

CHAPTER 1

COMMUNITY GOALS

Walton Hills Master Plan

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important elements in the development of a master plan is the formulation of community goals. Goals are general statements that reflect the broad ideals and desires of residents, stakeholders and elected officials with respect to their collective “vision” of their community’s future.

Community planning goals serve as a broad guide for master plan preparation. They form the framework within which recommendations and policy decisions set forth in the master plan must be structured. Goals also serve as a guide for master plan implementation and, ultimately, for the courts in determining whether such decisions involving land use and zoning matters are fair and equitable.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY GOALS

In order to formulate goals that accurately reflect all viewpoints of the Walton Hills population, the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission conducted a three-pronged strategy, which included:

- Working with the 17 members of the Master Plan Committee, appointed by the Mayor and Council. Identification and ranking of community strengths and weaknesses were conducted during meetings held during August and September of 2002;
- Interviewing key Village officials, including the six Councilpersons and Mayor during the August - October, 2002 period; and
- Conducting a Community Attitudes Survey of 200 randomly selected Walton Hills households to derive public perceptions of the Village.

A comprehensive report summarizing these three methods and derived findings can be found in *Appendix A*.

Based on the information assembled from the above activities, community planning goals were prepared, discussed and subsequently adopted by the Master Plan Committee at its January 22, 2003 meeting. The following goals, grouped by subject, are general statements which will serve as a guide for Master Plan preparation as well as for the Village when addressing future development issues and proposals.

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COMMUNITY GOALS

“Country” Lifestyle

- ✓ Preserve and enhance the safe, rural/small town environment and character typifying Walton Hills that is favored by the overwhelming majority of Village residents and officials.
- ✓ Identify environmentally sensitive ways to preserve the benefits derived from wildlife while reducing conflicts – especially regarding deer.

Community Image, Promotion and Quality of Life

- ✓ Work to improve and promote the Village’s image to current and potential residents and businesses and improve the quality of life for all residents.

Local Economy and Industrial Areas

- ✓ Assess the potential for new, quality commercial office/industrial developments within the Village and redevelopment of underutilized and marginal land and buildings.
- ✓ Work to retain existing businesses and promote the strategic regional locational advantages of the Village for future quality developments, particularly those that generate the highest revenues for the Village.
- ✓ Identify opportunities to maintain and expand the Village’s tax base and reduce the tax burden on existing homeowners.
- ✓ Assess the development potential for selected retail businesses, including restaurants, pharmacies/drug stores and supermarket/grocery stores.
- ✓ Identify and leverage public funds to the maximum extent possible to attract private investment for commercial expansion and redevelopment.
- ✓ Improve the appearance of the Northfield Road Corridor, including gateways and associated industrial areas.

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Public Facilities, Infrastructure and Services

- ✓ Continue to maintain the high-quality level of municipal services.
- ✓ Identify opportunities to improve public facilities and provision of services, particularly in areas of fire protection, emergency medical services, recreation, and senior services. Investigate the benefits of maintaining existing and forming new intergovernmental partnerships with nearby communities.
- ✓ Improve the Village's ability to plan, manage and conduct infrastructure improvements, particularly for its roadways and water distribution system.
- ✓ Identify opportunities for a centralized, public assembly location, including improvements and expansion of the Village's Community Room in the Community Hall building.
- ✓ Improve the Village's financial accounting and reporting methods.
- ✓ Investigate improvements to public transportation (including Village provided transportation) that best meets residents' and workers' needs.
- ✓ Maintain existing, and develop new, services to enable residents to remain in their homes as they age, if they desire.

Education for Children

- ✓ Leave the Bedford School system and aggressively pursue other options for providing a safe and effective education for the Village's school-age children.

Recreational Programming and Facilities

- ✓ Investigate and reevaluate the feasibility of completing the recommendations of the T.G. Young Plan (2001).
- ✓ Improve and expand community recreational opportunities, particularly for adults and teens.
- ✓ Identify opportunities to partner with nearby communities in the provision of recreation to Village residents and/or to build our own affordable recreational and/or multi-use facilities.

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Housing

- ✓ Work to maintain and improve residential market values.
- ✓ Assess the potential and feasibility of creating upscale senior housing (age 55 and older).
- ✓ Continue to maintain and improve the condition of the Village's housing stock through improved enforcement of existing regulations.

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