Linking Land Use and the Economy

Lessons Learned in Local Government Policy-making from Upper Chippewa Creek Watershed Planning Partnership

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Balanced Growth Initiative

- Strategy to protect Ohio’s watersheds to ensure long-term economic competitiveness and quality of life
- Local governments incentivized to come together as a region
- Goal: identify where conservation and development would be most appropriate within the selected watershed
- Does not place restrictions on where development can occur
Benefits of Participation

- Special incentives for development and conservation – includes enhanced access to state programs and funding
- Direct working relationships with State decision-making agencies
- Greater predictability to streamline decision making process for private sector developers

Creating the Partnership

- Pilot Balanced Growth Watershed
  - 2nd in Medina County
- Grant from Ohio Watershed Resources Council
  - Administered by Medina County Soil & Water Conservation District
- Upper Chippewa Creek Watershed Planning Partnership created
Upper Chippewa Creek Watershed

- Watershed study area lies entirely within Medina County
Project Tasks

- Create a Balanced Growth Plan that promotes the guiding principles for Sustainable Ohio Watersheds
  - Establish subcommittees: Conservation, Development, Agriculture, Land Use Study
  - Develop land-use suitability criteria
  - Identify priority land-use areas
- Reach consensus with local jurisdictions
- Obtain resolutions of support
- Receive State endorsement

Economic Development Role

- Tasked with chairing the Development Subcommittee
- Committee job – provide recommendation to Planning Partnership
- Determine what made up the criteria to designate a Priority Development Area
  - PDA defined as a locally designated area where growth & redevelopment is to be especially promoted
PDA Criteria 1: Zoning

PDA Criteria 2: Sewer Service
PDA Criteria 3: Proximity to Highways

PDA Criteria 4: Proximity to Fiber Optic Network
PDA Criteria 5: Tax Abatement Areas

PDA Criteria 6: Foreign Trade Zones
PDA Criteria 7:
Proximity to the I-71 / I-76 Interchange

Combined Priority Development Area Criteria
Floodplain Areas

Combined Priority Conservation Area Criteria

1. Floodplains
2. Critical Soils
3. Woodlands
4. Preserved Lands
5. Wellhead Protection
6. Ground Water Pollution Potential
Solution to locations where Priority Development and Priority Conservation Areas overlapped: *dual classification*

- Map the overlap areas and allow incentives to apply to both development and conservation
- First consideration will be for conservation

Other conflicts resulted in “Local Preference Areas”
Collaboration is key – bring everyone to the table at the beginning of the process
Avoid “code words” that could undermine the process
Committee leadership requires patience and willingness to hear all sides of the debate
Don’t allow “government” to dominate – Include private sector experts in the field
Be open to compromise
Contact

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For a complete copy of the Upper Chippewa Creek Watershed Balanced Growth Plan, go to
www.medinaswcd.org