

August 25, 2007

Note from the President

Oldham County has a new vision, and a new administration with the challenge of implementing the vision in a challenging fiscal environment. A spirit of cooperation, coordination, and communication among county government, non-profit organizations, the business community, and individuals is required to lay the foundation for Oldham County to remain a county we can be proud to call home. Oldham Ahead, with your support, stands ready to help make the vision a reality.

Doug Wampler

President, Oldham Ahead

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Oldham County Vision Council Outlines New Vision in Report to Fiscal Court

In January, 2007, Oldham County Judge/Executive Duane Murner appointed 20 Oldham County citizens to serve on a Vision Council. The task to the council was to meet, gather information, solicit input from fellow citizens, and create a paper describing the vision of what Oldham County should be in four years. Additionally, the council was asked to address a series of specific questions related to achieving that vision. The council's collective vision and response to specific questions were provided to Judge/Executive Murner and the Oldham County Fiscal Court on July 17, 2007.

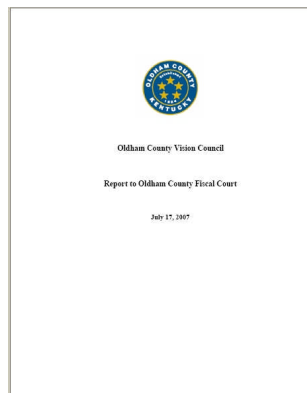
The council's vision for Oldham County is very simple:

"We must become, and strive to remain, the best rural/suburban county in Kentucky. By 2011, Oldham County has:

- *A financially sound and well managed county government*
- *A spirit of cooperation, coordination, and communication among all government, private, and non-profit organizations*
- *A "managed growth" philosophy that provides adequate and efficient infrastructure and utilities; great schools; open spaces,*

greenways, trails and parks, and the continued high quality of life we enjoy as residents of the county

- *A "lean" government that provides a safe environment for residents and families to live and prosper"*



To realize the vision with respect to quality of life and growth, the report stated that "The rural character that remains must be maintained." and "We must accept that the county will experience growth but that growth must be managed to allow for a high quality of life our citizens expect with the very real fiscal constraints the county must operate within."

Moreover, the Executive Summary states, "We believe that the majority of Oldham County residents value the rural and suburban nature

of the county and desire to preserve the delicate balance between future growth and the preservation of the county's rural attributes. We should support and reward quality development that benefits the county..." "We believe that the parks, open spaces, and greenways goals and objectives from the Oldham County Comprehensive Plan remain valid and the county should fully implement them."

The council also made recommendations on utilities, bonding, budgeting, tourism, and the residential/commercial split in development. Also included is a frank discussion on paying for the vision.

We have posted the entire report on www.OldhamAhead.org and urge you to read it. In many respects, the report's content is consistent with the vision and recommendations from the Countryside Exchange visit and report from 1999. This effort however, was the result of 20 Oldham County citizens, led by council chairman, Kevin Eldridge. Judge/Executive Murner has appointed a Fiscal Court committee to consider the recommendations and devise plans for implementation. We believe the window of opportunity to preserve the rural nature of the county is fast closing, and urge you to contact your magistrates and ask them to fund and implement the new vision.

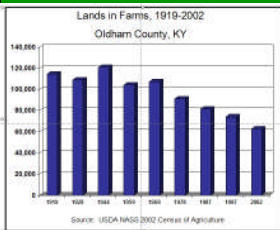
Bike, Pedestrian & Greenways Summit Set for September 26

Oldham County recently received a grant for the development of a new Bike, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan that will be completed by the end of the year, along with a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Oldham County Planning and Zoning Office, Greenways for Oldham County, and the consultant will jointly sponsor a summit of all stakeholders with an interest in trails and greenways to be held September 26 in the Fiscal Court building. The time and agenda will be announced within the next few weeks. Oldham Ahead's Doug Wampler will participate in the summit planning.



Six Acres Per Day

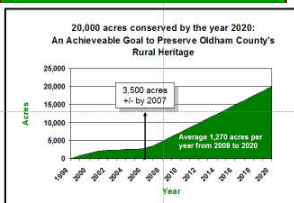
According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture 2002 Census of Agriculture, Oldham County land in farms decreased 11,704 acres (16 percent) between 1997 and 2002. That equates to 2,340.8 acres a year and 6.413 acres a day.



Meanwhile, the county's population continued to increase at a high rate. From 2000 to 2006, the county's population increased 20% to 55,285, up 9,107 persons. Jefferson County grew by 1.1%, or 7,896 persons in contrast. Oldham County is KY's 4th fastest growing county in terms of both percentage and numeric growth this decade.

20 X 20

Oldham Ahead believes that an achievable goal for the



county is to preserve 20,000 acres of land by voluntary conservation actions by the year 2020. That amounts to about 1,200 acres placed in conservation easements per year over the next 13 years. Approximately 3,000 acres are currently preserved.

Equine Council Formed for Oldham County

The Oldham County Equine Council is up and running. Oldham Ahead Board Member Mary Lowry, who owns and operates Altavista Farm, spearheaded the formation of the council in January 2007 and has recruited an outstanding board of leading equine operators in the county and state to guide the direction of the council. The council is open to all persons with an interest in the Oldham County equine industry.

The mission of the Oldham County Equine Council is to build a county-wide, broad-based educational and professional forum to increase awareness of the impact of the equine industry within Oldham County; to develop a comprehensive directory of equine businesses, services, and support businesses, to promote jobs and economic opportunities for equine operations and related support businesses. Additionally, the Council will work with Oldham County and the Commonwealth of Kentucky governments and equine organizations to support state-wide equine initiatives and industry

best practices. The Council is playing an important role with the Oldham County Fair Association in the design of a new Equestrian Center.

The Equine Council, with Oldham Ahead funding, is conducting the first county-



wide equine economic impact study. The Council is providing surveys to Oldham County equine community members to determine the current equine inventory, economic contribution, and value of equine and equine related assets. An independent consulting firm is analyzing the data and will draft the economic impact study report. All financial data will remain confidential.

The economic impact of the equine industry in Kentucky has long been known to be significant, but how much impact it has on Oldham County has been unidentified up to this point. It would be of great assistance to the citizens and elected officials in Oldham County and throughout the state if economic data were available. State officials, educators, and policy makers would then have the information needed to help promote Oldham County, and show that we are a major player in the horse industry.

The study will provide facts about the number and value of horses, the farms they live on, assets, and related expenses. This data will then be used so the horse community can speak with a collective, influential and distinct voice about issues that affect them. The Oldham County Equine Council is undertaking this study, to help everyone understand the importance of the horse industry in our county.

To learn more, visit www.oldhamequinecouncil.org.

2006-07 Quality of Life Advances

Despite the consistent loss of agriculture and rural landscapes to development resulting from a high county rate of growth, there have been a number of quality of life advances since last summer. Oldham Ahead has worked closely with Oldham County government to provide citizen input to the road and wastewater capacity ordinances and revised subdivision regulations; the development of the Brownsboro Area Master Plan; the development of the Parks and Recreation and Greenways Master Plans; the Oldham County Sewer District Facilities Plan; the Oldham County Vision Council; and other county and private initiatives.

We have also coordinated our efforts more closely with other Oldham County non-profit organizations to achieve progress on a number of initiatives important to the future of the county. They include the formation of the Equine Council, support to the Fair Board in its plans for a new Fair, Equine, Exposition and Convention Center; and coordination with Greenways for Oldham County, the Harrods Creek Trail Association, and Brownsboro Conservation Council on initiatives for expanded parks and open space, trails and greenways for the county. Over 3,000 acres of farmland have been entered into agricultural districts, and 300 into conservation easements the past year. We provided a presentation with recommended legislation for the enactment of Kentucky tax credits for conservation easements to the Kentucky Land Stewardship and Conservation Task Force in June in order to increase land preservation efforts state-wide.

Oldham Ahead has supported several conservation subdivision applications at Planning and Zoning Commission hearings and supports OCEDA efforts at Eden Park. We have assisted a number of individuals who are pursuing conservation easements. We continue to rely on your support to preserve a rural legacy for the 22nd century.

Time Running Out to Take Advantage of Expanded Federal Tax Deductions for Donations of Conservation Easements

Congress passed a law last August to enhance the tax benefits of protecting farm land by donating a voluntary conservation agreement. The legislation included provisions that dramatically expanded the federal deductibility of conservation easement donations.

If you own land with important natural or historic resources, donating a voluntary conservation agreement can be one of the smartest ways to conserve the land you love and protect Oldham County's rural heritage, while maintaining your private property rights and possibly realizing significant federal tax benefits.

These agreements, often referred to as conservation easements, are donations of a landowner's development rights to land, to protect specific natural, scenic or historic resources. The landowner continues to own and manage their land, and continues to pay local taxes. The public gets protection of resources that are an important heritage for our community.

What Congress did makes the tax law work much better for many modest income landown-

ers who, under the old rules, only got credit for a small portion of the value of their donation. These new incentives make it easier for average Americans, including working family farmers, to donate conservation easements. The legislation allows:

- ✦ A conservation agreement donor to deduct up to 50% of their adjusted gross income in any year. The previous limit was 30%.
- ✦ Qualifying farmers (those who derive 50% of their income from farming) can deduct up to 100% of their adjusted gross income per year.
- ✦ Donors can carry over deductions for as many as 15 years. (The previous limit was 5 years).

These changes allow many modest income landowners to deduct much more than they could under the old rules, bringing increased fairness to the tax code. However, the act, as written limits the expanded federal incentives to 2006 and 2007 only.

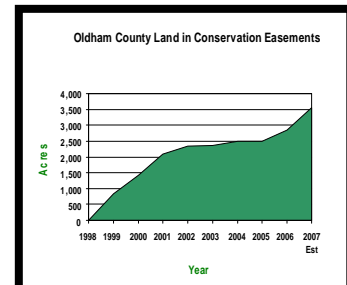
Estate tax reduction. Estate taxes can be as high as 46% of the value of the donor's estate. In many cases, a landowner's heirs must sell the property in order to

pay the estate taxes. By donating an easement, landowners can reduce these taxes in two different ways:

- The total value of the estate will have been reduced by the value of the easement (smaller estate value means less-or perhaps no-estate tax due).
- Second, the American Farm and Ranch Protection Act of 1997 allows heirs to exclude up to an additional 40% of the remaining value of their land from the taxable estate.

Currently, there are approximately 3,000 acres in Oldham County permanently protected with conservation easements.

Several of our board members have donated easements and would be glad to talk you through the process. The chart below shows acres in easement since 1999.



Contact us at 552-6306 for additional information.

Oldham Ahead Proposes Tax Credits for Conservation Easement

The Kentucky Legislature in 2006 authorized the formation of a Land Stewardship and Conservation Task Force to develop recommendations for a comprehensive conservation program for Kentucky. Oldham County Judge/Executive Duane Murner is a member of the Task Force, representing the Kentucky Association of Counties. Judge Murner has proposed new legislation that will assist counties in local land conservation programs. Oldham Ahead support Judge/Executive Murner's initiative that we hope will be included in the Task Force's recommendations.

Oldham Ahead is very interested in the Task Force's potential outputs and recommendations. Kentucky lags behind most states in its land conservation programs and results. We have studied Virginia's highly successful Land Preservation Transferable Tax Credit Program

for Conservation Easements and believe Kentucky should strongly consider incorporating elements of this program into the **Conserve Kentucky** overall recommendations.

Oldham Ahead President Doug Wampler, at the request of the Task Force, provided two presentations on June 6. The first provided an overview of Virginia's conservation programs and its tax credit program. He also provided a suggested framework for incorporation of transferable tax credits for conservation easements in 2008 legislation. Enacting a Transferable Tax Credit Program in Kentucky will provide incentives for the preservation of hundreds of thousands of acres of valuable farm and equine operations land in Kentucky. Oldham County will benefit along with all counties in the Commonwealth. We ask you to talk to your state legislators to make this happen next legislative session. See our website for details.

Oldham Ahead Board Members

- Ned Bonnie
- Laura Lee Brown
- McCall Brown
- John Delautre
- David Gleason
- Bob Horner
- Prewitt Lane
- Mary Lowry
- Austin Mussleman
- Steve Ragan
- Suzanne Schimpeler
- Miriam Tinnell
- Doug Wampler
- Steve Wilson

Chairman: Prewitt Lane
 Vice Chairman: Laura Lee Brown
 President: Doug Wampler
 Treasurer: Steve Ragan
 Secretary: Miriam Tinnell

The Salt River Watershed Watch Project is organizing volunteer teams to conduct visual surveys and collect samples for laboratory analysis from waterways in the county. You can access a form for on-line registration and receive additional information at <http://kywater.org/watch/saltl.htm> or call 1-800-928-0045, Extension 473.

Visit our On-Line Library

Over the years, Oldham Ahead has collected a significant amount of data, statistics, reports, and maps related to quality of life issues in Oldham County.

From census data to economic statistics, to farm and land preservation, chances are we have data and reports of interest to you. We invite you to visit our web at www.oldhamahead.org and click on the Library tab to see the surprising amount of information available about the county. We firmly believe that county decisions should be based on facts when charting the future course of the county.

Preserving a Rural Legacy for the 22nd Century

Membership

About Oldham Ahead

Oldham Ahead is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization consisting of over 500 members dedicated to preserving the rural nature and quality of life in Oldham County, KY. We invite you to visit our website at www.oldhamahead.org where we have posted extensive demographic and other growth management and agriculture census data concerning Oldham County. We strongly believe in the maxim: "Failure to Plan = Planning to Fail" and that there is a race against time and space in our efforts to preserve the rural character of the county.

We rely on tax deductible contributions from our supporters. Please provide your financial support to Oldham Ahead.

The Oldham Ahead Board has voted to establish a revolving conservation acquisition fund to allow us to provide a viable alternative to landowners who desire to sell their land. We are currently setting up a foundation for this purpose and look forward to your future interest and support.

For additional information contact Doug Wampler at 502-552-6306.

Join Oldham Ahead Membership dues will help offset operational costs, fund research and studies, and help establish a land acquisition program. Please join today.

Annual Membership Dues

Students:	Free
Individuals:	\$20
Family:	\$25
Friend of Oldham County:	\$100
Open Space Partner:	\$250
Preservation Patron:	\$500
Oldham Conservation Society:	\$1,000
Oldham County Steward:	\$5,000
Sally Brown Land Preservation Society:	\$10,000

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Phone: _____ Email: _____

Membership Category: _____

_____ Please include me for email alerts on important quality of life issues impacting Oldham County

Please clip and mail to Oldham Ahead, P.O. Box 1223, Crestwood, KY 40014

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