



**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – ELUC/ County  
Facilities/Highway  
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois  
Tuesday, April 3, 2012 – 6:00 p.m.**

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*Lyle Shields Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center  
1776 E. Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois*

**VIII. Environment & Land Use**

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| A. <u>Request to Authorize CRIS Application for Public Transportation Assistance Grants for Operating and Rolling Stock Capital Under the Illinois Department of Transportation’s Authority on Consolidated Vehicle Procurements, Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom</u> | 23-26 |
| B. <u>Recreation &amp; Entertainment License – U of I Rodeo Club – Champaign County Fair Association, 1302 N. Coler, Urbana</u>  | 27-31 |
| C. <u>Request Approval from ELUC to Place the Draft LESA on the Zoning Board of Appeals Agenda for a Public Hearing</u>  | 32-65 |
| D. <u>Request Approval from ELUC to Place a Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment Changing the Definition of Best Prime Farmland on the Zoning Board of Appeals Agenda for a Public Hearing</u>  | 66-68 |
| E. <u>Monthly Report</u> (to be distributed)   |       |
| F. <u>Other Business</u>   |       |
| G. <u>Designation of Items to be Placed on Consent Agenda</u>  |       |



**PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

1776 East Washington Street  
Urbana, IL 61802

Phone 217.328.3313

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[www.ccrpc.org](http://www.ccrpc.org)

**TO:** Environmental & Land Use Committee Members  
**FROM:** Rita Morocoima-Black, CCRPC/CUUATS Transportation Planning Manager;  
Eileen Sierra, CCRPC/HSTP Region 8 Coordinator  
**DATE:** April 3, 2012  
**RE:** Rural Public Transportation Grant Applications

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Approve Resolution for CRIS Rural Transit Applications on behalf of Champaign County to expand services using operating and capital technical assistance under IDOT's Section 5311 Consolidated Vehicle Procurements, 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute, and 5317 New Freedom beyond American with Disabilities Act.

**BACKGROUND:**

Since February 2011, CRIS Rural Transit (CRIS) has provided rural public transportation to the northern areas of Champaign County (Rantoul, Ludlow, Thomasboro, and Gilford) through federal technical assistance funding passed through the Illinois Department of Transportation – Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation (IDOT-DPIT). Since that time, demand for service has greatly increased far beyond the services currently being provided, as demonstrated in the quarterly and annual reports provided to the Rural Transit Advisory Board (RTAG) and the Champaign County Board during the November meeting. Until recently, all equipment (rolling stock capital are the paratransit vehicles used to provide the service) for the service was being rented from Vermillion County.

CRIS is applying for three different IDOT grants to expand current transportation services to provide medical transportation for rural residents of Champaign County, establish a new shuttle service between north Champaign County and Champaign-Urbana and to obtain new vehicles to meet service demand now that the system is established, which are described below:

**New Freedom Grant Application**

CRIS will expand current transportation services through a New Freedom medical shuttle to rural areas throughout Champaign County. This service will fill a void for affordable, general public long distance, nonemergency medical trips to medical appointments, pharmacies, hospitals, and specialized medical centers (such as dialysis, outpatient surgery centers, the VA Illiana Health Care System, etc.) located within urban centers. This service will be provided from Monday to Friday from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm and Saturday from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm throughout Champaign County. The service will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis or by advance reservations with fares varying from \$2 to \$5 each way. To provide this service, two mini-vans will cover the additional service area of the 998 sq. mi. in the county. One mini-van will be provided by VA Illiana Health Care System as in-kind match and the second mini-van with ramp (2 wheelchairs/5 passenger) is requested under this grant application. Six part-time drivers will be needed in operating costs to maximize coverage.

### **Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Grant Application**

CRIS will establish a new JARC shuttle service for north Champaign County residents including Rantoul, providing a deviated fixed-route multi-municipality service between Rantoul and Champaign-Urbana to fill a void in rides for low-income individuals to and from jobs, training and child care. The route will originate in Rantoul and run directly to Parkland College, then, proceed to other high employment centers in the Champaign Urbana area, and return to Rantoul. This service will be provided six times each weekday from 5:00 am to 9:00 pm. Two 14-passenger buses will be utilized to cover this 40-mile daily route with ten stops. Four part-time drivers and an additional part-time dispatcher will be needed in operating expenses to maximize coverage and coordination. All CRIS vehicles are wheelchair-lift and bicycle-rack equipped.

### **Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP 5311) Startup & Expansion Grant Application**

IDOT sets aside annual funds from federal funding for 5311 providers (rural public transit providers) to replace older vehicles or to purchase new vehicles to expand the system. Additionally, during the ICCT Primer Process the Champaign County Board requested that IDOT set aside (banked) 5311 funding until a provider could be selected. As the primer process took three years prior to selecting CRIS as the operator, there is funding banked to assist CRIS in purchasing new vehicles to meet service demand now that the rural transportation system is established. In these two CVP applications for Champaign County, CRIS expects to secure four 14-passenger light duty vehicles. Receiving these vehicles will make it possible to serve more rural residents of Champaign County. These vehicles are ideal because they last longer than mini-vans, in regards to maintenance; and operate on regular gas at a lower cost than diesel (on average).

As mandated in SAFETEA-LU for local coordination, the JARC, New Freedom, and CVP expansion applications were endorsed by the Region 8 Human Service Transportation (HSTP) Regional Transportation Policy & Technical Committees (RTCs) on March 22, 2012. While these grant applications were endorsed, there is no guarantee that IDOT-DPIT will award this funding to Champaign County. Once the Champaign County Board approves the attached resolution, the applications will be reviewed and scored by IDOT's State Oversight Committee (SOC), to decide if they are selected to receive federal funding. We are soliciting the Environmental and Land Use Committee (ELUC) to approve these applications in order for CRIS, the selected operator of Champaign rural public transit services, to apply for these vehicles on behalf of Champaign County.

**RESOLUTION NO.**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CRIS APPLICATION FOR  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE GRANTS FOR OPERATING AND  
ROLLING STOCK CAPITAL UNDER THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S  
AUTHORITY ON CONSOLIDATED VEHICLE PROCUREMENTS,  
JOB ACCESS REVERSE COMMUTE, & NEW FREEDOM**

Resolution authorizing application for Public Transportation Financial Assistance under Sections 5311, 5316, and 5317 of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended (49 U.S.C. § 5311, 5316, 5317).

**WHEREAS**, the provision and improvement of public transit service is essential to the transportation of persons in the non-urbanized area; and

**WHEREAS**, Sections 5311, 5316 and 5317 of Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended (49 U.S.C. § 5311, 5316, 5317) makes funds available to help offset certain operating and capital deficits as well as administrative expenses of a system providing public transit service in non-urbanized areas; and

**WHEREAS**, grants for said funds will impose certain obligations upon the recipient, including the provision by it of the local share of funds necessary to cover costs not covered by funds provided under Sections 5311, 5316, and 5317 of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended (49 U.S.C. § 5311, 5316, 5317).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Board of the County of Champaign:

**Section 1.** That an application be made to the Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation, Department of Transportation, State of Illinois, for a financial assistance grants under Sections 5311, 5316, and 5317 of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended (49 U.S.C. § 5311, 5316, 5317), for the purpose of off-setting a portion of the Public Transportation Program operating and capital deficits of the County of Champaign.

**Section 2.** That while participating in said operating and capital assistance programs the CRIS Rural Transit ('CRIS') will provide all required local matching funds.

**Section 3.** That the Chief Executive Officer of CRIS is hereby authorized and directed to execute and file on behalf of the County of Champaign such applications.

**Section 4.** That the Chief Executive Officer of the CRIS is authorized to furnish such additional information as may be required by the Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration in connection with the aforesaid application for said grant.

**Section 5.** That the Chief Executive Officer of CRIS is hereby authorized and directed to execute and file on behalf of the County of Champaign all required Grant Agreements with the Illinois Department of Transportation, in order to obtain grant assistance under the provisions of the Sections 5311, 5316, and 5317 of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended (49 U.S.C. § 5311, 5316, 5317).

**Section 6.** That the *Chief Executive Officer* of *CRIS* is hereby authorized to provide such information and to file such documents as may be required to perform the Grant Agreements and to receive these grants.

**PRESENTED, ADOPTED, APPROVED AND RECORDED this 19<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2012.**

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C. Pius Weibel, Chair  
County Board of Champaign County, Illinois

ATTEST:

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Gordy Hulten, County Clerk and  
Ex-Officio Clerk of the County Board



STATE OF ILLINOIS, **FILED**  
 Champaign County  
 Application for: **MAR 27 2012**  
 Recreation & Entertainment License

Applications for License under County Clerk  
 Ordinance No. 55 Regulating Recreational & Other Businesses within the County (for use by businesses covered by this Ordinance other than Massage Parlors and similar enterprises)

For Office Use Only

License No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date(s) of Event(s) 4/28/12  
 Business Name: RODEO CLUB OF U of I  
 License Fee: \$ 20.00  
 Filing Fee: \$ 4.00  
 TOTAL FEE: \$ 24.00  
 Checker's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Filing Fees: Per Year (or fraction thereof): \$ 100.00  
 Per Single-day Event: \$ 10.00 x 2  
 Clerk's Filing Fee: \$ 4.00

Checks Must Be Made Payable To: Gordy Hulten, Champaign County Clerk

The undersigned individual, partnership, or corporation hereby makes application for the issuance of a license to engage a business controlled under County Ordinance No. 55 and makes the following statements under oath:

- A. 1. Name of Business: Rodeo Club at the University of Illinois
2. Location of Business for which application is made: \_\_\_\_\_  
Animal Science Laboratory
3. Business address of Business for which application is made: \_\_\_\_\_  
1207 W. Gregory Dr. Urbana, IL 61801
4. Zoning Classification of Property: University
5. Date the Business covered by Ordinance No. 55 began at this location: unknown
6. Nature of Business normally conducted at this location: College (research and classes)
7. Nature of Activity to be licensed (include all forms of recreation and entertainment to be provided): Country Band
8. Term for which License is sought (specifically beginning & ending dates): \_\_\_\_\_  
April 28<sup>th</sup> 2012 9pm - April 29, 1am - wa \_\_\_\_\_  
(NOTE: All annual licenses expire on December 31st of each year)
9. Do you own the building or property for which this license is sought? No
10. If you have a lease or rent the property, state the name and address of the owner and when the lease or rental agreement expires: Champaign County Fairgrounds  
1302 N. Coler Ave. Urbana, IL 61801 April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012
11. If any licensed activity will occur outdoors attach a Site Plan (with dimensions) to this application showing location of all buildings, outdoor areas to be used for various purposes and parking spaces. See page 3, Item 7. w6

**INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR A LICENSE AND WILL BE RETURNED TO APPLICANT**

Recreation & Entertainment License Application  
Page Two

- B. If this business will be conducted by a person other than the applicant, give the following information about person employed by applicant as manager, agent or locally responsible party of the business in the designated location:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Residence Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Citizenship: \_\_\_\_\_ If naturalized, place and date of naturalization: \_\_\_\_\_

If, during the license period, a new manager or agent is hired to conduct this business, the applicant MUST furnish the County the above information for the new manager or agent within ten (10) days.

Information requested in the following questions must be supplied by the applicant, if an individual, or by all members who share in profits of a partnership, if the applicant is a partnership.

If the applicant is a corporation, all the information required under Section D must be supplied for the corporation and for each officer.

Additional forms containing the questions may be obtained from the County Clerk, if necessary, for attachment to this application form.

- C. 1. Name(s) of owner(s) or local manager(s) (include any aliases): Will Glazik  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: Champaign, IL  
Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship: citizen  
If naturalized, state place and date of naturalization: \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Residential Addresses for the past three (3) years: 1002 S. Lincoln Ave.  
Urbana, IL 61801  
3. Business, occupation, or employment of applicant for four (4) years preceding date of application for this license: Student

EACH OFFICER MUST COMPLETE SECTION D. OBTAIN ADDITIONAL FORM PAGES IF NEEDED FROM THE COUNTY CLERK AND ATTACH TO THIS APPLICATION WHEN FILED.

- D. Answer only if applicant is a Corporation:

1. Name of Corporation exactly as shown in articles of incorporation and as registered: \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Date of Incorporation: \_\_\_\_\_ State wherein incorporated: \_\_\_\_\_

Recreation & Entertainment License Application  
Page Three

3. If foreign Corporation, give name and address of resident agent in Illinois:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Give first date qualified to do business in Illinois: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Business address of Corporation in Illinois as stated in Certificate of Incorporation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Objects of Corporation, as set forth in charter: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Names of all Officers of the Corporation and other information as listed:

Name of Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date elected or appointed: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Citizenship: \_\_\_\_\_

If naturalized, place and date of naturalization: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Addresses for past three (3) years: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Business, occupation, or employment for four (4) years preceding date of application for this license: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. A site plan (with dimensions) must accompany this application. It must show the location of all buildings, outdoor areas to be used for various purposes and parking spaces.

**AFFIDAVIT**

(Complete when applicant is an individual or Partnership)

I/We swear that I/we have read the application and that all matters stated thereunder are true and correct, are made upon my/our personal knowledge and information and are made for the purpose of inducing the County of Champaign to issue the permit hereunder applied for.

I/We further swear that I/we will not violate any of the laws of the United States of America or of the State of Illinois or the Ordinances of the County of Champaign in the conduct of the business hereunder applied for.

Will [Signature]  
Signature of Owner or of one of two members of Partnership

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner or of one of two members of Partnership

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Manager or Agent

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2012.



Nora M. Stewart  
Notary Public

**AFFIDAVIT**

(Complete when applicant is a Corporation)

We, the undersigned, president and secretary of the above named corporation, each first being duly sworn, say that each of us has read the foregoing application and that the matters stated therein are true and correct and are made upon our personal knowledge and information, and are made for the purpose of inducing the County of Champaign to issue the license herein applied for.

We further swear that the applicant will not violate any of the laws of the United States of America or of the State of Illinois or the Ordinances of the County of Champaign in the conduct of applicant's place of business.

We further swear that we are the duly constituted and elected officers of said applicant and as such are authorized and empowered to execute their application for and on behalf of said application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of President

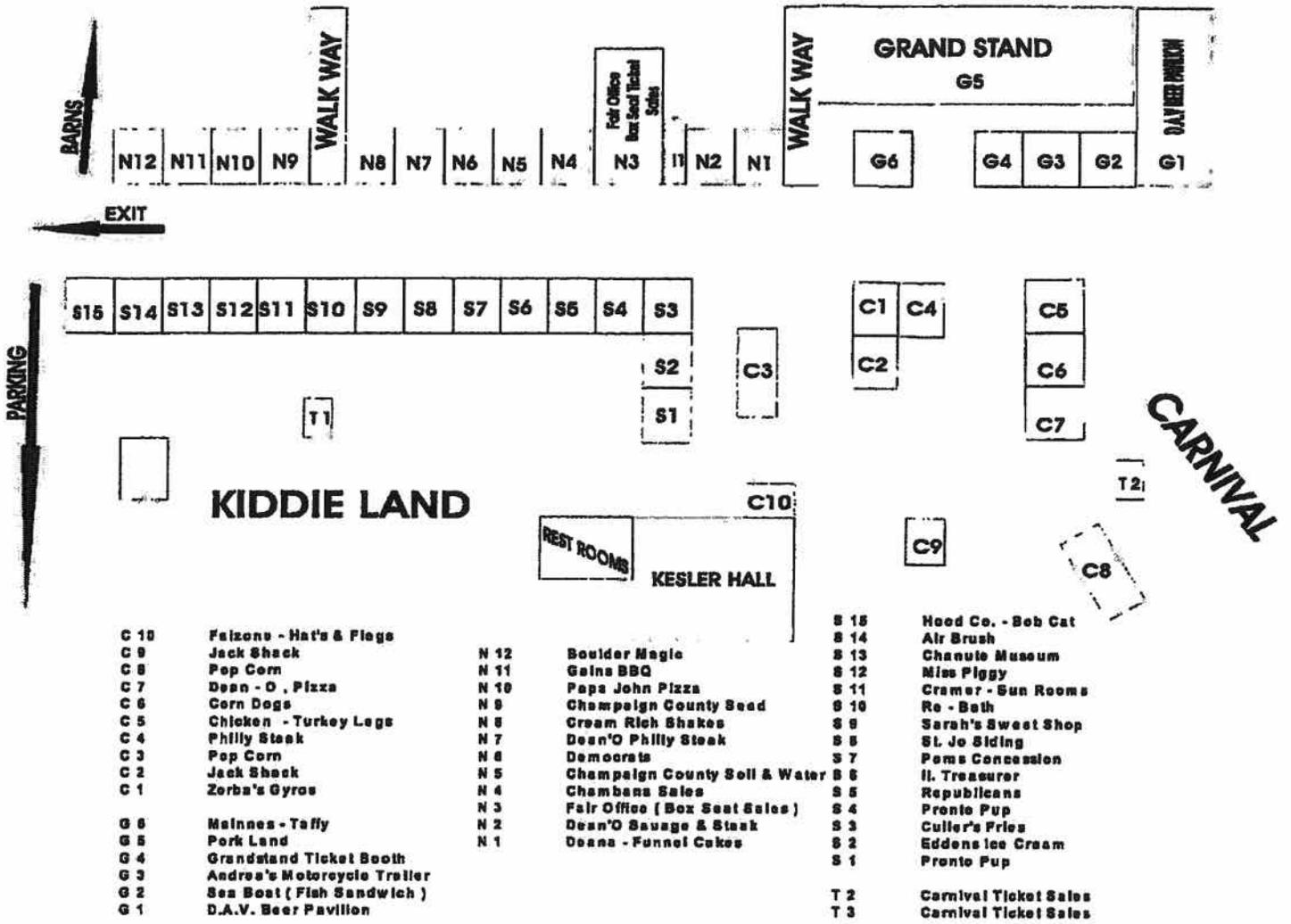
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Manager or Agent

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

This COMPLETED application along with the appropriate amount of cash, or certified check made payable to MARK SHELDEN, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY CLERK, must be turned in to the Champaign County Clerk's Office, 1776 E. Washington St., Urbana, Illinois 61802. A \$4.00 Filing Fee should be included.



- C 10 Faison - Hat's & Flage
- C 9 Jack Shack
- C 8 Pop Corn
- C 7 Dean - O , Pizza
- C 6 Corn Dogs
- C 5 Chicken - Turkey Legs
- C 4 Philly Steak
- C 3 Pop Corn
- C 2 Jack Shack
- C 1 Zorba's Gyros
  
- G 6 Maines - Taffy
- G 5 Pork Land
- G 4 Grandstand Ticket Booth
- G 3 Andrea's Motorcycle Trolley
- G 2 Sea Boat ( Fish Sandwich )
- G 1 D.A.V. Beer Pavilion

- N 12 Boulder Magic
- N 11 Gains BBQ
- N 10 Papa John Pizza
- N 9 Champaign County Seed
- N 8 Cream Rich Shakes
- N 7 Dean'O Philly Steak
- N 6 Democrats
- N 5 Champaign County Soil & Water
- N 4 Chambans Sales
- N 3 Fair Office ( Box Seat Sales )
- N 2 Dean'O Sausage & Steak
- N 1 Deans - Funnel Cakes

- S 15 Hood Co. - Bob Cat
- S 14 Air Brush
- S 13 Chanute Museum
- S 12 Miss Piggy
- S 11 Cramer - Sun Rooms
- S 10 Re - Bath
- S 9 Sarah's Sweet Shop
- S 8 St. Jo Siding
- S 7 Pems Concession
- S 6 Il. Treasurer
- S 5 Republicans
- S 4 Pronto Pup
- S 3 Culler's Fries
- S 2 Eddens Ice Cream
- S 1 Pronto Pup
  
- T 2 Carnival Ticket Sales
- T 3 Carnival Ticket Sales

Champaign  
County  
Department of

PLANNING &  
ZONING

Brookens  
Administrative Center  
1776 E. Washington Street  
Urbana, Illinois 61802

(217) 384-3708

To: **Champaign County Board Committee of the Whole**

From: **John Hall, Director & Zoning Administrator**

Date: **March 26, 2012**

RE: **Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Update**

Request: **Request Approval from ELUC to Place the Draft LESA on the Zoning Board of Appeals Agenda for a Public Hearing**

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## **BACKGROUND**

The County Board authorized an update to the existing Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) in Resolutions No. 7642 (on 2/24/11) and No. 7797 (on 6/23/11). See the attached Resolutions.

At their March 7, 2012, meeting the LESA Update Committee voted 5 to 1 (with one member absent) to recommend the attached Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Update Draft dated March 7, 2012.

The existing LESA System and other materials from the Update Committee meetings are under "Champaign County LESA Update" on the Champaign County RPC website ([www.ccrpc.org/planning/LESA\\_update](http://www.ccrpc.org/planning/LESA_update)).

The Update Committee reviewed the results of testing the Draft Update on 15 actual Champaign County test sites. The overall results were reviewed in Memo #2 (dated 2/14/12) for the 2/22/12 meeting.

Because LESA figures so prominently in rezoning of rural property, the State's Attorney recommends that the LESA Update Draft should go through a public hearing process at the Zoning Board of Appeals prior to County Board action.

## **BRIEF COMPARISON OF EXISTING LESA TO THE PROPOSED LESA**

Attachment C is a brief comparison of the existing LESA System to the proposed Draft Update LESA. In general the Draft Update LESA compares to the existing LESA as follows:

1. Regarding the Land Evaluation part:
  - a. The productivity of all soils is greater under current agricultural practices than what the current LESA was based upon.
  - b. The Draft Update LESA divides County soils into twice as many Agriculture Value Groups (AVG) as the existing LESA and therefore the differences between the soils in each AVG are much less and the AVGs are more homogenous. This is an important consideration for the definition of Best Prime Farmland.
2. Regarding the Site Assessment part:

**Zoning Administrator**  
**MARCH 26, 2012**

- a. The number of Site Assessment factors is reduced from 20 to 10 so the Site Assessment is much easier to understand.
- b. The Draft Update LESA emphasizes agricultural productivity (including Best Prime Farmland) and agricultural compatibility (including any adjacent livestock management facilities) much more than the existing LESA. Only about 47% of the Site Assessment points in the existing LESA are for productivity and compatibility but about 80% of the Site Assessment points in the Draft Update LESA are for these two important considerations.
- c. The Draft Update LESA does not consider other environmental factors that are included in the existing LESA. One Update Committee member did not support this approach in the Draft Update LESA.
- d. The Draft Update LESA includes a correction for “creep” in future Site Assessment ratings and penalizes multiple developments from the same tract of land. Most LESA Systems (including the existing LESA) do not address these two common problems.
- e. In testing done on 15 actual Champaign County test sites the Draft Update LESA resulted in scores that were approximately 27% higher than the current LESA. Higher LESA scores mean that a greater level of protection is warranted and so the Draft Update LESA appears to be more protective of prime farmland.
- f. Field testing on those 15 actual Champaign County test sites also proves that the Draft Update LESA can be applied consistently based on the guidance in the Draft Update LESA.

**USDA REVIEW OF UPDATE DRAFT LESA**

Both Illinois Department of Agriculture and local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff have had the opportunity to review the proposed Update Draft LESA and all comments have been positive. Nonetheless, the USDA NRCS State Conservationist must formally approve any LESA. That approval is still required and is recommended to occur after the public hearing at the ZBA.

**RECOMMENDED CHANGE TO BEST PRIME FARMLAND**

The Update Committee also recommended a new definition of Best Prime Farmland. See the other memo included in the Agenda.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A Champaign County Resolution No. 7642**
- B Champaign County Resolution No. 7797**
- C Brief Comparison of Existing LESA to Proposed Update Draft LESA**
- D Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Update Draft dated March 7, 2012**

RESOLUTION NO. 7642

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE SITE ASSESSMENT UPDATE COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, The Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan includes Objective 4.5, which states: "By the year 2012, Champaign County will review the Site Assessment portion of LESA (Land Evaluation and Site Assessment) for possible updates, thereafter, the County will periodically review the Site Assessment portion of LESA for potential updates at least once every 10 years." ; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County 's LESA system was adopted in 1984 and has not been updated in the 26 years since its adoption; and

WHEREAS, The Champaign County Board desires that the LESA system be updated because significant zoning and land use policy related changes have occurred since the system was adopted; and

WHEREAS, The Champaign County Board desires to create a Site Assessment Update Committee to work with the County Planner to review site assessment factors and the weighing of such factors, to test the proposed site assessment factor weighing in accordance with LESA Guidebook recommendations, and offer related recommendations to the County Board; and

WHEREAS, The Site Assessment Update Committee shall be a committee of seven voting members appointed to represent public and key stakeholder perspectives and technical experts and consist of the following:

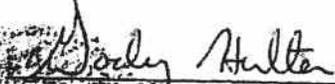
1. A resource conservationist from the Champaign County Soil & Water Conversation District,
2. A member from the Champaign County Soil & Water Conversation District Board of Directors,
3. Two members of the Champaign County Board Committee of the Whole/ELUC
4. A member from the Champaign County Farm Bureau Land Use Committee,
5. A representative from the development or real estate community,
6. A past Chair or member of the Champaign County Zoning Board of Appeals; and

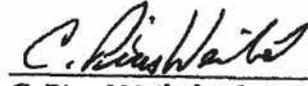
WHEREAS, The Director of the Champaign County Planning & Zoning Department shall serve as an advisory, non-voting member of the Site Assessment Update Committee;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Champaign County Board establishes a Site Assessment Update Committee with seven voting members and one advisory member to be appointed by the Champaign County Board.

PRESENTED, ADOPTED, APPROVED, AND RECORDED this 24th day of February,  
A.D. 2011.

ATTEST

  
Gordy Hulken, County Clerk  
and ex-officio Clerk of the  
Champaign County Board

  
C. Pius Weibel, Chair  
Champaign County Board

RESOLUTION NO. 7797

RESOLUTION EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF WORK AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE SITE ASSESSMENT UPDATE COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, The Champaign County Board established the Site Assessment Update Committee with Resolution 7642; and

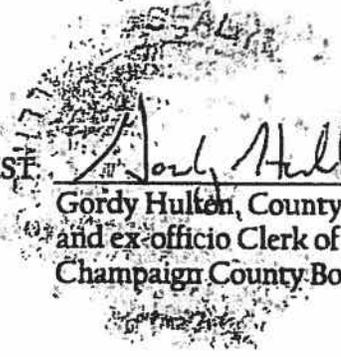
WHEREAS, Champaign County Board proposes to expand the scope of work of the Site Assessment Update Committee to include land evaluation instead of forming a separate Land Evaluation Committee and to add 1 or 2 members to include the necessary expertise on the expanded committee; and

WHEREAS, The expanded committee will be known as the "LESA Update Committee";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Champaign County Board hereby expands the scope of work and membership of the Site Assessment Update Committee to become the LESA Update Committee.

PRESENTED, ADOPTED, APPROVED, AND RECORDED this 23rd day of June, A.D. 2011.

ATTEST

  
Gordy Hulken  
Gordy Hulken, County Clerk  
and ex-officio Clerk of the  
Champaign County Board

C. Pius Weibel  
C. Pius Weibel, Chair  
Champaign County Board

Characteristic or Feature	Existing LESA	Update Draft LESA	Notes
<b>LAND EVALUATION PART</b>			
1. Total Land Evaluation points	100 points	SAME	
2. Source of soil productivity data (and date)	Circular 1156 (April 1978)	Bulletin 811 (January 2011)	
3. Method of comparing soils	Triple basis	SAME	
4. Number of relevant Agriculture Value Groups (AVG)	8	17	AVG= Agriculture Value Group
5. Range of Relative Values for all relevant AVGs	59 points	50 points	
6. Average points per AVG (Range of relative value divided by number of AVGs)	7.4 points	2.9 points	Fewer points per AVG means less difference in productivity for the soils in that AVG
<b>SITE ASSESSMENT PART</b>			
1. Total Site Assessment points	200 points	SAME	
2. Number of Site Assessment Factors	20	10	Six factors are identical (or nearly) to six exist. factors and one factor incorporates four exist. factors.
3. Emphasis of Site Assessment based on total possible points per each category:			
a. Feasibility and productivity of site for agriculture	9%	33%	
b. Suitability of site and surroundings for agriculture	38%	47%	
c. Development suitability (infrastructure & services avail.)	34%	20%	
d. Other environmental factors	19%	0%	One Update Committee member did not agree with this approach
4. Standard for compatibility with agriculture	Not specific	Agriculture	
5. Standard for "large" property	More than 100 acres	More than 25 acres	
6. Relevant radius for adjacent land use & zoning	1.5 miles	1.0 mile	One Update Committee member disagreed with a 1.0 mile radius
7. Explicit consideration of prime and best prime farmland	NO	YES	
8. Explicit consideration of environmental factors not related to agriculture feasibility	YES	NO	One Update Committee member did not agree with this approach
9. Correction for "creep" in future Site Assessment ratings	NO	YES	See the 2/22/12 Update Committee Agenda w/ memo
10. Penalty for multiple developments from the same tract of land	NO	YES	The penalty only applies to prime and best prime farmland
11. Explicit consideration of adjacent livestock management facilities	NO	YES	One Update Committee member did not agree with this approach
12. Equalized protection ratings (ie, the same range of points for "moderate" protection as for "high (including very high)" protection)	NO	YES	See the 3/7/12 Update Committee Agenda w/ memo
13. Relative score for a typical rural property	Lower	Higher	A higher score is more protective for farmland.

**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY  
LAND EVALUATION AND SITE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

**UPDATE**

**Draft dated March 7, 2012**

**Prepared by the  
Champaign County Regional Planning Commission**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### LESA Update Committee Members

- Kevin Donoho
- Debra Griest, Committee Chair
- Elizabeth R. Jones
- Kyle Krapf
- W. Steven Moser
- Patti Petrie
- Steve Stierwalt
- Bruce Stickers
- John Hall, Advisory Committee Member

### Project Staff

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>LAND EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>LE WORKSHEET.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>SITE ASSESSMENT.....</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>SA WORKSHEET.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>CALCULATING THE TOTAL LESA SCORE .....</b>	<b>20</b>

**Tables**

- 1 Summary of SA Factors**
- 2 Summary of SA Factors and Potential SA Points**
  
- A Composition of Agriculture Value Groups (in Appendix A)**

**Appendices**

- A Champaign County LESA Agriculture Value Groups**
- B Defined Terms**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment System (LESA) is a tool designed to provide County officials with a systematic and objective means to numerically rate a site or a parcel in terms of its agricultural importance.

### ***Intended Use of LESA***

The LESA is intended for the following applications within Champaign County:

- To assist County officials to evaluate the proposed conversion of farmland on a parcel or site in County rezoning cases that include farmland conversion to a non-agricultural land use.
- To assist in the review state and federal projects for compliance with the Illinois Farmland Preservation Act and the Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act in terms of their impact on important farmland.

The Land Evaluation (LE) portion of LESA is additionally intended as a means to determine the 'Best Prime Farmland' designation of a particular site or parcel.

The LESA is one of several tools intended to assist in making land use decisions; it should be used in conjunction with the *Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan*, and land use regulations including the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*, *Champaign County Subdivision Regulations*, and *Champaign County Stormwater Management Policy*.

### ***LESA Score Overview***

The LESA system is a numerical rating system that consists of two separate components: Land Evaluation (LE) and Site Assessment (SA).

The LE portion of LESA is based on the soils properties of a subject site. A single LE score is calculated, with a maximum LE score of 100 points possible.

The SA portion of LESA consists of ten non-soil factors shown in Table 1. Each SA factor identifies a separate and measurable condition. SA Factors 1, 2, and 3 are used to assess the importance of continuing the agricultural use of a site located in any unincorporated area. SA Factors 4 through 10 are additionally used to assess the importance of continuing the agricultural use of a site located outside of the Contiguous Urban Growth Area (CUGA). The maximum SA score possible for a site is 200 points.

Table 1. Summary of SA Factors

Applicable to all subject sites:	
1	size of site
2	Best Prime Farmland designation of site
	if Best Prime Farmland, site size and configuration
	if Prime Farmland, site size and configuration
3	whether site is located within the CUGA <sup>1</sup>
Applicable to sites located outside of the CUGA <sup>1</sup>	
4	percentage of site perimeter adjacent to agriculture principal uses
5	distance from site to nearest municipality
6	largest area of site in agricultural production over past five years
7	area of land zoned rural within one mile
8	area of agriculture principal uses within one mile
9	distance to nearest 10 non-farm dwellings
10	proximity to livestock management facility

**Note:**

<sup>1</sup> 'CUGA' is an acronym for the 'Contiguous Urban Growth Area'. The CUGA is a feature of the annually updated Land Use Management Area Map of the *Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan*. The CUGA is described in the Site Assessment section of LESA.

The total LESA score is the sum of the LE points and SA points for a particular site. The maximum total LESA score possible for a site is 300 points.

The higher the total LESA score, the more highly rated the site is to be protected for continued agricultural use. The total LESA score of a site signifies a rating for protection of a site as follows:

251 – 300	very high rating for protection
226 – 250	high rating for protection
151 – 225	moderate rating for protection
150 or below	low rating for protection

## LAND EVALUATION

The Land Evaluation (LE) portion of LESA is based on the ranking of Champaign County soils according to the following three soils classification systems.

- **Land Capability Classification**

A system of grouping soils developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Soils are grouped primarily on the basis of their capability to produce common cultivated crops and pasture plants without deteriorating over a long period of time. A detailed explanation of the Land Capability Classification system is provided in Part 622.02 of the USDA NRCS National Soil Survey Handbook.

- **Farmland Classification**

A soils classification system developed by the USDA NRCS to better manage and maintain the soils resource base of land most suitable for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. Farmland Classification identifies the soils series map units as: Prime Farmland; Farmland of Statewide Importance; or Farmland of Local Importance. A detailed explanation of the 'Farmland Classification' system, including the definition of Prime Farmland, is provided in Parts 622.03-622.04 of the USDA NRCS National Soil Survey Handbook.

- **Productivity Index of Illinois Soils Under Optimum Management**

The soils productivity index is based on data published in Table S2 of Bulletin 811, developed by the Office of Research, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). Bulletin 811 provides crop yields and productivity indices under an optimum level of management used by the top 16% of farmers in Illinois. The crop yields were updated in January, 2011 to reflect growing conditions from 2000 to 2009. Bulletin 811 Year 2011 crop yields and productivity indices for optimum management are maintained at the UIUC Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences.

### ***Agriculture Value Group***

The LE portion of LESA places the soils of Champaign County into several 'Agriculture Value Groups' ranging from the best to the worst, based on the three soils classifications systems indicated above, which generally gauge a site's suitability for crop production based on soil properties. A relative LE value is determined for each Agriculture Value Group, with the best group assigned a relative value of 100 and all other groups assigned lower relative values. Table A in Appendix A contains details regarding the composition of the Agriculture Value Groups.

### ***Calculating a Land Evaluation Score***

The Land Evaluation (LE) score is calculated separately from calculations to determine the Site Assessment (SA) score.

The LE score of a subject site is typically calculated by the Champaign County Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District office and provided to the Champaign County Zoning Office as part of the Natural Resource Report for a subject site.

**LE WORKSHEET**

The LE Worksheet provided on the following page can be used to calculate the LE score for a subject site.

The steps below describe how to calculate an LE score, based on the format of the LE Worksheet:

1. Outline the subject site to be rezoned, and overlay with a Champaign County soils map unit layer. Soils data produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey is available at the NRCS-operated 'Web Soil Survey.'

Soils data produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey, and Champaign County parcel data, is available at the Champaign County GIS Consortium website 'GIS Web Map – Public Interface for Champaign County, Illinois.'

2. In Column 1, list both the 'soil map unit' and 'soil series' (e.g., '154A Flanagan') for each soil located on the subject site.
3. From Table A in Appendix A, record the Agriculture Value Group for each soil in Column 2.
4. From Table A in Appendix A, record the LE for each Agriculture Value Group in Column 3.
5. Calculate the acreage of each soil within the subject site. Record the number of acres for each soil in Column 4.
6. For each soil, multiply the LE indicated in Column 3 by the number of acres indicated in Column 4. Record the product in Column 5.
7. Add up the Column 4 acres and record the total. Add up the products shown in Column 5 and record the total.
8. Divide the Column 5 total by the Column 4 total. The result is the LE Score for the subject site.

When calculating an LE score, a score ending in 0.49 or lower should be rounded down to the nearest whole number. A score ending in 0.5 or higher should be rounded up to the next whole number.

The maximum number of LE points possible for any subject site is 100.

LE WORKSHEET

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5
Map Unit Symbol and Soil Series	Agriculture Value Group	Group Relative LE	Acres	Product of Column 3 and Column 4
Totals:				
Column 5 total divided by Column 4 total :				
LE Score:				

**Example:** A 5.3 acre parcel that has five soil types: 134B Camden, 152A Drummer, 242A Kendall, 3107A Sawmill, and 570C2 Martinsville. Following the steps outlined to calculate the LE, the LE score for this parcel equals 88.

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5
Map Unit Symbol and Soil Series	Agriculture Value Group	Group Relative LE	Acres	Product of Column 3 and Column 4
242A Kendall	5	88	0.20	17.60
152A Drummer	2	100	0.83	83
570C2 Martinsville	13	75	0.01	0.75
134B Camden	9	83	1.64	136.12
3107A Sawmill	6	87	2.63	228.81
Totals:			5.31	466.28
Column 5 total divided by Column 4 total:				87.81
LE Score:				88

## SITE ASSESSMENT

The Site Assessment (SA) process provides a system for identifying important factors, other than soils, that affect the economic viability of a site for agricultural uses.

### SA Factors

The primary criteria used to identify SA factors are that each factor: 1) be relevant to continued agricultural use of a subject site within the rural areas of Champaign County; and 2) be measurable.

There are 10 SA Factors. Table 2 contains a summary of the 10 SA Factors and the point values assigned to each SA Factor.

Table 2. Summary of SA Factors and Potential SA Points

		Potential Points			
SA Factors that apply in all areas:			Subtotal	Total	
1	size of site	10	90	200	
2	a) Best Prime Farmland designation of site	30			
	b) if Best Prime Farmland, site size and configuration as of 1/1/2004	10			
	c) if Prime Farmland, site size and configuration as of 4/12/2011				
3	whether site is located within the CUGA <sup>1</sup>	40			
SA Factors that apply only outside of the CUGA <sup>1</sup>					
4	percentage of site perimeter adjacent to agriculture principal uses	20			
5	distance from site to nearest municipality	15			
6	highest area of site in agricultural production over past five years	15			
7	area of land zoned rural within one mile	10			
8	area of agriculture principal uses within one mile	20			
9	distance to nearest 10 non-farm dwellings	20			
10	proximity to a livestock management facility	10	110		

Note:

<sup>1</sup> 'CUGA' is an acronym for the 'Contiguous Urban Growth Area'.

SA Factors 1, 2 and 3 are applied to all subject sites. SA Factors 4 through 10 are additionally applied to subject sites located outside the Contiguous Urbana Growth Area (CUGA). CUGA is identified in the 'Land Use Management Areas Map' of the *Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan* as land designated for non-agricultural land use. The Land Use Management Areas Map is updated annually to reflect accurate municipal boundaries and to reflect any adjustments to the CUGA based on changes to areas served by public sanitary sewer.

The CUGA consists of:

- land designated for urban land use on the future land use map of an adopted municipal comprehensive land use plan, intergovernmental plan or special area plan, and located within the service area of a public sanitary sewer system with existing sewer service or sewer service planned to be available in the near-to mid-term (within approximately five years);
- land to be annexed by a municipality and located within the service area of a public sanitary sewer system with existing sewer service or sewer service planned to be available in the near-to mid-term (within approximately five years); or
- land surrounded by incorporated land or other urban land within the County.

### ***Calculating the SA Score***

The SA score of a subject site is calculated by planning staff of the Champaign County Planning and Zoning Department. The SA scoring is based on review of several sources of information which may typically include:

- Champaign County GIS Consortium data regarding parcels, corporate limits, zoning districts, digital orthophoto, etc.
- 'Land Use Management Map' of *Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan*
- field site inspection or windshield survey of site
- landowner interview

Each of the SA factors has point values, ranked on a 'best-to-worst' scale. The point values for each SA Factor are proportionately represented and no interpolation to an intermediate value should occur to obtain an SA Factor score.

The maximum number of possible SA score for a subject site or parcel is 200.

The process of calculating the SA score of a subject site involves: selecting the appropriate point value response for each SA Factor, and then adding the SA Factor points to obtain a total SA score.

The SA Worksheet beginning on the following page contains a description of each SA Factor and scoring instructions for each SA Factor.

SA WORKSHEET

<b>1</b>	What size is the subject site?	More than 25 acres	10 points	
		20.1 to 25 acres	8 points	
		15.1 to 20 acres	6 points	
		10.1 to 15 acres	4 points	
		5.01 to 10 acres	2 points	
		5 acres or less	0 points	

**Factor 1** considers that the size of the subject site has an impact on its long-term viability for agricultural purposes. The factor recognizes that the predominant row crop form of agriculture is generally more efficiently farmed on larger sites.

**Scoring Factor 1:** Determine the area of the subject site based on current Champaign County Assessor Office tax parcel size data or on a legal description of the subject site.

<b>2a</b>	Is the subject site Best Prime Farmland ?	Yes	30 points	
		No	0 points	

**Factor 2a** assigns value to a subject site if it is designated as Best Prime Farmland, consistent with the *Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan* goals, objectives and policies.

An estimated 96.6% of the County consists of Prime Farmland soils. "Best Prime Farmland" is a subset of Prime Farmland soils identified by Champaign County in order to differentiate among Prime Farmland soils. The definition of 'Best Prime Farmland' is provided in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*.

**Scoring Factor 2a:** Refer to the LE score of the subject site and to the "Best Prime Farmland" definition in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*.

<b>2b</b>	If the subject site is Best Prime Farmland, which one of the following statements is correct:	10 points	
	(1) The subject site is 15% or less of a larger real estate tax parcel (or multiple parcels) that existed on January 1, 2004. (Yes 0 points)		
	(2) The subject site is larger than 15% of a larger real estate tax parcel (or multiple parcels) that existed on January 1, 2004. (Yes 10 points)		
	(3) The subject site was not part of a larger tax parcel or parcels on January 1, 2004, and is 25 acres or less. (Yes 0 points)		
	(4) The subject site was not part of a larger tax parcel or parcels on January 1, 2004, and is larger than 25 acres. (Yes 10 points)		

**Factor 2b** assigns value to a subject site if it exceeds the lot size and configuration limits noted. The 15% limit and 25-acre lot size limit featured are arbitrary values selected to represent the general

**Factor 2b (continued)**

concern about the conversion and loss of best prime farmland. The *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance* has included a maximum lot size limit on Best Prime Farmland since July, 2004.

**Scoring Factor 2b:** Review subject site size and configuration based on Champaign County parcel identification tax maps for the year 2004 (also referred to as the 27<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Champaign County tax map atlas).

<b>2c</b>	<p>If the subject site is not Best Prime Farmland and is at least 51% Prime Farmland,</p> <p>which one of the following statements is correct:</p> <p>(1) The subject site is larger than 25 acres. (Yes 10 points)</p> <p>(2) All of the following statements are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The subject site is part of a larger parcel that existed on April 12, 2011.</li> <li>ii. Since April 12, 2011, a separate portion or portions of that larger parcel have been converted to a non-agricultural use as the result of a rezoning or special use.</li> <li>iii. In total, the area of the subject site and those areas converted to a non-agricultural use (as identified in item ii. above) is larger than 25 acres.</li> </ul> <p>(Yes 10 points)</p> <p>(3) Neither (1) or (2) above apply to the subject site. (Yes 0 points)</p>		
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**Factor 2c** assigns value to a subject site which is not Best Prime Farmland but which consists of at least 51% Prime Farmland and exceeds a 25-acre lot size and configuration as of April 12, 2011. The 25-acre size threshold is an arbitrary value selected to represent the general concern about the conversion and loss of Prime Farmland.

This factor awards 10 points to a subject site if it would result in conversion of more than 25 acres of Prime Farmland, or if the subject site would cumulatively contribute to the conversion of more than 25 acres of Prime Farmland on a larger parcel existing as of April 12, 2011.

**Scoring Factor 2c:** Assess whether the soils on the subject site are comprised of at least 51% Prime Farmland based on the 'Farmland Classification' column of Table A in Appendix A.

Review the lot size and configuration based on Champaign County parcel identification tax maps and digital orthophotography as of April 12, 2011. (April 12, 2011 is the date of the annual digital orthophotography available for the year 2011.)

<b>3</b>	Is the subject site located within the Contiguous Urban Growth Area?	no	40 points	_____
		yes	0 points	

**Factor 3** is a general measure of development pressures which tend to support the conversion of agricultural sites to urban uses.

The 'Land Use Management Areas Map' of the *Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan* specifies the location of the 'Contiguous Urban Growth Area' (CUGA). CUGA is land designated for non-agricultural land use, and consists of:

- land designated for urban land use on the future land use map of an adopted municipal comprehensive land use plan, intergovernmental plan or special area plan, and located within the service area of a public sanitary sewer system with existing sewer service or sewer service planned to be available in the near-to mid-term (within approximately five years);
- land to be annexed by a municipality and located within the service area of a public sanitary sewer system with existing sewer service or sewer service planned to be available in the near-to mid-term (within approximately five years); or
- land surrounded by incorporated land or other urban land within the County.

**Scoring Factor 3:** Review the CUGA boundaries of the current *Champaign County Land Resource Management Plan "Land Use Management Map"*.

**If the subject site is located within the CUGA, skip the remaining SA Factor questions and indicate a total SA score for only SA Factors 1, 2 and 3 at the end of the SA Worksheet.**

**Continue to answer the following SA Factor questions only if the subject site is located outside the CUGA . . .**

<b>4</b>	<p>Amount of the perimeter of a subject site that is adjacent to parcels with a principal use of agriculture.</p> <p>a) If the subject site is Best Prime Farmland and/or at least 51% Prime Farmland, the amount of the perimeter of the subject site that is adjacent to parcels with a principal use of agriculture that existed on April 12, 2011.</p> <p>b) If the subject site is less than 51% Prime Farmland, the amount of the perimeter of the subject site that is adjacent to parcels with a principal use of agriculture.</p>	<p>91 to 100% of perimeter</p> <p>81 to 90% of perimeter</p> <p>71 to 80% of perimeter</p> <p>61 to 70% of perimeter</p> <p>51 to 60% of perimeter</p> <p>41 to 50% of perimeter</p> <p>31 to 40% of perimeter</p> <p>21 to 30% of perimeter</p> <p>11 to 20% of perimeter</p> <p>1 to 10% of perimeter</p> <p>none</p>	<p>20 points</p> <p>18 points</p> <p>16 points</p> <p>14 points</p> <p>12 points</p> <p>10 points</p> <p>8 points</p> <p>6 points</p> <p>4 points</p> <p>2 points</p> <p>0 points</p>	
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**Factor 4** assesses the amount of the perimeter of the subject site that is adjacent to parcels that have the principal use of agriculture. The assessment is made based on principal use of each parcel that is adjacent to the subject site. The principal use of a parcel (as used in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*) represents the main use for which a lot is intended.

Additionally, for a subject site that is Best Prime Farmland and/or at least 51% Prime Farmland, Factor 4 includes the provision to not recognize any adjacent non-agricultural principal use established after a set date of April 12, 2011. (April 12, 2011 is the date of the annual digital orthophotography available for the year 2011.) This measure is intended to partially address the problem referred to as 'creeping effect' whereby case-by-case land use decisions may lower LESA scores on nearby sites, thereby justifying more land conversion decisions.

More points are assigned to a subject site that is surrounded by parcels with the principal use of agriculture.

**Scoring Factor 4:** Measure the perimeter of the subject site adjacent to parcels with a principal use of agriculture.

Defined terms relevant to the scoring of this factor include:

**AGRICULTURE:** The growing, harvesting and storing of crops including legumes, hay, grain, fruit and truck or vegetable crops, floriculture, horticulture, mushroom growing, orchards, forestry and the keeping, raising and feeding of livestock or poultry, including dairying, poultry, swine, sheep, beef cattle, pony and horse production, fur farms, and fish and wildlife farms; farm buildings used for growing, harvesting and preparing crop products for market, or for

**Scoring Factor 4 (continued)**

use on the farm; roadside stands, farm buildings for storing and protecting farm machinery and equipment from the elements, for housing livestock or poultry and for preparing livestock or poultry products for market; farm dwellings occupied by farm owners, operators, tenants or seasonal or year-round hired farm workers. It is intended by this definition to include within the definition of agriculture all types of agricultural operations, but to exclude therefrom industrial operations such as a grain elevator, canning or slaughterhouse, wherein agricultural products produced primarily by others are stored or processed.

**FARM DWELLING:** A dwelling occupied by a farm owner or operator, tenant farm worker, or hired farm worker. (In Champaign County, it is generally assumed that a dwelling located on a lot that is 35 acres or larger is a farm dwelling, unless information provided as part of the public record to the Zoning Board of Appeals indicates otherwise.)

**PRINCIPAL USE:** As used in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*, the main purpose for which land is designed, arranged, intended, or for which it is or may be occupied or maintained. (The primary purpose of a lot may not necessarily be the largest use on the lot in terms of the area of the lot that is occupied by that use and it may not necessarily be the use that generates the most income for the person who owns or resides on the lot.)

***Guidelines for measuring perimeter of subject site adjacent to parcels with principal use of agriculture:***

Adjacent property is property that touches or that is directly across a street, highway or interstate right-of-way or a rail road right-of-way from a subject site.

Measure the perimeter of the subject site that is adjacent to parcels that have a principal use of agriculture. Parcels with a principal use of agriculture are generally as follows:

- a. Any parcel that is 35 acres or larger whether or not there is a dwelling, with the exceptions noted below.
- b. Parcels that are less than 35 acres in area and that either have a farm dwelling or have no dwelling, with the exceptions noted below.
- c. Exceptions to the above are the following:
  - (1) Any parcel that is inside an incorporated municipality.
  - (2) Any parcel that is zoned Residential, Business, or Industrial on the Champaign County Zoning Map and contains a non-agricultural principal use.
  - (3) Any parcel or portion of a parcel on which a Special Use has been approved by the County except for a Rural Specialty Business or greenhouse.
  - (4) Institutional land that is not specifically used for production agriculture such as land owned by the University of Illinois but not in agricultural production or land owned by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District that is not in agricultural production.
  - (5) Any parcel or portion of a parcel considered as nonconforming use, as defined in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*.

<b>5</b>	Distance from the subject site to the nearest city or village limits.	more than 3 miles 1.51 to 3 miles within 1.5 miles adjacent	15 points 10 points 5 points 0 points	_____
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**Factor 5** awards higher points the further a subject site is from a city or village. Factor 5 is based on the general assumption that the further the subject site is from a municipality, the less chance there is of a nearby land use or development that would conflict with the agricultural land use of that subject site.

**Scoring Factor 5:** Measure outward from the property lines of the subject site to the nearest municipal boundary.

<b>6</b>	The highest percentage of the subject site in agricultural production in any of the last 5 years.	80 to 100% 60 to 79% 40 to 59% 20 to 39% less than 20%	15 points 11 points 7 points 3 points 0 points	
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**Factor 6** is intended to serve as a general indicator of the agricultural viability of a subject site.

**Scoring Factor 6:** Based on the most recent five years of annual digital orthophotography, estimate the highest percentage of area of the subject site in agricultural production. To obtain accurate information, the scoring of Factor 6 may additionally require a field site inspection, windshield survey of the subject site, or landowner interview.

Defined terms relevant to the scoring of this factor include:

**AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION:** The growing, harvesting, and storing of crops and the keeping, raising, and feeding of livestock or poultry and the buildings and land used in those activities, including:

- any farm dwelling,
- land taken out of production for purposes of government-sponsored agricultural programs, or
- land being used productively, such as woodlands for which there is a plan for managing the timber.

**FARM DWELLING:** A dwelling occupied by a farm owner or operator, tenant farm worker, or hired farm worker. (In Champaign County, it is generally assumed that a dwelling located on a lot that is 35 acres or larger is a farm dwelling, unless information provided as part of the public record to the Zoning Board of Appeals indicates otherwise.)

***Guidelines for estimating percentage of subject site in agricultural production in any of the last 5 years***

Based on review of digital orthophotography of the subject site for the most recent five years,

- a. If there is no structure on the subject site and the subject site appears to be in crop land, then count the entire subject site as in agricultural production.
- b. If only a street or road improvement is present on the subject site, and no wooded area is present on the subject site, then count the entire subject site as in agricultural production.
- c. Unless information is available to indicate otherwise,
  - (1) If the subject site is 35 acres or larger and has both a dwelling and what appears to be crop land, then count the entire site as agricultural production.
  - (2) If the subject site is less than 35 acres and has both a dwelling and what appears to be crop land, then count all of the subject site-- except for one acre, inclusive of the dwelling -- as in agricultural production. The one acre will be assumed to contain the well, septic, system, and any non-agricultural outbuildings.
- d. A part of the subject site that appears not to be crop land may be counted as in agricultural production only provided the landowner indicates that part of the subject site was or is not in production due to participation in a government-sponsored agricultural program, or due to implementation of a crop management plan.

<b>7</b>	Percentage of land zoned AG-1 Agriculture, AG-2 Agriculture or CR Conservation-Recreation within 1 mile of subject site.	91 to 100%	10 points	
		81 to 90%	9 points	
		71 to 80%	8 points	
		61 to 70%	7 points	
		51 to 60%	6 points	
		41 to 50%	5 points	
		31 to 40%	4 points	
		21 to 30%	3 points	
		11 to 20%	2 points	
		1 to 10%	1 points	
	none	0 points		

**Factor 7** measures the amount of land in the one-mile area surrounding the subject site zoned AG-1 Agriculture, AG-2 Agriculture, or CR Conservation-Recreation. These are the rural zoning districts within the County.

More points are assigned to a higher percentage of land zoned AG-1, AG-2, or CR within one mile of the subject site because:

- rural zoning districts are intended for agricultural land uses, and
- land within these districts is subject to use restrictions and limits on the density and location of non-agricultural land uses.

**Scoring Factor 7:** Measure the area zoned AG-1, AG-2, and CR outward one mile from the property lines of the subject site.

<p><b>8</b> Percentage of area within 1 mile of a subject site which consists of parcels with a principal use of agriculture.</p> <p>a) If the subject site is Best Prime Farmland and/or at least 51% Prime Farmland,</p> <p>the percentage of area within one mile of the subject site which consists of parcels with a principal use of agriculture that existed on April 12, 2011.</p> <p>b) If the subject site is less than 51% Prime Farmland,</p> <p>the percentage of area within one mile of the subject site which consists of parcels with a principal use of agriculture.</p>	91 to 100%	20 points	
	81 to 90%	18 points	
	71 to 80%	16 points	
	61 to 70%	14 points	
	51 to 60%	12 points	
	41 to 50%	10 points	
	31 to 40%	8 points	
	21 to 30%	6 points	
	11 to 20%	4 points	
	1 to 10%	2 points	
	none	0 points	

**Factor 8** is a major indicator of the agricultural character of the general area, based on the assumption that areas in the County dominated by agriculture are generally more viable for farm purposes. The assessment is made based on the principal use of parcels located within one mile of the subject site. The principal use of a parcel (as used in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*) represents the main use for which a lot is intended.

Additionally, for a subject site that is Best Prime Farmland and/or at least 51% Prime Farmland, Factor 8 includes the provision to not recognize any non-agricultural principal use established after a set date of April 12, 2011 within one mile of the subject site except for development that has been annexed by a municipality. (April 12, 2011 is the date of the annual digital orthophotography available for the year 2011.) This measure is intended to partially address the problem referred to as ‘creeping effect’ whereby case-by-case land use decisions may lower LESA scores on nearby sites, thereby justifying more land conversion decisions.

More points are assigned to a subject site with a greater percentage of area within one mile consisting of parcels with the principal use of agriculture.

**Scoring Factor 8:** Estimate the area of land within a one-mile distance outward from the property lines of the subject site that consists of parcels with the principal use of agriculture.

The defined terms shown below generally form the basis on which this factor is scored:

**AGRICULTURE:** The growing, harvesting and storing of crops including legumes, hay, grain, fruit and truck or vegetable crops, floriculture, horticulture, mushroom growing, orchards, forestry and the keeping, raising and feeding of livestock or poultry, including dairying, poultry, swine, sheep, beef cattle, pony and horse production, fur farms, and fish and wildlife farms; farm buildings used for growing, harvesting and preparing crop products for market, or for use on the farm; roadside stands, farm buildings for storing and protecting farm machinery and equipment from the elements, for housing livestock or poultry and for preparing livestock or poultry products for market; farm dwellings occupied by farm owners, operators, tenants or seasonal or year-round hired farm workers. It is intended by this definition to include within the definition of agriculture all types of agricultural operations, but to exclude therefrom industrial operations such as a grain elevator, canning or slaughterhouse, wherein agricultural products produced primarily by others are stored or processed.

**Scoring Factor 8 (continued)**

**FARM DWELLING:** A dwelling occupied by a farm owner or operator, tenant farm worker, or hired farm worker. (In Champaign County, it is generally assumed that a dwelling located on a lot that is 35 acres or larger is a farm dwelling, unless information provided as part of the public record to the Zoning Board of Appeals indicates otherwise.)

**PRINCIPAL USE:** As used in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*, the main purpose for which land is designed, arranged, intended, or for which it is or may be occupied or maintained. (The primary purpose of a lot may not necessarily be the largest use on the lot in terms of the area of the lot that is occupied by that use and it may not necessarily be the use that generates the most income for the person who owns or resides on the lot.)

***Guidelines for estimating area within one mile of subject site consisting of parcels with principal use of agriculture:***

Generally identify parcels with a principal use of agriculture as follows:

- a. Any parcel that is 35 acres or larger whether or not there is a dwelling, with the exceptions noted below.
- b. Parcels that are less than 35 acres in area and that either have a farm dwelling or have no dwelling, with the exceptions noted below.
- c. Exceptions to the above are the following:
  - (1) Any parcel that is inside an incorporated municipality.
  - (2) Any parcel that is zoned Residential, Business, or Industrial on the Champaign County Zoning Map and contains a non-agricultural principal use.
  - (3) Any parcel or portion of a parcel on which a Special Use has been approved by the County, except for a Rural Specialty Business or greenhouse.
  - (4) Institutional land that is not specifically used for production agriculture such as land owned by the University of Illinois but not in agricultural production, or land owned by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District that is not in agricultural production.
  - (5) Any parcel or portion of a parcel considered as nonconforming use, as defined in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*.

<b>9</b>	What is the distance from the subject site to the nearest 10 non-farm dwellings?	more than 1 mile	20 points	
		0.76 to 1 mile	18 points	
		0.51 to 0.75 mile	16 points	
		0.26 to 0.50 mile	14 points	
		0.01 to 0.25 mile	12 points	
		adjacent	0 points	

**Factor 9** considers the proximity of the nearest 10 non-farm dwellings as a general indicator of an existing land use incompatibility with production agriculture and an incompatibility with livestock facilities vis-a-vis the *Illinois Livestock Management Facilities Act (510 ILCS 77/ et seq.)*

In Champaign County, it is generally assumed that a dwelling located on a lot less than 35 acres is a non-farm dwelling, unless information provided as part of the public record to the Zoning Board of Appeals indicates that a dwelling is part of on-site agricultural operations or otherwise qualifying as a farm dwelling.

The defined term for Non-Farm Dwelling is shown below:

**NON-FARM DWELLING:** A dwelling that is not occupied by a farm owner or operator, tenant farm worker, or hired farm worker.

**Scoring Factor 9:** Measure the linear distance outward from the closest point on the property line of the subject site to the façade of the tenth nearest non-farm dwelling.

<b>10</b>	<p>a) How close is the subject site to a known livestock management facility of 400 or more animal units?</p> <p><i>Answer Parts b or c) only if the subject site is more than 1 mile from a known livestock management facility of 400 or more animal units.</i></p>	<p>adjacent to 0.25 mile    10 points                      0.26 to 0.5 mile    9 points                      0.51 to 0.75 mile    8 points                      0.76 to 1 mile    7 points                      more than 1 mile    n/a</p>	_____
	<p>b) How close is the subject site to a known livestock management facility of 200 - 399 animal units?</p> <p><i>Answer Part c) only if the subject site is more than 1 mile from a known livestock management facility of 200-399 animal units.</i></p>	<p>adjacent to 0.25 mile    7 points                      0.26 to 0.5 mile    6 points                      0.51 to 0.75 mile    5 points                      0.76 to 1 mile    4 points                      more than 1 mile    n/a</p>	
	<p>c) How close is the subject site to a known livestock management facility of 50 – 199 animal units?</p>	<p>adjacent to 0.25 mile    4 points                      0.26 to 0.5 mile    3 points                      0.51 to 0.75 mile    2 points                      0.76 to 1 mile    1 point                      more than 1 mile    0 points</p>	

**Factor 10** is a measure of the compatibility of the subject site for continued agricultural use based on its proximity to an existing nearby livestock management facility. More points are assigned to a subject site in closer proximity to a known livestock management facility.

**Scoring Factor 10:** A response may be based on data available from the Livestock Management Facilities Program, Illinois Department of Agriculture, actual site inspection, and/or landowner interview.

The maximum points possible for this factor is 10 points.

This is a 3-part factor. Part a) measures proximity of a subject site to a livestock management facility of 400 or more animal units. If the subject site is located more than one mile from such facility, then respond to Part b). Part b) measures proximity of a subject site to a livestock management facility of 200-399 animal units. If the subject site is located more than one mile from such facility, then respond to Part c).

<b>SA Total Score</b>	_____
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**CALCULATING THE TOTAL LESA SCORE**

The total LESA score is the sum of the LE points and SA points for a particular site or parcel. The maximum total LESA score possible for a site is 300 points.\*

LE Total	_____
SA Total	_____
Total LESA Score	_____

The higher the total LESA score, the more highly rated the subject site or parcel is to be protected for continued agricultural use. The total LESA score of a site signifies a rating for protection of the subject site or parcel as follows:

251 – 300	very high rating for protection
226 – 250	high rating for protection
151 – 225	moderate rating for protection
150 or below	low rating for protection

\* The maximum LE score possible for a site is 100 points.  
The maximum SA score possible for a site is 200 points.

Table A Composition of Agriculture Value Groups

Agriculture Value Group	Relative LE <sup>1</sup>	Land Capability Classification	Farmland Classification	Adjusted Soil Productivity Index <sup>2</sup>	Map Unit Symbol and Soil Series	# Acres Countywide	Percentage of County Land
1	100	1	Prime	98 - 100	154A Flanagan silt loam	100,553	15.74
					198A Elburn silt loam	17,641	2.76
					149A Brenton silt loam	16,465	2.58
2	100	2e, 2w	Prime, Prime1	98 - 100	152A Drummer silty clay loam	254,484	39.82
					679B Blackberry silt loam	4,985	0.78
3	94	1, 2e, 2w	Prime, Prime1	93 - 95	171B Catlin silt loam	17,385	2.72
					153A Pella silty clay loam	6,422	1.01
					623A Kishwaukee silt loam	3,105	0.49
					481A Raub silt loam	22,903	3.58
					663B Clare silt loam	8,391	1.31
4	91	1, 2e, 2w	Prime, Prime1	90 - 92	67A Harpster silty clay loam	2,153	0.34
					234A Sunbury silt loam	2,014	0.32
					56B Dana silt loam	22,838	3.57
					219A Millbrook silt loam	1,454	0.23
					490A Odell silt loam	1,269	0.20
					687B Penfield loam	2,327	0.36
					125A Selma loam	2,908	0.46
					148B2 Proctor silt loam	15	0.002
					232A Ashkum silty clay loam	29,196	4.57
					206A Thorp silt loam	2,641	0.41
5	88	2e, 2w	Prime, Prime1	87 - 89	146A Elliot silt loam	761	0.12
					242A Kendall silt loam	1,441	0.23
					3107A Sawmill silty clay loam	11,080	1.73
					56B2 Dana silt loam	136	0.02
6	87	3w	Prime2	87 - 89	330A Peotone silty clay loam	3,744	0.59
					236A Sabina silt loam	3,011	0.47
					102A La Hogue loam	1,423	0.22
					233B Birbeck silt loam	2,669	0.42
					235A Bryce silty clay	1,623	0.25
					134A Camden silt loam	14	0.002
					83 - 86		
7	85	1, 2e, 2w	Prime, Prime1	83 - 86	56B2 Dana silt loam	136	0.02
					330A Peotone silty clay loam	3,744	0.59
					236A Sabina silt loam	3,011	0.47

continued

Table A Composition of Agriculture Value Groups (AVG) continued

Agriculture Value Group	Relative LE <sup>1</sup>	Land Capability Classification	Farmland Classification	Adjusted Soil Productivity Index <sup>2</sup>	Map Unit Symbol and Soil Series	# Acres Countywide	Percentage of County Land
8	84	3e, 3w	Not Prime	89 - 84	637A+ Muskego silt loam	47	0.01
					687C2 Penfield loam	809	0.13
9	83	2e, 2w, 3w	Prime, Prime3	81 - 83	146B2 Elliott silty clay loam	28,484	4.46
					622B Wyanet silt loam	7,312	1.14
					134B Camdem silt loam	1,207	0.19
					680B Campton silt loam	1,651	0.26
					91A Swygert silty clay loam	73	0.01
					146C2 Elliott silty clay loam	1,485	0.23
					291B Xenia silt loam	4,837	0.76
448B Mona silt loam	245	0.04					
3473A Roszburg silt loam	982	0.15					
10	79	2e	Prime	78 - 79	387B Ockley silt loam	1,125	0.18
					570B Martinsville silt loam	708	0.11
11	78	3e	Statewide Importance	78	622C2 Wyanet silt loam	6,331	1.00
					131B Awin fine sandy loam	205	0.03
12	76	2e, 3e	Prime	74 - 76	223B2 Varna silt loam	8,040	1.26
					91B2 Swygert silty clay loam	2,791	0.44
					150B Onarga sandy loam	290	0.05
					223C2 Varna silt loam	3,116	0.49
					91C2 Swygert silty clay loam	411	0.06
					530B Ozaukee silt loam	509	0.08
					618B Senachwine silt loam	269	0.04
13	75	3e	Statewide Importance	74 - 75	322C2 Russell silt loam	1,930	0.30
					570C2 Martinsville loam	1,021	0.16
14	71	2e, 2w, 3w	Prime, Prime1, Prime2	68 - 73	23A Blount silt loam	804	0.13
					530C2 Ozaukee silt loam	411	0.06
					3302A Ambraw silty clay loam	2,794	0.44
					23B2 Blount silt loam	808	0.13

continued

Table A Composition of Agriculture Value Groups (AVG) continued

Agriculture Value Group	Relative LE <sup>1</sup>	Land Capability Classification	Farmland Classification	Adjusted Soil Productivity Index <sup>2</sup>	Map Unit Symbol and Soil Series	# Acres Countywide	Percentage of County Land
15	69	3e	Statewide Importance	69	530D2 Ozaukee silt loam	543	0.09
					618C2 Senachwine silt loam	850	0.13
16	66	4e	Statewide Importance, Not Prime	62 - 69	387C3 Ockley clay loam	301	0.05
					570D2 Martinsville loam	360	0.06
					223D3 Varna silt clay loam	2,826	0.44
					622D3 Wyanet clay loam	357	0.06
					618D2 Senachwine silt loam	632	0.10
					530E2 Ozaukee silt loam	382	0.06
17	50	6e, 7e	Not Prime	37 - 57	618E2 Senachwine silt loam	511	0.08
					618F Senachwine silt loam	398	0.06
					241C3 Chatsworth silty clay	36	0.01
					241D3 Chatsworth silty clay	285	0.05
18	n/a	n/a	Not Prime	n/a	533 Urban Land	1,607	0.25
					802B Orthents loamy undulating	4,290	0.67
					830 Landfill	115	0.02
					865 Gravel Pit	460	0.07
					W Water	1,319	0.21

Table A Notes

1. LE is the weighted, average designated Land Evaluation score assigned to each Agriculture Value Group.
2. The "Adjusted Productivity Index" is derived from Productivity Index data published in Table S2 of Bulletin 811. The Productivity Indices provided in Table S2 are for 0% to 2% slopes and slightly eroded conditions. Productivity indices were adjusted for increasing slope and erosion in accordance with Table S3 of Bulletin 811: "Decimal Adjustments in Crop Yields and Productivity Indices Under an Optimum Level of Management for Various Slope Groups and Erosion Phases."

**DEFINED TERMS**

**AGRICULTURE:** The growing, harvesting and storing of crops including legumes, hay, grain, fruit and truck or vegetable crops, floriculture, horticulture, mushroom growing, orchards, forestry and the keeping, raising and feeding of livestock or poultry, including dairying, poultry, swine, sheep, beef cattle, pony and horse production, fur farms, and fish and wildlife farms; farm buildings used for growing, harvesting and preparing crop products for market, or for use on the farm; roadside stands, farm buildings for storing and protecting farm machinery and equipment from the elements, for housing livestock or poultry and for preparing livestock or poultry products for market; farm dwellings occupied by farm owners, operators, tenants or seasonal or year-round hired farm workers. It is intended by this definition to include within the definition of agriculture all types of agricultural operations, but to exclude therefrom industrial operations such as a grain elevator, canning or slaughterhouse, wherein agricultural products produced primarily by others are stored or processed. Source: *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*.

The principal use of a parcel (as defined in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*) represents the main use for which a lot is intended. Guidelines for estimating whether a parcel has a principal use of agriculture are generally as follows:

- a. Any parcel that is 35 acres or larger whether or not there is a dwelling, with the exceptions noted below.
- b. Parcels that are less than 35 acres in area and that either have a farm dwelling or have no dwelling, with the exceptions noted below.
- c. Exceptions to the above are the following:
  - 1) Any parcel that is inside an incorporated municipality.
  - 2) Any parcel that is zoned Residential, Business, or Industrial on the *Champaign County Zoning Map* and contains a non-agricultural principal use.
  - 3) Any parcel or portion of parcels on which a Special Use has been approved by the County, except for a Rural Specialty Business or greenhouse.
  - 4) Institutional property that is not specifically used for production agriculture such as land owned by the University of Illinois but not in agricultural production or land owned by the Champaign County Forest Preserve District that is not in agricultural production.
  - 5) Any parcel or portion of a parcel considered as nonconforming use, as defined in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*.

**AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION:** The growing, harvesting, and storing of crops and the keeping, raising, and feeding of livestock or poultry and the buildings and land used in those activities, including: any farm dwelling; land taken out of production for purposes of government-sponsored agricultural programs; or land being used productively, such as woodlands for which there is a plan for managing the timber.

**ANIMAL UNITS:** A measure that is based on the number, species and size of an animal. The following table lists for selected species, the size and number of animals multiplied by a specified conversion factor equivalent to 50 animal units:

Species/Size	Conversion Factor	50 Animal Units
Swine over 55 lbs.	0.4	125
Swine under 55 lbs.	0.03	1,667
Dairy	1.4	35
Young dairy stock	0.6	84
Cattle	1.0	50
Sheep, lamb, goats	0.1	500
Horses	2.	25
Turkeys	0.02	2,500
Laying hens or broilers	0.01 – 0.03 *	1,667 -5,000 *
Ducks	0.02	2,500

Source: Livestock Management Facilities Program, Illinois Department of Agriculture  
Table Note: \* depends on type of livestock waste handling facility provided

**BEST PRIME FARMLAND:** A subset of Prime Farmland soils identified by the County, and as defined in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*.

**FARM DWELLING:** A dwelling occupied by a farm owner or operator, tenant farm worker, or hired farm worker. (In Champaign County, it is generally assumed that a dwelling located on a lot that is 35 acres or larger is a farm dwelling, unless information provided as part of the public record to the Zoning Board of Appeals indicates otherwise.)

**LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT FACILITY:** A 'livestock management facility' is any animal feeding operation, livestock shelter, or on-farm milking and accompanying milk-handling area. A 'livestock waste handling facility' is an immovable structure or device (except sewers) used for collecting, pumping, treating, or disposing of livestock waste or for the recovery of by-products from the livestock waste. Two or more livestock management facilities under common ownership, within ¼ mile of each other, and that share a common livestock waste handling facility are considered a single livestock management facility. (Illinois Livestock Management Facilities Act (510 ILCS 77/et seq.)

**NON-FARM DWELLING:** A dwelling that is not occupied by a farm owner or operator, tenant farm worker, or hired farm worker.

**PRINCIPAL USE:** As used in the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance*, the main purpose for which land is designed, arranged, intended, or for which it is or may be occupied or maintained. (The primary purpose of a lot may not necessarily be the largest use on the lot in terms of the area of the lot that is occupied by that use and it may not necessarily be the use that generates the most income for the person who owns or resides on the lot.)

**SUBJECT SITE:** The area of a parcel that is proposed for development. As an example, for a zoning case to request a rezoning, the subject site will be the area of the parcel or parcels that is proposed to be rezoned.

Champaign  
County  
Department of

PLANNING &  
ZONING

Brookens  
Administrative Center  
1776 E. Washington Street  
Urbana, Illinois 61802

(217) 384-3708

To: **Champaign County Board Committee of the Whole**

From: **John Hall, Director & Zoning Administrator**

Date: **March 26, 2012**

RE: **Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Update and Best Prime Farmland**

Request: **Request Approval from ELUC to Place a Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment Changing the Definition of Best Prime Farmland on the Zoning Board of Appeals Agenda for a Public Hearing**

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## **BACKGROUND**

At their March 7, 2012, meeting the LESA Update Committee voted unanimously (with one member absent) to recommend a new definition of Best Prime Farmland in addition to their Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Update Draft dated March 7, 2012.

The existing LESA System and other materials from the Update Committee meetings are under "Champaign County LESA Update" on the Champaign County RPC website ([www.ccrpc.org/planning/LESA\\_update](http://www.ccrpc.org/planning/LESA_update)).

Best Prime Farmland is a term recently added to the Zoning Ordinance and changing the definition will require a text amendment with public hearing at the Zoning Board of Appeals before it can be adopted by the County Board. That text amendment should occur at the same time as the public hearing for the Update Draft LESA.

## **PROPOSED DEFINITION OF BEST PRIME FARMLAND**

The Update Committee recommends the following revised definition of Best Prime Farmland that was documented in a 3/7/2012 handout by Update Committee member Kevin Donoho:

**Best Prime Farmland is Prime Farmland soils that under optimum management have 91% to 100% of the highest soil productivities in Champaign County, on average, as reported in the Bulletin 811 Optimum Crop Productivity Ratings for Illinois Soils. Best Prime Farmland consists of the following:**

- a) **Soils identified as Agriculture Value Groups 1, 2, 3 and/or 4 in the Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System;**
- b) **Soils that, in combination on a subject site, have an average LE of 91 or higher, as determined by the Champaign County LESA System; or**
- c) **Any development site that includes a significant amount (10% or more of the area proposed to be developed) of Agriculture Value Groups 1, 2, 3 and/or 4 soils.**

The existing definition of Best Prime Farmland is defined in the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Soils identified in the Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System with a Relative Value of 85 or greater and tracts of land with mixed soils that have a LESA Land Evaluation rating of 85 or greater.

**BRIEF COMPARISON OF EXISTING DEFINITION OF BEST PRIME FARMLAND WITH THE PROPOSED DEFINITION OF BEST PRIME FARMLAND**

Attachment A is a brief comparison of the Existing Best Prime Farmland (BPF) with the proposed Best Prime Farmland (BPF). In general the Proposed BPF compares to the Existing BPF as follows:

1. The Proposed Best Prime Farmland (BPF) does not include any soil that is less than 90% of the productivity of the highest soil productivity in the County.
2. The Proposed BPF will affect 3.7% less land area. Approximately 24,165 acres of land will no longer be burdened with the added regulations that come with being identified as Best Prime Farmland.
3. The Proposed BPF puts 88% less BPF at risk of being lost when combined with other non-BPF soils. The Proposed BPF applies when there is only 10% of a site that is BPF and so there is much less BPF that can be lost. The averaging of LE that happens under the Current BPF can result in a site that is more than 10% BPF not being considered BPF if the average LE of the site is less than 85.

**PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT**

The proposed text amendment is not attached but will consist of the following:

1. Changing the Zoning Ordinance definition of “best prime farmland” to the proposed definition.
2. In general, replacing any reference in the Zoning Ordinance to “...Land Evaluation score of greater than or equal to 85 on the COUNTY’s Land Evaluation and Site Assessment System...” to “BEST PRIME FARMLAND”. This will also generally require some additional minor grammatical changes. Changes are only required in Footnote 13 of Section. 5.3 on p. 5-18 and subsection. 5.4.4 on p. 5-21.

**AMENDING THE LAND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) also includes the current definition of “best prime farmland”. If the Board amends the Zoning Ordinance definition of “best prime farmland” it should also amend the LRMP at the next annual update.

**ATTACHMENT**

- A Brief Comparison of Existing Best Prime Farmland to Proposed Best Prime Farmland**

**Attachment A. Brief Comparison of Existing Best Prime Farmland to Proposed Best Prime Farmland**      **DRAFT**      **March 26, 2012**

Characteristic or Feature	Existing BPF	Proposed BPF	Notes
1. Range of average soil productivity identified as Best Prime Farmland as a percent of the highest soil productivity in the County based on <u>Agriculture Value Groups</u>	85% to 100%	91% to 100%	BPF= Best Prime Farmland
2. Lowest average soil productivity actually included in Best Prime Farmland as a percent of the highest soil productivity in the County based on <u>individual soils</u>	82%*	90%**	*see Attachment C to the 12/29/11 memo for the 1/4/12 Update Committee meeting  ** see Handout 1 of the 11/16/11 Update Committee meeting
3. Number of Agriculture Value Groups included as Best Prime Farmland	4	4	
4. Acres of land directly identified as Best Prime Farmland (percent of total County area)	511,461 acres (80.0%)	487,296 acres (76.3%)	See Attachment B to the Update Committee Agenda of 1/4/2012
5. Acres of Best Prime Farmland at risk of being lost if combined with non-BPF	66,945 acres*	14,708 acres**	* See Attachment B to the Update Committee Agenda of 1/4/2012  ** see Attachment C to Memo#2 dated 2/14/2012 for the 2/22/2012 Update Committee meeting.