

**APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE RESOURCE CRITERIA AND RATING SYSTEM**

## **Example Resource Criteria and Rating System**

The following are sample criteria, based upon the guiding principles for open space developed as part of this plan, for Ogden's use in creating a system in evaluating and scoring parcels in order to prioritize them for inclusion in a permanent protection program. Many communities throughout New York State have developed specific resource protection programs and have utilized similar strategies. Typically, such screening or rating systems are developed in conjunction with a funded program for acquiring open space resources and are used to apply for federal, state, and county resource protection funds to assist municipalities in leveraging local dollars for open space protection.

The rating system enables the town to be strategic in its allocation of program funds by giving the town a tool to both proactively identify parcels and resources that meet the goals of the open space program; and to analyze the merits of individual projects and opportunities as they present themselves. It must be noted that the criteria for a parcel rating system are unique to an individual community and to the community's priorities and goals with respect to its open space resources. The following sample system is a starting point for Ogden. Moving forward, should the town wish to undertake a funded program for acquiring open space resources, a more detailed and specific rating system may need to be developed to reflect the town's protection priorities. In addition, as criteria are developed and utilized, more detailed site-specific analyses may be required to further refine the evaluation and protection of resources.

## **EXAMPLE CRITERIA AND RATING SYSTEM**

General criteria for rating parcels identified for open space protection:

- ❖ Groundwater and watershed protection potential
- ❖ Protection of ecologically significant habitat
- ❖ Proximity to other protected lands
- ❖ Farmland preservation
- ❖ Historic/cultural/scenic qualities

In order to rank each parcel, a total number scoring system could be devised. For example, each of the criteria above could be ranked on a scale of 0 to 3, with 0 indicating that the parcel doesn't meet the criteria at all and 3 indicating that it meets the criteria completely. Using this scoring system, the maximum score each parcel can obtain is 27 points. In addition to the total score, the town can establish a baseline: those parcels scoring a 14 or higher will be considered priority projects; those parcels scoring below a 14 can still be considered for protection, as determined by the town.

### **Example of how to determine and assign value to the criteria**

1. Potential to Offset Impact of Development – To determine this, calculations can be based on maximum residential dwelling units permitted by current zoning of the zoning ordinance and/or subdivision and land development regulations. For land zoned for non-residential purposes, an estimate of the intensity of development could be used.
2. Groundwater and Watershed Protection – Parcel contains significant freshwater wetlands or significantly protects public and/or private water supply sources.
3. Ecologically Significant Habitat – Parcel contains endangered or threatened species or species of State interest or is in close proximity to areas that contain such species. Parcel is contiguous or in close proximity to habitat corridors. Parcel contains unique, unusual, or important wildlife habitat. Parcel will help support/create the greenbelt concept identified in the open space plan.
4. Historic / Cultural / Scenic / Neighborhood Value – Parcel has significant historical or cultural value. Parcel has significant scenic views or contains distinctive scenic landscape features. Parcel is

adjacent to or in close proximity to neighborhoods that lack significant open space or recreation areas.

5. Potential for Recreational Use – Parcel contains areas that are suitable for recreational use such as ball fields, trails, boating, or fishing, or other active or passive recreational activities.

**EXAMPLE POINT SYSTEM**

CRITERIA	NUMBER OF POINTS			
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Criteria A: Water protection	Minimal to none	Low	Medium	High
Criteria B: Ecological Habitat	Degraded habitat	Average habitat	Above average habitat	High quality habitat
Criteria C: Proximity to protected lands	More than half mile away	Quarter to a half mile	Less than a quarter mile	Abutting or provides linkage
Criteria D: Farmland preservation	None	Inactive farmland	Active farm—less than 25 acres	Active farm—greater than 25 acres
Criteria E: Historic/cultural/scenic value	Minimal of None	Low	Medium	High

**OTHER CRITERIA OGDEN MAY WANT TO CONSIDER:**

- ❖ Total acreage/size of parcel— how much land will be protected?
- ❖ The potential to offset the impact of residential development.
- ❖ The ability for the town to leverage funding to help protect the parcel.
- ❖ The potential for recreational use, extending trail systems, or linking to existing recreational areas.
- ❖ Specific resources that the town wants to protect (i.e., the Salmon River, specific farms, etc.).
- ❖ Protection of important roadside views.

This is not an exhaustive list. As stated previously, should the town wish to develop this into a useful tool for identifying and prioritizing parcels for open space protection, a more detailed and specific rating system should be developed to reflect the town’s protection priorities, open space goals, and the community’s vision for the future.