

Ohio Balanced Growth Program

Fact Sheet: Best Local Land Use Practices

The Best Local Land Use Practices document prepared for the Balanced Growth Program contains three model regulations and eleven guidance documents that can be used by local governments to guide the location of development and improve its design. The document also contains recommendations to consider as local governments prepare comprehensive plans.

These model regulations have been thoroughly researched, drawing from actual practices in Ohio and other states. They constitute some of the very best land-use practices available for protecting and restoring sensitive areas and contributing to economic growth.

These model regulations are intended as guides. To be effective, new regulations must only be adopted after consideration and modification to reflect specific local conditions and after a careful review by the local government's legal advisor and others prior to adoption and use. This ensures that they will suit the individual needs of the community.

The model regulations include:

Stormwater Management

This model includes stormwater management, erosion and sediment control, and protection of riparian areas, floodplains, and wetlands. Local measures to reduce stormwater impacts and protect aquatic areas can show a direct savings of community dollars from managing stormwater and floods.

Meadow Protection

This model can be used in communities where mowing regulations exist. It is intended to ensure that natural meadow areas are permitted and protected. These areas are not necessarily unkempt; they actually serve important natural functions to reduce runoff, improve its quality, and provide habitat.

A coastal protection ordinance has been planned for, but has not yet been developed.

The eleven Guidance Documents in Best Local Land Use Practices contain recommended best practices and links to regulations that have been successfully used by other communities. The subject areas included in this are:

Conservation Development allows for homes normally permitted on a parcel to be grouped together on smaller lots, while a sizeable proportion of the property is set aside as common open space.

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Compact Development plans help conserve open space and natural resources while enhancing a particular development.

Source Water Protection addresses what local governments can do to protect their drinking water from point and nonpoint source pollution.

Agricultural Land Protection focuses on strategies that local governments can take to conserve valuable farm land, while protecting surface and groundwater resources.

Woodland Protection deals with practices that communities can use to conserve woodlots critical for environmental quality and community character.

Scenic Protection of views and other open space can increase recreational opportunities and improve economic growth.

Historic Preservation can increase property values as much as 20% and often lead to reinvestment in the community.

Protection of Steep Slopes from development can reduce uncontrolled stormwater flows, dangerous erosion, and flooding.

Transfer of Development Rights would allow rural landowners to maintain their properties, redirecting growth to more compact development areas, possibly in more urbanized areas.

Brownfields Redevelopment addresses strategies that would encourage the cleanup and reuse of brownfield sites, and polluted areas of land.

Access Management regulations give local government a means for minimizing traffic congestion and travel delay while enhancing safety.

The Best Local Land Use Practices document is available on the Balanced Growth Program website.