



SHARE YOUR DREAMS • BUILD A VISION • SHAPE OUR FUTURE

# VISION

## Yellow Springs and Miami Township

*Draft for Public Review  
August 16, 2010*





# A message from the Co-Chairs of the Citizen Steering Committee...

Dear Citizens of Yellow Springs and Miami Township,

We are pleased to submit the results of a several-year effort that has involved the input and contributions of hundreds of individuals and organizations. The last community-wide visioning was done in 1990, and it is quite a different environment we face two decades later.

The recommendations of the Vision will serve us well as we continue to co-create our future. Few communities of 5,000 citizens have the rich history, the diversity of citizens and gifts, the assets, or the opportunities that we enjoy in Yellow Springs and Miami Township. There is so much that is happening, proposed, and espoused hereabouts that at times it can be hard to focus as a whole community on where we are and where we wish to go.

The Vision is a rare opportunity to get that kind of focus. Everyone won't like everything that is in it. There are things some would have liked to see that are not included. But we believe that the contents represent aspirations that are broadly shared and worthy of our best efforts to bring into reality.

Thank you for your whole-hearted participation in the Visioning, and for the role you will play in making and keeping this a community we will be proud to share with those who come after us.

Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Fred Bartenstein' and the signature on the right is 'Kathy Sanders'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fred Bartenstein, co-chair

Kathy Sanders, co-chair

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# Acknowledgments

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

### **Yellow Springs Village Council**

Judith Hempfling, President

Lori J. Askeland

John Booth

Rick Walkey

Karen Wintrow

Kathryn Van der Heiden (former)

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Mark Crockett, President

Chris Mucher

Lamar Spracklen

Margaret Silliman (Fiscal Officer)

## STAFF

Mark Cundiff, Yellow Springs Village Manager

Stephen Anderson, Greene County Regional Planning Commission

Ruthe Ann Lillich, Administrative Assistant

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Kathy Sanders (Co-Chair)

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Megan Bachman

Carl Bryan

Don Benning

Viki Church

Mark Crockett

Ted Donnell

Joan Edwards

John Hempfling

Kenneth Huber

Len Kramer

Bomani Moyenda

Enshane' Nomoto

Patricia Olds

Gina Paget

Anisa Qualls

Alan Raney

Matt Reed

Shernaz Reporter

Gerald Simms

John Struewing

Jerry Sutton

Kathryn Van der Heiden

Rick Walkey

Marianne Whelchel

Karen Wintrow

### **VOLUNTEERS (FACILITATORS AND ANY OTHERS)**

Ed Amrhein	Marianne MacQueen	Jayne Richeson
Stephen Anderson	Krista Magaw	Joe Robinson *
Megan Bachman	Tucker Malishenko	Linda Rudawski *
Fred Bartenstein	Jan Mazza	(former co-chair)
Maria Booth *	Aida Merhemic	Kathleen Riggs
Bob Brecha	Janet Mueller	Gerry Simms *
Meg Carver	Pat Murphy *	Lisa Singh
Sarah Cook	Guy Orr *	Lamar Spracklen *
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Stephanie Elsass *	Stephen Puderbaugh	Kisha Taylor
Lisa Igo	Anisa Qualls	Ali Thomas
Thomas Jennings	Roberta Perry *	Sarah Wallis
Len Kramer	Alan Raney	Thomas Welton
Lisa Kreeger	Dimi Reber *	
Maggie Lewis	Shernaz Reporter	

\* Former Steering Committee member

### **FUNDERS**

Village of Yellow Springs  
Miami Township  
Morgan Family Foundation  
Yellow Springs Community Foundation

### **FACILITIES**

Bryan Center  
Clifton Lodge  
First Presbyterian Church  
Yellow Springs Schools  
Yellow Springs Senior Center

### **CONSULTANTS**

ACP Visioning+Planning  
Donald T. Iannone & Associates

For additional information on the visioning process, please contact the Village Manager at (937) 767-1279.

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Supporting documents are bound under two separate covers:

- Appendix A. Conditions and Trends**
- Appendix B. Public Involvement**

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# Executive Summary

## INTRODUCTION

“What is needed for Yellow Springs and Miami Township to be the best that they can be?”

*Vision Yellow Springs and Miami Township* is the result of an intensive year-long, citizen-based initiative to answer that question and in so doing create a holistic, collaborative vision and action plan for the future of the village and township. The Vision brought together a diverse group of citizens to chart a course toward a common future that reflects the community’s shared values.

The Vision identifies goals for most aspects of quality of life in the village and township—from arts and culture to economic health to land stewardship. It also presents specific actions to realize a preferred future. This document presents the results of that effort.

## Motivation for the vision

Nearly 20 years ago, the *Envisioning the Future* neighborhood forums guided the village, township and school board on substantive actions to protect, improve and enhance the community. Since that time, the community has seen significant changes—both locally and regionally—which threaten its identity and prosperity. Now experiencing one of the most challenging periods in their history, the leadership of the village and township conceived the Vision as a means to take stock of the current situation, to collaboratively shape an inspired agenda for the future, and to collectively work toward that future.

## THE VISION

The Vision is a strategic guide to achieving the community’s aspirations for the future. It is organized into four initiatives, which emerged from the public process as critical areas of focus for the community. Addressing each of these initiatives is necessary to effectively achieve the community’s vision for the future and will require bold leadership and broad collaboration. The four initiatives are:

1. Strengthening the Economy
2. Managing the Physical Environment
3. Meeting the Needs of People
4. Promoting Energy Conservation & Sustainability



## Chapter Organization

The Executive Summary is organized into the following sections:

*Introduction*  
Motivation

*The Vision*  
Actions  
Community Aspirations  
Principles for Land Stewardship

*Key Issues*

*The Vision Process*  
Public Involvement

*Organizing for Implementation*

In summary, the vision for the future of Yellow Springs and Miami Township is expressed by the following statement:

“Our vision for the future is to be a diverse and unique community with rich arts and lifelong learning opportunities that works collaboratively to create a more sustainable future—in the broadest definition—with vital and authentic villages surrounded by a carefully managed rural landscape.”

#### **Priority Actions**

Actions are programs, policies, or projects that support one or more goals. The Vision contains 52 actions. These actions are organized according to the four initiative areas. Within each initiative, the actions are organized into two tiers of importance: priority actions and supporting actions. With the guidance of public input, 10 of these actions were identified by the Steering Committee as priorities. These priority actions are the most important steps for the community to undertake to realize the Vision:

#### ***Strengthening the Economy***

- 1) Create and implement an economic development plan.
- 2) Identify and work to increase potential properties for business.
- 3) Develop and implement a program to engage area colleges and universities in collaborative initiatives with the community.

#### ***Managing the Physical Environment***

- 4) Prepare and implement a joint comprehensive land use plan.
- 5) Prepare and implement a long-term utility improvement plan
- 6) Prepare and implement a pedestrian (sidewalk) and bicycle plan for Yellow Springs and the Township.

#### ***Meeting the Needs of People***

- 7) Conduct and implement a housing plan for the village and township.
- 8) Maintain and improve an independent public school system.

#### ***Promoting Energy Conservation & Sustainability***

- 9) Develop a green energy and waste reduction program.
- 10) Create a campaign to encourage more local consumption of locally grown foods.

“What is needed for Yellow Springs and Miami Township to be the best they can be?”

# Community Aspirations

## Goals

Ten goals, identified below, express in simple terms the community's aspirations for the future. All of the goals are integral parts of the vision – they are the foundation upon which specific actions were generated. They were conceived during the public Goal Writing Workshop to capture the consensus of the “Ideas for the Future” that were generated during the first round of Idea Gathering Workshops. They address the most critical aspects of community life: what the village and township look like, diversity of the population, the business and employment opportunities that exist, the services available, how people spend their leisure time, opportunities for personal growth and cultural expression, and the role of community leaders. Addressing each of these goals is critical to achieving the overall vision.

1. **Arts & Culture:** A vital and well-supported arts community that offers a wide experience of art works and performances, provides lifelong learning opportunities, and reinforces culture as an essential part of the identity of the villages and township.
2. **Economic Health:** A strong economy that provides diverse, living-wage employment, a stable tax base, and venues and events that are attractive to residents and visitors.
3. **Education & Schools:** Strong, well-funded and well-managed public and private educational institutions with creative curriculums that serve all segments of the community.
4. **Energy, Environment & Sustainability:** Commitment to a sustainable local economy and environment.
5. **Facilities, Services & Infrastructure:** Safe and supportive facilities, services and infrastructure that encourage community building and collaboration.
6. **Housing:** A range of attractive housing choices with respect to type, affordability and location that meet the needs of a wide-range of residents.
7. **Land Stewardship:** Stewardship of land resources that maintains scale and distinct character, puts a priority on intensification of infill development and redevelopment, identifies priority growth areas, and supports additional greenspace and farmland.
8. **Leadership & Collaboration:** Inclusive, responsive, forward-thinking and creative community leadership that practices both local and regional collaboration, including the sharing of resources.
9. **People:** A community whose residents and organizations are encouraging and respectful of its diverse mix of ages, racial/cultural/ethnic/spiritual backgrounds, and socioeconomic status
10. **Place & Identity:** A vibrant community that values wellness, tolerance and local history, cultivates social and environmental responsibility, and welcomes new people and new ideas in a remarkably authentic place.

“Overall these aspirations reflect a desire for a sound, open, thoughtful democratic and self-sustaining community.”

– Citizen comment from Open House

# Principles for Land Stewardship

Nine principles describe community values related to the character of the physical environment of the community. The principles address “how” (character attributes) and “where” (conceptual location) the community should develop, if and when development occurs in the future, and they can be useful in preparing a joint comprehensive land use plan and new development regulations. They were conceived through public input and refined by the Steering Committee to capture the consensus of the Strong Places, Weak Places mapping exercise during the first round of Idea Gathering Workshop. These principles are closely related to the actions within Initiative 2, Managing the Physical Environment.

**1. Redevelopment and infill locations are favored over development of greenfield locations.**

To the extent growth—such as population increase and business growth—takes place in the future, it is preferable to accommodate this investment in locations that are underutilized and/or already have needed infrastructure. This will take place in a deliberate and careful manner that considers other community needs like quantity and proximity to greenspace and parks. Development in greenfield areas will be the exception, not the rule, and will be a result of very careful and strategic decision-making

**2. Natural features and resources (streams, woodlands, farms, etc.) are preserved and, if not, then conserved.**

The community currently has extensive land in its natural state that is permanently protected from development. The natural resources are critical to the identity of the community and should be preserved. Land use for farming represents both important economic, aesthetic and environmental benefit to the community. In cases where preservation is not possible (e.g. no control over land ownership or higher community purpose) conservation is the preferred alternative. Where direct conservation efforts are not feasible, the Villages and Township will provide support for conservation or seek out assistance for conservation options.

**3. Future development—including redevelopment— will happen in a manner that strengthens the physical character (scale, building forms, site placement, etc.) of the villages.**

To the extent future development takes place in Yellow Springs and/or Clifton, it will respect the scale, form, and site placement that reinforces village character (as opposed to city, suburban or rural character). This applies to infill, redevelopment or greenfield development. This does not imply that only development “strengthens physical character.” The natural environment is a strong element of physical character. It means that when development takes place it needs to “behave” in a manner that respects the essential physical character of the village, including historical context.

**4. Development outside the villages respects the rural character of the township.**

To the extent growth takes place *outside* of Yellow Springs and Clifton, but within Miami Township, it will respect the scale, form, and site placement that reinforces rural character (as opposed to city, suburban, or village character). This means that if and when development takes place, it needs to “behave” in a manner that respects the essential physical character of the township, including generally undeveloped open spaces, agricultural focus, and the “beauty and serenity” of the countryside.

# Principles for Land Stewardship, continued

**5. Quality design is emphasized for all uses to create an attractive, distinctive public and private realm.**

The aesthetic qualities of private and public developments strengthen the uniqueness and appeal of the community. This includes areas under control of government entities (e.g. streetscapes, community facilities, etc.) and private development. Areas are planned and designed in a way that preserves their overall usability, affordability, and sustainability. Similarly, these areas should also be attractive in a way that contributes to a common identity in the community, while allowing for creative differences, innovation, and freedom and diversity of design.

**6. Places are created with an integrated mix of uses that contribute to the community's identity and vitality.**

To the extent that future development and redevelopment occurs, the places are created with multiple uses—residential, commercial, and institutional, among others—in close proximity to each other, perhaps on the same parcel and or in the same structure. Close attention is given to the compatibility of those uses, as well as efficiency of the use of space. Uses are arranged in a manner that maximizes pedestrian activity and supports community viability.

**7. Diverse housing choices are found throughout the community, including in relatively higher density development within the Village of Yellow Springs.**

New residential development is diverse in type (single-family and multi-family, detached and attached, etc.) as well as diverse in cost, with special emphasis on affordability. Existing housing stock in Yellow Springs is primarily single-family detached dwellings. Enhanced diversity will include relatively higher densities that will be consistent with physical design attributes consistent with village character (as opposed to city, suburban, or rural character). The housing choices are physically organized to strengthened neighborhood qualities like diverse, multi-generational residents living in close proximity to one another.

**8. Parks, open space, and recreational areas are incorporated as part of future development.**

Parks and recreational opportunities protect sensitive natural resources, including wildlife habit. Although the community enjoys considerable parks, open space and recreational areas, a more equitable geographic distribution of such resources is sought.

**9. Places are connected and accessible throughout the community by transportation methods other than automobiles.**

Destinations within the villages and throughout the township are safely and attractive connected for pedestrians and bicyclists. The general development pattern within the villages is conducive to this intent and should be reinforced with future development and redevelopment. Overall, a network of non-automobile choices connects the community, for all levels of ability.

## Key Issues and Conditions

*Regional Decline*

*Demographic Transition*

*Land Stewardship Conflict*

*Economic Challenges*

*Considerable Potential for Progress*

*Authentic Places*

## KEY ISSUES FACING THE COMMUNITY

In addition to engaging the community, research was conducted on key conditions and trends affecting the community. Below are key themes from that work; *Appendix A* contains a complete analysis.

### Regional Decline

Yellow Springs exists within a region that is slowly but consistently losing population. This regional decline has taken the form of “hollowing out” from the center where older urbanized areas in the region have generally been declining in population fastest while newer suburban areas and rural areas have grown, but at a rate that does not offset the urban declines. Greene County has seen a large share of the region’s growth since 1970, particularly in the western areas near Dayton and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Unfortunately, most of this growth can be attributed to movement within the region, rather than in-migration. Accompanying this population movement is a continuing loss of agricultural or open-space land while older developed areas become underutilized. This has meant that many older areas struggle to maintain their infrastructure amid a shrinking tax base.

### Demographic Transition

Mirroring the broader regional trend, Yellow Springs and Miami Township’s population has declined slowly since the 1970s. Accompanying this population decline have been significant changes in the community’s demographics. These changes are most notable in age, race, and household makeup. The population, which once had a lower median age than most of the region and state (partly due to Antioch College students), is now significantly older than the state and regional average. The village has become less racially diverse over time, with a lower percentage of African Americans and other non-white groups. Households have increased in number but declined in size, much like national trends.

### Land Stewardship Conflict

Yellow Springs and Miami Township feature unique natural areas and development patterns that are critical components of the community’s identity. To preserve the area’s scenic and environmental value, large portions of the township and undeveloped land in the village are under permanent preservation. However, most of the township remains unconstrained from future development. Land preservation efforts have created a greenbelt around the village’s northern and eastern edge and protected the township’s most scenic areas. But these efforts have also put upward pressure on land values in the village. In addition, a significant amount of land in the Village is publicly owned or in institutional uses that are not taxable.

### Economic Challenges

Yellow Springs has lost several major employers since 1990, including downsizing at Vernay Laboratories in 2002 and the closing of Antioch College in 2008. Since 2000, the rate of job losses in Yellow Springs has outpaced that of Ohio and the Dayton region. Currently, the village lacks economic diversity as five industries account for more than three-quarters of all jobs. Further, most people who live in Yellow Springs do not work in the Village, which fuels a growing perception that Yellow Springs is becoming a bedroom community.

### Considerable Potential for Progress

Despite significant challenges that the community faces, there is reason to be optimistic about the future. The community's high levels of education, its tradition of civic engagement, its unique character and the reputations of Antioch College and University are just some of the assets that it can build upon.

### Authentic Places

One of the community's greatest assets is its physical character, with unique natural and built environments. The Village's physical growth has been very slow since the 1970s, yet it has retained its vibrant downtown area with a mixture of unique shops, cultural attractions and social gathering places. Its character has remained largely unaffected by generic corporate architecture that is common in most parts of the country. Miami Township contains some of the most scenic natural areas in western Ohio, much of which is under permanent preservation.

## Public Participation

The *Vision Yellow Springs and Miami Township* process was an unprecedented coming together of the community. It engaged people of all ages and backgrounds from all parts of the villages and township. Nearly 600 people attended at least one Vision workshop and many others volunteered to support the process. Never before have so many citizens gathered to share their ideas, hopes, and concerns about the community's future.

### BY THE NUMBERS

#### Participants

Idea Gathering Workshops: **300**  
Goal Writing Workshops: **114**  
Open House: **150**

#### Ideas Gathered

**855** Ideas for the Future collected  
**831** Strong Places identified  
**624** Weak Places Identified  
**1,000** Characteristics described:  
**650** strong place characteristics  
**350** weak place characteristics

#### Satisfaction

Participants expressed a very high degree of satisfaction with the Idea Gathering Workshops:

**95%** felt that the information was presented in a clear manner

**92%** felt that they had an opportunity to fully express their ideas

**99%** felt that their ideas were received and recorded properly

**97%** felt that the process was fair to everyone in the small groups

#### Representation

Participants represented all segments of the community, though representation was not completely proportional to overall demographics. In most communities, certain groups are very difficult to attract to public workshops, and Yellow Springs and Miami Township are no different. Participants represented all ages, races, levels of education and income, but there was proportionally greater representation from older people, Caucasians, and those with higher levels of education and income.

*Citizens describe the interests or concerns that brought them to the Vision workshops:*

“Concern for the future of the village, wanting to represent the younger people in the village.”

“Concern with maintaining positive aspects of the village and building new, progressive initiatives in key areas.”



## OVERVIEW OF THE VISION PROCESS

An effective visioning process requires the active participation of a broad cross section of a community. To achieve that end, the Village Council and Township Trustees jointly appointed a diverse Steering Committee to guide the process. This citizen group met often to develop an outreach and communication campaign, coordinate public meetings, evaluate data and trends, review ideas generated through the public process and to draft the goals, initiatives, and actions of the Vision. The primary responsibility of the Steering Committee was to be the steward of the public voice.

The Vision process included three rounds of public involvement opportunities, which the Steering Committee named: 1) Share Your Dreams, 2) Build a Vision, and 3) Shape Our Future. Everyone with an interest in the community’s future was invited to attend the public workshops. The extensive awareness and outreach effort all but ensured that participation was a choice for residents. The purpose and outcomes of each phase are described below.

### “Share Your Dreams” – Idea Gathering Workshops

The first phase involved highly interactive brainstorming workshops designed to gather ideas from a broad range of citizens about the future of the community. These ideas are the foundation on which the Vision is based. Share Your Dreams established a baseline of values and aspirations.

Between October 26 and October 28, 2009, four Share Your Dreams workshops were conducted attracting 241 participants. Three additional workshops were held in November with groups of people who were underrepresented during the initial workshops. In total, nearly 300 community members contributed their ideas for the future of Yellow Springs and Miami Township in this first phase.

### Workshop Structure

During these workshops, participants worked in small groups led by trained facilitators. They brainstormed responses to the question, “What is needed for Yellow Springs and Miami Township to be the best that they can be?” Participants also engaged in a map-based activity where they identified and described strong and weak places in the community. Strong places are those that are appealing and reflect well on the community, while weak places are those that represent conditions that should be improved or that do not reflect well on the community.

### Workshop Outcomes

These workshops yielded 855 ideas for the future. These ideas were entered verbatim into a database and sorted based upon emerging topics. The topics were considered by the Steering Committee and became an organizing structure for drafting goals and actions. The mapping exercise identified specific places within the community and their descriptive characteristics that were used to develop nine principles for future growth and development.

### “Build a Vision” – Drafting Goals and Principles

The second phase molded the community’s voices into a consensus on their aspirations for the future. Build a Vision involved an analytical workshop where future and principles to describe how the physical environment—both natural and built—should be treated in the future. The goals and principles developed during this phase of the process are the policy foundation of the Vision and are the basis for developing specific actions. This workshop was held on December 12, 2009, and attracted 114 participants, many of whom had previously participated in the Share Your Dreams workshops.

#### **Workshop Structure**

The workshop consisted of two parts: a general assembly and small group work. During the general assembly, participants were introduced to the draft principles in a worksheet-based activity and asked to indicate their assessment of the importance of each principle and provide written comments to refine them. During the second part of the program, participants worked in small groups with a trained facilitator to develop goals for assigned topics. Each group focused on two theme topics that emerged from the ideas gathered during the first round of workshops. Participants were randomly assigned to groups, as no topical expertise was expected. They considered all ideas related to their topic and identified recurring themes. The groups then constructed goal statements that captured the critical themes they identified.

#### **Workshop Outcomes**

The goals drafted during the Build a Vision workshop were considered by the Steering Committee along with the themes identified for each topic. Based on this public input a refined set of goals and principles emerged. The Steering Committee organized Action Groups that were assigned to develop action steps to support each goal.

### “Shape Our Future” – Public Open House

Shape Our Future brought the results back to the public for deliberation and prioritization. A public open house asked the community to review and comment on the Vision goals and actions. The Open House was held between May 19 and May 21, 2010.

Large displays presented the goals, values, priority actions and supporting actions. Participants were given sticky dots to indicate the actions that they felt were most important. They were also asked to submit written comments and to sign up to become involved in implementing the specific actions. The Steering Committee, Village Council, and Township Trustees considered the input from the public open house in refining the Vision’s recommendations. The result is a framework for implementation described in the Implementation Plan. Approximately 150 people attended the Open House over its three-day duration.



“Yellow Springs is my home — I want to see it viable and forward moving, sustainable and diverse, taking into account all the changes that will be required.”

“I have a young family and intend to raise them here. The chance to share my vision is a great opportunity.”



## **ORGANIZING FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The Vision represents the community's aspirations for the future and actions for achieving them. The Vision's success depends on the committed, ongoing implementation of those recommendations. The Implementation Plan (which begins on page 35) presents a suggested approach to implementation. It explains how to use the Vision, describes possible structures for organizing implementation, and contains a summary table of actions that identifies responsibility and timeframes for implementation.

# Initiative 1: Strengthening the Economy

## OVERVIEW

The health of its economy is essential to a community's overall well-being. Jobs must be available locally to attract and retain residents and generate a sufficient governmental revenue stream. The economy must be diverse enough to serve the basic needs of both visitors and the local population and business community. There must be a strong concentration and mix of uses downtown to generate a critical mass of activity that fuels the vitality of the core of the community. Finally, local educational institutions must supply the knowledge, assistance, and human capital that cultivate a talented and adaptive economy.

This initiative area seeks to strengthen the local economy by removing barriers through more flexible regulations; providing the information, tools, and funding desired by potential employers; and facilitating partnerships and forums to cultivate innovation within the community. This initiative contains 15 actions.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

Three priority actions are recommended for strengthening the economy.

### 1.1 Create and implement an economic development plan.

Work collaboratively with all existing economic development entities to develop an economic development plan that develops a set of business incentives; promotes the community's arts, culture and entertainment assets; coordinates and engages external networks to attract and retain businesses; leverages the reopening of Antioch College; and includes tourism marketing strategies.

## Initiative Overview

### Priority Actions

Create and implement an economic development plan.

Identify and work to increase potential properties for business.

Develop a program to engage area colleges and universities in collaborative initiatives.

### Supporting Actions (12)

“Find ways to increase our tax base.”

“Develop resources to support innovative ideas.”

“Community prosperity without moral compromise.”

“Maintain a healthy and vibrant downtown.”

“Local jobs and livable wages for a variety of skills.”

- Citizen ideas from the Idea Gathering Workshops

The following activities should be undertaken concurrently with this action:

a. *Update the 2002 Cost of Living Study.*

This report should be updated with 2010 Census data. The new report should be expanded to include Clifton and the rural areas of the township. Also, if possible, the additional comparison factors should be broadened to present an even more comprehensive portrait of diversity in the villages and township.

b. *Investigate how to become an Elderhostel site.*

Elderhostel is the world leader in lifelong learning programs, empowering adults to explore the people and places of the world. By becoming a destination for one of Elderhostel’s *Road Scholar* travel programs, Yellow Springs and Miami Township would experience an infusion of tourism into the local economy, as well as opportunities to enhance and expand lifelong learning programs.

**1.2 Identify and work to increase potential properties for business.**

Identify potential properties for business in the village: buildings, land, and existing sites. For example, Antioch College may have spaces that could be rented out. Also, work to provide spaces for existing businesses to grow, such as the Center for Business and Education (commerce park). The Village could also work with real estate developers to attract businesses that meet our plans or co-develop property and infrastructure with developers.

**1.3 Develop a program to engage area colleges and universities in collaborative initiatives.**

There are numerous areas of mutually beneficial potential collaboration: arts, economic development, community development, geriatric health, early childhood education, etc. Existing and potential collaborations need to be identified, with the appropriate partners recommended to pursue strengthening and expanding collaborations. This program could include an academic forum to create a continuing dialogue between all area universities.

The following activities should be undertaken concurrently with this action:

a. *Create a business incubator with Antioch College and Antioch University Midwest.*

The incubator would provide the resources necessary for entrepreneurs to develop their ideas into products and services. It could feature an agriculture component, potentially using the Glass Farm to promote sustainable and diversified agricultural practices using publicly owned land.

- b. *Conduct an analysis of the possibility for a cooperative effort to create a community health and fitness center in currently underutilized college buildings.*

The Village of Yellow Springs, Antioch College, and other local entities such as Friends Care Community could develop a cooperative agreement to use the Curl Gym pool and fitness equipment for recreation. Also, the Fels Building or other college buildings might be appropriate for developing a medical center with a wellness focus.

- c. *Create an internship program with local and regional colleges and universities directed at local groups/organizations.*

Develop a partnership with Antioch College, Antioch University Midwest, Cedarville University, Central State University, Wittenberg University, Wright State University, and other regional colleges and universities to establish internships with local community-supported agriculture operations (CSAs), environmental groups, and businesses.

## **SUPPORTING ACTIONS**

A number of actions were also identified by the Steering Committee from analysis of public input. Below are 12 actions that were important to strengthening the economy but did not rise to the level of priority actions.

- **Develop a program to provide financial support for facilities and programs that strengthen activities and commerce downtown.**

Various entities have worked to bring arts, entertainment, and intellectual forums to the village center; the community should explore ways to finance and expand these efforts. One strategy is to pursue development of a year-round life-long learning community using the resources of Antioch College, Antioch University Midwest, and Nonstop Liberal Arts Institute.

- **Expand access to high speed internet connections for individuals and businesses in the villages and township.**

Expanding high speed internet access will add to the community's economic competitiveness and aid in attracting new businesses and residents.

- **Prepare a collaborative arts marketing strategy.**

The Chamber of Commerce, Yellow Springs Arts Council, governments and any other arts organizations should collaborate in marketing and promoting the villages and township as an arts destination.

- **Provide opportunities and financial incentives for artists and arts-related businesses to live and/or work in the community.**  
Sustain and recruit artists and arts-related businesses through tax breaks or abatements, arts-designated housing and/or studio space, co-housing and cooperative purchasing arrangements, artist-in-residence programs, etc.
- **Catalog local resources, goods, and services.**  
A catalogue, perhaps on the web, of what goods and services are available in the community could help to link those who want to purchase as much as they can locally with the providers of those goods and services. This would support and encourage local businesses to meet local needs, and it would encourage citizens to use local services such as health care providers and builders.
- **Enact legislation to give preference to local business.**  
Create a policy that enables the Village bidding process to include a preference for local businesses in their criteria for evaluating the purchase of goods and services. This sustains local businesses which, in turn, generates tax revenue and increases employment opportunities.
- **Establish local currency or credit clearing system.**  
Explore creating incentives for local purchasing of local goods and creating credit for new local businesses. An example would be a local discount card for use at participating businesses or a local debit card (as discussed in 1.11 below).
- **Develop a local debit card.**  
Develop a debit card that would be good only at local businesses. Merchants would profit because the cost of using it could be less (maybe 1½ %). Community members would be strengthening the local economy, and some portion of the fee collected could go to an organization that funds local non-profits, such as Yellow Springs Community Foundation.
- **Investigate establishing a private local investment fund to provide small business loans.**  
Assess the feasibility of creating a local investment fund based on the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs), which are private local investment funds that provide equity capital, long-term loans and management assistance to qualifying small businesses. Or, alternatively create a network of local “angel” investors to support the local business community with capital investments.

- **Investigate creating a local mutual fund with company stock from village-based businesses.**

Assess the feasibility of establishing a community-based stock exchange in which local residents can invest in, or “buy stock from,” local businesses.

- **Update zoning to permit short-term lodging throughout the village.**

Short-term lodging uses such as bed and breakfasts, hotels, and motels are currently permitted principally in the General Business District and on a conditional basis in the Central Business District. It is recommended that the zoning code be amended to principally permit short-term lodging in all business-related districts and on (at least) a conditional basis in residential districts.

- **Establish food carts at various designated locations.**

There are several places within the village that could support outdoor food vendors similar to those found in Portland, Oregon. These vendors would offer affordable food options and would contribute to the vitality of the public realm as well as improving the pedestrian and bicyclist experience. This initiative would provide opportunities for piecemeal expansion of existing local food businesses as well as low-risk start-up opportunities for new businesses.

Potential locations include: along Railroad Street, near Dayton Street; Cemetery Street overflow parking area; Corry Street in municipal parking lot; Hughes-Beatty Park; Glen Helen parking lot; Kings Row parking lot; Vernay ‘Prairie;’ ‘South Town’ (Dollar Store lot); WSU Family Medical Center site; Gaunt Park; and the former Stutzman's Nursery site.

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# Initiative 2: Managing the Physical Environment

## OVERVIEW

The community's character is reflected in its unique natural and built environment. The village is predominantly residential but is anchored by an attractive downtown and the campus of Antioch College. The village's physical growth has been very slow since the 1970s, yet it has retained its vibrant downtown area with a mixture of unique shops, cultural attractions and social gathering places. Its character has remained largely unaffected by generic corporate architecture that is common in most parts of the country. The township contains some of the most scenic natural areas in western Ohio, much of which is under permanent preservation.

This initiative seeks to preserve and enhance the community's unique physical character by addressing future land development and conservation efforts; protecting natural and cultural resources; and improving the community's transportation and utility infrastructure. Thirteen actions support this initiative.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

Three priority actions are recommended for managing the physical environment.

### 2.1 Prepare and implement a joint comprehensive land use plan.

Develop a single integrated land-use management plan for Yellow Springs and Miami Township, to be completed and adopted within two years. The plan should include an assessment of the physical outline of the village-rural interface for best land use and water quality, an emphasis on infill and higher density development within existing Village boundaries while discouraging development in greenfield areas, and a cultural history survey to identify historically important elements and resources.

## Initiative Overview

### Priority Actions

Prepare and implement a joint comprehensive land use plan.

Prepare and implement a long-term utility improvement plan.

Prepare and implement a pedestrian (sidewalk) and bicycle plan for Yellow Springs and the Township.

### Supporting Actions (10)

“We need to preserve our best farmland from development and control sprawl.”

“Natural features and resources are what make our community unique. But we should always attend to balance.”

“Redevelopment should consider preserving historical qualities wherever possible.”

“How we develop is as important as *where* we develop.”

“Freedom and diversity of design is what has distinguished Yellow Springs.”

– Citizen responses to Principles for Land Stewardship

The following activities should be undertaken concurrently with this action:

- a. *Revise the zoning and development regulations in Yellow Springs to ensure desired village character, improve affordability, and support economic vitality.*

The zoning revisions should promote infill and higher density development within the Village and discourage development in greenfield areas. They should also improve housing affordability and permit housing alternatives such as clustered housing, planned unit developments, mixed-use facilities, condominiums, and apartments.

- b. *Establish a Farmland and Open Space Preservation Task Force.*

Form a working group focused on the issues and needs for sustaining and protecting farming assets—rural land and water quality primary among them. The task force would work with Village and Township governments, which will continue to contribute on a regular basis to funds for conserving farmland and greenspace. The task force would also explore the adoption of impact fees as an additional funding source for those contributions.

- c. *Update zoning to permit home-based businesses and allow office uses in accessory structures within residential areas.*

Ensure that home-based business activities that meet certain criteria are permitted within all residential areas in the village as a way to promote more small, diverse businesses.

- d. *Establish a program to protect culturally significant sites and materials based on a cultural history survey of the village and township.*

Define and protect what is culturally and historically important to Yellow Springs, Clifton, and the broader Township.

- e. *Revise parking requirements and other regulations to strengthen downtown businesses.*

The current Central Business District has zoning that severely limits any changes to structures due to off-street parking requirements. Changing this policy would allow businesses and building owners to make necessary upgrades more expeditiously. However, the *flexibility* needs of building and business owners must be balanced with the *accessibility* needs of visitors and customers of the downtown. An evaluation of parking demand and supply should inform any revisions to the downtown parking regulations.

## **2.2 Prepare and implement a long-term utility improvement plan.**

The Village of Yellow Springs has five-year capital improvement plans for water, wastewater, and electrical infrastructures. The intent of this action item is to engage in longer-term planning. The planning should include green

technologies and it should be updated periodically as new green technologies emerge. Having such planning in place will make it possible to take advantage of federal or state funding that becomes available for projects that conserve energy and reduce pollution. These plans should be publicized and the community notified prior to making infrastructure repairs and replacements, to allow residents and business owners to adjust their activities.

### **2.3 Prepare and implement a pedestrian (sidewalk) and bicycle plan for Yellow Springs and the Township.**

Provide additional sidewalks in Yellow Springs, based on universal design and complete streets concepts. Upgrade existing sidewalks where needed for accessibility and enforce maintenance requirements of property owners. To enable greater use of bicycles, bike racks should be more widely available (particularly in downtown), the number of bike lanes should be increased and clearly marked, and signage installed to inform automobile drivers to share the road with bicyclists. The plan should include a feasibility analysis for constructing multi-use trails throughout the township and, specifically, a bike path connecting Yellow Springs and Clifton.

## **SUPPORTING ACTIONS**

A number of actions were also identified by the Steering Committee from analysis of public input. Below are 10 actions that were important to managing the physical environment but did not rise to the level of priority actions.

- **Develop a water quality plan that combines the Wellhead Protection Plan with a Storm Water Management Plan to comply with EPA Clean Water Act Phase II Regulations.**

Yellow Springs is small enough to be exempt from the storm water management plan requirements of the EPA Clean Water Act, Phase II. However, such a plan, if implemented, could improve the water quality of the wellhead and creeks that surround Yellow Springs. This effort should include the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices as they relate to water quality.

- **Create a Task Force to investigate and recommend locations for formal and informal gathering places in Yellow Springs, such as pocket parks, community centers or a town center development in downtown.**

The task force should consider outdoor plazas/gathering spaces and indoor gathering spaces (especially downtown) that would not be dependent on automobile access and parking. Potential sites include: the Barr Property, part of Short Street or Corry Street, Hughes-Beatty Park, or the Wright State Medical Center site. A multi-purpose community facility should be considered that could be used for receptions, lectures, birthday parties, etc. It would contain meeting

rooms, multi-use spaces, a small library of donated books, a kitchen, or other amenities.

- **Conduct an analysis for the creation of a designated number of kominkans in Yellow Springs.**

Kominkans are community centers in Japan which serve as facilities to study, communicate, and exchange information on a regular basis, as well as serving as emergency shelters. A “wired” kominkan, complete with computers, would be an invaluable asset for Yellow Springs residents who lack regular access to downtown facilities such as the library or wired stores. Elderly residents and those without transportation would likely benefit the most from an accessible community center such as this.

- **Reaffirm support for Designated Facilities Planning Area.**

Per the current Village Comprehensive Plan, the Urban Service Area is designated as the Facilities Planning Area and the Village is the Designated Planning Agency or the Facilities Planning Agency. The Facilities Planning Agency takes the lead on any discussions regarding development in the Facilities Planning Area.

- **Create a 501c3 “Friends of John Bryan and Clifton Gorge” like Cedar Bog.**

John Bryan State Park and Clifton Gorge are unique treasures. This organization would work to build a group of volunteers and establish an endowment fund to make sure that these places remain protected and secure.

- **Consider creating a Little Miami Accord modeled after the Big Darby Accord.**

The Big Darby Accord is a multi-jurisdictional plan to preserve and protect the Big Darby Creek and its tributaries in Central Ohio. The Plan includes preservation and growth strategies, is capable of implementation, and provides mechanisms for monitoring and oversight. It is recommended that community leaders study the Big Darby Accord and contact Little Miami Inc. regarding the possibility of undertaking such an initiative for the Little Miami River.

- **Investigate establishing a “Joint Redevelopment Authority” to interface between incorporated and unincorporated areas of the township.**

The group would consist of knowledgeable community members whose responsibility would be to learn and understand the basis and applications of a redevelopment authority in Ohio. A campaign would be necessary to identify and solicit local and regional group members who would add expertise and interest to the group.

- Establish a township-wide program for eradication of honeysuckle.**

The Yellow Springs Tree Committee has studied and determined that honeysuckle has become a serious issue in much of the community's wooded areas. This program would establish a long-term effort by an organization to facilitate year-round implementation and education. It would require fundraising and grant writing to secure funding, communications and outreach to recruit members and volunteers, and training materials.
- Develop a campaign to promote membership in the Glen Helen Association.**

Glen Helen depends on public support to maintain 1000 acres of preserved land, 25 miles of trails, and various educational programs. This campaign would include face-to-face recruiting, distribution of membership packets via local businesses, and mailings to local residents encouraging them to volunteer or become a member.
- Form and enlist an ad hoc Historical Assets Services Committee.**

This Committee would be similar to the Yellow Springs Tree Committee, and would have designated authority to identify and serve as steward to certain historical/archeological assets in the community. Establish a room in the Yellow Springs Library, or other appropriate venue to host a local history and culture exhibit. *(See also letter "d" under action 2.1)*

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# Initiative 3: Meeting the Needs of People

## OVERVIEW

The population of Yellow Springs and Miami Township was once dominated by the youngest age groups (young families, children, and college students); it was a progressive, racially integrated community where African-Americans composed a relatively large proportion of the population and were highly active in community affairs and leadership. Today, the population is more heavily weighted in the older age groups, the proportion of African-Americans has slowly declined, and there has been an observed reduction in community cohesiveness and in economic and educational equity. As the characteristics of the population change, so will the demand for various types of housing, facilities and services.

This initiative area contains 14 actions that address the provision of affordable housing; meeting the community's health, safety, and educational needs; as well as providing opportunities for entertainment and artistic expression.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

Two priority actions are recommended for meeting the needs of people.

### 3.1 **Conduct and implement a housing plan for the village and township that includes a survey of housing conditions, affordability and needs.**

In compliance with HUD guidelines, the plan would be based upon a thorough housing study that could be done in conjunction with an updated cost of living report. The plan would address where the villages and township want to be in the year 2025 in terms of housing as well as addressing the needs of various demographics such as young adults, families, seniors etc. The housing goals would necessarily link to planning for economic development and policies for dealing with diversity and the environment.

### Initiative Overview

#### *Priority Actions*

Conduct and implement a housing plan for the village and township that includes a survey of housing conditions, affordability and needs.

Maintain and improve an independent public school system.

#### *Supporting Actions (12)*

“Prioritize issues of affordability. Keep the Village as affordable as possible and support permanently affordable housing.”

“Have specific initiatives in place to retain and expand diversity in Yellow Springs.”

- Citizen ideas from Idea Gathering Workshops

“Yellow Springs should focus its policy on improving amenities for both residents and businesses. One key factor for that is the quality of the school.”

“Encourage a thriving community for learning and educational excellence.”

- Citizen ideas from Idea Gathering Workshops

The following activities should be undertaken concurrently with this action:

- Establish a trust fund and partnerships for the construction or rehabilitation of housing that is permanently affordable for families with low to moderate incomes.*

Disbursements from the fund would help finance the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing projects. Not-for-profit housing organizations would be required to use the community land trust model or other arrangements to ensure that the housing developments are permanently affordable. Partnerships would be established between the villages, township, Greene Metropolitan Housing Authority, Yellow Springs Home, Inc., and other not-for-profit housing organizations in order to share infrastructure costs; reduce utility costs; and provide essential services. The Village of Yellow Springs could also identify and set aside land that it currently owns for the development of affordable housing.

- Investigate the requirements for obtaining assistance with affordable rental and owner-occupied housing.*

In order to achieve the community’s goal for housing, significant funding sources will need to be identified. Several government agencies distribute such funding (Department of Housing and Urban Development, Ohio Housing Finance Agency, USDA Rural Development, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits). It would be in the community’s interests to understand the prerequisites for receiving this funding.

### **3.2 Maintain and improve an independent public school system.**

Yellow Springs schools are facing significant financial issues, as costs and expenditures are increasing faster than revenues, with serious budget deficits projected as soon as the 2012-2013 school year. The School Board is currently engaged in strategic financial planning to explore new revenue sources and/or cost-saving measures. This action seeks to achieve the Yellow Springs Schools’ mission, “to create a challenging educational environment where each student contributes to the intellectual and cultural richness of the community and is provided the skills and knowledge to become a socially responsible self-directed, life-long learner.”

The following activities should be undertaken concurrently with this action:

- Implement a volunteer program to supplement teachers in the classrooms.*

The schools used to have teacher’s aides but these were eliminated because of tightened budgets and declining enrollments.

- b. *Develop a program of alternative educational opportunities that utilize community assets.*

This program would offer Yellow Springs School students hands-on learning opportunities utilizing Glen Helen, John Bryan, and Clifton Gorge as living laboratories, enriching the classroom experience and promoting stewardship. The program could also involve an elective course about agriculture, including organic farming, agribusiness and small-scale farming through hands-on activities like planting a garden.

- c. *Study and address the racial achievement disparity in Yellow Springs schools.*

Such a study would establish a baseline of understanding about racial disparities in achievement within local schools. A program should be initiated to address identified problems.

- d. *Recruit more community members for the Mentoring Program.*

The Mentoring Program should be evaluated to determine how it is working and a plan put into place to improve it.

- e. *Create and maintain arts programs in the schools.*

Partner with local arts organizations to develop innovative arts education programs in Yellow Springs Schools.

- f. *Develop initiatives for school and parent partnerships*

Promote parental involvement and commitment to their children's education.

- g. *Create a communication strategy to promote engagement between the schools and community.*

The communication strategy would consist of meetings between the schools and community members (those with children and those without) to create a collaborative discussion of ongoing educational issues.

## **SUPPORTING ACTIONS**

A number of actions were also identified by the Steering Committee from analysis of public input. Below are twelve actions that were important to meeting the needs of people but did not rise to the level of priority actions.

- **Develop a new senior center in Yellow Springs and explore options for the villages and township to provide ongoing support to programs for senior citizens.**

The existing Yellow Springs Senior Center is inadequate to meet the future needs of local seniors. During the next five years the Senior Center plans to

build up the resources necessary to plan for and develop a new center. The Yellow Springs Senior Center currently receives no local governmental support. The Villages and Township could assist the Senior Center in two ways: by including support for its programs in their budget and by offering it publicly owned land as a site for a new facility.

- **Plan for the design and financing of a new fire station.**

Both of the existing fire stations are over fifty years old and were designed prior to the development of modern emergency apparatus and safety standards. The space needs for equipment and activities have reached or exceed the limitations of the current facilities. The Department should renovate or rebuild Station #1 and continue to upgrade the facilities and appearance of the Clifton Station.

- **Create a community arts and cultural center.**

The center would provide gallery space, performance space, classroom space and studio space. An organization could be formed to oversee the development of the facility and coordinate the collaboration between arts venues and activities in the community. Upgrades and restorations to existing venues and facilities for the arts should be pursued to as complements or alternatives to a new multi-purpose center.

- **Develop a program to initiate and promote community social events and activities.**

Initiate events and activities such as block parties, welfare checks, welcome wagon, etc. Initially, identify individual neighborhoods and a resident for each who will assume the responsibility of organizing such activities. This will establish stronger relationships within the community and promote tolerance and an appreciation for diversity.

- **Create a communication and public relations strategy to increase citizen awareness of and involvement with the Yellow Springs Police and Miami Township Fire and EMS Departments.**

Tension currently exists between the Village Police Department and some residents – particularly those in their mid-teens through early twenties. This program is intended to improve communication and to increase mutual understanding between the department and the public through more comprehensive reporting of all police and fire service activities. A strategy might include ride-along programs, potluck get-togethers, and profiles of department personnel in the *Yellow Springs News*.

- **Establish a clearing house for volunteer services and opportunities in the villages and township.**

Opportunities to provide or benefit from volunteer services are now scattered among many different organizations and establishing a clearing house will

enable service providers and users to know what services are needed and available.

- **Request Greene County Sheriff's Department to have a more visible presence in Clifton.**

Due to concerns of Clifton residents that officers from the Sheriff's Department do not patrol the community on a regular basis, pursue an ongoing dialogue between the Sheriff and the community that will lead to a better understanding of the issues involved and, ultimately, better service.

- **Provide additional support for the Yellow Springs Community Library as part of the budget processes of the villages and township.**

Yellow Springs Community Library is part of the Greene County Library System, which funds the library's operations through County property tax revenue. The Village of Yellow Springs currently owns and maintains the library building through its annual budget. Additional financial support could be provided by the Villages and Township, for example, to meet the costs of special community events or special projects that are administered by the library staff.

- **Conduct an analysis of ways the villages and township can provide support to families.**

Develop a family and youth resource center (a physical center or a website). The center could provide information about existing local family services and serve as a meeting place (physical or virtual) where families could exchange information about the challenges they face and/or share their solutions with others. A group of families with young children who call themselves the Yellow Springs Potluck Group is already doing this.

- **Provide a central bulletin board and a website that would provide a listing of a wide range of available services.**

*Yellow Springs News* currently provides two annual publications of available services: the *Red Book* and the *Directory of Local Organizations*. The idea of the bulletin board is to provide a constantly updated listing (rather than annual) that also includes services that are available regionally outside of the township.

- **Develop an initiative to improve government transparency and communication with citizens.**

Governmental entities should make every reasonable effort to improve transparency and allow increased citizen access to information and involvement in decision-making processes. Websites are an excellent tool as most citizens have access to computers either at home, work or at the library; therefore materials should be posted on websites in a timely manner to allow citizen

access to the information prior to meetings as well as utilization of the internet to broadcast meetings.

- **Create a directory for child care activities/resources.**

This directory would be maintained on a website or blog, and would also be included in the *Village Red Book* and the annual Yellow Springs tabloid. There would be a link on the Village website directing visitors to the directory website.

## Initiative 4: Promoting Energy Conservation and Sustainability

### OVERVIEW

The Yellow Springs community has long been known for its progressive social and cultural values. These values include a very strong desire to live a more sustainable, less energy-intensive way of life. And although this desire has often been at odds with popular culture and economic conditions, experts agree that any recovery from the current economic crisis will no doubt be powered by and defined by a new and more sustainable way of life. Thus, there is no better time to create a community-wide framework for mobilizing this shift.

This initiative contains 10 actions that seek to reduce the community's energy needs and find better sources of energy to meet those needs, help re-localize consumption patterns to become more self-reliant, and create the incentives and regulations that will align household and business decisions with community goals.

### PRIORITY ACTIONS

Two priority actions are recommended for promoting energy conservation and sustainability.

#### 4.1 Develop a green energy and waste reduction program.

First, as a basis for encouraging conservation, quantify the village's current energy use patterns and carbon footprint. The program could then kick off with an educational campaign on recycling, waste reduction, and water conservation, and should investigate alternative energy utilization including wind, solar or

### Initiative Overview

#### *Priority Actions*

Develop a green energy and waste reduction program.

Create a campaign to encourage more local consumption of locally grown foods.

#### *Supporting Actions (8)*

“Quality design should include attention to environmental sustainability and keeping our carbon footprint as small as possible.”

- Citizen response to Principles for Land Stewardship

“I am encouraged from seeing that many goals, principles, and actions concern greening, reduction of waste and energy use, and support recycling.”

- Citizen comment from Open House.

“Yellow Springs should promote renewable energy investment and model itself as a clean village of the 21st century.”

- Citizen comment from Idea Gathering Workshop

biomass, potentially through a cooperative with nearby jurisdictions. A permanent waste reduction program or facility should be pursued, such as a recycled goods exchange (aligning with and coordinating with the Greene County program). Incentives for green construction should also be considered.

#### **4.2 Create a campaign to encourage more local consumption of locally grown foods.**

Develop food cooperatives; make food stamps available for use at local farmers’ markets (as is done in Springfield); increase the use of local food in restaurants (already done by the Winds and Sunrise); establish a community kitchen for residents to process and preserve food for sale or home use; and investigate the use of local food in school cafeterias.

### **SUPPORTING ACTIONS**

A number of actions were also identified by the Steering Committee from analysis of public input. Below are eight actions that were important to promoting energy conservation and sustainability but did not rise to the level of priority actions.

- **Provide incentives for renewable energy and energy conservation businesses already in Yellow Springs and to encourage firms to locate here.**

Research State and Federal programs, under the EPA or other agencies, that provide funds that the community could use in creating incentives to attract and sustain “green” businesses. Green businesses are those that integrate environmental responsibility into their operations in a manner that supports profitable business practices.

- **Enact legislation on an energy-efficiency electric surcharge.**

As proposed by the Yellow Springs Energy Task Force, impose an electricity surcharge of \$0.005/KwH for residential and commercial uses to raise money for local renewable energy projects. It has been estimated that such a surcharge would raise about \$75,000 per year in contributions for a loan fund that would be used to assist homeowners and business owners in implementing energy efficiency improvement projects.

- **Investigate a progressive rate structure for electrical energy use.**

A progressive/graduated rate structure would create an incentive to reduce residential energy use by increasing the cost of electricity as the amount of use increases. For example, a three-tier rate structure would have three rates: the lowest rate for those consuming 325 KwH or less; a higher rate for those consuming 326-1050 KwH; and the highest rate for those consuming over 1050 KwH.

- **Update building codes and subdivision regulations to mandate green construction methods.**  
Add language to the new zoning code revision to mandate subdivision compliance with high-efficiency building design.
- **Develop a symposium in conjunction with the Solar Home Tour to model green construction and energy conservation.**  
Develop a symposium (with workshops) that coincides with the Solar Home Tour and educate the public on a variety of issues around green construction and energy conservation.
- **Establish a ride-sharing website.**  
To reduce reliance on individually owned cars, it would be useful to establish a ride-share listserv, which connects people who cannot drive or do not own a car with people who are already making automobile trips and have excess capacity in their vehicle, so that they can share a ride and make fewer automobile trips (essentially carpooling).
- **Explore opportunity for Zip Car(s).**  
Zip Car is a car-sharing arrangement that provides an alternative to car ownership and car rental. Zip Cars would be useful to those who do not own a car or do not use their car often enough to justify sole ownership. Car-sharing has the potential to reduce dependence on individually owned cars in the community by making these vehicles (Zip Cars) available to community members in the villages and township.
- **Establish a Building Winterization Services Agency.**  
Develop and implement a Building Winterization Services Agency serving Miami Township in both residential and commercial structures, using local workers only. Base the agency on current models and funding from the State of Ohio and federal governments, similar to existing long-time programs in Athens County and others in southeastern Ohio.

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# Implementation Plan

## OVERVIEW

*Vision Yellow Springs and Miami Township* presents an action agenda for realizing the community's shared vision for the future. The success of the Vision will not be determined by the quality of this document, but rather by the committed, ongoing implementation of its actions. The comprehensive nature of the Vision means that it can only be achieved through the coordinated efforts of individuals and organizations representing the public, private and civic sectors of the community.

These individuals and organizations have already begun to work together during the preparation of the Vision. Almost 600 community members representing a wide range of backgrounds and interests served on committees, facilitated, or attended meetings to guide the process. Thirty-four residents have already volunteered (at the Open House) to help implement specific actions. There is widespread awareness of the Vision. It is time now to harness that energy to work towards achieving the Vision. This section of the report outlines the issues that may affect implementation and describes the suggested approach for carrying out the Vision.

## STRUCTURE FOR INITIATING IMPLEMENTATION

It has been stated throughout this process that the Vision is not intended to be solely implemented by government. Commitment to the Vision and commitment to implementation will require the coordinated efforts of all sectors of the community. Even those actions that require public sector involvement need an active citizenry to place them on the agendas of government agencies and ensure that the agencies follow through.

The Steering Committee has recommended a structure for managing the implementation effort, which is described on the following pages.

### Chapter Organization

*Overview*

*Structure for Initiating Implementation*

*Vision Management*

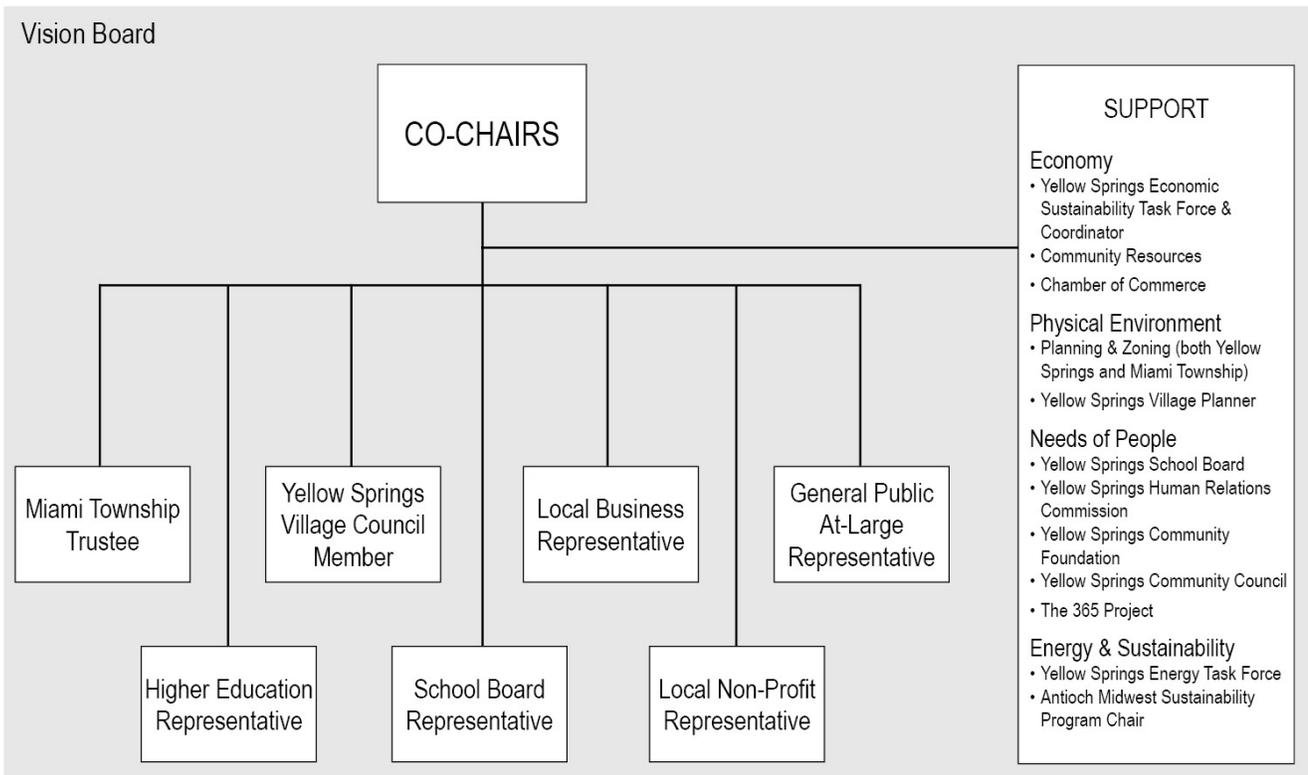
*How to Use the Vision*

*Summary Table of Actions*

### A Vision Board

Implementation can be structured in several ways. To a great degree, implementation can be structured around existing organizations and initiatives. However, more can be accomplished if these efforts are coordinated and complementary. An implementation entity can help disseminate and share information, provide clearinghouse activities, and promote initiatives to the general public. It can also be a means by which citizens and community leaders develop a broader view of community programs and thereby reinforce efforts to make initiatives mutually supporting.

The board would be composed of former Steering Committee members, elected officials, and key representatives from local businesses, organizations, and institutions. Support will be provided by existing organizations and programs suited for each initiative area. This board will provide broad leadership across many interests, missions, and constituencies and will coordinate the implementation effort and maintain momentum, communication, and accountability. It is also recommended that on three to four occasions per year, a work session be convened to bring together staff and elected officials of Yellow Springs, Clifton, and Miami Township to discuss progress of the Vision, areas of concern, and opportunities for other cooperative activities.



## VISION MANAGEMENT

This section outlines the guidance for monitoring the Vision’s effectiveness and maintaining its relevancy.

### 1. Sharing the Vision

A community-wide educational and promotional effort should be carried out immediately after the Visioning effort concludes. This “road show” would provide copies of the Vision and reach out to all local organizations and civic and community groups and ask them to seek alignment with the Vision recommendations, officially adopt or endorse the Vision, offer implementation assistance, and/or designate an internal individual to assist in the monitoring effort.

### 2. Monitoring the Vision

The Vision should be monitored for implementation effectiveness and relevancy. This review should happen on a formal basis no less than once per year. A Vision status report, based on this review, should be promoted throughout the community, such as through a permanent Vision website. As part of this monitoring process, it is proposed that the monitoring board act as a facilitating organization to hold an annual forum or workshop to address specific areas of interest. This forum would provide a community-based assessment of ongoing Vision implementation and an appraisal of whether changing conditions warrant a change in action prioritization or new actions.

### 3. Updating The Vision

A major update of the Vision should be scheduled by Village Council following a formal recommendation from the Planning Commission and Administration. The update should be considered at least every ten years in order to align with new census information. In the interim, key milestones may be reached which necessitate an update sooner than a ten-year cycle. Those milestones could include expansion of the wastewater treatment plant, for instance. Such milestones should be considered by the Planning Commission and Administration on a case-by-case basis.

## HOW TO USE THE VISION

The Vision is intended to be used on a daily basis as public and private decisions are made concerning development, redevelopment, capital improvements, economic incentives and other matters affecting the community. The following is a summary of how decisions and processes should align with the goals and actions of the Vision.

### 1. Annual Work Programs and Budgets

Individual local government staff and administrators should be cognizant of the recommendations of the Vision when preparing annual work programs and budgets. Local institutions and organizations might also consider the Vision when making important policy and financial decisions that impact the community.

### Unintended Consequences

As the Vision takes hold and guides decision-making throughout the community, it is critical that it is monitored by a wide variety of perspectives.

The actions presented in the preceding chapters all have legitimate justification and noble intentions, but also may have unforeseen side-effects or unintended consequences.

For example, reducing zoning requirements for off-street parking will improve the public realm and increase land use efficiency, but also *may* negatively impact nearby businesses or cause traffic congestion as people search for parking spaces.

A wide variety of perspectives will ensure that many consequences and alternatives are weighed against one another to determine the best solution for the entire community.

## **2. Development Approvals**

Administrative and legislative approvals of development proposals, including rezoning and subdivision plats, should be a central means of implementing many of the Vision’s actions. Decisions by the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Village Council and Township Trustees should reference relevant Vision recommendations and policies. The zoning code and subdivision regulations should be updated in response to regulatory strategies presented in the Vision.

## **3. Capital Improvement Plan**

An annual, five-year and ten-year capital improvement plan (CIP) should be consistent with the Vision’s land stewardship principles and actions.

## **4. Economic Incentives**

Economic incentives should be reviewed to ensure consistency with the recommendations of the Vision.

## **5. Private Investment Decisions**

Property owners, developers, and other private entities should consider the goals and actions of the Vision in their planning and investment decisions. Public decision-makers will be using the Vision as a guide in their deliberations about development proposals, zoning updates, infrastructure projects, and funding requests. Property owners and developers should be cognizant of and compliment the Vision’s recommendations.

## **6. Consistent Interpretation**

Village Council and Township Trustees should collaborate with the Village Planning Commission and other critical decision-making entities to ensure clear and consistent interpretation of all actions in the Vision. The Fifth Monday Meetings will be instrumental in achieving this.

## **SUMMARY TABLE OF ALL ACTIONS**

The tables on the following pages summarize the recommended actions of the plan. They include the recommended stakeholders for each action and the timeframe in which the action should be implemented (only priority actions have been assigned timeframes).

Initiative 1. Strengthening the Economy		Recommended Stakeholders	Recommended Timeframe
Priority Actions	1.1 Create an economic development plan.	Yellow Springs Economic Sustainability Commission and Coordinator, Community Resources, Greene County Department of Development, Jim McKee Group, Wright State University's Center for Urban and Public Affairs, Antioch College, Antioch University Midwest, Nonstop Institute, Yellow Springs Arts Council	2011-2015
	1.2 Identify and work to increase potential properties for business.	Yellow Springs Economic Sustainability Commission and Coordinator, Community Resources and Greene County Department of Development	2011-2015
	1.3 Develop a program to engage area colleges and universities in collaborative initiatives.	Wright State University Medical Center, Friends Care Center, Antioch University Midwest, Nonstop Institute, Antioch Writer's Workshop, Antioch College Facilities Committee, Summer Chautauqua Project, Community Supported Agriculture	2011-2015
Supporting Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a program to provide financial support for facilities and programs that strengthen activities and commerce downtown.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Staff, Yellow Springs Arts Council, Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce, Senior Citizens Center, Yellow Springs Kids Playhouse and Nonstop	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand access to high speed internet connections for individuals and businesses in the villages and township.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Staff, Yellow Springs Village Council, Township Trustees, Yellow Springs Community Library	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a collaborative arts marketing strategy.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce, Yellow Springs Arts Council, other arts organizations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities and financial incentives for artists and arts-related businesses to live and/or work in the community.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Yellow Springs Arts Council	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catalog local resources, goods, and services.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce, <i>Yellow Springs News</i> , Yellow Springs TimeBank	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enact legislation to give preference to local business.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish local currency or credit clearing system.</li> </ul>	Megan Quinn Bachman, Ali Thomas, Yellow Springs TimeBank, Yellow Springs Credit Union or other banks	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a local debit card.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Credit Union, US Bank or West Banco and the Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce, as well as any other interested parties	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate establishing a private local investment fund to provide small business loans.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce and Yellow Springs Credit Union	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate creating a local mutual fund with company stock from village businesses.</li> </ul>	Any local bank including Yellow Springs Credit Union, Yellow Springs Community Foundation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update zoning to permit short-term lodging throughout the entire village (bed &amp; breakfasts, etc.).</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Planning Administrator	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish food carts at various designated locations.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce	

Initiative 2. Managing the Physical Environment		Recommended Stakeholders	Recommended Timeframe
Priority Actions	2.1 Prepare and implement a joint comprehensive land use plan.	Yellow Springs Village Staff, Yellow Springs Village Council, Township Trustees, Clifton Village Council, Planning Administrator, Township Zoning & Planning Committee, Greene County Regional Planning Commission	2011-2015
	2.2 Prepare and implement a long-term utility improvement plan.	Yellow Springs Village Council, Clifton Village Council, Miami Township Trustees	2015-2020
	2.3 Prepare and implement a pedestrian (sidewalk) and bicycle plan for Yellow Springs and the Township.	Yellow Springs Village Council, Bike Enhancement Committee, Planning Commission and Environmental Commission	2011-2015
Supporting Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a water quality plan that combines the Wellhead Protection Plan with a Storm Water Management Plan to comply with EPA Clean Water Act Phase II Regulations.</li> </ul>	Planning Commission and Administrator	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a Task Force to investigate and recommend locations for formal and informal gathering places in Yellow Springs, such as pocket parks, community centers or a town center development in downtown.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Human Relations Commission	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an analysis for the creation of a designated number of kominkans in Yellow Springs.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Staff, Yellow Springs Village Council	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaffirm support for Designated Facilities Planning Area.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Miami Township Trustees	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a 501c3 “Friends of John Bryan and Clifton Gorge” like Cedar Bog.</li> </ul>	Any interested parties	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider creating a Little Miami Accord modeled after the Big Darby Accord.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Environmental Commission	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate establishing a “Joint Redevelopment Authority” to interface between incorporated and unincorporated areas of the township.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Village Manager, Miami Township Trustees, Miami Township Zoning/Planning Commission, Yellow Springs Planning Commission, Tecumseh Land Trust, Community Resources, Greene County Regional Planning Commission, Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a township-wide program for eradication of honeysuckle.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Tree Committee, Miami Township Zoning/Planning Commission, Glen Helen	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a campaign to promote membership in the Glen Helen Association.</li> </ul>	Glen Helen Ecology Institute, Glen Helen Association	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form and enlist an ad hoc Historical Assets Services Committee.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Historical Society and Planning Commission		

	Initiative 3. Meeting the Needs of People	Recommended Stakeholders	Recommended Timeframe
Priority Actions	3.1 Conduct and implement a housing plan for the village and township that includes a survey of housing conditions, affordability and needs.	Yellow Springs Village Council and Planning Commission, Miami Township Trustees, Yellow Springs Home Inc., Green Metropolitan Housing Authority	2010-2011
	3.2 Maintain and improve an independent public school system.	Yellow Springs Schools Board of Education and Superintendent, Parent-Teacher Association, Glen Helen, Yellow Springs Arts Council	2010-2011 (Ongoing)
Supporting Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a new senior center in Yellow Springs and explore options for the villages and township to provide ongoing support to programs for senior citizens.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Parks & Recreation Department, Miami Township Trustees, Senior Center Board of Trustees	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan for the design and financing of a new fire station.</li> </ul>	Miami Township Trustees and Chief of Fire & EMS Department	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a community arts and cultural center.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Cultural Arts Center Committee	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a program to initiate and promote community social events and activities.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Human Relations Commission, Senior Center, faith-based organizations and social groups	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a communication and public relations strategy to increase citizen awareness of and involvement with the Yellow Springs Police, Fire and EMS Departments.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Chief of Police and Human Relations Commission, Miami Township Fire-Rescue Chief	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a clearing house for volunteer services and opportunities in the villages and township.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Senior Center, TimeBank, or other not-for-profit organization	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request Greene County Sheriff's Department to have a more visible presence in Clifton.</li> </ul>	Clifton Village Council, Miami Township Trustees, Greene County Sheriff's Department	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide additional support for the Yellow Springs Community Library as part of the budget processes of the villages and township.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Staff, Yellow Springs Village Council and Miami Township Trustees, Head Librarian	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an analysis of ways the villages and township can provide support to families.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Potluck Group, Yellow Springs and Clifton Village Councils, and Miami Township Trustees, with leadership from a not-for-profit organization such as Yellow Springs Community Council	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a central bulletin board and a website that would provide a listing of a wide range of available services.</li> </ul>	A not-for-profit organization such as Yellow Springs Community Council, with support from local foundations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an initiative to improve government transparency and communication with citizens</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Staff and Elected Officials, Channel 5 Public Access Channel	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a directory for child care activities and resources.</li> </ul>	Bryan Center building monitors and any other interested parties	

Initiative 4. Promoting Energy Conservation & Sustainability		Recommended Stakeholders	Recommended Timeframe
Priority Actions	4.1 Develop a green energy and waste reduction program.	Yellow Springs Energy Board and Chamber of Commerce	2011-2015
	4.2 Create a campaign to encourage more local consumption of locally grown foods.	Community Supported Agriculture, Community Garden Group, Tecumseh Land Trust, Yellow Springs Schools Board of Education, local restaurants, Ten Percent Club	2010-2011
Supporting Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide incentives for renewable energy and energy conservation businesses already in Yellow Springs or moving here.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council, Planning Administrator and Economic Sustainability Coordinator, Yellow Springs Energy Board	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enact legislation on an energy-efficiency electric surcharge.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Energy Board	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate a progressive rate structure for electrical energy use.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Village Council and Energy Board	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update building codes and subdivision regulations to mandate green construction methods.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Energy Board, Environmental Commission, Economic Sustainability Commission and Economic Sustainability Coordinator	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a symposium in conjunction with the Solar Home Tour to model green construction and energy conservation.</li> </ul>	Green Energy Ohio, Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce, Environmental Commission and Energy Board, local home builders	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ride-sharing website.</li> </ul>	Ten Percent Club, Rick Walkey and Ali Thomas	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunity for Zip Car(s).</li> </ul>	Ten Percent Club	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a Building Winterization Services Agency.</li> </ul>	Yellow Springs Energy Board, Yellow Springs Community Foundation, local banks and credit unions, local builders	