

January 3, 2011

Mr. John Livey
Chief Administrative Officer
Town of Markham
101 Town Centre Boulevard
Markham, ON L3R 9W3

Dear Mr. Livey:

**Re: Request for Funding Assistance
Rouge Park Consolidated Management Plan**

Rouge Park is over 47 km², encompassing a unique mosaic of river valley, creeks, forests, meadow and rural landscapes, within the Rouge River, Petticoat Creek and Duffins Creek watersheds. The Park is part of Ontario's Greenbelt, and it represents Canada's largest natural environment park in an urban setting.

Rouge Park was formally established in 1994 by the Province of Ontario, following years of citizen support for the preservation of the Rouge River valley. Provincial lands both dedicated and owned for Rouge Park purposes in York Region now total 1558 ha (3850 acres). These lands include a portion of the initial land dedication for Rouge Park in 2004 along the Little Rouge Creek, transferred to both the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and the Town of Markham (117 hectares (289 acres)), the Bob Hunter Memorial Park lands in 2005, and most recently, the East Lands in 2007.

Rouge Park is managed as a partnership, with land and funds from the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), municipal governments and other agencies. The Rouge Park Alliance, a partnership of twelve organizations and one not-for-profit group, directs the planning and management of Rouge Park.

Since its inception, Rouge Park has increased in size through land acquisition and many significant restoration projects have been implemented. Through a variety of multi-jurisdictional planning exercises, there has been a consistent vision to establish a protected nature reserve stretching from Lake Ontario north to the Oak Ridges Moraine; develop a continuous trail system with compatible public use amenities; protect the profound cultural heritage of this region; and, identify areas dedicated to the preservation of near-urban agriculture.

To provide a comprehensive document representing these lands, Rouge Park is proposing to consolidate our existing plans and coordinate with our member organizations plans. Endorsed by the Rouge Park Alliance at the June 11, 2010 meeting, staff, in coordination with TRCA and Town of Markham staff, have retained a consultant, subject to the securement of funding and completion of a finalized work plan. The estimated cost to complete this plan is \$150,000.

The Rouge Park Alliance requests the Town of Markham to review its 2011 budget to consider the allocation of funds in the amount of \$50,000 for this initiative. We ask that the Town of Markham support and assist with a separate funding request to the Region of York for \$25,000 in support of this initiative. Additional revenues will be drawn from the remainder of the Provincial funding provided to Rouge Park. A copy of 'Proposal Requirements' section in the Request for Proposal (RFP) have also been enclosed for your information.

The Town of Markham is a strong partner on the Rouge Park Alliance, and has traditionally been highly supportive of natural and cultural heritage issues in the Rouge Park Area. We look forward to continued support from the Town of Markham.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alan Wells".

Alan Wells
Chair
Rouge Park Alliance

Enclosure

cc: Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Town of Markham
Regional Councillor Jack Heath, Town of Markham
✓ MS Lilli Duoba, Town of Markham

2 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Overview

The Rouge Park Alliance (the partnership body which coordinates the management of Rouge Park) invites proposals for consultant services to assist in development of a consolidated management plan for Rouge Park lands in Markham, which include Bob Hunter Memorial Park, the Little Rouge Corridor and the Markham East Lands.

2.2 Background

Rouge Park is over 47 km², encompassing a unique mosaic of river valleys, creeks, forests, meadow and rural landscapes, within the Rouge River, Petticoat Creek and Duffins Creek watersheds. The Park is part of Ontario's Greenbelt, and it represents Canada's largest natural environment park in an urban setting.

Rouge Park was formally established in 1994 by the Province of Ontario, following years of citizen support for the preservation of the Rouge River valley. The initial land dedication for Rouge Park comprised extensive lands south of Steeles Avenue, in the Cities of Toronto and Pickering. In subsequent years, lands north of Steeles Avenue, including the Little Rouge Corridor, Bob Hunter Memorial Park and most recently, the Markham East Lands, were dedicated to Rouge Park by the Province. The Park is managed as a partnership, with land and funds from the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), municipal governments and other agencies. The Rouge Park Alliance, a partnership of twelve organizations and one not-for-profit group, directs the planning and management of Rouge Park.

Since its inception, Rouge Park has increased in size through land acquisition and many significant restoration projects have been implemented. Through planning there has been a strong vision on establishing a protected nature reserve stretching from Lake Ontario north to the Oak Ridges Moraine, including a continuous trail system and areas dedicated to the preservation of near-urban agriculture.

2.3 Mandate

The Rouge Park Alliance is a partnership of groups and agencies whose mandate is to oversee and coordinate the implementation of Rouge Park Management Plans and to be an advocate for the protection, enhancement and restoration of the Rouge Watershed.

The Rouge Park Alliance in consultation with partners is responsible for:

- preparing resource plans, strategic plans organization plans and workplans;
- overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the Plans;
- ensuring a solid financial plan;
- monitoring success, amending and updating plans;
- remaining a strong, informed and reasoned leader and advocate for the health, biodiversity and the integrity of Rouge Park; and

- ensuring an ecosystem perspective is maintained.
- More specifically, the Rouge Park Alliance responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - Recommend and initiate rehabilitation, restoration and stewardship projects and activities in consultation with local and regional municipalities and other watershed stakeholders that will lead to the realization of the vision for Rouge Park;
 - act as the Rouge watershed advocate in projects that cross municipal boundaries;
 - support projects advocated by others which will protect, restore and enhance the Rouge;
 - provide a forum for watershed – wide communication;
 - continue to promote Rouge Park to municipal councils, agencies, businesses, community organizations and others throughout the watershed;
 - work cooperatively with local community groups in pursuit of the goals and objectives of Rouge Park;
 - in conjunction with the members, partners and others, host technical forums leading to improvements in planning and practice throughout the watershed;
 - inform watershed communities about Alliance programs and activities through public meetings, publications, displays and cultural events;
 - consult and involve individuals, interest groups, communities, business, industry, municipalities and government agencies in the realisation of the vision for Rouge Park
 - assisting gaining financial and in – kind of resources for Rouge Park projects;
 - adhere to the basic ecosystem principles that recognize the interrelationship between and amongst cultural heritage, natural heritage and economic processes, and the integration of conservation, restoration and economic activities necessary for the ecological health of the watershed.

The membership (alphabetical order)

- Government of Canada
- Regional Municipality of Durham
- Town of Markham
- Province of Ontario
- Town of Pickering
- Town of Richmond Hill
- Save the Rouge Valley System Inc.
- City of Toronto
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- Toronto Zoo (the Toronto Zoo is a special management area within the Park)
- Waterfront Regeneration Trust
- Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
- Regional Municipality of York

2.4 Vision, Goals and Objectives for Rouge Park

The Vision for Rouge Park

- Rouge Park will be a special place of outstanding natural features and diverse cultural heritage in an urban- rural setting, protected and flourishing as an ecosystem in perpetuity. Human activities will exist in harmony with the natural values of the park. The park will be a sanctuary for nature and the human spirit.

The Goal for Rouge Park is:

- To protect, restore and enhance the natural, scenic and cultural values of the park in an ecosystem context, and to promote public responsibility, understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this heritage.

The Objectives for Rouge Park are:

- Natural Heritage Objective - To protect, restore and enhance the natural ecosystem of the park by ensuring the health and diversity of its native species, habitats, landscapes and ecological processes.
- Cultural Heritage Objective - To identify, protect and conserve the cultural heritage features of the park for their inherent value and depiction of the long-term human use and occupancy of the area.
- Agriculture Objective – To protect agriculture as a land use that is consistent with all other Park objectives.
- Land Use Objective - To ensure protection of the ecological integrity and cultural values of the park through innovative planning, management and land use in the park and its environs.
- Management Objective - To manage the park to ensure the achievement of all park objectives and to provide for ongoing public involvement in park planning and management.
- Interpretation Objective - To promote knowledge and understanding of the natural and cultural values of the park, their protection and management requirements, as well as their significance, sensitivities and interrelationships.
- Recreation Objective - To provide opportunities for appropriate recreational enjoyment consistent with all other park objectives.

2.5 Ownership of Lands Comprising Rouge Park

Rouge Park is not a legal entity and cannot own land. Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Province of Ontario and Town of Markham hold title to Rouge Park lands on its behalf.

2.6 Rouge Park and Partner Management Plans

Numerous plans and review documents have been compiled for Rouge Park lands, including:

- Rouge Park Management Plan (1994)
- Rouge North Management Plan (2001)
- Bob Hunter Memorial Park Master Plan (2007)
- Little Rouge Corridor Management Plan (2007);
- Heritage Appreciation and Visitor Experience (HAVE) Plan (2008);
- Rouge Park Trail Development and Management Plan (1998, Toronto section);

- Rouge Park Action Plan (2008)
- Rouge Park Trails Master Plan (in progress)
- Rouge Park East Lands – draft strategies and background information.
- Rouge Park Management and Economic Considerations Discussion Paper (2006)
- ORC Rental Review (Rouge Park properties - 2010)

Our member organizations have also developed plans relevant to the Park, which include:

- Ontario Greenbelt Plan (2005);
- Markham OPA 140 – Rouge North Management Area / Greenbelt (2005)
- York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan;
- The Town of Markham's Pathways and Trails Master Plan;
- Central Pickering Development Plan (2006)

Rouge Park now has the need to update and consolidate its management plans for all Park lands in Markham, which include the Little Rouge Corridor, Bob Hunter Memorial Park and the Markham East Lands. This updated plan must comply with the Greenbelt Plan (2005) and Rouge North Management Plan (2001). As well, the plan should have regard for Rouge Park plans in the adjacent lands south of Steeles, and for all other Rouge Park and partner planning documents listed above.

2.7 Purpose of study

The purpose of this project is to develop a consolidated management plan for Rouge Park lands in Markham, which include Bob Hunter Memorial Park, the Little Rouge Corridor and the Markham East Lands.

The plan will be developed under the guidance of a Steering Committee comprised of staff representation from: Rouge Park Alliance, City of Toronto, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Regional Municipality of York, Town of Markham, Durham Region, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Transport Canada, Ontario Realty Corporation, City of Pickering, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, the Toronto Zoo, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Friends of the Rouge Watershed and representatives from the agricultural community and First Nations.

Rouge Park will be retaining a consulting firm to prepare a consolidated management plan for Rouge Park lands north of Steeles Avenue (Markham, Regional Municipality of York).

2.8 Study administration

The study will be managed by Rouge Park with the support of a Core Team, a Steering Committee and three Working Groups. The Core Team will be comprised of key Rouge Park staff (primarily the Project Manager and General Manager), Chair of the Rouge Park Alliance, Chair of the Steering Committee, and representatives from the TRCA and Town of Markham.

The Steering Committee is comprised of staff representation from: Rouge Park Alliance, City of Toronto, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Regional Municipality of York, Town of Markham, Durham Region, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Transport Canada, Ontario Realty Corporation, City of Pickering, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Town of

Whitchurch-Stouffville, the Toronto Zoo, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Friends of the Rouge Watershed and representatives from the agriculture community and First Nations. Its role in the development of the Management Plan will primarily be to provide direction and technical guidance, share information and give feedback to the Rouge Park staff and the consultants.

Members of the Steering Committee, along with other key participants from partner organisations, where appropriate, will be invited to participate in three working groups that were previously set up as part of the Markham East Lands planning process. These three groups focussed specifically on 1) agriculture, 2) natural heritage and 3) recreation, visitor experience and cultural heritage.

2.9 Project Goal and Objectives

To complete a management plan for Rouge Park lands in Markham that will:

1. Build upon the vision, goals and strategies outlined in the Rouge Park Management Plan (1994) Rouge North Management Plan (2001) and HAVE plan (2008), coordinate with the Rouge Park Trails Master Plan (in progress) and have regard for / comply with relevant partner documents (ie. Ontario Greenbelt Plan and Markham OPA 140).
2. Consolidate current plans for the Little Rouge Corridor (2007) and Bob Hunter Memorial Park (2007) as well as background information and draft strategies prepared for the Markham East Lands, in order to streamline management of these contiguous parcels of property in Markham.
3. Update plans as appropriate to incorporate new information and Rouge Park Alliance direction.
4. Incorporate the results of consultations with partners, stakeholders and the public.
5. Recommend land use designations for park lands in Markham. This will incorporate natural heritage system delineation and future restoration strategies developed collaboratively by TRCA, MNR and Rouge Park staff, trail routes to be determined as part of the Rouge Park Trail Master Plan, and consideration of agricultural land use. The zoning recommendations should be high-level and leave sufficient flexibility to develop detailed site plans as needs and opportunities arise.
6. Identify significant natural features and recommend measures to protect or enhance them.
7. Analyse and recommend areas that would be suitable for visitor facilities and / or trailheads. Highlight cultural and natural features that should form part of a future interpretive program, and recommend ways to incorporate existing built heritage structures into park functions.
8. Recommend measures needed to sustain viable agriculture in areas designated for farming.
9. Recommend strategies to establish the targeted natural heritage system, incorporate quality visitor experiences and maintain agriculture in designated areas.
10. Recommend strategies to avoid or minimize damage from infrastructure and future growth, and to ensure that a positive net environmental benefit can be achieved from all infrastructure development in and around Rouge Park.
11. Outline approximate costs of implementing the management plan recommendations.

2.10 Special Considerations

There are several topics that will require specific analysis and recommendations as part of this plan. These include:

- Consideration of one or several locations for large public use areas, as has been requested by the Town of Markham, as well as smaller picnic areas.
- Consideration of areas where dog off-leash parks may be appropriate and feasible.
- Consideration of areas where wilderness camping may be appropriate.
- Critical infrastructure and support needed to sustain near-urban farming in areas of the park designated for long-term agricultural use.
- Recommendations for use and treatment of heritage buildings, and establishment of priorities for rehabilitation of heritage structures.
- Strategies to address transportation corridors and regional servicing.
- Strategies for integration of hamlet communities into the park.
- Recommendations for educational / interpretive facilities, and links into the future trail system (will require close coordination with Trail Master Plan team).

2.11 Study Process

Phase 1: Background Review

- Convene a start-up meeting with the Core Team to review the proposed work plan, discuss strategies and issues of concern, and agree on approach to first Steering Committee meeting.
- Consolidate existing relevant information on natural, cultural and agricultural heritage in the area. (Most of this has already been compiled as part of the Little Rouge Corridor, Bob Hunter and Markham East Lands management plans.)
- Review relevant planning documents, including, but not limited to, those listed in this document, and articulate how these relate to the current management plan.
- Circulate background review document to the Core Team for feedback (via the project manager) and incorporate changes as necessary.
- Hold a Steering Committee meeting to update members on the new planning initiative, review work that has been done to date, review background information and gather feedback on the planning strategy and next steps. Steering Committee members will be invited to join one or more of the three working groups (agriculture, natural heritage, recreation and culture) in order to participate in the development of management strategies in the next phase.

Phase 2: Development of Strategies

- Hold a second Core Team meeting to review information collected to date and confirm strategy for moving forward.
- Based on findings of the background review and consultations with the Steering Committee and Core Team, draft a set of management strategies, including schematic mapping, for Rouge Park lands north of Steeles, considering:
 1. Compatibility with other Rouge Park and partner plans.
 2. Natural heritage features / systems, protection to be afforded to them, and restoration required to fulfill natural heritage objectives (incorporate

- restoration / natural heritage system analysis to be completed by TRCA / MNR / Rouge Park staff)
- 3. Future trail alignments (to be determined by the Rouge Park Trail Master Plan, currently in progress).
- 4. Appropriate visitor use areas (interpretive nodes, trailheads, etc).
- 5. Interpretive themes and key stories to be incorporated into future visitor experience initiatives.
- 6. Opportunities for use of existing buildings and structures.
- 7. Maintaining viable agriculture on lands allocated for farming, and ensuring that agriculture carried out in the Park is innovative, sustainable and ecologically compatible.
- 8. Opportunities to engage First Nations, particularly in interpretation of the historic Carrying Place trail.
- 9. Opportunities to engage local communities, particularly the hamlets of Locust Hill and Cedar Grove, the local Mennonite Community, and the local farm community.
- Hold meetings of the Agriculture, Natural Heritage and Recreation / Culture working groups to review draft mapping and strategies, and incorporate changes as necessary.
- Hold a third Core Team meeting to review draft mapping and strategies, modify as necessary, and prepare for presentations to the RPA and residents.
- Make a presentation to the Rouge Park Alliance to present draft mapping and strategies, collect feedback, and obtain RPA endorsement before public meetings.
- Convene two separate meetings for residents in the hamlets of Locust Hill and Cedar Grove, to present an overview of the management planning process, schematic park mapping, and a summary of management strategies. The Rouge Valley Mennonite Church and Cedargrove Community Centre should be included in the consultations. Collect comments and circulate to the Core Team (via the project manager) for discussion.

Phase 3: Management Plan

- Draft a management plan for Rouge Park lands in Markham, including cost estimates for the recommended actions.
- Circulate the draft management plan to the Core Team (via the project manager) and plan a fourth Core Team meeting, allowing for an appropriate review period. Modify the plan as necessary following direction from the Core Team.
- Hold meetings of the agriculture, natural heritage and recreation / culture working groups to review the draft management plan, and make modifications as necessary.
- Circulate the draft management plan to the Steering Committee (via the project manager) and plan a second Steering Committee meeting, allowing for an appropriate review period. Incorporate modifications as necessary.
- Hold a fifth Core Team meeting to agree upon final draft management plan to be presented to the RPA.
- Present the final draft management plan to the Rouge Park Alliance.
- Once approved by the RPA, submit final management plan, along with all associated mapping (including digital copies and GIS layers) to the Rouge Park project manager.
- Hold a public meeting to present the outcomes of the management plan. Particular efforts should be made to engage residents in the hamlets of Locust Hill and Cedar Grove, and in the communities of Box Grove and Cornell. If these groups cannot be adequately engaged as part of the public meeting, special presentations should be considered for the Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Cedar Grove Community Centre, Box Grove and Cornell Ratepayers Associations.

2.12 Available information

The following documents will be available to the successful consultant:

- DRAFT Rouge Park East Lands background information and strategies
- 2008 Rouge Park Heritage Appreciation and Visitor Experience Plan
- 2008 Rouge Park Natural Heritage Action Plan
- 2001 Rouge North Management Plan
- 1998 Rouge Park Trail Development and Management Plan
- 1994 Rouge Park Management Plan
- 2008 Rouge Park Visitor Guide
- 2007 Little Rouge Creek Corridor Management Plan
- 2008 Bob Hunter Memorial Park Management Plan
- 2009 Markham Town Wide Pathways and Trails Master Plan
- 2006 Central Pickering Development Plan
- 2005 Ontario Greenbelt Plan
- 2005 Markham OPA 140 – Rouge North Management Area / Greenbelt
- 2006 Rouge Park Management and Economic Considerations Discussion Paper
- Existing Rouge Park and area trail maps and others.
- 2009 Markham Environmental Policy Review and Consolidation study
- 2008 Final Report of the Rouge Park Implementation Task Force, summary of the April 16th, 2009 RPITF Workshop, Rouge Park staff response to the RPITF recommendations and associated documents.

2.13 Deliverables

Reports:

Phase 1 Report – Background review

Phase 2 Report – Draft strategies and mapping

Phase 3 Report – Final management plan

Meetings:

- At least five Core Team meetings.
- A minimum of five coordination meetings with Rouge Park staff (project manager and others as required).
- At least two Steering Committee meetings.
- A minimum of 2 sessions with each of the three Working Groups (6 WG sessions in total, with extra sessions to be added if required).
- Two presentations to the Rouge Park Alliance.
- Two hamlet meetings (Cedar Grove and Locust Hill)
- One public meeting, and additional consultations with community groups if required.

2.14 Deliverable formats

Reports / updates: 25 hard copies, PDF for email

Maps: CAD / GIS files, PDF for email

Other deliverable items and formats to be determined

2.15 Schedule

The targeted completion date is eight to ten (8-10) months from the date of consultant selection and project initiation. A detailed work plan will be required and will include schedules, tasks and dates for deliverables. The consultant will provide a start date for commencement of work for approval.

2.16 Budget

The consultant will propose a budget for this study, subject to approval by the Rouge Park. Submissions should be organized by study components and by each professional staff and provide detailed cost breakdowns. Alternative approaches are also invited based on the consultant's knowledge and experience with projects of a similar nature.

2.17 Consultant Expertise

- Environmental / land use / natural systems planning
- Cultural heritage planning
- Trail, recreation and visitor facility planning
- Public participation and facilitation
- GIS / mapping

2.18 Project Schedule

The consultants are expected to meet the following deadlines for the three major deliverables:

Major Deliverables	Deadlines
Phase 1 Report – Background Review	2 months from project commencement
Phase 2 Report – Draft Strategies and Mapping	4-5 months from Phase 1 delivery
Phase 3 Report – Final Management Plan	2-3 months from Phase 3 delivery

