

# Land Partnerships

*A Countywide Strategy for  
Open Space Preservation and Smart Growth*





# Background and Process

# Land Development Trends

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- Between 1990 and 2004, nearly 45,000 acres of land (13 percent of the County) was proposed for residential, commercial or industrial development.
- On average, about 3,000 acres was proposed for development each year.
- About 1500 new dwelling units each year and rising
- Significant industrial and commercial development

# Planning Process

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- Evaluation of natural, cultural, historic & recreation resources
- Assessment of public opinion & support for open space program
- Identification of preservation strategies
- Development of recommendations and a countywide action plan

# Components

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- Steering Committee
- Key Person Interviews
- Public Visioning Session
- 4 Public Forums
- Growing Greener: Conservation By Design Workshop & Audits
- Countywide Public Opinion Survey

# Plan Elements

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- Farmland Preservation
- Natural Resource Protection
- Parks, Greenways & Trails
- Livable Communities

# Implementation Strategies

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- Acquisition
- Planning
- Park and recreation development
- Redevelopment

# Implementation Plan

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- Five Year Plan
  - Phase 1: 2006-2007
  - Phase 2: 2008-2010
- \$6.5 million for farmland preservation
- \$1.5 million for open space preservation
- \$12 million program (and growing) considering matches



# War Stories

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Lessons Learned from the  
Cumberland County Example

# 4 Tips for Successful Planning

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- Establish goals and purpose
- Expect opposition & involve them
- Involve a 3<sup>rd</sup> party
- Variety is the spice of life

# Establish and Legitimize Clear Goals

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- ID purpose
  - Farmland, parks/rec, redevelopment?
  - Think beyond acquisition
- Establish need
  - Why is this so important?
  - Link to comp plan

# Establish and Legitimize Clear Goals

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- Consider audience (KISS)
  - Appeal to emotions
  - Avoid tax discussions
  - Use conservation language (TPL survey)
    - ❖ “Working farms”, “water quality”, etc.
- Get the word out!
  - Press
  - Public meetings

# Expect and Involve Opposition

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- Identify opposition
- Involve them in the planning process
- Understand, respect, and be prepared to counter their arguments
- Find “something for everyone” in your plan
- Expect the worst and don’t take it personal

# Expect and Involve Opposition: Common Arguments

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- Waste of tax dollars
- Opposed to zoning
- Farming is a dying industry
- Not needed
- Open space preservation = taking
- Will stop all development
- Need land for houses

# Expect and Involve Opposition: Common Arguments

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- Will stop all development
- Will take farmers retirement
- Need land for houses
- Will impact housing affordability
- Will cost us money

# Listing of Comments from Residents

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- “Plan is a waste of money and amounts to socialism. Planners are communists.”
- “Worked lifetime on land, don’t want the County taking away the farm.”
- “Spend tax money on necessities. Open space not necessary.”
- “This is a land grab. Already have Clean and Green Program and Nature Conservancy; why do we need county dedicating land use?”

# Otto Letter

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# Risch Letter

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# Involvement of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party

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- County staff can't lead the initiative
- Consider non-profits
- Remove perception of publicly funded lobbying

# Incorporate Variety

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- Consider a variety of preservation techniques.
- Develop a program tailored to your needs
- Use several public involvement tools
  - “Perpetual open house”
  - Person to person when possible



Questions?

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