



# **Agenda Item Requests from Friends of Swan Lake Park**

**Markham Sub-Committee**

June 18, 2025

## Agenda

FOSLP has requested that “a review of the classification of Swan Lake Park” be added as a separate item on the agenda for the upcoming Markham Subcommittee

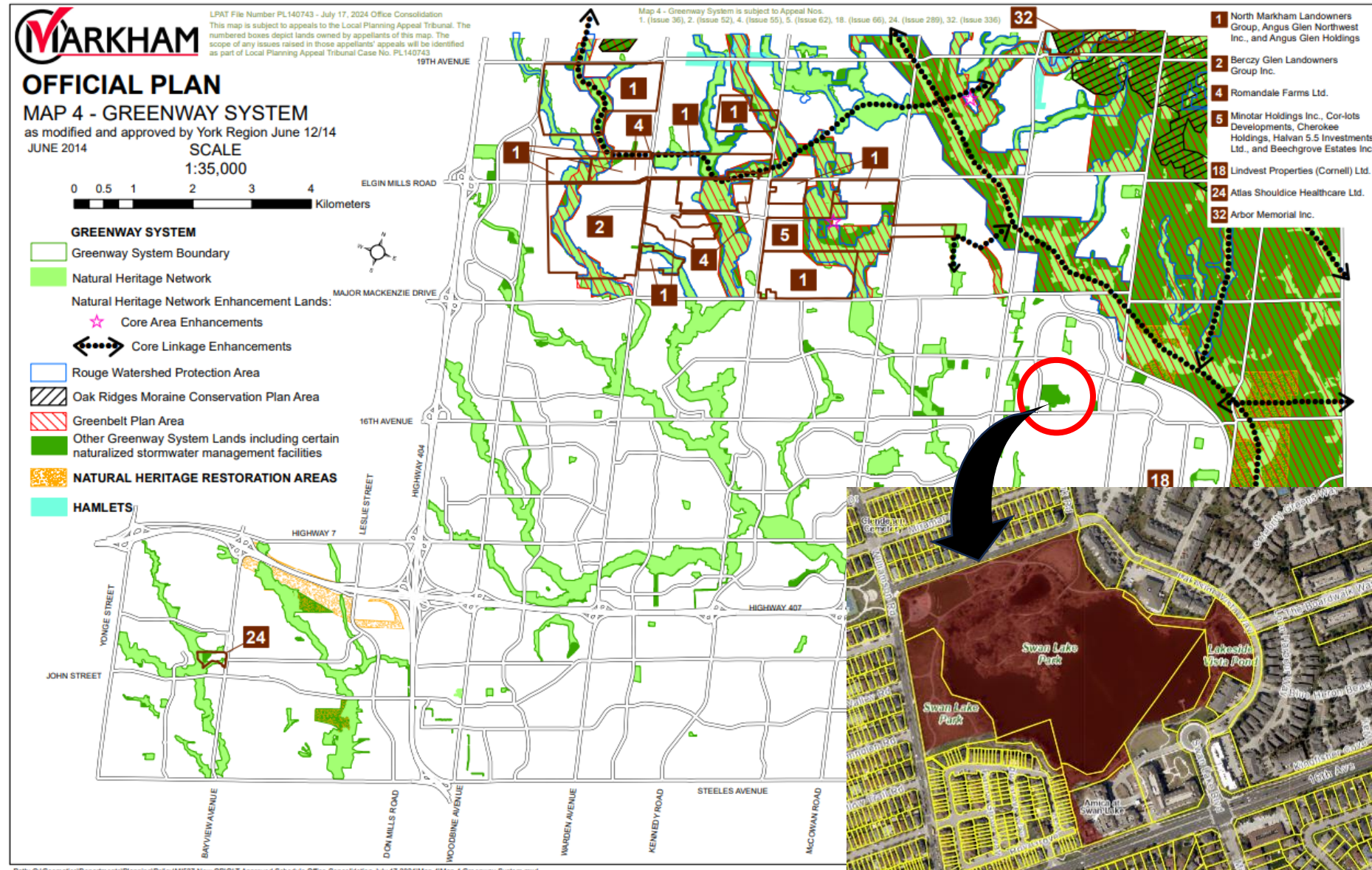
The FOSLP is requesting:

1. staff confirm whether the classification and identification of Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park as “Natural Heritage Network” in the Greenway System is being considered in the Official Plan Review workplan
2. staff be asked to outline the processes involved for reviewing the park classification for Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park (to classify Swan Lake as a “Destination Park”)



## Swan Lake Park

- Currently identified as “Other Greenway System Lands”
- Identification based on 2014 Official Plan information
- Official Plan Review will apply criteria to determine what features, including the lake, meet requirements for “Natural Heritage Network” identification



## What is “Natural Heritage Network”?

- Natural Heritage Network is a sub-category of the City’s Greenway System which identify all of the City’s natural heritage features such as wetlands, woodlands and valleylands
  - Identification of lands in the Natural Heritage Network is based on policy criteria and technical studies completed by the City and our consultants which assess whether natural heritage features exist on the landscape
  - Majority of Swan Lake Park is a man-made waterbody while some of the shoreline areas to the north of Swan Lake include woodlands and wetland features
- Natural Heritage Network is a land use and planning designation. It allows the City to identify requirements for planning and development including requirements for buffers and environmental impact studies prior to development on adjacent lands.
  - Staff note that Swan Lake Park and surrounding lands are fully built-out.
  - Identifying lands as ‘Natural Heritage Network’ does not influence the City’s level of service for park/asset management

# Identifying Swan Lake as “Natural Heritage Network” in the Greenway System

## Staff Response:

- a. In 2022, staff advised FOSLP that their request would be considered through the future Official Plan Review. In Jan 2025, Council held a Special Meeting to start the Official Plan Review process. As of June 2025, staff are in the process of preparing an RFP to retain consultants to undertake the Official Plan Review.
- b. Staff will confirm through the OPR whether the required criteria for identifying Swan Lake as “Natural Heritage Network” are met.
- c. FOSLP are also in the process of updating their original 2022 report and staff will review the updated information, once received, as part of the review work for the Official Plan Review.

# Swan Lake Park Classification

## Staff Response:

- Staff will review park classification criteria outlined in the Official Plan through Official Plan Review (OPR) project. Staff anticipates that current classification of Swan Lake Park would be reviewed through the upcoming OPR. Policy Planning is leading the OPR and as of June 2025, staff are in the process of preparing an RFP to retain consultants to undertake the Review.
- Swan Lake Park was classified as a 'Community Park' in the past, however the Swan Lake Park doesn't meet the criteria of a 'Community Park' according to the park classification criteria outlined in the 2014 Official Plan.



**Current Park Classification - 'Community Park';** refer to Policy 4.3.2.2 b) ii) of the 2014 Official Plan:

'Community Parks': generally in excess of 6 hectares, that provide programs and facilities for a number of communities, neighbourhoods and areas and include water play, playgrounds, skateparks, basketball and tennis courts and organized sporting activities for all age groups and supporting infrastructure such as large park pavilions and maintenance facilities. Community Parks are intended to serve park users generally within a 10 minute walking distance (approximately 800 metres)



## What is a "Destination Park"?

### Policy 4.3.2.2 a) of the 2014 Official Plan:

*"Destination Parks, including large and unique parks which attract residents from across Markham and the Region and include conservation areas and lands associated with the Rouge Park that are intended to serve broader regional, provincial, and in some instances, national interests.*

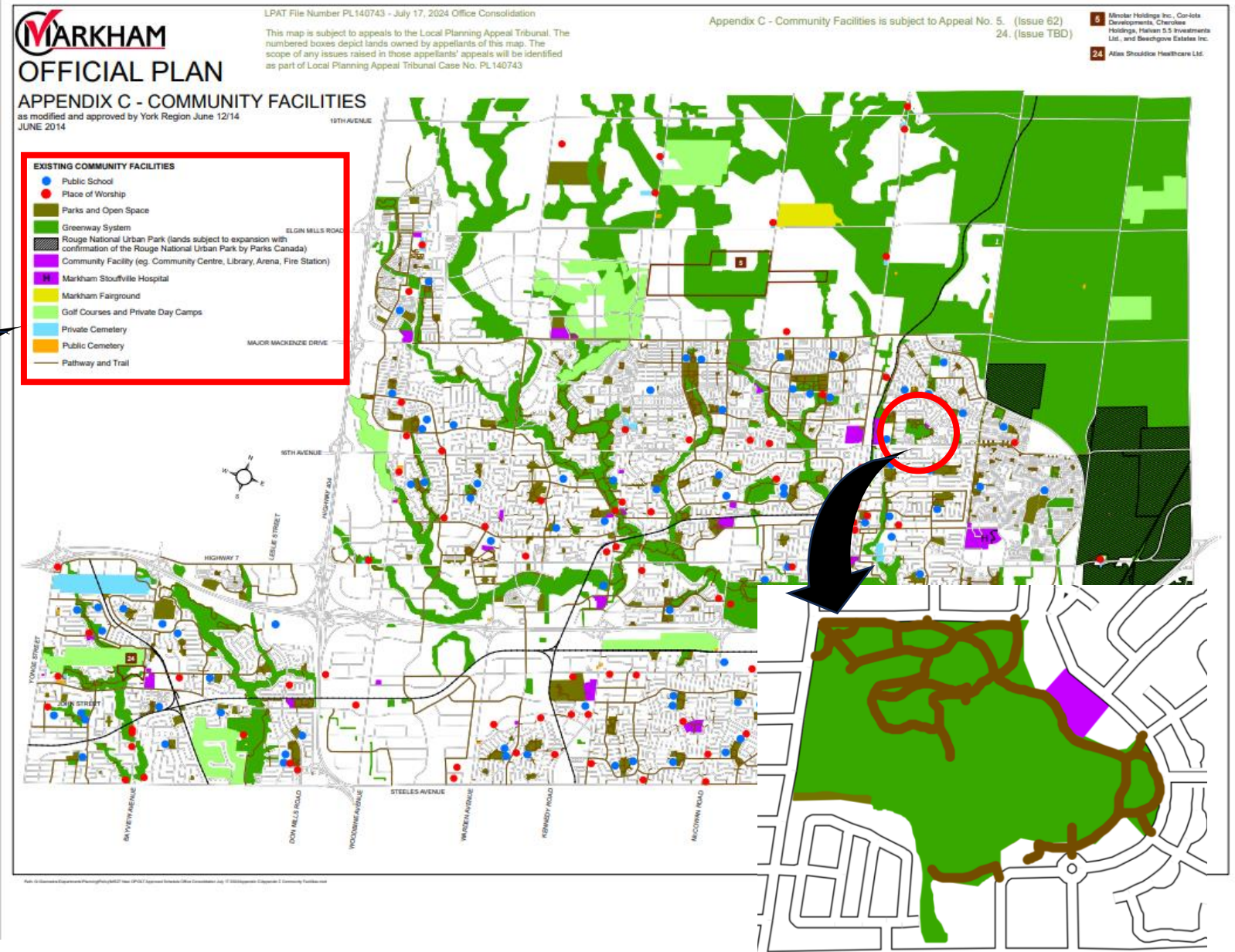
*In general, these parks perform an important environmental function. While Destination Parks provide additional uses and opportunities not typically provided by City Parks, they cannot compensate for the parks and open space facilities and services that would otherwise be required under the Planning Act as City Parks."*





## Swan Lake Park

- Identified as “Greenway System - Other Greenway System” in the ‘**Appendix C - Community Facilities**’ of 2014 Official Plan. The Swan Lake Property/ Parcel(s) include Pathways and Trail.



#### EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Public School
- Place of Worship
- Parks and Open Space
- Greenway System
- Rouge National Urban Park (lands subject to expansion with confirmation of the Rouge National Urban Park by Parks Canada)
- Community Facility (eg. Community Centre, Library, Arena, Fire Station)
- Markham Stouffville Hospital
- Markham Fairground
- Golf Courses and Private Day Camps
- Private Cemetery
- Public Cemetery
- Pathway and Trail