Years

Geographic area:
City of Cincinnati

Primary issues:
Parking for the bikes
Involvement:
Stakeholders, consultants, advisory team and the project manager (Melissa McVay), Lead Agency (Department of Transportation and Engineering) are involved in the project formation.

Plan creation:
After getting started with the plan, they have plans to reach the public for input, analyze the existing conditions, develop a proposed network, develop implementation strategies, estimate costs, develop program ideas—education, safety, and enforcement, develop policies/procedures for ongoing planning, design, funding, and maintenance, draft & final report with maps.

Public involvement:
Structured public meetings, neighborhood-based bicycle rides and web-based outreach efforts such as a communitywalk.com map and online survey, and open house.

Plan vision statement: Bicycling is an integral part of daily life in Cincinnati, and persons of all ages and abilities fee comfortable using a bicycle for a wide variety of travel purposes.

Plan goals or objectives:
• Double the number of people bicycling for transportation in 5 years.
• Reduce annual bicycle/motor vehicle crashes by 50 percent in 3 years.
• Complete a City-wide trails master plan within 3 years.
• Include bicycle accommodations in at least 50% of repaving projects and 50% of street rehabilitation/reconstruction projects beginning in 2011.
• Develop and grow a bicycle skills and safety education program that within 10 years reaches 75% of public and private elementary school students.
• By 2015, apply for and receive Bronze status as an LAB Bicycle Friendly Community.

Implementation and funding:
- On-road bike facilities can be obtained by
  • striping when repaving
  • Roadway Restriping (Lane Diet)
  • Road /Lane Diet
  • Pave Shoulder
  • Consolidate Parking
  • Remove Parking
  • Road Widening/Reconstruction
- Work with Transportation and Engineering
  • Department and Advisory Team to
    – Draft prioritization methodology
    – Draft map of prioritized routes/improvements

Strategies:
• Develop a network of bicycle facilities and routes
• Create a network map of preliminary facility recommendations
• Recommend complementary infrastructure

Key Projects:
• Bike Lanes
• Shared Lane Markings
• Wide Outside Lanes
Plan ID 7
Full Title of Document/Plan: Camp Washington Industrial Area Plan
Print/post date: December 2009
Physical/Web location: Blackboard
Name/address of provider: n/a
Collected by: Lauryn Alleva
Collection Date: April 12, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
Authoring Organization: City of Cincinnati

Time Frame: No time frame given

Geographic Area: Camp Washington,

Primary Issues: Deals primarily with business development in the Camp Washington neighborhood. The plan focuses on how to attract and retain businesses in Camp Washington. It also emphasizes sustainable development and renewal of a neighborhood that has been in decline for over 30 years.

Plan creation and public involvement:
Public participation includes the Camp Washington Business Association, the Camp Washington Community Council, and the Camp Washington Community Board. The Camp Washington Business Association (CWBA) was most involved since the bulk of the plan focuses on the Spring Grove Avenue corridor, where key members of this organization own businesses. The CWBA suggested additional bike access and walking access to the Mill Creek.

Plan vision statement:
The goal of the Camp Washington Industrial Area Plan is to establish development priorities to guide City and other public and private investment into business development projects in the Camp Washington neighborhood.

Plan goals or objectives:
The primary goals of the Camp Washington Industrial Area Plan are:
• Return vacant, contaminated, or underutilized land to productive uses;
• Enhance overall quality of life in the community;
• Connect existing businesses to City services and incentives to help them grow; and
• Attract new businesses and foster the expansion of existing businesses in order to increase the availability of jobs and increase the tax base.

Strategies:
Identified four priority areas and separate implementation mechanisms for each. Did a SWOT analysis for the entire area. Established a set implementation process that is too detailed to include.

Key Projects:
First priorities are to revitalize the Spring Grove Avenue corridor. This will focus on renovating and revitalizing vacant buildings and increasing pedestrian access. Another primary priority is working on Sassafrass and Arlington Streets to consolidate businesses into a central business district of sorts and do some brownfields redevelopment.

Revitalizing the former Sara Lee Factory Area and the Kao Brand area.

**Implementation and funding:**
To reiterate the implementation process is delineated in the plan, but is too extensive to include in this brief review. The plan was funded by the City of Cincinnati. Most of the funding is via Federal grant programs, ODOT, and the local government, as well as some private sector funding.
which impact parks and greenspace. A steering and advisory committee collaborated on what they believed the Park’s Board strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities.

**Plan vision statement:**
Cincinnati is a city where greenspace and parklands touch the lives of all people. It is a city where:
- A network of parkways, greenways and open spaces shape the future of the entire region.
- Distinctive parklands, beautifully designed and maintained facilities, gardens, and greenspaces abound
- Parks provide natural settings for the community’s outdoor leisure activities, education, and growth.
- Parks provide enrichment through programs, events, services, and community celebrations.
Conservation, investments, appreciation, and enjoyment of our parks’ cultural and natural resources will bring this vision to life.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
• Describe a compelling vision for parks and public greenspace which also shapes the development of the region
• Guide future system enhancements
• Build community awareness, support and value
• Promote the effective use of financial resources
• Focus priorities and set action steps
• Assure a system which is responsive to community needs and change
• Promote sustainability

**Strategies:**
• Building the Centerpiece: Cincinnati Riverfront Park - Reconnecting downtown to the riverfront
• Strengthening the Urban Core - Downtown, Over-the-Rhine, Uptown and the Mill Creek Valley need community and financial support and new partnerships.
• Strengthening the neighborhoods - Enhancing neighborhood parks, adding programs and services and building even more relationships with communities, including expanding Park Advisory Councils.
• Continued upgrades throughout the system
• Sustainability, Stewardship & Strengthening Natural Systems - continued work on assembling and connecting key properties and facilities along our hillsides and streams, appropriately managing and conserving our parklands and nurturing and plating the urban forests are all vital to the long-term economic, social and environmental health of our city.

**Key Projects:**
• New Master Plan | Upgrades for Lytle and Washington Parks
• New Park in the Broadway Commons Area in concert with Redevelopment
• New Parks in the St. Xavier District and near the convention center, using Piatt Park Model
• New small parks in OTR, in partnership with 3CDC, developers, CRC and CPS
• Green connective streets, parking lots and sustainable building strategies.
• Cincinnati Riverfront Park
• Burnet Woods | The Oasis
• Inwood Park | The Gateway
• Jackson Hill Park & Filson Park | The Eastern Windows
• Fairview Park | The Promenade
• Bellevue Hill Park | The Central Window
• Fleischmann Gardens | The Strolling Garden
• Mill Creek Valley - Ohio River, 8th Street, Ezzard Charles/Museum Center
• Western Hills Viaduct
• Mitchell/Salway Area

**Implementation and funding:**
Action steps are listed on p. 174 of plan. Action step categories include Organizational Priorities, operations and land management priorities, funding a partnership priorities, capital improvements.

Plan_ID 10
Full Title of Document/Plan: Blue Ash Town Center Redevelopment Plan
Print/post date: 2005
Name/address of provider: City of Blue Ash Website
Collected by: Geoffrey Bliss
Collection Date: 4/09/10

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
Mixed-use development, improved pedestrian flow & connectivity, support of public actors and venues, reorganization of existing parking structure & traffic conditions to be conducive to new building typologies. Project Planning will take place primarily in the CBD. Time frame for development will be over the course of 10-12 years.

Plan creation and public involvement:
Created by Menelaos Triantafillou & Associates

Plan vision statement:
“The Blue Ash City Council and Administration retained a professional consultant to undertake and prepare the attached Blue Ash Town Center Concept Redevelopment Plan. This process was undertaken due to a recognition that while today’s downtown is attractive and viable, that the City must remain vigilant in ensuring that downtown continues being competitive in an ever-changing market. Thus, a process was undertaken to produce the Concept Redevelopment Plan which is both ambitious and visionary” (p. 1).

Plan goals or objectives:
• The City will encourage the introduction of more appropriate dense and mixed use developments than exist today but to be determined at a later time
• Future projects will encourage pedestrian flow and connectivity, particularly to Towne Square
• The City will encourage and support key public and/or private anchors or venues; and
• The City further study the re-organization of existing parking and traffic conditions to result in a more productive and effective configuration conducive to proposed new building patterns (p. 1).

Strategies:
The strategy of the plan will address new challenges relating to changing social, economic and political circumstances within the city of Blue Ash. Before any major projects are created the city will review and allocate funds to the most economically viable projects on a case-by-case basis. Identification of major sources of funding will remain one of the project’s major components.

Key Projects:
The City hopes to address economic development through enhancing downtown amenities in addition to creating "a sense of place." New additions may include bookstores, restaurants, a jazz club, arts theatre and movie theatre. High Density living is planned alongside downtown redevelopment. A higher FAR ratio of at least .50 is to be achieved through new mixed-use developments. New designs call for apartments, townhouses and condominiums. Plan will create a town center, which will create an attractive "niche," which is not meant to be a commercial center but an attractive meeting place. Improved urban design guidelines will be utilized in addition to multivariate architectural styles to compliment the town center concept. New designs will call for enhanced walkability and attractive architectural choices. Creation of new on street parking and creation of new traffic management will help to reduce traffic in CBD while new sidewalks will promote walkability.
Implementation and funding:
“Typically, public resources are used for land acquisition, site cleanup and preparation, infrastructure upgrades, street connections and expansions, parking development, and other ‘soft’ costs normally associated with pre-development activities. Among these costs, land acquisition is the one that usually demands the greatest amount of funds…It is estimated that the redevelopment of the downtown will require public subsidies in the range of 1-2 million dollars/acre. Land assembly in the downtown could easily reach $1,000,000/acre, and could range between 12%- 15% of the total project cost” (p. V-2).

Project implementation:
“The attached plan is NOT an implementation strategy or document” (p.1)

Project Phasing:
Phase One: 1-4 years. During this phase the key projects for redevelopment should be pursued as described in the previous section. In addition, design guidelines and review procedures should also be developed as early as possible. Residential developments and the mixed-use redevelopment at the Kenwood Cooper Roads should be given priority.

Phase Two: 5-9 years. Projects during this phase should include redevelopment of properties along Kenwood, south and north of Cooper, and by the Ronald Reagan Highway area. Second phase redevelopment may also include changes along Kenwood Road north from Cooper Road. In addition, redevelopment dynamics will be set in place through the market’s response to the implementation of the key projects during phase one.

Phase Three: 10-12 years and beyond. During this phase specific projects and opportunities will emerge as a result of projects already built. Development at the southwestern and Cooper Roads may be possible. Depending on market conditions and the success of the redevelopment thus far, it would be possible during this period to reevaluate the viability and potential for redevelopment of the existing commercial space at the Kenwood and Cooper Road intersection (p. V7-V8).

It is also noted that the first two initial phases of development will help to give great impetus to the project.
neighborhoods are becoming greatly improved through community guided action planning. Massive redevelopment of the CBD has created tremendous growth downtown. In addition, Blue Ash is becoming a premier destination for high quality education, beautiful parks, and non-profit organizations, creating the potential for Blue Ash to become of the nation’s most successful small sized cities.

Plan goals or objectives:
- New Commercial uses in vacant properties
- New Infill Residential development
- Continued improvements to the Town Square to accommodate more people to attend events
- Creation of more downtown amenities such as restaurants and entertainment venues
- Planning for a light rail system

Strategies:
- Build using established norms and procedures to encourage growth and stability
- Planning will be based upon an updated 2003 Comprehensive Zoning ordinance
- Public input in the planning process through survey and open discussion

Key Projects Implementation and funding:
No implementation dates provided, no list of organizations to fund the project

**Key Projects:**
- Complete I-471, Extend Melish (present Day MLK Drive) to Madison Ave.
- Expand Convention Center.
- Complete channelization of Mill Creek through Corp of Engineers.
- Expand Riverfront Park

**Implementation and funding:**
Ongoing, long term plan for up to 2000.

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**Plan_ID 13**
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Deer Park Comprehensive Plan, 2008
**Print/post date:**
**Physical/Web location:** [http://www.deerpark-oh.gov/DEER%20PARK%20COMPREHENSIVE%20PLAN.pdf](http://www.deerpark-oh.gov/DEER%20PARK%20COMPREHENSIVE%20PLAN.pdf)
**Name/address of provider:** City of Deer Park
7777 Blue Ash Road
Deer Park, OH 45236
**Collected by:** Thomas DiBello
**Collection Date:** 4/14/10

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**
Jay T. Stewart, Esq, AICP
Kleingers & Associates Inc. 20 year comprehensive plan covering the City of Deer Park, OH. It is a small primarily residential municipality, covering about 500 acres.

- “spot” land use (non-similar uses in an area)
- Lack of residential variety (mostly single family)
- Decline in owner-occupied housing rates (conversion to rental)

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
Public open houses to acquire input; a comprehensive plan survey; public hearings before the planning commission and city council.

**Plan vision statement:**
The City of Deer Park is a vibrant community distinguished by its convenient location, access to urban amenities and unique small-town character. Deer Park is an inclusive and diverse city with a livable business and civic core that promotes walkability and social interaction. The citizens of Deer Park are civically engaged, and civic groups and existing neighborhoods work collaboratively to continually improve quality of life.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
1. Enhance and promote Deer Park’s physical and perceived identity to create a unique sense of place.
2. Develop proactive land use and economic development policies aimed at attracting targeted new commercial, residential and mixed-use development within identified redevelopment areas.
3. Develop an economically sustainable balance of city services, amenities and infrastructure to promote targeted growth in the commercial and residential sectors.
4. Promote community interaction by supporting gathering places, open spaces, and
parks and recreation opportunities.
5. Support community members of all ages in their efforts to promote active lifestyle choices.
6. Connect the city business districts, parks, neighborhoods, and neighbors through pedestrian mobility options.
7. Establish processes that engage citizens and community partners and implement policies that reflect the desires and concerns of community members and business owners alike.
8. Continue to proactively seek intergovernmental solutions on a regional scale to increase municipal service levels and offerings.

Strategies:
Infill development, mixed use, pedestrian scale commercial uses, variety of housing types, increase connectivity and multi-modal transportation (walking, bikes), development of small parks within neighborhoods,

Key Projects:
Transportation Master Plan (classification of roadways), Deer Park Business District Plan

Plan_ID 14
Plan profile
Full Title of Document/Plan: Insight 2010
Print/post date: 2005
Physical/Web location: www.fairfield.city.org/manager/insight2010
Name/address of provider: City of Fairfield, Office of City Manager
Collected by: Clare Norwood
Collection Date: April 12, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
City of Fairfield, Office of City Manager and Development Division
The plan outlines a number of goals to be met by 2010 within the geographic area of the City of Fairfield. The primary issues are: community development and redevelopment, economic development, education, health & safety, recreation & culture, regionalism, and transportation.
Plan creation and public involvement: Created a community planning committee and opened up citycouncil meetings to public participation.

Plan vision statement:
“Vision: Building a Better Future for All; Mission: The Mission of the City of Fairfield is to provide opportunities for all to experience an exceptional quality of life in a safe, well balanced, and attractive environment by creating progressive partnerships to build our future.”

Plan goals or objectives:
Strengthen community development and redevelopment, economic development, education, health & safety, recreation & culture, regionalism, and transportation.

Strategies:
“Create opportunities to encourage optimal use of existing residential land and redevelopment of existing houses/multi family units and business; develop opportunities that encourage growth of existing businesses and attraction of new businesses that meet the needs of our community and embrace our financial stability; cooperate with Fairfield City Schools, area corporations, public and private universities and technical schools to secure life long educational opportunities for all ages; explore ways of constantly improving our natural environment, safety of our citizen and visitors, and health care opportunities within our community; develop and maintain a variety of recreational and cultural opportunities that serve our diverse population; intensify our participation in regional activities that will benefit our community and region; improve all
way of enhancing access within our community and access within our region.”

**Key Projects:**
Tax incentives, enterprise zones, new zoning standards, PUD districts, construction of Village Green, widening of roads,

**Implementation and funding:**
Implemented by City of Fairfield; funded by national, regional and local gov. funding sources

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**Plan_ID 15**
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** City of Fairfield Land Use Plan
**Print/post date:** 2009
**Physical/Web location:** Plan not available on the web. Contacted Erin Donavan, Planning Manager, for copy of Land Use Plan
**Name/address of provider:** Erin Donovan, Planning Manager, City of Fairfield
**Collected by:** Clare Norwood
**Collection Date:** April 12, 2010

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**
City of Fairfield, Butler County

This chapter presents the City’s official policy with regard to the form and pattern of future development and redevelopment. It will be used to direct growth by serving as a reference guide when considering rezonings, annexations, subdivisions and other items that pertain to the use of land within the City of Fairfield. It will also be used to direct planning for public infrastructure and aid decisions for private sector investment. The existing land use pattern and land characteristics in a community will suggest the best uses for undeveloped and underdeveloped land. Local government typically provides land in its Plan for open space, parks, industrial, commercial, office and residential uses. These decisions can be guided by unique siting opportunities, needs or constraints that make each section of a community uniquely suitable for a specific land use. The following discussion, tables, graphs and maps will help with evaluating future land use needs of the community and allocating the limited land area in a way that promotes efficient development and a high quality of life for residents and businesses.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
The Land Use Plan for Fairfield has continued to evolve using the following methodology:
1. The Evolution of Fairfield’s Land Use Pattern is examined through past land use plans (1966 – 2005). The major issues and concerns that were addressed and the methods for handling those concerns and issues are analyzed to determine their current relevance and actual impacts. Fairfield’s changing regional role is discussed in an attempt to understand the impacts and demands the region has placed on the City.
2. Existing Land Use Analysis provides an inventory for each land use including the remaining undeveloped land resource (quantity and location). Existing inventories are compared to past inventories to show changes in land use.
3. Existing Development Pattern Analysis examines the functional characteristics of the City’s development pattern and sets objectives that guide future land use planning decisions.
4. Natural Features Constraints are identified to increase sensitivity and awareness of those areas of the City where limitations or specific requirements should be imposed on any development. Some areas have constraints severe enough that prohibit development altogether.
5. A Land Use Plan is the end product. It represents the combination and interrelationships of all facets of this study. It consists of a set of 1) Community Land Use Goals derived from perceived community needs and standards, and legislative and statutory provisions; 2) a set of specific recommendations designed to positively address previously identified land use and development problems and issues.

These specific recommendations are consistent with the Community Land Use Goals; and 3) The Land Use Plan Map graphically represents the most desirable development pattern by designating each parcel of land in the City as a general land use type. This map is the major land use policy statement and reference source in making day to day
development and planning decisions. Most importantly, all procedures for the Implementation of the Land use Plan (goals, recommendations and the land use map) are reviewed and changes are recommended as needed.

**Plan vision statement:**
The intent of land use planning includes the following statements:
1. Promote continued economic development for the City and the region.
2. Maintain and enhance property values.
3. Encourage the redevelopment of outdated or incompatible land uses.
4. Mitigate existing land use conflicts and avoid future land use conflicts.
5. Preserve sensitive environmental areas.
6. Meet the needs of residents for services and recreation near their places of residence.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
The undertaking of land use planning has three (3) main purposes:
1. Aid City Council and Planning Commission in protecting the public health, safety and welfare with regard to the growth and development of the community.
2. Provide a framework for evaluating land use questions that is responsive to pertinent issues and gives direction to the land use decision making process.
3. Develop a land use mix that will ensure appropriate balanced growth for the City.

**VIII. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**
The following goals, objectives and policies provide a basic framework for all land use decisions.

1.0 Community Land Use Goals

**Goal 1:** Have a land use pattern that promotes the fiscal stability of the City.

**Policy 1:** Require proper phasing and management of growth.

**Policy 2:** Require a proper mix of net tax payers and net tax receivers (commercial/industrial vs. residential).

**Goal 2:** Have a land use pattern that promotes community and neighborhood pride, identity and enjoyment.

**Policy 1:** Ensure aesthetic quality in all areas of the City.

**Policy 2:** Provide for community and neighborhood activities and events.

**Goal 3:** Have a land use pattern that eliminates the close proximity of incompatible uses.

**Policy 1:** Ensure the adequate separation of incompatible uses.

**Policy 2:** Locate more intense uses close to major thoroughfares.

**Policy 3:** Develop a landscape plan to screen incompatible uses that cannot be separated.

**Goal 4:** Have a land use pattern that is sensitive to environmental factors.

**Policy 1:** Ensure the preservation of significant natural features.

**Policy 2:** Ensure the proper use of areas with fragile or special environmental constraints (i.e. floodplains, aquifers, steep slopes).

**Goal 5:** Have a land use pattern that is consistent with changes in trends and surrounding cities (Regionalism).

**Policy 1:** Revise plans and ordinances as new technology is developed and trends are set by surrounding cities.

**Policy 2:** Create new districts as indicated by the creation of new types of land uses.

2.0 Objectives

2.1 General

**Objective 1:** Coordinate development with thoroughfare and utility improvements.

**Objective 2:** Develop a comprehensive plan for the City that includes sections for community facilities, parks and recreation and thoroughfares.

**Objective 3:** Amend the City’s zoning map and district regulations to be in accordance with the land use plan as much as possible.

2.2 Residential

**Objective 1:** The objective of the housing mix ratio of this plan shall be 70% housing units from R 0 and R 1 single family zones and 30% housing units from R 2, R 3 and R 4 multi family zones.

**Objective 2:** Locate multi family uses in areas having good access to arterial streets and shopping areas.

**Objective 3:** Ensure that infill projects are of the same density as surrounding properties and/or underlying zoning.
Objective 4: When developing land for infill housing, special attention should be given to make sure adequate open space is provided.

Objective 5: Ensure the stability of existing residential neighborhoods via infrastructure improvements.

Objective 6: Explore the opportunity to develop large lot estate housing with close proximity to the interstate in order to attract the executive homeowners.

Objective 7: Provide for a variety of housing opportunities while maintaining stable property values.

Objective 8: Provide single family housing that meet the needs of empty nesters and senior citizens such as ranch style homes for easy access and a home owners association for property maintenance.

2.3 Commercial

Objective 1: Ensure cluster commercial development as opposed to strip commercial development.

Objective 2: Provide for neighborhood convenience shopping areas.

Objective 3: Encourage the location of community facilities in the Town Center (i.e. civic center, library, government offices, etc.).

Objective 4: Provide areas for office park type development with good access and visibility.

Objective 5: Implement the Route 4 Service Drive Plan at every opportunity.

Objective 6: Implement the Town Center Development Plan where possible.

Objective 7: Maintain strict control of commercial signage.

2.4 Industrial

Objective 1: Confine all heavy industrial development (Currently M2 zoning) to areas north of Route 4 and west of North Gilmore Road.

Objective 2: Discourage heavy industrial uses that will detract from the area. If they do locate in the City, it is recommended that all activity be located in a wholly enclosed building and any outside storage to be screened.

Objective 3: Expand wastewater capacity to allow the City to provide sewer service to all areas, especially land zoned for industrial development.

2.5 Airport

Objective 1: Ensure that development within the airport zone is complimentary to the airport and does not restrict flight operations.

Objective 2: Promote uses that can safely interact with the airport.

Objective 3: Work with other jurisdictions such as Butler County and the City of Hamilton in promoting the use of the airport as a means of attracting new businesses to the region.

2.6 Open Space

Objective 1: Preserve undevelopable areas as community open space (i.e. floodplains, hillsides).

Objective 2: Preserve land for open space.

Objective 3: Preserve and acquire land for storm water detention.

Objective 4: Make provisions for appropriate reuse of storm water detention areas.

2.7 Other

Objective 1: Set aside land for parks and recreation activities per the needs of the City.

Objective 2: Create a bike/pedestrian trail along the entire length of the Miami Erie Canal that can be used by all residents in the City.

Objective 3: Create a buffer around future school sites to protect them from undesirable uses. Also, where possible, create buffers around existing school sites to protect them from existing and possible future undesirable uses.

Strategies:

Key Projects:

Implementation and funding:
Implementation of any land use plan is an ongoing day to day job. The zoning code is the primary tool to accomplish land use goals. The main stakeholders in land use implementation are: 1) development demands, 2)
Planning Commission, 3) Planning Commission staff and City administration, 4) City Council and 5) citizens. This is a complex combination of political, professional, lay, market, legal persons and forces that will spawn many divergent opinions. A land use plan becomes more valuable as all of the stakeholders become more educated as to the Plan’s merit and purpose. Educating the stakeholders can be aided through using the Plan at all meetings involving zoning, development and other planning issues. Implementation of the Plan will require serious evaluation of development proposals that go against the plan’s original design. Thus, a land use plan is an evolving plan needing constant reevaluation and adjustment. The actual implementation of the Plan goals may involve amendments to the existing zoning code. Other Plan implementation actions may not necessitate zone changes, but will require collaboration, investigation and follow up. Since the Plan is constantly evolving, it is important that the City review and makes changes to the Plan on a regular basis.

Plan_ID 16
Full Title of Document/Plan: City of Fairfield Thoroughfare Plan
Print/post date: 2009
Physical/Web location: Plan not available on the web, called Erin Donovan, Planning Manager for City of Fairfield, to obtain a copy of the plan.
Name/address of provider: City of Fairfield, Erin Donovan, Planning Manager
Collected by: Clare Norwood
Collection Date: April 12, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The purpose of the Thoroughfare Plan is to establish locations and minimum standards for the future street network within the City. It is a planning tool used to establish future right of ways and plan the construction of new roads through the development process. It will also serve to guide public and elected officials in the development of future road improvement projects.

Plan creation and public involvement:
The current thoroughfare plan is the result of countless updates to the first plan that was adopted in 1966. The 1966 plan addressed the construction of roads for inner-city traffic and diverting east west traffic around residential neighborhoods. An update in 1977 promoted the Loop Traffic Flow concept, which was a series of thoroughfare loops within the city intended to ease traffic flow within City boundaries. Updated again in 2006, the revisions were a departure from the previous two plans. This plan assigned roadway classifications to more accurately represent existing conditions. It also addressed the widening of Route 4. These two objectives are still present in the most current plan of 2009.

Plan vision statement:
“The completion of thoroughfares in the City of Fairfield must be undertaken in an orderly fashion so as to create sound traffic patterns and eliminate congested and hazardous conditions. The priority of improvements recommended by this plan should be based on their urgency.”

Plan goals or objectives:
1. The Thoroughfare Plan shall be an integral part of the development of the City of Fairfield.
2. The Thoroughfare Plan is a guide for the orderly development of thoroughfares through undeveloped areas and assures the proper extension and connection of existing thoroughfares. The plan is meant to be a plan only and may be adjusted to meet prevailing conditions.
3. The Thoroughfare Plan shall provide direct connection to major regional highways surrounding the City.
4. The Thoroughfare Plan shall be enacted when development occurs on vacant parcels and when parcels get redeveloped. For the purpose of this plan, redevelopment is defined as substantial demolition of existing structures and rebuilding for a new use.
5. The Thoroughfare Plan should be reviewed approximately every ten years so that transportation and market condition impacts can be evaluated upon the various thoroughfares in the City.
**Plan_ID 17**

**Full Title of Document/Plan:** City of Hamilton, OH Stormwater Management Plan for compliance with Phase II PDES Regulations

**Print/post date:** February 2003


**Name/address of provider:** City of Hamilton, Butler County, Ohio

**Collected by:** City of Hamilton, Butler County, Ohio

**Collection Date:** February 2003

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**
Ohio EPA and the city of Hamilton, Ohio. Stormwater Management Issues are the primary concern.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
The plan was mandated by the Ohio EPA. There was no public involvement.

**Plan vision statement:**
None

**Plan goals or objectives:**
Public Education and Outreach on Storm Water Impacts; Public Involvement/Participation; Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination; Construction Site Runoff Control; Post Construction Storm Water Management in New Development and Redevelopment; Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations.

**Strategies:**
Hazardous Materials Storage; Storm Drainage System Cleaning and Maintenance; Spill Response and Prevention; Illegal Dumping Control; Parking Lot / Street Cleaning; Used Oil Recycling; Road Salt Application / Storage; Leaf Collection; Detention Basin Maintenance; Materials Management

**Key Projects:**
City Garage; Wastewater Treatment Plant; Street Sweeping; Catch Basin Cleaning; Drainage Swale Maintenance; Stream/Creek Maintenance; Culvert Maintenance; Storm Sewer Maintenance; Detention Basin Maintenance; Leaf Collection; Work Order and Recordkeeping Systems; Training and Certification Programs; Operation and Maintenance Equipment Inventory.

**Implementation and funding:**
The city of Hamilton, with the help of the Ohio EPA is responsible for the implementation of the plan. The Stormwater User Utility Fee is supposed to help cover any costs that will be needed to support the plan.

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**Plan_ID 18**

**Full Title of Document/Plan:** City Hamilton 2020 Vision Plan

**Print/post date:** 2010


**Name/address of provider:** Springfield Township Website

**Collected by:** Geoffrey Bliss

**Collection Date:** 4/09/10

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**
City of Blue Ash Planning Commission, City of Blue Ash Administration Staff, Kinzelman Kline Gossman & Brownstone Design. Plan is concerned with the creation of a pedestrian oriented downtown, creation of on street
pedestrian entertainment, creation of a sense of place, and establishment of district character, "organic" development phases where development will coincide with the overall master plan. The plan also calls for creation of new gateways and signage. No specific time frame is mentioned.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
Plan calls for collaborative action between “…local Governments, School Districts, Religious Institutions and Civic Associations who will work together to improve the effectiveness of their services, maximize their efficiency in utilizing resources, and improve the quality of life and economic well-being of the Springfield Township region” (p. 2).

**Plan vision statement:**
“The Springfield Township 2020 Vision has been created for the following specific purposes: To guide the Springfield Township Trustees in the decision making process to create a climate of positive change in the community by leveraging the many community assets and attributes and bringing about new collaborative efforts between the Township, Schools, Churches, Neighborhoods Civic Associations, Businesses, and Non-Profit Organizations to achieve new economies of scale, improved communications, and increased services to the community” (p. 1).

**Plan goals or objectives:**
- Township Service/Actions/Governance
- Collaborative Actions
- Business/Economic Development
- Neighborhood Enhancement
- Recreational, Educational, and Cultural Enrichment

**Strategies:**
Major strategies will center on:
- The creation of a government consortium of community organizations to facilitate fair discussion and communication between important community stakeholders
- The creation of an educational alliance between neighboring school districts to improve communication and sharing of information and explore new ways to implement tax savings opportunities.
- The creation of a faith alliance between different religious groups to foster new community volunteer opportunities and educational training to related professions.
- The creation of a Springfield Township Civic Association, which will help to create a neighborhood watch program to improve overall safety and help foster an improved sense of community

**Key Projects:**
Within each category, specific projects are listed in relation to economic development, neighborhood development and recreational and cultural enrichment. Related projects include:

**Economic Development:**
- The creation of Joint economic development districts
- The creation of strong township business district, which will identify major partnerships between important community business stakeholders
- The creation of a commercial property database

**Neighborhood Development:**
- The creation of an updated Neighborhood Action Plan
- The development of a new bike path, which creates linkages between different neighborhoods, parks and schools
- The creation of neighborhood cleanup initiatives
Recreational and Cultural Enrichment:
- The creation of a community health fair
- Review of existing park master planning
- A feasibility study to understand the creation of a performing arts center

**Implementation and funding:**
There is no mention of implementation or project funding.

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**Plan_ID 18**  
**Plan profile**

**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Steering a Course to the Future, Vision 2020 Hamilton  
**Print/post date:** March 2000  
**Name/address of provider:** City of Hamilton, Butler County, Ohio  
**Collected by:** Parsons Harland Bartholomew & Associates, Inc., in association with Ed Barlow, Jr. of Creating the Future, Inc.  
**Collection Date:** November 1998  

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**
The city of Hamilton Planning Department authorized the plan, and the city of Hamilton, Ohio was studied. The primary issues that were addressed were economic development, historic preservation and dealing with the issues of an urban school system.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
The plan was created after a resident of Hamilton saw “Back from the Brink,” which was a movie on urban rejuvenation. The resident then gave a copy of this film to former mayor Tom Nye, who later passed it on to the city manager and other city council officials, until it reached the Hamilton Planning department, who decided to hire Parsons PBA to help the city create a Comprehensive Plan. Public participation was very active throughout the entire planning process.

**Plan vision statement:**
Hamilton is a city filled with the celebration of life!

**Plan goals or objectives:**

**Strategies:**
Focus Group participation

**Key Projects:**
Revitalizing the downtown area; improving the image of the Second and Fourth wards of the city; redeveloping underutilized and vacant lands; creating more greenspace within the city; develop the Riverfront area of Hamilton; preserving the historical architecture of Hamilton.

**Implementation and funding:**
Assess the plan and convince members of the community, especially the youth, to implement and update the plan as often as possible. The group also wanted to have meetings by topics instead of focus groups.
Plan_ID 19
Full Title of Document/Plan: Forest Park Redevelopment Plan
Print/post date: 2007
Name/address of provider: City of Forest Park
Collected by: Per Jansen
Collection Date: April 12, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The City of Forest Park, based and built on a 1950s era master plan, authorized a new redevelopment plan on a five-year scale. It covers only the city’s territory, and was developed to combat urban decay, blight, disinvestment, foreclosure and the loss of housing stock.

Plan creation and public involvement:
No public participation; largely an administrative tax issue to create incentives for housing and development.

Plan vision statement:
None

Plan goals or objectives:
Stop decline and blight in Forest Park; bring investment into the community; restore housing and encourage the creation of new housing.

Strategies:
Zoning changes; purchase dilapidated structures and fund their redevelopment; enact a branding plan; serve as intermediary between vacant property owners and developers.

Key Projects:
TIF district in central business district; acquiring multiple properties throughout the city; infrastructure plans.

Implementation and funding:
As an administrative matter, the city government merely enacted the redevelopment plan. Funding came from city resources.

Plan_ID 20
Village of Greenhills, Ohio Comprehensive Plan: Defining Our Future
Print/post date: 9-19-2009 (Public Hearing Draft)
Physical/Web location: http://www.hamilton-co.org/hcrpc/greenhills/default.asp
Name/address of provider: Village of Greenhills and Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission
Collected by: Kevin McNally
Collection Date: 4/7/2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The Village of Greenhills contacted HCRPC in November of 2008 searching for consultation in the process of creating a comprehensive plan for the community. HCRPC worked along with a village steering committee appointed by the Village Council from November 2008 to August 2009 on the Comprehensive Plan studies and documentation. Greenhills, a village of 3,675 residents, is located north of the City of Cincinnati border, just south of I-275 and west of I-75. Greenhills was a community that developed by the Federal government during the 1930s as a stimulus project to provide construction work for unemployed citizens during the period of the Great Depression. Modeled after the “Garden City”, Greenhills was developed as a community with a “greenbelt” of undeveloped land encompassing the village. The village was incorporated in 1938 and grew in population until the 1970s, when outlying suburban areas began to pull residents to communities further north of Greenhills. This population loss has effected community institutions and schools, and deterioration of the housing stock and
community shopping center have also begun to plague the community and its once proud image. The creation of a comprehensive plan for the Village hopes to create a set of goals and objectives in order to reverse these trends and re-create Greenhills as a destination suburban community for Cincinnati suburbanites.

Plan creation and public involvement:
The plan was formulated using community input during various community gatherings during the planning process. An initial meeting in December 2008 gave residents the opportunities to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the Village of Greenhills (p. 79). Meetings were also held in March and May 2009 to continue to gather community input on issues that were somewhat divisive, including housing, historic preservation, the “greenbelt”, and the village center, and to draft a collective vision of Greenhills in the year 2029. The input from community members and the future visions of Greenhills helped to lead the goals, objectives, and strategies of the final comprehensive plan.

Plan vision statement:
“The Collective Vision for the Future of Greenhills is a multi-prong approach that builds on the Village’s historic past, its physical development respectful of the natural environment, its collaborative and friendly atmosphere where residents are afforded opportunities for community life, and its supportive approach of commercial activity that provides financial stability and much needed products and services to the community.” (Village of Greenhills Comprehensive Plan, 7)

See also the Collective Vision of Greenhills – 2029 (page 82 of comprehensive plan)

Plan goals or objectives:
The Greenhills Comprehensive Plan calls out goals into seven key categories and themes:
- Image
- The Village Center
- Community Life
- Schools/Education
- Housing/Neighborhoods
- Open Spaces, Recreation, and Community Services
- Redevelopment/Economic Development

Each of these categories contain goals and objectives to help guide future implementation of the comprehensive plan.

Image:
- Goal 1: “To develop a recognizable positive image of the community that it is a great place to live, work, play, and invest”
- Goal 2: “To create visual markers and identifiers that reinforce the sense of place and arrival to Greenhills”
- Goal 3: “To build a reputation as a hub for sustainable development and redevelopment practices”
- Goal 4: “To make Greenhills a high speed communication hot spot”
- Goal 5: “To promote the special character of neighborhoods and assist residents to build and implement civic agendas that contribute to the progress of Greenhills”

The Village Center:
- Goal 1: “To redevelop the shopping center and adjacent properties as a mixed-use project promoting a ‘new urbanism’ environment in the community”
- Goal 2: “In the short-term, upgrade the building and surrounding property to make it more efficient to attract more businesses”
- Goal 3: “To become a catalyst for mixed-use development in The Village Center”
- Goal 4: “To identify desirable uses for the Village Center”
- Goal 5: “To develop opportunities to use the Commons to complement retail objective”
- Goal 6: “To develop a plan to improve the ‘look’ of the Village Center”

Community Life:
- Goal 1: “To provide opportunities for local groups to volunteer in community projects that enhances the image of Greenhills”
- Goal 2: “To provide opportunities for churches, clubs, and other local organizations to address collaboratively the needs of populations in different age groups”
- Goal 3: “To create a relaxed, welcoming space for teens”
- Goal 4: “To preserve Greenhills as a family oriented community”
- Goal 5: “To provide opportunities for residents to become familiar with environmentally friendly practices of gardening and landscaping”
- Goal 6: “To provide incentives to neighborhoods to become communities”
- Goal 7: “To improve communications”
- Goal 8: “Greenhills is a community where its citizens can age in place”
- Goal 9: “To raise funds to pay for community events and programs”
- Goal 10: “To collaborate with the School District to improve the education conditions and opportunities of Greenhills residents”
- Goal 11: “To diversify recreation and performing arts opportunities within the Village”

**Schools/Education:**
- Goal 1: “To improve the image of our public school system”
- Goal 2: “To collaborate with the School District, Forest Park and Springfield Township to improve walkability to school buildings and other School District facilities”
- Goal 3: “To create a Greenhills School/Education Committee that is an advocate for residents’ educational needs”

**Housing/Neighborhoods:**
- Goal 1: “To encourage a mixture of housing densities, ownership patterns, and building types to serve diverse households types”
- Goal 2: “To increase the ratio of owner-occupied housing units in the Village”
- Goal 3: “To maintain and rehabilitate existing housing stock”
- Goal 4: “To promote preservation and restoration of historic housing within the Historic District”
- Goal 5: “To create opportunities for infill housing development”
- Goal 6: “To inform and educate residents of housing policies, strategies, and resources so they become partners in creating strong neighborhoods”
- Goal 7: “To create effective solutions for the parking and storage of transportation and recreational vehicles within the community”
- Goal 8: “To create support mechanisms to assist property owners with maintenance, ownership, and promotion objectives”

**Open Spaces, Recreation, and Community Services:**
- Goal 1: “To reinforce the value of Greenhills’ parks and recreation facilities”
- Goal 2: “To improve the appearance of neighborhood parks and fields”
- Goal 3: “To maintain tree-lined streets throughout the Village that enhances the park-like setting of the community”
- Goal 4: “To make open spaces and recreation facilities accessible for pedestrians and cyclists”
- Goal 5: “To make the Village Recreation Complex a state of the art facility”
- Goal 6: “To improve connectivity to Winton Woods Park”

**Redevelopment/Economic Development:**
- Goal 1: “To promote housing redevelopment”
- Goal 2: “To redevelop the Village Center as the vibrant, identifiable center of the community”
- Goal 3: “To facilitate growth of local businesses”
- Goal 4: “To identify acceptable revenue generating uses of lands in the greenbelt district”
- Goal 5: “To incorporate the Bastion Tract into the Village”
- Goal 6: “To redevelop the Winton Woods corridor (on both sides of the road including Johnny’s Toys and shopping center) as a mixed retail, housing, office and recreation space that is architecturally cohesive, enhances the image of Greenhills, and increases Village’s re-sources”

**Strategies:**
Key strategies are outlined for each of the seven topic areas under the goals, objectives, and strategies section starting on page 85.

**Key Projects and Implementation:**

*A* = Must do it  
*B* = Should do it  
*C* = Could do it  

A - Create future land use plan  
A - Zoning analysis and update  
B - Winton Road Corridor Strategic Economic Development Plan  
A - Village Center Master Plan  
C - Short-Term Solutions for Shopping Center  
B - Greenbelt Analysis  
C - Annexation of Bastion Tract  
B - Re-establish Parks and Recreation commission  
B - Prepare study for new Village Recreation Center  
A – Short-term Solutions for Recreation Facilities (skatepark, workout facilities, picnic area, etc)  
B – Tree-lined Streets/Trees in Right of Way  
C – Housing Studies (Vacant, infill, increasing diversity, develop design guidelines)  
C – Create Citizen’s Housing Committee  
C - Research Alternative Transportation Modes  
A – Create Greenhills Educational Committee  
A – Create Branding Campaign for Village  
A – Promote Community Communication (between schools, organizations, new residents, etc.)  
A – Study Local Historic District Implementation

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**Plan_ID 21**  
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Montgomery City Comprehensive Community Plan, 2007  
**Print/post date:** August 1, 2007  
**Name/address of provider:** Council of the City of Montgomery, OH  
**Collected by:** Thomas DiBello  
**Collection Date:** 4/14/10

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**  
Montgomery is a city to the north of Cincinnati with a population of about 10,000 as of 2005. It has a strong commercial sector, medical institutional presence and single family residential neighborhoods.  
- Increasing traffic and development pressures; restrictions on sewer expansion.  
- Pressure to develop its historic district and aging infrastructure in historic district.  
- Lack of pedestrian connectivity to commercial districts; lack of sidewalks.  
- Storm water runoff, noise/light pollution, development pressure on natural land.  
- Desire to maintain/continue low density residential development.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**

**Plan vision statement:**  
Montgomery is a premier residential community of citizens, businesses, organizations and institutions who are committed partners with their local government in the care and
support of our vibrant City. While respecting tradition, we are forward thinking, embrace change, and continuously seek opportunities for improvement. Parks, landmarks, pedestrian walkways, distinctive landscaping, and fountains contribute to the unique character and ambiance of our “Tree City”. Our neighborhoods are well-maintained, reflect a diverse population and, architecturally, are a pleasing blend of old and new. Our business community is varied and well balanced and our historic Heritage District is the signature of the community. The City is fiscally sound and delivers high quality programs and services to our customers.

Plan_ID 22
Full Title of Document/Plan: Mt Healthy Comprehensive Plan 2007
Print/post date: 2007
Physical/Web location: www.mhealthy.org/COMP PLAN Revise - Council approved.pdf
Name/address of provider: Mt Healthy City Council
Collected by: McGill Smith Punshon, Inc. and Planning Development Solutions
Collection Date:

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
In 2005 Mt. Healthy City Council and staff discussed revisions in the Zoning Ordinance

Plan creation and public involvement:
A consultant specializing in economic influences was included in the study team, local businesses and the community of Mt. Healthy.

Plan vision statement:
The future vision of the City of Mt. Healthy is to sustain community vitality and continuously improve the quality of life of our residents by ensuring public safety; by providing comprehensive public services and facilities; by supporting local educational, religious, and social institutions; by celebrating our heritage, and by encouraging investment by diverse businesses and residents.

Plan_ID 24
Full Title of Document/Plan: City of St. Bernard 1998 Comprehensive Plan
Print/post date: Feb. 4, 1999
Physical/Web location: St. Bernard Archives
Name/address of provider: City of St. Bernard, Al Kanters
Collected by: David Spatholt
Collection Date: 4/7/2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
City of St. Bernard

Supposed to be updated in 2003.

St. Bernard Municipal Area

(1) Retain current residents/prevent population decline.
(2) Develop visual appeal.
(3) Provide high level of community services
(4) Encourage Economic Development in the City (retail/industrial focused)
(5) Diversify Tax Base
(6) Correct traffic and flood control.
(7) Livable environments, protect residents and industry.
(8) Solve parking and traffic problems
(9) Protect small town feel of St. Bernard.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
SWOT Public Meeting in April 1998 with speakers to familiarize residents with issues.
Plan was then presented to community.

Planning committee adjusted recommendations based on community input.

Then there was a final community/council meeting to present final recommendations.

The planning committee, which consisted of fifteen St. Bernard Residents, was in charge of the plan.

**Plan vision statement:**
“In the next twenty years St. Bernard will position itself as a model community with well-maintained residential neighborhoods, a vibrant business area that encourages pedestrian activity throughout the district, accessible and interconnected green spaces, and a balanced economy with a combination of retail, service and technology oriented employees.”

**Plan goals or objectives:**
(1) Stop population decline.
(2) Revitalize community commercial developments particularly retailing activities.
(3) Diversify tax base.

**Strategies:**
(1) Upgrade/maintain existing housing stock to retain residents and attract new ones.
(2) Facilitate the provision of new housing.
(3) Encourage private sector to redevelop vacant or abandoned properties for housing.
(4) Re-evaluate city’s redevelopment tools for urban renewal, spot blight, etc.
(5) Offer incentives to property owners for up keeping properties.
(6) Enforce building codes.
(7) Evaluate effectiveness of loan program for upgrading property.
(8) Promote development of multi-family/multi-apartments, row houses and town houses.
(9) Identify and promote redevelopment of existing buildable lots in residential areas.
(10) Evaluate feasibility of senior housing within the city of St. Bernard

(1) Improve city aesthetics
(2) Identify city boundaries (gateways)
(3) Identify city’s landmarks
(4) Develop a strategic plan
(5) Address incompatibility of small businesses in residential areas.

(1) Maintain/improve current community facilities.
(2) Update park equipment in disrepair.
(3) Repair/redesign pool area – community center.
(4) Continue dialog with Hamilton County-Cincinnati Public Library System: interest in expanding St. Bernard Branch Library
(5) Develop new community facilities.
(6) Promote implementation of neighborhood tot-lots (play areas for pre-school age children)

(1) Improve aesthetics on Vine Street to attract businesses and customers.
(2) Adopt design standards for Vine Street businesses.
(3) Develop a plan that would address overall aesthetics on Vine Street – include signage and streetscape options.
(4) Examine feasibility of underground utilities – do for aesthetics but also look to future (fiber optic)
(5) Revitalize Vine Street Business District
(6) Create a “Main Street” type of program to promote the business district area on an ongoing basis.
(7) Promote business growth/attraction that will minimize vacancies.
(8) Survey market of businesses.
(9) Improve Chamber of Commerce Participation
(10) Use economic tools to boot economic development. (CRA, link deposit loan, TIF, spot blight program, urban renewal, etc.)

(1) Develop or redevelop vacant and other industrial properties.
(2) Diversify industrial base.
(3) Use cluster analysis and trend analysis.
(4) Look at historical changes and current trends that detail the types of businesses that are attracted to the area.
(5) Coordinate efforts to market available industrial sites (work with realtors, developers, and property owners).
(6) Organize realtors roundtable sessions, promote incentive and loan programs

(1) Maintain communication with MSD, bloody run treatment plant implementation.
(2) Continue support St. Bernard Sewer Master Plan Program
(3) Remain active in Mill Creek Watershed / Greenway Master Plan regional decision making process.
(4) Continue dialog with ODOT to obtain protection wall along I-75
(5) Collaborate with the City of Cincinnati to find solutions for the Mitchell and Vine Intersection.

(1) Maintain a separation of land uses.
(2) Address sound problems and screening issues.

(1) Maximize parking options for residents.
(2) Educate residents (public relations) Encourage residents to park in garages.
(3) Evaluate one-way streets and on-street parking.
(4) Promote implementation of residential parking lots.
(5) Enforce current parking regulations.
(6) Secure/ease traffic in residential areas to provide accessibility to service/emergency vehicles.
(7) Identify public parking lots.
(8) Establish hierarchy of traffic – street calming alternatives – establish importance of auto or pedestrian.
(9) Provide adequate signs, road and parking surface treatments.
(10) Alleviate congestion and parking problems in business district during school, church, halls peak hours.
(11) Develop a collaborative plan between the city and the schools to devise alternatives for student pick-up and drop-off bays and school bus waiting areas.
(12) Close-off street(s) to decrease business and residential crossover (e.g. McClelland).

Key Projects:
-Urban Design Master Plan/Downtown Special Planning District (Vine Streetscape Project)
-New Housing/Infill (Angels Way/Rose Hill)
-Economic Development/Infill, etc. (Creation of the CIC)
-Main Street Program (Main Street Ohio Application)
-Marketing the City (CIC Marketing Committee)
-St. Bernard Heritage Trail (Canal Bed Townhouses?)
-Senior Housing Feasibility/Implementation (Volunteers for America)
Implementation and funding:
Update in 2003, a table is included for timelines of each segment. Many are listed as being handled by multiple city and community units.

Surface Transport Program Funds (TEA21), National Recreation Trails Fund (NRTFA), CDBG, Downtown Ohio Inc. (Technical Assistance), Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District (Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources’ Recycle Ohio Grant), Hamilton County Office of Economic Development (SBA 504 Loan, State’s 166 Loan, SBA Microloan, State Tax Incentives (Enterprise Zones, etc.) Staffs Small Business Development Center (Technical Assistance).

Plan_ID 25
Full Title of Document/Plan: Sharonville Strategic Master Plan
Print/post date: 2010
Physical/Web location:
Name/address of provider: Woolpert, Inc. 4141 Rosslyn Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45209
Collected by: Fawaz Alharbi
Collection Date: 04/23/2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:

Plan creation and public involvement:
A consultant specializing in economic influences was included in the study team, local businesses and the community of Mt. Healthy.

Plan vision statement:
The vision for the plan is simply stated as “Establish Downtown as a Destination.” Though simple in form it does guide all plan recommendations towards a singular end state. Plan themes and goals detail how the vision can be achieved.

Plan goals or objectives:
Goals are general statements that create a bridge between the idealistic theme statements and the action oriented tasks of the Strategic Action Plan (Chapter 4). Goals must be attainable yet ambitious in their focus. Goals must address opportunities and constraints and work towards implementing plan themes. Goals can address opportunities and constraints by:
- Pursuing opportunities that are a good fit for downtown’s strengths
- Overcoming weaknesses to pursue opportunities
- Using opportunities to leverage strengths and overcome constraints

Strategies:
The plan calls for developing a critical mass of retail activity at the Reading Road and Creek Street intersection. This strategy revitalizes the center of downtown, building on a position of strength, and works outward over time. Developing a critical mass of retail activity is necessary before the downtown can be marketed as a true destination.

Key Projects:

Implementation and funding:
A coordinated approach among various stakeholders is important to achieving plan goals. An Implementation Committee should be established as an advisory body to help maintain communication, coordination, and cooperation among participating interests. This body can also be tasked with keeping the city and its stakeholders focused and on schedule. Membership should consist of a broad cross section of downtown interests and development related professionals. The committee should act as public — private partnership.
Funding: Special Assessment (additional property tax), Special Improvement district (method of tax assessment and potentials uses of revenues), TIF (Tax Incremental Financing), Grants (Land and Water Conservation Fund and NatureWorks Grants Programs, USEPA/Clean Ohio Brownfield Grants, Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grants, Historic Tax Credits, Donations

**Plan ID 26**  
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Climate Protection Action Plan  
**Print/post date:** June 19, 2008  
**Physical/Web location:** www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cmgr/downloads/cmgr_pdf18280.pdf  
**Name/address of provider:** City of Cincinnati Office of Environmental Quality  
Office of Environmental Quality  
805 Central Avenue, Suite 320  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
Phone: 513-352-6991  
Fax: 513-352-6995  
email: oeq@cincinnati-oh.gov

Collected by: Aaron Olson  
Collection Date: Feb 12, 2010

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:** City of Cincinnati. Covers the City of Cincinnati. GHG emission inventory and reduction goals. Includes tasks for transportation, energy, waste, land use, food related

**Plan creation and public involvement:**

**Plan vision statement:**  
To access sources of GHG emissions and create short and long term goals to reduce emissions.

**Emission Reduction Goals**

Cincinnati adopts the following GHG reduction goals:  
Short Term – Reduce GHG emissions 8% below 2006 levels by 2012.  
Medium Term – Reduce GHG emissions 40% below 2006 levels by 2028.  
Long Term – Reduce GHG emissions 84% below 2006 levels by 2050.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for the City of Cincinnati, and for Cincinnati’s City Government, have been computed using the Clear Air and Climate Protection (CACP) software model developed by ICLEI.

The CACP model is the one endorsed by the National Conference of Mayors and used by most cities and counties that have calculated their GHG emissions.

The City of Cincinnati produced approximately 8.5 million tons of CO2 equivalents (CO2e) in 2006. At 25.5 tons per capita, Cincinnati is slightly higher than the national average emission rate of 24.5 tons.

Cincinnati’s emissions come from a wide variety of activities, which can be grouped into sectors.  
By sector, Cincinnati’s GHG emissions come from: Commercial Buildings, 40.7%; Transportation, 26.6%; Residential Buildings, 18.6%; Industrial Operations, 15.6%; and Waste Disposal, -1.5%. Cincinnati City Government produced 432,179 tons of GHG emissions in 2006, or approximately 5% of the total GHG emissions from the City. By far the largest contributors to these emissions were the water and sewer utilities, accounting for 69.5% of City Government’s emissions. Other contributors to City Government’s emissions included: City Buildings, 17.8%; Streetlights, 7.9%; and City Vehicles, 5.0%.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
Form a time frame and target viable ways to reduce carbon emissions.

**Strategies:**

**Emission Reduction Measures – Transportation**
Transportation accounts for 26.6% of Cincinnati’s GHG emissions. Emissions from transportation can be reduced by decreasing the number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), improving the fuel economy of vehicles, and reducing the carbon content of fuels.

**Emission Reduction Measures – Energy**
The use of energy in buildings accounts for nearly 75% of Cincinnati’s GHG emissions. The majority of these emissions are due to use of electricity implementing energy efficiency measures, installing distributed renewable energy production capacity, and reducing emissions associated with the centralized production of electricity.

**Emission Reduction Measures – Waste**
Disposal of wastes and the resulting emission of methane from landfills, constitutes only a tiny percentage of Cincinnati’s GHG emissions. Key strategies will include incentives for higher participation levels for commercial and residential recycling, and development of infrastructure to reuse currently unusable components of the waste stream, such as a composting facility for food waste.

**Emission Reduction Measures – Land Use**
Higher density, more compact mixed-use development patterns can offer significant reductions in GHG emissions due to 3 complementary effects. Additional GHG reductions are available by adding trees, natural greenspaces, and sustainable urban agriculture to our existing communities. Promoting infill development, redeveloping brownfields, and enhancing our trail system to encourage walking and biking to destinations are all strategies that will lead to reduced GHG emissions.

**Emission Reduction Measures – Food**
An Emission Reduction Measure encourages voluntary reductions in meat consumption, documenting significant GHG reductions available from relatively small dietary shifts.

**Key Projects:**
Hybrid Buses, City of Cincinnati Fleet Fuel Efficiency, The Cincinnati Streetcar, Increase Bicycle Use, Regional Light Rail Plan

Encourage overall home energy efficiency measures, such as, CFLs, smart power strips, temperature modifications, etc.

Encourage programmable thermostats

Prioritized from most to least critical:

1. Grants for low income residents specifically for energy efficiency similar to Cleveland’s program.


3. Expand —LEED ordinance to include a residential retrofit program. In 2007, Council passed an ordinance allowing for property tax exemptions for certain residential, commercial, and industrial properties. Provide vouchers to City employees to ride Metro to work for free. The IRS downtown and in Covington have a program where they provide free bus vouchers to employees. Duke has a similar program in place.
Plan_ID 27
Full Title of Document/Plan: Colerain Township Comprehensive Plan 2005
Print/post date: 2005
Name/address of provider: Colerain Township
Collected by: Per Jansen
Collection Date: April 10, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues
The planning commission and board of trustees of Colerain Township authorized this plan. It is limited to the area of Colerain Township, a large township in western Hamilton. The plan incorporates a 20 year comprehensive plan and a five year economic development plan. The main issues confront Colerain Township include urban decline, disinvestment, foreclosure and environmental issues related to Rumke’s landfill.

Plan creation and public involvement:
Meetings with community groups, workshops designed to solicit community input, private business, environmental groups.

Plan vision statement:
The plan is dedicated to establishing several vision principles: Maintaining neighborhoods, variety of housing, quality of development, parks and open space, rural preservation, transportation and infrastructure.

Plan goals or objectives:
Maintain housing stock; strengthen services; prevent foreclosures; mixed development; green space protection standards; development of a comprehensive park system; preserve rural, green areas; improve job opportunities for residents; support infill; protect the environment from industrial spill; redevelop greyfields.

Strategies:
Colerain Township is limited in actions because it does not have home rule. Thus, zoning plays a major role in its strategies to enforce its new plan. The plan also recommends becoming a limited home rule township, but this is unlikely to occur.

Key Projects:
Updates to zoning code.

Implementation and funding:
Legal action to implement new zoning code; general township funds

Plan_ID 28
Full Title of Document/Plan: Downtown Bethany Vision Plan
Print/post date: 2010
Physical/Web location:
Name/address of provider: Liberty Township, Butler County, Ohio
Collected by: Teresa Fadden
Collection Date: April 5, 2010

Authorizing Organization:
Liberty Township Trustees

Time Frame:
N/A
**Geographic Area:**
The area surrounding the Bethany Road intersection (at Cincinnati-Dayton Road), north to Bethany United Methodist Church, on both sides of Cincinnati-Dayton Road (Rt. 25).

**Primary Issues:**
Address reasons for slow development along Cincinnati-Dayton Road in Bethany due to: speed of through traffic; small lot sizes, which also make storm water management problematic, and desire to incorporate existing historical housing stock. Want to address issues while creating a viable downtown area for Liberty Township.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
A coordinated effort between the Liberty Township Board of Trustees, the Liberty Township Staff, and the Downtown Bethany Vision Plan Steering Committee. A public open house meeting was held on September 17, 2009, at the Bethany United Methodist Church.

**Plan vision statement:**
“The aim of the Downtown Bethany Area Plan is to produce a clear plan document which outlines achievable goals for the revitalization of Downtown Bethany into a thriving, community oriented gathering spot. When put into action, the plan will result in a vibrant and sustainable downtown, consistent in design, sensitive to surrounding uses, and reflecting the community’s desires, which will lend positively to the identity of Downtown Bethany and Liberty Township.”

**Plan goals or objectives:**
1. establish an identity for Downtown Bethany and promote that identity through a cohesive vision or aesthetic; 2. provide for proper transition between the commercial corridor and adjacent residential uses; 3. create a connected and walkable Downtown Bethany; and (4) find ways to promote businesses in the Downtown Bethany area.

**plan objectives:**
1. establish a Bethany Business Association/Business Incubator; 2. evaluate existing zoning regulations and zoning district boundaries; 3. develop a decision making framework for handling historic properties – what measures to take to protect certain properties, and under which situations to enact these measures; 4. investigate avenues, both publicly and privately driven, to accomplish the desired vision of Downtown Bethany; 5. create a Mission Statement for the Downtown Bethany Area Plan; 6. provide a strategy to complete and improve pedestrian infrastructure in Bethany (7) evaluate including a community gathering space and amenities, possibly in the form of park, civic building, streetscape, etc.; (8) evaluate the required mass needed to support the commercial corridor, and how residential use might be incorporated into the vision for Downtown Bethany (for a mixed-use, “round the clock” presence of businesses and residents); (9) provide a strategy to provide the necessary parking to service the area in a functional and attractive way; (10) evaluate the prospect of relocating or burying above ground utilities; (11) Evaluate options and possible locations for planned access drives.
Plan creation and public involvement:
Creation of a pedestrian oriented downtown, creation of on street pedestrian entertainment, creation of a sense of place, establish district character, have "organic" development phases where development will coincide with the overall master plan. Plan also calls for creation of new gateways and signage, which be located between different districts. City Council and staff members guided the planning process in addition to public input from citizens during a public meeting on May 24th 2007.

Plan vision statement:
“This Streetscape Master Plan has been created in order to foster the development of a more pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use downtown district. The standards and guidelines presented herein are intended to be used in the development of more detailed construction plans, which will be developed for all future downtown streetscape development projects. While the recommendations of this plan are based on realistic and achievable design practices, each subsequent development project must address specific technical issues related to traffic management, property ownership and utility issues” (p. 4).

Plan goals or objectives:
· Create a more vibrant pedestrian-oriented downtown environment - unique to the City of Blue Ash.
· Establish on-street pedestrian spaces that support outdoor dining, entertainment and cultural activities.
· Establish a stronger “Sense of Place” through the incorporation of carefully crafted “Branding” and “Wayfinding” elements.
· Establish standards appropriate to the character, function, and tenanting of each respective sub-district of the downtown area.
· Establish a standard palette of durable street furnishings and materials in order to ensure a cohesive identity and minimize life-cycle maintenance and replacement expenses.
· Utilize common design elements from the current streetscape in order to maintain continuity, to create a “Sense of Place” and to keep cost down
· Support future “organic” / phased development. This Master Plan will not be implemented in wholesale fashion but rather as a series of phased implementation projects that would likely coincide with private redevelopment initiatives (p. 4).

Strategies:
• Streetscape Improvements such as broad sidewalks, curbside parking, decorative pavements, and the introduction of a new wayfinding and signage system.
• Gateways, Signage & Wayfinding: The plan hopes to utilize unique gateways and signage systems in order to better promote a sense of place in the Blue Ash CBD

Key Projects:
① Cooper Road Gateway Concept (to also include a large fountain as its centerpiece)
⑦ Major renovations to Kenwood Road to provide on street parking, walkability, enhanced shopping experiences, higher urban density and buildings, which are to be located closer to the street to reverse low-density building trends
② New Signage Design
⑦ Major Streetscape Improvements to be associated with location of new trees & street lights
③ Site Furnishings
② New streetscape typologies

Implementation and funding:
The following preliminary estimates of probable construction costs have been created to guide budgeting for the phased implementation of Downtown Streetscape Improvements. Future phasing will be contingent upon several factors including public funding, private development initiatives and private property owner participation. Any or all future phases could be separated or combined based upon available funds. (Below is listed the proposed construction costs and areas of focus associated with related improvements.)
Estimate of Probable Construction Costs:
The following categories have been listed based upon the limits of each given typology, the current availability of right of way and the relative importance in of the development area to the creation of the Main Street Identity at the Downtown Core.

Area #1 - $1,000,000 to $1,100,000
Cooper Road Gateway and Kenwood Road from Cooper Road south to Hunt Road. Work includes demolition, removal / relocation of existing pavers, curb and gutter, unit pavers, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, wayfinding and branding elements and limited site furniture. In addition the work at the intersection includes specialty pavements, crosswalks, ornamental pool with sculptural identity element and site accent lighting.

Area #2 - $900,000 to $1,000,000
Ronald Reagan Highway Gateway, and Kenwood Road from Hunt Road south to Ronald Reagan Highway. Work includes demolition, removal / relocation of existing pavers, curb and gutter, unit pavers, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, screen walls, wayfinding and branding elements and limited site furniture. In addition the work at the Ronald Reagan Highway Gateway includes the addition of a bridge overpass entry feature façade with lighting, Blue Ash branding and the painting and addition of lighting to the underside of the overpass.

Area #3 - $1,200,000 - $1,300,000
Cooper Road from the Railroad tracks east across Kenwood Road, not including the intersection, to Cooper Lane. Work includes demolition, removal / relocation of existing pavers, curb and gutter, unit pavers, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, wayfinding and branding elements and limited site furniture.

Area #4 - $1,300,000 - $1,400,000
Hunt Road, Towne Square Avenue and Alma Avenue. Work includes demolition, removal / relocation of existing pavers, curb and gutter, unit pavers, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, wayfinding and branding elements and limited site furniture.

Area #5 - $1,100,000 to $1,200,000
Kenwood Road from Cooper Road north to Catalpa Creek Drive. Work includes demolition, removal / relocation of existing pavers, curb and gutter, unit pavers, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, screen walls, wayfinding and branding elements and limited site furniture (p. 22).
and local government hospitable towards business are primary goals in furtherance of JEDD creation. Job creation and economic activity will in turn provide revenue sources directly associated with meeting the increased demand for services from local government.

**Strategies:**
Transportation, Job Creation and Commercial Development

**Key Projects:**
N/A

**Implementation and funding:**
Implementation will occur by creating an environment where transportation and commercial activity can be improved. Funding will come from income taxation associated with commercial activity within the JEDD territory.

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**Plan_ID 31**
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** General Reevaluation Report
**Print/post date:** March 2005
**Name/address of provider:** N/A
**Collected by:** Marc Von Allmen
**Collection Date:** April 7, 2010

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues**
Prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District for the Mill Creek Valley Conservancy District

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
Mailing of informational brochures as well as all day workshop and open house to answer questions and take comments.

**Plan vision statement:**
The purpose of this GRR is to identify a flood damage reduction plan that will yield a functionally, economically, and environmentally sound project to reduce damages to communities in Hamilton County, Ohio, from flooding of Mill Creek and its tributaries. The GRR provides decision-makers (including local stakeholders and Corps’ higher authority) a complete technical, environmental, and economic assessment of flood reduction alternatives for the Mill Creek Study Area (see Figure 1) based on the four-stage reevaluation effort conducted between April 2002 and November 2004.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
The project objectives addressed are flood damage reduction, environmental infrastructure / water quality, and recreation.

**Strategies:**
In order to find the best course of action for Mill Creek, an in depth cost benefit analysis was performed ranging from no action to non structural improvements and structural improvements.

**Key Projects:**
The federally supportable project chosen based on economic impact and amount of protection provided was an improved channel modification project. Local interest groups favored a deep tunnel project that was more expensive but provided greater environmental and social benefits

**Implementation and funding:**
Funding is to be shared 50/50 between federal and Mill Creek Valley Conservancy District.

Plan_ID 32
Plan profile
Full Title of Document/Plan: Glendale Village Plan, 2000 (finalized in 2002)
Print/post date: 
Physical/Web location: http://www.glendaleohio.us/MasterPlan/GLENDALE_COMPREHENSIVE_PLAN_02-23.pdf
Name/address of provider: The Village of Glendale, OH
Collected by: Thomas DiBello
Collection Date: 4/15/10

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:

• Preserve open/residential character.
• Preserve historic character and status.
• Limit commercial/economic development.
• Preserve and enhance green space.
• Some traffic and storm water runoff pressures.

Plan creation and public involvement:
Resident survey to determine issues/priorities, creation of resident led committees covering different elements of the plan, public input and meetings to keep the public involved/informed, development of recommendations and strategies based on community input and professional analysis, presentation and approval of the plan to/by public and Village Council.

Plan vision statement:
(selection from each paragraph of vision)
Glendale, Ohio, is a unique community cherished by its residents for its charm... Twenty years from now we see a modestly larger village that is a quiet community of primarily single-family residences... Glendale’s growth, both in terms of population and housing stock, will be limited. The population will be diverse - diverse by race, by economics, and by age. The community will be a safe and highly desired place to live for both young and old... Glendale will be a community which deeply respects and protects its prestigious status as a National Historic Landmark... The Village Square will have thriving businesses, as will the commercial area along Congress from Sharon to Coral. We are not seeking to attract mass market enterprises that come complete with needs for large land area, big well lighted parking lots, and disposable buildings of no design merit... Village government will function with the same combination of professional staffers and public service that it has today thereby providing extremely cost-effective municipal management while delivering superior services... The Planning Commission will develop and maintain architectural guidelines for use in both new construction and alteration of existing structures... The spirit of volunteerism in the community will remain strong... Above all, Glendale will be a community that strives for balance - looking forward into the 21st Century while celebrating its proud heritage from the 19th Century.

Plan goals or objectives:

• Promote existing art, education, and social activities.
• Encourage arts, education, and social activities in new areas not served by existing activities or in areas not now open to all Glendale residents.
• Provide effective communication, in a timely manner, to all residents of the Village on matters of Village government or items of general interest to the public.
• Maintain commercial vitality in the existing business areas of the Village.
• Insure that local schools are assets which attract families to Glendale.
- Insure that Glendale is an environmentally balanced community.
- Insure that the Village of Glendale has a perpetual green “canopy”.
- Preserve the historic character of the Village - including, but not limited to, structures and open space.
- Keep Glendale a primarily residential village with significant green space.
- Maintain the infrastructure, services and safety of the Village.
- Strengthen the community’s recreation facilities and programs.
- Minimize the impact of vehicular and rail traffic and insure a safe, peaceful, and quiet Village.

Plan ID 34
Full Title of Document/Plan Go Ohio Transportation Futures Plan
Print/post date: January 2009
Physical/Web location: http://www.dot.state.oh.us/groups/goohio/Pages/default.aspx
Name/address of provider: Ohio Department of Transportation 1980 West Broad Street, Columbus Ohio, 43223
Collected by: Ryan Nagel
Collection Date: April 6, 2009

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) National Transportation Enhancement Clearinghouse, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Natureworks, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Clean Ohio Trails Fund and the Recreational Trails Program

Plan creation and public involvement:
Go OHIO grew from the Governor’s 21st Century Task Force, which concluded that Ohio could create jobs, drive business growth and contribute to long-term prosperity by creating a fully integrated, well-managed transportation system. the Steering Committee and Interagency Working Group, which will help shape the Go Ohio plan. Public meetings, e-communication and Web feedback will allow the public to weigh in on the project. ODOT will finalize GO OHIO in the fourth quarter of 2010, and deliver it to The Governor’s Economic Growth Cabinet and the State Legislature for review and approval.

Plan vision statement:
“to deliver a detailed blueprint for transforming Ohio’s vast road, rail, transit, maritime, air and bicycle/pedestrian transportation assets into one, fully integrated, technically-advanced system that will help ignite the economy and bring value to communities across the state.”

Plan goals or objectives:
Increase the State’s Competitiveness; Connect Transportation System Investment to Targeted Industries; Understand the Impact of Land Use & Transportation Policies; Advance a Green Economy

Strategies:
Focus on developing policies needed to develop efficient, high value transportation solutions that attract and grow business and in Ohio; Identify high priority, existing transportation needs in which future investment has the potential to dramatically grow business and lay the groundwork for long-term prosperity; Protect the safety and security of Ohio’s residents, support the long-term vitality of its communities, and incorporate green principles while improving its transportation assets. Ensure that Ohio considers all modes of transportation – including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit – when new transportation infrastructure is developed; Provide a step-by-step process that will identify the most strategic elements of the transportation system for future investment.; Establish performance criteria so Ohio gets the biggest bang for its buck and closely tracks results of transportation investments.

Key Projects:
See Ohio’s 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force Final Report and ODOT’s 2010-2011 Business Plan
Implementation and funding:
In 2008 Governor Ted Strickland appointed the 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force and challenged its members to “envision and champion the optimum transportation system for Ohio’s future and recommend the resources and financial tools needed to build and sustain it.” The Task Force will continue to monitor the Go OHIO effort to ensure the Task Force’s vision and recommendations are realized. Transportation Enhancement Program (TE) Funds, Federal funds, are available in accordance with the latest federal highway reauthorization act. Approximately $11 million dollars each year is offered to local governments located in are available to ODOT-sponsored projects to enhance state-owned and/or state-maintained facilities. An additional $8.9 million/year of ODOT’s TE funds are sub-allocated to the state’s 17 MPO’s for projects within their boundaries.

Plan_ID 39
Full Title of Document/Plan: Greenspace Concept Plan HAMILTON COUNTY 2030 PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK
Print/post date: November 2004
Physical/Web location: http://www.communitycompass.org/2030/start.htm
Name/address of provider: Community COMPASS, Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission
138 East Court Street, Room 807
Cincinnati, OH 45202
Collected by: Azharuddin Saiyed
Collection Date: April 06, 2010

Authorizing organization: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission

Time frame: 2030

Geographic area: 49 local governments Within Hamilton County

Primary issues: To protect the forested hillsides, rivers and streams, floodplains, and open plains, which provide the County’s environmental diversity and continue to be vital components in the social and economic development of the region today.

Plan creation and public involvement
The Greenspace Concept has evolved from the identification of environmentally critical and sensitive areas, existing public and private open space, and other natural features such as rivers, streams, and lakes.

The Greenspace Concept map utilizes the work and recommendations of various organizations including the HCRPC State of the County Report on environment as well as the nine county Regional Greenprint prepared by Green Umbrella.

Hamilton County’s Greenspace Concept is designed to be consistent with, and supportive of, the Regional Greenprint prepared in April 2004 by Green Umbrella in collaboration with Hamilton County Park District.

Plan vision statement
The intent of the Greenspace Concept Plan is to promote a broad comprehensive vision for greenspace protection, conservation and restoration within Hamilton County for current residents and future generations.

Plan goals or objectives
To assure future concentrations of tree canopy, which improves air filtration, erosion control, water quality and overall quality of life in the area.

The Concept Plan will also promote conservation of corridors that provide connected habitats for land and aquatic plants and animals, which ensure survival of species more successfully than smaller disjointed areas.
To create opportunities for open space protection and trail connections in the county.

**Strategies**
- Convene public forums and key partner meetings
- Identify priorities and specific action plans for Community COMPASS strategies
- Update the State of the County Report on land use and development framework and related key indicators of progress every five years.

**Key Partners**
- Local Planning Commissions and Greenspace Committees
- Green Umbrella (and partner organizations)
- OKI Greenspace Office
- Hamilton County Parks District
- Ohio River Way
- Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Watershed Councils
- Conservancy Districts
- Land Conservancies
- Friends of Great Miami River
- Imago, Inc
- Little Miami, Inc.
- Little Miami River Partnership
- Local Alliance for Nature and Development
- Mill Creek Restoration Project
- Oxbow Inc.
- Smart Growth Coalition
- Western Wildlife Corridor, Inc.
- Planning Partnership

**Implementation and funding**
- The Ohio Conservation Fund in 2000
- Hamilton County resident’s support for the 2002 15-year, 1-mill replacement park levy. Objectives include promoting naturally functioning ecosystems, floodwater management, reduction of air and water pollution, wildlife habitat protection and creation, and the preservation of open space.
Through a collective shared vision for the future based on the wishes and dreams of thousands of citizens, Hamilton County now has direction to chart its course into the 21st century.

In developing a broad vision with broad support, Community COMPASS will help ensure that trends are anticipated, challenges are addressed, priorities are focused, and our collective future is planned and achieved strategically over the next 20 to 30 years. Through an in-depth analysis of all aspects of the County, the multi-year process will result in a comprehensive plan.

1,300 people came together at the first Countywide Town Meeting to set the course for Hamilton County’s future. The four Core Goals that emerged were assuring economic prosperity, embracing diversity and equity, balancing development and the environment, and building collaborative decision-making.

**Plan vision statement:**
This report examines land use and growth issues in Hamilton County and studies various factors causing growth and development patterns in the region. It identifies five important findings related to growth and land development at the regional, county, and local levels. It studies impacts of these trends on the economy, housing, transportation, utilities, environment, and fiscal resources, and identifies indicators for measuring the trends.

The 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework in and of itself does nothing. As mentioned previously, the County does not have the authority to mandate compliance with this or any other comprehensive plan. With the variety of local government jurisdictions in Hamilton County, and the close identity most residents have with their particular community, it would be inappropriate to engage in centralized, top-down planning for the future of the County. That is not what Community COMPASS is about. Community COMPASS and the 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework grew from a voluntary partnership of Hamilton County communities, from collaboration on the most pressing challenges facing our region, and from consensus-building on how to best address these challenges. This broad acceptance of Community COMPASS, and the open and inclusive process to create the 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework will hopefully result in wide adoption of this plan as a decision-making framework for organizations across the public, private, and civic sectors in Hamilton County.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
The inclusive process of the 2030 framework will result in the adoption of recommendation for future decision making for all organizations within Hamilton County
Create a comprehensive vision for Hamilton County

**Strategies:**
It only provides findings of Planning partnership project staff and reviews who include, Liz Bloom, Carla Chifos, Menelaos Triantafillou, Ron Miller, K.D. Rex

**Key Projects:**
STATE OF THE COUNTY REPORT: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
Economy and Labor study, housing study, environmental and social justice study
Includes comprehensive studies of land use, environmental, and social trends to consider while making decisions for growth and development

**Implementation and funding:**
NA

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**Plan ID 42**
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Land Use Concept Plan HAMILTON COUNTY 2030 PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK
**Print/post date:** November 2004
**Physical/Web location:** http://www.communitycompass.org/2030/start.htm
**Name/address of provider:** Community COMPASS, Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission
138 East Court Street, Room 807
Authorizing organization: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission,

Time frame: 2030,

Geographic area : 49 local governments Within Hamilton County

Primary issues : It is highly related to transportation and future land use requirements to enhance environment, particularly brownfields, air, and water quality.

Local practices, such as Not in My Backyard (NIMBY) and Locally Unwanted Land Uses (LULUs) have emerged as significant land use issues in environmental and social justice movements across the country.

Plan creation and public involvement
The Concept Plan reflects future land use recommendations identified in the Western Hamilton County Collaborative Plan, the Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan, local community plans, and local zoning plans.

January 12, 2002, more than 1,300 people came together at the first Countywide Town Meeting to validate the Vision and set the course for Hamilton County’s future.

Plan vision statement:
The Land Use Concept Plan illustrates planned land uses and future development patterns desired by local governments in Hamilton County. It presents a consolidated view of the collective vision of our 49 local governments as well as the vision portrayed in other plans for corridors and sub regions within the County.

Plan goals or objectives:
To address the goals related to physical, economic, and social issues among the 49 communities within Hamilton County through a collective shared vision for the next 20-30 years.

Strategies:
· Convene public forums and key partner meetings
· Identify priorities and specific action plans for Community COMPASS strategies
· Update the State of the County Report on land use and development framework and related key indicators of progress every five years.

Key Partners:
· The AMOS Project
· American Farmland Trust (Cost of Community Services study)
· Citizens for Civic Renewal, Transportation Task Force
· City of Cincinnati (Strategic Program for Urban Redevelopment)
· Housing Opportunities Made Equal
· Housing and Urban Development
· OKI Regional Council of Governments
· Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
· Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority (Brownfields Redevelopment Program)
· Mill Creek Watershed Council

Implementation and funding:
Adopted land use regulations through zoning, earthworks, subdivision regulations, and Public Works Department to protect natural resources and promote the development of an integrated greenway system.
Development of land use policies that promote development patterns that are sensitive to the topography, preserve open space, hillsides, and greenways.

**Potential Federal funds or grants:**
- Housing and Urban Development
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Highway Administration

**Potential Local funds or grants:**
- Murray and Agnes Seasongood Foundation
- Greater Cincinnati Foundation

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**Plan_ID 43**

**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan  
**Print/post date:** September 18, 2006. Revision adopted January 22, 2008  
**Physical/Web location:**  
**Name/address of provider:** Liberty Township, Butler County, Ohio  
**Collected by:** Emily Lewis and Teresa Fadden  
**Collection Date:** April 4, 2010

**Authorizing Organization:** Liberty Township Board of Trustees

**Time Frame:**
N/A

**Geographic Area:**  
Liberty Township, Butler County, Ohio. Located 20 miles north of Cincinnati and 25 miles south of Dayton, straddling I-75 and the Butler County Veteran’s Highway (Rt 129).

**Primary Issues:**  
Liberty Township describes itself as a semi-rural bedroom community and allocates only 2% of its land to commercial use. In a SWOT analysis conducted prior to the development of the plan, the primary (repeated) issues were: (1) Strengths: Good school system, Availability of land, Proximity to Cincinnati and Dayton, Good township administration, Rural character and beauty; (2) Weaknesses: Roads inadequate for traffic, Lack commercial development, No post office, Lack of defined identity, Township form of government (would be better to have home/city rule); (3) Opportunities: Economic development, Can control the pace of development, Have land available for commercial or tech opportunities, Have the opportunity to plan commercial areas carefully and maintain a low-density environment; and (4) Threats: All residential taxes too high, Pace of growth not sustainable, Overdevelopment, Unplanned development, Annexation by West Chester (if/when it incorporates as city)

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
Liberty Township Board of Trustees authorized a plan in 2005 to update the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. A steering committee of residents, developers, business owners, homebuilders, county agency representatives, and Township employees was formed. They met 16 times throughout the planning process and held four public open houses to gather public input on the Concept Areas Analyses, planning issues, and review of the plan. Additional public meetings were held for the Township Zoning Commission and the Liberty Township Board of Trustees prior to the plan being adopted. A SWOT analysis was conducted at one of the public meetings and a public input survey was mailed to nearly 9,000 households. It received a response rate of 15.6%.

**Plan vision statement:**
N/A

**Plan goals or objectives:**
Economic Development - Develop, plan, and encourage sufficient commercial, industrial, research park, retail, service, and office development; Be proactive in providing infrastructure to support, attract, and expand business; Form an economic development committee; Educate residents on the need for commercial development; Expand land earmarked for commercial development;

Community Identity and Vision - Develop and market a long- and short-term vision, image, and identity; Get a post office; Need an identifiable downtown/center for community; Clarify/define community branding; Evaluate the long-term implication of Liberty Township being only a dormitory community; Develop the Township’s identity: is it going to be only a bedroom community or can it be a good mixed-use community?

Residential Development - Provide areas for mixed use development with retail/residential/transition uses; Provide areas for retirement and empty nester homes; Provide a range of housing types, including affordable housing, to allow a wide range of residents to live in the community; Control and adhere to the Land Use Plan;

Transportation/Infrastructure - Transportation improvements need to occur prior to or during development; Integrate sidewalks, pedestrian ways, and bike paths to create pedestrian linkages; Prepare an overall pedestrian plan, Support and maintain good North-South and East-West thoroughfares to move traffic throughout the Township; Provide a new interchange along I-75 between Kyles Station Road and Millikin Road;

Parks - Find an alternative means to finance parks; Make sure Liberty Township has adequate park space for the number of residents and locate parks adjacent to residents; Require developers to provide land for parks and park facilities; Focus on quality not quantity of parks; Develop a central park facility;

Environmental and Historical Resources - Keep the rural character of the community with expanded open-space areas; Developers should give usable green space, not leftovers; Natural drainage courses should be maintained and not altered without engineering and environmental review/approval;

Public Facilities/Services/Government - Evaluate alternate forms of government and consider having 5 Trustees instead of 3; Small businesses need architectural design that fits with the area; Develop a master plan for anticipated government facilities; Assess emergency public services—may need more police;

Schools - Ensure a way to maintain good quality schools in the future;

Development - Evaluate impact fees on development; Consider whether developer “benefits to the community” can include linking school population and quality to new developed property, including funding and sponsoring; Need to maintain low staff to student ratio for the future; Development should be balanced and stick to the comprehensive plan;

Farmland - Help preserve farmland to the extent the property owner wants it preserved; Provide incentives for keeping property, and identify agriculture on the land use plan.

Plan_ID 44
Full Title of Document/Plan: Metropolitan Master Plan (1948)
Print/post date: 1948
Physical/Web location: http://plancincinnati.org/pages/library.htm
Name/address of provider: PLAN Cincinnati website
Collected by: Rebecca Gafvert
Collection Date: 8 April 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The plan was adopted by the City Planning Commission of the City of Cincinnati and is intended as a revision of the 1925 plan. It covers the metropolitan area, which it defines as “the urbanized portions of the three counties – Hamilton in Ohio, and Kenton and Campbell in Kentucky.”

Plan creation and public involvement:
The plan was created by the City Planning Commission, which formed the Metropolitan Planning Commission for the effort, including three from Ohio and two from Kentucky. The Planning Commission claims that it solicited input from “civic-minded citizens,” mostly through organized groups, and mentions the Citizens Planning Association as the most notable group.

Plan vision statement:
The broad objective of the plan is to realize the most healthful living conditions and the highest degree of economic wellbeing possible for the residents in the area. It identifies two basic planning problems in the metropolitan area: providing for orderly peripheral expansion and revitalizing inner communities.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
The plan focuses on the development of communities on the neighborhood level; plans for residential development; the separation of industrial and residential land; coordinating the dominating roadways with other forms of transportation, including public transit, railroads, and air transportation; the coordination of all public services; recreation; the revitalization of the riverfront in the wake of the 1937 flood; public buildings; the integration of parking in the CBD with the new expressways; and the redevelopment of the wholesale produce market in the downtown area.

**Strategies:**
The Commission attempts to achieve its specific goals in each area through land use control, guided by the existing neighborhood pattern.

In addition, the Commission urges local governments and all city departments and boards to adopt policies and allocate funds for programs outlined in the Master Plan. It recommends that once the plan is adopted, the Commission should produce more detailed studies for each program outlined in the master plan.

**Key Projects:**
The plan focuses many projects on the development of peripheral areas as well as the revitalization of the inner city. The plan recommends the formation of an emergency housing committee due to neighborhoods in which housing needs immediate renovation. It also recommends that some areas be zoned exclusively for industrial use. It recommends routes connecting Cincinnati to the national interregional highway system.

The plan includes a 10-year airport plan, a plan to redevelop the riverfront due to deteriorating conditions and flooding. It also includes a more detailed plan to redevelop the existing produce market downtown.

Some projects specifically focus on the Mill Creek Valley. The plan proposes transforming specific Mill Creek neighborhoods (“Oyler, Cumminsville, Elmwood Place, and Carthage”) from residential to industrial, due to “widespread obsolescence, flooding, or present infiltration by industry.”

In addition, the plan discusses the new interregional highways and the Millcreek Expressway, the Third Street Distributor, and the Norwood Lateral, all of which will deal with traffic within and traveling through the Mill Creek Valley. The plan states that motorways should not cut through residential areas but should serve as buffers between incompatible uses. In respect to motorways, the plan states that “…the Mill Creek and Northeast Expressways are almost ideally located from the standpoint of relationship to residential communities. Except in a few locations it has been found feasible to route these highways between communities within the corridors of non-living areas.”

In terms of residential development, a map included in the plan shows that the majority of “deteriorated” areas that will need redevelopment ASAP (based on rent/value of property, years built, and condition of buildings) are in the Mill Creek Valley and CBD. It also predicts that future growth will continue in the Upper Mill Creek Valley with the construction of the expressway and growing industrialization.

**Implementation and funding:**
As the Commission states, the Master Plan is not an end in itself. It will be of value only to the extent that it is used for directing public and private improvements and developments to bring into reality the desirable future community which it envisions. It will only have value if it is constantly applied to all proposed projects and developments. The plan is a long range program and is not intended as a static device. It must be kept attuned to changing conditions so that in general it will at all times contain the features most conducive to the improvement of the area and its sound future growth and development. This Master Plan is not merely a compilation of desirable projects but an organic whole of closely related elements. The achievement of these elements must be systematic, not haphazard, or serious unbalances will be created. This implies that the various local governmental units, boards and departments use the Master Plan as a guide to their own long-term programs and annual budgets. Moreover, the public must be educated to what the Plan is and can do. Also, procedures for capital budgeting and public works programming must have “built in” provisions for application of Master Plan programs. The governmental unit must know how much money
is available from normal sources for capital improvements. If this money is inadequate to secure the improvements at a satisfactory rate, new sources must be found. An appropriate financial agency should maintain continuous data on all fiscal matters and the best possible forecasts on valuations, receipts, operating expenditures, tax rates and similar data.

Plan_ID 45
Full Title of Document/Plan: Mill Creek Watershed Greenway Master Plan
Print/post date: March 1999
Physical/Web location: N/A
Name/address of provider: Greenways Incorporated/Biohabitats, Inc./Rhinoworks
Collected by: Sean Holden
Collection Date: April 2, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
Mill Creek Watershed Council/Mill Creek Restoration Project/Hamilton County Department of Environmental Sciences/Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati/Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Plan creation and public involvement:

Plan vision statement:
The vision of the Mill Creek Watershed is a healthy ecological system of hills, valleys, and stream corridors that serve to enrich the lives of residents in both Hamilton and Butler Counties. The Mill Creek Watershed Greenway System will improve floodplain management and water quality within the primary and tributary channels of Mill Creek and will contribute to the economic well-being of the Greater Cincinnati metropolitan region.

Plan goals or objectives:
Environmental Goal-
• Restore riparian corridor habitat throughout the watershed to improve flora and fauna species diversity and number;
• Clean up toxic areas and hazardous waste to prevent adverse health effects on people and wildlife;
• Encourage biodiversity through removal of invasive exotic species and reintroduction of native species and natural communities;
• Maximize wildlife habitat in a manner that is consistent with community infrastructure and development needs;
• Promote pollution prevention strategies to be adopted by businesses, institutions and individuals within the watershed;
• Encourage environmental responsibility and stewardship of natural resources among all sectors of the watershed;
• Promote air quality improvements in the region by providing facilities for alternative forms of transportation;
• Develop environmentally friendly greenways through the use of recycled materials, native vegetation and soil bioengineering techniques.

Water Quality Goals-
• Ensure/encourage compliance with, and enforcement of existing local, state and federal water quality regulations;
• Provide vegetated buffers and wetlands to treat and prevent non-point source pollution;
• Utilize best management practices to slow runoff and pollutant loading on streams;
• Expand local volunteer water quality monitoring and educational programs;
• Educate local residents as to the importance of streamside vegetated buffers and other best management practices;
• Improve water quality in surface and groundwater supplies within the watershed to enhance human recreational use and fish and wildlife habitat;
• Work with agencies to reduce contamination from combined sewer overflows
(CSOs) as quickly as possible.

Economic Goals-
• Implement a watershed-wide greenway strategy that encourages sustainable economic development and does not serve as a barrier to growth;
• Contribute to the economic well-being of the community by providing employment opportunities for watershed residents;
• Increase residential, commercial and industrial property values, and the local tax base, through the development of the greenway system; and define, quantify and promote these economic benefits;
• Work to coordinate greenway development with efforts to redevelop abandoned industrial sites (brownfields);
• Promote tourism by connecting historic/cultural sites along the greenway;
• Help to reestablish the Mill Creek Valley as a center for economic and community activity.

Recreation Goals-
• Return Mill Creek to an attractive destination for local residents and visitors.
• Develop passive recreation facilities along greenway lands close to where residents live, work and play.
• Construct a comprehensive system of trails on publicly owned or leased properties.
• Promote improved water quality to provide for the recreational use of waterways within the watershed, including fishing, canoeing and swimming;
• Link historic and significant natural sites throughout the watershed with the greenway system;
• Improve water and air quality within the watershed to benefit public health;
• Regularly inform and educate watershed businesses, municipalities and residents as to the level of contamination and efforts to reduce pollution in Mill Creek and its tributaries;
• Work with agencies to improve water quality so Mill Creek is designated as safe for human contact.
• Promote safety and security as key elements of the new recreational greenway system.

Public Participation Goals-
• Include all watershed communities (upper and lower reaches) and all sectors in the planning and creation of the greenway system;
• Implement a community-based planning strategy that enables local residents and the business community to be involved with the decision making process;
• Involve the youth of the community in the planning process;
• Promote the long-term involvement of local residents, property owners and businesses in the implementation of the Greenway Master Plan.
• Involve low income and minority populations in Master Plan implementation to help promote environmental justice.

Maintenance/Stewardship Goals-
• Develop greenways in a way that will minimize maintenance requirements;
• Provide assistance to individual communities (through the MCWC);
• Develop a plan to ensure short and long-term maintenance of the system, recruiting individuals and groups throughout the watershed to adopt portions of the greenway system;
• Implement strategies for public/private partnerships to ensure the long-term maintenance and management of the stream corridor greenway system.
• Develop and maintain long-term relationships with residents, property owners and businesses within the watershed;
• Implement strategies to minimize future encroachments in the greenway system.
• Work to secure dependable long-term funding and endowments to provide for responsible maintenance and management of the future greenway system.

Quality of Life Goals-
• Improve the quality of life for all who live, work or play in the watershed by reforesting portions of the watershed;
• Improve the physical character of the stream corridors, making them assets for local neighborhoods and businesses;
• Provide physical improvements that link neighborhoods and businesses to stream corridors;
• Integrate the greenways system concept with other unique assets of the region, including existing park and recreation facilities, cultural and historic sites, and ongoing civic and educational activities;
• Return Mill Creek to a more beneficial and positive aspect of the community.
• Promote the development of vegetated buffers for community beautification and community gardening projects;
• Promote volunteerism and community involvement throughout Master Plan implementation.

Transportation Goals-
• Provide a trails system connecting community resources within the watershed system;
• Encourage local employers to make the greenway accessible to adjacent businesses.
• Develop an efficient alternative transportation system within the watershed by including bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the greenway system;
• Take advantage of opportunities to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian transportation enhancements;
• Promote safety and security as elements of an alternative transportation system within the watershed;
• Develop an efficient intermodal transportation system through linking bicycle and pedestrian facilities with other modes of transportation (bus, light rail, airplane, ferry) in the region;
• Convert human-made corridors, including abandoned railroads, utility rights-of-way and canals, into multi-use trails;
• Promote the development of a continuous trail system through linking existing trails and building new ones;
• Promote the connection of Mill Creek greenways to the Buckeye Trail, American Discovery Trail, Ohio River Heritage Trail, Ohio to Erie Trail (Cincinnati to Cleveland) and the Toledo-Cincinnati Trail.

Safety/Public Goals-
• Protect the public health, welfare and safety of greenway users;
• Respect the privacy of adjacent landowners;
• Reduce the liability of landowners who voluntarily participate in the greenways program;
• Promote safety and security through comprehensive education;
• Improve water and air quality within the watershed to benefit public health;
• Regularly educate watershed businesses, municipalities and residents as to the level of contamination in Mill Creek and its tributaries;
• Work with agencies to improve water quality so Mill Creek is designated as safe for human contact.

Environmental Education Goals-
• Create and enhance opportunities for environmental education to occur throughout the watershed;
• Encourage education-based projects, experiments, monitoring programs and other activities;
• Work with local school systems to provide and utilize outdoor classroom settings for biology, zoology and geology classes;
• Develop curricula that teach students about the Mill Creek watershed and encourage
them to become involved in its improvement;
• Educate local residents, governments and industries as to the importance of streamside vegetated buffers;
• Increase public awareness of the watershed and educate communities on what they can do to improve current conditions;
• Provide the public and the media with updates on the implementation of the Master Plan;
• Provide opportunities for interpretation of historic, natural and cultural resources along the greenway system.

Provide areas where environmental education can occur throughout the Watershed.

Stormwater/Flood Damage Reduction Goals-
• Develop, in coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and multiple jurisdictions, a long-term solution to large water flows through Mill Creek;
• Increase soil perviousness (allowing rainfall to percolate through the soil) and reforestation throughout the watershed;
• Reduce the volume and velocity of stormwater impacting Mill Creek watershed streams, and thus reduce flood damage, through greenway implementation;
• Promote watershed-wide, environmentally friendly flood damage reduction alternatives in the Corps of Engineers’ Reevaluation study;
• Promote the greenways system as part of the solution to a comprehensive stormwater/flood damage reduction strategy;
• Implement a stormwater/flood damage reduction strategy that will serve as a national model for urban watershed planning.

Land Use Planning/Floodplain Management Goals-
• Provide for reuse of floodplain lands through clean up and ecological improvement of waterways and adjacent lands, greenway development, and a reduction in point and nonpoint source pollution;
• Encourage the voluntary removal of repetitive flood loss properties and reuse of these lands as open, park and recreational landscapes;
• Promote land use, zoning and floodplain management practices that support creation and long-term maintenance of the greenway system and help to protect sensitive natural resources;
• Support development that incorporates on-site stormwater management;
• Update FEMA floodplain maps for Mill Creek and its tributaries;
• Encourage land use and zoning regulations that protect natural resources and promote the development of an integrated greenway system.
• Promote the connection of the Mill Creek greenway system to the Buckeye Trail, American Discovery Trail, Ohio River Heritage Trail, Ohio to Erie Trail (Cincinnati to Cleveland) and the Toledo-Cincinnati Trail.

Strategies:

Key Projects:
Caldwell and Seymour Parks Greenway: physically connecting the two parks through a greenway system, providing opportunity for future migration corridors for wildlife.

Silver Oak Estates Park, Winton Hills: Passive park to be developed on the site of a “new” neighborhood development, headed by Preserving Affordable Housing (PAH), located at the highest point of the hillside, between Winton Road and Center Hill Road.

Salway Park/Mitchell Avenue Greenway Trail & Queen City Centre Park: Proposed park location in the riparian corridor of Mill Creek, from Salway Park to Mitchell Avenue.
Salway Park to Queen City Avenue/Western Hills Viaduct: Greenway Walking Trail: A multi-purpose hike and bike trail located on the riparian corridor greenway from Lower Price Hill to Caldwell Park

North Fairmount Community Center (NFCC) Research and Training Greenway: Seven acre piece of land which will become part of the greenway trail between Salway Park and Queen City Avenue and it would provide parking and access to the greenway trail system. Further, it will be used as a center for scientific research and as a training center for ecological restoration and greenway creation for other parts of the Mill Creek watershed.

Mill Creek/Ohio River Confluence Park and Greenway Trail to Downtown: Located west of downtown and just east of Lower Price Hill. This will be at the mouth of Mill Creek located in the open space area near the Barrier Dam.

Implementation and funding:
Implementing the proposed Greenway System will require the establishment of unique partnerships between the public and private sectors in Hamilton and Butler Counties. These partnerships must be capable of resolving complex problems within the watershed. As a matter of policy, participation in the greenway program shall be voluntary. No individual, business or organization is required to participate in the recommended actions of this Plan. However, the key to success of this plan will be a broad participation by many people throughout the metropolitan community.

Secured and potential funding sources for Cincinnati Projects:
City Capital Budget
ODNR Nature Works
TEA-21
HUD CDBG
Community Investment Partners
City of Cincinnati

Plan ID 46
Full Title of Document/Plan: North South Transportation Initiative
Print/post date: February 2004
Physical/Web location: http://www.oki.org/transportation/northsouth.html
Name/address of provider: N/A
Collected by: Marc Von Allmen
Collection Date: 4/7/2010
Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues
Authorized by OKI and MVRPC

Plan creation and public involvement:
A three-level screening process was implemented. Initially, a few pertinent and important details were identified about a broad array of initial alternatives. As the analyses progress, the range and depth of information was widen as the number of alternatives decreased.

The preliminary screening involved determining the impacts of various alternatives via a limited number of criteria and the completion of a matrix-based evaluation sheet for each alternative. The first phase of analysis, Level I or “Fatal Flaw” screening, was made on a qualitative, rather than quantitative basis.

As the screening process progressed, the development of more detailed information took place. The criteria for the later stages, Levels II and III respectively, gradually became more definitive and require more quantitative rather than qualitative results. During the initial level of screening some information remained unknown. In this instance, data related to the evaluation and performance of similar alternatives/systems in other cities was used to provide order-of-magnitude information, expressed as ranges. For example, the performance of an alternative for the Initiative was compared to a similar system in place in a peer city. Based on that experience and the application of local knowledge, we would expect a performance measure, to within a certain range. Likewise, the “Yes” or “No”
information developed in Level I was replaced with more refined information, much of it quantitative, and expressed as ranges. Where quantitative data was incomplete or unavailable more qualitative data was substituted. Finally, Level III screening involved the most detailed analysis of the final set of alternatives. This analysis was based on financial and ridership data, social, economic and built environmental factors and analysis. Since this is the most in-depth screening, it was limited to only those alternatives that offer the best potential to successfully address the Initiative’s Goals and Objectives. This level had the most complete and detailed quantitative data of all the analysis phases.

Public involvement included creation of task forces and oversight committees from each MPO, stakeholder interviews, surveys, open house meetings, newsletters brochures, a website, and a roving project display.

Plan vision statement:
The major focus of the Initiative is to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the system. In effect the Initiative’s primary goal was to keep the OKI and MVRPC regions moving.

Plan goals or objectives:
1. Promote a balance between sustaining the operational condition of the existing system and maximizing its safety, efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
2. Cooperatively address transportation system design, safety, congestion and mobility problems that affect both local residents and through travelers, including trucks.
3. Support opportunities for economic development through transportation system improvement projects that incorporate sustainable design and funding options and that promote a balanced approach to keeping people and the economy moving.
4. Maintain and improve community-wide / regional quality of life with respect to the natural and built environments by fostering supportable investments that are sensitive to community preservation and equity.
5. Reach consensus on a Preferred Program of Projects that support a shared future vision for both the Cincinnati and Dayton regions respectively over the intermediate and longer term(s).

Strategies:
1. Identify regional alternatives that are compatible with and maximize the investment in the current transportation system.
   - Identify alternatives that are fiscally feasible.
   - Demonstrate that the overall benefits of improvements are reasonable given life cycle costs (capital, operations and maintenance (O&M)).
2. Improve system safety.
   - Reduce delay and travel times.
   - Increase modal choices.
   - Improve connectivity between modes.
   - Improve levels of service (i.e. highway, transit, other modes).
3. Improve accessibility and mobility to freight and distribution centers.
   - Enhance access to employment centers.
   - Provide greater mobility options including reverse commute, cross-town and other opportunities / services.
   - Enhance access to major activity centers. (i.e. airports, job centers, shopping areas, universities/colleges, hospitals, etc.)
   - Promote land use policies and transportation investments that are compatible and concentrate development along existing transportation corridors.
   - Promote opportunities for joint development and private participation in transportation investments to leverage existing resources and accommodate the development of more projects.
4. Preserve/improve air quality.
   - Minimize adverse environmental impacts including neighborhood and community disruption.
   - Protect sensitive areas. (i.e. neighborhoods, habitat areas, etc.)
   - Support transportation investments that promote community cohesion including nonmotorized travel (pedestrian, bicycle, etc.)
   - Promote investments that seek to equalize the distribution of impacts and benefits to the community
   - Explore impacts of proposed alternatives / projects on different socio-economic groups.
5. Promote projects that benefit both regions and minimize competing interests.
   - Produce a Preferred Program of Projects that is supported by the public, elected officials, and implementing agencies

**Key Projects:**
- Kyle Lane Interchange Improvements
- Buttermilk Pike Interchange Improvements
- Norwood Lateral Interchange
- Town Street Interchange
- Paddock Road Interchange
- SR 122 Interchange
- Tylersville Road Interchange

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**Plan ID 47**

**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Official Plan of the City of Cincinnati (1925)

**Print/post date:** 1925

**Physical/Web location:** [http://plancincinnati.org/pages/library.htm](http://plancincinnati.org/pages/library.htm)

**Name/address of provider:** PLAN Cincinnati website

**Collected by:** Rebecca Gafvert

**Collection Date:** 8 April 2010

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**
The plan was adopted by the City Planning Commission of the City of Cincinnati and addresses goals that range from immediate action to a span of 50 years. The plan is limited in its focus to the city boundaries, however the conclusion mentions that the City Charter gives the plan authority at the metropolitan level. This is described as including “the whole region directly tributary to Cincinnati” and the plan is referred to as a metropolitan, regional, and county plan.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**
The plan was created by the City Planning Commission, with help from various advising agencies, including consulting engineers from the Technical Advisory Corporation of New York City. There is no mention of public involvement.

**Plan vision statement:**
There is no overarching vision statement.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
The plan focuses on community development; subdivisions and housing; thoroughfares and downtown traffic; transit, including rapid transit and railways; waterways and flood control; parks, playfields, and parkways; schools and school play yards; public and semi-public buildings and tracts; street structures and appearance; garbage refuse and disposal; financing improvements; and administration. The plan also includes a chapter addressing the need for and nature of the city plan.

A major focus of the plan is the building zone ordinance, which was passed on April 1, 1924. In addition, the plan contains a concluding chapter that outlines a plan to meet urgent deficiencies in the city, both through regulations and policy as well as specific projects.

**Strategies:**
Each chapter divides the proposed policies or projects according to their urgency, creating a rough timeline for the execution of each in relation to the greater plan.

**Key Projects:**
- Kyle Lane Interchange Improvements
- Buttermilk Pike Interchange Improvements
- Norwood Lateral Interchange
- Town Street Interchange
- Paddock Road Interchange
- SR 122 Interchange
- Tylersville Road Interchange
The projects outlined in the section devoted to immediate deficiencies include regulations on subdivision, the adoption of the building zone ordinance, traffic regulations and rerouting of transit, the new role of the Planning Commission as an Art Jury for public structures, and various physical improvements to parks and roads.

In terms of the Mill Creek Valley, the plan mentions that the population of the city is moving north from the Basin, and the northwest is predicted to grow faster than the northeast. It also recognizes a housing problem in that the black population is growing and concentrated largely in the west end of the Basin, and to a lesser extent in other neighborhoods including the Mill Creek Valley. The plan classifies housing for the black population in the west end as slum conditions. It also recommends many of the neighborhoods in the valley for lowest cost one- and two-family houses.

The plan identifies areas of the city flooded by the Mill Creek and proposes several flood control alternatives. It suggests a possible Mill Creek railroad terminal as either an alternative to the expensive real estate of Union Terminal or as a separate station for the Pennsylvania Railroad. In terms of transit, it suggests that through rail freight be diverted away from Mill Creek Valley as much as possible to avoid congestion.

The plan cites the Mill Creek Valley as an important area for the transportation of refuse as well as for the location of a plant because of its distance from the center of the city and the favorable wind situation

Implementation and Funding:
The plan specifies that its implementation should not increase municipal expenditures, but that as each proposal becomes more urgent according to the timetable of the plan, funds will be levied as long as there is public support.

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Plan ID 48
Full Title of Document/Plan
Project Groundwork (formerly the Wet Weather Improvement Plan)
Print/post date: Project Groundwork Level 1 Report was issued March 26, 2010
Physical/Web location: http://projectgroundwork.org/index.htm
Name/address of provider: MSD MaryLynn Lodor, MaryLynn.Lodor@cincinnati-oh.gov (official contact from Frank) 513.244.5535 513.562.7220—mobile
Collected by: Russell Best
Collection Date: April 21
Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues MSD, 2010, City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County; sewer overflows and storm water management, public health, community revitalization

Plan creation and public involvement:
The plan developed in 2006 to address the Global Decree’s requirements and to implement capacity-based sanitary sewer and CSO issues of the Interim and Global decrees was known as MSD’s Wet Weather Improvement Plan. In 2008, MSD branded this improvement effort as “Project Groundwork.”

Plan vision statement:
To improve the quality of our lives — through cleaner streams, improved protection of public health, and enhancements to the communities where we work, live, and play — Hamilton County, Ohio is embarking on one of the largest public works projects in its 200-plus year history.

Plan goals or objectives:
- Reduce or eliminate sewage overflows into local rivers and streams and sewage backups into basements.
- Benefit Hamilton County communities through environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable solutions to these current problems; and
- Revitalize the economy through creation of jobs and growth opportunities for local businesses.
**Strategies:**
The projects will provide [community benefits](#) through sustainable solutions designed to:
- Reduce combined sewer overflows (CSOs) into local rivers and streams;
- Eliminate sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) in a typical year;
- Eliminate sewage backups into basements caused by MSD's sewer system;
- Reduce sewage debris and sewage odors in local waterways and make streams more pleasant after heavy rains.

Types of sustainable infrastructure projects include:
- New sewers – to replace existing sewers that are deteriorating or too small.
- Sewer separation – to divide a combined sewer into separate sanitary sewer and storm water lines.
- Upgrading pump stations – to handle greater amounts of wastewater during heavy rains and prevent overflows at the pump station.
- Upgrading treatment plants or building new ones – to treat greater amounts of wastewater during heavy rains.
- Eliminating pump stations and replacing them with gravity sewers – to eliminate overflows and odors at pump stations and reduce energy demands.
- Flow regulators – to control how much sewage and storm water moves through a sewer pipe.
- Enhanced high-rate treatment facilities – to treat combined sewer flows directly at the CSO outfall prior to discharge to a local waterway.
- Underground or aboveground storage facilities (e.g., tunnels) – to store excess wastewater during heavy rains.
- Stream separations or stream "daylighting" that remove storm water from a combined sewer and restore a natural stream channel.
- Green infrastructure such as pervious paving, bioretention basins, green roofs, and bioswales that keep storm water out of sewers.

Since 2004, MSD has already invested about $300 million in 71 wet weather projects, mainly focused on eliminating SSOs such as SSO 700, located along the Mill Creek in Reading.

**Project Groundwork** will be conducted in two phases: Phase 1 (2009-2018) and Phase 2 (after 2018).

**Phase 1 (2009-2018)**
Phase 1 projects, estimated to cost about $1.145 billion (in 2006 dollars), must be completed by or before 2018. Phase 1 projects and their schedules are stipulated in a "wet weather plan," which was conditionally approved by the U.S. and Ohio EPAs in June 2009.

**Phase 1 is comprised of:**
- 45 construction projects, including a deep tunnel to store storm water and wastewater in the Lower Mill Creek area. These sewer infrastructure improvements will take place in Green, Springfield, and Symmes townships, the City of Cheviot, and 19 neighborhoods within the City of Cincinnati.
- A 3-year action plan (2009-2011) for the Lower Mill Creek area, located to the west and northwest of downtown Cincinnati, to resolve two billion gallons of combined sewer overflows each year. The remedy listed is a deep tunnel, but MSD is researching more sustainable alternatives. See the Sustainable Solutions sidebar under Community Benefits.
- A 3-year study (2009-2011) to determine the best "green practices" to control storm water flows in combined sewer areas. See the Sustainable Solutions sidebar under Community Benefits.
- Planning work for specific projects to be completed in Phase 2.

Phase 1 projects will be complemented by Project Groundwork Asset Management and Assessment Sewer projects. For a list of the Phase 1 projects, please [click here](#).

For a complete list of Phase 1 and other sewer construction projects in your neighborhood, please visit the Projects page.

**Phase 2 (after 2018)**
Phase 2, estimated to cost about $2.1 billion (in 2006 dollars), is comprised of about 256 construction projects across Hamilton County.

The Phase 2 projects are stipulated in a "wet weather plan," which was conditionally approved by the U.S. and Ohio EPAs in June 2009.
The project schedule for Phase 2 has not yet been developed. It must be submitted to the U.S. and Ohio EPAs by 2017 for approval.

Planning and design of these projects may occur prior to the 2017 schedule submittal. Phase 2 projects will be complemented by Project Groundwork Asset Management and Assessment Sewer projects. A formal planning process is essential to achieving the goals and objectives of Project Groundwork. This process, known as MSD’s Sustainable Watershed Evaluation Process (SWEP), involves four broad steps:

- Date compilation and inventory analysis—watershed characterization
- Opportunities and constraints—wet weather strategy matrix
- Solutions and action plans—synthesis plan of integrated solutions
- Implementation—business case for project

Similar to comprehensive planning, the SWEP identifies and analyzes the important relationships among the environment, infrastructure, the economy, transportation, communities and neighborhoods, and other components. It does so on a watershed-wide basis and in the context of a wider region and objective.

**Key Projects:**

To learn more about construction projects in your community, please view the project list, which is divided by Hamilton County municipality or township. Within Cincinnati, the projects are further divided by neighborhood. Please note that all project information is subject to change. Check back every three months for new projects and updates.

To minimize inconveniences to property and business owners, Hamilton County is initiating a construction coordination program to ensure that sewer-related construction is planned in coordination with road, water line, gas line, etc. construction by other utilities.

The projects are listed as three different categories:

- **Project Groundwork - Phase 1**
  These include Phase 1 wet weather projects to be completed by 2018.

- **Project Groundwork - Asset Management**
  These projects help rebuild our aging sewer system. Asset management projects are generated internally at MSD and are prioritized each year based on criteria such as condition of the sewer or other equipment and operating efficiency.

- **Project Groundwork - Assessment Sewers**
  These projects bring sewer service to unsewered areas of Hamilton County. Assessment sewers are built at the expense of property owners. A majority of the affected property owners must approve the new sewers. A portion of the cost is offset by Hamilton County.

- **Project Groundwork - Trenchless Technology Program**
  These projects include relining of deteriorated sewers and rehabilitation of manholes to prevent inflow and infiltration of water.

**Implementation and funding**

In June 2009, state and federal EPAs and ORSANCO conditionally approved the Project Groundwork improvement effort. As of January 2010, Project Groundwork is awaiting final acceptance by the U.S. District Court for Southern Ohio Western Division.
Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
City of Cincinnati Department of City Planning, 5-15 years, Four study sites within the Mill Creek Valley (Spring Grove Village/ St. Bernard; Northside/ South Cumminssville; Camp Washington/CUF; Queensgate)

Primary Issues:
The study states that within the past 60 years the “winners” of the region have been the railroads and the interstate, while the “losers” have been the waterways, open space, and local connectivity. “The Mill Creek has received little respect and has not been viewed as an asset for people to enjoy. Tributaries have been piped and portions of the Mill Creek are inaccessible. Open space is more often left over land that has no champion. Local transit is now limited to bus service. Local and arterial streets were disrupted by the interstate, impacting several communities. The valley has been a barrier to trails and pedestrians rather than a connector.

Plan creation and public involvement:
During the course of the 8 month process, the planning team, which consisted of urban designers, landscape designers, market analysts, and transportation engineers, conducted a three phase process including: Data Collection and Analysis; Alternatives Exploration; and Development of the Preferred Plan. The process included focus group meetings with residents and civic leaders, institutions, City representatives, area businesses, and other key stakeholders. These participants described their perceptions of the city of Cincinnati, the Mill Creek Valley and their respective Study Areas, outline for the planning team, the challenges ahead as well as their hopes for the future. The process created a consensus opinion about the overall approach for improving the study areas and how this in turn would help improve the future of the city.

Plan vision statement:
The vision for the Mill Creek Valley enhances the valley as a major transportation corridor while transforming it into a viable sustainable open space corridor. Theses corridors, which are in fact systems, will serve to revitalize communities and centers of industry, research and commerce. This study proposes a series of integrated ad sustainable infrastructure improvements, linked to communities, education and research centers and downtown. These Initiatives include:

Plan goals or objectives:
- Transportation
- Rail Freight Transportation and Port Facilities
- Intercity Passenger Service
- Dedicated Transit Corridors
- Interstate interchanges, crossings and landscaping
- Arterial road improvements
- Bicycle and Trail Network
- Restored Ecosystem
- Connected park system
- Active and passive neighborhood parks
- Restored wetlands and tributaries
- Green streets and public spaces
- Livable Communities
- Focus on an emerging Green Economy
- Transportation related industries
- Mixed use neighborhood centers
- New residential neighborhoods and infill development

Strategies:
Thorough studies and community cooperation, key interchanges on I-75 which will be subject to multi-billion dollar projects over the next twenty years, were targeted to demonstrate that by properly managing these investments, the city will leverage additional investment in the creation of a sustainable eco-system, new forms of mobility, preservation of unique historic neighborhoods, and transformation of underutilized land into centers of research. This is a cross-agency effort to coordinate future expenditures to produce system-wide improvements in city infrastructure, social cohesion and attracting private investment.

Key Projects:
Neighborhood plans are being drafted for Spring Grove Village and St. Bernard, Northside and South Cumminsville, Camp Washington and CUF, Queensgate. Each neighborhood plan has various urban design approaches, reflecting desired changes discovered during the analysis stage of the project while working with the steering committee and general public.
Some key components of this plan involves a system-level approach that serves both communities and transportation corridors, whether federal freeways or city streets.

Implementation and funding:
Leverage funding through major infrastructure projects funded by ODOT, MSD, and the City.

Plan_ID 49
Full Title of Document/Plan: Revive Cincinnati: Neighborhoods of the Mill Creek Valley Draft
Print/post date: April 7 2010
Physical/Web location: N/A
Name/address of provider:
Urban Design Associates
Gulf Tower, 31st Floor
707 Grant Street
Pittsburg, PA 15219

Collected by: Sean Holden
Collection Date: April 14, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
City of Cincinnati Department of City Planning, 5-15 years, Four study sites within the Mill Creek Valley (Spring Grove Village/ St. Bernard; Northside/ South Cumminsville; Camp Washington/CUF; Queensgate)

Primary Issues:
The study states that within the past 60 years the “winners” of the region have been the railroads and the interstate, while the “losers” have been the waterways, open space, and local connectivity. “The Mill Creek has received little respect and has not been viewed as an asset for people to enjoy. Tributaries have been piped and portions of the Mill Creek are inaccessible. Open space is more often left over land that has no champion. Local transit is now limited to bus service. Local and arterial streets were disrupted by the interstate, impacting several communities. The valley has been a barrier to trails and pedestrians rather than a connector.

Plan creation and public involvement:
During the course of the 8 month process, the planning team, which consisted of urban designers, landscape designers, market analysts, and transportation engineers, conducted a three phase process including: Data Collection and Analysis; Alternatives Exploration; and Development of the Preferred Plan. The process included focus group meetings with residents and civic leaders, institutions, City representatives, area businesses, and other key stakeholders. These participants described their perceptions of the city of Cincinnati, the Mill Creek Valley and their respective Study Areas, outline for the planning team, the challenges ahead as well as their hopes for the future. The process created a consensus opinion about the overall approach for improving the study areas and how this in turn would help improve the future of the city.
Plan vision statement:
The vision for the Mill Creek Valley enhances the valley as a major transportation corridor while transforming it into a viable sustainable open space corridor. These corridors, which are in fact systems, will serve to revitalize communities and centers of industry, research and commerce. This study proposes a series of integrated ad sustainable infrastructure improvements, linked to communities, education and research centers and downtown. These Initiatives include:

Plan goals or objectives:

- Transportation
- Rail Freight Transportation and Port Facilities
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- Bicycle and Trail Network
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- Connected park system
- Active and passive neighborhood parks
- Restored wetlands and tributaries
- Green streets and public spaces
- Livable Communities
- Focus on an emerging Green Economy
- Transportation related industries
- Mixed use neighborhood centers
- New residential neighborhoods and infill development

Strategies:
Thorough studies and community cooperation, key interchanges on I-75 which will be subject to multi-billion dollar projects over the next twenty years, were targeted to demonstrate that by properly managing these investments, the city will leverage additional investment in the creation of a sustainable eco-system, new forms of mobility, preservation of unique historic neighborhoods, and transformation of underutilized land into centers of research. This is a cross-agency effort to coordinate future expenditures to produce system-wide improvements in city infrastructure, social cohesion and attracting private investment.

Key Projects:
Neighborhood plans are being drafted for Spring Grove Village and St. Bernard, Northside and South Cumminsville, Camp Washington and CUF, Queensgate. Each neighborhood plan has various urban design approaches, reflecting desired changes discovered during the analysis stage of the project while working with the steering committee and general public. Some key components of this plan involves a system-level approach that serves both communities and transportation corridors, whether federal freeways or city streets.

Implementation and funding:
Leverage funding through major infrastructure projects funded by ODOT, MSD, and the City.

Plan_ID 50
Full Title of Document/Plan: Sedamsville Community Development Plan
Print/post date: July 2003
Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:

**Authoring Organization:** The Sedamsville Community Development Plan was created by the Department of Transportation and Engineering, the Office of Architecture and Urban Design for Sedamsville, and the Department of Community Development and Planning. The City of Cincinnati Planning Commission approved the Plan.

**Geographic Area:** Neighborhood of Sedamsville

**Primary Issues Include:**

Poor Educational Attainment—56% have less than a high school diploma as compared to 30% for the City as a whole.

Sedamsville has a declining housing stock and increased vacancy which could impede neighborhood redevelopment.

Limited by topography, location in the 100-year floodplain, and potential for landslides (environmental factors).

Perception that the community is unsafe.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**

Primarily done by citizen groups, and via community meetings and discussions.

**Plan vision statement:**

Improve Sedamsville

**Plan goals or objectives:**

**Priorities**

1) Public Facilities and Infrastructure: evaluate drainage and identify potential and next steps to create a walkable community.

2) Social and Economic Development: promote and support more activities for youth and elderly, focus on businesses that meet resident needs, replace businesses that are perceived as detrimental to the community, open community up to new job/business opportunities.

3) Housing and Property Value: campaign to decrease housing value depreciation, decrease the number of absentee landlords and vacancy rates, and improve poor housing conditions.

4) Safety: offer a viable solution to crime, eliminate drug activity and vehicles speeding through the neighborhood.

**Goals**

1) Improve and expand upon existing recreational opportunities; enhance and highlight the community’s character and charm

2) Strengthen and expand Santa Maria community services.

3) Attract/ Develop businesses catering to the community’s needs

4) Improve/expand housing opportunities

5) Increase safety and reduce the incidence and perception of crime.

**Strategies:**

Under each goal, the plan authors have recommended specific activities that should be completed in order to achieve the outlined goals. The plan goes on to outline the specific strategies for the accomplishment of each goal, and the projects that would be included within those strategies.

**Key Projects:**
The projects outlined focus on specific locales within the neighborhood (i.e. core area, east of core area, etc.) and include: develop a housing village north of the core area, rehabilitate and improve Bold Face Park, and create community identification markers at significant areas (all for the core area).

**Implementation and funding:**
The plan does not list a funding or implementing agency, although it was sponsored by the City of Cincinnati and approved by the Planning Commission.

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**Plan_ID 50**  
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Sedamsville Community Development Plan  
**Print/post date:** July 2003  
**Physical/Web location:** Sedamsville Civic Association  
**Name/address of provider:** n/a  
**Collected by:** Lauryn Alleva  
**Collection Date:** April 14, 2010

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**

*Authoring Organization:* The Sedamsville Community Development Plan was created by the Department of Transportation and Engineering, the Office of Architecture and Urban Design for Sedamsville, and the Department of Community Development and Planning. The City of Cincinnati Planning Commission approved the Plan.

*Geographic Area:* Neighborhood of Sedamsville

*Primary Issues Include:*

- Poor Educational Attainment—56% have less than a high school diploma as compared to 30% for the City as a whole.

- Sedamsville has a declining housing stock and increased vacancy which could impede neighborhood redevelopment.

- Limited by topography, location in the 100-year floodplain, and potential for landslides (environmental factors).

- Perception that the community is unsafe.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**

Primarily done by citizen groups, and via community meetings and discussions.

**Plan vision statement:**

Improve Sedamsville

**Plan goals or objectives:**

*Priorities*

1) Public Facilities and Infrastructure: evaluate drainage and identify potential and next steps to create a walkable community.

2) Social and Economic Development: promote and support more activities for youth and elderly, focus on businesses that meet resident needs, replace businesses that are perceived as detrimental to the community, open community up to new job/business opportunities.

3) Housing and Property Value: campaign to decrease housing value depreciation, decrease the number of absentee landlords and vacancy rates, and improve poor housing conditions.

4) Safety: offer a viable solution to crime, eliminate drug activity and vehicles speeding through the neighborhood.

*Goals*
1) Improve and expand upon existing recreational opportunities; enhance and highlight the community’s character and charm
2) Strengthen and expand Santa Maria community services.
3) Attract/Develop businesses catering to the community’s needs
4) Improve/expand housing opportunities
5) Increase safety and reduce the incidence and perception of crime.

Strategies:
Under each goal, the plan authors have recommended specific activities that should be completed in order to achieve the outlined goals. The plan goes on to outline the specific strategies for the accomplishment of each goal, and the projects that would be included within those strategies.

Key Projects:
The projects outlined focus on specific locales within the neighborhood (i.e. core area, east of core area, etc.) and include: develop a housing village north of the core area, rehabilitate and improve Bold Face Park, and create community identification markers at significant areas (all for the core area).

Implementation and funding:
The plan does not list a funding or implementing agency, although it was sponsored by the City of Cincinnati and approved by the Planning Commission.

Plan_ID 52
Full Title of Document/Plan: Neighborhood Master Plan
Print/post date: n.d
Name/address of provider: Springfield Township Website
Collected by: Geoffrey Bliss
Collection Date: 4/09/10

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
Neighborhood action planning

Plan creation and public involvement:
Town trustees are working with individual neighborhood groups to create steering committees. These steering committees will become primary stakeholders in the planning process, each bringing different levels of expertise to the group.

Plan vision statement:
“Springfield Township is a unique, diverse community that is comprised of many different neighborhoods, each with their unique character, attributes and needs. In addition, the Township includes one school district that is entirely within the Township and portions of six others. With a total of 39,755 residents and about 16,000 households, we recognize that an overall Master Plan for the entire Township may fail to address the individual and specific needs of a particular neighborhood. Therefore, we are creating a Master Plan process that embrace the Township for what it is - a community of neighborhoods. You care about your neighborhood, what it looks like and what it could be. It's where you call home. Creating many individually customized, but unified neighborhood and district plans, will allow us to better ensure our Township's sustainability and create a path for a bright future” (p. 1).

Plan goals or objectives:
Community meetings will be scheduled throughout 2010. These community meetings will help to inform neighborhoods and community stakeholders throughout the planning process. The final Neighborhood Action Plan will be completed sometime in mid 2011.

Strategies:
Residents are invited to participate in neighborhood meetings and become part of respective steering committees.

**Key Projects:**
None specifically mentioned. **Implementation and funding:** None specifically mentioned.

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**Plan_ID 53**  
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Strategic Neighborhood Master Plan  
**Print/post date:** n.d.  
**Name/address of provider:** Springfield Township Website  
**Collected by:** Geoffrey Bliss  
**Collection Date:** 4/09/10

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**  
Economic Development, crime prevention, service delivery, infrastructure/capital improvements, housing redevelopment. Springfield Township Trustees will authorize plan.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**  
Springfield Township Trustees established the plan. Public involvement is specified under individual objectives, strategies and outcomes.

**Plan vision statement:**  
“Taking our community from vision to reality”

**Plan goals or objectives:**  
Plan objectives are based upon four major principles being housing development/revitalization, capital improvements to existing infrastructure, economic development, crime prevention and service-delivery enhancements.

**Strategies:**  
- Housing Development/Revitalization  
  - The creation of Joint Economic Development Districts (JED)  
  - Support of existing land use policies  
  - Partnership with the Cincinnati Metro Housing Authority

- Capital Improvements to Existing Infrastructure  
  - Increased revenue will be created from the passage of a road levy  
  - Creation of residential improvement and Tax incremental Financing Districts  
  - Community outreach to find new grant opportunities through effective partnerships with state and regional organizations

- Economic Development  
  - Creation of unique businesses to help the city  
  - Create business partnerships between neighboring jurisdictions  
  - Actively participate in new land acquisition in relation to the provision of infrastructure improvements

- Crime Prevention  
  - Creation of new patrol units  
  - Expansion of township and neighborhood watch programs
Possible creation of a remote video monitoring network

Service delivery Enhancements
- Increase number of personnel and restructure service procedures in fire service departments
- Implement a township wide Wi-Fi network
- Create joint service delivery districts related to neighboring political jurisdictions

Key Projects:
Not specifically mentioned.

Implementation and funding:

Plan_ID 54
Full Title of Document/Plan: South Cumminssville Community Improvement Plan
Print/post date: May 10, 2000
Physical/Web location: South Cumminssville Neighborhood Association
Name/address of provider: n/a
Collected by: Lauryn Alleva
Collection Date: April 12, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
Authoring Organization: The South Cumminssville Community United for Better Housing and the South Cumminssville Community Council.

Geographic Area: Neighborhood of South Cumminsville

Primary Issues Include:
- Trash and illegal dumping on vacant land
- Wayne Field: The center of the community it is a neglected park in need of improvement.
- Industrial expansion into residential areas
- Potential for hillside slip in the area west of Tappan Avenue

Plan creation and public involvement:
Primarily done by citizen groups, and via community meetings and discussions.

Plan Vision Statement:
Improve South Cumminssville.

Plan goals or objectives:
1) Contain Industrial Expansion
2) Create a greenbelt

Strategies:
Different projects will require different strategies. The plan calls for the participation, involvement, and creativity of the community members.

Key Projects:
Tappan Avenue Hillside Preservation: enter into discussions with the hillside preservation trust, because the land cannot be redeveloped.

Hoffner Street Open Space: at time of plan the area was an illegal dumping area, the suggestion in the plan is to convert it to open space.

Wayne Field Revitalization—make it a useable public space

Convert dump site to greenspace

Create a vegetative buffer along I-74

Revitalize gateway along Elmore

**Implementation and funding:**
Lists some suggested agencies, but no specific implementation mechanisms are listed.
Strategies:
· Convene public forums and key partner meetings
· Identify priorities and specific action plans for Community COMPASS strategies
· Update the State of the County Report on land use and development framework and related key indicators of progress every five years.

Key Partners:
• OKI Regional Council of Governments
• Hamilton County Engineer
• Hamilton County Caucus of OKI Representatives (Planning Partnership)
• Citizens for Civic Renewal, Transportation Task Force
• League of Women Voters, Friends of the Public Transit
• SORTA, Metro
• Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC)
• The AMOS Project

Implementation and funding:
• Widening of I-75 (Interstate) to eight or ten lanes for most of its length within Hamilton County including improvement of interchanges.
• Interchange, ramp, and signal improvements on I-71 at some places within Hamilton County
• Widening of some portions on I-275 to eight lanes, reconstruction of 28 bridges, and intersection improvements within Hamilton County
• Upgrading traffic signals, bridge approach improvements, and a new park and ride lot at the vicinity of Beechmont Mall
• Eastern Corridor light rail project known as the Oasis Line

Federal funds:
• Surface Transportation Program (STP)
• Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CM/AQ)
• National Highway System (NHS)
• Interstate Maintenance (IM)
• Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program
• Federal Transit Administration Funding

State and local funds:
• State Capital Improvements Program (SCIP)
• Local Transportation Improvements Program (LTIP)
• Safety Program
• Major Bridge Program
• County Surface Transportation Program
• County Local Bridge Program
• Municipal Bridge Program
☐ Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC)

Plan_ID 56
Full Title of Document/Plan: Upper Mill Creek Watershed Action Plan
Print/post date: December 2005
Physical/Web location: pdf file obtained by Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities
Name/address of provider:
Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The Upper Mill Creek, East Fork Mill Creek and Beaver Run (UMC) watershed is the focus of this WAP. It represents the headwaters of Mill Creek. The UMC watershed is identified as USGS HUC-1 within the Mill Creek Watershed. The UMCW encompasses approximately 45 square miles (29,000 acres) in southeastern Butler County and northern Hamilton County including portions of the following political jurisdictions: West Chester, Liberty and Fairfield Townships and the Cities of Fairfield and Hamilton in Butler County, and Forest Park, Sharonville, Springdale and Springfield Townships in Hamilton County. The population of the UMC watershed is approximately 62,000 based on 2000 Census data. The majority of the population in the UMC watershed is located in Butler County representing approximately 80% of the population in the county.

The goal of the UMC WAP is to address causes and sources of water quality impairment and habitat degradation within the watershed and to recommend restoration and protection goals. The final outcome of the UMC WAP is an itemization of problems, priorities and action items identified and supported by local watershed communities and stakeholders.

Issues: rapid growth: the three townships that comprise majority of the watershed acreage has increased 476% in the last four decades, SSO/on-site, non mechanical sewage disposal systems (septic thank/leach field) in the UMC, soil erosion loss on both urban and agricultural lands; water quality, stormwater management; the entire UMCW is required to comply with the NPDES Phase II Stormwater Regulations which went into effect March 2003.

From available information presented in the OEPA’s 305(b) and 303(d) lists the UMC watershed (HUC 1) has been identified with the following causes of impairment:

- Nutrient enrichment
- Other habitat alterations
- Siltation/sediment
- Flow alterations

Associated with the causes of impairment are the possible sources of impairment identified in the UMC watershed. Potential sources of impairment include the following:

- Channelization
- Streambank modification/destabilization
- Urban runoff /storm sewers
- Removal of riparian vegetation
- Agriculture
- Pastureland
- Non-irrigated crop production

Plan creation and public involvement:
This plan was initiated as part of the implementation strategy for the Mill Creek Total Daily Maximum Daily Load (TDML) process undertaken by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). This action plan was then submitted for approval to the USEPA in 2004, which focuses on attainment of water quality standards (WQS), both chemical-specific and numeric biological criteria, that would result in eventual removal of the Mill Creek (Southwest Ohio) from the OEPA’s 303(d) list of impaired waterways. Water quality and biological assessments indicate that non-attainment of WQS is in part due to nutrient and organic enrichment, and habitat degradation.

Development of the UMC WAP was a collaborative effort between Mill Creek Watershed Council, Butler County Department of Environmental Services and local communities and stakeholders.

A UMC WAP work group was formed in late 2001 as an ad hoc committee whose efforts were coordinated by the MCWC Water Quality Committee. Elected officials and administrative officials from watershed jurisdictions and key decision makers from other stakeholder organizations were invited to participate in the development of the UMC WAP. The MCWC Executive Director and the Chair of the MCWC Water Quality Committee coordinated the UMC meetings and development of the watershed WAP.
Representatives attended these meetings:
Butler County Department of Environmental Services
Butler County Department of Development
Butler County Planning Department
Butler County Engineer’s Office
Butler Soil and Water Conservation District
City of Fairfield
City of Forest Park
City of Hamilton
City of Springdale
City of Springdale Health Department
Fairfield Township
Liberty Township Parks Committee
West Chester Township Planning and Zoning Department
West Chester Township Parks and Recreation Department
Biohabitats, Inc.
Fuller, Mossbarger, Scott and May, Inc.
Gilmore Ponds Conservancy
Metro Parks of Butler County
Mill Creek Restoration Project
Mill Creek Watershed Council
Ohio Environmental Projection Agency – Southwest District Office
XCG Consultants, Inc.

The UMC Work Group community representatives attended a meeting sponsored by the Mill Creek Watershed Council on September 24, 2001, to learn about the WAP development process and it identify stream-related issues within the watershed. In 2002 and 2003 the group formally met eight times with the goal of creating an action plan to address those issues. These meetings took place on 6/18/02; 8/3/02; 10/15/02; 11/13/02; 1/21/03; 2/6/03; and 3/3/03. Between December 17th and 21st, 2002, XCG Consultants, Inc., using funds provided by BCES, performed a detailed watershed assessment to identify sources of impairments and opportunities for watershed improvement. After data collection was completed, the UMC work group began development of a series of proposed actions to address identified issues and impairments and an implementation strategy for their completion. A detail action plan matrix was developed and unanimously approved by the group and shared with the state resource agencies at that time. MCWC staff created the first draft of the WAP with the matrix as its centerpiece. Work group members and the MCWC water quality committee reviewed the WAP draft during the summer of 2003. This plan was then forwarded to the OEPA in October 2003 for review and endorsement. Extensive comments from OEPA and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) on the first draft plan were presented to MCWC in March 2004. Modifications were made based on OEPA/ODNR comments. As soon as the UMC WAP has been finalized, a series of public meetings were to be held to inform community residents and property owners of the plan’s proposed actions and offer an opportunity for them to become involved in its implementation.

**Plan vision statement:** to create a regional, community-based watershed action plan that addresses issues related to the Mill Creek and its tributaries located within the Upper Mill Creek and East Fork watershed.

**Plan goals or objectives:** The goal of the UMC WAP is to address causes and sources of water quality impairment and habitat degradation within the watershed and to recommend restoration and protection goals. The final outcome of the UMC WAP is an itemization of problems, priorities and action items identified and supported by local watershed communities and stakeholders.

**Plan goals include:**

- Improve habitat through riparian restoration
- Reduce sediment loading for the basin
- Reduce nutrient loading towards meeting TMDL – specific goals for the basin;
- Stabilize stream banks using bio-engineering techniques;
- Restore natural stream functions where channel alterations have occurred; and
- Improve stewardship of local streams and watersheds through public education.
Strategies
Education and Outreach: fact sheets, guidance, training programs and presentations to educate local decision makers, homeowners associations and commercial property owners about stormwater quality best management practices (BMPs) are suggested activities to complement the task of revegetating the riparian zone.

Watershed Inventory include the following: geology – topography, soils, glacial history; biological features – threatened, rare and endangered species; Invasive plant species; water resources; habitat assessment - biological and water quality assessment, macroinvertebrate assessments, surface water, sole source aquifer status, pollution potential status, land use (including status and trends), forest/open space, agriculture, water and wetlands, impervious surface, and cultural resources.

Implementation:
In 2003, political jurisdictions and stakeholders either adopted a resolution in support of the UMC action plan items or submitted a letter indicating their support for the actions proposed in the original matrix. Reasonable assurance is provided through implementation of the Phase II Stormwater requirements and the permits filed with the OEPA in March 2003. Included in these permits is a plan to implement actions that will address construction site runoff and pollution prevention, municipal pollution prevention, detection and elimination of illicit discharges to surface water bodies, and education and outreach to residents about means to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

The Butler County Department of Environmental Services, through a permit with the Ohio EPA, is addressing point source discharges from its Upper Mill Creek Water Reclamation Facility located on the East Fork Mill Creek, the only point source in the watershed.

Butler County has adopted an ordinance intended to restore and protect floodplains on properties located adjacent to the Mill Creek in the unincorporated areas of the county. Also included in this ordinance are creation of a stream buffer and notching existing levees along the Mill Creek.

West Chester Parks and other UMC stakeholders are committed to implementation of the Port Union Gilmore Ponds Conservation Corridor which will restore/protect riparian habitat within the UMC watershed.

The Mill Creek Watershed Council has offered its services to assist with implementation of the UMC WAP action items and to provide resources, such as its newsletter, website and public meetings, necessary to publish and distribute educational and plan evaluation and reporting materials. The Council will also identify sources of funding and assist, when requested, in the preparation of grant or other forms of funding applications.

Funding:
Application for traditional sources of funding, such as Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution grants from the State of Ohio, Clean Ohio Conservation Funds, and community foundations will be performed based on availability for those eligible action items identified within the implementation plan that require significant funding levels. Non-traditional funding sources will be pursued as opportunities arise. Structural activities will be funded on a local basis as needed through traditional capital improvement funding programs or grants. Other sources of funding will be explored. Partnerships with existing entities such as school districts, community organizations, and local parks or with local businesses to reduce costs associated with plan implementation. Funding for activities related to implementation of Phase II stormwater regulations will be provided by the county-wide stormwater districts or the Phase II jurisdictions not participating in these districts.
Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The city administration of Lockland authorized this plan in 1996 as a redevelopment scheme; there is no time frame as it is mainly administrative and legal in nature. It covers financial aspects of Lockland, and deals with brownfields, business incentives and tax breaks.

Plan creation and public involvement:
The city administrator, in consultation with the Hamilton County Development Company, created the plan; there was no public involvement.

Plan vision statement:

Plan goals or objectives: Increase development in Lockland; redevelop brownfields, increase tax base.
Strategies: Ohio state grants for brownfield clean up; tax abatements for developments; new housing subdivisions.

Key Projects:
Key projects relate to the cleaning of specific brownfields. Though many are clean today, the economic collapse has prevented the attraction of development in any significant way. City administrators believe that any uptick in the economy at all will result in substantial development.

Implementation and funding: As an administrative matter, legal implementation came from Lockland. Funding for the environmental cleanup grants was secured from the state of Ohio.

Plan_ID 59
Full Title of Document/Plan: City of Springdale, Ohio Comprehensive Plan
Print/post date: June 2002
Physical/Web location: PDF file from community contact
Name/address of provider: William Mc Erlane WMcErlane@springdale.org
Collected by: Kevin McNally
Collection Date: 4/12/2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The comprehensive planning process for Springdale, Ohio began in the fall of 2000 and was directed by the Springdale Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and consultant McBride Dale Clarion over a period of 18 months. The final comprehensive plan document was completed in June 2002.
The City of Springdale was developed as a village as early as 1806 and has evolved to become a city with a population of 10,563. It has a mix of both residential (single-family and multi-family) and non-residential uses, including commercial, office, industry and manufacturing, and parks and recreation. The population has seen a steady growth over four decades before plateauing around 10,500 from the 1990 to 2000.
The Steering Committee laid out a list of community priorities and issues that were communicated by residents. These included:
Quality City Services and Facilities: fire protection, police, road maintenance, waste collection, traffic control, and other services.
Strong Residential Neighborhoods: residential neighborhoods as an equal priority to commercial development and protection from commercial encroachment
Top Quality Business Districts: One third of land area used for commercial, office, industry; quality of businesses contributes to the positive image of Springdale and its economic health; workforce 4 to 5 times size of population
Community Mobility: access roads provide connections to surrounding region, good for residents and community businesses; congestion is becoming an increasing problem due to high volume demands, and pedestrian/bicycle options need to be improved
Strength of Diversity: diversity in land use, housing types, people, and neighborhoods; future plans should continue to capitalize on this fact
Identity of Springdale: identity as regional shopping area but need to improve image as a residential destination and enhance community image along major corridors to further show this; showcase gateways using community markers/branding

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space: continued improvement of open spaces and recreational facilities needed to meet demands of residents; limited undeveloped land will prove to be a challenge to this goal

Plan creation and public involvement:

Plan vision statement:

Plan goals or objectives:
A series of goals and strategies were produced to guide the community’s future direction. These deal with four distinct categories: land use, community character, public services and facilities, and community mobility.

Land Use
Mix of land use will not change, and residential and commercial districts will remain separated. Quality of development will remain a high priority and increased parks and open land will also be a new priority.
- Preserve existing land use pattern
- Varied housing type opportunities
- Protect residential neighborhoods from encroachment
- Create mixed-use development at intersection of Springfield Pike and Kemper Road, near existing recreation center (to become center of community)
- Increased open space and expanded recreational facilities
- Redevelopment of vacant and underutilized buildings, properties, districts
- Become a regional leader in transit oriented development standards
- Encourage creation of transit hub in Springdale

Community Character

Reinforce regional identity while improving “sense of place” and continue redevelopment efforts along Springfield Pike Corridor while also capitalizing on the community’s diversity in housing, commercial, and residents.
- Establishment of Design Guidelines to guide building and site design in various districts
- Design system of gateway features at various locations to provide sense of place
- Implement streetscape improvements along major corridors
- Explore placing utility lines underground
- Continued development along Springfield Pike around municipal complex to create city center
- Establish Neighborhood Associations within distinct districts
- Ensure all community groups/populations are fairly represented

Public Services and Facilities

Maintain a high level of public services and facilities for all community residents, including police, fire, and emergency medical services.
- Develop a Capital Improvement Program
- Explore fiber optic lines and infrastructure within community
- Coordinate with utility and infrastructure service providers (Cincy Water Works, Cinergy, MSD)
- Continue to use storm water and erosion controls in site plan and construction design
- Provide more park areas and recreational amenities to residents
- Review storm water management systems at existing developments to ensure standards

Community Mobility
More opportunities of alternative modes of transportation while managing traffic flow and minimizing congestion in the community.

- Manage traffic congestion on major arterials
- Reduce cut through traffic in residential districts
- Improve east-west traffic flow
- Develop Alternative Transportation Master Plan that deals with pedestrian, bicycle, and transit circulation systems
- Promote design of multi-modal streets
- Increase pedestrian mobility (increase sidewalks and walkways to activity centers)
- Create bikeway plan
- Promote regional transit options (park and ride facilities and mass transit)
- Infrastructure improvements (lanes, signals, etc)
- Utilize traffic calming techniques
- Study intra-city transit/shuttle system

Plan_ID 60

Plan profile

Full Title of Document/Plan: The Village of Woodlawn Master Plan, 2007
Print/post date: September 2007
Physical/Web location: http://www.beautifulwoodlawn.us/government/masterplan.html
Name/address of provider: The Village of Woodlawn, OH
Collected by: Thomas DiBello
Collection Date: 4/14/10

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues: Jacobs, Edwards and Kelcey; 10 – 20 year plan; Woodlawn is a 2.5 square mile village north of Cincinnati. It has a population of about 2,800 and relies on a strong industrial base and a strong park/open space presence.

- Aging infrastructure/roads
- Potential for declining homeownership rates
- Lack of strong pedestrianism
- Aging industrial facilities, lack of expansion room, competition from neighbors

Plan creation and public involvement:
Regular meetings between Jacobs, Edwards and Kelcey and a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee produced the Vision and analyzed existing conditions. In addition there were public input meetings, a survey and focus groups.

Plan vision statement:
The Village of Woodlawn is an attractive and inviting community of choice, unique because of its natural beauty, its regional access and the cultural diversity of its residents. Our neighborhoods are attractive and well maintained, and they offer a mix of quality housing options for people in all life phases and income levels. Woodlawn has a high quality of life for its residents through public services, education, and close proximity to a variety of shopping. Woodlawn residents of all ages enjoy our unique park and trail system, our outstanding indoor and outdoor recreational resources, and community events. Woodlawn preserves its green spaces and natural beauty so that all our residents can use and enjoy them. Our Village is automobile, bicycle and pedestrian friendly. Woodlawn's major corridors, highly visible public areas and key gateways support our claim that we are "Beautiful Woodlawn". The Village works to support, attract and retain businesses that enhance the community's environment, physical appearance and economy and positively contribute to its tax base. The Village's government works to make wise decisions that focus the many strengths of the community into a vibrant whole and keep the community focused on realizing our vision. Our citizens are proud to say that they live in Woodlawn.
Plan goals or objectives:
(see Vision)

Plan_ID 61
Full Title of Document/Plan: Walnut Hills Vision 2010
Print/post date: 1999/2001
Physical/Web location: http://www.whrf-cincinnati.org/vision.html
Name/address of provider: October 7, 2003
Collected by: Lauryn Alleva
Collection Date: April 10, 2010

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
Authoring Organization: Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation (The 06 Alliance)
Time Frame: 1999-2010
Geographic Area: Walnut Hills
Primary Issues: Economic Development, Housing, Land Use, Arts, Entertainment & Leisure, Education, Safety, Transportation and Health and Human Services

Plan creation and public involvement:
The 06 Alliance is an alliance between East Walnut Hills and Walnut Hills based on their shared zip code ending in 06. The 06 Alliance Steering Committee decided to create Vision 2010 by engaging community stakeholders. This included a series of community meetings held throughout 2001, formed eight committees on community life (economic development, housing, land use, arts, entertainment and leisure, education, safety, transportation and health and human services). The 06 Alliance used this information to guide the vision.

Plan vision statement:
The 06 communities will be the standard for opportunity and prosperity in urban living. Walnut Hills and East Walnut Hills will be safe, healthy, attractive, educated, caring communities with a sense of pride and respect for both individuals and community. Our leaders will be strong, well organized and able to advocate for the rights of all citizens.

Plan goals or objectives:
Economic Development: Our goal is that by the Year 2010 the 06 community will be economically stable with a strong labor force, a diverse business mix and ownership, which will foster attractive, vibrant business districts.
Housing: Increase owner-occupied housing in the 06 community. Increase affordable housing opportunities within the 06 community. Market the 06 community as a place to live and raise a family. Preserve the historic and architectural character and ensure the continued beautification of the 06 area. Encourage the demolition/renovation of vacant buildings.
Land Use: By the year 2010 the 06 community will have developed and implemented a comprehensive land use plan that promotes a balance of quality commercial and residential properties preserving the historical significance of the area by applying design standards that incorporate revitalization of existing structures in the neighborhood and business districts.
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Leisure: By the Year 2010 the 06 community will be recognized for its rich art, entertainment, history and the diversity of recreational and leisure activities available to its residents and visitors to the 06 community.
Education: The vision of the 06 community is to provide every resident access to educational opportunities which ensure self-sufficiency; contribute to one's self worth and improve one's quality of life. By the year 2010 every resident in the 06 community will have the opportunity to learn; be self-sufficient; be enlightened and have fun while gaining new information and skills.
Public Safety: By the Year 2010 the 06 community will have taken the appropriate steps to strengthen and increase personal safety by eliminating criminal and environmentally unsafe activity to make the 06 community a safe, clean and viable community.
Transportation: By the year 2010 transportation through the 06 community will include environmentally clean, safe,
user friendly buses, trains or trams that will be seen as major assets for the community and will serve as a transportation connector for the City’s mass public transportation system.

Health and Human Services: By the Year 2010 the Health and Human Services Committee of Vision 2010 will have enhanced the 06 community's health and human service base by analyzing current service function; seeking resident input on unmet needs; reviewing statistical data and recommending appropriate adjustments. The goal is to ensure that the 06 community is prepared to meet the needs of its families, singles, seniors and the physically challenged.

Strategies:
The vision plan states: “Our greatest asset, the residents of this community, are a key factor in this plan being implemented and the Victory Neighborhood Services Agency (VNSA) has been charged with the responsibility of working with the residents of the 06 community to develop a work plan to begin implementation of Vision 2010.”

Key Projects:
N/A at time the plan was created.

Implementation and funding:
In 2003 VNSA will begin the work of forming committees comprised of residents and community-based stakeholders who will review Vision 2010 and establish priorities based on the document. Their next step will be to develop a work plan of activities to implement the parts of Vision 2010 that address the identified priorities.
centers; Have a range of enriching cultural, recreational, and social activities that attract a large outside population; Retain a sizable senior population and encourage high school graduates to stay in or return to the Township upon entering the workforce; Protect and be good stewards of natural and man-made environments; Build sidewalks for all major thoroughfares and main feeders by 2012; Obtain excellent public safety ratings; Rank among the top 3 of all listings of best places to live, work, or have a business in the Cincinnati-Dayton Metroplex; Utilize multi-modal transportation to reduce automobile usage and congestion; Preserve, enhance and leverage historical sites.

Implementation and funding:
By January 2007: Develop strategies and measures for each of the stated Goals of the Vision, prioritize strategic plans, recommend a course of action and implementation assignments to the Board of Trustees. On March 31, each year, publish a State of the Vision progress report that details the steps taken toward goal achievement and includes measurements of effectiveness. And, on April 30, each year, communicate a progress report to the residents of West Chester.

Plan_ID 64
West Chester Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan
Print/post date: 2004
Physical/Web location: www.westchesteroh.org
Name/address of provider: West Chester Township Board of Trustees
Collected by: Emily Lewis
Collection Date: April 1, 2010

Authorizing Organization:
West Chester Township Land Use Planning Committee, appointed by the Township’s Board of Trustees.

Time Frame:
10-15 years

Geographic Area:
West Chester Township, Butler County, Ohio. Located in the Southeast portion of Butler County, just north of Sharonville. The Township is situated on the I-75 corridor and close to I-71 and I-275.

Primary Issues:
Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion; Promoting West Chester as a strategic location for business and families; Maximizing use of vacant or under-utilized rural farm land; Promoting green space and bike trails to improve quality of life; Maintaining neighborhood character, particularly along major thoroughfares and avoiding “commercial creep;” Improving and widening roads to promote development and alleviate traffic congestion; Managing growth while moving toward build-out and maintaining an appropriate residential/commercial mix; Build conservation corridors along the Mill Creek to preserve water quality and flood plain capacity.

Plan creation and public involvement:
Throughout the plan creation process, the Land Use Planning Committee presented the plan to the Zoning Commission, the public, and the Township Board of Trustees at public hearings. Residents and property owners who had questions about the use of their land addressed their concerns to the Planning Committee at public meetings.

Plan vision statement:
To consider future growth and land development decisions objectively and consistently with an overall scheme, rather than taking reactive measures as the market brings proposals forward.

Plan goals or objectives:
Provide an updated snapshot of the Township’s land use conditions; State current demographics and estimated future demographics; Identify community goals, objectives and give direction on how to accomplish them; Illustrate
West Chester Township’s development direction; Set forth desired land use development patterns; Guide review of requests for zoning map amendments.

**Key Projects:**
Develop a Neighborhood Commercial Pod system to promote accessibility for to commercial needs; Build sidewalks to improve neighborhood appearance and increase pedestrian presence; Build bike trails; Expand water infrastructure; Promote and improve floodplain awareness among developers.

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**Plan_ID 66**  
**Full Title of Document/Plan:** Where Do We Grow From Here: A Strategic Regional Policy Plan  
**Print/post date:** April 2005  
**Physical/Web location:** [http://www.oki.org/landuse/srpp.html](http://www.oki.org/landuse/srpp.html)  
**Name/address of provider:** N/A  
**Collected by:** Marc Von Allmen  
**Collection Date:** April 7, 2010

**Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:**  
Authorizing organization was OKI. The geographic area includes the Greater Cincinnati area. Primary Issues include transportation, public facilities and services, natural systems, housing, economic development, and land use.

**Plan creation and public involvement:**  
In 2002, the Commission and the public developed a vision for the region, and the Commission selected 28 strategic regional issues in six issue categories as the focus for developing the regional policy plan. The 28 issues are seen as strategic because they represent particularly critical challenges or fundamental policy concerns. The Commission’s visioning process included an overview of regional trends and conditions and extensive public outreach and involvement. Thousands of people were reached through grass roots and media coverage in every county of the region that described the visioning process and its components, and 326 people gave input at eight public forums on the vision of the Land Use Commission during September 2002.

In 2003, the Commission further assessed the trends and conditions associated with the six issue categories and the 28 strategic regional issues selected in 2002, and used this knowledge to draft goals and objectives that could change the trends and conditions and address the strategic regional issues.

In 2004, the Commission systematically drafted and discussed over a hundred policies to indicate how the goals and objectives could be met and how the strategic regional issues could be addressed. Between January and March of 2005, another extensive public involvement process was conducted to get feedback on the draft policies. Public involvement included grass roots outreach teams in every county, extensive media coverage, public meetings in every county, and a survey to gauge support for the draft policies available both in hard copy and on OKI’s website. In response, over 400 people participated in public meetings and returned policy surveys, and over 500 comments were received.

The draft slate of policies was then modified to reflect recurring public comments and was adopted by OKI’s Board on April 14, 2005 as part of the strategic regional policy plan. This final plan document has been formatted to include components from all the phases of the Land Use Commission’s work: its mission; vision; strategic regional issues; trends and conditions; goals and objectives; and policies.

**Plan vision statement:**
Through open dialogue and communication with decision makers and the public, the OKI Commission on Land Use shall develop a strategic regional plan which encourages land use patterns that promote multimodal travel and the efficient use of land, natural resources, and public facilities and service.

**Plan goals or objectives:**
1. Provide an effective, balanced, integrated, and financially constrained transportation system for the entire region.
2. Adequate public services and facilities will be available for all planned development, and adequate capacity will be maintained for all existing developed and redeveloped areas.

3. Protect and improve the diversity and sustainability of the region’s natural systems.

4. Offer a diverse mix of housing choices - in terms of size, price, type, transit accessibility and location – within communities throughout the region, and maintain and improve the quality of the housing stock in every community in the region, whether newer developments or older neighborhoods, owner-occupied or rental.

5. Improve cooperation and coordination on economic development efforts and opportunities throughout the region, and provide incentives for such cooperation in order to make our region the location of choice for diverse businesses and to build the regional tax base.

6. Encourage local governments throughout the region to create up-to-date, consistent, and coordinated comprehensive plans.

Strategies:
Instead of producing a future land use map that would presume to tell local governments where to establish certain land uses, this strategic regional policy plan establishes measurable objectives and policy statements that address a 20-year vision and the high priority, strategic issues facing the region. These policies can be used to guide local and county jurisdictions to ensure that land use and transportation linkages are considered in all planning processes.

Implementation and funding:
The 2005 Strategic Regional Policy Plan is being implemented on a voluntary basis over a period of years by OKI, local governments and other organizations. As part of implementation, OKI has been working with local governments to increase the understanding of trends that affect land use, transportation and local budgets.

Plan_ID 65
Full Title of Document/Plan: West End Comprehensive Plan 2008
Print/post date: July 2008
Name/address of provider: City of Cincinnati
Collected by: John Yung
Collection Date: 4/22/10

Authorizing organization, time frame, geographic area, and primary issues:
The purpose of this plan is to present the redevelopment issues and concerns identified by residents, businesses and key stakeholders in the West End and to provide a guide for implementation of redevelopment in the community.

Plan creation and public involvement:
The West End Community Council and a group of more than 150 concerned residents, businesses, property owners and key stakeholders worked with City staff and Menelaos Triantafilou, a private consultant to the community, to develop a list of goals with objectives and strategies included in the plan.

Plan vision statement:
Continue Housing Development with a Balance of Housing Opportunities, New Commercial Redevelopment should focus on Neighborhood Oriented Businesses, Actively Pursue a Campaign to Improve the Community’s Image and Marketability & Work with the City of Cincinnati to Improve the Quality of Life for West End Residents

Plan goals or objectives:

Strategies:
Encourage the redevelopment of the area north of Liberty Street and south of Dayton Street between John Street and Central Avenue as a neighborhood oriented commercial district. Redevelopment of this area should be part of a larger mixed-use commercial/residential loft district that would include the area along.

For areas between Central Parkway and Bank Street west of Linn Street: Encourage the Linn Street corridor between Central Parkway north and West Court Street south as the primary Neighborhood Business District.

Retain the existing Medium-Density Manufacturing (M-2) area north of Liberty Street between Central Parkway and Central Avenue as a general manufacturing district. Create a museum exhibit in conjunction with Samuel Adams Brewery that would focus on the beer and wine manufacturers who first developed in this area of the West End. Market and promote this exhibit as a West End asset to attract retail business activity to the West End.

Redevelop Linn Street and Ezzard Charles Drive as boulevards with gateway elements that identify the West End as a Cincinnati historic community.

**Key Projects:**
City West (A Hope VI project), Sam Adams Brewery Expansion,

**Implementation and funding:**
The implementation of this plan is for a 20 year outlook. The plan was requested by the West End Community Council and is funded by the City of Cincinnati with contributions from the University of Cincinnati DAAP.
Green spaces and initiatives, water quality, environmental educational, Corridor design, streetscape amenities, crate more businesses.

**Implementation and funding:**
State and the tax payers.