

IV. SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

All valid applications will be reviewed to determine if the acquisition of development rights will promote the PDR program’s goals and priorities. Selection criteria have been developed to guide, but not control, the review and assessment of eligible properties during each selection round.

In all selection rounds, valid and accepted offers on eligible properties of greater points shall be considered for purchase with available funds before properties receiving lower scores. The criteria, which will be used to evaluate the applications, are outlined below.

Rating instructions: The selection criteria allow for a score of up to 100, with all five criteria sections assessed. Each criteria section is rated and assigned a point value. Then each section is assigned a weight factor. The five weight factors add up to 1.0. When total point values for a section are multiplied by the weight factor, a score will be reached for that section. The total of the 5 section scores result in the final applicant score. Staff performs the ranking, with review and adjustment by the PDR Oversight Committee.

1. Land Evaluation

Productive farming and associated activities depend on soil capability (the suitability of soils for most types of field crops). Therefore, emphasis should be placed on the property’s soil characteristics. The scoring system uses the NRCS Prime Farmland classifications, LESA classifications and APO soils classifications. Higher points are assigned to better soils and lower points to poorer soils. Points are also assigned based on the productivity and/or characteristics of the soil (profile, texture, slope, other).

In addition, five points are added to the total soils score for each soil if the property has drainage tiles, flood protection or soil improvement infrastructure. If water rights are available on the property five more points are added.

Below is a table detailing the soil point system:

LESA Rating	APO or Non-APO Prime 1	Non-APO - Prime 2-6	None
1	90	80	0
2	85	75	0
3	80	70	0
4	75	65	0
No Rating	70	60	0
For all rows and columns add five points (not to exceed 100) if property has drainage tiles, flood protection, or soil improvement infrastructure.			
For all columns and rows, add 5 points (not to exceed 100) if water rights <u>are</u> available on property.			

Once a point value for the section is determined, it is multiplied by a weight factor to indicate the importance (weighted factor for Land Evaluation section has been 0.33, but is subject to ongoing review by the Committee).

2. Site Evaluation

The points for each criteria are based on a 100 point scale. Higher points are given to site characteristics that are more desirable, such as parcel size, characteristics that reflect a site's threat of conversion, such as proximity to high traffic roads or UGA, and characteristics that make a site more desirable to farming, such as available water rights.

1. Total size of parcel(s) (nominal acres)

a. <10	0 pts
b. 10-29	20 pts
c. 30-49	40 pts
d. 50-79	60 pts
e. 80-100	80 pts
f. >100	100 pts

2. Number of existing development rights offered under current zoning

a. 1-2	20 pts
b. 3	40 pts
c. 4	60 pts
d. 5	80 pts
e. >=6	100pts

3. Adjacent land is conserved by easement or other means (Whatcom Land Trust or NRCS CREP Program)

a. >1 mile	0 pts
b. ½ to 1 mile	25 pts
c. ¼ to ½ mile	50 pts
d. < ¼ mile	75 pts
e. Adjacent	100 pts

4. Percent of parcel actively farmed

a. 0-25	25 pts
b. 26-50	50 pts
c. 51-75	75 pts
d. >75	100 pts

5. Proximity to high traffic roads

- | | |
|----------------|---------|
| a. >1 mile | 0 pts |
| b. ½ to 1 mile | 25 pts |
| c. ¼ to ½ mile | 50 pts |
| d. < ¼ mile | 75 pts |
| e. Adjacent | 100 pts |

6. Proximity to UGA or city limits

- | | |
|----------------|---------|
| a. >1 mile | 0 pts |
| b. ½ to 1 mile | 25 pts |
| c. ¼ to ½ mile | 50 pts |
| d. < ¼ mile | 75 pts |
| e. Adjacent | 100 pts |

7. Percent of parcel surrounded within ½ mile by more intensive uses

- | | |
|----------|---------|
| a. >75 | 0 pts |
| b. 51-75 | 33 pts |
| c. 26-50 | 66 pts |
| d. <25 | 100 pts |

8. Number of platted lots

- | | |
|---------|--------|
| a. 0-2 | 20 pts |
| b. 3 | 40 pts |
| c. 4 | 60 pts |
| d. 5 | 80 pts |
| e. >= 6 | 100pts |

9. Water Rights available

- | | |
|--------|---------|
| a. Yes | 100 pts |
| b. No | 50 pts |

Once a point value for the section is determined, it is multiplied by a weight factor to indicate the importance (weighted factor for Site Evaluation section has been 0.33, but is subject to ongoing review by the Committee).

3. Special Considerations

1. Site contains heritage/historical significance
 - a. Yes 50 pts
 - b. No 0 pts
2. Site contains conservation values (viewsheds, wetlands, wildlife habitat, other)
 - a. Yes 50 pts
 - b. No 0 pts

Once a point value for the section is determined, it is multiplied by a weight factor to indicate the importance (weighted factor for Special Considerations section has been 0.03, but is subject to ongoing review by the Committee).

4. Bargain Sale Opportunity

1. Sale below market value
 - a. 81%-Full Value 0 pts
 - b. 65%-80% 33 pts
 - c. 50%-64% 66 pts
 - d. < 50% Full Value 100 pts

Once a point value for the section is determined, it is multiplied by a weight factor to indicate the importance (weighted factor for Bargain Sale Opportunity section has been 0.09, but is subject to ongoing review by the Committee).

5. Bonus Points

1. Increases the amount of preserved farmland in priority areas to:
 - a. Not in target area 0 pts
 - b. <25 25 pts
 - c. 25-50 50 pts
 - d. 51-75 75 pts
 - e. >75 100 pts

Once a point value for the section is determined, it is multiplied by a weight factor to indicate the importance (weighted factor for Bonus Points section has been 0.22, but is subject to ongoing review by the Committee).

6. Final Score

The points for each section are added up and multiplied by a weight factor, which indicates the importance that is placed on a particular characteristic. The weighted scores are then added to provide an overall score (0-100). The higher the score, the more closely the property meets the goals of the program and hence is a higher priority for purchase and preservation.