

**Ottawa County  
Purchase of Development Rights  
Scoring System Criteria**

**Section I  
Primary Characteristics**

These characteristics apply directly to those outlined by the State of Michigan. Furthermore, these characteristics combined makeup 40% of the state's overall total.

**1. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY**

Priority is placed on prime productive farmland and/or farmland that has *unique or locally significant growing characteristics*. Farmland can be considered prime or unique if it meets the USDA definition for prime and unique or locally significant soils as defined in the USDA Soil Conservation Service Soil Survey.

- a) Points are to be determined by multiplying the percentage of prime, unique, or locally significant acres by 150 to receive a score between 0 and 150. The percentage of prime, unique, or locally significant farmland is calculated by using the number of prime, unique, or locally significant acres and dividing it by the total acres in the application. Prime, unique, or locally significant acres are to be verified by Natural Resource Conservation Service or Michigan State University Extension staff educators.

**Total Points for Item 1: \_\_\_\_\_**  
*Maximum Points Possible: 150*

**2. CREATION OF BLOCKS OF PRESERVED LAND**

It is important to protect blocks of agricultural land, thus protecting the public investment in farmland preservation, as well as providing for an adequate economic base for continued agriculture in the area. Blocks of farmland also help minimize land use conflicts and help provide a buffer to interior farming operations. Emphasis is placed on farmland located in an area in which the potential for future development of surrounding farmland is restricted.

- a) *Parcel Size – 50 points possible*

Priority is placed on larger parcels to help promote more economically viable agricultural production units. One point is awarded for every two acres over 40, with a maximum of 50 points for parcels 100 acres or larger in size after the forty acre parcel size is deducted from the total.

*Example: 100 acre parcel = 100(parcel size) – 40 (parcel size) = 60 acres  
60(acres)/2 = 30 points*

Points for a):

- b) *Proximity to permanently preserved land – 50 points possible*

Parcel is near other permanently preserved farmland, publicly owned land, conservation land, or agricultural conservation easements that will help to enhance other local open space initiatives in the community such as connecting an open space or wildlife habitat corridor, or in preserving unique habitats/natural features that benefit local conservation efforts.

- Parcel is directly adjacent to preserved land with at least 500 feet of shared boundary.....50 pts
- Parcel is not adjacent but within ½ mile of preserved land .....35 pts

- Parcel is not adjacent but between 1/2 to 2 miles of preserved land .....20 pts

Points for b):

*Please list the addresses of the surrounding preserved parcels and the type of preservation that is in place for each parcel:*

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**Total Points for Item 2: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Maximum Points Possible: 100*

**3. CONSERVATION PRACTICES/VALUES**

- a) RMSL Soil Conservation Plan in place on parcel –50 points possible

Points are awarded for property that has an approved and implemented Resource Management System Level soil conservation plan adopted by the landowner and USDA-NRCS to help maintain the agricultural productivity and environmental health of the land.

Implemented RMSL Soil Conservation Plan.....50 points  
 No RMSL Soil Conservation Plan Adopted.....0 points

Note: 100 points will be deducted if the farm operation, in the last three years, has been found by the Michigan Department of Agriculture to be in violation (problem not resolved within the allotted time frame) of the Michigan Right to Farm Act or has been found to be in violation of state environmental statutes.

**Total Points for Item 3: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Maximum Points Possible: 50*

*Please attach a confirmation letter from USDA-NCRS verifying that a RMSL plan is in place on the parcel.*

#### 4. MATCHING FUNDS

Landowners and/or local units of government must secure matching funds in order to be eligible for points under this section. Matching funds may be money contributed by public, private, or non-profit sources or can be via a proposal by the landowner to accept an offer less than the purchase value of the development rights and to donate the remaining portion of their development rights' value. A letter of commitment regarding matching funds must accompany the application. The total number of points possible for this category is 100.

- There is a state mandated minimum 25% match of appraised development rights value to qualify for state grant funds.
- There is a federal mandated minimum 50% match of appraised development rights value to qualify for USDA grant funds (only 25% of match may originate from landowner donation)
- 1 point will be awarded for every 1% in matching funds to a maximum of 100 points.

*Example: 1) 25% match = 25 points  
2) 50% match = 50 points  
3) 95% match = 95 points*

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Total Points for Item 4: _____</b> |
|---------------------------------------|

*Maximum Points Possible: 100*

#### 5. MAEAP PARTICIPATION/ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

The MAEAP assists farms in establishing environmentally sound agricultural practices, and Organic farms emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations. Farms that are certified under the MAEAP program or the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP) will receive preferential treatment because environmentally sound agricultural practices will contribute to the sustainability of the agricultural operation.

- Points will be awarded if the farm in the grant application is verified through the MAEAP or the USDA's NOP. Applicants may receive points for either MAEAP or organic certification, but not for both.

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Total Points for Item 5: _____</b> |
|---------------------------------------|

*Maximum Points Possible: 50*

*Please attach a copy of certification from MAEAP or the USDA.*

**6. LOCAL AGRICULTURAL PLANNING**

Additional points will be awarded to parcels that are part of a documented, long-range effort or plan for land preservation by the local unit of government in which the parcel is located.

- Parcel is designated as Agricultural in Township Zoning Ordinance (i.e.1 dwelling unit/20 acres or greater).....30 pts
- Parcel is designated as Agricultural in Township Master Plan and within Tier B of the Ottawa County Development Plan.....20 pts

**Total Points for Item 6:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Maximum Points Possible: 50*

**Total Score Awarded for Primary Characteristics (Items 1-6):** \_\_\_\_\_

*Total Score Possible for Primary Characteristics: 500 Points*

**Section II**  
**Secondary Characteristics**

These characteristics are not scored by the state. However, they will be used to select suitable applicants from the local program.

**7. TYPE OF AG PRODUCTION/LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Ottawa County agriculture production is diverse and ranges from commodity-based products, such as corn and soybeans, to fruit and vegetable crops. Ottawa County is ranked second in the state in blueberry production and third in the state in apple production. These crops are considered “specialty crops” and are economically valuable to the county because of their high value/acre, their connection to local processing, and ability to direct market to the consumer.

a) Specialty Crop – *125 points possible*

A specialty crop (defined as a vegetable, tree fruit, blueberries, or grapes fit for human consumption or nursery crops) is grown on the parcel.

- Points are determined by multiplying the percent of the parcel on which a Specialty crop is grown times 125 to receive a score between 0 and 125.

Example: 75% of parcel in specialty crops = .75 x 125 points possible = 93.75 points

Points for a):

*Please list type of specialty crop(s) grown:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE PROVIDE FSA (FARM SERVICES AGENCY) RECORDS LISTING THE CROPS THAT WERE GROWN IN THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS. IF FSA RECORDS ARE UNAVAILABLE, PLEASE PROVIDE PERSONAL CROP RECORDS. (PLEASE NOTE: THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MAY REQUEST ADDITIONAL RECORDS TO BE PROVIDED.)**

b) Commodity Crop – *85 points possible*

Commodity crops (defined as crops which produce feed, food, fiber, or fuel and include hay crops and pastureland) are grown on the parcel.

- Points are determined by multiplying the percent of the parcel on which a Commodity crop is grown times 85 to receive a score between 0 and 85.

Example: 75% of parcel in commodity crops =  $.75 \times 85$  points possible = 63.75 points

Points for b):

*Please list type of commodity crop(s) grown:*

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**PLEASE PROVIDE FSA (FARM SERVICES AGENCY) RECORDS LISTING THE CROPS THAT WERE GROWN IN THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS. IF FSA RECORDS ARE UNAVAILABLE, PLEASE PROVIDE PERSONAL CROP RECORDS. (PLEASE NOTE: THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MAY REQUEST ADDITIONAL RECORDS TO BE PROVIDED.)**

c) Proximity to Existing Livestock Farms – *40 points possible*

Points are awarded for parcels that are in closer proximity to existing livestock farms, creating an additional buffer between livestock and residential neighbors and protecting a land base that can also be used for feed production or manure disposal. A livestock operation for this purpose means a farm with more than 100 animal units (EPA definition).

- The parcels are an existing livestock operation or are located less than 0.5 miles of an existing livestock operation.....40 pts
- Located between 0.5 miles and 1 mile of an existing livestock operation .....15 pts
- Located further than 1 mile from existing livestock operation.....0 pts

Points for c):

d) Agricultural Products that Receive an Added Value or are Processed Locally – *40 points possible*

An additional 40 points may be earned for parcels that produce a locally value added/processed agricultural product or service (to include but not be limited to crops, livestock, food, and fiber or otherwise). The product must receive an added value or be processed within Ottawa County or an adjoining county to receive up to an additional 40 points.

- Points are determined by multiplying the percent of the parcel on which the value added/processed product is produced TIMES 40 to receive a score between 0 and 40

Example: 75% of parcel's crops are processed locally =  $.75 \times 40 = 30$  points

Points for d):

Please list the name and address of facility(ies) where products are processed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Points for Item 6: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Maximum Points Possible: 290*

**8. ENROLLMENT IN PA 116**

Emphasis will be given to landowners who have already taken this step to temporarily protect their farmland by enrolling in the state Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (PA 116). If the entire parcel is enrolled, then the maximum score of 25 points would apply. If only a percentage of the parcel is enrolled, then the percentage is multiplied by the maximum number of points (50) to result in a score.

*Example: Two adjacent 50 acre parcels are submitted as part of the same application by the same landowner. Only one 50 acre parcel is currently enrolled (50%). Total points = 12.5*

**Total Points for Item 7: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Maximum Points Possible: 50*

*Please provide verification of PA 116 Enrollment.*

**9. ROAD FRONTAGE**

Parcels that include lands along public roads will be given higher priority. Protected road frontage preserves scenic views, reduces development and traffic near productive agriculture and protects the agricultural integrity of the property and the surrounding area.

- No road frontage .....0 pts
- Road frontage less than ¼ mile .....10 pts
- Road frontage is ¼ mile or more but less than ½ mile .....15 pts
- Road frontage is ½ mile or more, but less than ¾ of a mile .....25 pts
- Road frontage is ¾ miles or more .....35 pts

**Total Points for Item 8: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Maximum Points Possible: 35*

*Please list all roads where frontage exists and the length of frontage on each road:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**10. AMOUNT OF LAND IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IN AGRICULTURE USE**

Parcels located in areas which are still predominantly in agriculture use will be given a higher priority rather than those parcels which have already become a more isolated “island” of agriculture. A one-

mile radius from the center of the parcel (approximately 2,000 acres) will be used to calculate the percentage of land still in agriculture production. This can be measured using individual township zoning maps along with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software. Current production standards will be verified by the administering agency in conjunction with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and/or Michigan State University Extension.

Agricultural production means the production of plants and animals useful to humans, including forages and sod crops; grains, feed crops, and field crops; dairy and dairy products; poultry and poultry products; livestock, including breeding and grazing of cattle, swine, captive cervidae, and similar animals; berries; herbs; flowers; seeds; grasses; nursery stock; fruits; vegetables; Christmas trees; and other similar uses and activities.

- 75% or more of the surrounding land area is in agriculture production .....50 pts
- 50% or more but less than 75% of the surrounding area is in agriculture production.....30 pts
- 25% or more but less than 50% of the surrounding area is in agriculture production.....15 pts
- Less than 25% of the surrounding area is in agriculture production .....0 pts

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| <p><b>Total Points for Item 9: _____</b></p> <p><i>Maximum Points Possible: 50</i></p> |
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*Please list land owner(s) names and the address of their property which surrounds your farm. Further, please provide the percentage of land in each surrounding parcel that is in ag production.*

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**11. PROXIMITY TO EXISTING PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER AND/OR WATER**

Additional priority is placed on parcels closer to existing community services with the exception that parcels adjacent to existing sewer and/or water lines should receive the lowest priority for preservation (the public has already made the investment and can be used for higher density development). Linear distance to existing, usable public sanitary sewer and/or water service (transmission lines not included) will result in the following scoring options:

- Less Than ½ mile from sewer or water .....0 pts
- ½ Mile or more but less than 1 ½ miles.....50 pts
- 1 ½ Miles or more but less than 3 miles .....35 pts
- 3 Miles or more but less than 5 miles .....25 pts
- 5 Miles or more.....10 pts

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Total Points for Item 10: _____</b></p> <p><i>Maximum Points Possible: 50</i></p> |
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*Please provide the address of the closest parcel with sewer and/or water lines, and please designate whether the referenced public infrastructure is a water and/or sewer line.*

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**12. WATER ACCESSIBILITY**

- A parcel having frontage on a major stream that drains more than 640 acres.....25 pts
- A parcel having frontage on a minor stream that drains between 100 and 640 acres.....15 pts
- A parcel having frontage on a stream that drains less than 100 acres or has a year-round spring, pond, or lake of three acres or more .....10 pts

**Total Points for Item 11: \_\_\_\_\_**  
*Maximum Points Possible: 25*

*Please list stream(s):* \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**13. HISTORICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Centennial Farms are eligible for 25 points, whereas farms that are other historically registered sites are eligible for 15 points. Applicants may receive a maximum of 25 points.

- Centennial Farm .....25 pts
- Other Historically Registered Sites .....15 pts
- Parcel does not have unique features.....0 pts

**Total Points for Item 12: \_\_\_\_\_**  
*Maximum Points Possible: 25*

*Please list any unique features of your farm:*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Score Awarded for Secondary Characteristics (Items 6-12): \_\_\_\_\_**  
*Total Score Possible for Secondary Characteristics: 500 Points*

**TOTAL SCORE AWARDED**

**Primary:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 + **Secondary:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Total Score Possible: 1000 pts.*

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**Purchase of Development Rights Scoring System Overview**Ottawa County**

| <b>Characteristic</b>                                    | <b>Points Possible</b> | <b>Points Awarded</b> |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Agricultural Productivity                             | 150                    |                       |
| 2. Creation of Blocks of Preserved Land                  |                        |                       |
| a. Parcel Size   | 50                     |                       |
| b. Proximity to Permanently Preserved Land               | 50                     |                       |
| 3. RMSL Plan in Place on Parcel                          | 50                     |                       |
| 4. Matching Funds  | 100                    |                       |
| 5. MAEAP Participation                                   | 50                     |                       |
| 6. Local Agricultural Planning                           | 50                     |                       |
| 7. Type of Agricultural Production/Local Economic Impact |                        |                       |
| a. Specialty Crop  | 125                    |                       |
| b. Commodity Crop  | 85                     |                       |
| c. Proximity to Existing Livestock Farms                 | 40                     |                       |
| d. Agricultural Products that are Locally Processed      | 40                     |                       |
| 8. Enrollment in PA 116                                  | 25                     |                       |
| 9. Road Frontage   | 35                     |                       |
| 10. Amount of Surround Land in Agricultural Use          | 50                     |                       |
| 11. Proximity to Existing Water and Sewer                | 50                     |                       |
| 12. Water Accessibility                                  | 25                     |                       |
| 13. Historical Characteristics                           | 25                     |                       |
| <b>Total Points</b>                                      | <b>1000</b>            |                       |

**State of Michigan**

| <b>Characteristic</b>                      | <b>Points Possible</b> | <b>Anticipated points to be awarded, based on Ottawa County scoring</b> |
|--|------------------------|---|
| 1. Agricultural Capacity & Productivity    | 150                    |   |
| 2. Conservation Plan in Place on Parcel    | 50                     |   |
| 3. MAEAP Participation                     | 50                     |   |
| 4. Parcel Size                             | 50                     |   |
| 5. Parcel Location                         | 100                    |   |
| 6. Local Farmland Preservation Commitment  | 100                    |   |
| 7. Matching Funds                          | 100                    |   |
| 8. Intergovernmental Cooperation           | 100                    |   |
| 9. Local Planning Training                 | 75                     |   |
| 10. Local Capacity to Execute              | 50                     |   |
| 11. Local Agricultural Planning            | 125                    |   |
| 12. Agricultural Economic Development Plan | 50                     |   |
| <b>Total Points</b>                        | <b>1000</b>            |   |