

Appendix A: Definitions

The following definitions are those meanings given by or approved by the Portage County Farmland Task Force, to terms to assist in understanding concepts important to farmland preservation issues and plan recommendations.

AGRICULTURE: Any of the following activities and uses of land as defined by the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 519.01: Farming; ranching; aquaculture; apiculture; horticulture; viticulture; animal husbandry, including but not limited to, the care and raising of stock, equine, and fur-bearing animals; poultry husbandry and the production of poultry and poultry products; dairy production; the production of field crops, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees, flowers, sod, or mushrooms; timber; pasturage; any combination of the foregoing; the processing, drying, storage, and marketing of agricultural products when those activities are conducted in conjunction with, but are secondary to, such husbandry or production.

ASSET MAPPING: The process of inventorying the resources of a community or region. The Asset Mapping project for Portage County is a joint venture between the Portage County Regional Planning Commission, the Portage County Auditor and the Information Technology Department. The Asset Mapping project was undertaken to provide community leaders, residents and anyone interested in development with important knowledge about the County's business and non-residential land uses and to enhance development or redevelopment efforts.

BUFFERS: A space between a farm and a nonfarm property that is kept undeveloped and often planted or maintained in trees and shrubs to minimize any spillover of noise, dust, and odors.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP): A program of when, where, and how much a community or county plans to invest in public services over the next 5 to 10 years. The program presents a capital budget each year, which is used in drafting the community or county budget. A capital improvement program usually includes such things as roads and bridges, sewer and water lines and treatment plants, public buildings, solid waste disposal, police (sheriff) equipment, etc.

CLUSTER ZONING: A form of zoning that allows homes to be built close together in areas where large minimum lot sizes are generally required. By grouping houses on small sections of a large parcel of land, more open space can be protected.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: A document that contains a vision of how the community or county will grow and change and a set of plans and policies to guide land use decisions. It summarizes the current conditions of a community or county, projects future needs, and develops general policy goals and objectives and strategies for implementation. It acts as the legal basis for zoning and subdivision regulations.

CONCURRENCY: A government policy stating that a new development will be approved only when adequate public services, such as sewer and water are in place.

CONDITIONAL USE: A land use in a zoning district that is neither permitted outright nor prohibited by a zoning ordinance or resolution. A conditional land use permit that may be granted after review and approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals or Planning Commission. A conditional use usually has wider

impacts than a permitted use. Approval is usually contingent upon meeting certain conditions specified in the zoning ordinance or resolution.

CURRENT AGRICULTURE USE VALUE (CAUV): A form of differential assessment that allows eligible land to be assessed at its value for agriculture rather than at its fair market value. Landowners must pay all or some of the taxes that were excused if they later convert land to an ineligible use. (Also known as differential assessment) This tool is often used in conjunction with Agriculture Districts.

DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS: The right to develop land, which is one of several rights that come with land ownership. The development right may be sold or given away separately from the other rights. If the development right is removed, the land is still private property, though the uses that are allowed are typically limited to farming and open space.

FARM: Land and buildings devoted to the production of crops/and or livestock. Full time farm is a farm where the principal income is from agriculture. Part time farm is a farm where the principal income of the operator is from activities/occupations other than farming.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS): A method of storing geographic data on computers to create maps comprised of one or more layers of data. Data can also be used to predict what will happen when changes occur in any layer of data. Examples of data include: soils, land in agriculture use, sewer and water lines, land use, land use changes over different time periods, environmentally sensitive areas. GIS systems enable the production of graphics that aid in decision making.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT: The use of regulations and incentives to influence the rate, timing, location, density, type and style of development in a community.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS: Ordinances, Resolutions and Codes enacted by municipalities, townships, counties and other governments under authority of Ohio Enabling Legislation. Such controls are designed and intended to be used to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. (morals in Townships). Common land use controls are: Zoning, which separates land into zones or districts, and regulates the uses of land and buildings in those districts; Subdivision Regulations, which guide and control the division of land for building and improvements.

NUISANCE: The use of land that brings harm or bother to an adjacent property owner or the general public. Nuisances are typically noise, odors, visual clutter, and dangerous structures. (See right to farm law)

POLITICAL SUBDIVISION: A municipal corporation, County, Township or other governmental unit specified in the Ohio Revised Code.

PRIME OR UNIQUE AGRICULTURAL LAND: Farmland that has a gentle slope and well-drained soils and requires a minimum of conservation practices. It is the easiest land to farm. In Portage County, Class I, II, and III are considered prime soils by the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS: The voluntary sale of rights to develop a piece of property by the landowner to a government agency or land trust. The sale price is determined by an appraisal. The land is restricted to farming or open space. Landowners retain full ownership and use of their land for

agricultural purposes. Development rights are extinguished in exchange for compensation. PDR is also known as PACE (Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements)

REAL ESTATE TRANSFER TAX: A tax imposed on the sale of real property.

RIGHT TO FARM LAW: A state law that protects farmers and farm operations from public and private nuisance lawsuits. A private nuisance interferes with an individual's use and enjoyment of his or her property. Public nuisances involve actions that injure the public at large.

SETBACK: A zoning provision that stipulates the required distance of structures from roads, property lines, or other structures.

SPRAWL: Development which may take several forms: 1) a wave of urban or suburban expansion; 2) scattered housing, stores, offices, etc., throughout the countryside.

SUBDIVISION: Is any of the following situations: 1) The division of land into 2 or more parcels, any one of which is less than 5 acres for the purpose of immediate or future transfer of ownership; 2) Divisions of land into parcels of 5 or more acres which involve new streets or easements of access; 3) The sale or exchange of land between adjoining lot owners where new building sites are created; 4) The improvement of one or more parcels of land for residential, commercial or industrial structures or groups of structures involving the division or allocation of land for the opening, widening, or extension of any street or streets except private streets serving industrial structures; or the division or allocation of land as open spaces for common use by owners, occupants, or lease holders, or as easements for the extension and maintenance of public sewer, water, storm drainage or other public facilities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The effective use of resources-natural, human, and technological- to meet today's community needs while ensuring that these resources will be available for future generations to secure the quality of life we now enjoy.

URBAN SERVICE AREA: An area where urban services such as central sewer and water will be provided to accommodate urban type growth.