

Eastern Corridor

Green Infrastructure Planning Committee

Green Infrastructure Concept Master Plan

Final Report

February, 2005

Acknowledgements

The following individuals have participated in the Green Infrastructure Planning Committee:

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Eastern Corridor Green Infrastructure Planning Committee Green Infrastructure Concept Master Plan

Executive Summary

Overview

The Green Infrastructure Concept Master Plan for the Little Miami River Plains is a continuation of the land use planning process established with the Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan (LUV) 2002, the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) Eastern Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) 2000, and the Eastern Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Projects PE/EIS work that is currently underway. The Green Infrastructure Concept Master Plan and recommendations have two key applications: first, to be used by local communities in guiding future land use planning and public and private infrastructure and community development initiatives, and secondly, to create the context for the refinement of alternatives, design and development of transportation investment in the Eastern Corridor.

Committee's Work

The Committee was established by Resolution of the Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District (TID) to develop a consensus Green Infrastructure Concept Master Plan for the Little Miami River Plains Focus Area of the Eastern Corridor to coordinate land use, green infrastructure and transportation planning elements (see Chapter 6 for TID resolution). The Green Infrastructure Concept Master Plan will integrate long standing greenspace plans, preliminary mitigation and protection measures with local land use, watershed, new greenspace ideas, floodplain, aquifer, and other environmental stewardship programs for the preservation and improvement of wildlife habitat, water quality, together with important neighborhood community resources in the Little Miami River plains area. The Committee has focused on three areas of concern: economic development and community needs; environmental protection and preservation; and transportation improvements.

Summary of Findings

The Committee initially identified 34 key issues related to resource protection which were grouped into 14 natural and cultural resource protection priorities: agriculture, aquifer, communities and neighborhoods, cultural resources, streams and rivers, hillsides, wetlands, floodplains and hydrology, parklands, wildlife, mineral resources, land suited for commercial development, scenery and landscape, and geology.

Values associated with each of the resource protection priorities were then identified by the Committee, and subsequently organized into eight value groups (values overlapped between some resources). These value groups, with a summary of recommended protection measures for the Little Miami River plains area, are presented below (see Chapter 4 for further details):

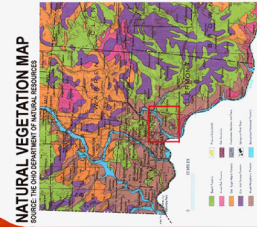
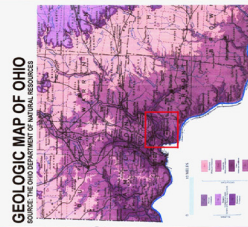
- **Agriculture:** minimize loss of agricultural land; protect agricultural infrastructure; use natural landscapes; control invasive species; and preserve historic values.
- **Communities and Neighborhoods:** preserve and foster smart growth and sustainable development in nearby communities and neighborhoods; create a network of pedestrian and bike trails to connect to recreation, commercial and business districts; preserve historic areas and greenspace near neighborhoods to enhance community identity; and buffer new roadways and commercial development.
- **Geology:** protect and preserve the regionally significant geologic features of hillsides and Little Miami River floodplains/aquifers within greenspace; and restore disturbed formations (e.g., from mining and brownfields) with greenspace.
- **Historic and Cultural Resources:** identify, preserve and interpret important archaeological and historic sites to enhance the educational value of these cultural resources and link the sites with carefully located access routes.
- **Parklands, Greenspace and Recreation:** increase greenspace by restoring wetlands, preserving wooded hillsides, and creating a network of hiking and biking trails to link neighborhoods to greenspace to increase the use and pedestrian accessibility to those areas; create new Little Miami River access and new recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, and/or outdoor education
- **Scenery and Landscape:** create buffers around new commercial and industrial developments to screen objectionable views into those areas; conserve viewshed from existing and new roads and key vistas; and improve views from the Little Miami River with streamside buffers and reforestation.
- **Water Quality:** manage stormwater runoff; develop watershed plans and pollution prevention practices; restore riparian corridors and create wetlands to improve water quality; and protect aquifer recharge areas.
- **Wildlife, Fish and Habitat:** restore and preserve existing habitat; control invasive species; create new greenspace; provide wildlife crossings; and create links between greenspace to create wildlife corridors and provide wildlife connections.

Conclusion

This report and the Green Infrastructure Concept Master Plan will serve as a guide document to keep protection and enhancement of the Little Miami River plains in the forefront of future work on the Eastern Corridor study and the planning efforts of local jurisdictions. Key next steps are described in Chapter 5.

The Eastern Corridor

The map illustrates the Little Miami River Watershed, which is divided into several sub-watersheds: Little Miami River, Yellow Creek, Middle Creek, and North Branch. It also shows various land use designations such as Forest, Agriculture, and Urban. Key locations marked include Cincinnati, Dayton, and Columbus. The map includes a scale bar and a north arrow.



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