

# *VISION STATEMENT*

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## **VILLAGE OF GREENHILLS**

PREPARED BY:

**THE GREENHILLS VISION COMMITTEE**

*WITH ASSISTANCE BY:*

**MCBRIDE DALE CLARION**

May 2, 2000

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## **Introduction**

Greenhills is a community at a crossroads. It is largely built out, with no substantial vacant land remaining for development. From a life cycle point of view, it is a mature community that is showing signs of aging. At the same time, there is a high level of energy and commitment to the community.

It is no coincidence that in other parts of the country, developers are building new communities that are very much like Greenhills. The pedestrian scale, the town center core, the housing diversity, and the open space elements of Greenhills are all being mimicked throughout the country under the label of the "new urbanism".

The challenge now is to take steps as a community to avoid the negative aspects of age and deterioration, and reinforce the positive aspects of heritage and livability. That is the reason for this planning process.

The purpose of this report is to present a summary of a Community Vision prepared as a result of a series of visioning workshops involving a cross section of Greenhills residents and community leaders. This process was undertaken to create a widely accepted community vision to serve as a basis for a long range plan for Greenhills. With a Plan in place, strategies should be developed for the implementation of the Plan.

## **Visioning Process**

This document was drafted as a result of three workshops conducted during January and February of 2000. The participants in this process are listed in Appendix A.

The development of this Vision Statement involved several steps. First, the Vision Committee met to identify and prioritize Greenhills planning issues. The results of this session are contained in Appendix B. Generally, those issues included:

- Shopping Center Health
- Public Image/Greenhills Theme
- Aging Housing/Rental Housing Condition
- City Service Viability
- Infrastructure Maintenance
- Economic Development

Second, the Committee met to refine these prioritized issues by geographic area of the Village. Specifically, small working groups were established for the purpose of identifying how Village Council should focus Village resources for the east side of the Village, the west side of the Village, and the Winton Road Corridor. The working groups also developed suggested vision statements for each of these areas. The results of this session are summarized in Appendix C.

Finally, the Vision Committee worked with a consultant to synthesize these statements into the following summary.

## **Vision**

Based on the work of the Vision Committee, the following is suggested as an overall Vision Statement for Greenhills, followed by more detailed statements related to several key issues and area:

*Greenhills will retain all of the positive features of an historic American "small town": It will be clean, safe, well maintained, and walkable. It will be economically strong through the selective pursuit of redevelopment opportunities; the shopping center will be the highest priority for redevelopment. The Village government will lead by example through the continued maintenance and replacement of public infrastructure. The Village will also work to provide assistance to homeowners and property owners to encourage long term housing maintenance and viability.*

The pursuit of this Vision will occur by focusing on the following six issues, which emerged from the Vision Committee as the priority planning issues facing the Village:

### ▪ ***Shopping Center Redevelopment***

During the Vision Committee work, it quickly became apparent that the overwhelming top concern of the group is the condition of the Greenhills Shopping Center. There was considerable discussion about the obsolescence of the facility and the continued signs of deterioration and underutilization of the property. Its strategic location at the "heart" of the community only serves to heighten the sense of importance in addressing this property before it reaches crisis proportions. While there was some discussion of a more widespread redevelopment of the Village core, including the community pool area, the Community Building, and others, the consensus of the majority of the group is that the focus of the Village attention should be on working with the Shopping Center owners to either completely renovate the center, or demolish the building and start from scratch.

### ▪ ***A Green Theme***

In keeping with the heritage of Greenhills as a greenbelt community, there continues to be a strong desire to maintain a "green image" for the community. This can involve many different actions, including continued public investment in street trees and landscaping, encouragement to homeowners to plant and maintain landscaping, additional improvements in park space landscaping, and the eventual installation of a landscaped median along portions of Winton Road. There was considerable discussion during the Vision Committee process about the need to promote a regional image, or theme for the community as a way to give it greater regional identity. Since Greenhills

does not have a strong base of historic buildings or a historic downtown, the “green theme” is an opportunity to foster a positive image of the community throughout the Tri-State area.

### ▪ *Capitalizing on Selective Economic Redevelopment Opportunities*

With the clear emphasis on the importance of the Shopping Center redevelopment, the Village should focus other redevelopment efforts on a more selective basis, as opportunities arise. In the long term, the Village will benefit by the development of job producing businesses. For example, there may be an opportunity for an economically beneficial redevelopment of property in the “F” Section, particularly along Farragut Road, possibly for office uses. Similarly, there are some multi-family buildings along Chalmers and Drummond/Damon that may provide opportunities for redevelopment for employment related uses. Opportunities should be explored for the improvement of the gas station property. In the long run, the Village may entertain proposals to convert the golf course to a business campus use, when and if a market for such a use can be demonstrated. This would occur only if such a use can be designed without negative impacts on nearby residents.

The bottom line, however, is that the bulk of the efforts should be on redeveloping the Shopping Center site.

### ▪ *Leading by Example*

There are a series of infrastructure and community service issues that go into the creation of a sense of community pride and livability. Well maintained streets, curbs, and sidewalks; modern water lines; trimmed trees; and well designed public lighting are examples of public services that concern people on a day to day basis. It is the policy of the Village to lead by example: If the Village is going to insist that private property owners maintain their property, then the Village must continue to do its share. For example, when curbs were deteriorated to the point that there was little division between the street, curb, tree strip, and sidewalk, the street frontage looked ragged and dilapidated. The result was that home maintenance suffered. When the Village repaired the curbs and street, homeowners began to better maintain their property. In a small town like Greenhills, care and maintenance are contagious. The Village intends to continue to lead the maintenance cause by example.

### ▪ *Housing Maintenance*

The Village of Greenhills now has housing stock that ranges in age from 30 to 70 years. Like any mature community Greenhills must prepare itself for long range housing maintenance issues. Preserving the stability of its housing stock will be a permanent, ongoing issue for the Village. This is particularly true of non-owner occupied housing. The efforts that the Village has begun through the housing maintenance code, while controversial, must be continued. Other housing maintenance programs will be explored

for use in Greenhills. Without solid housing stock, the Village will enter into a cycle of deterioration that will threaten its long term viability.

### ▪ ***“Small Town” Issues***

There are a variety of issues that are best grouped into what can be described as intangibles associated with the small town feel of the community. While individually these issues may be considered as details, collectively they help to create the fabric of a community. Examples include:

- Community cleanup weekends
- Welcome package/greetings for newcomers
- A system for bequeathing gifts to the Village
- The Christmas light contest
- Maintaining Memorial benches
- Tree maintenance
- Better pedestrian access to the park

The “smallness” of Greenhills is something that is valued. The reinforcement of these features through the encouragement of these kinds of issues is a legitimate Village government function; in its efforts to deal with long-range planning issues, the Village should not lose sight of the importance of “customer”, or citizen, service and satisfaction.

### ***Next Step***

The next step will be for the Village Council to discuss these results and determine how best to proceed with the development of a Plan for Greenhills. Clearly, that Plan should *not* proceed as a typical Comprehensive Plan, which tends to focus on a broad range of growth-related issues. Rather, the Plan should be “strategic” in nature, meaning that the Plan should be targeted and selective in choosing the action steps to pursue. The preliminary process summarized in this report should serve as a guide to Council in thinking through how best to prepare the Village for the next stage of its life.

# APPENDIX A

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## PARTICIPANTS IN GREENHILLS VISIONING PROCESS

Wally Bolduc  
Kyle Bradford  
Mick Brown  
Kenny Burck  
Alex Byrnside  
Mary Lou Carroil  
George Fecher  
Rick Gates  
Jenny Hardy  
Tim Hecker  
Art Hermes  
Lisa Herrlinger  
Joy Hoffman  
Oscar Hoffmann

Jenny Howard  
Tim Jones  
~~Nancy Moore~~  
Chris Newcomer  
Cathy Reardon  
Doug Schray  
Jon/Jackie Seymour  
Marian Shramm  
Olga Steinway  
Christine Visnich  
Jack Willard  
Sylvia Williams  
Renee Winters  
Linda Wolterman

**APPENDIX B**

## Appendix B



### Memorandum

To: Greenhills Vision Committee

Date: January 19, 2000

From: C. Gregory Dale  
McBride Dale Clarion

Re: Results of First Vision Meeting

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The following are the prioritized planning issues that were identified in the first Greenhills visioning session that occurred on January 10. They are in order of priority, based on the rankings that the group performed. The number in parenthesis after the issue represents the number of "points" that each issue received.

Please review these in preparation for the next meeting, which is on **January 25 at 7:30 at the City Building**. At that meeting, we will be focusing on refining these issues for 3 geographic areas of the City: the east side, the west side, and the Winton Road corridor, including the business core.

#### Prioritized Planning Issues:

1. *Shopping center condition/tenants -- gas station – hardware store (113)*
2. *Improve public image to attract new residents, i.e., greenbelt. (33)*
3. *Developing a historic district, Greenhills theme/look (26)*
4. *Long term viability of city services – revenue (23)*
5. *Aging housing – upgrade & maintain (22)*
5. *Economic development opportunities (22)*
5. *Maintain infrastructure (22)*
5. *Rental housing upkeep (22)*
6. *Continued & strong preserv. of Greenbelt (21)*

7. *Active recreation – pools, golf course – youth – civic center (15)*
8. *Focal point need commons usage (14)*
9. *Parking – Not enough off street, i.e., apts. parking related to Springfield Township border. (12)*
9. *Bring back Greenhills High School (12)*
10. *Leadership – need to quantify – criteria (10)*
11. *Remove deteriorating multi-family – replace with non-residential. (9)*
12. *Elderly – mobility – especially west/east – aging population (7)*
13. *Coordination w/Springfield Township. (6)*
13. *Enforcement of laws – i.e., barking dogs, snow removal, leash laws, etc. trash cans. (6)*
14. *Stormwater runoff (5)*
14. *Annexation (5)*
14. *Cleanliness of community (5)*
14. *Empower citizens – getting people involved to spend time. (5)*
15. *Federal & state laws/rules compliance, i.e., downspout connections (4)*
15. *Improved access to Winton Woods (4)*
15. *Aesthetics – i.e., vista going through city. (4)*
16. *Public safety services – i.e., 911 (3)*
17. *Viability of newspaper. (2)*
18. *Trees – safety relative to walking (1)*
18. *Sidewalk safety/paths (1)*
- Streets & curb condition (0)*

*Land usage – use green spaces/parks better (0)*

*School lighting (0)*

*Police cars on school fields (0)*

*Remove stop sign at January Court (0)*

*Signboard in Commons (0)*

*Accessibility (0)*

*Diversity (0)*

# APPENDIX C

## Appendix C



### Memorandum

**To:** Greenhills Vision Committee

**Date:** February 8, 2000

**From:** C. Gregory Dale  
McBride Dale Clarion

**Re:** Results of Second Vision Meeting

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The following are the results of the second visioning workshop conducted on January 25, 2000.

#### GROUP 1

##### EAST SIDE

- East/West Burley; Drummond; Gambier; Old F Block; Damon; DeWitt; All C Block  
– Upgrade – Do not allow to deteriorate further.
- East/West Condition of housing equates with quality of people
- Annexation of Bastion track
- East/West Enforce current ordinances
- Be informed of (on top of) future of schools in Greenhills
- East/West Community clean-up weekends
- Involve Boy Scouts, organizations, help elderly  
Use opportunity to solve garbage can locations, etc.
- East/West Select areas for potential redevelopment. Identify property/areas for economic redevelopment. "There is a prejudice about multi-family, rental property."
- East/West Cars/parking problems

## WEST SIDE

- Acquire property for museum
- Economic Development person/share a person with another community
- Tap into historical grants for historical areas upgrade
- Soften look of “barracks” look from Winton Road. “Unugly” the area.
- Access into Winton Woods walk along Winton Road

## CORRIDOR

- Develop welcome package/kit to give to newcomers, with rules, history, etc.
- Shopping center looks bad!
- Start at one end of shopping center and tear it down, then move to the other end.
- Replicate North side of shopping center to match from CVS down.
- Consider purchasing the:
  - Shopping Center
  - Community building
  - Land behind community building
- Gas station – sell, open, tear down
- Set up system whereby people can leave gifts, wills of money, etc. to Village

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- Get people to come up with plan of businesses (make rent reasonable)
  - Good dry cleaners
  - Ethnic food restaurant
  - Gas station
  - Fight to keep/enlarge library
  - Keep Post Office
  - Doctors/Dentists
- Corridor green belt side doesn't help anything – Don't use  
Don't see it – Doesn't add beauty  
Backs of houses

## **VISION STATEMENT**

A beautiful, well-known, well-groomed residential area that preserves historical significant of the Village and green areas, while creating new economic opportunities of development.

## **GROUP 2**

### **EAST SIDE ISSUES**

Commercial Development - F Section

Doctors Office

Nursing Home

Coordination with Springfield Township – Traffic

Trees (Safety, Replacement)

Gambier, F-Section side streets housing redevelopment

Home repair incentives (abatements, low interest loans)

Annexation of Bastion tract

### **WEST SIDE ISSUES**

Create community standards (image) at a particular area of Greenhills and then expand the area.

Home repair incentives (abatements, low interest loans)

Commercial development – Chalmers area and Drummond/Damon area

### **CORRIDOR**

Develop right mix in shopping center that community will support

Develop community building for recreation and community purposes

Hire part-time facilitator/coordinator to develop quality of life issues.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Provide a visual and cultural experience within the corridor that invites people to stop and shop, and believe they would like to make their homes here. Establish planning and incentives for renewal that maintain the vitality of the corridor and community.

### **GROUP 3**

#### **EAST SIDE**

- Dark – lack of street lighting
- Older housing – Rental inspections - “F” section – upkeep
- Open and green spaces – maintain image
- Parking – restrictions, safety hazards
- Community identity
- Annex Bastion tract
- Green belt preservation

#### **WEST SIDE**

- Green belt protection
- DeWitt, Drummond – Upkeep, parking
- Bayham – lighting
- Encourage owner/occupied housing
- Upkeep of memorial benches
- Bikeway/sidewalk access to Winton Woods

#### **CORRIDOR**

- Shopping center image
  - Relations with landlord
  - Community support of merchants
  - Sidewalk (south side) maintenance at shopping center
  - EYESORE – bad image facing commons

- Maintain green spaces in undeveloped tracts (no commercial/retail)
- Johnny's Toys fence – clean up

### **VISION FOR 10 YEARS**

- Maintain green belt – trees
- Upgrade image to attract good neighbors
- Enhance livability
- Quantify why we all live in Greenhills and maintain this.

Greenhills improves the quality of life of our residents and visitors through attractive, safe, well maintained facilities, streets and activities which encourage family life and activities close to home.