

Big Darby Revenue Program

Revised April 9, 2009

Accord Background

In early 2005, the jurisdictions comprising the 84-square-mile Franklin County portion of the Big Darby Watershed began an unprecedented planning effort. Building on decades of hard work and advocacy, partner communities came together around a common mission to balance growth and protect the national and state scenic river. Hundreds of area residents, property owners, and other stakeholders participated in a cooperative planning effort. The resulting 2006 Big Darby Accord Watershed Master Plan outlines a balanced conservation and development vision along with the tools for its implementation strategy.

Over 25,000 acres are called out for protection based on environmental sensitivity. Rigorous development standards and water quality measures are included. New growth equivalent to an additional 20,000 dwelling units is reflected, primarily in the form of conservation subdivisions and a new town center. Recommendations for utility service to new development are also addressed, including central sanitary service in township areas.

Much Has Been Accomplished

Since plan completion, Accord partners have worked to implement key provisions of the 2006 vision, including:

- Big Darby Advisory Panel - established to review development proposals.
- Open Space Advisory Committee - formed to provide input on protecting sensitive lands.
- Conservation subdivisions – draft zoning district prepared.
- Natural area protection – acquisition of land and easements through Metro Parks purchases and grants through the Ohio Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program.
- Town Center plan – project scope developed and RFP process concluded.

Annual reports for 2007 and 2008 include additional detail regarding progress to date. These reports can be obtained from the Franklin County Department of Economic Development and Planning or by going to www.franklincountyohio.gov/bigdarbyaccord.

Why a Revenue Program is Needed

Accomplishing the goals of the Accord partners will require a range of resources. The plan underscores the critical links between development and conservation – timing, impacts, and revenues. Chapter Five of the plan outlines a funding framework, which is designed to ensure that as development occurs, revenues are raised that can be focused on such things as land acquisition and conservation.

Implementing the plan requires that Accord partners refine the funding framework, which includes use of developer contributions, tax increment financing district dollars, and new community authorities. These sources complement ongoing investments, such as parkland acquisition and grant funding for stream restoration. Resolving and moving forward with a revenue program is critical to respond properly to development proposals, several of which have come forward. Establishing developer agreements and revenue commitments is best done in conjunction with the zoning process. Accord partners are currently without this direction. This document is intended to provide the needed policy guidance in a manner that recognizes local discretion and collective needs.

Complementary Revenue Sources

Metro Parks continues to acquire sensitive land in the Big Darby Watershed, and local governments have applied for and received funds from state grant programs such as the Ohio Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program (WRRSP). Thousands of acres within the planning area have been permanently protected in this manner and the Accord partners will continue to pursue these and other means of acquiring, protecting, and restoring lands and streams.

Revenue Sources Based on Development

The plan's revenue framework outlines three primary revenue sources associated with development:

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- New Community Authority (NCA)
- Developer contributions

The revenue consultant engaged by the Accord partners has projected that the TIF districts over the 30 years of the revenue program are expected to generate an aggregate of \$192.2 million in present value . While New Community Authorities and developer contributions will also generate significant revenue toward implementing the plan, TIF districts are expected to generate more revenue than these other two sources.

Uses of Development-Based Revenue

In developing a revenue proposal, Accord partners focused on balancing the need for local discretion on use of funds and the priorities outlined in the document. The allocation approach described below reserves the greatest share of this revenue for the essential environmental protection purposes of the Big Darby Accord, while leaving a reasonable amount for other infrastructure needs. This requires some definition of “Accord purposes,” as well as fair allocations among the jurisdictions for funds not reserved for Accord purposes.

Accord Purposes

Big Darby Accord purposes are defined as those that are critical to achieve the environmental and regional purposes of the Big Darby Accord Watershed Master Plan. Those identified are:

- Protection and/or restoration of sensitive open space
- Stream preservation and restoration
- Extraordinary costs associated with extension of centralized sewer and water to the Town Center
- Extraordinary costs associated with creation of public regional alternative wastewater treatment systems and extension of centralized water to serve the conservation development areas.
- Extraordinary costs related to transportation improvements needed to allow access to the Town Center from I-70 and/or Broad Street.
- Regional stormwater improvements, beyond those required by existing storm water standards.

“Extraordinary costs” as used above means expenditures for utilities and transportation that exceed the normal costs of development because of the requirements or policies of the Accord. All of the Accord purposes above have the potential to play critical roles in implementing the balanced vision of the Accord Plan. The first two bullets could be considered to be particularly high priorities at this time.

Spending Decisions

This program includes minimum allocations by revenue type for Accord Purposes (see next section). Accord partner communities that adopt this program agree to be guided by these minimum allocations. The jurisdiction controlling the revenue will be able to decide which particular Darby Accord purposes project(s) to use that revenue for. In making those decisions, the jurisdiction is expected to consider the advice of the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC), stakeholders, and partner jurisdictions. They will work through existing and future Big Darby Accord working groups to attempt to coordinate expenditures on Darby Accord purposes so that revenues will be used as efficiently as possible.

Uses of revenues beyond the minimums for Accord Purposes are wholly at the discretion of each jurisdiction. In all cases the statutory procedures that apply to each jurisdiction under Ohio law for the appropriation of funds shall be followed.

Revenue Generation and Allocation Program

<u>Uses - How to allocated to Purposes</u>	Funding Source	Specific Formula	Portion dedicated to Accord Purposes	<u>share funds not Accord</u>
(A) Cities • TIF: 25%	Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	30 year, non-school, non-township fire	75% of revenue	The not
	New Community Authority (NCA)	30 year, minimum of 5 mills, max of 10 mills	5 mills	
	Developer Contributions	\$2500 per residential unit	75% of revenue	

required to go to Accord purposes shall be divided as follows – 5% set aside to compensate county levy agencies, and 20% used at the discretion of the City for priority regional and environmental infrastructure not meeting Accord purposes criteria. Levy agency compensation shall apply only to land within the Big Darby watershed. If the TIF district includes land outside the watershed, 25% shall still go to Accord purposes and 75% used at the discretion of the City.

- NCA: City shall determine whether to impose community development charges above the 5 mills required for Accord purposes, and has discretion concerning the use of any millage above 5.
- Developer Contributions: City shall discretionary use of the 25% share not allocated to Accord purposes, in consultation with applicable developer(s).

(B) Unincorporated Areas

- TIF: The 25% not required to go to Accord purposes shall be divided 12.5% to the applicable township and 12.5% to Franklin County. The applicable township will have discretion on the use of its 12.5% share. The County share may be allocated to compensate levy agencies or otherwise used at the discretion of the County Commissioners for priority regional and environmental infrastructure not meeting Accord purposes criteria.
- NCA: Any decision to impose community development charges above the 5 mills required for Accord purposes shall be subject to agreement between Franklin County and the applicable township, as will uses of revenue resulting from such additional millage.
- Developer Contributions: The townships shall have discretionary use of the 25% share not allocated to Accord purposes, in consultation with applicable developer(s).
- Revenue Options: Other revenue options should be explored to help cover the increased public sector operating costs anticipated from new residential and commercial development.