Montgomery County Farmland Preservation
Why Protecting Farmland is Important

Conserves farmland for future food and fiber production;

Opportunities to provide a high quality food supply for our citizens;

A key component for the preservation of agriculture as an industry;

Enhanced quality and way of life for all residents

Lewis Orchard - AEP
What Constitutes Protection and Levels of Protection?

Protection can be achieved by a variety of methods:

- Agricultural Zoning (RDT)
- Transfer of Development Rights Programs (TDR)
- Purchase of Development Rights Programs (PDR)
- In Fee Acquisition (Public Parkland)

Each method establishes varying levels of protection
Agricultural Zoning

Agricultural Zoning – helps to promote Agricultural and Rural Landscapes

In Montgomery County, establishment of the RDT reduced the threat of development from 1 unit per 5 acres to 1 unit per 25 acres.

Unfortunately, agricultural zoning itself does not place long term protections to the land.

Must consider other tools that can help accomplish long term protections - Perpetual Easements.
Montgomery County
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

- WATER
- AG RESERVE (RDT ZONE)
- PUBLIC LANDS

Agricultural Land Data Source: DEE Agricultural Services

Map Produced by Geographic Information Systems
Office of Environmental Services
Montgomery County, Maryland
Date: December 31, 2002
Transferable Development Rights (TDR) Programs

TDRs are used to shift development from agricultural areas to designated growth zones which are closer to public services;

The number of available TDRs is based upon the calculation of 1 TDR per 5 acres

Once a TDR is created the land is restricted by a permanent TDR easement

This easement ensures the property can not be developed for residential use at densities which exceed 1 unit per 25 acres
The Purchase of Development Rights or "PDR" represents a voluntary program by where the County/State uses public funds to purchase development rights on a farm.

A permanent deed restriction is placed on the property which permits agricultural activities on the land in perpetuity.

In this way, a legally binding contract is achieved to ensure that the farm will remain in agriculture.

In this process the County/State eliminates the development rights upon settlement of the easement.

The deed restriction may also be referred to as a conservation easement.
Purchase of Development Rights Programs (PDR)

Maryland Environmental Trust (1967) - State

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (1977) - State

Montgomery County Agricultural Easement Program (1986) – County

Rural Legacy Program (1997) – State/County

Legacy Open Space Program (2000) - County
Protected Farmland Acres and Total Farmland Acres

Phase I - The Preservation of 70,000 acres of Farmland through PDR and TDR Programs

ACRES

Pre 1990  FY95  FY96  FY97  FY98  FY00  FY01

Fiscal Year

Total Farmland  Protected Farmland

70,000 acres
Farmland Protected by Easements
as of June 30, 2014
70,315 acres
Phase I

Public Sector Investment
$61 Million

Private Sector Investment
$117 Million

(MALPF/AEP/RLP/MET/BLT)  (TDR)
Montgomery County Agricultural Land Preservation
Relationship of Phase I and Phase II Preservation Goals

Enhanced Protection of Lands Encumbered by Transferrable Development Rights Easements
as of June 30, 2014
2,507 acres
Phase II

Farmland Protected by Easements
as of June 30, 2014
70,315 acres
Phase I

Public Sector Investment $61 Million
Private Sector Investment $117 Million

Enhanced Preservation
TDR Easements

Enhanced Protection of Lands Encumbered
by Transferrable Development Rights Easements
as of June 30, 2014
2,807 acres
Phase II

49,245
(TDR)

Enhanced Preservation
TDR Easements
In Fee Acquisition (Public Parkland)

Owned by the Public Managed by Government

Restricted Uses in the park

Public Access

Often Lands are in Conserving Use - Limited Access for Agricultural Production Opportunities

Over 47,800 acres of Land in the County is designated as parkland

Federal/State/County

Little Bennett - Public Parkland
For More Information:
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