

**Van Buren County**  
**Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program**  
**LANDOWNER APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**Application Deadline: July 1, 2007**

The PDR program, enabled through a county ordinance passed in July of 2004, allows development rights to be purchased from landowners in participating townships who farm at least 51% of their property. The amount a landowner may receive for selling his/her development rights, and therefore restricting new development on the site, is the difference between the value of the land as farmland and its value if sold for development. For example, if the land is assessed for \$2,000 per acre as farmland and \$6,000 per acre for development, a landowner could be paid as much as \$4,000 an acre for his/her development rights.

Farmers must apply and be accepted into the program. **Submitting an application does not guarantee that your development rights will be purchased.**

Eligible landowners include those in Antwerp, Paw Paw, and Pine Grove Townships who meet the following criteria:

- At least 51% of the nominated land is devoted to an agricultural use.
- Mineral rights must be either owned by the landowner or must be subordinated when the development rights are acquired.
- A RMS level Conservation Plan does not need to be in place when the application is turned in to Van Buren County, but one will need to be completed by the USDA-NRCS if your parcel is chosen to be submitted to the State.
- The nominated parcel must be at least 20 acres in size, unless the parcel is located adjacent to already preserved land or is a viable agricultural entity.
- A 25% match can be provided. This match, which is required by the Michigan Department of Agriculture, can be made using private donations, other grants, voter-approved tax levy dollars (specific to farmland and open space preservation), or by the landowner by reducing the payment he/she receives for his/her development rights.

At the present time, Van Buren County is relying on grant funding from the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) to support this program. After applications have been received, they will be scored by the land preservation board (LPB), and the top scoring application(s) will be selected to receive appraisals and move onto the next steps in the preservation process. You will be notified whether or not your property has been selected to receive an appraisal.

In order to complete the application, follow the steps below:

- 1.) **Read through the application carefully**, noting that it is two-sided.
- 2.) Fill in all of the necessary information on the front and back sides of the page. Some additional information, such as supporting documentation and photographs will be required, as noted on the application. **The owner of record must sign the application.**

3.) If you wish, you can print and use a Van Buren County Land Preservation Board Worksheet. This worksheet will help to give you an idea of the score your application may receive from the LPB.

3.) Mail your completed application to:

Department of Land Services  
Van Buren County  
Attn: Ryan Miller  
219 Paw Paw Street, Suite 302  
Paw Paw, MI. 49079

4.) Applications **MUST BE RECEIVED** by July 1, 2007.

5.) If you have questions, please contact Ryan Miller at 269.657.8243, ext. 14 or via e-mail at [millerr@vbco.org](mailto:millerr@vbco.org). Applications, worksheets, the scoring system, and a list of frequently asked questions can be obtained online at [www.vbco.org/government576215.asp](http://www.vbco.org/government576215.asp).