

Big Darby Accord Plan Principles

March 3, 2006

Protection of Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The preliminary draft land use plan protects environmentally sensitive areas in a green infrastructure of approximately 20,000 acres. The green infrastructure includes floodplains, wetlands, groundwater and surface flow exchange areas, special habitat areas, wooded areas, and areas with groundwater pollution potential. These elements contribute to the Darby's unique ecosystem and should be protected and preserved according to the mission statement, Accord recommendations, and regulatory requirements, such as OEPA's 208 plan.

A preliminary land use plan that balances environmental protection and responsible growth.

Development is managed and focused in a sustainable town center and a range of conservation-style development patterns, which will create opportunities for open space preservation. The land use pattern offers a mix of uses, maximizes access to infrastructure, and guides development to less sensitive areas. This approach promotes a responsible growth pattern as recommended in the mission statement.

A preliminary land use plan that recognizes existing sewer and wastewater treatment capacities, while taking into account the rights accorded watershed landowners under current zoning.

The plan will work within the limits of existing sewage conveyance system and treatment capacities. At the same time, the plan will recognize zoning and development rights that are currently in place. The plan will identify practical and equitable mechanisms of preserving these rights while striving to protect water quality by focusing density in key locations. Through this approach, the plan will seek a balance on both a regional and project-specific basis where appropriate

Growth areas will be served by adequate public facilities, particularly central sewer.

Central sewer service is planned for identified growth areas including the town center and existing contract service areas pending available capacity. Central sewer service is not planned, or anticipated for, a majority of the study area, including areas associated with lower density conservation development. Non-centralized services would be subject to standards and inspection programs to ensure the systems are functioning properly. Such a program should be consistent with Accord recommendations and regulatory requirements, such as OEPA's 208 plan.

A Development Policy that provides for mechanisms to acquire environmentally sensitive areas.

Development of policies and procedures that link new development to the provision of green space within the environmentally sensitive areas of the land use plan, both regionally and within the same site. These green spaces would provide permanent protection of the environmentally sensitive resources.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) among Accord members to implement the agreed upon plan.

The MOU represents a commitment to continue to implement the plan and work together to leverage resources. The MOU encourages consistency and compliance across political boundaries. As a primary step in a long-term implementation process, the MOU underscores the importance of adaptive management techniques to monitor plan implementation.

Development without the condition of annexation.

The City of Columbus is offering the limited extension of water and sewer services without the condition of annexation. As part of the Accord process, the City of Columbus is identifying conditions that must be met to qualify for utility extensions into unincorporated areas. This will require consideration of existing utility contracts, design and cost implications, capacity, provision of a full range of housing options, revenue sharing and compliance with Accord provisions.

Mechanisms for cooperative revenue sharing among Accord members.

Through the creation of joint economic development districts (JEDD), cooperative economic development agreements (CEDA), and/or community authorities, Accord members can structure specific agreements to allow revenue sharing across political boundaries as development comes on line. Cooperative agreements and new revenues can be established to help provide community resources and amenities and to initiate joint projects in the study area, including open space. The general criteria may include, among other things, establishing an amount of millage to be collected by a CDA and the manner in which the proceeds would be used.

Water quality, biological integrity, and adaptive management.

This plan relies on the principle of adaptive management, an ongoing process. This includes prediction, monitoring, inspection, enforcement, and ongoing planning to continue to maintain and pursue aggressive OEPA water quality goals that will improve the water quality and biological integrity of the Big Darby Watershed. Pursuit of this objective is balanced with the understanding that while Accord provisions can apply to the entire Hellbranch watershed, they can only address the Franklin County portion of the overall watershed.