

# YELLOW SPRINGS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## FINAL DRAFT – 05/08/09

### 4.0 LAND USE PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

#### Introduction

Our community has consistently valued the surrounding rural environment and the small-town feel of our village that have endured since the Comprehensive Land Use Plan's first iteration, circa 1969. These have been incorporated into many community activities including all planning/land use documents. A number of long-standing issues, such as the role of tourism, have also played a familiar role in many land-use decisions. These values and issues have been discussed in previous Comprehensive Plans and are updated in this Plan.

For this 2009 update to the Comprehensive Plan, a set of nine principles have been developed to help guide future planning and land use decisions, including zoning decisions.

After the discussion of the community values, issues and the articulation of implementing principles, the major areas of land use planning are discussed and land use objectives identified.

#### Values and Issues

In this section the community values and recurring issues underlying and guiding the community's land use planning and decision-making activities are discussed. With each value or issue, there are interdependencies and trade-offs that enter into land use decisions, and these are also discussed below.

##### **A. Open Space**

The community has consistently expressed that it values preservation of open space, natural topographic and vegetation features, and critical environmental areas. The community has consistently identified the importance of "guaranteed" open space-- land which is legally restricted with regard to development-- and has even used the tools available through Village Government and private organizations to act on that desire. In general, these actions have been perceived as positive and retain continued local support.

As important as preservation of open space is to the community, there are trade-offs that include reduction of land available for other uses, reduction in potential property tax revenues and increases in value of adjacent land, making it less affordable to some segments of the population and thereby potentially reducing diversity. Various groups in the community are at work to mitigate these concerns through subsidized housing and the exploration of development patterns that attempt to increase density.

##### **B. Economic Vitality**

Yellow Springs has largely been a relatively self-reliant community that has the knowledge, skills, resources and vision to identify changing economic conditions, locate needed technical assistance and initiate action in such a way that protects the Village character and distributes local economic benefits equitably.

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The global, national and local economic pictures are constantly changing and the Village must continue to define and maintain its role in this changing world. An unbalanced reliance upon one element of the economy, tourism for instance, is risky and should be avoided. Public and private support for new ventures spanning many areas of the marketplace must be maintained and enhanced wherever and whenever possible.

The community believes in planned growth and must continue to look seriously at how education, business and industry contribute to ongoing economic health.

### **C. Healthy Downtown**

While one major role of the downtown is to serve the commercial needs of the community, we also recognize and seek to preserve its role as a vital place for social interaction. Presently, the downtown is a vibrant mixture of commercial, social and cultural activities. This environment is treasured by the community, and methods of supporting and encouraging that role should be pursued.

It is also crucial to recognize and preserve the downtown's character as an "anchor" for the community's heritage and history, and to ensure the ongoing stability of those components that make up that character, while also recognizing and protecting the rights of downtown business and property owners. Unique, locally-owned and operated businesses contribute to the identity of the downtown and should be recognized for that and encouraged. National franchises and businesses need to be made aware of this and encouraged to design their Yellow Springs locations in ways that allow them to blend into the existing fabric of the downtown and avoid changes that significantly alter the total ambiance.

### **D. Healthy Business Districts**

While the downtown area is unique and has special qualities that the community values, there is also a recognition that the limited size of the downtown area means that it cannot serve all the economic activity needs of the community. Therefore, the economic vitality of the community also requires that all the business districts remain healthy.

### **E. Local Control and Acceptable Level of Public Services**

The community has long exercised local control of public services such as utilities, police protection and a locally operated, independent school system. Historically there have been overt demonstrations of this commitment, including the use of local resources and revenue. Local control has enabled the Village to choose to provide higher quality services that are more expensive than less extensive services elsewhere.

Continuing to provide locally controlled services will require an on-going community commitment to maintaining a revenue base sufficient to keep these services affordable. Otherwise a higher cost of living results in challenges -- higher utility rates, for example -- which make it harder to maintain an economically diverse population.

### **F. Diversity**

The community continues to find that it is desirable to maintain a population that is economically, ethnically, politically, culturally, educationally, professionally diverse with the full range of age groups, and that is inclusive of those with disabilities. As in the past, Villagers recognize the value of being a part of a diverse community. The wide array of resources that result from such diversity is a treasured asset. Constructive efforts must be pursued to ensure that a wide variety of lifestyles are part of the community. These efforts will involve both public and private entities.

## **H. Staying Small**

Although the community has clearly expressed the desire to stay “small” numerous times in the past, this may not be possible or even desirable when balanced with other desires of the community and in the face of being an economically sustainable community.. The Village might be perceived as a living organism that needs movement, growth and change in order to survive. It may more appropriate to modify the desire to "stay the same" into actions that identify valued assets, services, programs and amenities of the community and express a willingness to incorporate changes and growth that preserve and enhance those assets.

## **I. Tourism**

Many Village residents feel that the topic of tourism is a critical one. Yellow Springs has been a place for visitors since its beginnings, when tourists came to sample the water from the mineral spring. Obviously, more recent additions such as the bike path have influenced the numbers of people who visit the Village, their ages and interests, and the types of activities they are likely to engage in while here. Recognizing that it is difficult to identify direct relationships between "tourism" and specific by-products or effects of tourism, this Plan focuses on issues that may or may not be products of tourism, such as limited parking, the need for additional public facilities, and economic development.

There is no evidence of Village consensus on whether or not tourism itself should be encouraged or discouraged, though there seems to be widespread acceptance of the fact that if the Village is charming and interesting, people will want to visit. For that matter, regional and national attention to these attributes of Yellow Springs in the press and other media seems to elicit no small degree of pride. There seems to be a general perception that there are problems needing attention related to increased numbers of cars and people for temporary periods of time mainly in the downtown area, and these problems especially the development of alternative parking areas other than downtown should be identified and dealt with, regardless of who or what may be responsible for their existence. The Village sponsored endeavor to enhance the Cemetery Street Parking area is an example.

## **J. Planned Growth**

Much of the essence of the existing Village depends on limited change in the surrounding Township. Not only should the Village monitor potential changes within its Urban Service Area, defined as such on the 2006 Urban Service Area Map (Appendix B to this document), but it should also seek to cooperate with Miami Township to address development and find ways to meet the needs of both Village and township residents with planned growth, without the type of uncontrolled growth commonly recognized as sprawl.

Even so, emerging regional land use plans being developed by the Regional Planning and Coordinating Commission of Greene County ([www.co.greene.oh.us](http://www.co.greene.oh.us)) and the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission ([www.mvrpc.org](http://www.mvrpc.org)) must be acknowledged as possibly having an influence on our community's future land use planning efforts.

## **K. Historic Preservation**

Historic preservation has long been a concern of Village citizens and local government representatives. Whereas there has been no direct Village governmental participation in this area, the Yellow Springs Historical Society has been in existence for many years. During the early years of historical involvement, activities were limited to surveys and data collection. As a result, there is a limited recognition of historic sites and properties.

Up to now, the salvage of important historic resources has relied on the goodwill and cooperation of landowners. This cooperation cannot be counted on to always be successful in the future. Due in part to the lack of regulation, a number of significant historic treasures have been lost. With the closing of Antioch College and the resulting vacancy of its historic campus, and with the emphasis on infill as a strategy for growth in the Village, measures must be taken to insure the reliable conservation of historic resources. The community seems to be at the threshold of new historical conservation activity. The process of preserving our historic resources must begin with a plan of action.

1. Articulate an historical overview to establish the context for preservation activities.
2. Establish an updated inventory of historic sites.
3. Village Council should consider legislation to address the concerns of historic preservation practices.

### **Land Use Principles**

The principles articulated below have been identified for the first time in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan for the purpose of guiding the community's land use planning and decision-making, including zoning decisions.

**Principle 1** - Make land use provisions and decisions that make possible the restoration, maintenance, and retention of a population, employment, and economic base that is capable of sustaining the community.

**Principle 2** - Make provisions for a range of housing opportunities, costs, and choices that provide safe, quality housing for current and potential residents of all income levels.

**Principle 3** - Support land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play.

**Principle 4** - Encourage collaborative land use development that honors both landowners' rights to a fair return on the value of their land, and the community's desire to determine how and where it wants to grow. Land use decisions should be made in a manner that make land use proposals predictable, fair, and cost-effective by a land use plan and zoning code that is consistent with this Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

**Principle 5** - Promote compatible mixed-use land use adjacencies that foster synergies (not disharmonies) among residential, commercial, retail, educational, and industrial uses.

**Principle 6** - Preserve open space, naturally occurring topographic features and vegetation, critical environmental areas, and historic buildings and land uses.

**Principle 7** - Promote a transportation infrastructure that supports safety, compatibility, and accessibility for pedestrian, bicycle, and motorized vehicles.

**Principle 8** - Direct new development, should it occur, to areas either already served by existing infrastructure – water, sanitary sewer, electric, and streets – or to areas defined as being within our Urban Service Area, and encourage the township to do the same.

**Principle 9** - Promote new retail, commercial, and industrial development in areas in the community where these land uses already exist (are already zoned for), and/or to yet undeveloped areas in the community and the Urban Service Area where compatible land use adjacencies already exist.

## 4.1 HOUSING

**Principle 1** - Make land use provisions and decisions that make possible the restoration, maintenance, and retention of a population, employment, and economic base that is capable of sustaining the community.

**Principle 2** - Make provisions for a range of housing opportunities, costs, and choices that provide safe, quality housing for current and potential residents of all income levels

**Principle 3** - Support land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle - to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play

Opinions about the adequacy of housing in the Village and Miami Township vary, but there is a common concern about the Village's ability to respond to changes in housing needs. Current census figures continue to suggest a shrinking and aging population. Nevertheless, there is at least the perception of limited available housing that fulfills these Principles, and that therefore planned moderate growth in housing that facilitates the achievement of these Principles should be encouraged.

To test the validity of this perception there should be periodic assessments of:

- A. the existing mix of housing types, including rentals, and costs,
- B. the changing demands for housing types and costs,
- C. how these demands are or are not being met by the existing mix, and
- D. the household incomes/economic capacity necessary to afford the housing types in the mix.

These assessments should account, in so far as it is possible to do so, for

- A. emerging trends that would create rapid change,
- B. the rise in housing costs due in part to increased taxes, public service costs (including an independent local school system) as well as for increases in "construction" and "land" costs, and
- C. the competitive cost due to the desirability of living in Yellow Springs, especially when housing is tight.

Village Government bears considerable responsibility for ensuring safe housing. The community has also indicated support for Government involvement in ensuring that Village provides a wide variety of opportunities to obtain housing. At a minimum, land use planning and decisions should ensure that policies and laws foster, or at least do not inhibit, the achievement of these Principles.

## 4.2 COMMERCE

**Principle 1** - Make land use provisions and decisions that make possible the restoration, maintenance, and retention of a population, employment, and economic base that is capable of sustaining the community.

**Principle 5 - Promote compatible mixed-use land use adjacencies that foster synergies (not disharmonies) among residential, commercial, retail, and industrial uses.**

**Principle 9 - Direct new retail, commercial, and industrial development to areas in the community where these land uses already exist (are already zoned for), and/or to yet undeveloped areas in the community and the Urban Service Area where compatible land use adjacencies already exist.**

One factor that has distinguished Yellow Springs from other communities of comparable size has been the diversity of its commercial activities. The orientation of activities include retail, professional, medical, research, educational and industrial/manufacturing. The size of these businesses ranges from individuals to hundreds of employees. This diversity has provided a wide variety of job opportunities and growth potential, and has mitigated the economic impact of the rise and fall of any particular component of commerce. Another important byproduct of this diversity has been the contribution to the community of the variety and expertise of the individuals connected to these ventures. However, trends in recent years have significantly reduced some components of this diverse mix.

Based on past and present concerns expressed by community members, one goal for future commercial activity in the Village should focus on the development and utilization of an economic strategy that conserves resources and increases local productivity. This would include emphasizing human development (skills, knowledge, talents), expanding local control of resources (water, land, etc.), increasing internal investment capacity (providing capital to underwrite growth that will stay in the Village).

Land use planning and zoning should provide opportunity for new and expanding commercial activity while protecting current land uses and the vitality of the downtown area. To accomplish this objective, the Land Use Plan (Appendix B) establishes several custom commercial districts, each with its special character and purpose:

- A. The Central Business District (CBD), with its concentration of various uses in a relatively small area, is aimed at serving mostly pedestrian traffic, but with parking needs for both bicycles and motorized vehicles. There very little currently vacant land in this district.
- B. A General Business District (US 68/Xenia Avenue from approximately Brookside Drive to the south corporate limits) with a primary focus on automobile related businesses and large land users. Examples of such businesses include vehicular services and dealerships, motels, drive-through food services, and industrial/manufacturing operations.
- C. A light industrial area north of the Central Business District where buildings related to past industrial/commercial activities are currently being put to new uses.
- D. The area at the intersection of Dayton Street and East Enon Road including the recently established Center for Business and Education.

Land use planning and land use decisions should support all the districts to:

- A. Preserve each as an “anchor” for its respective (but different) role in providing places for community interactions that are commercial, social, and cultural,
- B. Ensure their stability while recognizing the rights of business and property owners,
- C. Ensure that unique, locally owned and operated businesses continue to contribute to the community’s identity,
- D. Encourage businesses coming into the community to design their locations and operations to “blend” into these interactions, stability, and permanence of the community’s retail and commercial centers.

The Village's PUD process also allows commercial activity to be established in other areas as part of a coherent plan that has received the community's support.

In order to avoid retail development in strip centers throughout the Village, retail activity should be clustered, and not simply allowed to develop wherever space and prime street frontage allow. Such clustering should be limited to increasing around the two primary retail areas already existing -- the central business district and the area south of Brookside Drive along the east side of Xenia Avenue.

Although commercial districts other than the Central Business District are currently predicated primarily on vehicular access, land use planning, zoning and community policy should also require provisions for easy access by pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Village's commercial land use policies should support a diversity of successful commercial activities, encourage assistance to existing local commercial activities and local entrepreneurial efforts, and enable and encourage commercial activities to relocate here. These policies may use concessions on density, open space and other land use features to reward conservation of resources, and environmental, economic, and other sustainability features.

### **4.3 INDUSTRY**

**Principle 1 - Make land use provisions and decisions that make possible the restoration, maintenance, and retention of a population, employment, and economic base that is capable of sustaining the community.**

**Principle 3 - Support land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play.**

**Principle 5 - Promote compatible mixed-use land use adjacencies that foster synergies (not disharmonies) among residential, commercial, retail, educational, and industrial uses.**

**Principle 9 - Direct new retail, commercial, and industrial development in areas in the community where these land uses already exist (are already zoned for), and/or to yet undeveloped areas in the community and the Urban Service Area where compatible land use adjacencies already exist.**

Industry has long been part of the community's economic fabric. In the past, many task forces and committees have been assigned to evaluate how to continue, resurrect and perpetuate this historically vibrant part of the community, whether stimulated by local entrepreneurial ingenuity or by incubation (as by Antioch College's science and engineering disciplines, neither of which now exist, which created Morris Bean, Vernay and YSI). These committees generated the Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund (EDRLF), which is strategically used to foster commercial, industrial and retail businesses that create local jobs. They decided that State and Federal Economic Development grants should be sought to secure the community's economic sustainability. External funding can contribute to sustaining local enterprises -- commercial, retail and industrial -- that are contributors to the community's business economy, diversity and independence.

Industrial land use plans and decisions should support existing industries, enabling them to grow and remain in the community. These plans should also attract new industries to locate, expand and thrive in the community by encouraging state-of-the-art telecommunications and environmentally sustainable building design and manufacturing practices. Additionally, we recognize the need to keep local commercial, industrial, retail and health care activities in the community.

It is important to recognize Health Care as an industry. The Village is fortunate to be home to some of the area's finest healthcare facilities and practitioners, including medical doctors, dentists, chiropractic and other holistic care providers. The Village also has an excellent long-term care nursing center, which includes assisted living and independent living units.

#### 4.4 EDUCATION

**Principle 1 - Make land use provisions and decisions that make possible the restoration, maintenance, and retention of a population, employment, and economic base that is capable of sustaining the community.**

**Principle 3 - Support land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play.**

**Principle 5 - Promote compatible mixed-use land use adjacencies that foster synergies (not disharmonies) among residential, commercial, retail, educational, and industrial uses.**

A community forum dubbed the Village of Yellow Springs as the "Education Village" owing to our own local educational institutions, and those in close proximity to the community (Appendix C) that have been part of the educational assets of our community and that have contributed to the social and economic development of the community and that have collectively been among the largest employers of local residents.

While the public school population has generally declined over the past twenty-five years, local school achievement remains on a high level and community support (through taxation and tuition) continues to be acceptable to taxpayers and to parents.

With the closing of Antioch College on July 1, 2008, it is especially important that community land use planning continue to enable the community's local educational institutions to:

- 1) attract and retain students,
- 2) retain the open spaces their campuses and contiguous land uses represent,
- 3) maintain the relatively clear and safe intersections proximate to their facilities, and
- 4) maintain their roles in civic and recreational community activities.

Land use policies should enable "safe access to schools" by pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, and other vehicles (whether by parents or student drivers).

Locations of all the educational institutions have the advantages of significant open area and nearby green space, which is of great benefit to the schools and efficiently permit varied nearby activities. The principal traffic intersections near these locations are relatively "clear". Thus, although traffic can be heavy during some parts of the day, the safety record of the locations has been very good. In any future development, it is recommended that pressure to develop heavily at intersections in proximity to educational centers should be resisted in favor of the need to preserve this safety record. Side setbacks at principal intersections should conform to "front" setbacks.

The Children's Center location does not have the advantage of a large setback from Corry Street. In fact, the setback is rather small, making drop-off and pick-up of students less than ideal. The playground and access are also small and would appear to receive precipitation runoff from adjacent higher ground to the west.

All the educational institutions have remarkably high automobile use associated with their activities and perceived as a need by students and/or faculty. With the exception of the High School and the new Antioch McGregor facility, automobile parking near the schools during normal operations is at a premium.

All of the locations have modest infrastructure in spite of the relatively heavy utilization of the properties. Many of the structures and even principal buildings appear to need improved maintenance.

The Mills Lawn School plays important and generally appreciated roles in downtown recreational and civic events. In any future planning, the value of these roles should be taken into account.

#### **4.5 PARKS AND RECREATION**

**Principle 3 - Support land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play.**

**Principle 5 - Promote compatible mixed-use land use adjacencies that foster synergies (not disharmonies) among residential, commercial, retail, educational, and industrial uses.**

**Principle 6 - Preserve open space, naturally occurring topographic features and vegetation, critical environmental areas, and historic buildings and land uses.**

Both community-owned and nearby parks and recreational areas contribute to the desirability of the community as a place to live, work and learn.

- A. Village owned parks and recreational areas include:
  - Ellis Park
  - Gaunt Park
  - Bryan Center
  - Duncan Park
  - Beatty-Hughes Park
  - Hilda Rahn Park (location of the Train Station – Chamber of Commerce)
  - Portions of the Little Miami Bike Trail
- B. Nearby recreational areas that are not owned by the Village include:
  - Glen Helen
  - John Bryan State Park
  - Clifton Gorge
  - Little Miami Scenic Trail (the bike path)
  - Greene County Park system

Community land use planning should ensure the continued viability of the Village-owned park and recreation areas and make provisions in new developments for properly managed and maintained “neighborhood parks” in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Appendix D), which needs to be updated.

## **4.6 TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND THOROUGHFARE PLAN**

**Principle 3 - Support land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play.**

**Principle 7 - Make provisions for a transportation infrastructure that supports safety, compatibility, and accessibility for pedestrian, bicycle, and motorized vehicles**

A Thoroughfare Plan (see Appendix E) designates how the elements of the community's transportation infrastructure – streets, sidewalks, and bike-ways – work together to fulfill these Principles. The Thoroughfare Plan should integrate the Village plan with the larger system of county, state, and federal roads, highways, interstates and bikeway systems.

### **Local Street Network**

The majority of streets serve local traffic within the Village. Most existing streets and associated infrastructure are in a 50-foot right-of-way; although some have only a 40-foot right-of-way. Many streets have a pavement width of 20 feet or less and no walkways on one side of the street. The present design standards for new streets provide an option for an estate street which includes a 24-foot wide pavement on a 50-foot right-of-way. This design allows for an aboveground swale system in lieu of the standard underground storm sewer infrastructure. The original approval of this design was initiated not only for the appropriateness of the design but also as a way of lowering development costs. Several streets in the Village with this design, such as Orton Road are quite functional and have presented no serious problems. The estate street design, along with other alternatives, should be an option in future developments. Modifications to this basic design may include requirements for a sidewalk when anticipated traffic volume warrants separation of motorized traffic from pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles for safety.

An effective street network must recognize the different functions of various streets. A street hierarchy system separates routes that carry traffic to different destinations and serve different types of travel. A system that maintains the appropriate balance between movement and access is desirable. One obvious distinction in the hierarchy recognizes streets serving through traffic and those serving access to specific property. Specific access and movement criteria are the foundation for an ordered classification system with associated design standards. The street hierarchy is outlined below.

#### **(1) Residential Access Street**

The general purpose of this street is to carry traffic having destination or origin on the street itself and to provide frontage for service and access to private lots. These streets should be designed to carry the least amount of traffic at the lowest speed. The geometric design should be such that safety is promoted and one that contributes to an overall desirable residential neighborhood design. Typically, these streets are short loops, cul-de-sacs, or courts. Residential subdivisions should be designed so that all or most housing units front on this type of street. Design standards include:

1. No section conveys an average daily traffic volume greater than 250 vehicles at a design speed of 25 mph.
2. In a minimum 40-foot right-of-way.
3. Two moving lanes with minimum width of 10 feet each.
4. Parking lane with width of 8 feet is optional.
5. Curbing is required with a parking lane, optional otherwise.

6. Sidewalks and tree lawns should also be viewed as necessary when they add an important component to the overall design but are not required in all cases.

## **(2) Residential Sub-collector**

The purpose of this street is to carry the traffic of adjoining residential access streets to destinations within the immediate neighborhood. The traffic would be limited to that from intersecting residential access streets along with the traffic generated on the street itself. This street does not interconnect adjoining neighborhoods and should not carry regional through traffic. Some properties can front on these streets when a development design does not allow them to front on the access street. Design standards include:

1. No section conveys an average daily traffic volume greater than 500 vehicles at a design speed of 25 mph.
2. Usually in a 40 to 60-foot right-of-way.
3. Two moving lanes with minimum width of 10 feet each.
4. One or two 8-foot wide parking lanes.
5. Curbing should be included and is required with a parking lane.
6. One or two 5-foot sidewalks
7. Tree lawns with minimum width of 4 feet on each side of street.

The variation in design elements for any particular case would depend on the expected intensity of the street use, not only by vehicles but pedestrians and bicycles, and how it would complement surrounding areas.

## **(3) Residential Collector**

The purpose of this street is to conduct and distribute traffic between lower-order streets and higher-order ones. These streets should carry the largest volume of residential traffic at higher speeds. To allow free traffic flow, on-street parking and direct access to homes should be prohibited. Residential collectors expected to carry considerable volume should be designed so that they are not used as short cuts between neighborhoods. Not all developments will require residential collectors but, as a general rule, developments over 150 dwellings will typically contain collectors. Design standards include:

1. Average daily traffic volume up to 3000 vehicles at a design speed of 35 mph.
2. Usually in a 40 to 60-foot right-of-way.
3. Two moving lanes with a width of 12 feet each.
4. On-street parking and drive-way access to residential properties should be limited.
5. Curbing is required.
6. One or two 5-foot sidewalks
7. Tree lawns with minimum width of 4 feet on each side of street.

## **(4) Arterial**

The purpose of these streets is to convey traffic into and out of the community, and to and from major activity centers within the community such as commercial, industrial and retail areas. Design standards include:

1. Average daily traffic volume above 3000 vehicles at a design speed of 35 to 45 mph.
2. Usually in a 50 to 60-foot right-of-way.
3. Two moving lanes with a width of 12 feet each.
4. Two 8-foot parking lanes with curbing.
5. Two 5-foot sidewalks
6. Tree lawns with minimum width of 5 feet on each side of street.

**(5) Special Purpose Streets**

- (a) Alley: This is a service road providing secondary access to lots. It is considered the same functional level as a residential access street with different standards. The amount of activity on alleys should be minimized and their layout should discourage use as shortcuts. These should be designed to discourage through traffic and no parking should be permitted. The pavement must be a minimum of 12 feet wide and 15 is preferred.
- (b) Cul-de-Sac: This is a street with single access for ingress and egress with a circular turn-around at its terminus. These streets are valued in residential developments as they promote neighborhood identity and allow safer, quieter living conditions. Cul-de-sacs can have different design standards, depending on the uses they serve. Those serving residences can be narrower than those serving businesses.
- (c) Stub Street: This is a portion of a street (of whatever kind) either approved in its entirety (but not yet constructed) or planned as a future connector (of whatever kind) to subsequent, future development of adjacent land. Design standards would be the same as its expected completion street, with additional temporary design elements, e.g., temporary turn-around as deemed necessary.
- (d) Estate Street: This is really a street architecture more than a special purpose street as its architecture can be used throughout the hierarchy of other streets (even special purpose ones, with the exception of alleys).

The Land Use Map included in this Plan indicates the classification of existing streets and also indicates where new street connections are desirable.

Regardless of street type, consideration should always be given to making provisions for:

- A. Bike-ways – either as part of the roadway or as separate paths,
- B. Pedestrian sidewalks/walkways at least 5’ wide – with appropriate ramping for “walkers” and wheelchairs (and revise the Zoning Code to require this width), and
- C. Intra- and inter-neighborhood connectors such as dedicated paths between lots.

**4.7 GENERAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Principle 3 - Support of land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle - to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play**

**Principle 6 - Preserve open space, naturally occurring topographic features and vegetation, critical environmental areas, and historic buildings and land uses**

Some basic values have emerged and been strengthened through community dialog during the past several decades that define Yellow Springs' current and future image of itself. They all have some impact on the environment, and on the way citizens of the Village expect to relate to the environment. In general, Villagers agree that:

- (1) Being environmentally responsible-- working to improve and preserve the natural ecosystem's health-- is deemed higher priority than individual or collective economic gain.
- (2) The community values diversity and seeks to preserve the freedom and rights of individuals insofar as possible, so long as the freedom and rights of others and the long-term health of the Village environment, ambiance, and quality of life are not compromised.
- (3) The current ambiance of Yellow Springs-- "small" and "rural"-- should be preserved. A healthy central business district, the "hub" of the Village, is an integral part of the valued ambiance, as is green space both within and around the Village.
- (4) While recognizing that Yellow Springs has attributes worth preserving, stagnation is not a desirable goal and a healthy economy is also important. The community sees itself as connected to and influenced by surrounding communities and the world, and proactive in developing and using new ideas and appropriate technology for land use strategies and protecting the environment.
- (5) Conservation, be it applied to the natural environment as a whole or resources such as air, water and energy, is more than a concept in Yellow Springs. Village government should lead and support programs and practices that conserve energy and reduce, if not avoid, contaminating our air and water.

In terms of the community's goals vis-à-vis the environment in general, these basic values support the goal of protecting or improving our landscape, air and water.

### **Open Space**

Open spaces, both internal to the community and surrounding the Village, are important to the residents of Yellow Springs.

Preservation of natural forest, meadowland, and agricultural open space beyond the Urban Service Area is a desirable goal. Yellow Springs pledges support for the continued preservation of Glen Helen on the east and the preservation of additional greenbelt to extend completely around the Village. Currently, the Country Common to the southeast and Whitehall Farms to the north have been preserved through conservation easements. The western portion, known as the Jacoby Greenbelt, is the largest piece that has not yet been preserved.

General strategies that may be used toward this greenbelt goal include acquiring and keeping land and/or development rights, acquiring land for resale once conservation easements are applied, and active cooperation with the Tecumseh Land Trust, other conservation groups, agricultural organizations, and neighboring planning commissions. Specific strategies will include, but not be limited to, mapping of the greenbelt areas, keeping records and tracking ownership and land use activity, establishing acquisition priorities, identifying development threats, and determining a financial plan that includes appropriate compensation (financial or otherwise) for greenbelt land owners other than the Village.

Open spaces within the Village include the Village parks, the Yellow Springs school campuses, the "Golf Course" of Antioch College, the Glass Farm and the undeveloped private land in the northwest and southwest. There are also small areas of private land in various neighborhoods that, while not available to the general public, do add to the open space ambiance of the Village. Increasing the public accessibility and interconnectedness of publicly owned open spaces within the village is a desirable goal, particularly via biking/walking paths to encourage healthier and safer living for everyone. Strategies for accomplishing this goal include purchases, conservation easements, easements for biking/walking paths, and exchanging increased density for open space designation in PUD developments.

## **Natural Resources: Air, Water, and Energy**

Recognizing that the Village of Yellow Springs has limited control over the quality of its air, environmental goals for protecting air quality should include utilizing data from the regional air-monitoring programs that track contaminant fluctuations. Encouraging the use of bicycles, enforcing laws against idling vehicles and open burning, and using low-emission fuels for Village energy expenditures are small but significant steps. Taking an active stand on practices, proposals, and developments upwind and downwind is justified within the larger goal of protecting the quality of life in Yellow Springs.

The Village is completely dependent on groundwater, and groundwater, like air, does not respect political boundaries. Recognizing this and the connection between surface water and groundwater, as well as the impact of storm water and agricultural runoff, lawn treatments, landfills, septic tanks, and non-containment of industrial and household wastes, should direct land use planning, legislation, enforcement, and the use of Village-owned land.

### **4.8 SPECIAL PLANNING AREAS**

**Principle 1 - Make land use provisions and decisions that make possible the restoration, maintenance, and retention of a population, employment, and economic base that is capable of sustaining the community.**

**Principle 2. - Make provisions for a range of housing opportunities, costs, and choices that provide safe, quality housing for current and potential residents of all income levels.**

**Principle 3 - Support land use developments in which residents can live, walk, and bicycle to work, to learn, to shop, to worship, and to play.**

**Principle 4 - Encourage collaborative land use development that honors both landowners' rights to a fair return on the value of their land, and the community's desire to determine how and where it wants to grow. Land use decisions should be made in a manner that make land use proposals predictable, fair, and cost-effective by a land use plan and zoning code that is consistent with this Comprehensive Land Use Plan.**

**Principle 5 - Promote compatible mixed-use land use adjacencies that foster synergies (not disharmonies) among residential, commercial, retail, educational, and industrial uses.**

**Principle 6 - Preserve open space, naturally occurring topographic features and vegetation, critical environmental areas, and historic buildings and land uses.**

**Principle 7 - Promote a transportation infrastructure that supports safety, compatibility, and accessibility for pedestrian, bicycle, and motorized vehicles.**

**Principle 8 - Direct new development, should it occur, to areas either already served by existing infrastructure – water, sanitary sewer, electric, and streets – or to areas defined as being within our Urban Service Area, and encourage the township to do the same.**

**Principle 9 - Promote new retail, commercial, and industrial development in areas in the community where these land uses already exist (are already zoned for), and/or to yet undeveloped areas in the community and the Urban Service Area where compatible land use adjacencies already exist.**

Four Special Planning Areas are identified on the Land Use Plan (Appendix B) as important components of the Village Plan because of their size, physical location, and potential for mixed-use development. These are (1) the central business district, (2) the Dayton-Yellow Springs and East Enon Roads area,

(3) the King Street and Fairfield Pike area, and (4) the US Route 68 and Hyde Road area. All the identified areas require development proposals and approvals that:

- conform to zoning regulations,
- do not threaten air, water, and other environmental factors, and
- are compatible with adjacent land uses.

A performance-based approach should be considered in the review of any specific development proposals within these areas. The premise of this approach is that any type of land use is possible, as long as the impact of growth and development does not threaten natural, social and economic qualities that are deemed worthy of protection, but the premise should not be so restrictive as to stagnate the Village, precluding those things we wish to preserve. These natural, social and economic qualities should be explicitly defined beforehand. Compatibility with existing adjacent uses and infrastructure/service demand must also be addressed in using this approach.

### **Area 1: The Central Business District**

The Central Business District has physical, social and economic importance as the community's hub. There has been, and continues to be, clear and on-going support for measures that would enhance the downtown area as a community focal point. This means that the present variety of land uses, all complementary to the community with respect to services, retail, social and cultural offerings, and aesthetics, should be supported and protected. Planning should maintain and add to the elements that provide a human scale to the district – sitting benches, planters and ornamental trees, bike parking, and an eclectic mixture of building types and architectures worthy of preservation. New or renovated buildings should preserve the already established scale and harmony of height, bulk, and setbacks.

The district has fairly well defined entry points including:

- Three main entry points: US 68 at SR 343; US 68 at Limestone Street (James A McKee Way); and Dayton Street at Walnut Street
- Secondary entry points: Corry Street at Glen Street, Glen Street itself, Elm Street at Walnut, and Short Street.

All of these entry points deserve careful attention with respect to their street architecture – roadways, sidewalks, bikeways, and streetscapes, as well as the present and future land uses to insure that the Central Business District continues to have clearly identifiable entry points.

The Central Business District has two serious problems: its small size, and limited and inadequately identified parking.

The small size of the Central Business District, currently about 18 acres, limits the expansion of existing businesses and restricts the ability for new businesses to locate in the district. By comparison, land use data for other communities in the region indicates rule-of-thumb acreage of commercial land being about one acre per 100 residents, which would mean that about 39 acres should be provided to serve the present Village population. However, it is clear, both in the public opinion survey of 1973 and the 1990 neighborhood forums, that citizens would discourage new commercial centers elsewhere in or near the Village that might be harmful to the retail base of the Central Business District. However, small, alternate commercial areas that do not rival the focal-point character of downtown are seen as realistic and accommodating the overall quality of Village life.

Although limited downtown parking has been the subject of many studies over the years, there is still no comprehensive plan to accommodate “peak” parking needs. On-street parking in the Central Business District is already maximized with respect to size and duration. Off-street parking - both private and

public – also seems to be maximized, but is inadequately signed and identified. The Northern Gateway Project will provide relief through improvements to the Cemetery Street parking area.

Planning for the Central Business District should include desired development patterns and preferences regarding the direction of expansion. New or modified development in the district should reflect its legacy of relatively small lots, high density, a pedestrian orientation, and mixed uses-- for example, shops on the ground floor and offices, studios, light production or residences on the second floor. Buildings that have managed to endure as "historic treasures" should be specifically identified and protected.

### **Area 2: Dayton Street and East Enon Road**

Education and light industry already exist in this special planning area, which is surrounded by adjacent residential and agricultural areas. The northwest corner of the intersection, which comprises the Center for Business and Education, has recently been annexed into the Village. There are only two more properties to the west on Dayton Street that lie within the Urban Service Area and can be provided with gravity sewers should they be annexed. These three properties together will form the western entrance to Yellow Springs for the foreseeable future. Additional properties to the north on East Enon Road are also within the Urban Service Area and could be added to this special planning area in the future.

Development in this special planning area should:

1. Encourage education and light industry, but residential uses should not be precluded, including the possibility of mixed-uses areas.
2. Discourage retail uses that would detract from the Central Business District.
3. Minimize access points and curb-cuts on Dayton Street and East Enon Road.
4. "Aesthetically" recognize the importance of this intersection as an entry point to the community and accordingly design for compatibility with existing structures, provide landscaping and screening, and signage that enhance this entrance to the community.
5. Protect Jacoby Creek and its watershed.

### **Area 3: King Street and Yellow Springs-Fairfield Road**

Development in this area is expected to be residential with various densities consistent with the existing subdivisions in the general area, which include Park Meadows (high density), Kingsfield (low density), The Stancliff Neighborhood (medium-high density) and Thistle Creek (medium-high density). The eastern third of the Village-owned Glass Farm was recently designated a conservation area, which includes a recently constructed detention pond that reduces the frequency of downstream flooding.

Most of the undeveloped land in this planning area is west of the creek and consists of "interior" parcels such as the Kinney property and the western part of the Glass Farm. Access points for streets are limited to Wright Street extended, Kenneth Hamilton Way extended, one point on Fairfield Road and frontage on East Enon Road. Sanitary Sewer to serve the area must come from a new sewer in Wright Street beginning at Dayton Street. Proper storm water management will be important for this area. Although, the entire area drains to the Glass Farm detention pond, this pond was not intended for, or designed to accommodate, any new development.

Planning for this area should include a Thoroughfare Plan and preliminary routing and design for sanitary trunk sewer that starts on Wright Street at Dayton Street and extends to East Enon Road. Storm water management may work best if undertaken jointly by multiple landowners and this should be encouraged.

With existing commercial land uses on Yellow Springs-Fairfield Road just west of the Village limits, there could be consideration of compatible uses on part of the Glass Farm.

**Area 4: US 68 and Hyde Road (and the surrounding area)**

This area currently includes residential, industrial, commercial and agricultural land uses. Any new development must be compatible with this land use reality and cannot – by the zoning regulations already applied to this area – detract from the vitality of the Central Business District. Additionally, any development should not adversely affect down-stream watercourses – including Hyde Creek, Jacoby Creek and the Little Miami River.

As yet undeveloped areas to the east of this US 68 corridor should probably be encouraged to be developed residentially, although some transient uses could possibly be allowed as well (given the proximity of the Springs Motel). Wherever feasible, access to US 68 should be from existing streets rather than from new curb cuts. Sanitary sewer extensions should be carefully planned to allow access to the entire service area.

**4.9 ANNEXATION, UTILITY EXTENSION**

**Principle 1 - Make land use provisions and decisions that make possible the restoration, maintenance, and retention of a population, employment, and economic base that is capable of sustaining the community.**

The annexation of the Kinney property, the Village owned Glass Farm, and the Community Resources owned Center for Business and Education (CBE) – have added some 100+ acres to the community’s land area. However, except for the CBE, no definite development plans have emerged for these annexed land areas. Other land adjacent to the Village boundaries may also be subject to annexation proposals in the future.

A policy outlining the Village Council’s position regarding annexation was adopted in 1992 and amended in 2006 in response to changes in Ohio annexation law. The 2006 policy is included as Appendix K of this document.

When land that is annexed to the Village is developed, it must be provided with the necessary infrastructure of which the following components generally fall within the direct responsibility of the Village to own operate and maintain after installation by the developer:

1. Transportation including streets, sidewalks and bikeways.
2. Electricity
3. Water distribution
4. Sanitary sewers
5. Storm water management

However, there may be instances where the Village is not directly responsible for components of the infrastructure such as operation and maintenance of private sanitary lift stations, storm water detention facilities, etc. For these infrastructure components, the Village should ensure that the development plans include the appropriate legal structures for continued operation and maintenance of facilities that remain in private ownership, and provide for Village intervention should the facilities not be properly operated and maintained.

## **Transportation**

Transportation infrastructure was covered extensively in Section 4.6. A particular issue related to the most recent annexations is the need to develop a plan for transportation infrastructure within the area bounded by Dayton Street, East Enon Road, Fairfield Road and King Street, which has few points of access to the interior parcels.

## **Electricity**

Yellow Springs has owned, operated and maintained its own electric distribution system for many years. The system functions as an enterprise, and supports its own maintenance and capital improvements. The Village purchases power through its membership in American Municipal Power – Ohio (AMP-O), a non-profit public power membership organization with 119 member jurisdictions in four states.

The electric distribution system was recently evaluated for reliability and future adequacy. The Electric System Task Force was commissioned by Village Council to provide information regarding the system condition. The Task Force was created due to concerns about the delivery of reliable power at sufficient capacity to meet existing and future needs, and to examine a proposal to construct a new sub-station.

The Task Force’s Phase I report (October, 2007) indicated that the Village-owned system is in good condition and is well maintained. The report identified certain deficiencies capacity and quality that can be addressed without the construction of a new sub-station. The full impact on the electrical system of changes at Antioch College in 2008 and 2009 are not fully documented in the Phase I report.

The Task Force’s Phase II report recommends that the Village embark on an effort to reduce electricity consumption, reduce our reliance on coal-fired electricity generation and increase our use of renewable sources of power. The report also recommended finding ways to create new energy related jobs in the Village by systematically investing in conservation efforts, community education and the development of renewable energy generation. Both of the Task Force’s reports are attached to this Comprehensive Plan as Appendix ??

## **Water distribution**

The Village has developed a computer model of the water distribution system that can be used for water infrastructure planning when land within the Village is developed, or when land is being considered for annexation.

Results of the computer model indicate that water supply is plentiful for normal uses in most areas, but that fire flows may be limited in some scenarios due to a “bottleneck” between Allen Street and Herman Street. Fire flows for the south end of the Village must come primarily from the well field while fire flows for the area from Herman Street north must come primarily from the water towers at Gaunt Park.

Water distribution infrastructure is well positioned to serve the recently annexed land with large water mains between the water towers at Gaunt Park and Dayton Street at East Enon Road and east to King Street. While water volume is plentiful, pressure will be low for multi-story buildings and fire suppression systems, necessitating booster pumps for those uses.

### **Sanitary Sewers**

The Village policy, adopted in 19xx, is that the Village will not extend sanitary sewers outside the Village limits, and that future extensions of Village owned sewer infrastructure will only be through gravity sewers. This means that the Village will not extend sanitary service to areas that would be served by Village owned lift stations.

In 2006, the Village established an Urban Service Area based on the lands that could be served by gravity sewer as established in a 2006 Sanitary Sewer Study that is included as Appendix L. Outside the Urban Service Area the Village expects that sanitary wastewater will be treated with on-site or semi-public systems as delineated in the Facilities Planning Area documents adopted by Yellow Springs and approved by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission.

The recently sanitary sewer improvements in Dayton Street have facilitated the development of the Center for Business and Education. Careful planning is needed for providing sanitary sewer service throughout the already annexed land bounded by Dayton Street, East Enon Road, Fairfield Road and King Street. As described in the 2006 Sanitary Sewer Study, the primary means of serving this area and the remaining land in the northwest part of the Urban Service Area is via a trunk sewer that would begin at Dayton Street and Wright Street. This sewer must be planned and constructed with the entire service area in mind, not merely the next piece of land to be developed.

### **Storm Water Management**

Village ordinances require that land being subdivided provide storm water detention in accordance with Greene County standards. When land is being developed under a PUD, the Greene County standards are not mandatory so the Village has considerable latitude to require those standards or to consider site specific alternatives for storm water management. However, the existing ordinances are silent on requirements for storm water management as relates to development undertaken through site plan review only. This is a gap that should be addressed.

A high level of storm water management must be included in all development in the northwest area that drains to the Glass Farm Branch of Yellow Springs Creek. While the recently constructed detention pond on the Glass Farm is reducing the frequency of flooding downstream, this detention pond was not designed or intended to substitute for proper storm water management by new development throughout the watershed.