

Hunter fought urban sprawl

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its rare plants and animals another reason it must be protected, Mr. Wong added.

Mr. Hunter, who was 63 when he died, supported many environmental initiatives in Markham, said Councillor Erin Shapero.

"He was concerned about urban sprawl, protecting the (Oak Ridges) Moraine. He had a lot of concern about what was happening in York Region. He took an interest in Markham. He was concerned with the 905's rate of growth, poor air quality, sprawling communities," said Ms Shapero, a Markham representative on the Rouge Alliance, the Rouge Valley's governing body.

The Markham park will be named the Bob Hunter Memorial Park. The McGuinly government designated the new park as part of the Greenbelt, with Hwy. 407 as the north border, Steeles Avenue to the south, Little Rouge Creek (Rouge Park) to the east and the CPR railway

line as the western boundary.

"After 17 years of trying to protect the Rouge Park, it's a magnificent announcement," Mr. De Baeremaeker said. "Five hundred years from now, there will be people walking through a cathedral-like forest."

He pointed out 500 acres of protected parkland means 500 acres less of urban sprawl, but continued to emphasize the protection should extend to more land.

"Another 3,000 acres should be in Bob Hunter Memorial Park that is not in it yet. If you left it to developers and planners, every acre would be destroyed," said Mr. de Baeremaeker, who has lobbied for protection of the Rouge Valley for 17 years.

"We should be protecting all (environmentally sensitive) land north of Steeles ... we own thousands of acres. Why not protect it all? We've got houses coming out of our ears.... we need (to draw) a line in the sand," he said.

Idling bylaw targets increasing smog

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reduce unnecessary vehicle emissions, air pollution and smog," Ms Ligeti said.

Markham MP John McCallum supports the new bylaw.

"We applaud Markham's actions to support their commitment to improve the air quality in the community," Mr. McCallum said in a media release. "And, we encourage all cities across Canada to take action on idling. It is one environmental problem and one health threat that is easily fixed — all it takes is the turn of a key."

Vehicle idling costs Canadians million of dollars in wasted fuel, can damage cars and human health, Mr. McCallum stressed.

"If all Canadians avoided idling five minutes every day, this would reduce more than 1.6 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emission annually," Mr.

McCallum said.


The bylaw applies to all engine types and is consistent with the standards used in such municipalities as Toronto and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Markham kicked off an aggressive anti-idling campaign a year ago. Starting with school awareness, the town delivered idle-free presentations, introduced classroom activities and created idle-free zones at schools, community centres, libraries and the Markham Civic Centre.

Meanwhile, idling-control material was distributed throughout Markham, including at schools, shopping centres and train stations.


As well, Markham beat Newmarket in a recent idle-free challenge sponsored by the York Region Environmental Alliance.

While the bylaw exempts emergency vehicles, the town encourages all drivers not to idle.



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