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John R. Schmidt, M.S.

Dear Editor  
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Now that we grasp the shape of our Downtown Queen, foreseen by City planners nearly two decades ago, Robert Clerc, in his editorial Friday, January 31, 1986, "The Year 2000 Plan, Part II", has opened discussion in the form of "What next".

Wisely, those planners decided to build from a strong core.

This is perhaps a critical point in the evolution of this City. As we near our bicentennial year 1988, confirming a new City Manager, there is increasing awareness of our heritage, our destiny, and the challenge to optimize the Greater Cincinnati land we share. Conceptualization of the Mt. Adams tram is a symbolic gesture toward dreaming in-the-large while gazing outward from the strong heart of Downtown.

The time is right for all Greater Cincinnatians to look far forward while gazing outward from the strong heart of our Queen City. In all directions there is evidence of the love of development to match the vibrant beat of the strong Downtown heart.

An example with which i am most familiar is the interest in development on Prospect Hill, the south face of Mt. Auburn, and the hillside nearest the Queen's heart. The Hillside Trust has sponsored an architectural design competition arousing unexpectedly strong response from most of the 50 states and several foreign countries. The results have been on display in the Downtown Public Library for the past few weeks. February 5 is the last day of exhibit.

The response was unexpectedly strong because the parochial vision behind the design competition was unfortunately limited. In fact, few cities on earth enjoy such a favorable setting for development. About a century ago, the south face of Mt. Auburn was quarried for the rock that even now comprises retaining walls and building foundations in fine old Cincinnati homes. The result is a magnificent site for earth-sheltered, southern-oriented, view-oriented construction.

In pioneering activities reported in the Wall Street Journal, Jan 31, enabled by the 1984 National Cooperative Research Act, a joint venture is under way by electronics and appliance companies to standardize a more capable wiring system supporting greater control of the habitat. We are on the threshold of a new age in application of computer technology to support the increased demands of urban living, including the harnessing of renewable energy to minimize the effects currently choking many urban areas.

It will be hard for many of us to accept any development on the natural, wooded Mt. Auburn hillside. But sacrificing this rare beauty for meager, twentieth century housing is an insult to all Greater Cincinnatians committed to a vibrant 21st century Queen. The design competition is best seen as the first step toward comprehending the majesty of what is possible when the wisdom of the Year 2000 Plan is focused on comprehensive hillside development. Let us not be impatient while growing to this task.