

**This document provides a step-by-step summary of how landowners would go about selling the development rights, legally referred to as a conservation easement, on their property to the Town of Dunn as part of the it's Purchase of Development Rights program.**

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### **Step One: Learn More about PDR**

The town has collected extensive information about PDR that is available to the public. Members of the Land Trust Commission, as well as the town's PDR coordinator, are also willing to meet with you at your convenience to discuss the program. Please contact the Town Hall to request information or to set up an appointment.

### **Step Two: Complete a PDR "Pre-Application" Form by October 15**

If you decide that you might be interested in participating in the PDR program, please request a pre-application form from the town hall. Completion of this form in no way commits you to selling your development rights to the town. However, if you wish to be considered in the next round of PDR negotiations, you must send a completed pre-application form no later than October 15 to the Town Hall at 4156 County Highway B, McFarland, WI 53558.

### **Step Three : Meet with Members of the Land Trust Commission**

After the annual October 15 pre-application deadline, you will be contacted to discuss your interest in the PDR program and to go over the specific features of your land. For example, you may be asked to describe current uses of your property, special conservation practices used on the land, or any special features, such as Indian mounds or wildlife habitat, on the property.

### **Step Four: The Land Trust Commission Ranks your Application**

Once the commission has met with all interested landowners, it will rank the applications using a set of objective criteria. These criteria include such factors as: quality of farmland; development pressure; and natural, historical or archaeological features. The commission has worked with a variety of agencies and organizations to develop objective methods for evaluating your property according to the different criteria.

### **Step Five: Discuss Terms of Potential Easement on Your Property**

If your application receives a high score according to the ranking system, you will be asked to meet again with members of the Land Trust Commission to discuss the terms of a potential easement on your property. Please keep in mind that the Land Trust Commission wants to accommodate landowners to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, it is helpful to come to this meeting with an idea of what your needs are for the future and what types of provisions you would like included in the easement. Additional meetings to finalize the terms of the easement may be required. Members of the commission may also request a tour of your property during this phase of the process.

### **Step Six: A Professional Appraiser will Determine the Value of the Easement**

Once the general terms of the easement have been identified, the town will have an appraisal conducted by a certified professional to determine the value of the proposed easement on your property. Using "comparable sales" on similar properties in the area, the appraiser will first determine the value of your property as agricultural land. Using the same method, the appraiser will then determine what the value of your land would be if it were to be developed to the fullest extent under the town's current Land Use Plan. The difference between these two values is the value of the easement. If a landowner is dissatisfied with the

results of the appraisal commissioned by the town, he or she may have additional appraisals conducted at his or her expense.

### **Step Seven: Negotiate Terms of Sale**

After the appraisal/s have been conducted, you will be ready to negotiate the terms of sale of the easement with the Land Trust Commission. Like any other sale, you and members of the commission will try to negotiate a price that meets both of your needs. Along with negotiating the final price of the easement, you will also need to discuss other issues such as payment schedules. Please keep in mind that you are not obligated to sell the development rights (an easement) to your property until the final papers are signed. Therefore, if at any time in the process you decide that you are no longer interested in selling an easement to the town, you are free to withdraw from the negotiations. You may also wish to consult a legal or tax advisor at this point. The town can provide you with general information about the tax and legal implications of selling an easement on your property. However, the town is not able to provide you with expert advice particular to your specific situation.

### **Step Eight: Secure Approval from Mortgage or Lien Holders**

If you have a mortgage or lien on your property, you must secure approval in writing from the relevant holders before you can sell an easement. The town will help you in this process.

### **Step Nine: The Town Prepares a Baseline Data Report of your Property**

As part of the easement, the town prepares a "Baseline Data Report.". This report, which consists of maps, photographs and other relevant documents, serves as a record of the condition of the property at the time of sale of the easement. Both the town and the landowner must agree in writing that the report is an accurate representation of the current condition of the property.

### **Step Ten: Finalize Sale of Easement**

Prior to the final transaction, a Special Town Meeting will be held to authorize the town to purchase the easement. Like any other transaction involving land, parties to the conservation easement must attend a closing to sign relevant documents.