

GREEN SPACE / NATURAL FEATURES CRITERIA

Introduction to Green Space Acquisition Criteria

These criteria are intended to provide the Rochester Hills City Council and our citizens with a fair, rational and objective basis for the properties recommended by the Green Space Advisory Board (GSAB) for acquisition. To this end we utilized several documents and key studies that reflect the wishes of our citizens and the judgment of experts:

1. The millage approved by voters in September 2005, which proposes that Rochester Hills “permanently preserve natural green spaces, wildlife habitats and scenic views; protect woodlands, wetlands, rivers and streams; and expand the Clinton River Greenway and other trail corridors...”
2. Planning documents prepared by local citizens, city staff, and natural resource experts, foremost among them the City of Rochester Hills Natural Features Inventory; the Greenways Opportunity Plan; and the City of Rochester Hills Master Land Use Plan. To the extent possible, definitions and values established in these “core” documents are incorporated in the criteria, i.e. designations from the Natural Features Inventory are used to “score” wildlife habitat. Features such as woodlands, wetlands, and floodplains are also easily identified and quantified by reference to the City’s GIS maps.
3. Criteria prepared by other Michigan communities, including Washtenaw County and Oakland Township. We should note that we also studied the work done by communities as diverse as Cambridge, Massachusetts and Wethersfield, Connecticut before preparing our own list.

Because the task of selecting land is complex and challenging, we also incorporated several “common sense” criteria into our list to ensure that our recommendations hold up under close scrutiny:

1. They must be simple enough to facilitate the review of numerous properties with different features without creating an administrative nightmare, but robust enough that experts and non-experts alike would agree on the decisions they yield.
2. They must be flexible enough to deal with unusual situations, such as the availability of outstanding properties with unusual features not anticipated in our criteria – hence the addition of the “other” category.
3. To be fiscally responsible, they must encourage gifts of property or the sale of property at preferential prices by civic-minded citizens. In addition, our criteria were chosen to be fully consistent with major public and private grant providers so that we could take advantage of matching grant opportunities.

GREENSPACE / NATURAL FEATURES CRITERIA Rochester Hills, MI

SUMMARY OF CATEGORIES

- A. WATER RESOURCES
- B. HABITAT PROTECTION
- C. RECREATIONAL / HISTORICAL RESOURCES
- D. OTHER FACTORS
- E. ADVERSE FACTORS

A. WATER RESOURCES

1. **Rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes*** Does the property have frontage on or contain a perennial stream or lake?
Yes = 5 points
No = 0 points _____

2. **Wetlands*** Does the property contain wetlands identified by the City of Rochester Hills Natural Features Inventory (NFI)?
 - a. Measure the percentage of wetlands within the property:
50% - 100% = 5 points
20% - 49% = 3 points
>1% - <20% = 1 point _____

 - b. Measure the total acreage of wetlands within the property:
>20 acres = 5 points
10 - 20 acres = 3 points
>1 acre = 1 point _____

 - c. Does the property border city-designated wetlands identified by the City of Rochester Hills Natural Features Inventory (NFI)?
Yes = 5 points
No = 0 points _____

3. **Floodplain*** Does the property contain floodplain designation?
100 Year = 5 points
500 Year = 3 points _____

4. **Steep Slopes*** Does the property contain significant steep slopes?
Yes = 1 – 5 points
No = 0 points _____

Total: Water Resources _____

B. HABITAT PROTECTION

1. **Wildlife Habitat*** Does the property contain Priority 1, 2, or 3 natural areas as identified in the city’s Natural Features Inventory?
Priority 1 = 5 points
Priority 2 = 3 points
Priority 3 = 1 point _____
2. **Woodlands*** Does the property contain woodlands identified by the city’s Natural Features Inventory?
a. Measure the percentage of woodlands within the property:
>50% = 5 points
20% - 49% = 3 points
<20% = 1 point _____
- b. Measure the total acreage of woodlands within the property:
>20 acres = 5 points
10 - 20 acres = 3 points
<10 acres = 1 point _____
- Total: Habitat Protection** _____

C. RECREATIONAL / HISTORICAL VALUE

1. **Clinton River Greenway Corridor*** Does the property have frontage on the Clinton River?
Yes = 7 points
No = 0 points _____
2. **Other Stream and Trail Corridors*** Does the property have frontage on:
a. Sargent Creek, Stony Creek, Paint Creek, Galloway Creek, Red Run or other stream corridor?
Yes = 5 points
No = 0 points _____
- b. Clinton River or Paint Creek Trail?
Yes = 5 points
No = 0 points _____
3. **Adjacency / Connectivity*** Is the property adjacent to or potentially linked to “Hubs or Sites” as identified in the Oakland County Green Infrastructure Network?
Yes = 5 points
No = 0 points _____

4. **Scenic Views.** Does the property contain scenic views or provide access to a scenic view?
 Yes = 1 - 5 points
 No = 0 points _____
5. **Passive Recreation*** Is the property accessible for passive recreation (i.e., hiking, biking, fishing, etc) either from a publicly owned road, safety path or trail?
 Yes = 5 points
 No = 0 points _____
6. **Historical / Cultural*** Does the property include the location or remains of a site of historic significance, such as a pioneer homestead, Native American village or trail, burial or ceremonial ground?
 Yes = 1 - 5 points
 No = 0 points _____
7. **Community Planning*** Is the property located in a voting district that is underserved by existing parklands or public open space? District with:
 <50 acres = 5 points
 50 acres - 149 acres = 3 points
 150 acres - 250 acres = 1 points _____
8. **Size of Property*** Total size of property in acres:
 >10 acres = 5 points
 5 - 10 acres = 3 points
 2 - 5 acres = 1 points _____
- Total: Rec/Historical:** _____

D. OTHER FACTORS

1. **Other Unique Factors** Examples include threatened or rare native plants or animals, old growth native and/or rare canopy trees, bike paths, etc.
 Describe briefly
 Yes = 1 - 5 points
 No = 0 points _____
2. **Market Value Considerations** Is the property offered at below "market value," (i.e., less than 2 X State Equalized Value) or is a significant portion of the value offered as a donation or match for a grant?
 Yes = 1 - 5 points
 No = 0 points _____
3. **Development Risk** Is the property in imminent danger of being developed or altered?
 Yes = 1 - 5 points
 No = 0 points _____
- Total: Other Factors:** _____

E. ADVERSE FACTORS

1. **Environmental Hazards***

a. Is the property currently being used or has it been used in the past for the following purposes: gas station, motor vehicle service or repair facility, commercial printing facility, dry cleaners, photo developing lab, junkyard, landfill, waste treatment, storage, processing, or recycling, or disposal facility?

Yes = -1 to -5 points
Unknown = 0 points _____

b. Are any of the following currently being stored, discarded, or used or have they been used in the past on the property: automotive or industrial batteries, pesticides or other chemicals, paints, industrial waste, or other chemicals in drums or other containers or storage tank?

Yes = -1 to -5 points
Unknown = 0 points _____

2. **Higher than "Market Value" Cost** Is the property offered at a cost greater than 2 X the SEV established by the City of Rochester Hills assessor?

Yes = -1 to -5 points
No = 0 points _____

3. **Any Unique Detractors** Are there other unique factors not covered in these criteria that would detract from the property or cause it to be a detriment to our community?

Yes = -1 to -5 points
No = 0 points _____

Total Negative Factors: _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

** Objective factors; scores derived from City of Rochester Hills source documents*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
