

**OCONEE COUNTY
TDR STUDY COMMITTEE
FINAL REPORT**

The Oconee County TDR study committee has spent 6 months conducting an evaluation of the Transfer of Development Rights process. We have had presentations and discussions led by Oconee County employees describing county zoning, character areas, facilities and capacities. We have heard from educators from UGA, who study and help formulate TDR programs. We heard from the former director of a County TDR program in Georgia. We have also heard from the development community regarding what types of benefits of a TDR program that could attract them to use it.

We have been asked to evaluate the TDR program and to determine:

- ❖ If Oconee County could benefit from a TDR program and
- ❖ If Oconee County is a county which is suitable for a TDR program
- ❖ If the County should proceed to hire a TDR consultant to design such a TDR program for implementation in Oconee County Georgia.

Once the study has been completed, to communicate those findings to the BOC.

These are the recommendations of this citizens TDR Study Committee:

1. The committee unanimously agrees that Oconee County appears to be well suited for a successful TDR program, because of the current existence of easily identifiable sending and receiving areas.
2. The Committee unanimously agrees that “time is of the essence”. The current lull in development across the Country, including here in Oconee County, provides the perfect time to hire a consultant to design a TDR program appropriate for our County.
3. The committee unanimously agrees that because a TDR program must be tailored specifically to the County, it is imperative that a well qualified, knowledgeable TDR specialist (with the stature and competence level of Rick Pruitt) should be engaged by the County, without delay. This consultant should evaluate the appropriateness of Oconee County for a TDR program, then if found to be appropriate, design such a TDR program with input from all appropriate stakeholders. Once designed, this

TDR program should be presented to the county and considered for implementation.

- 4. The committee unanimously agrees that a TDR program would be a valuable tool (among many tools) which could help insure that Oconee County could continue to grow with well thought-out development occurring in areas with adequate infrastructure and at the same time insuring the preservation of Oconee County's unique attributes, our historic landmarks, rural character and agricultural heritage, for generations to come. A TDR program could alleviate problems and concerns of commissioners, developers and landowners regarding rezoning applications.**
- 5. The committee unanimously agrees that in order to be successful a TDR program must be easily understood, and must benefit developers, landowners, and the County as a whole. We feel that a TDR program would compliment the 2030 Future Development map for Oconee County, and help fulfil its Long-Range goals.**
- 6. A successful TDR program could provide adequate and creative incentives such as sewer capacity, increased density, or multiple use areas to developers, while providing fair compensation to farmers and landowners to preserve agriculture, scenic vistas and greenspace, making more efficient use of county infrastructure and conserving taxes, thereby benefiting the entire County. This tool could increase the desirability of the County, stimulating more commercial development and help to insure a balanced growth.**
- 7. Board of Commissioners and County policies regarding ordinances, rezoning, water and sewer availability and exceptions will need to be aligned closely with the TDR program, for it to be effective.**
- 8. Having a successful TDR program (including a County TDR bank) could increase Oconee County's potential to leverage these funds and attract other available Local, State and Federal funds for Farmland Protection and Historic and Scenic Site Protection.**
- 9. The committee unanimously agrees on the importance of a strong commitment on behalf of Oconee County leaders, and that a strong educational effort be made to inform citizens, landowners and developers of the benefits of such a program to them and to the County.**

10. The committee feels compelled to restate the following, in the strongest terms possible.

- 1. All sectors of Oconee County (developers, landowners, taxpayers, and County Officials) could benefit greatly from a well-designed TDR program.**
- 2. For the reasons stated above, NOW is the perfect time to hire a consultant and conduct the necessary study.**
- 3. Oconee County should only hire a TDR consultant with the highest credentials and knowledge.**