



ROUGE PARK - OPTIONS FOR COMMUNITY USE PARKLAND

**Development Services Committee
November 2, 2010**





Council Direction for Rouge Park Group Picnic Facilities

- **March 4, 2008** - “That the Working Committee together with Staff identify a substantial acreage in the Rouge Park to permit leisure activity similar to Milne Park Conservation Area, and review other uses that relate to recreational activities”
- **October 27, 2009** – Council endorsed RPITF recommendations:
 - # 2.c.1 Identify potential locations for a large group picnic area

Rouge Park Response

- **March 2, 2010** - Rouge Park staff submitted a response to the Town identifying 3 potential sites for large group picnic facilities
- **June 11, 2010** - Terms of Reference approved by Rouge Park Alliance for a Rouge Park North Consolidated Plan including direction to address the development of large group picnic areas (consultant selection underway)

Recommendations of the RPITF supporting public uses in the Rouge Park

- # 1.c Establish **appropriate names** for distinct areas and features within Greater Rouge Park.
- #2.a.1 Establish **ecologically focussed camping** be permitted within Rouge Park.
- #2.b Identify potential **off-leash areas** within and in close proximity to Rouge Park .
- **# 2.c.1 Identify potential locations for a large group picnic area.**
- # 2.c.2 Consideration be given to a **celebration forest and an arboretum / horticultural garden area.**
- #2.d.1 Priority in the preparation of a detailed **Rouge Park trails and pathways plan.**
- #2.e.1 That staff and the Alliance identify a location for an **outdoor activity centre** in Eastern Markham.
- #2.e.3 Identify a location for an **outdoor cultural centre** in Eastern Markham, for plays, music, nature lectures, and volunteer planting activity coordination.
- # 2.e.2 Identify a location for a **park maintenance facility** in Eastern Markham.
- #2.f.1 Town supports the **relocation of the Rouge Park offices** to the park in Markham.



Markham's Integrated Leisure Master Plan

Recommendation No. 174


“Rouge Park” supports the following activities in the Rouge Park:

- Large Group Picnic Area
- Celebration Forest, Arboretum, horticultural garden
- Outdoor Activity Centre
- Outdoor Cultural Center
- Integrate the Rouge Park into Markham's park system and promote its benefits
- Recommendation No. 60 supports dog-off leash facilities including Rouge Park location



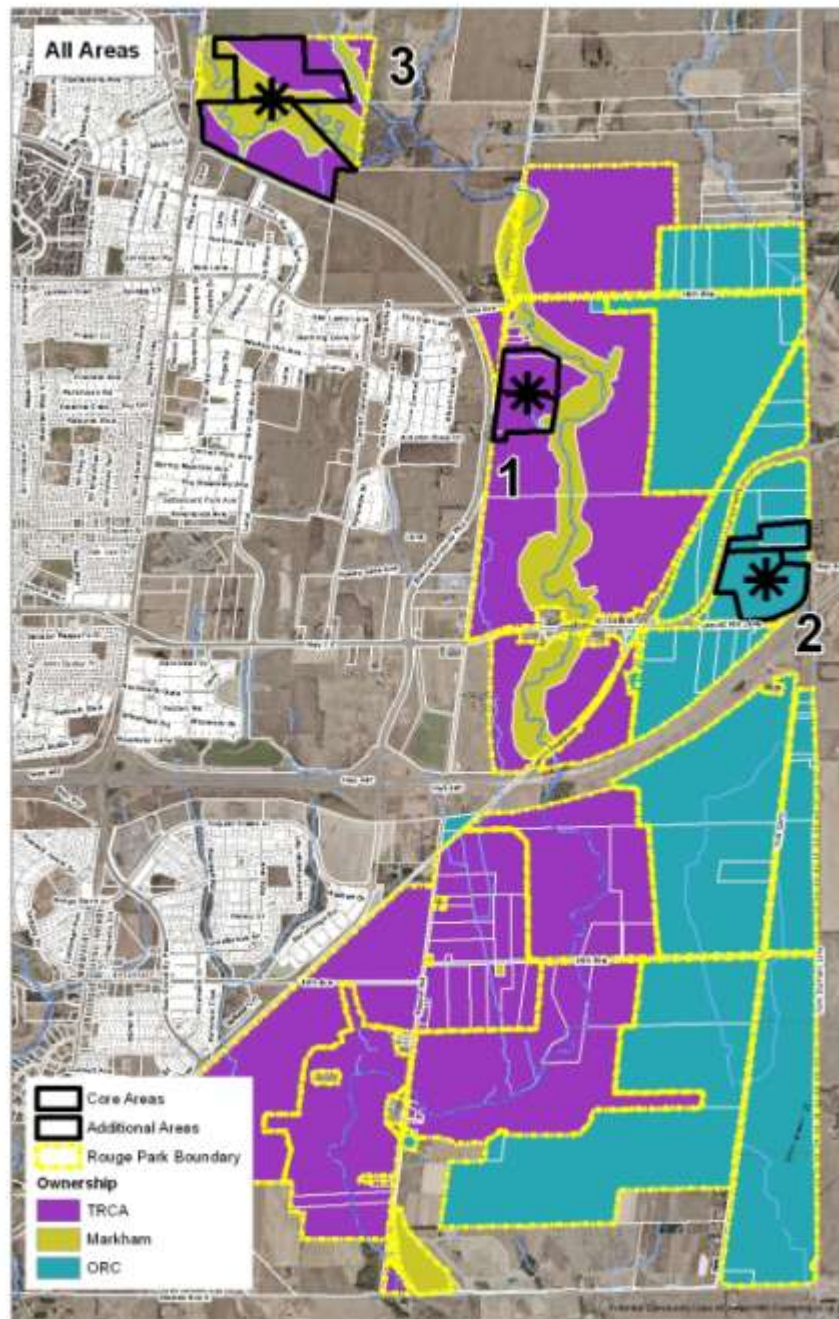
Criteria for Evaluation of Sites

1. Size of land sufficient for proposed use
2. Location of site compatible with adjacent park uses
3. Access to existing or future public transit
4. Neighbourhood context and local access
5. Potential integration with RP trails and natural features
6. Supportive of other compatible public uses identified by RPITF
7. Consistent with Rouge Park objectives
8. Supports Town's Integrated Leisure Master Plan



Organizational Model for Public Use Activities

- **Uses Requiring Trails** - hiking, cycling, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, horseback riding, access to watercourse for fishing
- **Public Shared Open Space** - group picnics, lawn games, frisbee, volleyball, badminton
- **Landscaped Formal Shared Space** - outdoor theatre for nature and agricultural events, picnic pavilions interpretation venues, outdoor theatre for concerts, celebrations, private events
- **Landscaped Single Use Space** - camping, children's playground, fenced dog-off leash area



Rouge Park Proposed Potential Sites

Site 1

- Reesor Road and Donald Cousens Parkway
- 9 ha (22 acres)

Site 2

- Townline (Locust Hill Lane) and 407
- 19 ha (47 acres)

Site 3

- 9th Line and Donald Cousens Parkway
- 32 ha (79 acres)



SITE 1 Location Map

Red core area 9 ha (22 acres).

Green additional area 10 ha (24 acres)

Site 1 Characteristics

- Owned by Toronto Region Conservation Authority and Town of Markham (valley and buffer)
- Adjacent to existing urban community (Cornell)
- Lands are currently leased for agricultural uses
- Historical features on site include the Christian Reesor homestead, Reesor Family Cemetery and Locust Hill School House
- No public transit on Reesor Road– bus service on 16th Avenue
- Little Rouge Creek provides eastern boundary with small tributaries crossing the southern portion
- Identified as Heritage Agricultural Reserve in LRCMP





Site 1

Opportunities/Constraints

Opportunities

- Existing historical and cultural elements
- Potential re-use of existing buildings
- Site provides opportunity for trail connection into the valley
- Highly visible location
- Quality of the site provides good opportunity to support RPITF outdoor activity and/or cultural centre

Constraints

- Currently farmed
- Small site area
- No direct public access available



SITE 2 Location Map

Red 19 ha (47 acres) in size.

Green additional 6 ha (potential reforestation)

Site 2 Characteristics

- Owned by Ontario Realty Corporation
- Isolated parcel bounded by Highway 407, Avenue 7, York Durham Line and agricultural lands (north) – not connected to the Little Rouge Creek corridor
- Located on Locust Hill Lane and not directly accessible by public transit (close to Avenue 7)
- Large open agricultural field – partially farmed partially fallow
- Existing woodlot to the north outside the proposed boundary
- Proximity to Locust Hill and agricultural lands
- Small Petticoat Creek tributary within site





Site 2

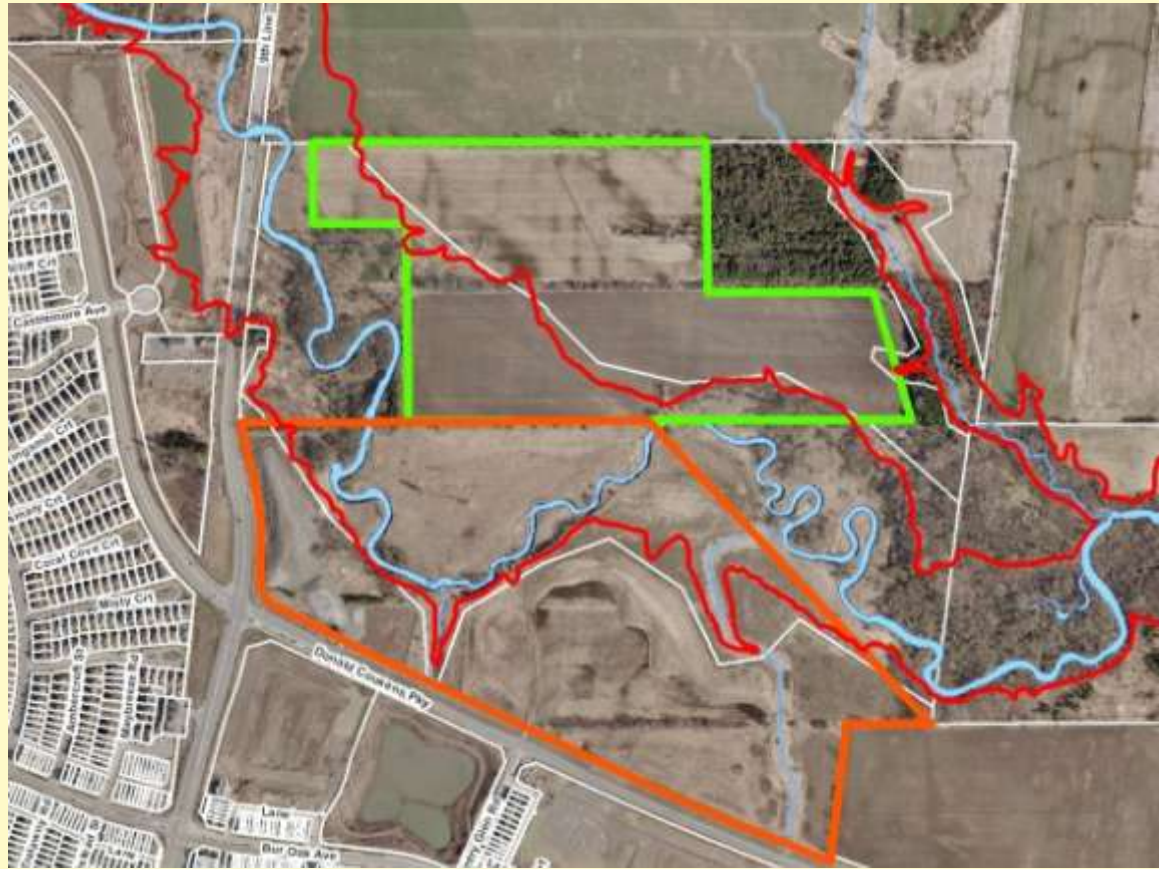
Opportunities/Constraints

Opportunities

- Vacant lands
- Potential to design public use area with few existing site constraints
- Good opportunity for large picnic area with limited potential noise impacts due to boundary highways
- Opportunity to plan for a variety of activities and uses
- Isolated location suitable for a works yard facility
- Good opportunity to design a group picnic site

Constraints

- Limited natural heritage features to provide park related amenities
- No obvious trail connection into the corridor area of the park
- No direct public access (close to Avenue 7)



SITE 3 Location Map

Red 32 ha (79 acres)

Green additional 22 ha (54 acres)

Site 3 Characteristics

- Owned by Toronto Region Conservation Authority and Town of Markham
- Vacant parcel
- Approximately 40% of lands are within the floodplain
- Significant natural heritage restoration undertaken by Region of York and 10,000 Trees
- Access to existing public transit
- Adjacent to existing urban community (Cornell, Greensborough and Swan Lake)
- Approved wetland restoration and tree planting on northern section.





Site 3

Opportunities/Constraints

Opportunities

- Vacant lands
- Lands used by local community as informal dog park
- Easy access to existing communities of Cornell and Greensborough
- Public transit available

Constraints

- Majority of site within floodplain
- Significant natural heritage restoration undertaken for lands
- Tablelands to the north committed for longer term agricultural use (until retirement)

Town Input to Rouge Park and Study Processes



SITE 1 (Reesor Road)

- Protect site for future Community Use
- Consideration should be given to RPITF recommendations for a more active public use area such as outdoor activity centre or outdoor cultural centre
- Heritage features should be protected and integrated into any future public use
- Trailhead and trails (identified in LRCMP) should continue to be supported
- Agricultural uses should continue until such time as the parcel transitions into public uses

Town Input to Rouge Park and Study Processes



SITE 2 (Locust Hill Lane)

- Request Rouge Park protect and plan the site in consultation with Town staff, for a large community use – group picnic site
- Request Rouge Park to review operational facility park needs and work with the Town to identify a potential works yard and facility

Town Input to Rouge Park and Study Processes

SITE 3 (Donald Cousens Parkway)



- Request Rouge Park support a dog-off leash area in this location on the tableland and close to Donald Cousens Parkway
- Support trailhead and parking area as identified in LRCMP
- Request Rouge Park consider a celebration forest, arboretum, horticultural or community garden at this location

Next Steps

1. Submit presentation to Rouge Park for consideration of public uses in the Rouge Park North Consolidated Plan Study and Rouge Park Trails Master Plan Study
2. Continue consultations with Rouge Park on the implementation of public use facilities in the Rouge Park
3. Examine feasibility of the municipal delivery of public use options for the 3 sites in the 15 year Capital Parks program
4. Report back to Council upon completion of Rouge Park studies on further public use details, priority sites and implementation options