

# FACTS about Ann Arbor's **GREENBELT**

## Open Space & Parkland Preservation

The Open Space and Parkland Preservation (aka Greenbelt) Millage was passed overwhelmingly by voters in November 2003. A portion of the tax levy is used to purchase additional City parkland, and a portion to preserve land within the Greenbelt District. To date, the primary method of land protection in the Greenbelt District, has been through the Purchase of Development Rights easements on working family farms.

The Greenbelt Strategic Plan was adopted by the Greenbelt Advisory Commission in early 2006. The primary goals of the plan are to:

- 1) Preserve large blocks of farmland in five target areas,
- 2) Preserve land alongside the Huron River and major tributaries, and
- 3) Obtain maximum leverage of taxpayer money through use of grant funds, partnerships, and landowner donations.

In 2007, City Council approved expanding the original Greenbelt District in certain townships, to enhance the City's partnership opportunities.



Photo by Matthew Cook

## **Partners** IN BRIEF

### **TOWNSHIP MILLAGES**

In 2003, Ann Arbor Township overwhelmingly passed a land preservation millage. Since 2003, Scio Township and Webster Township have passed similar millages and Pittsfield Township has dedicated general funds to land preservation.

### **ANN ARBOR TOWNSHIP**

The City's Greenbelt program partnered with Ann Arbor Township to protect the 147 acre Kapp farm. The Township received a federal grant in the amount of \$698,500 for the purchase.

### **PRESERVE WASHTENAW**

Public and private land preservation agencies have been meeting regularly since 2005. In 2007, Preserve Washtenaw was officially formed as an advisory body, which includes all public and private agencies working to permanently protect land resources in Washtenaw County. Preserve Washtenaw serves as a coordinating body for ongoing land protection efforts, ensuring cooperation /communication and reducing duplication and overlap. Stay tuned, its Web site will soon be launched!

### **WASHTENAW COUNTY & SCIO**

The City has also partnered with the County and Scio Township to protect the Fox Science Preserve in Scio Township. The site has been used by Ann Arbor Public Schools for environmental education excursions for decades.

## **Program highlights** IN BRIEF

To date, the City has allocated funds to protect six working farms through purchase of development rights and one open space park.

These properties comprise a total of 755 acres protected within the Greenbelt District. The Fair Market Value of these purchases was \$11,761,254 for a cost to the tax payer of \$7,495,030.

In addition to the matching funds provided by Greenbelt Partners mentioned above, the City has been very successful in competing for limited federal match dollars, through the Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP). Since 2005, the City has been awarded funds in the amount of \$3,961,362.

## Community benefit

PROTECTING FARMLAND AND OPEN SPACE:

- \* Maintains a high quality of life by preserving the rural characteristics of the countryside.
- \* Sustains the area's farming industry – an important part of the local economy and of the area's history and culture.
- \* Enhances wildlife habitat, air and water quality, scenic views and "sense of place."
- \* Improves the water quality of the Huron River and Ann Arbor's drinking water.
- \* Encourages a growing emphasis on the production of food for local markets as a contribution to a healthier environment and lifestyle.

## fun FACTS about the **GREENBELT**

Look for Rabble Roasters' roasted soy beans and popcorn in local markets around Ann Arbor. The Bur Oaks Farm that produces and roasts soy beans and popcorn was the first farm permanently protected by the Greenbelt in Webster Township.

For more INFORMATION about Open Space & Parkland Preservation, and to visit the Greenbelt Web site visit:

[a2gov.org/greenbelt/greenbelt.html](http://a2gov.org/greenbelt/greenbelt.html)

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