

Proposed Repurposing of Rochester Hills Green Space Millage

Vote
November 5th

Preserving *and* Protecting our Environment



Over 60 acres preserved to date | No change in tax rate proposed

Please read City Council's full resolution on the opposite side of this postcard
For additional information, please visit www.rochesterhills.org/gproposal

Dear Resident:

In recent Public Opinion Surveys, our residents have rated Rochester Hills' natural amenities and environmental characteristics as one of the top reasons to live and raise a family here. Thanks to the support of voters, our residents passed a Green Space Millage in 2005 to acquire and preserve natural green space in our community. As a result, the City Council established the citizen driven Green Space Advisory Board (GSAB) for the purpose of developing a strategy and making recommendations on properties to preserve.

To date, nearly 60 acres have been acquired and protected, and now our attention turns to stewardship of those resources. *The GSAB, with City Council's support, is asking voters for the authority to repurpose the Green Space Millage to include **stewardship** as the next phase of protecting our natural resources.* By including stewardship language into the plan, it allows us to continue to protect, care and maintain our green spaces and natural features.

It is now up to the voters to decide how to best use our Green Space funds. I would like to direct your attention to the reverse side for additional information on the proposed ballot question.

Sincerely,

Bryan K. Barnett, Mayor



Resolved, that Rochester Hills City Council hereby approves the proposed ballot question for the November 5, 2013 General Election that revises permissible uses of the Green Space Millage to include future stewardship in order to protect, care and maintain green spaces and natural features owned, acquired or controlled by the City of Rochester Hills:

**BALLOT PROPOSAL
PROPOSAL TO REVISE PERMISSIBLE
USES OF GREEN SPACE MILLAGE**

At the September 13, 2005 Primary Election, City of Rochester Hills voters approved a Proposal to provide funding to permanently preserve green spaces and natural features within the City “by funding the purchase of land and interests in land, and enabling the City to seek matching grant funds by levying a new millage of up to 0.3 mills.” It is proposed to revise the permissible use of tax revenues derived from this millage to authorize it to be used to fund the protection, care and maintenance of, and to improve pedestrian accessibility to and within, green spaces and natural features owned, acquired or controlled by the City, in addition to funding the purchase of land and interests in land.

Therefore, shall the permissible use of tax revenues derived from the green space millage be revised to authorize it to be used to fund the protection, care and maintenance of, and to improve pedestrian accessibility to and within, green spaces and natural features owned, acquired or controlled by the City, in addition to funding the purchase of land and interests in land? If approved, this proposal will not authorize any new or additional tax or renewal of any current tax.

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FAQs on the Rochester Hills Proposed Use of Green Space Millage

Q. Will this increase my taxes?

A. No. If approved, the ballot proposal will not authorize any new or additional tax or renewal of any current tax. Rather, the proposal will permit revenue derived from the existing Green Space Millage to be used for stewardship of the City’s green spaces. Specifically, the proposal would authorize tax revenues the City has received, and will receive, from the existing voter-approved Green Space Millage to be used not only for the purchase of green spaces, but also to protect, care for and maintain, and to improve pedestrian accessibility to and within, green spaces the City owns, acquires or controls.

Q. What properties would be covered by this change?

A. All City-owned green spaces and natural features including all Green Space purchases, undeveloped portions of parklands and other natural features or open space owned or controlled by the city. This would include significant (named) watercourses (Clinton River, Paint, Stony, Galloway and Sargent Creek’s etc). It also would cover any land under a conservation easement.

Q. How do we define “Stewardship” for Rochester Hills green space?

A. A written policy was adopted by the GSAB in 2013 that defines stewardship as, “The responsible managing of land to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity and natural features, for the benefit of current and future generations.”

Q. What are the elements of a good stewardship program?

- A.
1. An accurate vegetative inventory and baseline assessment for each green space property.
 2. A Management Plan for each parcel of land.
 3. Establish a team of volunteers to help implement the Stewardship Plan while working with qualified contractors to oversee the initial removal of invasive species.
 4. A continual education and communication program with surrounding property owners and the community.

Q. How can we be sure the Green Space Millage will continue to be used for its intended purpose?

A. The City Council recently expanded the role of the GSAB by directing the GSAB to annually report to and advise the City Council about green space priorities and issues. The Green Space Millage is a special, voter-approved millage, and funds derived from the millage are dedicated and restricted to the permanent preservation of green spaces and natural features in the City. The Green Space fund is accounted for and managed separately from other funds of the City, and the ballot proposal will not alter that.

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