

AGRICULTURAL EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM

The Board of Trustees of Bethel Township, Miami County have determined that the preservation of agricultural lands are an integral part to keeping Bethel Township "A model rural community" Understanding that the Board of Trustees of Bethel Township are permitted through Section 5301.691 of the Ohio Revised Code to purchase, hold and enforce Agricultural and Conservation Easements the Bethel Township Trustees have established an Agricultural and Conservation Easement Program.

FUNDING

In 2003, the Bethel Township community voted in a 5-year, 3.8-mill General Fund levy that generates nearly \$440,000 in tax revenues each year. The Board of Trustees have set aside \$500,000 of these funds for the purchase of easements and the administration of an agricultural easement purchase program.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to become eligible for an agricultural easement purchase, the following criteria for the property must be met:

- The land must be in, or adjacent to, the "Conservation Development Farmland Preservation" or "Recreation" land use concept area in the Strategic Development Plan.
- The farm must be no smaller than 20 contiguous acres.
- The applicant must be willing to provide no less than a 35% match of the total value of the easement.
- The owners must provide evidence of a clear title to the land with no mortgages or liens which could not be subordinated with the presence of a deed of agricultural easement.
- The land must currently be enrolled in the County Auditor's Agricultural District and have CAUV values calculated for the land.



The Board of Trustees shall judge each application on the basis of providing for the most number of protected acres each year that meet the minimum basic criteria. If, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees there are a number of qualified applicants, the Board of Trustees shall use the scoring system of the above criteria to decide funding decisions. The Board of Trustees also reserves the right not to fund any applications in a particular year.

(Agricultural Easement Continued)

VALUE OF EASEMENTS

Easements will be valued by the difference in the County Auditor's Market Value and County Auditor's CAUV Value.

Example:	
Acres:	27.74
Land Value:	\$65,100
CAUV Value:	\$4,780
Easement Value/Acre:	\$2,174.48
35% Match/Acre Value:	\$761.07
65% Purchase/Acre Value:	\$1,431.14
Total Easement Purchase:	\$39,207.99

APPLICATIONS

The Board of Trustees shall provide an application form to all interested land owners interested in the program and applications shall be due no later than _____ of the calendar year in which the funds are expected to be expended.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER OFFICES

The Board of Trustees will seek guidance and assistance from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the Miami County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the administration of this program.

For more information on this or other programs offered by the Bethel Township Board of Trustees contact:



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