



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **HURON RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL RECEIVES \$65,000 GRANT TO STUDY AND PROMOTE TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

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The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) has been awarded a \$65,000 grant to study and promote the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a tool for protecting priority natural areas and agricultural lands. Funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation's People And Land program, the goal of the 18-month project is to provide an educational tool that will help communities, developers, and residents of the Huron River Watershed understand the benefits and workings of a TDR program.

TDR programs allow landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land. The parcel of natural area or agriculture where the development rights originate is called the "sending parcel." When the rights are transferred from a sending parcel, the land is restricted with a permanent conservation easement. The parcel of land to which the rights are transferred is called the "receiving" parcel. Buying these rights generally allows the owner of the receiving parcel to build at a higher density than ordinarily permitted by the zoning. In the context of protecting the Huron River Watershed, TDR is a market-based approach to shifting development from natural or agricultural areas to designated growth zones with municipal services.

For example, if a parcel of natural area is valued for both its development potential *and* its role in protecting local water quality and wildlife, the property owner could voluntarily sell his development rights to a developer, who would then use these rights to develop at a higher density in an urban area. The result? The natural area is permanently protected while the landowner is compensated for his land's development potential, and the developer profits from building more homes in an urban area than he could without the TDR option.

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With a team of TDR experts and planners, HRWC will conduct case studies on current or recent land developments in the Huron River watershed. HRWC will examine the fiscal, environmental, and societal impacts of these developments, and then compare these to impacts that would have resulted under a TDR program. The results will serve as an educational tool for public and private sectors in promoting the use of TDR and influencing statewide enabling legislation.

For more information on the grant, or to suggest recently completed or proposed developments as potential case studies, contact Chris Riggs at HRWC at (734) 769-5123 x13 or check the web site at [www.hrwc.org](http://www.hrwc.org).

**About the Huron River Watershed Council:**

HRWC is a public nonprofit coalition of local communities, businesses, and residents established under Michigan's Local River Management Act in 1965 to protect the Huron River and its tributary streams, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater. The Council works to inspire attitudes, behaviors, and economies that protect, rehabilitate, and sustain the Huron River system. Services include hands-on citizen education, technical assistance in policy development, and river protection and monitoring projects.

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