



**2010 Annual Report
Webster Township Farmland and Open Space Preservation Board
8 March 2010**

Farmland and Open Space Preservation Board Members

Voting Members:

John Westman, Chair
Erica Perry
Tom Bloomer
Jean Cares

P.J. Martin

Supporting Personnel:

Kristen Uthus and Heidi Mitzel,
Recording Secretary

Barry Lonik, Consultant

Report Contents:

As required by Webster Township Ordinance #2005-1, this report contains the following information:

- List of all parcels from which developments rights were acquired along with details
- Map showing acquired lands and parcels preserved by other governmental entities
- List of the number of applications made, number unsuccessful and categorical reasons why they were not accepted.

Executive Summary:

The Webster Township Farmland and Open Space Preservation (FOSP) program has been in existence since September, 2005. The program was initially funded by Township voters in August, 2005 through a five-year property tax of 0.5 mills. This

initial millage generated about \$930,000 for the purchase of development rights (PDR) on farmland and open space within the township. Township voters renewed the millage for another five years in November, 2009.

List of all parcels from which developments rights were acquired along with details: To date, the FOSP program has received 25 applications covering a total of 2,141 acres. Six projects have been completed, including four in 2009. Those are:

- Marjorie Smyth property, Section 28, 100 acres (Township lead)
- Ann Merkel property, Section 34, 147 acres (Ann Arbor Greenbelt program lead)
- Bill Nixon property, Section 33, 265 acres (Ann Arbor Greenbelt program lead)
- Webster United Church of Christ property, Section 26, 94.5 acres (Ann Arbor Greenbelt program lead)

Webster Township contributed funds to each of the Greenbelt-lead projects. With all matching fund sources included, Webster Township's contribution to completed projects is about 11% of the total, meaning funds have been leveraged at a rate of 8:1. See the attached tables for further detail, and the attached protected lands map for locations of projects.

The FOSP Board is actively pursuing many additional projects. The process involved keeps applications confidential throughout the evaluation and negotiation process until such time that the FOSP Board or Board of Trustees takes action on the commitment of public funds or the signing of a purchase agreement. Therefore, much of the work of the FOSP Board is not readily visible to the public.

The main issues the FOSP Board has faced in its work are:

- Limited funds available to purchase development rights compared to the high cost of development rights in our township
- Lack of well-funded state and federal matching grant programs
- Many applications falling outside of the Ann Arbor Greenbelt. The Greenbelt area is the southeastern 12 square miles of the township: 4 miles east-to-west and 3 miles north-to-south, or roughly Maple Road to Vaughn Road and Joy Road to North Territorial Road.

To offset these concerns, the Board has developed:

- Strong working relationships with the Ann Arbor Greenbelt and Washtenaw County Natural Areas Preservation Programs to leverage our resources
- Informal partnerships with neighboring townships having funded PDR programs to share lessons learned

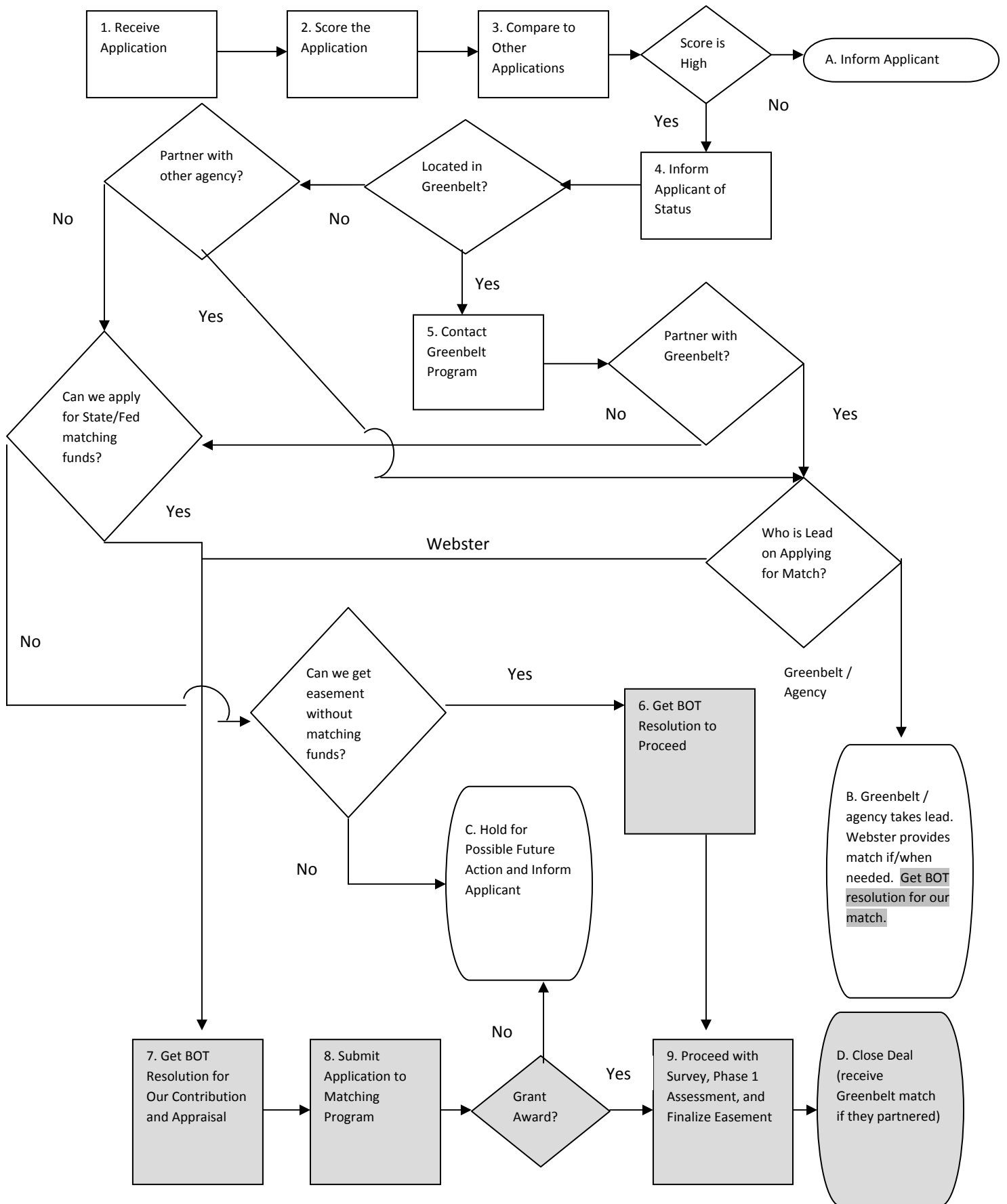
- Communication with state and federal officials supporting programs to assist local PDR efforts.

Listing of the number of applications made, number unsuccessful, and categorical reasons why they were not accepted: Total Applications = 25

Table 1: Status of Applications Which Remain Confidential

Project Status	# of Applications	Combined Acreage
<u>Unsuccessful Applications:</u>		
Applicant informed that property scores low	1	40
Application scores high, but no matching funds available to proceed (many of these are outside of the Greenbelt)	5	355
<u>Still Being Considered:</u>		
Application referred to another governmental agency for them to take the lead – Applications are either being acted upon or being evaluated	5	441
Still being evaluated	8	655

Webster Township Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program Overview



WEBSTER TOWNSHIP FARMLAND AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM

EXPENDITURES AND COMMITMENTS -- through 2/28/10

<u>Project (Acres)</u>	<u>Agricultural</u>	<u>Natural/Open Space</u>	<u>Non-acquisition Costs*</u>	<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</u>
Gordon Hall (20)	\$33,000.00			
Nordbloom (23)		\$5,000.00		
Smyth (100)	177,500.00			
Merkel (145)	110,000.00			
Nixon (265)	200,000.00			
Webster Church (94)	77,000.00			
Total Webster funds	\$597,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$77,050.00	\$679,550.00
Total acres protected: 647			11.0%	
Total acres nominated: 2,141	1,390 acres	751 acres		
Percent protected: 30%				

*Non-acquisition costs are a total of consultant and legal fees, professional services and other budgeted items since program initiation

WEBSTER TOWNSHIP PROJECTS--VALUES AND LOCAL SHARE

	<u>Total Property Value</u>	<u>Webster Share</u>	<u>Note</u>
Gordon Hall	\$33,000	\$33,000	no appraisal
Nordbloom	265,000	5,000	CE donation
Smyth	945,000	177,500	
Merkel	1,360,000	110,000	
Nixon	2,061,000	200,000	
Webster Church	776,500	77,000	
TOTAL	\$5,440,500	\$602,500	11%, or 8:1

WEBSTER TOWNSHIP FUNDS LEVERAGE

<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source</u>
Smyth	\$767,500	Farm & Ranchlands Protection Program (\$355,000), Ann Arbor Greenbelt (\$177,500), landowner donation (\$235,000)
Merkel	1,250,000	Farm & Ranchlands Protection Program (\$680,000), Ann Arbor Greenbelt (\$570,000)
Nixon	1,861,000	Farm & Ranchlands Protection Program (\$1,030,500), Ann Arbor Greenbelt (\$830,500)
Nordbloom	265,000	landowner donation (\$265,000)
Webster Church	699,500	Ann Arbor Greenbelt (\$536,000), landowner donation (\$163,500)
TOTAL	\$4,843,000	