

# Appendix D: Funding and Finance Strategy

Implementing the recommendations of this Plan will require a combination of funding sources that include local, state, federal, and private money. Fortunately, the benefits of protected greenways and open spaces in general are many and varied, thus allowing the Region 2000 programs to access money for a variety of purposes including water quality, stormwater mitigation, recreation, air quality, and alternate transportation. Competition is almost always stiff for State and Federal funds, so it becomes imperative that the regional government and local governments work together to develop local sources in addition to any expected State or Federal assistance. For this program to be successful, it will almost certainly have to depend on a substantial, continued local revenue stream.

It is important that Region 2000 fully evaluate its available options and develop a funding strategy that can meet community needs, maximize local resources, and leverage outside funding. Financing will be needed to administer the continued planning and implementation process; acquire parcels or easements; and manage and maintain facilities in the Greenways and Blueways System. This appendix reviews a host of potential strategies that include: a stormwater utility fee, impact fees/ developer dedications, sales taxes, property taxes, and bonds.

An estimate for the funding necessary to fully execute this Plan is not included, and there is no attempt to predict the amount of funding that might be generated by the various financing mechanisms. Resolving these issues, as well as completing further evaluations of public opinion regarding the most palatable funding strategy, will have to be the focus of ongoing Region 2000 Greenways and Blueways Program efforts. This document presents the fundamental ideas and strategies that will inform the developing discussions about a Region 2000 Greenways and Blueways financing strategy.

## Stormwater Utility Fees

Stormwater charges are typically based on an estimate of the amount of impervious surface on a user's property. Impervious surfaces (such as rooftops and paved areas) increase both the amount and rate of stormwater runoff compared to natural conditions; such surfaces cause runoff that directly or indirectly discharges into public storm drainage facilities and creates a need for stormwater management services. Thus, users with

## Introduction

## Review of Funding Mechanisms

more impervious surface are charged more for stormwater service than users with less impervious surface.

The stormwater utility fee-structures frequently relate non-residential customer charges to an equivalent residential user (ERU), or the typical charges incurred by a single-family residential unit. Thus, a commercial business with 10 times the amount of impervious area as a typical residential property would pay for 10 ERUs or 10 times the amount that a residential customer would be charged. Single-family residential customers are typically charged a uniform monthly fee per ERU, although some communities do vary the charges based on the footprint of the home. Multifamily users may be charged the same rate per dwelling unit as a single-family user, charged a fraction of the single-family rate per dwelling unit, or charged based on the measured impervious surface of their building.

The rates, fees, and charges collected for stormwater management services may not exceed the costs incurred to provide these services. The costs that may be recovered through the stormwater rates, fees, and charges include any costs necessary to assure that all aspects of stormwater quality and quantity are managed in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and rules. Conservation lands, such as greenways, may be purchased with stormwater fees, if the property in question is used to mitigate floodwater or filter pollutants.

The City of Lenexa, Kansas has a “Rain to Recreation” program designed to connect park-like detention basins that process stormwater and meet recreation needs. The system uses natural filtration processes to improve water quality. Stream buffers along the connecting corridors provide recreational opportunities in the form of trails. The program is expected to cost \$82.6 million over 10 years compared to the \$99 million estimated to maintain the current, traditional stormwater system. In 2000, voters approved a 1/8-cent sales tax for stormwater/recreation improvements. This tax will cost residents about \$20 per year. Additionally, the city levy’s a stormwater utility fee of \$30 per household. Commercial and industrial utility charges are based upon the amount of impervious surface on the property (\$2.50 per 2,750 square feet per month).

### Impact Fees

Impact fees, which are also known as capital contributions, facilities fees, or system development charges, are typically collected from developers or property owners at the time of building permit issuance to pay for capital improvements that provide capacity to serve new growth. The intent of these fees is to avoid burdening existing customers with the costs of providing this additional capacity (“growth pays its own way”). Open space/ Park and Recreation impact fees are designed to reflect the costs incurred to provide sufficient capacity in the system to meet the additional needs. In Region 2000's case, this additional capacity could be in the form of new or extended greenways for exercise and recreation. They

## User Fees and Charges

could also be in the form of new canoe/kayak access points along blueways. The charges for capacity impacts are set in a fee schedule applied uniformly to all new development. Utilities strive to ensure that impact fees reflect customers' demands on the system. Communities that institute impact fees must develop a sound financial model that enables policy makers to justify fee levels for different user groups, and to ensure that revenues generated meet (but do not exceed) the needs of development. Factors used to determine an appropriate impact fee amount can include: lot size, number of occupants, types of subdivision improvements, and other applicable measures.

If Region 2000 is interested in pursuing the collection of impact fees for the development of greenways and blueways, enabling legislation will be required (if it does not already exist). Virginia is a "Dillon's Rule" state and as such, its local governments need specific State-level authorization to collect these fees. Securing this authorization may require substantial research and preparation of well defended reasoning for the need of this authorization, including descriptions of expected implementation strategies. The Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association suggests that requests for the authorization of new impact fees, should clearly demonstrate consistency between this fee and the goals articulated in the communities comprehensive plan.

## Developer Dedications

A developer dedication can require permit applicants to set aside a portion of their site as open space for future greenway development. Development approval, in these cases, is conditional upon the site plan preserving the requisite amount of undeveloped space. The use of dedications assures that a specific amount of land is preserved, however it is difficult to ensure that the land will meet the intended needs. Oftentimes, the land set-aside as a dedication includes wetlands, steep slopes or other features that render the set-aside land as unbuildable anyway. Protecting these lands is consistent with the goals of conservation, because they tend to be ecologically sensitive and their protection frequently has water quality benefits. Ecologically sensitive lands are not always suitable for passive recreation, however, and their protection may fall short of offsetting the anticipated need for increased recreational space.

## In-Lieu-Of Fees

As an alternative to requiring developers to dedicate a portion of their site, some communities provide developers a choice of paying a front-end charge for off-site land protection. Payment is a condition of development approval. This payment is designed to cover the cost of the off-site land acquisition or the development's proportionate share of the cost of a regional parcel serving a larger area. Some communities prefer in-lieu fees. This alternative can and provide staff more flexibility to protect property worthy of protection rather than accept marginal land that meets only the quantitative requirements of a developer dedication.

## Taxing Options

### Mitigation Banking

Mitigation banking presents another opportunity for furthering the objectives of the Region 2000 Greenways and Blueways Plan. Developers are required by federal legislation to mitigate the impacts of their development on wetlands, streams, or animal habitat. For every portion of wetland, streambed, or habitat that their development impacts, the developer is typically required to create or restore other wetlands, habitats, or waterways to mitigate the impact of their work. Developers can generally mitigate on-site or nearby, within the same basin or watershed.

If a mitigation bank is available, developers can sometimes satisfy this requirement by purchasing credits from the bank towards a collective restoration project that satisfies a more regional mitigation need. Mitigation banks have been developed by public, nonprofit, and private entities. In exchange for preserving the land, the banks get permission from the State or Federal government to sell mitigation credits to developers wanting to participate in off-site mitigation projects. Public and nonprofit mitigation banks generally use the funds generated from the sale of the credits to fund the purchase of additional land for preservation and/or for the restoration of the lands to a natural state.

The fees and exactions mentioned above generally must show a particular benefit to the users of the property that is paying the assessment. Taxes, on the other hand can be pooled to provide general benefit to the community as a whole. Various forms of common taxes are described on the next several pages. It is important to note that while taxes can create a solid funding base that can be used to fund annual capital and operating costs, there is always political pressure to keep taxes from increasing.

### Sales Tax

Currently, the Virginia sales tax is four and one-half cents per dollar (4.5 percent) of the sale of general items and 4 percent for grocery items. A 1% statewide local tax is included in that percentage and is distributed back to the localities for use in their general funds. The localities are not authorized to charge an additional sales tax rate. Any increase in the sales tax, even if applying to a single county, must gain approval of the state legislature. Dedicated sales taxes can generate considerable sums of money, are easily administered, and tap tourism expenditures. Objections to the sales tax generally revolve around the regressive nature of the tax and the reduction of funds in an economic slowdown. These objections can be alleviated by exempting basic necessity items such as food and drugs. In doing this, the sales tax becomes a consumptive tax.

### Property Tax

Property taxes are assessments charged to real property owners based on a percentage (millage rate) of the assessed property value. These taxes generally support a significant portion of a county's or municipality's non-public enterprise activities. The revenues from property taxes can

also be used for public enterprise projects and to pay debt service on general obligation bonds issued to finance land and water conservation acquisitions. Because communities are limited in the total level of the millage rate, use of property taxes to fund land acquisition could limit the county's or a municipality's ability to raise funds for other activities. Property taxes can provide a steady stream of financing while broadly distributing the tax burden. In other parts of the country, this mechanism has been popular with voters, as long as the increase is restricted to parks and open space. Please note, other public agencies compete vigorously for these funds, and taxpayers are generally concerned about high property tax rates.

### Deed Tax

When property ownership is transferred and a new deed is recorded, a tax is levied on the value of the transition. Virginia has a statewide tax of 1.5 percent for deed transfers and allows an additional 0.5 percent local tax on deed transfers. It is common in many states to use a portion of this tax to pay for land protection activities.

### Excise Taxes

Excise taxes are taxes on specific goods and services. These taxes require special legislation and the use of the funds generated through the tax are limited to specific uses. Examples include lodging, food, and beverage taxes that generate funds for promotion of tourism, and the gas tax that generates revenues for transportation related activities.

Bonds and loans can be used to finance capital improvements. The cost of the improvements is borrowed through the issuance of bonds or a loan and the costs of repayment are spread into the future for current and future beneficiaries to bear. Financing charges are accrued, however, and voter approval is usually required. There must be a source of funding (for the payment of the resulting debt service on the loan or bonds) tied to the issuance of a bond or loan.

### Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds are bonds that are secured by a pledge of the revenues of the public enterprise or local government. The entity issuing bonds pledges to generate sufficient revenue annually to cover the program's operating costs and meet the annual debt service requirements (principal and interest payment) times a factor, termed the coverage factor, which is designed to provide additional protection to the bondholders. The coverage factor generally ranges from 110 to 150 percent of the utility's annual or maximum annual debt service requirement in the current or any future year. Revenue bonds are not constrained by the debt ceilings of general obligation bonds, but they are more expensive than general obligation bonds.

## Borrowing

## General Obligation Bonds

Cities, counties, and service districts generally are able to issue general obligation (G.O.) bonds that are secured by the full faith and credit of the entity. In this case, the local government issuing the bonds pledges to raise its property taxes, or use any other sources of revenue, to generate sufficient revenues to make the debt service payments on the bonds. A general obligation pledge is stronger than a revenue pledge, and thus may carry a lower interest rate than a revenue bond. Frequently, when local governments issue G.O. bonds for public enterprise improvements, the public enterprise will make the debt service payments on the G.O. bonds with revenues generated through the public entity's rates and charges. However, if those rate revenues are insufficient to make the debt payment, the local government is obligated to raise taxes or use other sources of revenue to make the payments. G.O. bonds distribute the costs of open space acquisition and make funds available for immediate purchases. Voter approval is required.

## Special Assessment Bonds

Special assessment bonds are secured by a lien on the property that benefits by the improvements funded with the special assessment bond proceeds. Debt service payments on these bonds are funded through annual assessments to the property owners in the assessment area.

## State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loans

Initially funded with federal and state money, and continued by funds generated by repayment of earlier loans, State Revolving Funds (SRFs) provide low-interest loans for local governments to fund water pollution control and water supply related projects including many watershed management activities. These loans typically require a revenue pledge, like a revenue bond, but carry a below market interest rate and limited term for debt repayment (20 years).

## Installment Purchase Financing

As an alternative to debt financing of capital improvements, communities can execute installment/lease purchase contracts for improvements. This type of financing is typically used for relatively small projects that the seller or a financial institution is willing to finance or when upfront funds are unavailable. In a lease purchase contract the community leases the property or improvement from the seller or financial institution. The lease is paid in installments that include principal, interest, and associated costs. Upon completion of the lease period, the community owns the property or improvement. While lease purchase contracts are similar to a bond, this arrangement allows the community to acquire the property or improvement without issuing debt. These instruments, however, are more costly than issuing debt.

### Virginia Land Conservation Fund

A funding entity used to conserve certain categories of special land. Those categories are open spaces and parks, natural areas, historic areas, and farmland and forest preservation. A portion of the fund may be used for developing properties for public use. Matching grants provided to holders and public bodies for acquisition are generally used only for current projects; only in exceptional cases (where considerable public benefit and compelling, unusual financial need and circumstances have been shown) might grants be made for already complete purchases.

### Virginia Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund

This fund helps landowners cover costs of conveying conservation easements and the purchase of all or part of the value of the easements. Conservation easements preserve farmland, forestland, and natural and recreational areas by restricting intensive uses, such as development and mining, which would alter the conservation values of the land. Costs that the fund may reimburse include:

- legal costs
- appraisal and other costs and
- all or part of the easement's value.

Priority may be given to applicants who seek cost re-reimbursement only, demonstrate financial need, or cover a family-owned or -operated farm.

### Virginia Outdoors Fund

The Department of Conservation and Recreation administers a grant-in-aid program for acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. These grants are for public bodies only. Towns, cities, counties, regional park authorities and state agencies may apply for 50 percent matching fund assistance from the Virginia Outdoors Fund. When available, these funds are provided through state general fund appropriations and from federal apportionment from the Land and Water Conservation Fund meant for the acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation areas. This is a reimbursement program meaning that the sponsoring agency should be capable of financing the project while requesting periodic reimbursement.

### Virginia Recreational Trails Fund

The Virginia Recreational Trails Fund provides grants for developing and maintaining recreational trails and trail-related facilities. Funding may be provided to private organizations, local governments, other government entities, and federal agencies if teamed with private trail groups and organizations.

### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The CREP aims to improve Virginia's water quality and wildlife habitat by offering rental payments to farmers who voluntarily restore riparian buffers, filter strips and wetlands through the installation of approved conser-

vation practices. Another CREP goal is to establish 8,000 acres of perpetual conservation or open space easement statewide. State cost-share payments are administered through local Soil and Water Conservation District offices. The state will reimburse up to 25 percent, not to exceed \$200 per acre of restored buffer or wetland, of conservation practice costs deemed eligible by the local soil and water conservation district. There is also a 25 percent state income tax credit for out-of-pocket expenses, thus further reducing the landowner's cost. Federal reimbursement is made through the Farm Service Agency for up to 50 percent of a participant's eligible expenses for implementing best management practices, such as fencing or alternative watering systems.

### American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP)

This program provides funding for battlefield preservation projects. Individual project funding has ranged from \$1,000 to more than \$115,000. The average grant is about \$25,000. Although not required, the ABPP encourages matching funds or in-kind services. The program supports partnership projects that lead to the protection of battlefield land and sites associated with battlefields. The ABPP does not fund land acquisition or capital improvement projects. Projects associated with lands already owned by the National Park Service are not eligible for ABPP grants.

Types of projects that support this goal may include:

- Historical research
- Cultural resources surveys
- Archaeological surveys
- National Register of Historic Places documentation and nominations
- Assessment of the condition of battlefields and potential threats to their continued survival
- Battlefield acquisition plans and preservation plans
- Local land use strategies for sensitive planning
- Technical assistance for organizations and governments needing help to protect battlefields
- Public education

### Civil War Battlefield Acquisition Grants

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies are available to help states and localities acquire and preserve threatened Civil War battlefield land. The grants are awarded on to state and local governments. Private, nonprofit organizations can seek to acquire these funds by applying in partnership with a state or local government agency. In Virginia, the designated agency partner is DCR.

LWCF grants will be awarded through a competitive process over three years. Each grant requires a dollar-for-dollar non-federal match. They are available for the fee simple acquisition of land, or for the acquisition of permanent, protective interests in land as listed by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, Civil War battlefields. Greater consideration is given to proposals for acquisition of endangered priority I or II battlefield lands.

## Historic Resources (DHR) Incentives and Grants

Contact the DHR for historic resources incentives and grants, including easements, archaeological threatened sites, local government grants, survey and planning cost-share, rehabilitation tax credits, state grants, and nonstate grants.

## Water Quality Improvement Fund (WQIF)

WQIF is to provide water quality improvement grants to local governments, soil and water conservation districts and individuals for point and nonpoint source pollution prevention, reduction and control programs. This includes riparian open-space and conservation easements. The fund received no money for fiscal year 2002, hence no request for proposals was issued.

As stated in the introduction, federal and state sources of funding cannot be expected to carry all of the burden of financing the Region 2000 Greenways and Blueways System. A dedicated, local financing strategy will be imperative. Federal programs can be an important part of the mix, however and fortunately, there are a number of federal programs that offer funding for state and local programs that seek to conserve land and water resources, provide recreational opportunities, or to mitigate the effects of stormwaters. Most programs require state or local matching funds. Project eligibility requirements can be quite stringent.

## CARA

Federal conservation funds are available through the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA). CARA will provide \$12 billion over six years beginning in FY 2002. Funding for each CARA category is subject to annual appropriations, however minimum levels have been guaranteed. A sample of federal funding sources is discussed below. Additional programs are described on the EPA website (<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/wacademy/fund.html>).

## Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQUIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQUIP) is a federal program authorized in the 1996 Farm Bill that provides assistance to agricultural producers in complying with federal, state, and other environmental laws. Assistance provided through this program may be in the form of technical, cost-sharing, financial incentives, and producer education related to a broad range of soil, water, air, wildlife, and related natural resource concerns on North Carolina's farms and ranches.

The EQUIP assistance programs are available to crop, forage and forest products producers as well as wetlands and wildlife landowners who choose to enter into 5- and 10-year contracts based on conservation plans for their operations. These conservation plans may include a combination of structural, vegetative, and land management components. The program prioritization is led, coordinated, and implemented on the local level.

# Federal Sources of Funding

## Farmland Protection Program

The federal Farmland Protection Program (FPP) was created in the 1996 Farm Bill. This program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and provides federal matching funds for state and local farmland protection efforts. Funds are used to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses. Through this program the USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value to acquire conservation easements or other interests from farmland owners. To be eligible for funding, a state, county or local jurisdiction must have a complementary program of funding for the purchase of conservation easements, and grants are awarded competitively through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). (For more information visit <http://www.info.usda.gov/nrcs/fpcp/fpp.htm>).

## Hazardous Mitigation Grant Program

This program provides financial assistance to state and local governments for projects that reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from the effects of natural hazards. The grant program has 75 percent federal and 25 percent local contribution. The nonfederal share may be met with local cash contributions, in-kind services, or certain other grants such as Community Development Block Grants. The Federal Emergency Management Agency makes the final decisions on project eligibility, but the state agencies administer the program. Eligible projects include acquisition of property, retrofitting of buildings, development of standards with implementation as an essential component, and structural hazard control or protection measures such as dams and sea walls.

## Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is the largest source of federal money for park, wildlife, and open space land acquisition. The program's funding comes primarily from offshore oil and gas drilling receipts, with an authorized expenditure of \$900 million each year. However, Congress generally appropriates only a fraction of this amount. Between 1995 and 1998, no funds were provided for the state-and-local grant portion of the program, which provides up to 50 percent of the cost of a project, with the balance of the funds paid by states or municipalities.

LWCF funds are apportioned by formula to all 50 states, the District of Columbia and territories. Cities, counties, state agencies, and school districts are eligible for LWCF fund monies. These funds can be used for outdoor recreation projects, including acquisition, renovation, and development. Projects require a 50 percent match. In fiscal year 2000, Congress approved stateside grant funding at \$40 million. In FY 2001, \$89 million was approved. For FY 2002, the stateside amount was increased to \$140 million nationwide.

For more information contact:

Headquarters: U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service, Recreation Programs  
Room MIB-MS 3622  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 565-1200  
<http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/lwcf/>

### **Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants (319 Program)**

The 319 Program provides formula grants to states so that they may implement nonpoint source mitigation projects and programs in accordance with section 319 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Nonpoint source pollution reduction projects can be used to protect source water areas and the general quality of water resources in a watershed. Examples of previously funded projects include installation of best management practices (BMPs) for animal waste; design and implementation of BMP systems for stream, lake, and estuary watersheds; and basin-wide education programs. These grants allow for 60 percent of the cost of the project to be funded federally with a 40 percent local match.

For more information contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds  
Nonpoint Source Control Branch (4503F)  
Ariel Rios Bldg., 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW,  
Washington, DC 20460  
(202) 260-7100  
<http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/p66460.htm>  
<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/>

### **Pittman-Robertson Act**

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, popularly known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, provides funding for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of wildlife habitat, and wildlife management research. Funds from an 11 percent excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition are appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior and apportioned to states on a formula basis for covering costs (up to 75 percent) of approved projects. The program is cost-reimbursement in nature, requiring states to apply for reimbursement of up to 75 percent of project expenses. At least 25 percent of the project costs must be provided by the state and originate from non-federal sources.

### **Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century Funding Programs**

While generally a transportation-based program, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) funds programs to protect the environment. Through increased funding to the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the National Highway System (NHS), TEA-21 allows for more environmental projects. States may spend up to 20 percent of their STP dollars (used for transportation facility reconstruction, rehabili-

tation, resurfacing, or restoration projects) for environmental restoration and pollution abatement projects. Additionally, each state sets aside 10 percent of STP funds for transportation enhancement projects, which can include acquisition of conservation and scenic easements, wetland mitigation, and pollution abatement, as well as scenic beautification, pedestrian and bicycle trails, archaeological planning, and historic preservation.

For more information contact:  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
400 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590  
(202) 366-5004  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/>

### Wetlands Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program is administered through the Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. This program provides landowners with financial incentives to restore and protect wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal agricultural land. Landowners may sell a permanent or a 30-year conservation easement, or they may enter into a cost-share restoration agreement for a minimum of 10-years. Participating landowners voluntarily limit future agricultural use of the land. They continue to own and control access to the land, and they may lease the land for recreational activities. The amount of funding available in a given fiscal year depends on the amount of acres Congress permits to be enrolled in the program, and a per acre value is assigned in each state.

For more information contact:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Watersheds and Wetlands Division  
P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013  
(202) 690-0848  
<http://www.wl.fb-net.org>  
<http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/p10072.htm>

### Land Donations

While land donations are an inexpensive way to acquire property, it is imperative that donated parcels be considered critically in relation to the overall open space management strategy and its implementation costs. It is possible for donated parcels to augment a well-designed system of connected parcels, environmentally significant landscapes, or culturally valuable sites. However, it is unlikely that the most valuable parcels will be donated as a matter of coincidence. In fact, the Greenways and Blueways governing body will want to be selective in the parcels it accepts as donations. Careful consideration will be needed before deciding that the recreational and/or environmental benefits of a donated parcel outweigh the management and maintenance expense of adding it to the overall system.

## Private Corporate and Philanthropic

## Nonprofit Partners

Nonprofit organizations are capable of raising money from individual and corporate donors, large grant foundations, and state and federal grant programs. Partnering with land preservation foundations is often a beneficial arrangement for public agencies. Some granting authorities have policies that prohibit awarding grants directly to governmental agencies, or will only grant funds when a nonprofit agent is involved. Developing an agreement with a land conservation foundation could produce financial benefits and other support for the preservation and protection of future greenway and blueway corridors. Corporate partnerships are also worthy of cultivation. Their funds can be used as local matches for grants, and they can play leadership roles in civic activities and promotions.

Region 2000 will need to employ a combination of conservation methods in order to protect and preserve the necessary parcels. Plan administrators will need to consider:

- the intensity of land management;
- public access requirements;
- interests that the owners are willing to sell;
- administrative or management issues;
- and available funds.

After determining the possible and practical options available to fund the Region 2000 Greenways and Blueways Program, it is strongly recommended that the governing body engage a financing strategist and polling firm (such as the Trust for Public Land) to further explore the feasibility, public acceptability, and potential real returns before implementing a specific funding mechanism or strategy. Careful consideration should be given to the implementation of financing techniques that require voter approval. To implement most voter-approved taxing/borrowing options, a three-step approach is recommended: feasibility research, public opinion polling, and measure design. First, a jurisdiction's financing capacity and the potential revenues that could be raised via different financing options are determined. This research will help local leaders estimate how much revenue different options would raise and the potential impact on residents.

Scientific public opinion polling should be conducted to assess voter preferences (their willingness to fund greenways and blueways in relation to other public needs) and how much they are willing to spend. Polling will gauge the public's local conservation priorities and help determine the preferred type and size of financing measure. If the research and polling indicates a favorable response, a ballot measure can then be designed to reflect public priorities and a community's conservation needs.

## Conclusion