



Cincinnati Hillsides Development Guidelines

Prepared by The Cincinnati Institute for the City Planning Commission



CINCINNATI HILLSIDES
DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Prepared by

The Cincinnati Institute
2909 Carew Tower
Cincinnati, Ohio

Prepared for

The City Planning Commission
City of Cincinnati, Ohio

December, 1975

PREFACE

This report was prepared for the City Planning Commission by E. Pope Coleman, President, The Cincinnati Institute, with assistance from William Carney, Landscript Associates, Amherst, Massachusetts. It is based upon an analysis and illustrated presentation of hillside urban design principles prepared for the Institute by Rai Y. Okamoto, FAIA, AIP, The Okamoto Associates, Inc., San Francisco, California.

The report is one of a series of studies and reports undertaken by The Cincinnati Institute as part of its continuing program to conserve and enhance the hillsides of Cincinnati. This program was made possible by a grant from the Architecture and Environmental Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, by contributions and grants from concerned Cincinnati citizens and foundations, and by contracts with the City Planning Commission of the City of Cincinnati.

This report grew out of a process of thought and rethought which has extended over many years and included several hundred people. Beginning with the Hillside Forum in 1967, the process has involved people ranging from a philosophical window washer at the Carew Tower to some of the most noted urban planners in America.

In 1969 the City Planning Commission published "A Hillside Study" and in 1971 Richard A. Gardiner & Associates produced "The Cincinnati Hillsides: Recommended Design Process and Action Program" for the Commission. Between 1971 and 1974 a number of other environmental experts were brought to Cincinnati by the Institute. They were given tours of the hillsides and extensively queried as to the nature, constraints, and opportunities of this unique landscape. These professionals included John L. Field, Ronald Lee Fleming, Robert Lamb Hart, Kevin Lynch, Archibald C. Rogers, Sheafe Satterthwaite, and Paul D. Spreiregen. We wish also to acknowledge and thank Charles E. Little and The Conservation Foundation for their generous assistance and suggestions during this period.

In the summer of 1974, William Carney interviewed over 100 Cincinnatians to discover how they personally experienced the hillsides and how they felt about their future. The transcripts of these interviews provided invaluable insights into the human values of the landscape of this city. Mr. Carney was assisted in the conduct of his interviews by a group composed of Laura Chapman, Clyde Dial, Charles Graham, Jorene Johnson, Carolyn LeMond, Frank Taylor, and Laurence G. Wolf.

Meanwhile in 1973 and 1974, other experts in Cincinnati from fields such as law, geology and urban planning were doing the research and producing the reports which laid the groundwork for Environmental Quality Overlay Zoning Districts for the protection of the hillsides. These experts included J. A. Chewning, Robert W. Fleming, James E. Hough, Robert E. Manley, Hayden B. May, and Samuel V. Noe.

In the Spring of 1975 Rai Y. Okamoto performed field surveys, photographic documentation and analyses of the hillsides. He summarized his findings and integrated previous thinking in a report to the Institute. We thank the staffs of the Geology Department of the University of Cincinnati and the Cincinnati Historical Society for their assistance to Mr. Okamoto.

With that work as a starting point, a preliminary version of the present report was drawn up by the Institute and widely circulated for comment and criticism. At this stage, in addition to persons already mentioned who continued their assistance, the contributions of Robert L. Black, Jr., Helen C. Black, Alfred A. Moore, David L. Niland, and Malcolm D. Rivkin were particularly helpful.

From this review, this final report emerged. The Cincinnati Institute warmly thanks all those who have had a hand in it. Their interest has given the principles and guidelines presented here unusual breadth of vision and depth of foundation.

We especially want to acknowledge the continued support and assistance of the members and staff of the City Planning Commission, Estelle B. Berman, Chairwoman and Herbert W. Stevens, Director. The staff of the Architecture and Environmental Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts have rendered invaluable encouragement and advice far beyond their grant-making role and we want to acknowledge and thank Bill N. Lacy and Robert H. McNulty. Finally we want to acknowledge again the special efforts of Cincinnati attorney Robert E. Manley and Washington, D.C. based urban designer and architect Paul D. Spreiregen for inspiration, encouragement, and thoughtful guidance through all the years which have culminated with this document.

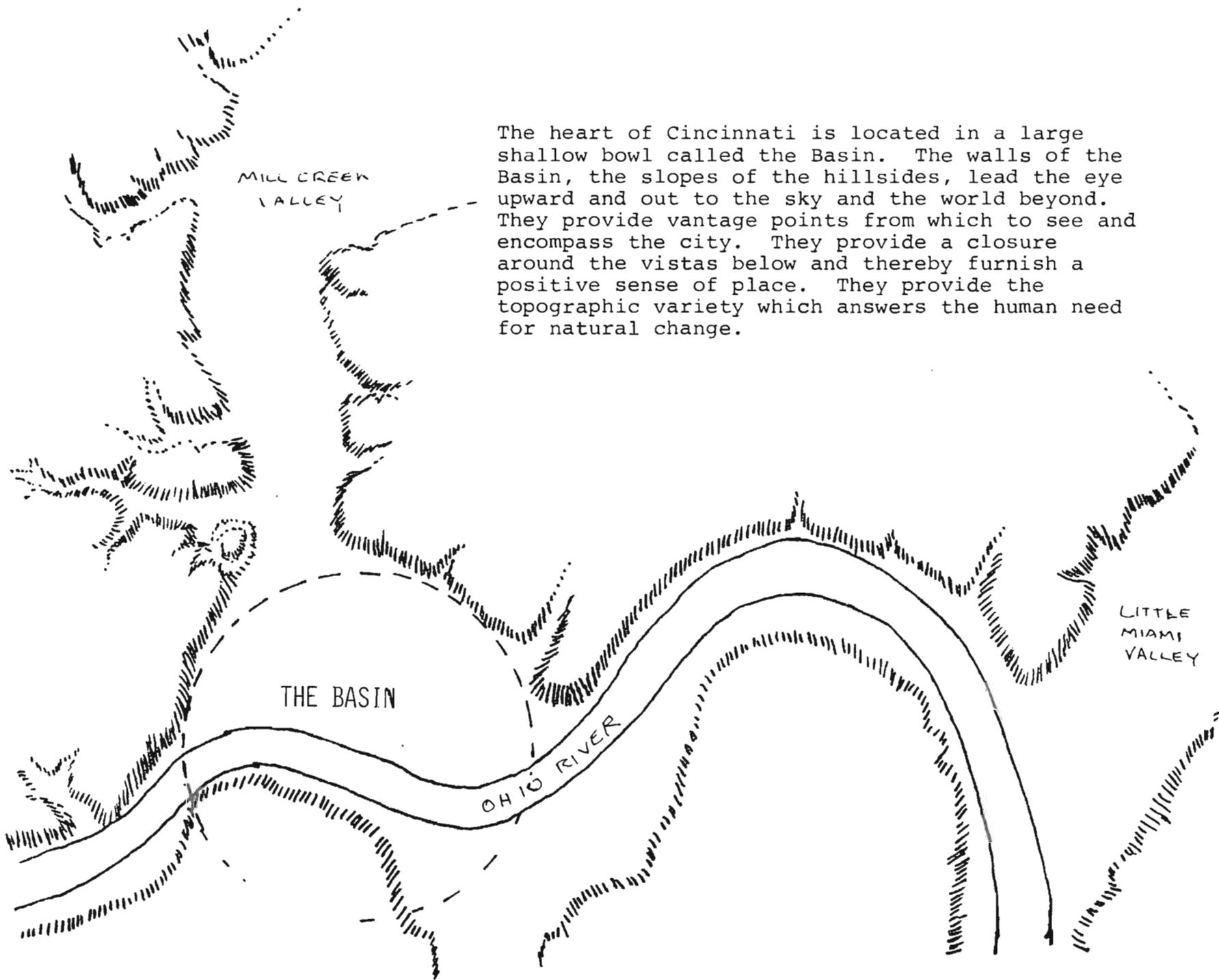
E. Pope Coleman

December, 1975

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The heart of Cincinnati is located in a large shallow bowl called the Basin. The walls of the Basin, the slopes of the hillsides, lead the eye upward and out to the sky and the world beyond. They provide vantage points from which to see and encompass the city. They provide a closure around the vistas below and thereby furnish a positive sense of place. They provide the topographic variety which answers the human need for natural change.



Cincinnati is a city gifted with natural, ageless attributes which provide symbolic meaning and significance no less important to human well-being than material sustenance or social institutions. Natural forces acting on the land and water have produced a setting distinguishing it from the surrounding region in shape and appearance. It is a setting which conveys strong images to those whose daily lives center on the city and to the visitor whose experiences are made memorable by its contrasts and surprises.

Cincinnati is located in and about the northern sides of a large, shallow bowl, split by the Ohio River. The center of the city, called the Basin, lies in the valley floor within the bowl. The Basin was cut into the surrounding plateau by the action of rivers prior to and in response to the glaciers whose southbound movement ended here. The sides of the Basin are defined sharply at first by steep hillsides whose slopes lessen as one moves up the main valley or bowl bottom to the north. Secondary valleys cut into the major hillsides or bowl walls on either side of the valley and along the Ohio River, defining successively smaller and shallower troughs. In this way the hillsides form a system of spaces linked to one another by past natural actions. Their flat tops at the level of the plateau form a continuous horizon line above the city floor.

To date the hillsides are largely tree covered and relatively uncompromised by development. In the past, using animal and human labor, man had no choice but to respect the natural constraints of the land. Today, when the power of applied technology is limited only by economics, new kinds of restraints are required if the very land which makes our city is to be preserved. The hillsides are preeminent in determining Cincinnati's character and this report is intended to guide those who seek to build upon them in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

The use of the guidelines within Hillside Environmental Quality Zoning Districts will assure that future development on the hillsides within them is done in such a way as to protect the public interest. The guidelines were developed after extensive research into such matters of public interest as geology, soil characteristics, vegetation and tree patterns, existing and potential public and private land uses, visual characteristics, the general public's perceptions and values, and other standard urban planning considerations.

The objectives underlying this report were:

1. That the guidelines work; that they accomplish in fact what they intended. These intentions included a) Provide a broader understanding of the hillsides' importance to the city and the general welfare of its inhabitants, b) Raise general awareness of hillside design and development problems and opportunities, c) Reflect general design policies and principles which protect hillside character, d) State the rules for avoiding blight in Hillside Environmental Quality Zoning Districts.

2. That the guidelines be clear; that they can be readily understood by the persons who will use them and that, to the extent possible, all users will be responding to the same document. These persons include a) The general public who are affected by them, b) The legislative bodies who adopt them, c) The city officials who administer them, d) The applicant for development permit, e) The architect or others who serve the applicant, f) The reviewing authorities who use them, g) The public affected by a specific project, h) The board of appeals which decides controversy, and i) The courts who must sustain them.

3. That the guidelines are fair. That they are a clear constitutional use of the police power for the public welfare. That they balance the private interest of the affected citizens with the public welfare.

4. That the guidelines can be easily administered; that they improve the climate for creativity by providing a quick and sure process for addressing the problems and opportunities of development in hillsides.

The guidelines are explained by the principles from which they were derived and are illustrated by pictures. These are intended to make it easier to understand the application of the guidelines. However, in the event there is ever an appearance of inconsistency between the principles and/or the pictures and the written guidelines, the written guidelines are to take precedence.

No attempt has been made to assign priorities amongst the guidelines. They are all rooted in evidence provided by the natural setting, prior planning studies, and the behavior and comment of Cincinnati's citizens. The process of planning, design and review will require skilled knowledge and judgement by all parties involved in each particular case. As guidelines rather than regulations, they recognize the greater potential for successful solutions if a cooperative and creative spirit prevails.

USING THESE GUIDELINES

This report is intended to assist all parties involved in the submission and review of applications for development within Hillside Environmental Quality Districts. To assure an orderly process, applicants for development permits should expect to provide visual and written material sufficient for reviewers to determine the answers to the following questions:

1. What is the degree of visibility of the project? How distinct will it be as seen from the valley floor, other hillsides, hilltops, and from public overlooks?
2. What will be the impact of the project upon the site and its environs? What is the form and character of the site before and after development?
3. What alternatives were considered? Why was the proposed solution chosen?
4. What will the project look like in silhouette against the hill or sky and in profile from the slope? What will be the effect of the massing or bulk of the project in relation to the hill form?
5. What will be the extent of site alteration required? What are the plans to restore or permanently modify the site?
6. What will be the effect of the project on existing vegetation? What are the kinds and condition of the vegetation on the site before and after development?
7. What are the structural materials proposed? How do their scale, color, texture, line and detail relate to the site?
8. What are the effects of service components of the project on its appearance? What are the arrangements for trash storage and removal, entrance ways, parking areas, and service drives?
9. What are the effects of site appurtenances and outfitting of the project on its appearance? What are the plans for outdoor lighting, signs, and retaining walls?

BASIC HILLSIDE THEMES

Section 1 HERE/THERE



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Section 2 DOWN/UP



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Section 3 IN/OUT



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Section 4 REST/MOTION



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Section 5 NATURE/PEOPLE



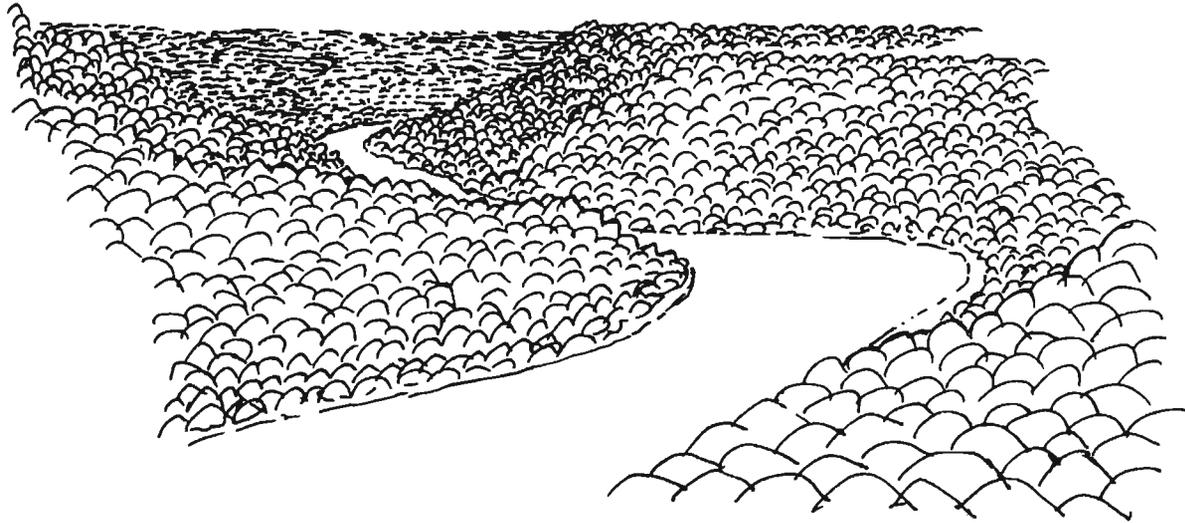
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HERE/THERE

HILLSIDES ARE WALLS WHICH LIMIT VIEWS
AND THEREBY CREATE DEFINITE PLACES.
DEVELOPMENT WHICH ENHANCES BOTH THE
CHARACTER OF THESE HILLSIDE WALLS AND
THE CHARACTER OF THE PLACES THEY
DEFINE EXTENDS THE EFFECT OF HILLSIDES.

CITY WALLS

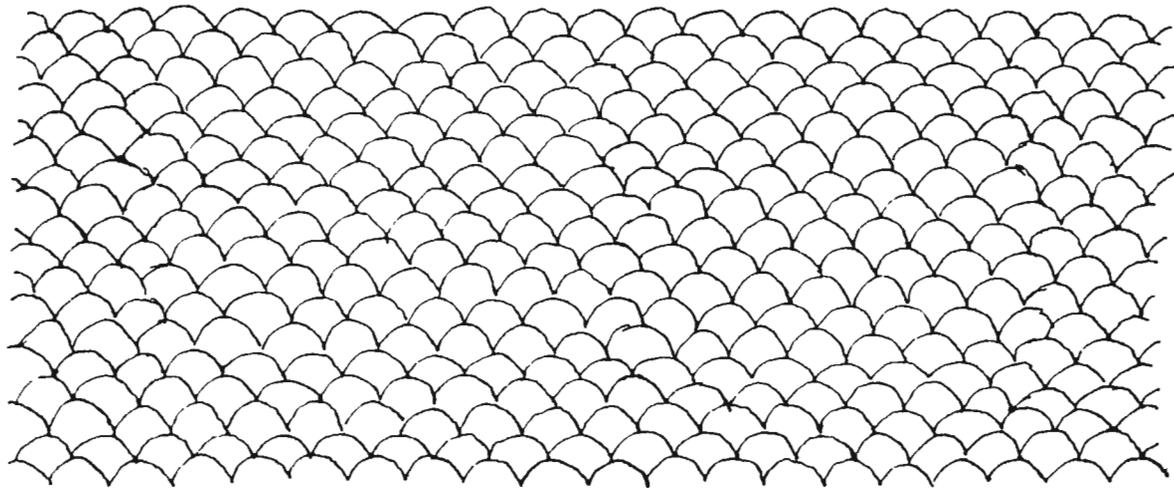
The hillside slopes of the bowl are like walls surrounding the city. They are everpresent, in every direction somewhere at the end of every street in the basin. They are also like walls in that they have a relatively horizontal top and bottom. The hillsides are not hills as, say, in San Francisco, but, are the slopes of an escarpment cut into a plateau by rivers and streams. This distinction between hills and hillsides is crucial to understanding the unique character of Cincinnati.



The hillside walls as seen looking downriver to the west. Even where there is a break in one wall, there is another wall just beyond.

CITY WALLS: TREES

Cincinnati's hillside walls appear to be built of trees, so much so that they are generally referred to as green-hillsides. Even hillsides which seem highly developed such as Mt. Adams and Mt. Auburn are more vegetation than structure when viewed as a whole. In winter as well as summer this natural cover contrasts sharply with the built up areas which the hillsides enclose and separate. Maintaining this contrast is the first principle for maintaining the wall-like character of the hillsides.

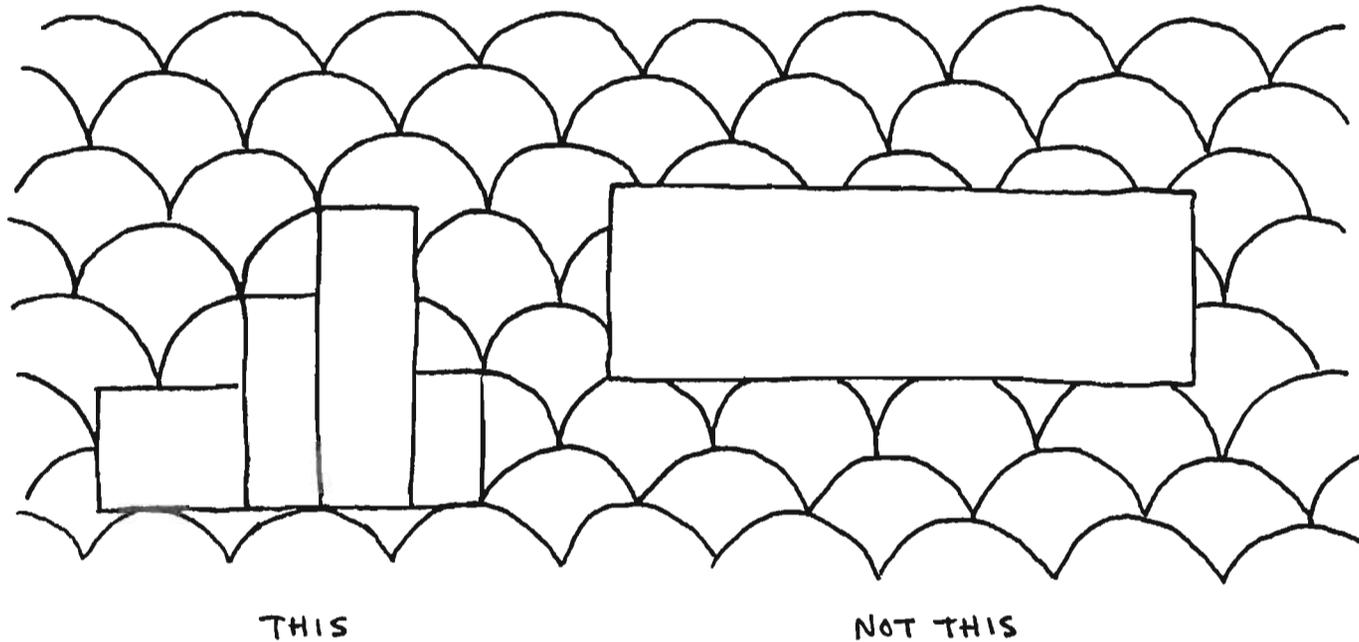


The trees produce a scalloped effect as they climb the slopes from the foot to the brow and extend laterally in both directions. This drawing is an abstraction of a tree covered hillside wall.

CITY WALLS: TREE SCALE

The hillside walls retain their visual strength when development appears to be in them rather than upon them. Trees are the natural building units of the hillsides. Development appears to be a part of the hillside when it is composed of building units which are of approximately the same scale and proportion as the natural units.

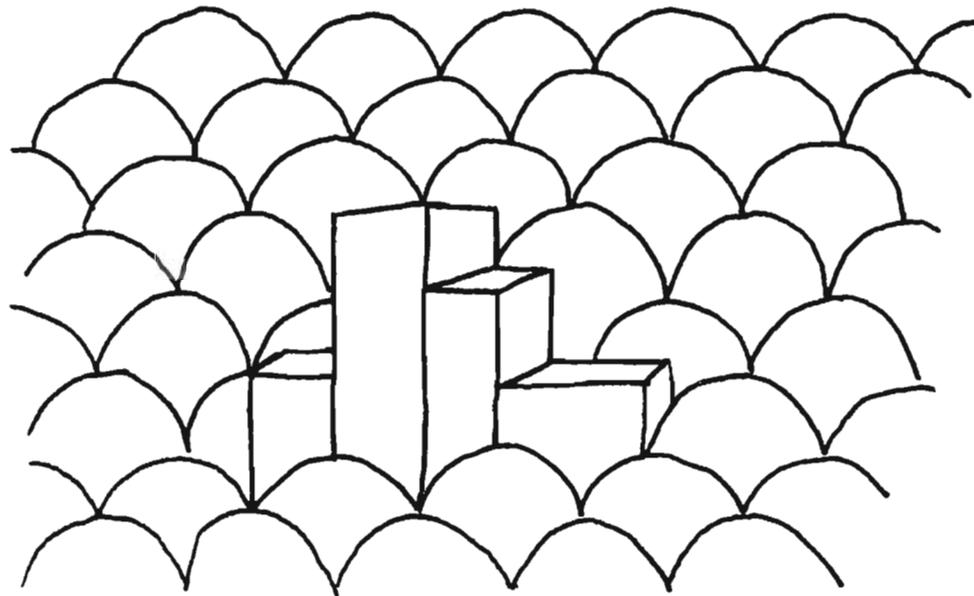
1. *Guideline: Plan buildings to reflect the scale and proportion of surrounding trees.*



CITY WALLS: ATTACHMENT

The trees which form the natural building unit of the hillside walls are rooted to the wall at their base and their branches intermingle. Similarly, buildings will appear a solid part of the wall when their base appears solidly attached and their sides appear amidst the surrounding vegetation.

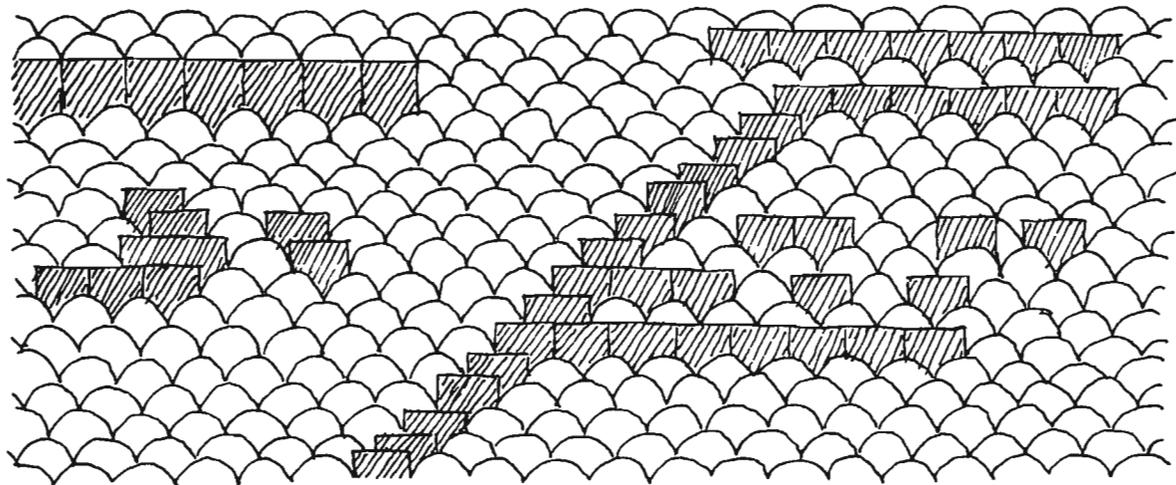
2. *Guideline: Use irregular architectural edges to interlock buildings with hillside vegetation. Emphasize attachment with planting which overlaps building edges, especially at the foundation.*



CITY WALLS: COMPOSITION

The hillside walls gain visual interest from the pattern of buildings and streets worked into their surface. In general, new buildings and streets should fit within the existing visual pattern of the hillside scene or provide a unique new pattern which does not alter the hillside's visual functions and value. Visual pattern is established by lines of visual force arising from topography, vegetation patterns and texture, and the patterns of existing development.

3. *Guideline: Plan development to fit the visual composition of the hillside wall in which it would occur or demonstrate that positive improvement would result from modifying it.*

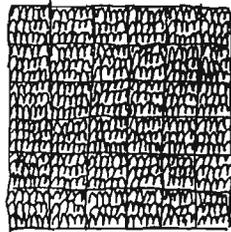


CITY WALLS: FIGURE/GROUND

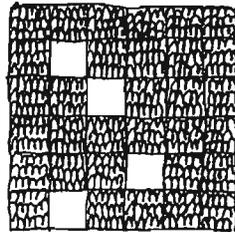
The two colors on a checkerboard appear to advance or recede one from the other from time to time. This is an instance of the optical phenomenon known as figure-ground. The dominant color is referred to as the figure, the other as the ground. The relationship between hillside structures and hillside vegetation is such a figure-ground relationship.

When the wooded hillside can be read as the ground within which the figure rests, the hillside will retain its natural visual appearance. When development is so dominant that it becomes the ground, the hillside character has irreversibly changed.

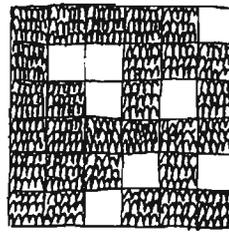
4. *Guideline: Do not exceed equilibrium in the structure-vegetation relationship.*



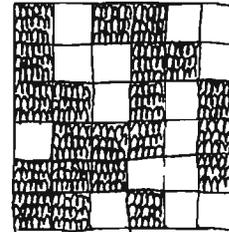
Natural Site
Vegetation is
the Ground.



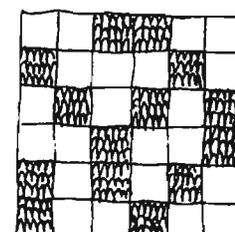
Development
Starts. Structure
is the Figure.



Development
Continues.



Equilibrium
Attained.



Figure/Ground
Reverses.
Hillsides lose
character.

NEIGHBORHOOD SEPARATORS

Hillsides and the valleys between them are natural neighborhood boundaries which sustain neighborhood identity. This is as true of the smaller slopes and valleys back on the hilltops as it is of the more obvious basin hillsides.

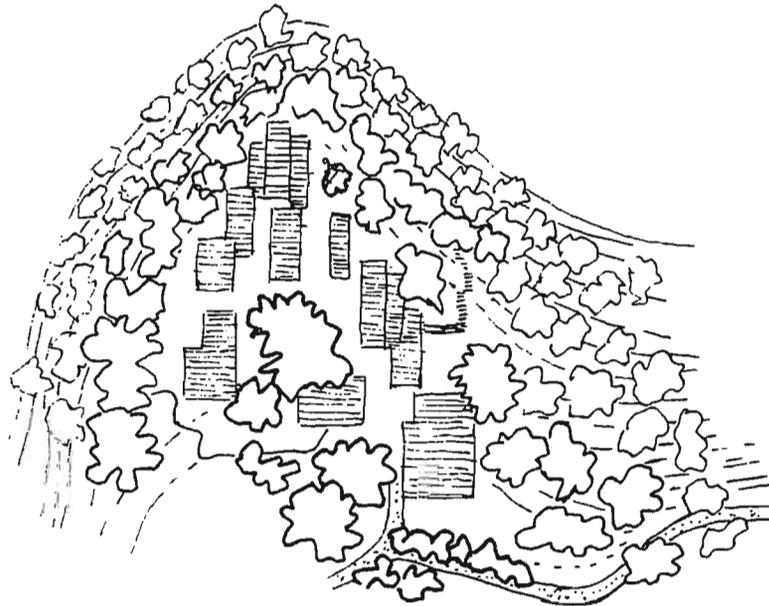
5. *Guideline: Align man-made boundaries such as roads and streets with the natural boundaries created by the terrain.*
6. *Guideline: Avoid excessive cutting and filling for roads and streets along boundaries.*
7. *Guideline: Emphasize boundaries with tree cover.*



NEW NEIGHBORHOODS

As hillsides continue to be developed new neighborhoods can be created. Large, moderately steep slopes offer opportunities for small communities which derive their character from their hillside location.

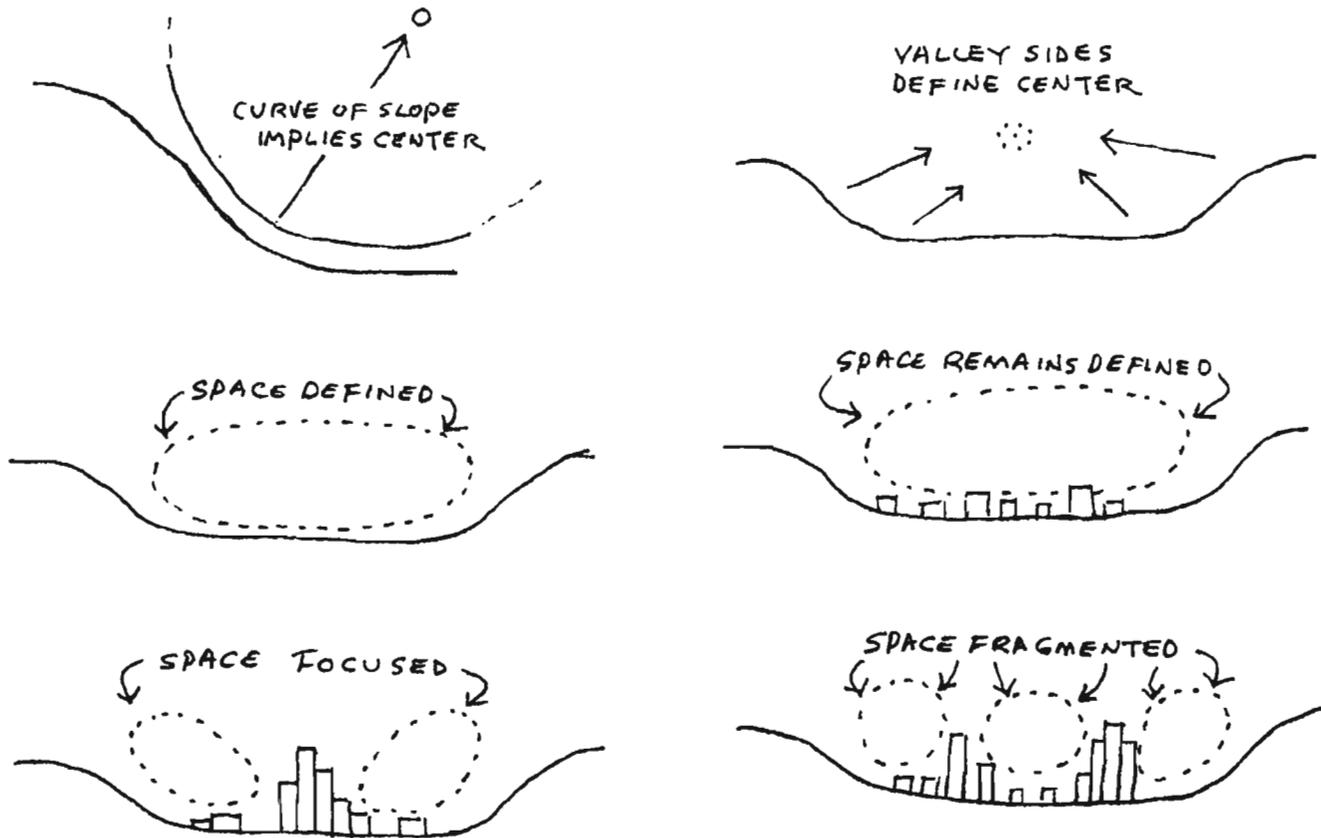
8. *Guideline: Cluster new development, retaining surrounding tree cover and minimizing changes in topography.*



FOCUS

A circle is the form which most implies a center. The overall landscape of Cincinnati is like a large shallow half bowl, defined by surrounding hillsides. Tributary valleys and the shallow valleys of smaller scale hillsides in the residential areas above and beyond downtown continue this circling or enclosing of space.

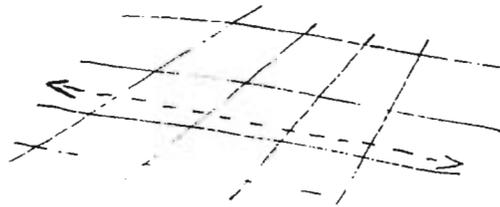
9. Guideline: Site valley development to focus the encircling hillsides rather than fragmenting the spaces they create.



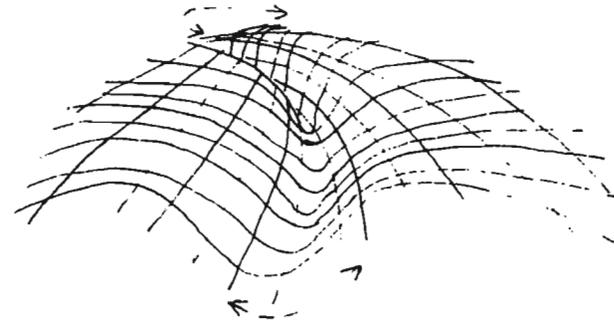
PLACE DEFINITION

Hilly terrain breaks up otherwise limitless space. Where views are limited on several sides of the viewer, even on a very small scale, a strong sense of place results. Development should respect and take advantage of this characteristic.

10. *Guideline: Match scale of buildings to scale of terrain.*



PLANE CONTINUOUS, SPACE UNIFORM



PLANE VARIEGATED, SPACE SUBDIVIDED

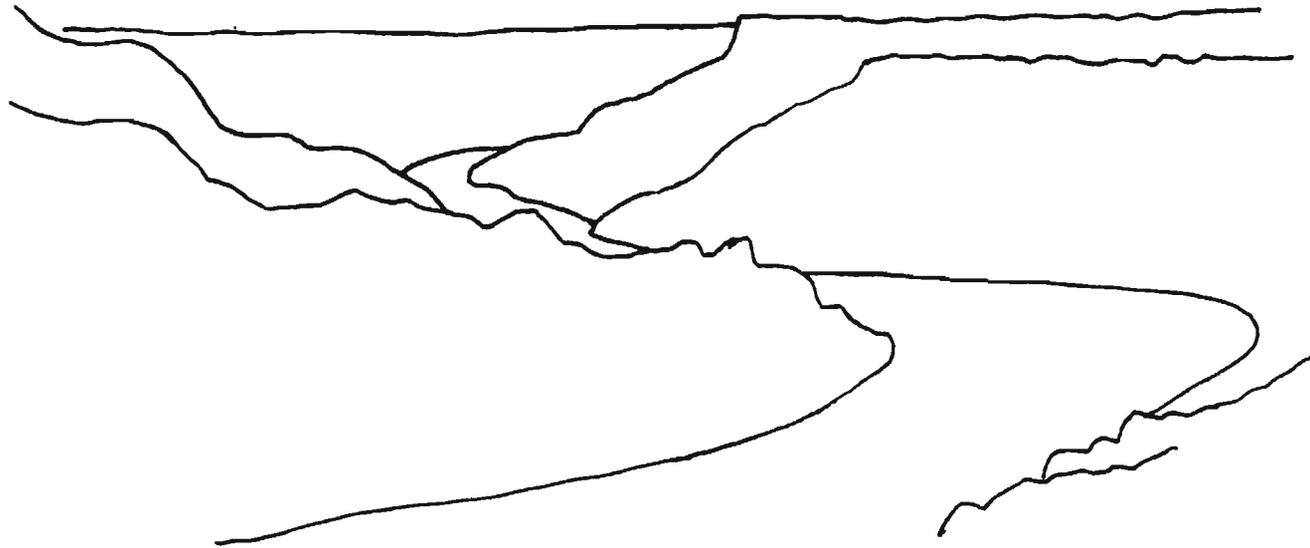
DOWN/UP

A BASIC CHARACTERISTIC OF HILLSIDES
IS THAT THEY GO UP AND DOWN.
DEVELOPMENT WHICH PRESERVES AND
EXPRESSES THIS VERTICAL ESSENCE
FITS THE HILLSIDES.

PROFILE

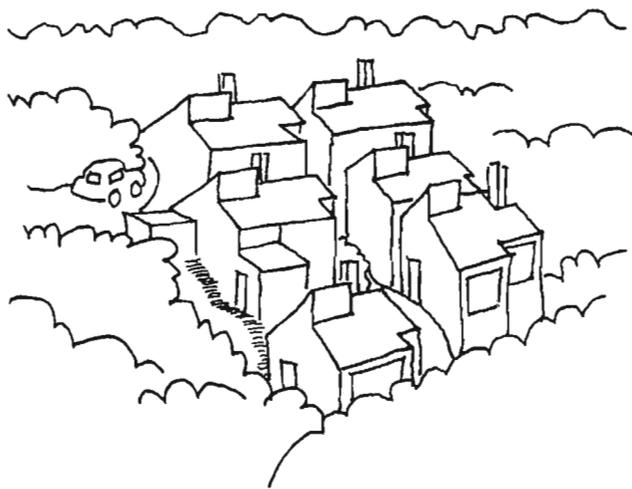
A hillside's slope or angle of repose expresses a balance between the strength of the materials holding up the hill and the force of gravity pulling it down. A hillside's profile is a precise visual expression of the forces which created it. These profiles are particularly important at the corners or entrances to major valleys.

11. *Guideline: Retain the natural slope lines as seen in profile. Restore the vegetation lines which convey the slope lines.*

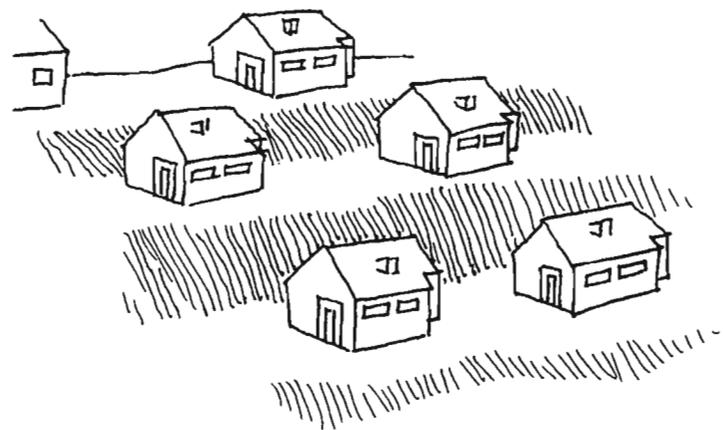


Preserving the natural slope of building sites is basic to preserving the overall shape of a hillside.

12. *Guideline: Plan buildings to fit into the hillside rather than altering the hillside to fit the buildings.*



THIS



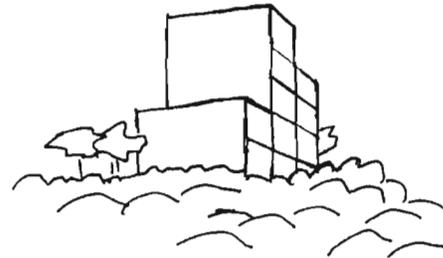
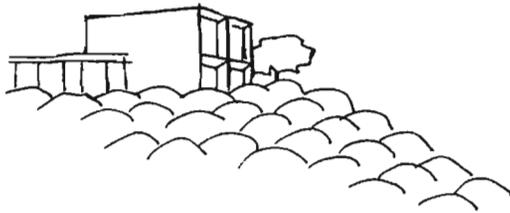
NOT THIS

BROW

A hillside's upward rise ends at its brow. In Cincinnati this brow is a strong horizontal line which both defines and emphasizes the top edge. Because the brow is the horizon of the city it is a crucial visual element.

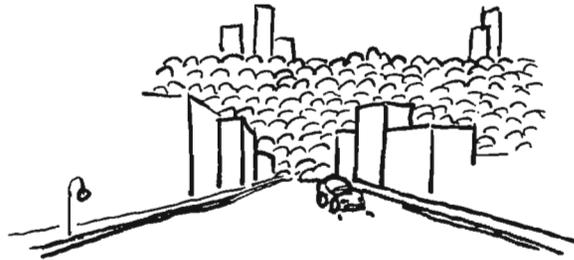
13. *Guideline: Maintain a clear sense of the hillside brow by siting buildings back from it.*

14. *Guideline: Maintain the natural appearance of the brow by tree planting and other landscape measures.*

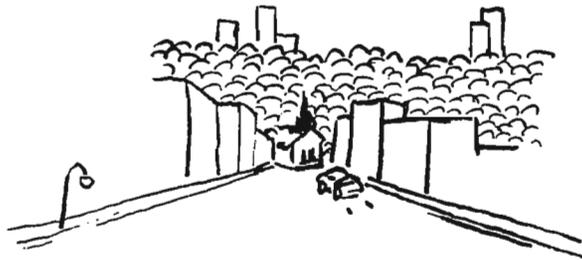


Cincinnati hillsides rise from an essentially flat valley floor, upon which a grid pattern of streets has developed. The view of green hillside which marks the end of each straight street is a visual characteristic unique to Cincinnati.

15. *Guideline: Do not obscure the hillside foot at the end of basin streets.*



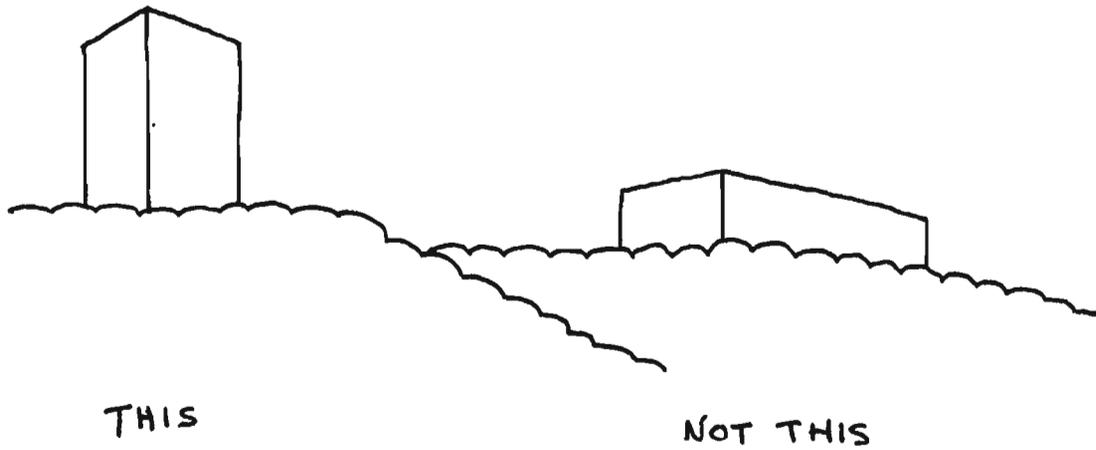
16. *Guideline: Only buildings of significance to the entire community should be allowed at the ends of basin streets.*



VERTICALITY

The shape of a building works either for or against the hillside's vertical thrust.

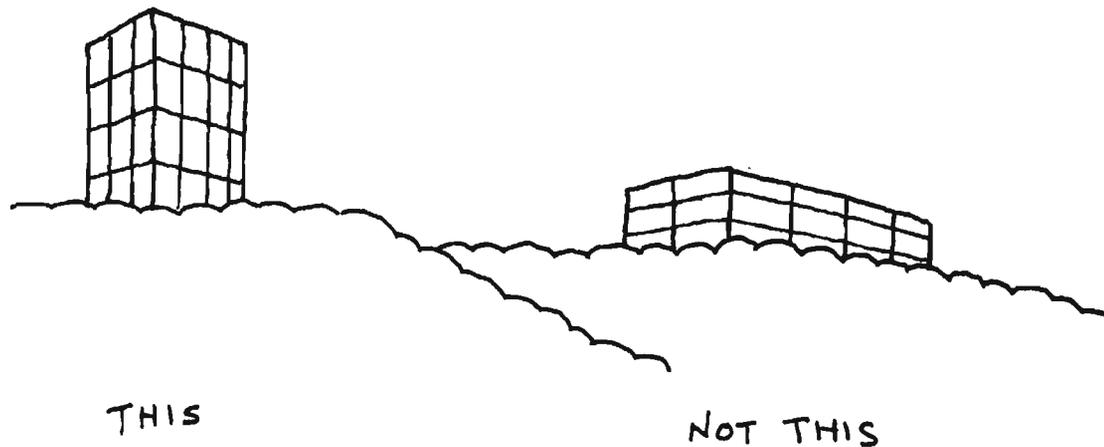
17. *Guideline: As seen on the face of the hillside or on the hilltop, buildings should appear higher than they are wide.*



VERTICAL UNITS

In large scale development it is especially important that the hillsides sense of verticality not be lost. It can be maintained through careful planning of the building units, modules, and details.

18. *Guideline: Emphasize the vertical dimension in the use of units, modules, and exterior treatment of large developments.*



STEPPED UNITS

The relation of a building to other buildings can give a visual index to the hillside's steepness.

19. *Guideline: Stagger or step building units according to the topography.*



STREETS

Streets provide important visual clues to the shape of a hillside. Streets built with the least alteration of the hillside are the most expressive of the hillside.

20. *Guideline: Use narrow lanes, one-way streets and split-level roads to avoid excessive earth moving.*



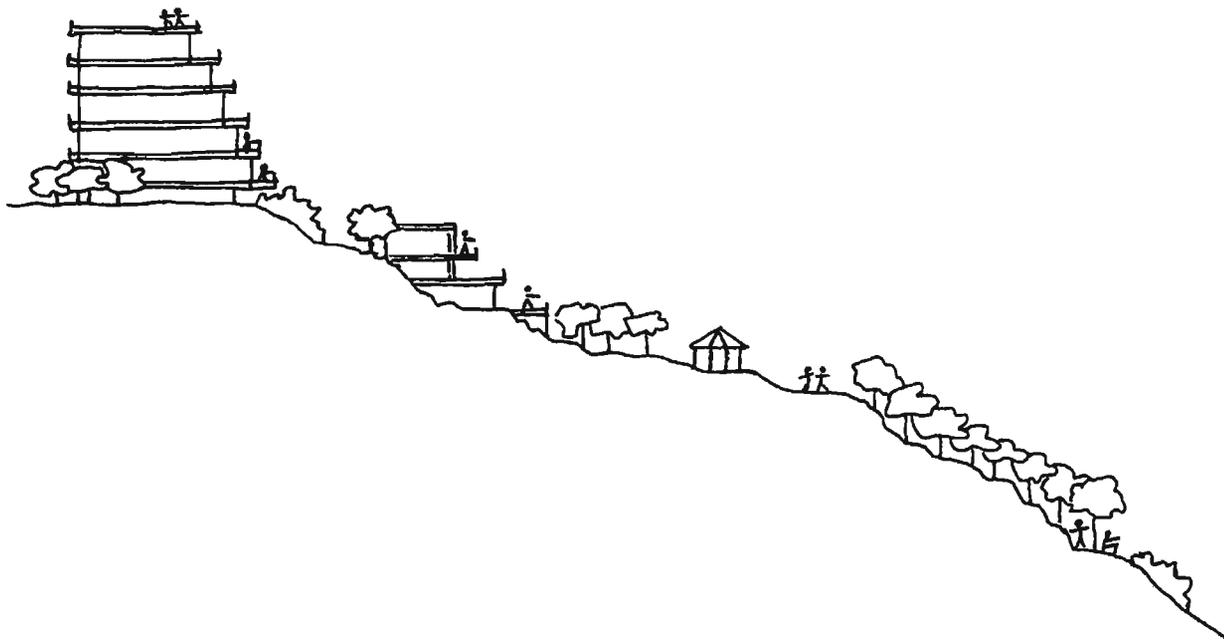
IN/OUT

HILLSIDES MOVE IN AND OUT, CREATING
EXPOSED POINTS AND ENCLOSED VALLEYS.
DEVELOPMENT WHICH RESPONDS TO THIS
CHANGING QUALITY OF SPACE TAKES FULL
ADVANTAGE OF THE HILLSIDE'S NATURAL
SHAPE.

VIEWS

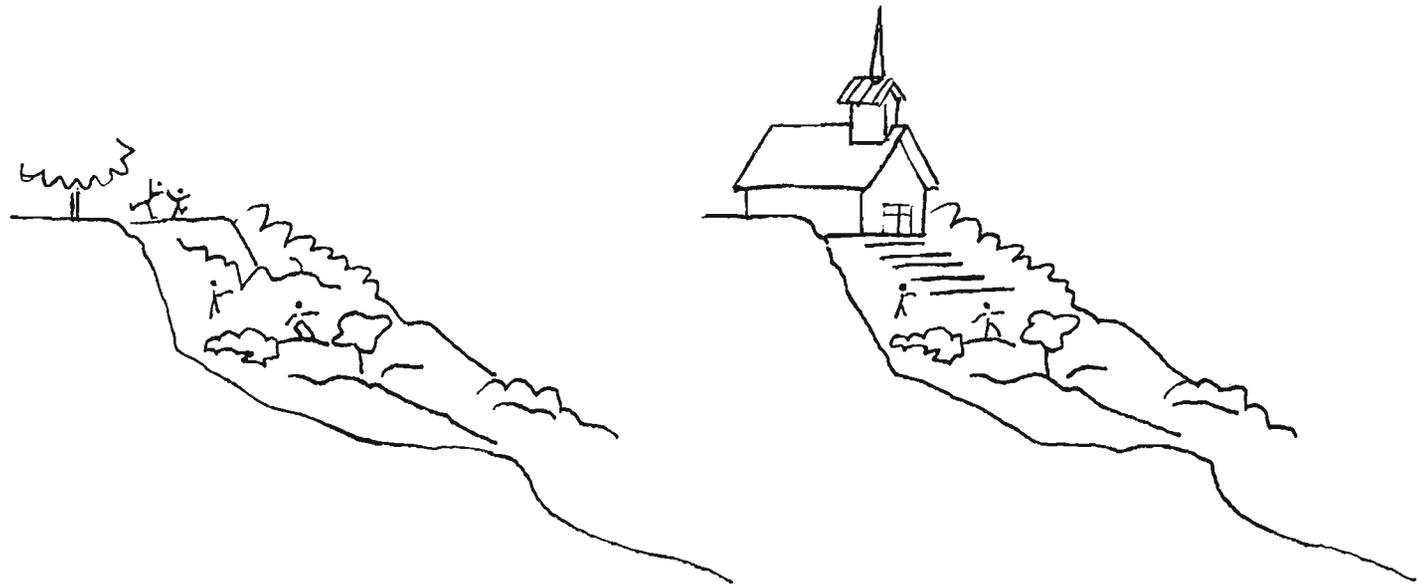
More than any other factor, views draw people to relax and reside on hillsides. With a hillside at one's back the openness beyond symbolizes the world at large and the opportunities and responsibilities which wait there. The contrast is between the unstructured space beyond and the stable, firm earth behind.

21. *Guideline: Site buildings not only to provide views, but also to provide a variety of community and private viewing places.*



The hillsides form a visual commons shared by the entire community. They are a public resource.

22. *Guideline: Utilize for community or public land use those portions of the hillsides most exposed to public view, or from which the widest views are possible.*



INTIMACY

The slopes which form tributary valleys focus inward. Such places encourage incremental discovery of the details of a small scale environment. Here perceptions are of intimacy, security, more private behavior and less public involvement than on more exposed slopes.

23. *Guideline: In small places, site and design buildings to emphasize intimacy and privacy, avoid the use of high rise or high bulk buildings, and develop personal scale circulation paths and meeting areas.*

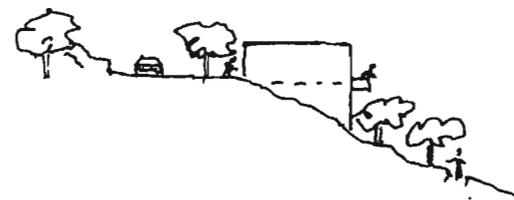
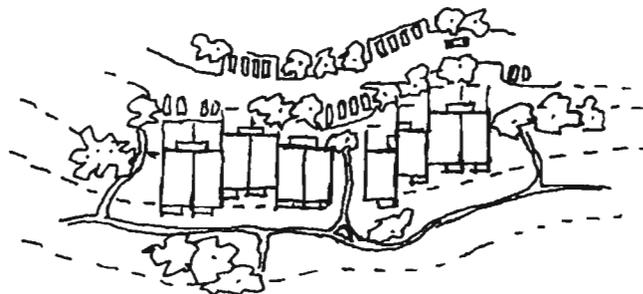
24. *Guideline: Provide maximum opportunities for exploration and discovery of small scale phenomena by retaining and increasing hillside vegetation and landscape, and by making variety a major design feature of all elements.*



CONTOUR

The undulations of the hillsides are an important aspect of their variety at close range. The relation of buildings to one another can give a visual index to these undulations. Similarly, careful planning of drives and parking areas can preserve and express topography.

25. *Guideline: Plan buildings, drives and parking areas to acknowledge the natural contour lines of the site.*

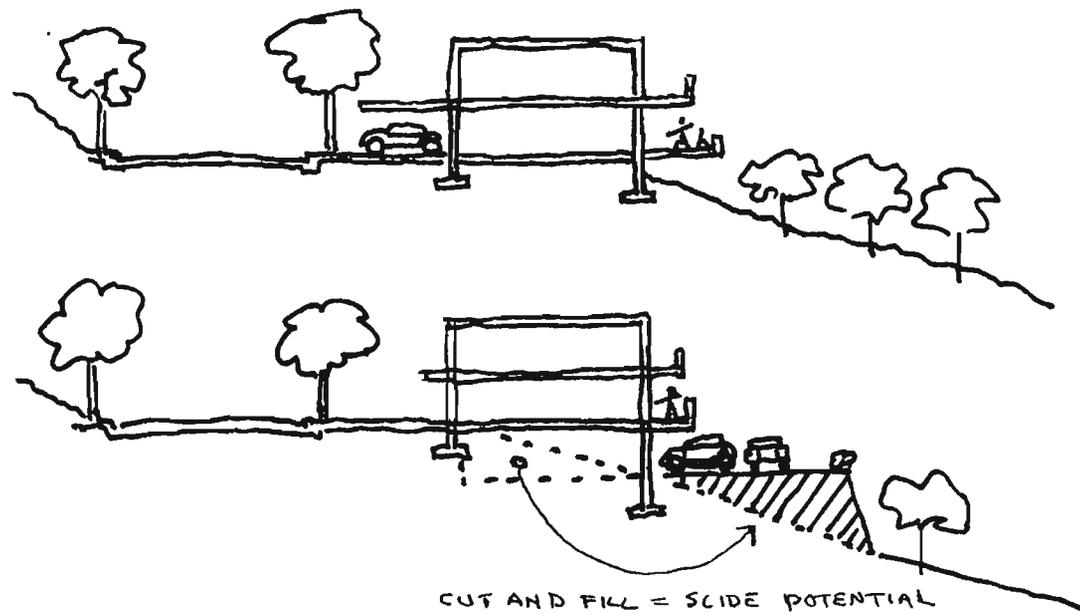


PARKING

Parking lots generally require large amounts of flat ground. The terrain modification required violates almost every hillside theme, principle, and guideline. Automobiles should not usurp the precious hillside ground and views.

26. *Guideline: Meet large parking requirements with multiple small parking areas, and screen with planting, berms, and terraces.*

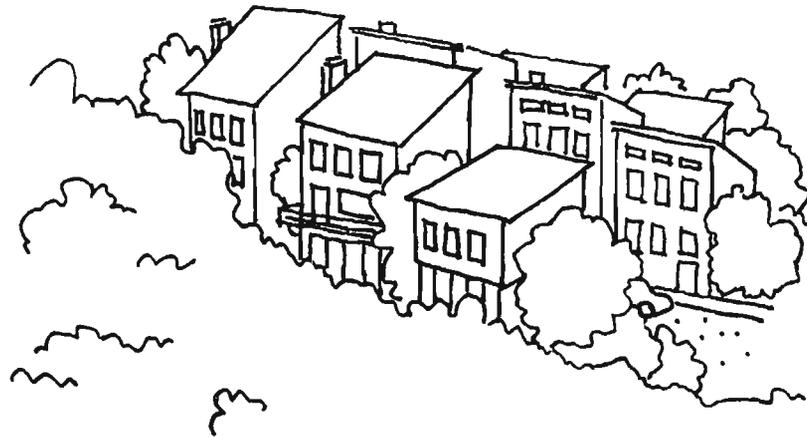
27. *Guideline: Provide parking on the uphill side behind buildings.*



ROOFTOPS

Because hillside buildings are frequently experienced from above and at close range, their roofs are more important than those of buildings on flat ground.

28. *Guideline: Avoid rooftop utilities, or provide screening and sound-control, or otherwise integrate them into the rooftop.*



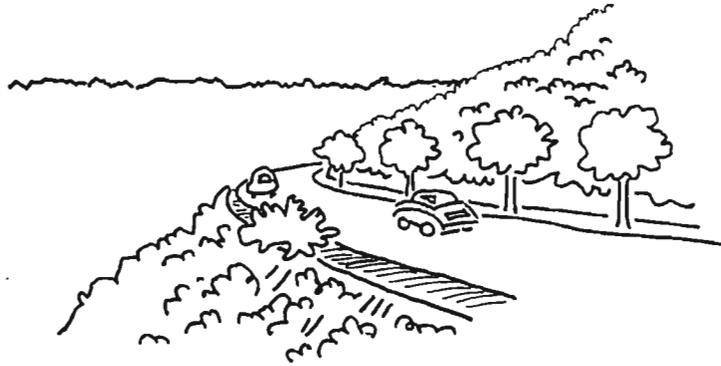
REST/MOTION

BECAUSE THEY ARE LARGE AND IMMOVABLE,
HILLSIDES REGISTER PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT
PAST THEM. DEVELOPMENT WHICH FURTHER
SHARPENS THIS SENSE OF MOTION STRENGTHENS
PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION BOTH OF HILLSIDES AND
THE CITY AS A WHOLE.

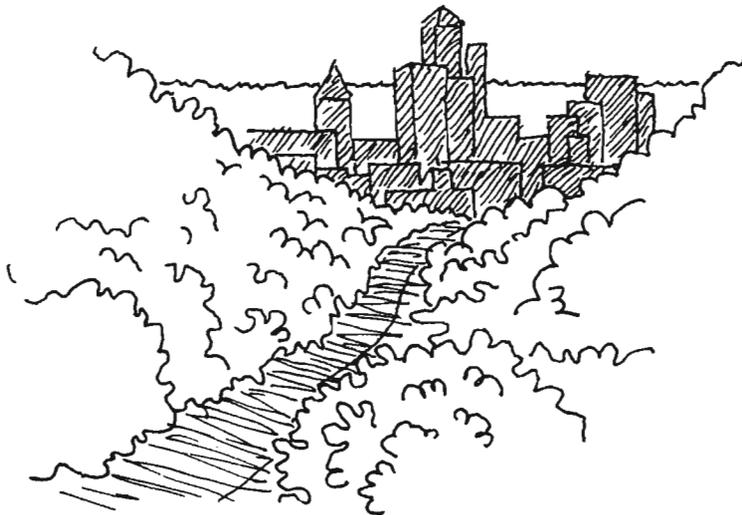
ORIENTATION

As people move around Cincinnati, their sense of where they are within the city is a function of their sense of where they are in relation to the city's topography.

29. *Guideline: Site and design structures along major roads to preserve driver views of the hillsides, especially at bends.*



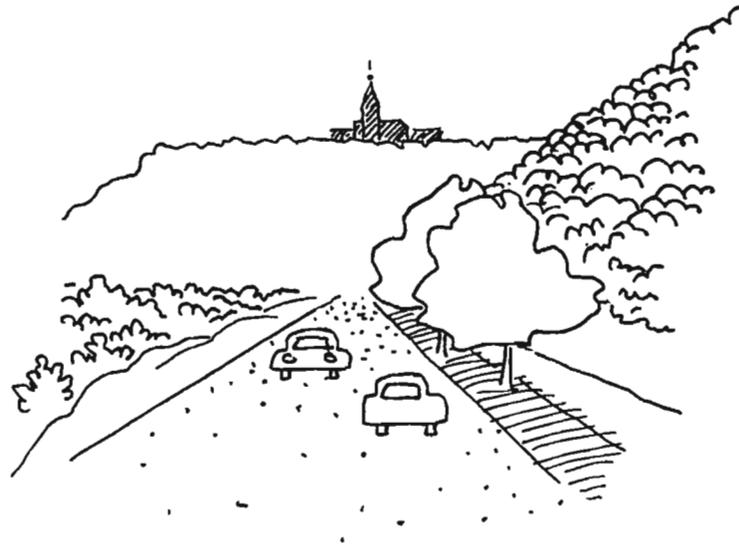
30. *Guideline: Employ extensive landscaping alongside development in corridors.*



LANDMARKS

Hillsides sharpen orientation by establishing natural landmarks and by providing prominent sites for man-made landmarks. A hillside holds up to view the place to which a person is going, or provides visual points of reference along the way.

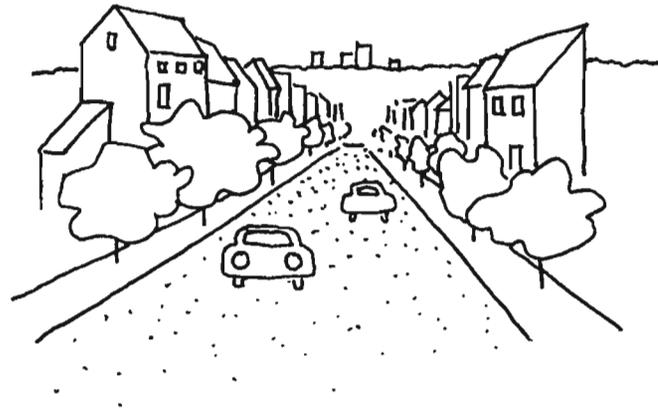
31. *Guideline: Plan highly visible buildings to be of landmark quality.*



STOP

The wall-like character of the hillsides channels people's movements, physically and visually. A hillside's mass stops the eye and is itself a large, motionless presence.

32. *Guideline: Aim roads and streets directly at hillsides for maximum impact.*



ENTICE

A hill implies its other side, enticing movement around or over it.

33. *Guideline: Site major structures to show only a portion of themselves beyond the hill's brow or profile when viewed from important roads.*



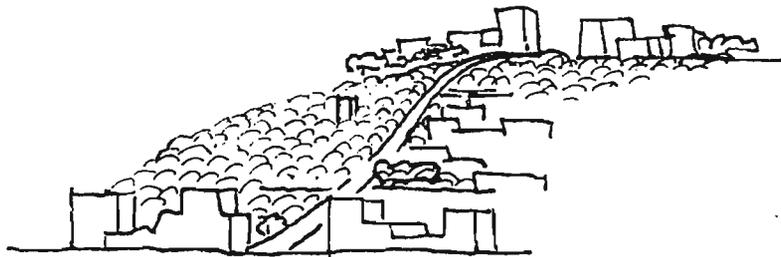
GRAVITY

Besides being basic to people's sense of up and down, gravity affects our sense of motion. It speeds us going downhill and slows us going up. In either case, we are made more conscious of our movements.

34. *Guideline: Design hillside roads and walkways to convey a vivid sense of movement.*



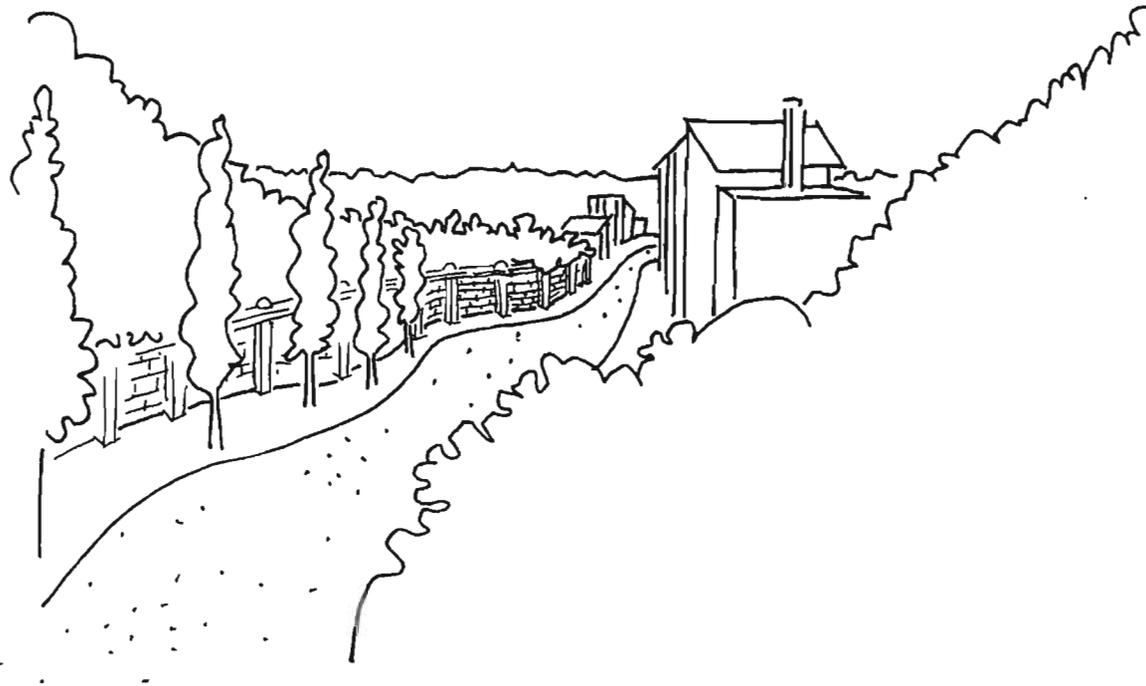
35. *Guideline: Provide circulation paths as steep as technically feasible.*



STREETSCAPE

Vertical streetscape elements pinpoint places and thereby register motion past a place very precisely, sharpening one's sense of motion.

36. *Guideline: Employ vertical structures and detailing along hillside roads. These include buildings, trees, street furniture and retaining wall detailing.*



NATURE/PEOPLE

HILLSIDES ARE A NATURAL LANDSCAPE. THE BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION WHICH THEY RAISE IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATURE AND PEOPLE. DEVELOPMENT WHICH INTENSIFIES THIS RELATIONSHIP IS A MATURE EXPRESSION OF AN URBAN CULTURE ROOTED IN THE LAND.

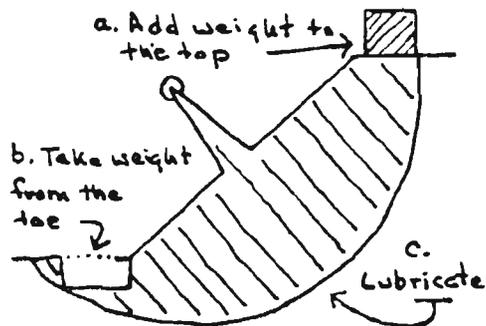
GEOLOGY

The stability of Cincinnati's hillsides can be easily disturbed. Few landslides of consequence have occurred naturally due only to bedrock geology and slope factors. Most have been created by excavating, filling, and other human activities.

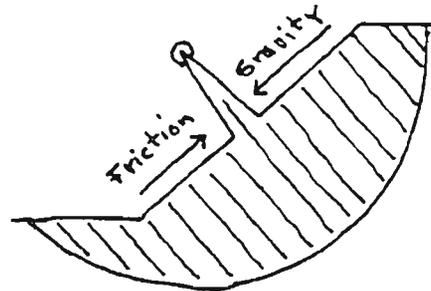
37. Guideline: Respect the site's conditions of steepness, soil, bedrock, and hydrology so as to insure hillside stability both during and after development.

Gravity wants to pull everything flat. Internal friction of the hill material resists gravity.

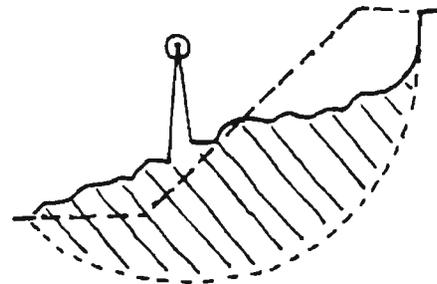
1. Natural angle of repose: forces are in balance.



3. Ways to cause the pendulum to swing down.



2. Diagram of forces; like a pendulum which wants to swing down.

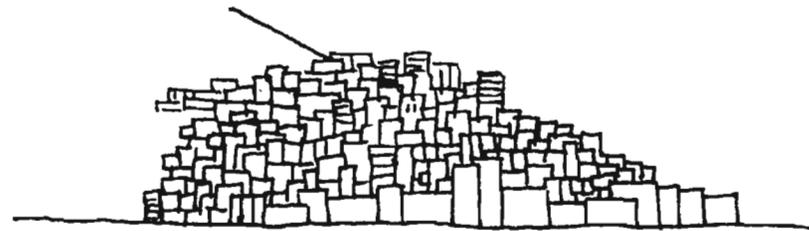
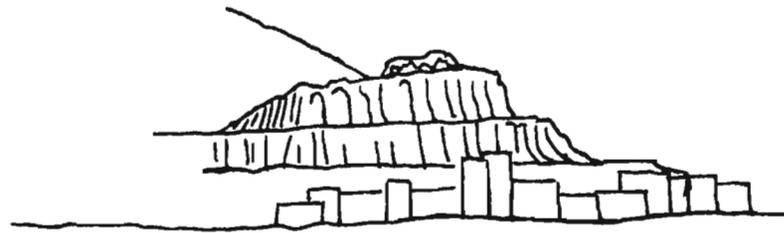


4. Result: landslide.

REBUILDING HILLS

Previous quarrying activity and landslides have left certain hillsides with a deteriorated appearance and frequently in an unstable condition. Restoring the natural material of an already unstable area is often impractical and the erection of retaining walls unduly expensive.

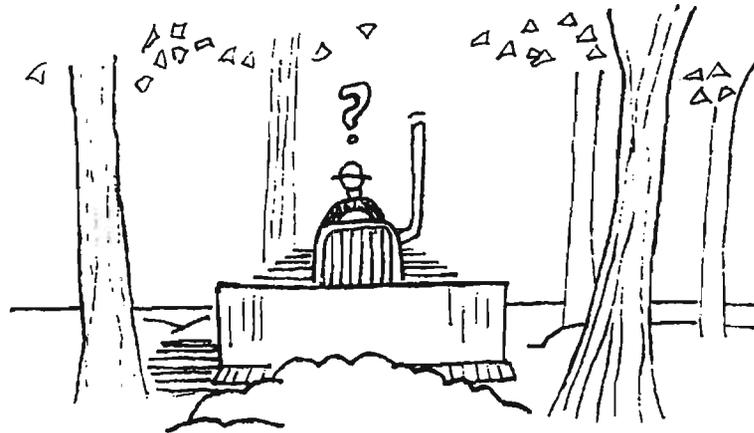
38. Guideline: Use megastructure development to restore and enhance the form of damaged hillsides, to stabilize slope conditions, and to create new landmarks.



EARTH MOVING

The delicate geological and ecological balances of Cincinnati's hillsides, their detailed visual texture and scale, and their steepness all make inappropriate the use of large machines which were designed for massive earth moving. Builders are encouraged to rethink the use of such machines in the hillsides.

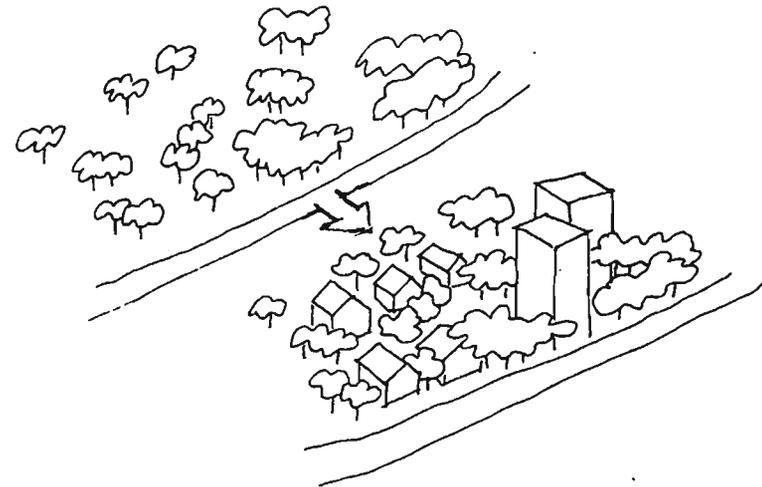
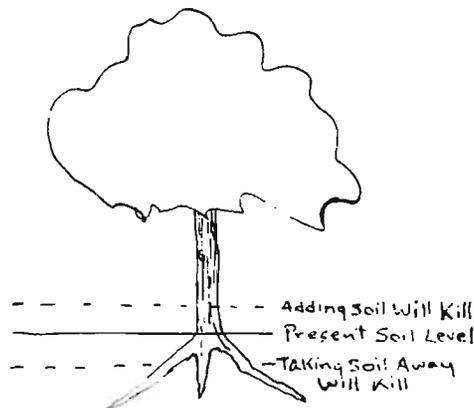
39. *Guideline: Employ methods and machines which match the grain and scale of the terrain being modified.*



More than any other element, trees cause the hillsides to read as a natural landscape. There is no excuse for cuts and fills left barren. Trees are never "in the way". Grading too close to tree roots will kill them just as surely, though more slowly, as cutting their trunks.

40. *Guideline: Do not heedlessly displace, degrade or destroy hillside vegetation.*

41. *Guideline: Do not add to nor take away soil around or over tree roots within the area covered by branches of trees which are expected to live.*



42. *Guideline: Replant all cuts, fills and any other earth modification.*

NATURAL SITE FEATURES

Hillsides integrate a wild landscape of great detail and variety into Cincinnati's urban environment. Respect for nature is expressed not only in the maintenance of whole hillsides but in close attention to the natural details which compose the hills.

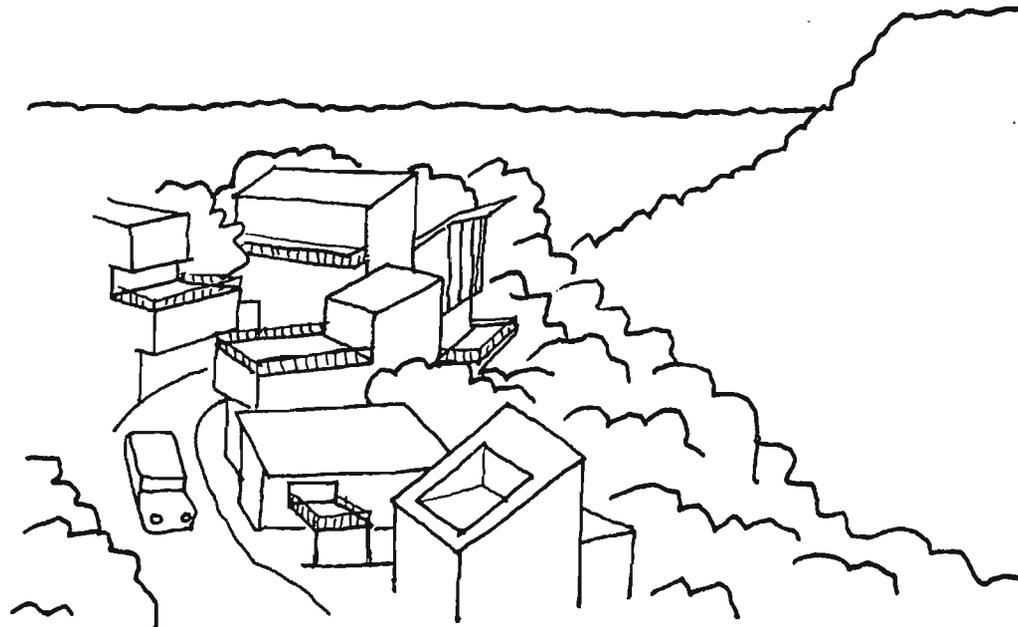
43. *Guideline: Respect and retain natural site features such as streams, slopes, ridge lines, wildlife habitat, plant communities, and trees.*



VARIETY

Buildings seem most natural when, like plants and animals, they are adapted to their environment. Also like plants and animals, a remarkable variety of buildings should result, echoing nature as well as answering people's need for diversity.

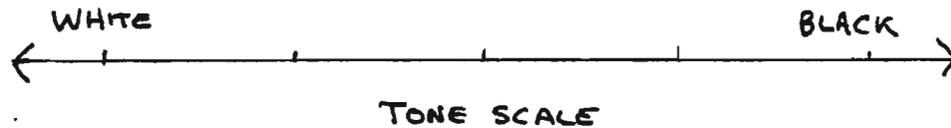
44. Guideline: Employ techniques that create a variety of architectural solutions responsive to the limits and potentials of hillside development.



COLOR

The colors, textures, and patterns of nature vary radically with the seasons, yet there is surprising continuity within the overall balances of these natural elements. Development need not mimic nature, but it should work within these larger continuities.

45. *Guideline: Avoid image incongruities by balancing the tone (the degree of white or black in the color) of new development with the dominant quality of the surrounding hillside.*



46. *Guideline: Maintain a sense of balance with the surroundings through choice of color, texture and other exterior building treatments.*



Large light color area and small dark color area appear to balance

Hillsides provide a visible indication of the passage of time as seasonal differences cause color and textural change in vegetation. At a more abstract level, hillsides provide a visual record of geologic time. They record the changing movements of land, water and glaciers which created them. Structures referencing historic time add a further dimension.

47. *Guideline: Retain and add landscape and vegetation which show strong seasonal change.*

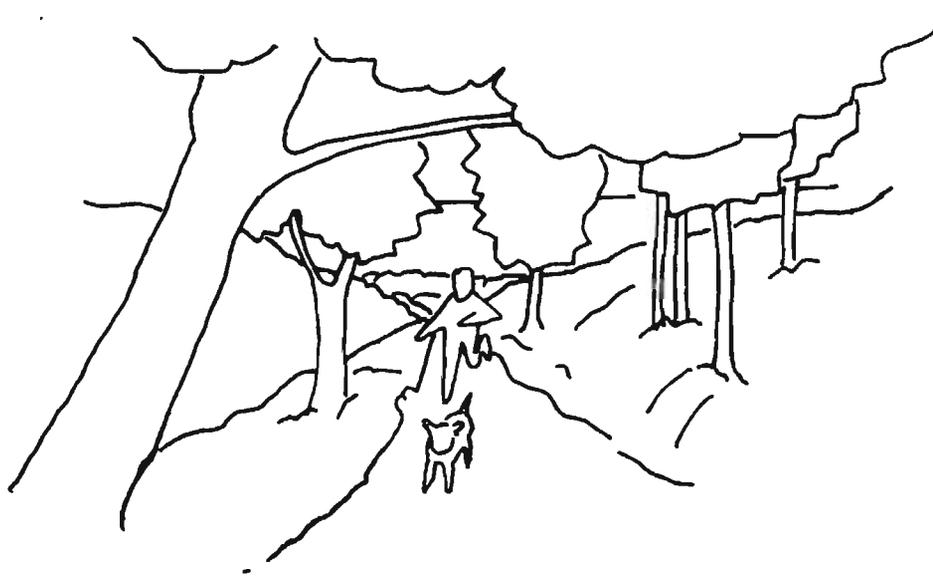
48. *Guideline: Where practicable, respect and retain historic site features such as old buildings, retaining walls, and other signs of past land use.*



CONTACT WITH NATURE

Contact between people and nature comes down finally to a personal matter, contact by a person. The hillsides provide countless opportunities for developing this basic ecological interaction. Interaction is not limited to vision. It must include all the senses: smell, touch, hearing, and taste as well as sight.

49. *Guideline: Provide site planning, landscaping and open space around developments which allow and encourage personal and total sensory contact with nature and the nature of the hillside.*



NUMERICAL INDEX OF GUIDELINES

CINCINNATI HILLSIDES DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

1. Plan buildings to reflect the scale and proportion of surrounding trees. (p 12)
2. Use irregular architectural edges to interlock buildings with hillside vegetation. Emphasize attachment with planting which overlaps building edges, especially at the foundation. (p 13)
3. Plan development to fit the visual composition of the hillside wall in which it would occur or demonstrate that positive improvement would result from modifying it. (p 14)
4. Do not exceed equilibrium in the structure-vegetation relationship. (p 15)
5. Align man-made boundaries such as roads and streets with the natural boundaries created by the terrain. (p 16)
6. Avoid excessive cutting and filling for roads and streets along boundaries. (p 16)
7. Emphasize boundaries with tree cover. (p 16)
8. Cluster new development, retaining surrounding tree cover and minimizing changes in topography. (p 17)
9. Site valley development to focus the encircling hillsides rather than fragmenting the spaces they create. (p 18)
10. Match scale of buildings to scale of terrain. (p 19)
11. Retain the natural slope lines as seen in profile. Restore the vegetation lines which convey the slope lines. (p 22)
12. Plan buildings to fit into the hillside rather than altering the hillside to fit the buildings. (p 23)
13. Maintain a clear sense of the hillside brow by siting buildings back from it. (p 24)
14. Maintain the natural appearance of the brow by tree planting and other landscape measures. (p 24)

15. Do not obscure the hillside foot at the end of basin streets. (p 25)
16. Only buildings of significance to the entire community should be allowed at the ends of basin streets. (p 25)
17. As seen on the face of the hillside or on the hilltop, buildings should appear higher than they are wide. (p 26)
18. Emphasize the vertical dimension in the use of units, modules, and exterior treatment of large developments. (p 27)
19. Stagger or step building units according to the topography. (p 28)
20. Use narrow lanes, one-way streets and split-level roads to avoid excessive earth moving. (p 29)
21. Site buildings not only to provide views, but also to provide a variety of community and private viewing places. (p 32)
22. Utilize for community or public land use those portions of the hillsides most exposed to public view, or from which the widest views are possible. (p 33)
23. In small places, site and design buildings to emphasize intimacy and privacy, avoid the use of high rise or high bulk buildings, and develop personal scale circulation paths and meeting areas. (p 34)
24. Provide maximum opportunities for exploration and discovery of small scale phenomena by retaining and increasing hillside vegetation and landscape, and by making variety a major design feature of all elements. (p 34)
25. Plan buildings, drives and parking areas to acknowledge the natural contour line of the site. (p 35)
26. Meet large parking requirements with multiple small parking areas, and screen with planting, berms, and terraces. (p 36)
27. Provide parking on the uphill side behind buildings. (p 36)

28. Avoid rooftop utilities, or provide screening and sound-control, or otherwise integrate them into the rooftop. (p 37)
29. Site and design structures along major roads to preserve driver views of the hillsides, especially at bends. (p 40)
30. Employ extensive landscaping alongside development in corridors. (p 40)
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