

Local government support is critical to the success of agriculture preservation in St. Clair County. The Agriculture Preservation Board is working diligently to educate Township and City officials on how they can contribute to the effort.

If you would like members of the Ag Preservation Board to come to your Township to discuss farmland and open space preservation, have your Township Planning Commission contact the St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission at (810) 989-6950.

2006 Ag Board Members:

Jim Reid, Chairman
Pat Anger
Jim Hayes
Chuck Kwasnik
Ken Langmesser
Mike Lauwers
Dianna Seifert
Susan Sniegocki

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St. Clair County Agriculture Preservation Board



**Working Hard to
Save Valuable
Farmland and Open
Space in St. Clair
County!!**



St. Clair County Metropolitan
Planning Commission



AGRICULTURE & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY

What is a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program?

- A PDR program is voluntary, on the landowner's part, and preserves farmland by removing the development rights from the landowner's "bundle of rights."
- Landowners are compensated for the value of lost development potential in exchange for maintaining the property as farmland.
- PDR programs buy the development rights of farmland and in exchange, an agricultural conservation easement would be placed on the property that restricts development.
- The easement would be held, with stewardship responsibilities, by the County and would "run with the land" in perpetuity, or forever.
- The landowner would still own the land and retain all of the other rights associated with it, but its development value would have been "captured" and converted into dollars.



The Benefits of Preserving Farmland and Open Space:

- Farming creates jobs, provides a product for sale, and pays taxes.
- Farmland also provides substantial environmental benefits, including floodplain protection, groundwater recharge, and wildlife habitat.
- Once lost to development, open space is impossible or difficult to retrieve and the long-term costs can be immense.
- Open space protects our drinking water. The health of our streams, ponds, and groundwater depends upon how the surrounding lands are used.
- Open space and farmland create scenic landscapes that make our community special and give us places to recreate with our family and friends.

A Brief History of the Ag Preservation Board:

- In 2001, a diverse group of farmers and local officials formed the Farmland and Open Space Initiative (FOSI), a group dedicated to developing innovative procedures for preserving farmland in St. Clair County.
- The St. Clair County Board of Commissioners adopted a PDR Ordinance in February 2004.
- The St. Clair County Agricultural Preservation Board was born out of the FOSI group and was formally established on June 9, 2004.

According to SEMCOG, St. Clair County had 268,597 acres of active agricultural land in 1990. In 2000, the county had 242,034 acres of active agricultural land, which means **between 1990 and 2000, the county lost 26,563 acres, or 9.9%, of its agricultural land.**

The Ag Preservation Board meets on the third Thursday of each month at the St. Clair County Administration Building, 200 Grand River Avenue, Port Huron, MI 48060. For more information, call (810) 989-6950.



In the past 40 years, Macomb County has lost 87,000 acres of farmland and 1,400 farms, according to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments.