



# Ottawa County Purchase of Development Rights Program Scoring Criteria

The Ottawa County Farmland Development Rights Ordinance (13-1), as amended, authorizes Ottawa County to purchase development rights to farmland from landowners who voluntarily offer those rights for sale. The purpose of this ordinance is to protect farmland from future development. These scoring criteria are designed to prioritize land for preservation based on specific characteristics identified by the local Agricultural Preservation Board. Each year, parcels will be prioritized based on score; however, the Agricultural Preservation Board will also evaluate each parcel individually and, if deemed necessary, reprioritize the applications in order to preserve the most critical parcels. These scoring criteria are evaluated annually and revised as needed.

## 1. AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM (ACEP) SCORE – 400 points possible

Priority is placed on applications that have a higher probability of receiving ACEP funding from the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Further, the ACEP Ranking Form addresses a number of criteria that are valued by Ottawa County. Total points awarded on the ACEP Ranking Form, which is included in its most current version as an addendum to this Scoring Criteria, will be entered here.

Points for Criterion 1:

## 2. FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION – 50 points possible

Priority is placed on parcels located in areas that have the greatest ability to sustain agriculture in the long term with the least amount of conflict with neighboring landowners and competing land uses. This approach provides the benefits of clustering for farm related land use. Points can be awarded for each bullet point below that apply to the property, not to exceed 50 total points.

- Master planned for agriculture ..... 20 pts
- 100% of directly adjacent parcels are actively farmed..... 20 pts
- 75-99% of directly adjacent parcels are actively farmed..... 10 pts
- >2 miles from municipal water connection ..... 10 pts

Points for Criterion 2:

## 3. DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE – 50 points possible

Ottawa County is the fastest growing county in the state, and its population is projected\* to grow by 6.7% by 2030. Priority is placed on preserving parcels located in townships that are experiencing higher rates of population growth, which could result in accelerated loss of farmland due to development.

- Blendon (18.8%)..... 50 pts
- Jamestown (13%)..... 43.75 pts
- Tallmadge (10.2%) ..... 37.5 pts
- Crockery (10.1%)..... 31.25 pts
- Olive (9.1%)..... 25 pts
- Park (6.0%) ..... 18.75 pts
- Zeeland (3.4%)..... 12.5 pts
- Polkton (0.4%)..... 6.25 pts

Points for Criterion 3:

**4. CROP PRODUCTION TYPE – 20 points possible**

Priority is placed on farmland that can produce one or more of the many specialty crops that are critical to Ottawa County’s agricultural industry, as defined by the [United States Department of Agriculture](#). In addition, points can be earned in this section if the commodity and/or hay crops grown are used on farm or sold directly as feed for Ottawa County livestock operations. Points will not be awarded for cash crop commodities that are sold into the market, aggregated, and/or processed into animal feed for third parties. Points are determined by multiplying the percent of the parcel on which a specialty crop or livestock feed is grown times 20 to receive a score between 0 and 20.

*Note: The Ag Preservation Board reserves the right to allow other crop types points under this criterion on a case by case basis.*

Example:

*Parcel size is 80 acres. 60 acres are used to produce silage for a neighboring dairy operation. The other 20 are used to grow corn that is sold to the local elevator then marketed.*

*60 acres ÷ 80 acres = 75%.*

*75% of parcel is use for specialty crops/direct market feed.*

*.75 x 20 points possible = **15 points***

Points for Criterion 4:

**5. CONSERVATION PRACTICES – 10 points possible**

Priority is placed on property that employs conservation practices to help maintain the agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability of the land. Points are awarded for properties that have had one of the following completed or updated within the past three years: an approved Resource Management System Level (RMSL) Conservation Plan prepared by NRCS and adopted by the landowner, a certified Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP), or one or more MAEAP Risk Assessments (Points are awarded for full MAEAP Verification in the ACEP ranking form noted in criteria 1).

- RMSL Conservation Plan and/or CNMP..... 10 pts
- MAEAP Risk Assessment(s) completed ..... 5 pts
- No implemented conservation practice..... 0 pts

Note: zero points will be awarded if the farm operation, in the last three years, has been found by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development 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.

Points for Criterion 5:

**Total Points Awarded:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Total Score Possible: 530 points*

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

<b>Primary Characteristics</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>
1. Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) score	<i>400</i>	
2. Future Sustainability for Agriculture	<i>50</i>	
3. Development Pressure	<i>50</i>	
4. Crop Production Type	<i>20</i>	
5. Conservation Practices	<i>10</i>	
<b>Total Points</b>	<i>530</i>	

\* Population projections are calculated by Ottawa County Staff using census data

**Fiscal Year 2024  
ACEP-ALE  
Michigan Ranking  
Form**

**Landowner Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **County:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Easement Acres:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Points:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verified by:** \_\_\_\_\_

Staff from entities submitting applications for ACEP-ALE funding consideration will determine an overall score for the parcel based on the following ranking criteria. After the parcels have been ranked, the ACEP-ALE Coordinator will review the ranking for each parcel. Parcels will be placed in ranked order and the State Conservationist will make funding selections by highest ranking.

**Eligibility Criteria. Check one.**

1. Has prime, unique, or other productive soil (attach soils map and documentation)
2. Contains historical or archaeological resources (attach historical documentation)
3. The enrollment of which would protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving land.

**National Ranking Factors**

<p><b>1) Agricultural Capacity.</b> Priority is placed on productive farmland that has unique growing characteristics as demonstrated by the presence of Prime, Unique or Statewide Importance soils (Please round to whole numbers).  <b>Formula:</b> <math>\frac{\text{Total Acre of Prime, Unique or Statewide Important Soils}}{\text{Total Parcel Acres}} \times 60</math>  <b>(Score must be greater than 30 points for Eligibility Criteria 1)</b></p>	
<b>(Max 60 points)</b>	Points _____
<p><b>2) Ratio of cropland, pastureland and grassland of the parcels(s) to be protected to non-agricultural land.</b></p>	
<b>(Max 15 points)</b>	Points _____
100% - 85%	15 pts
84% - 70%	10pts
69% - 50%	5 pts
49% - 33%	0 pts

<p><b>3) Ratio of total acres of land in the parcel to average farm size in the county according to the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture.</b>  <b>Formula: Ratio = (Parcel Size/Average Farm Size per County)</b>  <b>(www.agcensus.usda.gov). (See Appendix A)</b>  <b>(Max 15 points)</b> <span style="float: right;">Points _____</span></p>	
Ratio greater than 2	15 pts
Ratio of 2 – 1.1	10 pts
Ratio of 1 or lower	0 pts
<p><b>4) Percent decrease of farm and ranch land acreage in the county that the parcel is located using the last two USDA Census of Agriculture. (See Appendix A)</b>  <b>(Max 10 points)</b> <span style="float: right;">Points _____</span></p>	
Decrease more than 15%	0 pts
Decrease from 15% - 10.1%	5 pts
Decrease from 10% - 5.1%	10 pts
Decrease from 5% - 0.1%	5 pts
Decrease of 0%	0 pts
<p><b>5) Percent population growth in the county that the parcel is located in as documented by the U.S. Census (www.census.gov). (See Appendix B)</b>  <b>(Max 10 points)</b> <span style="float: right;">Points _____</span></p>	
Growth rate less than 1.0%	0 pts
Growth rate of 1.0% - 3.0%	10 pts
Growth rate of 3.1% - 5.0%	5 pts
Growth rate more than 5.0%	0 pts
<p><b>6) Population density (per square mile) of the county that the parcel is located in as documented by the most recent U.S. Census. (See Appendix B)</b>  <b>(Max 10 points)</b> <span style="float: right;">Points _____</span></p>	
Density less 175	0 pts
Density of 175 - 350	10 pts
Density of 351 - 525	5 pts
Density more than 525	0 pts
<p><b>7) Decrease in the percentage of acreage of permanent grassland, pasture, and rangeland, other than cropland and woodland pasture, in the county in which the parcel is located between the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture.</b>  <b>(See Appendix A).</b>  <b>(Max 5 points)</b> <span style="float: right;">Points _____</span></p>	
Less than 0.0%	5 pts
Greater than 0.0%	0 pts
<p><b>8) Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations.</b>  <b>(Max 5 points)</b> <span style="float: right;">Points _____</span></p>	
Yes	5 pts
No	0 pts
<p><b>9) Proximity of parcel to other permanently protected land, including military installations.</b>  <b>(Max 20 points)</b> <span style="float: right;">Points _____</span></p>	
Parcel is adjacent to protected land.	20 pts
Parcel is not adjacent to but within ½ mile of protected land.	15 pts
Parcel is not adjacent to but is more than ½ mile to within 2 miles of protected land.	10 pts

<b>10) Proximity of parcel to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure. (Max 20 points)</b>		Points _____
Parcel is adjacent to other agricultural operations.		20 pts
Parcel is not adjacent to but within ½ mile of other agricultural operations.		15 pts
Parcel is not adjacent to but is more than ½ mile to within 2 miles of other agricultural operations.		10 pts
<b>11) Contiguous Acres devoted to agricultural use (cropland, pasture, hayland). (Max 20 points)</b>		Points _____
Larger than 150 acres		20 pts
between 150 – 100 acres		15 pts
between 100 – 50 acres		10 pts
between 50 – 30 acres		5 pts
less than 30 acres		0 pts
<b>12) Is the parcel currently enrolled in a CRP contract set to expire within a year or is under a CRP Transition Incentive Program (TIP)? (Max 5 points)</b>		Points _____
Yes		5 pts
No		0 pts
<b>13) Will the grassland in the parcel benefit from the protection under a long term easement? (Max 5 points)</b>		Points _____
Yes		5 pts
No		0 pts

**Total National Points (200 max) \_\_\_\_\_**

### **State Ranking Factors**

<b>1) Zoning</b>	
Is the location of the parcel in an area Zoned for Agricultural Use? <b>(Max 25 points)</b>	
Points _____	
The parcel is designated for agricultural use.	25 pts
The parcel is not designated for agricultural use.	0 pts
<b>2) To promote the diversity of natural resources protected does the easement contain forests, lakes, rivers, or wetlands? Check all that apply.</b>	
Points _____	
Forest greater than 10 acres.	5 pts
Wetland greater than 2 acres.	5 pts
Lake or river frontage of more than a quarter mile	5 pts
<b>3) Road frontage (paved or gravel) adjacent to parcel to facilitate access to markets and agricultural infrastructure.</b>	
Points _____	
No road frontage.	0 pts
Road frontage less than ¼ of a mile.	5 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.	20 pts
Road frontage is ¾ mile or more.	25 pts

<b>4) To provide additional socioeconomic benefits, is any portion of the subject parcel enrolled in the Commercial Forest Act (part 512 of NREPA), Hunter Access Program, or will the conservation easement deed provide for the non-motorized recreational use by members of the public?</b>		<b>Points</b>
Yes		10 pts
No		0 pts
<b>5) Entity Cash Match. This is determined by the following Formula: (Entity's Funds)/Purchase Price (Max 20 points)</b>		<b>Points</b> _____
50%		20 pts
49%-30%		15 pts
29% - 10%		10 pts
< 10%		5 pts
<b>6) Percent Matching Funds. This is determined by the following Formula: (Entity's Funds + Landowner Donation)/Appraised Fair Market Value (Max 35 points)</b>		<b>Points</b> _____
90% - 71%		35 pts
70% - 61%		25 pts
60% - 51%		10 pts
50%		5 pts
<b>7) Is the farm MAEAP Verified in Cropping, Farmstead and/or Livestock Systems? Please provide copy of the verification certificate or other documentation. (Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program – <a href="http://www.maeap.org">www.maeap.org</a>) (Max 15 points)</b>		<b>Points</b> _____
Yes		15 pts
No		0 pts
<b>8) Multifunctional Conservation Values, Social and Economic (Max 15 points)</b>		<b>Points</b> _____
Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher		5 pts
Veteran Farmer or Rancher		5 pts
Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher		5 pts
<b>9) To benefit Multifunctional Conservation Values, Enhancing Carbon Sequestration and Improving Resiliency to Adverse Weather on agricultural land. (Max 10 points)</b>		<b>Points</b> _____
Does the agricultural operation utilize no-till, permanent hay, pasture, or orchard?		10 pts
Does the agricultural operation utilize strip till, conservation tillage or are there existing buffer practices installed on the farm?		5 pts
No		0 pts
<b>10) Multifunctional Conservation Values, Historical and Archaeological (Max 10 points)</b>		<b>Points</b> _____
Does the parcel have any known historical or archaeological significant sites located on the property?		10 pts
Has the parcel ever had an historical or archaeological investigation by an archaeologist?		5 pts
None		0 pts

<b>11) Does the parcel have habitat for a Federal or State listed or Candidate for listing Species? (Max 10 points)</b>		Points _____
Yes		10 pts
No		0 pts
<b>12) To achieve state conservation goals in farmland protection, is the parcel currently enrolled in the Farmland and Open Space Program (P.A. 116) or similar local program? (Max 10 points)</b>		Points _____
Yes		10 pts
No		0 pts

**Total State Points (200 max)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grand Total** \_\_\_\_\_ (Copy to front page)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Entity Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Appendix A. Average Farm Size, Percent Decrease in Farm Land & Percent Decrease in Permanent Grass land. (USDA Census of Agriculture 2012 and 2017)**

<b>County</b>	<b>Average Farm Size (Acres)</b>	<b>Decrease in Farmland (%)</b>	<b>Decrease in Permanent Grassland (%)</b>
Alcona	163	-5%	-2.23%
Alger	166	18%	-3.46%
Allegan	196	-15%	-0.27%
Alpena	158	-6%	-2.92%
Antrim	167	-13%	-1.32%
Arenac	249	7%	-1.38%
Baraga	271	-1%	-0.60%
Barry	165	-6%	-0.50%
Bay	289	8%	-0.29%
Benzie	94	-10%	-0.31%
Berrien	166	-8%	-0.85%
Branch	303	-2%	-0.61%
Calhoun	223	-5%	-0.37%
Cass	266	5%	-0.66%
Charlevoix	110	-20%	1.77%
Cheboygan	133	-3%	1.95%
Chippewa	209	-4%	0.14%
Clare	138	-13%	1.46%
Clinton	226	-6%	0.18%
Crawford	65	7%	-3.91%
Delta	232	-17%	-0.21%
Dickinson	140	-23%	0.33%
Eaton	218	-6%	-1.23%
Emmet	121	-1%	-2.09%

<b>County</b>	<b>Average Farm Size (Acres)</b>	<b>Decrease in Farmland (%)</b>	<b>Decrease in Permanent Grassland (%)</b>
Genesee	151	1%	-0.51%
Gladwin	128	-13%	0.03%
Gogebic	103	-9%	-2.87%
Grand Traverse	102	-7%	-0.61%
Gratiot	365	3%	-0.74%
Hillsdale	211	-3%	-0.48%
Houghton	125	-4%	-1.16%
Huron	430	9%	0.62%
Ingham	195	-11%	-0.51%
Ionia	245	-6%	-1.04%
Iosco	139	-11%	-0.83%
Iron	176	2%	2.99%
Isabella	221	12%	-1.17%
Jackson	174	-12%	-1.52%
Kalamazoo	196	-3%	0.50%
Kalkaska	121	5%	0.03%
Kent	156	0%	-1.10%
Keweenaw	27	-25%	0.45%
Lake	129	-17%	-3.62%
Lapeer	163	-6%	1.25%
Leelanau	106	-16%	-0.66%
Lenawee	283	12%	-0.67%
Livingston	123	4%	-2.27%
Luce	139	-15%	-4.60%
Mackinac	248	12%	-3.18%
Macomb	182	8%	-2.08%
Manistee	151	-7%	2.52%
Marquette	169	-1%	-9.20%
Mason	181	8%	-0.90%
Mecosta	166	-6%	-1.33%
Menominee	226	-13%	-2.23%
Midland	165	-2%	0.63%
Missaukee	280	14%	-2.36%
Monroe	193	-2%	-0.02%
Montcalm	239	-3%	-1.42%
Montmorency	147	7%	2.42%
Muskegon	133	-15%	0.05%
Newaygo	160	8%	-3.64%
Oakland	56	-9%	0.52%
Oceana	233	-1%	-0.55%
Ogemaw	238	3%	-1.02%
Ontonagon	238	-7%	-6.03%

<b>County</b>	<b>Average Farm Size (Acres)</b>	<b>Decrease in Farmland (%)</b>	<b>Decrease in Permanent Grassland (%)</b>
Osceola	166	-6%	-1.88%
Oscoda	112	-3%	0.97%
Otsego	172	3%	1.60%
Ottawa	152	-8%	-1.56%
Presque Isle	200	-21%	1.27%
Roscommon	120	-23%	-0.56%
Saginaw	262	6%	0.01%
St. Clair	332	-4%	-0.49%
St. Joseph	242	-23%	6.99%
Sanilac	217	-6%	-0.52%
Schoolcraft	169	1%	-0.55%
Shiawassee	273	10%	-0.12%
Tuscola	266	1%	-0.68%
Van Buren	159	-13%	-0.88%
Washtenaw	144	5%	-1.03%
Wayne	40	-36%	0.30%
Wexford	132	0%	-1.50%

### **Appendix B. Population Growth Rate & Population Density (US Census, 2010)**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population Growth Rate</b>	<b>Population Density</b>
Alcona	-4.50%	16.2
Alger	-1.50%	10.5
Allegan	2.10%	135
Alpena	-2.10%	51.8
Antrim	-1.30%	49.6
Arenac	-3.60%	43.8
Baraga	-2.40%	9.9
Barry	0.20%	107
Bay	-1.50%	243.7
Benzie	0.00%	54.8
Berrien	-1.00%	276.2
Branch	-3.90%	89.4
Calhoun	-0.90%	192.8
Cass	-1.30%	106.7
Charlev	0.70%	62.3
Cheboyg	-1.90%	36.6
Chippew	-0.50%	24.7
Clare	-0.90%	54.8
Clinton	2.50%	133.1

<b>County</b>	<b>Population Growth Rate</b>	<b>Population Density</b>
Crawfor	-2.40%	25.3
Delta	-1.40%	31.7
Dickins	-0.80%	34.4
Eaton	0.80%	187.4
Emmet	1.50%	69.9
Genesee	-3.10%	668.5
Gladwin	-1.10%	51.2
Gogebic	-4.40%	14.9
Grand	4.20%	187.3
Gratiot	-1.90%	74.7
Hillsdale	-1.90%	78.1
Houghto	-0.40%	36.3
Huron	-3.30%	39.6
Ingham	1.30%	505.1
Ionia	0.60%	111.9
Iosco	-1.80%	47.1
Iron	-3.80%	10.1
Isabella	0.40%	122.8
Jackson	-0.30%	228.4

<b>County</b>	<b>Population Growth Rate</b>	<b>Population Density</b>
Kalamaz	3.30%	445.7
Kalkask	1.40%	30.6
Kent	4.20%	711.5
Keween	2.80%	4
Lake	-1.70%	20.3
Lapeer	-0.20%	137.4
Leelana	0.90%	62.5
Lenawee	-0.90%	133.3
Livingst	2.50%	320.2
Luce	-3.20%	7.4
Mackina	-0.60%	10.9
Macomb	2.20%	1,754.90
Maniste	-1.30%	45.6
Marquet	0.90%	37.1
Mason	0.40%	58
Mecosta	0.90%	77.1
Menomi	-1.30%	23
Midland	-0.20%	162
Missauk	1.30%	26.3
Monroe	-1.50%	276.7
Montcal	-0.70%	89.8
Montmo	-5.00%	17.9

<b>County</b>	<b>Population Growth Rate</b>	<b>Population Density</b>
Muskeg	0.10%	344.9
Newayg	-1.20%	59.6
Oakland	2.90%	1,385.70
Oceana	-1.30%	51.9
Ogemaw	-3.10%	38.5
Ontonag	-9.90%	5.2
Osceola	-1.50%	41.5
Oscoda	-3.20%	15.3
Otsego	0.00%	46.9
Ottawa	4.50%	468.2
Presque	-2.90%	20.3
Roscom	-2.10%	47.1
Saginaw	-2.60%	250.2
St. Clair	-1.90%	226.1
St.	-0.60%	122.4
Sanilac	-3.70%	44.8
Schoolcr	-3.80%	7.2
Shiawas	-2.50%	133.1
Tuscola	-3.20%	69.4
Van	-1.40%	125.5
Washten	3.40%	488.4
Wayne	-3.20%	2,974.40
Wexford	0.50%	57.9

*The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*