Honing an urban edge

The edge is where the action is.
In nature, the edge between different habitats is a transition zone, a place of great species diversity and interaction. It's where the woods give way to fields, swamps turn into ponds and rivers, the beach flirts with the lake. Around cities, the urban edge is a place of intense development. It's where the country is overtaken by suburban sprawl, where some of the most wasteful forms of auto-dominated human habitation are realized.

More and more, we realize that healthy cities and a healthy environment depend on fixing the urban edge in place, holding the line between city and country. We need boundaries to manage development for the common good.

How? One way is to create a system of greenways, greenbelts and urban growth boundaries, as described in the following two articles. Both articles are reprinted with permission from the Spring 1994 issue of The Urban Ecologist, the journal of Urban Ecology, a nonprofit ecodty organization in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Green edges for healthy cities

By Jim Sayer
One of the biggest stumbling blocks for urban ecologists has been the persistent desire of planners, developers and even ordinary residents to look toward the urban fringe as the future—the "new," "raw," "exciting," "virgin," "unspoiled" fringe where we can plunk down homogenized subdivisions and shopping malls without the bother of those existing buildings or street grids.

Repeatedly, urban ecologists hear that it's a waste of time and money to re-build our cities and towns—to bring the built environment into sync with the natural environment—when land is cheap and barriers are few at the fringe. This attitude, especially prevalent since World War II, is a byproduct of an outdated frontier mentality which stresses human dominance over the natural landscape and neglects our existing urban areas.

So how do we curb this approach that leads us to devour productive farmlands at the urban fringe while ignoring the ecocity opportunities in our existing towns and cities? The answer is to create firm green edges for our
**Taxes for the lakefront?**

So now they are sending up trial balloons about a $285 million tax increase for lakefront projects—projects being rushed onto the public plate so they can be completed in time for Cleveland's bicentennial in 1996. One scheme advanced by Mayor Michael White calls for a sales tax or property tax paying $100 million to build the Great Waters Aquarium; up to $130 million to renovate Municipal Stadium for the Browns; $15 million to complete funding for the Great Lakes Museum of Science, Environment and Technology; and $40 million for improvements at the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority.

Laying aside equity issues raised by regressive sales taxes and whether the city's deteriorating neighborhoods and schools may need the money most, let's ask another question. If we are going to pump tax dollars into recreational enhancements, what could we spend the money on that would improve the quality of everyday life for the most people, both in the city and throughout the metropolitan area? What would the voters really feel good about buying? Here are some suggestions:

- Improved public access to the lakefront—a bond issue to gradually acquire lakefront property from Lorain to Mentor with the goal of establishing long stretches of public parks, as well as smaller pocket parks.
- Turning Burke Lakefront Airport into a public park surrounded by a new urban village.
- Development of neighborhood connectors to the lake — greenways from St. Clair-Superior, Detroit-Shoreway and other neighborhoods.
- Development of the proposed Ohio & Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor, a recreational link through the heart of the region.
- Creation of greenway corridors along other rivers and creeks in the region.
- A comprehensive system of bicycle routes and facilities throughout the region, so that cyclists of all abilities could ride where they need to go.
- Acquisition of open space and natural areas in the seven-county region, following recommendations from the Cleveland Metroparks' recent open space study. Since there are few large tracts of open space left in Cuyahoga County, it's vital to support the efforts of park districts in surrounding counties to buy land before it becomes too expensive. This is a regional issue.
- Restoration of existing urban parks.

These are the kinds of public investments in our region that politicians could feel good about championing.

**Welcome**

We welcome two new members to the EcoCity Cleveland Advisory Board. Lee DeAngelis is the director of the Great Lakes Regional Office of the Environmental Careers Organization and has been advising us on environmental education and other matters. Lois Epstein is an engineer with the Environmental Defense Fund in Washington, DC, and has helped us with pollution prevention issues. Thanks to both.

—David Beach
Editor
Green edges

From p. 1

communities—edges that go by the names of belts, boundaries and urban growth boundaries (UGBs).

Urban growth boundaries are long-term lines (set for 20 years or more) that stop outward sprawl and encourage investment in already built areas. Greenbelts are expansive bands of farmlands, parks, watersheds and other open lands that abut the UGB and our communities. Greenways are slender corridors of open space that lace through our communities, protecting key habitats and waterways within our cities and providing natural connections to an urban area's greenbelt.

Together, these three tools make up a "greenspace" system that contains our towns and cities. The system:

- Stops land speculation at the urban fringe, keeping communities from merging into one another.
- Directs attention to inner cities, stimulating innovative plans to use vacant, abandoned or under-utilized sites.
- Improves prospects for affordable housing (by encouraging more sustainable, higher density dwellings).
- Similarly improves the feasibility of public transit, bicycling and walking by helping to increase neighborhood densities.
- Protects the long-term health of ecosystems in and around communities.
- Enables residents of all incomes and backgrounds to make a quick retreat to nature, either in a greenway corridor or out in the greenbelt.
- Increases the viability of farming at the urban edge, creating the potential for re-connecting the traditional food supply link between country and city.
- And provides certainty and stability about the future direction of an urban area—the essential building blocks for creating a lasting community.

A common cause

What's also useful about UGBs, greenbelts and greenways is that they're highly collaborative and popular. They're collaborative because they require all sorts of people—environmentalists, home builders, farmers, and many others—to sit down and map out boundaries, protected areas, and development centers. They can bring diverse constituencies together and make local or regional planning a common cause. They've been popular in places ranging from Oregon to London because they're easy to understand and their benefits are so tangible (what better package could there be than environmental protection plus better communities with more affordable, accessible housing?). Efforts to undermine greenbelts and UGBs at the ballot box and in legislatures have been defeated, typically by increasing margins.

Despite the effectiveness and popularity of greenbelts, UGBs, and greenways, it has been slow going getting these measures implemented, especially the first two, because the attachment to old ways is hard to break.

As might be expected, most greenbelt efforts have taken place in Europe where landscape protection ethic prevail. Prominent examples include England, which has 15 "Green Belts," Denmark (Copenhagen has a remarkable "green wedge" plan separating it's developed corridors and assuring quick, non-motorized access to open space for all residents), and Switzerland (especially around Zurich).

In other parts of the world, progress is spotty. Sydney, Australia, has worked to protect a greenbelt around its perimeter. Also encouraging is Vancouver's effort to establish a secure "green zone" around the city and its suburbs.

In the United States, where the frontier mentality dies hard, there also is some good news to report. Since the early 1970s, the state of Oregon has required all cities and towns to draw a firm, 20-year UGB to discourage sprawl and encourage investment in its cities. Portland has especially benefited from the UGB's stimulation of investment in downtown, transit, and affordable housing development. Boulder, Colorado, has also established a firm "green frame" around the city and adopted complementary policies to encourage infill development.

In fact, across the U.S. new efforts are springing up to create "greenspace" systems. A coalition has formed of nonprofit groups to protect greenbelts and establish greenways, called the National Metropolitan Greenspace Initiative. The groups involved include Chicago's Openlands Project, New York's Regional Plan Association (working on a broad "greensward" project to protect landscapes and greenways), Portland's 1,000 Friends of Oregon, Philadelphia's Greenspace Alliance (a project of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council to establish greenbelts and greenways guarding watershed systems); and San Francisco's Greenbelt Alliance, working to protect Bay Area farmland, parks and watersheds since 1958.

Against the tide

Yet for all this activity, creating firm UGBs, greenbelts and greenways remains difficult. Despite many progressive moves to protect the greenbelt of the San Francisco Bay Area, for instance, a recent computer survey of land use trends for the next 30 years revealed that suburban sprawl proposals—almost all at the area's urban fringe—still threaten 570,000 acres of greenbelt lands (equal to 19 new San Franciscos).
Portland's edge

By Kevin Kasowski

The city of Portland, Oregon, is often hailed as one of America's most livable and best planned cities. Unlike many U.S. cities, it has a vibrant, healthy, human-scale downtown. In the 1970s, city leaders tore out a waterfront freeway and put in a waterfront park. In the 1980s, they invested in a light rail transit line, using money that was earmarked for another freeway.

But the most unique feature of the metro Portland region—and one that has contributed greatly to the success of the inner city and downtown—is the one you can't see. It's an invisible line against urban sprawl called an urban growth boundary, or UGB.

State land use planning

In the early 1980s, UGBs were put in place around every incorporated Oregon community as part of the implementation of Oregon's pioneering statewide land use planning laws, adopted in 1973. The metro Portland UGB encircles the entire urban region—all 24 cities and parts of three counties. It is 200 miles long and includes 325 square miles. An elected regional government, Metro, decides if, when and where the UGB is moved.

The idea of the UGB is simple: beyond the boundary, development is discouraged. Inside the boundary, which must include a 20-year supply of vacant lands for future growth, development is generally encouraged. When the UGB concept was introduced, it was intended mainly to prevent leapfrog development into the productive Willamette Valley farmlands that surround the metro Portland region. In effect, the UGB created a de facto open space greenbelt that protects everything outside of and between UGBs—some 25 million acres of land zoned for farm, forest and other rural uses—a notable feat compared to other areas where rural land is up for grabs.

Where the city stops

Over the years, the UGB concept has taken some new and surprising turns.

After a decade with UGBs in place, you can now see in many areas where the city stops and the country begins. A clear town-country boundary has been created, somewhat reminiscent of many older European villages.

A recent state Urban Growth Management study found that 95 percent of new residential development from 1985-89 took place inside metro Portland's UGB. Only five percent took place outside.

The character of residential development inside the UGB has also changed noticeably. After some initial opposition, homebuilders have jumped on the UGB bandwagon. Planning advocates and builders joined forces, for example, to support regional housing policies for land inside the UGB that have shifted development patterns toward more small, single-family residential lots and new townhome and multi-family construction. The shift away from typical, large-lot, "exclusionary" zoning has helped keep regional housing prices affordable.

In addition, the regional UGB has helped keep investment strong in downtown Portland and inner-city neighborhoods by preventing new investment from "leaking out" beyond the UGB in the form of low-density, sprawling, "Edge City" developments.

In short, the UGB—which began as a tool aimed primarily at protecting farmland outside the boundary—has evolved into a powerful urban growth management tool.

Compact suburbs

Now, with a UGB and healthy downtown in place, planning advocates are working to transfer that success to the 'burbs to create more sustainable development patterns. As part of its LUTRAQ (Land Use, Transportation, Air Quality) project, 1000 Friends of Oregon, a nonprofit citizens group, has developed a new land use vision for suburban Washington County, the fastest growing area in the metro Portland region. 1000 Friends enlisted the support of noted architect Peter Calthorpe to design a series of transit-oriented developments (TODs) to be located in the suburbs along metro Portland's emerging regional rail network.

The idea of a TOD is simple:
Sprawling Ohio

Research on the outmigration of homebuyers from Ohio's major cities (see our April 1994 cover story, "Moving to corn fields") is making news throughout the state. The Cincinnati Enquirer reported on June 15:

"In the first comprehensive study of Tri-state suburbanization, two University of Cincinnati researchers say the continuing move from Cincinnati spells trouble for the city—and its burgeoning suburbs. UC researchers Steven Howe and David Altar say that although the short-term benefits of moving farther from Fountain Square might make life good for suburbanites, the movement eventually will bring declining property values and other headaches."

Mirroring trends around the state, the study found that nine of 10 home sellers in Hamilton County in the 1980s bought homes farther from downtown, intensifying suburban sprawl and contributing to loss of population and tax base in the central city.

The research on outmigration trends was pioneered by Tom Bier of Cleveland State University's College of Urban Affairs and was conducted by Ohio's seven urban universities. By documenting the statewide effects of outmigration, such studies help build a case for state action—to stop promoting sprawl with new highways and other infrastructure investments, and to support better land use planning.
How I spent my summer vacation learning about transportation reform

By Jim Sheehan

For the past five years I've considered myself a local bicycle advocate. I've joined environmental groups, wrote letters, organized Bike to Work Days, and gone to meetings—lots of meetings.

In the meetings I'm used to a handful of cyclists sit around stuffing envelopes and trading hostile-motorist stories. Then we divide up a pile of posters and go for a bike ride.

The "Second Grassroots Transportation Reform Roundtable" held in August in Washington, D.C., was a different kind of meeting, however. Its agenda included workshops like "Efforts/Problems as Related to Federal Legislation and Agencies" on Sunday morning at 8:45 a.m., and "Discussion of SIPs, TIPs, NOx, & How They Lead to Transportation Reform."

From the advance material, it sounded a little overwhelming. But it was organized by the Surface Transportation Policy Project, one of the organizations that lobbied for the changes to federal highway funding policy which became the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA, or "ice tea" for short). ISTEA actually considers bicycles a form of transportation and legislates ways to pay for things like bike racks and paths. So I figured I'd be glad to listen to what these people had to say, especially since the agenda promised a crab dinner to boot.

So I packed my bag and intermodally transported myself to D.C., which was a bit of an education in itself. I biked to the Rapid station (where I left my junker-bike locked to a light pole in the absence of a bike rack), took RTA to the airport (Amtrak, ironically, was more expensive than the plane, and the Cleveland Amtrak station isn't served by RTA), flew to D.C. and boarded the Metro (where I noticed several secure bike racks at the station and met a commuter with his bike on the train, something that RTA still won't allow).

The first night, everyone introduced themselves, and the introductions alone gave a great picture of what's being done to straighten out the nation's car-crazed transportation mess. All kinds of groups were represented, some of which at first seemed pretty remotely concerned with transportation reform. But that turned out to be one of the main points of the whole thing: efficient transportation benefits everybody—bicyclists, clean air advocates, neighborhood activists, people concerned about watershed protection—not just motorists stuck in traffic jams.

The subject of acronyms also capped that first evening with some ISTEA humor. We were challenged to get through the whole conference without using any transportation planning acronyms: SIP, TIP, LRP, CMAQ, VMT, FHWA, FTA, DOT, MPO, AASHTO, etc. It was agreed that violators of this rule would have to pay a quarter per letter to Laura Olsen, the STPP staffer who did the legwork for the conference. Despite our self-policing, the next morning she was owed $47.50 by the first break, which was when I gave up counting, and we all gave up trying.

Transportation jargon can be baffling, indeed. Fortunately, many of the insiders at the meeting were able to translate. In a discussion of public participation, we came across the line, "Press for effective integrated, multimodal, demand-focused Congestion Management Systems with access-oriented performance measures." Translation: "How do we go shopping, to school and to work, without having to drive to hell and gone to get what we want?"

I also got a healthy dose of skepticism about computer modeling (a primary way that government planners determine future transportation demands). When one participant said that grassroots groups need "off-the-shelf modeling tools" to monitor their metropolitan planning agencies, STPP director Hank Dittmar opined that, "You can climb inside the black box with the technicians, but you can also stand outside and throw rocks at it, [because] most modeling doesn't pass the 'laugh test.' They just take a line from the past, project it into the future, add a bit for good measure, and divide by the number of lanes."

Later, the diversity of groups with a stake in transportation reform was revisited in "Coalition Building," when we were challenged to enlist organizations like our...
local chamber of commerce, the Teamsters, and the AARP in the fight for enlightened urban planning. Enlightening, but a bit beyond me: I'm still challenged just to enlist cyclists in a Bike To Work Day.

At the end of all the strategizing, we said goodbyes on the Metro as people disembarked to make their various connections. I squeezed in a sort of pilgrimage to the Smithsonian to see the Gossamer Condor, a human-powered airplane, and the Gold Rush, the first bicycle to break 60 mph, before catching the plane back to Cleveland.

After using the excellent public transport system in Washington, RTA seemed a bit shabby. But I found my bike as I left it, and I rode home reflecting on the lessons I had learned and how to put them to use in Cleveland.

First, you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Most of the brain-work in this cause has already been done and written about (with footnotes). To envision its application here takes no more than a few pounds of stuff to unpack my bag, I thought that what I really got out of the meeting, besides...about some 30 years ago, Rosa Parks sparked the greatest social change of my lifetime by refusing to sit at the back of an Alabama bus. Today Rosa Parks might find bus service nonexistent in her community. Or she might find that people of color were the only passengers on the bus.

In the decades since Ms. Parks took her rightful seat, we have achieved nominal integration of our society, yet our economic policies have divided us in profound ways. People with money have fled the cities to settle in mostly white suburban enclaves. From a society with transportation options for everyone, we have become a society in which the ability to afford a car determines most of our opportunities. Futurist and author Peter Schwartz recently cited the Federal Home Administration home mortgage program and the Federal Highway Administration Interstate Act as the two singlemost defining forces for social changes after World War II. The federal role in ensuring equity in investment and access derives as much from the equal protection clauses of the Constitution as from the federal role in interstate commerce. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is specifically referenced in the Federal Transit Act and in the new state and metropolitan planning regulations. These regulations also call for attention to the economic needs of central cities and to housing issues. President Clinton's new Executive Order on Environmental Justice asks all federal agencies to look more closely at the impact of their activities on disadvantaged communities. Finally, statement of policy of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act suggests that states and localities be funded to "help implement national goals relating to mobility for elderly persons, persons with disabilities and economically disadvantaged persons."

For decades, transportation officials saw their role as being to provide capacity to meet projected demand, leading to national design standards which rendered community needs secondary to vehicle needs. Now they see things in terms of a dichotomy between mobility and environment, and fear that one must be sacrificed to have the other. Can these same officials evolve to a new paradigm which seeks to meet multiple objectives, including mobility and the environment, while respecting community integrity and addressing profound social inequities?

Both officials and activists should seek transportation solutions that revitalize communities and put people first. At the same time, we must all be certain that everyone in society shares in the benefits of our progressive solutions. Hank Ditmar is executive director of the Surface Transportation Policy Project in Washington, DC. This article is reprinted from the June/July 1994 issue of the STPP newsletter.

Jim Sheehan is a grassroots bicycling activist with the Cleveland Area Bicycling Association and Wheels of Change.

Resources

The Surface Transportation Policy Project will send their newsletter, Progress, to concerned citizens and transportation planners. They also have published Transportation and the Changing Face Of America, an excellent primer on the societal ramifications of transportation planning. Contact STPP, 1400 16th St., NW, Washington DC 20036, (202) 939-3470.
Siting a superstore
The right place for competitive discount prices?

Some of the region's hottest land use battles involve the siting of superstores, such as Wal-Mart, Super Kmart and Meijer. How do these chains move into an area and select sites for their stores?

The following article describes the site selection process of Meijer, which is seeking to build a store in Broadview Heights at the intersection of Route 82 and Broadway Road. The text is excerpted from a wetlands permit application that Meijer's consultants submitted to Ohio EPA in April 1994.

Notice how the planning focuses on specific sites, not the larger impacts such stores have on regional traffic flows, retail trade or the quality of life in communities.

[Note: On October 10, Broadview Heights City Council responded to citizen opposition and voted down Meijer's proposed site plan for this store.]

Project description
Meijer proposes the construction of a store and adequate parking on the parcel. Meijer has designed a combination store which provides both grocery and other commodities, such as clothing, housewares, hardware, electronics, sporting goods, and garden supplies, under one roof. This design allows for maximum convenience for customers and greater volumes of merchandise sold, leading to more competitive discount prices. Volume sales is important to the success of the proposed Meijer store.

To accommodate this diversity and volume of merchandise under one roof, and maximize customer convenience, Meijer must construct a single-level structure with a total floor area of approximately 230,000 square feet. A separate convenience store/gasoline station will be located near Route 82. Access to the Meijer store will be provided from both Route 82 and Broadway Road. The store will require 1,300 off-street parking spaces in order to provide customer safety during the peak shopping season of Thanksgiving to Christmas.

The purpose of the project, the construction of the Meijer store, is to properly develop the site in accordance with zoning to maximize use of the land. Studies by Meijer have identified a target market of sufficient size to support the proposed store. Additionally, the store will provide some 700 jobs locally as well as up to $315,000 in real and personal property taxes. The project is supported by the local officials.

Alternate sites considered
Prior to selecting a site, Meijer must first determine the economic feasibility of the market, i.e., that a market exists to support a store. Over the years, they have established criteria which they use to evaluate potential markets and sites that have been identified within a certain target region. Meijer has created a profile of the patrons which typically shop at their stores in Michigan and Ohio, including age groups, income levels, etc. Demographic analysis of a target area generates a description of the persons that comprise this service area. In this case, Meijer evaluated the Broadview Heights/Brecksville area and determined that a target market exists.

Once it has been determined that a target market is present which is large enough to support their proposed development, including competitors, Meijer begins to evaluate potential development sites. As volume sales are the key to their success, high visibility, easy accessibility, and ample, convenient parking for customers, particularly during the peak shopping seasons, are critical. Based upon the area of the main store, parking, convenience store/gas station, and on-site stormwater management the typical property needed for a Meijer development is 36-40 acres. Factors that must be considered in site selection include site size, site dimensions/configuration, location relative to major thoroughfare and population centers, zoning, availability of utilities, and environmental factors.

Some of these factors can make a site completely unacceptable. For example, the absolute minimum site size is 28 acres, assuming off-site stormwater management, or about 34 acres if on-site stormwater storage is required. Minimum dimensions are 1000 feet for frontage and depth, with basically a rectangular configuration. Also, existing...
Alternative Site Location
Meijer Inc.
Broadview Heights

Figure 1

Source: Ohio Department of Transportation, Woolpert, 1994

zoning must allow the development, or the community must be willing to allow a variance or change. A site is unacceptable if any one of these criteria cannot be met.

In addition to the preferred site, four alternative sites were evaluated by Meijer. Alternative Site 1, the Crow Site, is located in the northeast quadrant of I-77 and Miller Road, in Brecksville. It is approximately 30 acres in size, less than the size usually required for a Meijer development. The site is also limited by accessibility; it is only directly accessible to traffic from southbound I-77. Northbound traffic would need to exit the interstate approximately 2.5 miles to the south at U.S. 21 or 2.5 miles to the north at Route 82. The site is currently zoned for local business and community facilities, and a previous proponent of a regional shopping center was refused a variance/zoning change in 1990. With regard to natural resources, the site also contains a significant length of headwater stream through its center. Therefore, development of this site would have comparable impacts on streams as the preferred site. Poor size, configuration, frontage/visibility, accessibility, and the need for stream relocation together encumber the site too heavily, making it unacceptable.

Alternative Site 2, the Tremont site, is located in the southwest quadrant of I-77 and Route 82. Its size, 31 acres, is also smaller than that required for a Meijer development. Visibility and accessibility for this site are both limited by its location approximately 1200 feet from Route 82, thereby requiring a single long driveway to access the store. The site is also constrained by its configuration, which is only 800 feet in depth. Regarding zoning, this parcel is located in both Broadview Heights and Brecksville. It is zoned for offices, and neither community wants rezoning to commercial. The owner would require a land lease which would essentially double the cost of the parcel over the life of the lease, and then Meijer would still have to ultimately purchase the parcel. Finally, the site also contains headwater streams which need to be altered for the development.

Alternative Site 3, the Richfield site, is located on the southeast quadrant of the intersection of I-77 and I-271. This site is large enough (200 acres) but is located too distant from the population centers and has no existing utilities. It also contains headwater streams.

All of Alternatives 1-3 contain similar, somewhat poorly drained soils as the preferred site, with similar topography. Therefore, they each have the same potential for wetland inclusions as the preferred site.

Finally, Alternative Site 4, the George Mitchell site, is located at the northwest quadrant of Route 82 and Broadview Road. This site, directly north of the preferred site, has been recently graded, does not contain a stream and otherwise has most of the same characteristics as the preferred site. However, it is clearly too small for the development (only 23 acres) and its L-shaped configuration makes a typical Meijer development impossible.

Preferred site

The preferred site has all of the qualities needed for the proposed development. Its size (40 acres) and configuration are adequate. It will be easily accessible from both Broadview Road and Route 82, both of which are major thoroughfares in this area. In fact, the transportation plan for the area includes expansion of Route 82 to four lanes because of existing and projected future traffic levels. Utilities are easily accessible, and the site is already zoned commercial. The presence of the unmapped, headwater stream on-site is the prime constraint to development.

According to Meijer's wetlands permit application, the project will fill in 0.61 acres of forested wetland. In addition, 2,200 linear feet of a creek will be filled and rerouted. Meijer proposes to mitigate the damage by constructing a wetland area in a detention basin, by creating meanders, pools and riffles in the rerouted creek, and by planting shrubs and trees along the creek bank.

The question—and it is a big question—is whether such landscaping features would restore the habitat and ecological functions of the natural wetland and stream, especially since the stream would be assaulted by the polluted stormwater runoff from a 1,300-space parking lot.

As we stated in our last issue, the suburban development of rural watersheds is one of the most serious water quality problems in Ohio. And small, headwater streams are often the most fragile parts of a watershed.
Old hot spots

Unregulated hazardous waste sites in the region

The following list contains the worst unregulated hazardous waste sites in the seven-county region. It is drawn from Ohio EPA's 1994 Master Sites List, which tracks known waste sites that potentially pose a threat to public health and/or the environment. Many of the sites are abandoned or uncontrolled facilities—called "unregulated" hazardous waste sites because the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous waste often occurred prior to the enactment of the nation's hazardous waste law in 1976.

The list here includes sites ranked "A" (an active site undergoing enforcement procedures), "H" (high priority sites where there is evidence of a release of hazardous waste which may present a threat to public health or safety), and "M" (medium priority sites where there is a potential for a release which may threaten public health and safety, or there is a release which may cause air or water pollution or soil contamination).

Another 155 sites in the region with low or zero priorities are not included here.

Ohio EPA constantly adds and deletes sites to the list as new information becomes available. For more detailed and up-to-date information about a particular site, contact Ohio EPA's Northeast District Office at 963-1200.

Number of sites in Ohio by county:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Site name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Problem</th>
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<td>CUYAHOGA</td>
<td>CLEVELAND HOPKINS AIRPORT SITES</td>
<td>5300 RIVERSIDE DR</td>
<td>CLEVELAND</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>BURN PITS</td>
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<td>CUYAHOGA</td>
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<td>COIT RD &amp; E 140TH</td>
<td>CLEVELAND</td>
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<td>PCB</td>
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<td>OFF CANAL RD</td>
<td>GARFIELD HTS</td>
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<td>627TH ST</td>
<td>CLEVELAND</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>RAD WASTE</td>
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<td>CUYAHOGA</td>
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<td>CLEVELAND</td>
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<td>DRUM RECOND</td>
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<td>1000 CROCKER RD</td>
<td>WESTLAKE</td>
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Acronyms stand for Ohio EPA's Master Sites List, which tracks known waste sites that potentially pose a threat to public health and/or the environment. Many of the sites are abandoned or uncontrolled facilities—called "unregulated" hazardous waste sites because the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous waste often occurred prior to the enactment of the nation's hazardous waste law in 1976.

The list here includes sites ranked "A" (an active site undergoing enforcement procedures), "H" (high priority sites where there is evidence of a release of hazardous waste which may present a threat to public health or safety), and "M" (medium priority sites where there is a potential for a release which may threaten public health and safety, or there is a release which may cause air or water pollution or soil contamination).

Another 155 sites in the region with low or zero priorities are not included here.

Ohio EPA constantly adds and deletes sites to the list as new information becomes available. For more detailed and up-to-date information about a particular site, contact Ohio EPA's Northeast District Office at 963-1200.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ohio EPA Division of Emergency and Remedial Response 1994 Master Sites List
Development vortex

What part of the region faces the greatest development pressure? It could be the four-corners area where Cuyahoga, Summit, Geauga and Portage counties meet. The reason: the area is surrounded by highways (I-480, I-80, and Route 422).

"I can't think of another area where such powerful forces are coming into play," said Cleveland State University housing policy analyst Tom Bier at a recent meeting in Mantua.

About 100 Portage County residents turned out for the meeting to discuss development impacts and traffic congestion coming from a new Ohio Turnpike interchange at Route 44. According to state projections, the interchange will cause southbound traffic on Route 44 to double. Northbound traffic, as well as traffic on Route 303, will also increase substantially.

Many of those cars will contain people who have moved to Portage County from Cuyahoga County, Bier said. The regional pattern of outmigration will burden the roads, municipal services, schools and land of rural areas, while draining population and tax base from existing urban areas.

"You've got a lot of hard work ahead of you," Bier told the crowd. "You can shape your future, but you have to be determined to make it what you want it to be."

The hard work will involve better zoning and land use controls, added Rick Hawksley of PLACE, a local land conservation organization. "Now our townships are 'Zoned For Your Protection.' But protected from what? Not from the accelerated loss of rural land," he said. "Will we join together and insist that private development respect the public quality of the landscape?"

To improve the county's ability to manage development in a coordinated manner, officials from the Portage County Regional Planning Commission outlined proposals for two planning studies. The first will study alternative development scenarios for the Route 44 corridor. And the second, which is already underway with citizen participation, will create a broad strategic plan for the county. Among the questions being addressed in the strategic planning process:

- Where should growth occur or not occur?
- What should the policies be for extension of utilities?
- Where should transportation and recreational improvements be developed to coordinate with the above mentioned growth areas?
- Where can services be coordinated between communities?
- Should we be preserving scenic, environmentally sensitive areas or prime agricultural land and, if so, how?
- Does this county want to control its destiny or have it controlled by market forces in an ad hoc, uncoordinated and wasteful manner?
- What kind of quality of life do people want for themselves and their children?

Safe to swim?

According to the Ohio Health Department, no Lake Erie beaches in Northeast Ohio were closed last summer due to high bacteria levels. But unhealthy levels at a number of beaches did require the posting of warning signs advising children, the elderly and those in ill health not to swim.

Advisories should have been posted on the following beaches during the week of the date given:

- Geneva State Park (7/14).
- Euclid State Beach Park (7/5, 7/12, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1).
- White City Beach (7/25, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 8/29).
- Fairport Harbor (8/11, 8/25).
- Headlands State Park East Beach (8/25).
- Avon Lake (7/12).
- Lakeview Park in Lorain (8/15, 8/22, 8/29).

High bacteria levels in Lake Erie typically follow rain storms that cause sewers to overflow. After a couple of days the pollution dissipates, unless there is a chronic "dry weather" sewage leakage in the area.

For more information about water quality sampling at bathing beaches, contact local health departments or the Ohio Department of Health at (614) 466-5190.

Although water at Edgewater Beach in Cleveland did not exceed bacteria standards this past summer, there was a big sewer overflow at the beach during the rain storm of August 13. The discharge from the Edgewater sewer overflow structure (the huge concrete pipe that sticks out from the base of the bluff) washed away a portion of the beach. To fill in the hole, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District had to truck in 3,571 tons of sand at a cost of $51,784.65. The Edgewater combined sewer overflow used to discharge frequently and pollute the beach, but the sewer district has found ways to store flow in large interceptor sewers so now overflows occur only during the most severe rains.

Preserving rural character

Randall Arendt, a national expert on issues of rural zoning and sensitive development to preserve rural character, will make two presentations of his provocative slide show on November 16 and 17. The November 16 show will be at 7:15 p.m. at Notre Dame Educational Center, 13000 Auburn Road in Munson Twp. The November 17 show will be at 7:15 p.m. at Hiram College's Hayden Auditorium in Hiram Village. Sponsored by Headwaters Landtrust and other conservation and planning organizations. Free and open to the public.
Tweaking the Dual Hub numbers?
RTA officials are sweating out the final stages of ridership and economic development studies that will help tell us all whether the Cleveland Dual Hub rail line is a wise investment. Preliminary figures indicate that a $700 million rail/subway line along Euclid Avenue between downtown and University Circle might not offer many benefits over a much less expensive improvement of existing bus service. A decision on the Dual Hub—and public meetings—will be delayed while the numbers are re-evaluated. One planning dilemma is the trade-off between lots of stations on the rail line (which would create more opportunities for economic development) and the speed of the trip. With one early configuration of stations, planners estimated the trip would take five minutes longer than the existing Red Line. So they had to cut out four stations. "If it takes longer, it ceases to be the Rapid," admitted an RTA official at a recent Dual Hub meeting.

Another controversy is between those favoring an improved bus/bicycle corridor along Euclid and those wanting rail so they can get rid of buses. The Playhouse Square Foundation, for example, doesn't like the sight of buses stopping at its doorstep.

Meanwhile, even though no one knows if the Dual Hub project will be approved, buildings along Euclid Avenue are already being forced to take the proposed rail right-of-way into account. The Pierre's Ice Cream building under construction at Euclid and E. 61st Street, for example, had to be set back farther from the street than its designers wanted.

Dioxin from the sludge?
Heightened public concern about dioxin emissions from incinerators may be making the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District a little nervous. At the district's October 6 board meeting, trustees considered a resolution authorizing the expenditure of up to $40,750 for "additional dioxin performance testing and air dispersion modeling services at the Westerly Wastewater Treatment Plant." The sewer district incinerates sludge collected from the wastewater treatment process, and officials want to know what combustion byproducts are going up the stack and where they go.

Look About Lodge
The Cleveland Metroparks has new facility for promoting environmental awareness—a rustic lodge on Miles Road between Chagrin River road and SOM Center. Look About Lodge was built out of chestnut logs during the Depression as a cooperative project of the Metroparks, the WPA jobs program, and the Cleveland Nature Club. Until recently, the nature club had exclusive use of the lodge. But now the Metroparks has assumed control of the building and will be using it for in-depth programs in environmental education, natural history, family camping programs and speakers series.

Organizations that have a similar environmental conservation mission to the Metroparks can rent the lodge for events. For more information, call the lodge naturalist/manager Wendy Weirich at 247-7075 or 341-3152.

Covering ground
The venerable Cleveland Hiking Club is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Organized to promote hiking for health and recreation, the club sponsors hikes through town and country all over Northeast Ohio. For example, the club's schedule for October includes two or three hikes planned nearly every day. For more information, call 749-4762 or 398-5852. To receive the club's next bimonthly schedule of activities, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Cleveland Hiking Club, P.O. Box 347097, Cleveland, OH 44134.

Bikes on the waterfront
Bicycle advocates and the Cleveland Waterfront Coalition are trying to ensure that improvements to Cleveland's North Coast Harbor include facilities for bikes. On October 24, the coalition sponsored a meeting with city officials and transportation planners to review the city's planned pedestrian enhancements for E. 9th Street. Topics also included the status of the moribund Lakefront Bikeway and how RTA's new Waterfront Rail Line could be designed to facilitate the bikeway.

How long will it be before cyclists have a safe, efficient route along the lakefront?

Deer crossings
The pressure is mounting to do something to control the local deer population.

According the Deer Management Task Force of the Cuyahoga Valley Communities Council, the number of reported highway accidents involving deer in Cuyahoga and Summit counties has doubled in the past six years from 505 to 1,063.

An overpopulation of hungry deer also wrecks ecological destruction by browsing the understory plants of woodlands to death. In some nature preserves, rare plants have to be fenced in to protect them. Local botanists joke that the Ohio state flower should be a painted trillium...in the mouth of a voracious deer.

Suburban communities and park districts have been debating ways to manage the deer population—controlled hunts, bow hunting, sterilization. But the idea of hunting Bambi near residential areas has been controversial, to say the least.

Rent a management plan, authorities are urging motorists to drive carefully, especially during deer mating season from mid-October through November when the animals are on the move.

Maybe what we really need is to reintroduce natural predators to Northeast Ohio. Where are the wolves when we need them?

Railroad blight
In Cleveland's Midtown Corridor area, deteriorated Conrail bridges crossing Euclid and Carnegie avenues create visual blight and emotional barriers to redevelopment. But the bridges could be transformed from eyesores to assets.

At least that was the hopeful message coming from residents, design professionals and students at a recent neighborhood design charette sponsored by the Cleveland Neighborhood Development Corporation. The intensive, one-day planning session generated a long list of ideas for improving the structures, including dramatic lighting to illuminate the bleak underpasses, turning the bridges into landmarks with railroad logos, a commuter rail station at Euclid E. 55th Street (where a train station once existed), and the attraction of a railroad car diner at E. 55th to bring people to the area.

On the same day, other teams of urban designers generated ideas for a neighborhood hub for Cleveland's Garret Square, a revitalization strategy for Warner Road, and a plan to boost the neighborhood identity of Clifton Boulevard.

Great Lakes information network
The Great Lakes Information Network (GLIN) can now be accessed online through the Internet, the worldwide computer network. GLIN, which is organized by the Great Lakes Commission, provides quick access to current data about the Great Lakes region. Topics include environmental quality, natural resources, commerce, industry, legislation, human health, and education. A brochure on how to get hooked up to GLIN is available from Ohio Sea Grant, The Ohio State University, 1314 Kinnear Road, Columbus, OH 43212, (614) 292-8949.
GLEANINGS

Biking in Bay
At least one new lakefront bikeway opened recently. Lake Road through Bay Village has been repaved and widened—wide enough so that the city now allows bikes on it. Bay Village has long been the bane of serious cyclists because it restricts bikes to designated routes, instead of allowing them on all roads like other vehicles.

Drains to lake!
The storm drain stenciling project of the Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan has passed its 3,500th drain. The environmental education project organizes teams of students, scouts and members of other organizations to paint warning signs on streets next to storm drains—drains which lead to streams, Lake Erie and our supply of drinking water. For information on participating, call Jan Rybka at 443-3730.

Landtrust gift
"...to ensure that there would always be some land in Geauga County that was in its original condition..." the Grosvenor family of Claridon Twp. has donated 25 acres of woodlands to the Headwaters Landtrust. The land on Hall Road had been in the family since it was purchased from the Connecticut Land Co. in 1819. The new nature preserve will be called the Grosvenor-Newell Woods.

Warning: Pesticides!
Some 56 million pounds of pesticides are used annually in the Great Lakes watershed. Because the lakes retain water for a long time, some persistent pesticides accumulate in the sediments, recycle into the water, and accumulate in the food chain.

The use of such pesticides can be minimized and consumers educated about the potential problems with pesticide exposure. The Cuyahoga County unit of the American Cancer Society has published a pamphlet, WARNING: The Use of Pesticides May Be Hazardous to Your Health! For a copy, call 241-1177. Bulk quantities for distribution are available.

Complaining pays
Overheard conversation between tree care company worker and his boss on the radio just after Cleveland Heights residents demanded that he not spray pesticides on a neighbor’s tree: "I’ve been getting complaints all day. I give up! I’m not going to spray anymore."

Payimg for access
Over 92% of 532 participants surveyed by Ohio Sea Grant at the 1994 Fairport Road and Reel Fishing symposium said they favored increasing public access to Lake Erie. They said they were willing to pay an average of $25.22 per household annually in higher taxes, prices and fees for greater public access. Almost 85% also favored the public purchase of Mentor Lagoons for public use.

Sad sign
"Juergenmier Farm built on this site, c. 1890." So it reads under the photo of the homestead hanging by the door of the new Max & Erma’s restaurant franchise at the Promenade of Westlake, a new shopping center built on fields and woods. An old skeleton key from the farmhouse is displayed over the photo.

Rural executives
A farmer friend reports that officials in Geauga County are having to cope with unusual demands for snow plowing from residents of new subdivisions. In the past, the rural residents used to wait out blizzards by walking over to a neighbor’s house for coffee. Now busy executives call local officials to demand clear roads so they can make it to the airport to catch early morning flights.

Permits to pollute
Here are some Ohio EPA actions of interest from recent weeks. For complete and up-to-date lists of permit activities in your county, watch for weekly legal notices in your local newspaper. For more detailed information, call the Ohio EPA Northeast District Office in Twinsburg, 440-917.

Public hearing
A public hearing on Ohio EPA’s draft hazardous waste permits for Chemical Solvents Inc., 3751 Jennings Road, Cleveland, will be held at 7 p.m. November 3 at Dublin Elementary School, 3799 W. 33rd St.

Fines
U.S. EPA has fined the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority $74,718 for violating underground storage tank regulations. EPA says RTA improperly installed and monitored tanks for fuel and oil at its Hayden, Triskett and Brooklyn bus depots.

Water pollution permits
Pet Processors, Painesville, organic chemical plant, discharge to Silver Creek.

VOC Plant, Mogadore, organic chemical plant, discharge to Wingfoot Lake Outlet.

Country Club, Pepper Pike, discharge to tributary of Chagrin River.

Cleveland Striping and Denturing, Cleveland, pretreatment system.

Cuyahoga Steel & Wire, Solon, pretreatment system.

Marathon Oil, Highland Heights, system to control and treat contaminated groundwater.

Ross Incineration Services, Grafton, aeration package plant.

Air pollution permits
CEI Lakeshore Plant, steam boiler fired with fuel oil.

Ashland Chemical, Cuyahoga Heights, zinc stack blending and packing.

AAS/Clubb Steel, Lorain, slow cooling furnaces.

BFI, Atwater, landfill gas collection system with flare control.

ACO Polymer Products, Chardon, polymer separation.

DeMita Sand & Gravel, Eastlake, concrete-rock crusher.

Northern Ohio Cremation Service, Mentor.

Osborne Concrete & Stone, Grand River, crushing plant.

Industrial Rubber, Wickliffe, burn-off oven for cleaning parts.

Lorain Properties, Lorain, landfill and asbestos waste disposal operation.

Lexus Aerospace, Aurora, vapor degreasers, vanishing booth, cleaning booth, drying ovens.

Permits to pollute
U.S. Laboratories, Solon, mixers and resin dispensers.

Tremco, Cleveland, insulation adhesive process and roofing mixing process.

Cleveland Steel Container, Streetsboro, surface coating line, cure oven, thermal incinerator.

Sea World, Aurora, solvent metal cleaning.

Hazardous waste
Chemtron, Avon, closure plan.

BP America Warrensville Research Center, closure plan for incinerator and container pad.

GSX Chemical Services, closure plan.

Universal Fuller, Cleveland, enforcement to comply with hazardous waste regulations.

River Recycling Industries, Cleveland, closure plan for underground storage tank.

Ferrous Metal Processing, Brooklyn, closure plan for waste bay and storage pad.

Water/sewer line extensions
Bonneville Subdivision Phase 1, Bedford Heights.

Silver Creek, Bradley, Lake Isca Reserve, Middleburg Heights.

Hilltop Place, Westlake.

Preston Village Subdivision, Brecksville.

Waterford Pointe Condominiums, Twinsburg.

Washington and Husking streets, Bainbridge Twp.

Middle Ridge Road, Amherst.

Rosefair Almoting Phase I, Fairlawn.

Wooded View Estates Phase I, Bath Twp.

Briarwood Subdivision, Olmsted Falls.

Ashbrook West Phase 2, Boston Heights.

Eagle Creek Subdivision Phase 2, Avon.

Westchester Estates Subdivision No.4, Amherst.

Fairways Subdivision Phase 1, Brunswick Hills Twp.

Hathorn of Aurora 2, Aurora.

Cornerstone Park Subdivision Phase 1, Rootstown Twp.

Kenneth Park Subdivision, Walton Hills.

Indian Ridge Estates No.2, Vermilion.

Taylorwood Subdivision, LaGrange.

Devonshire Meadows, Avon.

Fox Meadow Subdivision Phase I, Montville Twp.

Eaton Estate Phase 1B and 1C, Sagamore Hills Twp.

Wetlands (401) permits
Franklin and Margaret Rice, Novelty, Spring Creek.

Penny Embury, Lakewood, Lake Erie.

James Crandell, Bay Village, Lake Erie.

John Bowman, Sheffield Lake, L. Erie.
October 25
Sierra Club Urban Sprawl Committee monthly meeting, 7 p.m. at the Church of the Covenant, 11205 Euclid Ave. in University Circle. Cleveland Planning Commission director Hunter Morrison will speak.

October 26
Monthly meeting of the Sierra Club Northeast Ohio Group, 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in University Circle. New Sierra staff, Glenn Landers and Jeff Skelding, will present priorities for 1994-95.

Late autumn sightings in the bioregion

Birds
Black ducks, mergansers, whistling swans, Canada geese, white-throated sparrows, tree sparrows, fox sparrows, juncos, red-bellied and downy woodpeckers.

Wildflowers
New England asters, goldenrods, milkweed pods release their fluffy seeds.

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October 28
Student Congress of the GREEN Northeast Ohio Rivers Project, starting at 9 a.m. at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center in Peninsula. The project introduces students to water quality monitoring and links them via computer networks to other student stream watchers around the world.

November 3-4
Annual conference of the Ohio Association of Community Development Corporations at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Cleveland. Call (614)461-6392 for registration information.

November 4
Annual meeting of the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District, 7 p.m. at Cleveland Metroparks Look About Lodge. Brian Parsons, natural areas coordinator at the Holden Arboretum will speak on landscaping with native plants. Clambake dinner $13. Call 524-6580 for reservation details.

November 5
Birdwatching in the CVNRA with park rangers and the Cuyahoga Valley Bird Club, 8-10:30 a.m. at the Oak Hill Day Use Area off Oak Hill Road.

November 10-12
U.S. Healthy Communities Conference in Philadelphia, held in conjunction with the National Civic League's National Conference on Governance -- America Renewal. Call (800) 223-6004 for information.

November 19
EcoCity Cleveland editor David Beach will speak on "Thinking Bioregionally in Northeast Ohio," at 7 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks Garfield Park Nature Center.

November 22
Annual community luncheon of the Cleveland Restoration Society, 11:30 a.m. at Stouffer Tower City Plaza Hotel. Ruth Miller, president of Tower City Center, will speak on the revitalization of Cleveland's neighborhoods. Call 621-1498 for ticket information.

Linking land use and transportation planning
The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy are sponsoring an important program on the links between land use and transportation planning, November 17-18, at the Stouffer Tower City Plaza Hotel in Cleveland. Topics include the latest research findings on the relationship between transportation and land use, demographic trends and their effects on travel behavior, innovative zoning ordinances and design guidelines for transit-oriented development. Tuition is $155. Call 241-2414 for registration information.

Board meetings of regional agencies
Here are the regular, monthly meeting times of agencies that are shaping our region. Call to confirm.

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

MAP OF THE MONTH