

# Mt. Healthy Comprehensive Plan Synopsis of Report

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## Participants

### Steering Committee

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## **Initiatives Started in 2007**

### **Initiative A -- Improve the Visual Character of the City**

1. Create entry images at the 5 main entry points to Mt. Healthy. This will include a strong sign branding and landscaping. Additional landscaping and signage should especially be added to the west bound exit ramp from the Cross-County Highway.
2. Improve the city signage regulations. The Steering Committee has reviewed zoning amendments that will make the signs more uniform in the business areas and enhance the identification of business from Perry and Harrison Streets.
3. The City will develop criteria in the zoning ordinance that will provide for tree replacement with plan approval. There are streets that need additional trees and a fund can be created from fees or earmarked from budget to add trees where necessary along the street right-of-way.
4. Evaluate/Search for the opportunity to remove overhead utility wires along Hamilton Avenue and especially in the business district.
5. Street name signs throughout the city should be uniform and include address number ranges.
6. The Planning Commission and Council should act on the recommended zoning ordinance changes before the end of 2007.
  - 6.a. Appoint an "Architectural Review Board" that will be responsible for reviewing proposed development.
7. Preserve significant historical buildings and sites using the design standards added to the zoning ordinance and by review from the Architectural Review Board.
8. Note: the street improvements recommended in Initiative F will also improve the visual character of Mt. Healthy.

### **Initiative B – Foster a Healthy Branding**

1. Design and acquire easements or right-of-way for a walking/biking/rollerblading pathway. This walkway can become a strong healthy symbol for Mt. Healthy.
2. Sponsor an annual city run/walk event using the 3.8 mile pathway.
3. Organize year-round "HEALTHY" activities at the community center.
4. Implement a recreation department that will be responsible for youth activities at the community center, year round.
5. Develop a marketing strategy and possible incentive to go after the healthcare industry to locate satellite offices in the business district.

### **Initiative C – Promote a Higher Level of Home Ownership in Mt. Healthy**

1. The City should initiate a landlord permit and inspection program that will provide taxing information and standards for multi-family unit maintenance.

2. Develop a way to land bank the city's future – for open space preservation and or as part of new development. The City will set aside an open space preservation fund that will be used to acquire significant areas for historic reasons, additional healthy right-of-way, or environmentally sensitive sites.
3. Organize four neighborhood groups that will elect citizen representatives to participate in a development preview advisory group to the Planning Commission, responsible for concept review of any new development proposals. This group will also be responsible for reporting concerns of their neighborhood to city council and to prepare articles for a city newsletter.
  - 3.a. The City will prepare communication in the newsletter that informs the residents of home loan, renovation assistance, new permit processing for residents and counseling to buy rather than rent.
4. Continue the curb and gutter improvements plan the city is currently implementing. It encourages private investment within the neighborhoods
5. Add low profile, wide speed bumps along Clovernook Avenue.
6. Increase the awareness of residents to the Hamilton County Home Improvement Program (HIP).

#### **Initiative D – Stimulate Economic Development**

1. Prepare a public information folder that explains the economic assets of Mt. Healthy and distribute it to realtors and other national development interests.
2. The Future Land Use Map encourages new commercial development between Harrison and Perry Streets from Cross County Highway to Hill Street.
3. City Council should approve a staff position to lead economic development responsibility that will focus on the potential infill and redevelopment sites. This responsibility will coordinate with county, state and federal funding sources and staff resources.
  - 3 a. This responsibility will contact the Ohio Development Council and present a “Main Street Association” program to the businesses and city council in Mt. Healthy.
  - 3.b. An event committee must be formed (either separate or in cooperation with the Main Street Association) that will be responsible for developing promotional information about the economic opportunities and changes in Mt. Healthy. This committee will be responsible for organizing quarterly events that will bring people to Mt. Healthy. These events may reinforce the heritage and historic character of Mt. Healthy
  - 3.c. This committee will be responsible for creating a branding identity for Mt. Healthy. The Steering Committee has recommended that the central branding theme should be around healthy activities, businesses, and facilities (walking and recreation).

- 3.d. Work with property owners to complete feasibility studies for the redevelopment of key sites shown on the Future Land Use Plan.
- 3.e. Prepare an ordinance that sets forth the procedure for acquiring or tearing down abandoned, vacant and dilapidated structures.
- 3.f. Increase awareness of Enterprise Zone and CRA opportunities that exist for future improvements as well as new developments so that the right type of new development or improvement will be offered these incentives. It is also important to note that the Hamilton County Home Improvement Program (HIP) has been expanded to commercial uses. Develop criterion for the level of abatements offered. This criterion could be linked with Initiatives B, E & F.

### **Initiative E – Safe Walkable Environmentally Sensitive Community**

1. The city should evaluate funding alternatives that will provide 15 foot high colonnade street lights in the areas shown in the "Lighting Plan".
2. The city should evaluate funding to the Police Department that will provide key location street surveillance and improve the image of crime prevention.
3. Evaluate adding bicycle police patrols in shopping areas, parking lots and along pedestrian walkways.
4. Maintain and encourage city services and convenient businesses within the central business district – especially the post office, library, community center/park, groceries and restaurants.
5. Evaluate the City's use of hybrid vehicles.
6. Require "green building" elements in new development approval and the construction process. This can include pervious surfaces, rain water irrigation, non-toxic materials and more; especially in public buildings.
7. Work with Hamilton County Environmental Services to continue to improve recycling and disposal of hazardous wastes.
8. New development must include analysis of any environmental condition such as ephemeral water courses or "brownfield" conditions.

### **Initiative F – Eliminate Traffic Congestion on Hamilton Avenue and Promote Rear Entry Design Access for Businesses**

(To sufficiently handle the future traffic only on Hamilton Avenue would require the demolition of the historic buildings on at least one side for 4 to 5 blocks, in order to have enough right-of-way.) The following initiatives are presented as initial option concepts; all of which will require further detailed study and design in order to select the final solution.

1. Implement a phased improvement of Hamilton Avenue that will proceed with assistance from ODOT, OKI and the Hamilton County Engineer to upgrade the through traffic system. The first phase is to create a smooth right turn to Harrison and Perry Streets from Hamilton Avenue and to provide left turns at Compton Road with roundabout intersections. The second phase should be to

identify off street parking needs and new locations; and the third phase would be to eliminate parking along Hamilton Avenue between Stevens and Adams, build a median boulevard with landscaping, eliminate left turns from Hamilton Avenue and widen the side walks.

- 1.a. A field design and traffic study should be initiated to present a plan to ODOT and the Hamilton County Commissions for inclusion in their capital improvement plans.
- 1.b. A detailed wayfinding plan should be developed to orient drivers to the options designed and especially for alternative parking options for the businesses.

2. Study the redevelopment of the Hilltop Plaza, the mobile home parks, and a portion of the Standard Publishing site because of the impact of Wal-mart.
3. Amend the zoning ordinance as recommended to include more flexible standards for mixed use development with clearly defined requirements.
4. Coordinate Initiatives A, D, and E with this major effort. As an example, the entry signs and landscaping from Cross-County Highway must identify the business district, the history and healthy branding.