

## **RDU Forest Village at Raleigh-Durham International Airport**

A business opportunity including restaurants; small to medium meeting and entertainment venues; and outdoor recreation-education-team building features that creates an airport campus which benefits the airport, residents, travelers, businesses, etc.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information in full. I am part of a volunteer group that has presented an idea to the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority (RDAUAA) that has much benefit to the airport, the airport campus, and the region. One that provides long-term financial income to our airport, creates an airport campus that supports local businesses and attracts visitors from afar, preserves the Odd Fellows land, and protects Umstead State Park. This idea is an alternative to the proposed new 400 foot deep rock pit on the Odd Fellows land which only provides short-term income to the airport, will stop the airport campus from becoming an economic benefit to the RDU International Airport and the greater community, and would lead to the destruction of an extremely rare and irreplaceable gem - a large forested natural environment located in the middle of our metropolitan area.

The RDUAA might say that this issue is about a spoiled group of mountain bikers that is trespassing on their land. That is totally wrong. This is about our community and our quality of life. This is about the history of our land. This is about the Boy Scouts who can no longer camp in the area as they have done since the 1950's. This is about the running clubs, the bird-watching groups, the fisherman, the hikers, the boulderers, and many other groups that use the area. This is about families that bring their children to walk, ride, and socialize on the greenway leading to our state park. This is about our health and the health of our environment. This is about the animals that live in the state park and surrounding areas. This is about the loss of the last and final enclave of forested space next to the most used state park.

This is about the fact that we have a really, really good proposal for a business opportunity other than a rock quarry and this idea benefits so many more people than does this rock quarry. **Imagine an airport adjacent to a resort - a resort with a base village like a ski resort. The base village includes restaurants, shopping, entertainment, entertainment venues, conference centers, zip lines, ropes courses, rock climbing wall, pump track, equipment rentals, etc. The base village is the gateway to the forest and its activities. I travel with my regular job and have had many occasions in which the team flies to an airport, stays at the airport hotel for a meeting, and then gets the heck out of there because there is nothing to do. Currently, nobody flies into RDU to hold a meeting at RDU and nobody comes to the airport area for shopping/entertainment. The RDU Forest Village will change that. Companies will want to hold meetings on the RDU airport campus; travelers and locals will want to visit and/or stay on the airport campus to experience the multitude of available activities.**

The preservation of the Odd Fellows tract is important in making the airport campus an effective and viable business and tourism destination. A ski village does not exist without its adjacent ski slopes. They have a symbiotic relationship. RDU airport will be stronger and better if it preserves the Odd Fellows tract and works in concert with Umstead State Park and the community that owns it. The trails and activities hosted within these forested lands is what draws people to the base village. The base village supports the visitors. The base village, given its proximity to the airport and the park, facilitates access to a destination that draws visitors and customers from not only the local community, but from the flying community as well. The business and tourism destination benefits to both the airport and the community will be lost without preservation of the Odd Fellows land.

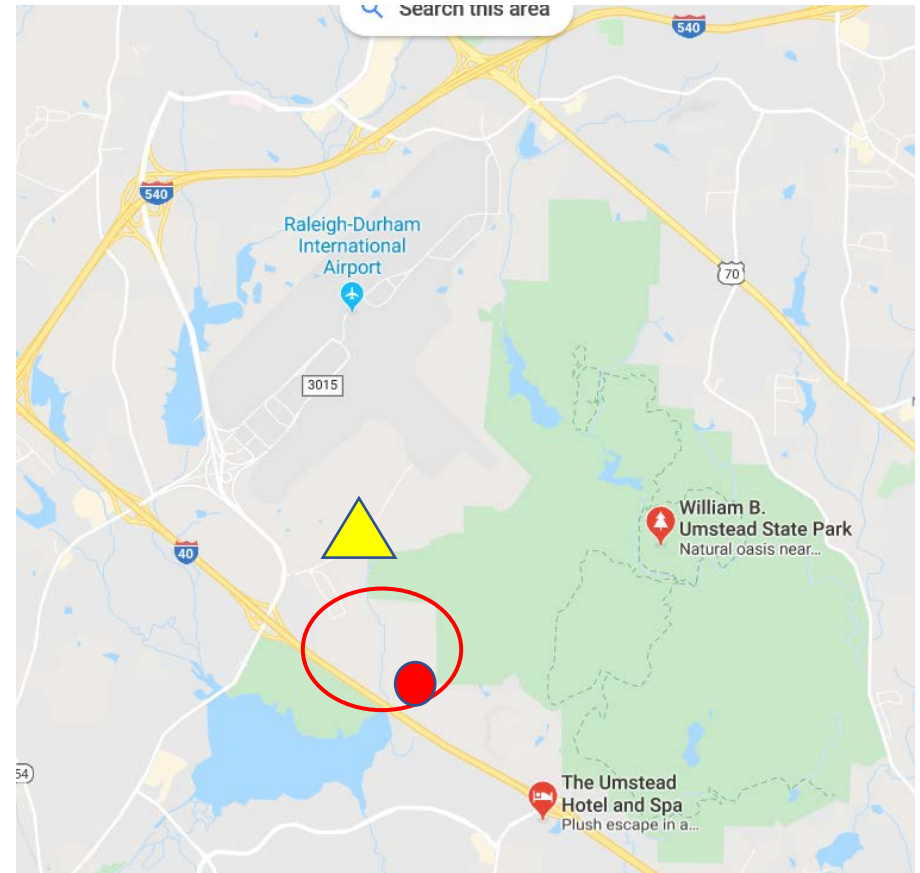
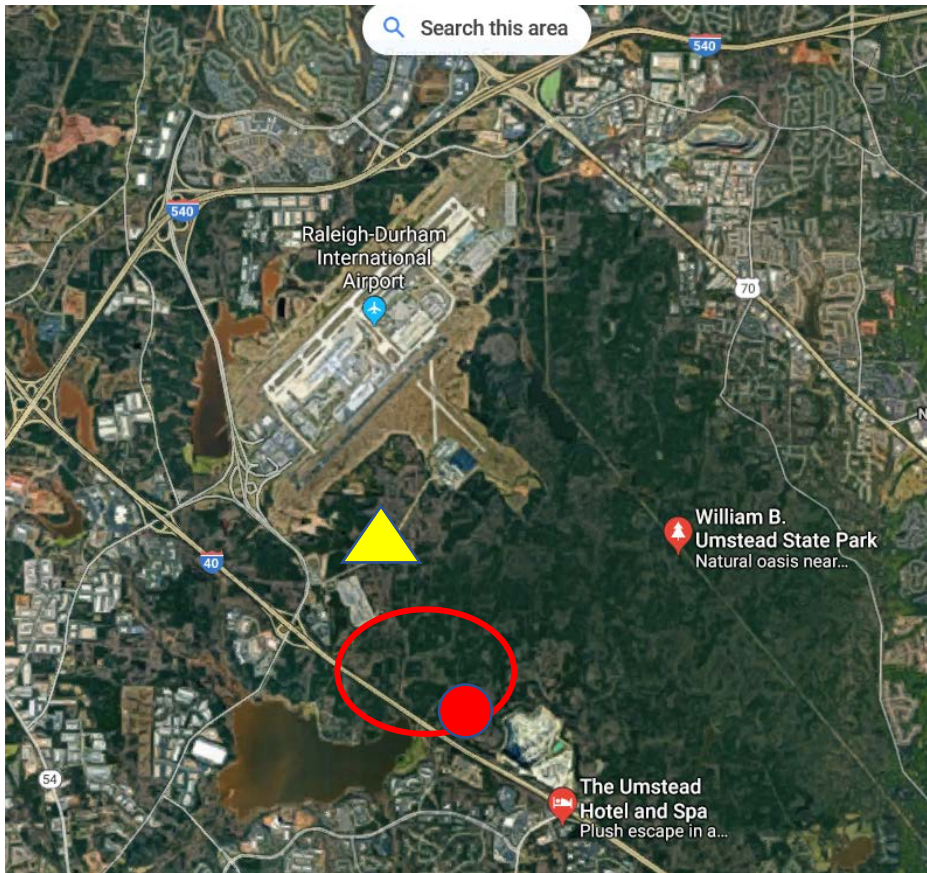
After you have reviewed the pages that follow, please feel free to contact me via phone or email with questions. Let me know if you want to tour the area for an overview of the situation and our proposal. Our group is confident that our proposal will create a benefit to all and will create a unique airport and airport campus, one that is not replicated anywhere in this country, let alone the world.

**My ask: please consider 1) openly stating you are in favor of preserving the Odd Fellows tract and 2) facilitating the creation of the RDU Forest Village Concept on the RDU Airport campus.**

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As you see from below, the RDU airport is adjacent to Umstead State Park. Umstead State Park was established PRIOR to the airport. The Red Oval Line contains land that was taken from private citizens under duress (i.e. they did not want to sell) in the 1970's for a proposed runway that would be perpendicular to the current main runway. The runway was not built due to negative impacts to the Umstead State Park.



The Red Circle represents the Odd Fellows tract. This land has been on the North Carolina State Park's critical acquisition list for many years. The RDUAA has offered to "lease" the Odd Fellows tract to Wake Stone Corporation to create a **new** quarry pit, permanently destroying the land. The Yellow Triangle in the area of the current Park and Ride 3 represents the area where the RDU Forest Village will be. *The village's proximity to both the airport and the recreation corridor along Old Reedy Creek Road (which includes the preserved Odd Fellows tract) serves to elevate the airport campus, making it a destination and not just a pass through.*

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The RDUAA and Wake Stone Corporation are proposing to put a new quarry pit on the Odd Fellows tract. This pit would be adjacent to one of the most used recreation corridors in the Research Triangle Park. This corridor includes one of the most used state parks (Umstead State Park), a greenway that runs from Maine to Florida (the East Coast Greenway), an environmentally sensitive creek (Crabtree Creek), Wake County's Lake Crabtree County Park, and two private homes.

The following two maps illustrate how remote the Odd Fellows (Red Circle on the previous map) and 286 (Red Oval Line on the previous map) are to the current airport flow and illustrate how intimately close the Odd Fellows and 286 are to Umstead State Park and Lake Crabtree County Park.

Not shown are 1) the greenway running through Umstead is part of the East Coast Greenway that runs from Maine to Florida and 2) Crabtree Creek, that runs out of the Lake Crabtree, through Umstead State Park, by Crabtree Mall, and through the City of Raleigh. The section of greenway next to Lake Crabtree County Park and Umstead is one of the most used sections of greenway in our area. It is a central artery to two other major greenways – The American Tobacco Trail and The Neuse River Trail.

These maps also show that there are already two other existing quarries in close proximity to the Lumley Road entrance of the airport, the Martin Marietta Quarry on Westgate Road and the Hanson Quarry on Duraleigh Road. Both of these rock quarries are already permitted and in progress with quarry expansions. Both of these quarries have materials that the airport needs, including overburden for fill for the runway projects. We do not need another quarry.

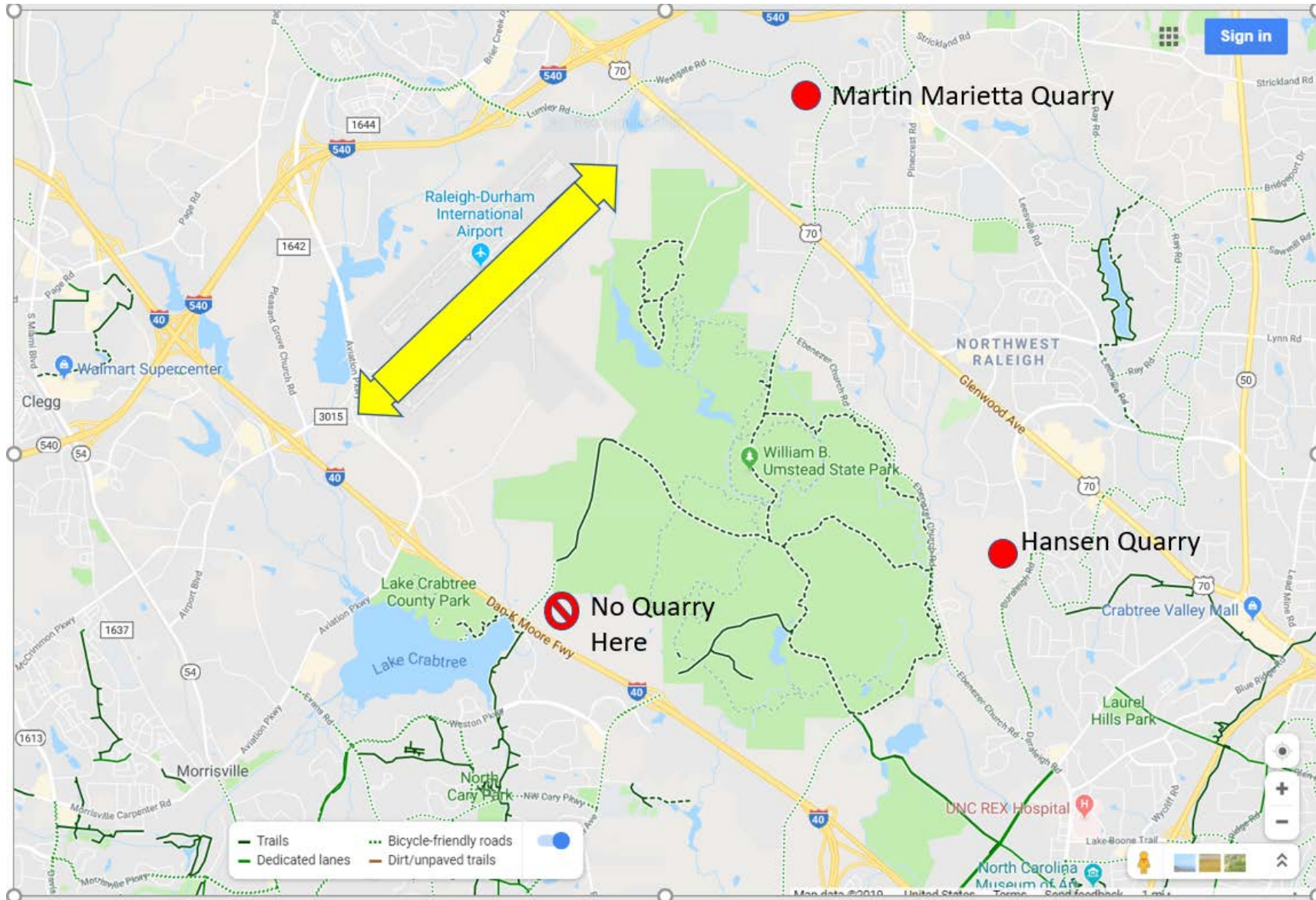
Instead of a divisive rock quarry pit adjacent to the highly used recreation corridor, why not create something that brings people together and to our area. Create a base village of restaurants, meetings space, entertainment space, outdoor recreation/education vendors and activities along National Guard Drive (by the Park and Ride 3 represented by the yellow triangle). The base village would produce revenue for the airport by creating an airport campus that can be used by business travelers, leisure travelers, local business, and the local community. The main draw to the area is the forest created by the Odd Fellows land, Umstead State Park, and parts of 286. The hook that keeps people in the area (and spending money) is the base village.

You have probably noticed that there is already a quarry next to the proposed new quarry site. Wake Stone is the owner of this quarry. The current quarry pit cannot be expanded due to the adjacent creek (Crabtree Creek). Wake Stone claims the current quarry pit only has 3 years of life remaining; some outsiders say that it likely has more. The public fiercely fought the current quarry pit in the 1980's given its location next to Umstead. The permit was denied by DEQ. Then, the Mining Commission allowed the permit only with a **50-year sunset clause (e.g. quarry operations would end after 50 years) and 250 feet undisturbed buffers**. Recently, without discussions with the public, without notifying NC State Parks, etc., the 50-year sunset clause was somehow mysteriously removed. Wake Stone needs the current quarry pit to remain open in order to make a new quarry pit viable. The Odd Fellows tract is too small to be a stand-alone rock quarry. Wake Stone Corporation has reneged on a promise to end quarry operations in order to expand their empire. More could be stated on this aspect, but that can be discussed at a later time.



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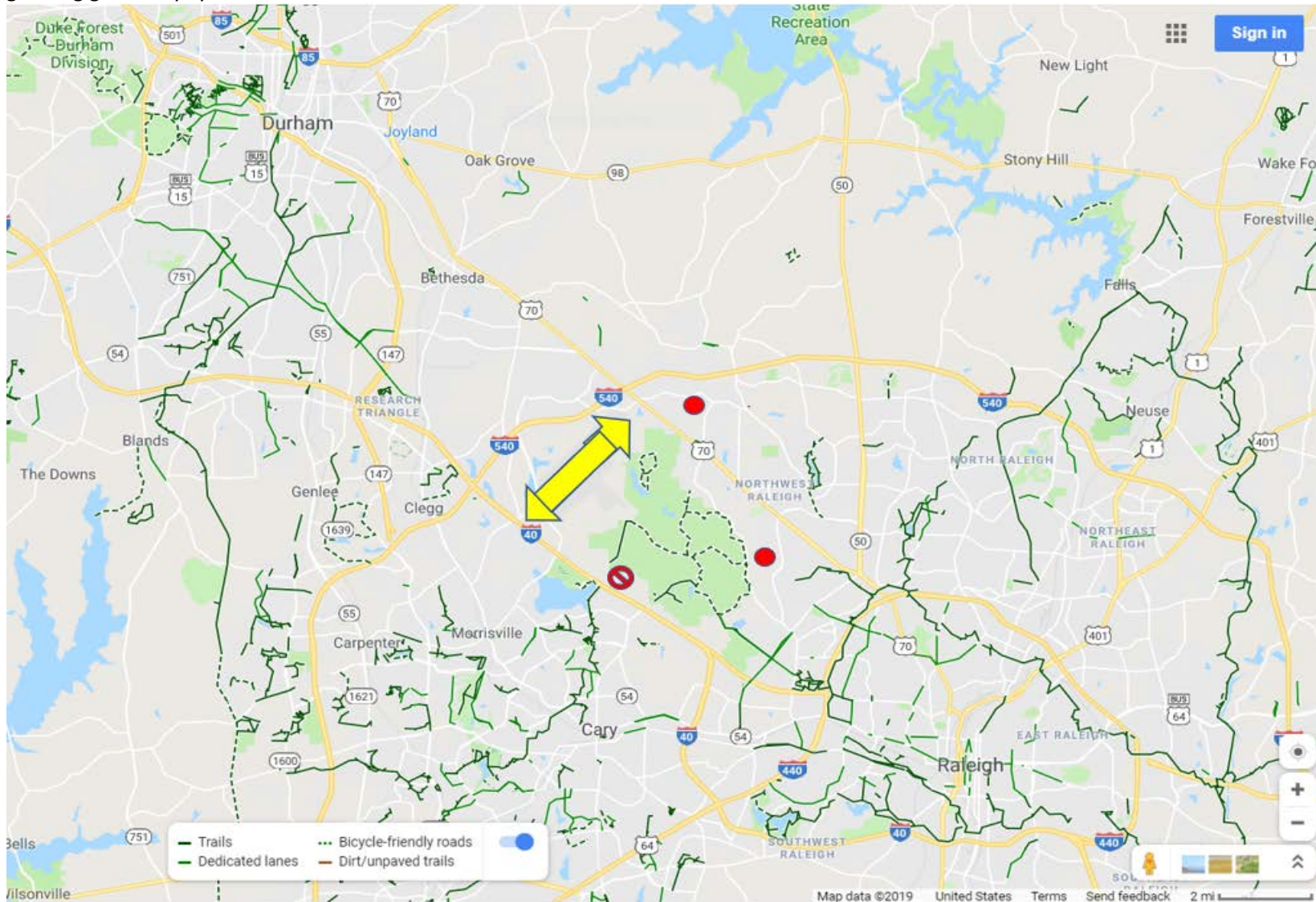
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This is a zoomed-out map of the previous map. Notice that the Odd Fellows track (where the quarry is proposed) is the central artery connecting the vast and growing greenway system with Umstead State Park.



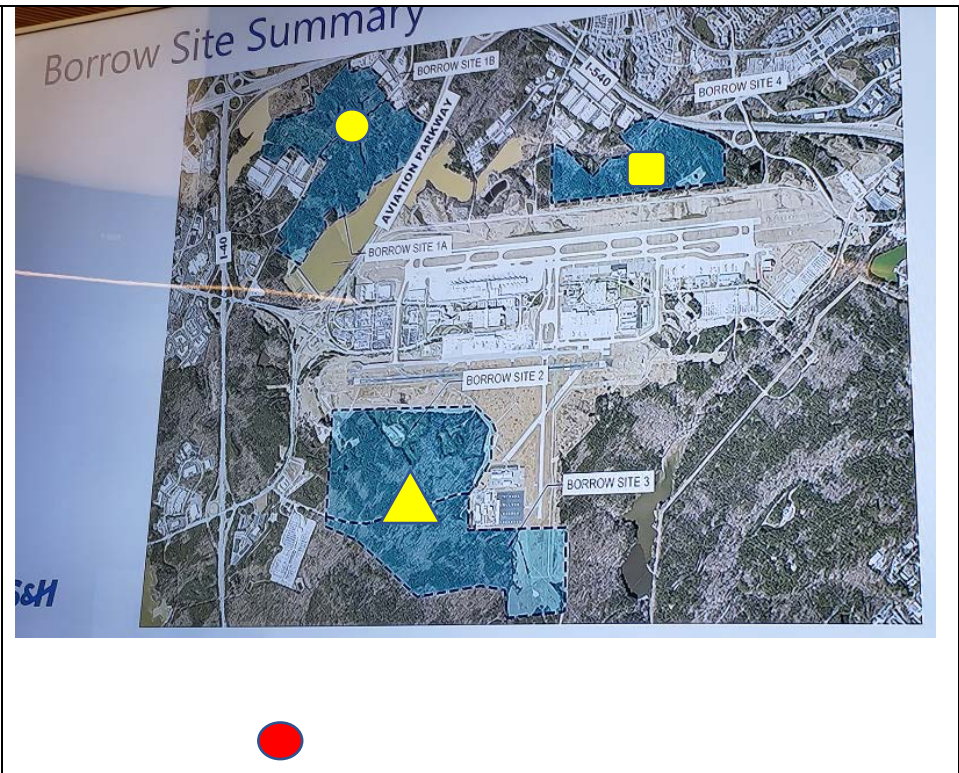


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The RDUAA recently (e.g. in Oct/2019) announced that it needs a lot of dirt in order to expand and lengthen the main runway (on the main terminal side of the airport). RDUAA indicated that deforested lands should be leveled/prepared for development. In the picture below on the right, the “borrow sites” are the areas highlighted in blue and are sites that will be deforested and the dirt removed and taken to the runway for leveling.

- Has the RDUAA fully investigated getting materials from the two nearby privately-owned rock quarries? ***Could this be a better solution for obtaining at least some of the fill dirt needed?***
- The initial site of deforestation is the **yellow dot**. ***Could this be a site of future parking, hotels, etc. that support the airport and RDU Forest Village? Could this be the site of a central bus or train station that serves Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill, and the surrounding communities?***
- The secondary area of deforestation is the **yellow square**. ***Could this be the site of future parking, hotels, etc. that supports the airport?***
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> area for deforestation is the **yellow triangle**. ***Some of this area is where the RDU Forest Village would be located.*** This area is bisected by National Guard Drive and, per the airport’s Master Plan, is already proposed for parking. Given the deforested lands are to be prepped for development, all the more reason that the RDU Forest Village resort concept makes good business sense. Note, this land is part of what is referred to as 286. We do not think all of this land should be deforested due to the number of creeks and watersheds and because it is adjacent to Umstead State Park.
- The **Red Dot** represents the proposed new rock quarry pit. Look again at how far it is from the flow of the airport, how intimately close it is to Umstead State Park, and be reminded that it is next to Crabtree creek so the current old quarry hole cannot be expanded.

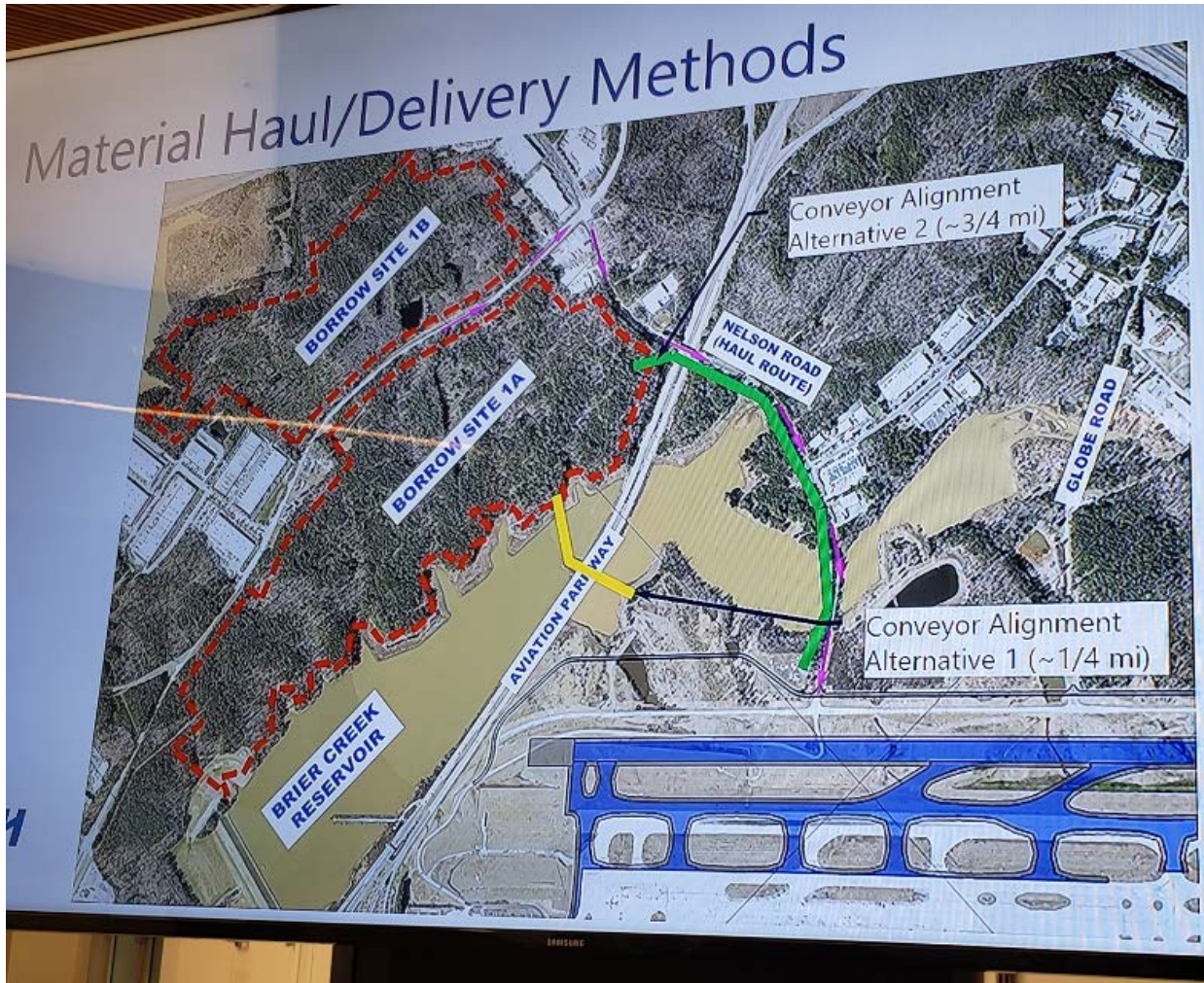




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The picture below is the proposed method for delivering the dirt from the site of first deforestation to the new runway area.



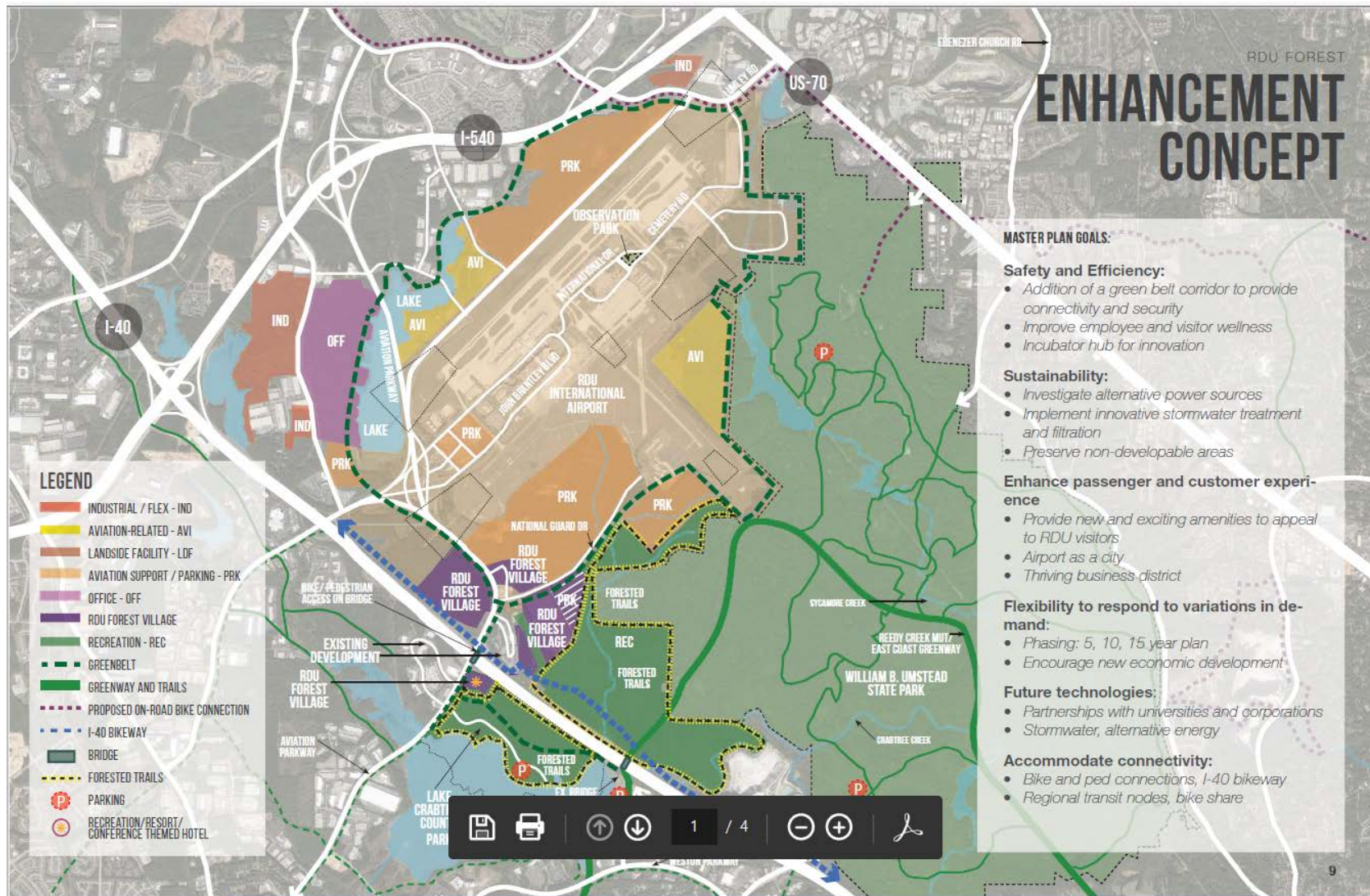


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The link below is to the RDU Forest Concept Maps. There are 4 slides in the series. The main concept map is included in this document for ease of reference.

[https://umsteadcoalition.org/resources/Documents/Airport/Concept%20Maps\\_RDU%20Forest%208-9-17.pdf](https://umsteadcoalition.org/resources/Documents/Airport/Concept%20Maps_RDU%20Forest%208-9-17.pdf)





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Here is a 3-minute public comment speech given recently to 3 of the 4 owners of the RDU airport (Wake County Commissioners, Raleigh City Council, and Durham City Council) regarding the Odd Fellows and 286:

In the 1970's, under duress, the owners of the Odd Fellows tract and the tracts of land that make up what is now referred to as 286, sold their homes and land. They were told that the land was needed for a runway – a runway that would benefit the community because the airport is a public airport. This runway was not built due to negative impacts to Umstead State Park and the Research Triangle Park.

Since 1976, these lands have been deeded to four public entities – of which you are one! (Wake Co., Durham Co., and the cities of Raleigh and Durham). The recently approved Vision 2040 Master Plan indicates that this land not needed for aviation use. Given the land is not needed for aviation use AND given its sensitive location, the owners must have a say in what happens to this land.

Look at a map. You will see that these lands are very remote to the present-day airport and NOT within logical operational bounds or flow of the airport. These lands are, however, ADJACENT TO UMSTEAD STATE PARK, CRABTREE CREEK, and THE EAST COAST GREENWAY. These lands are within the logical operational flow of our unique state park and a main artery of our vast greenway system which benefits and attracts residents and visitors.

*Historically, the Odd Fellows organization encouraged public use of their land. For example, they partnered with the Boy Scouts and facilitated the creation of a safe and local place for youth to camp, hike, and bike. This tradition continued for over 60 years, until just recently when the RDUAA forced stoppage of this tradition.*

*A 1977 draft Environmental Impact Study for Airport Expansion and Improvements acknowledges that "A recreation area under the jurisdiction of the Odd Fellows Club of Raleigh is located adjacent to the proposed project site" and states "This recreation facility will not be adversely affected by airport expansion." Presently, the land is being adversely affected. The RDUAA is attempting to sell our public land, timber, and mineral rights via a "lease" with Wake Stone. In order to access the minerals, the trees and dirt will be sold and the topography will be destroyed and a large, 400+ foot deep pit will be created.*

As demonstrated by the 20,000+ signatures on the petition against the rock quarry, attendance at public events, and messages to politicians it is clear that the current OWNERS of this land want to keep this land and its mineral rights.

Given this land was taken from private citizens for public use, it should remain as land for public use. Things like schools and parks are for public use. The quarry is not public use. It is private use that benefits private quarry owners and private developers.

Two days ago, the RDUAA announced proposed plans to deforest a significant portion of their other lands in order to obtain dirt for the new runway. All the more need to stop the quarry and preserve the Odd Fellows and 286.

The RDUAA can create a win-win for all by partnering with its owners and the community it serves. [...by pursuing the RDU Forest Village concept instead of the destructive rock quarry concept.]

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Places to get additional information:

- Website: <https://www.rduforest.com/stoprduquarry>
- Documentary film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gxguDyQOGY&feature=youtu.be>
- Website: <https://umsteadcoalition.org/StopRDUQuarry>
- Does RDU's Vision 2040 Compliment Wake County's Destination 2028 Plan? (Link is on Umstead Coalition website.)

Regarding the Odd Fellows, the quarry pit idea totally ignores the history of this irreplaceable asset to our community.

- The majority of the land where the quarry pit is proposed was owned by The Odd Fellows organization, an organization that encouraged public use of its land. In fact, the Boy Scouts camped on this land since the 1950's or so, until just recently when forced to stop by the local airport authority.
- This land is directly adjacent to Umstead State Park, Crabtree Creek, the East Coast Greenway, and one private home.
- In the 1970's, the land was taken from private citizens under duress. (e.g. threat of condemnation) for purposes of building a runway that would be perpendicular to the current runway. That runway was not built.
- In the Draft EIS for Airport Expansion and Improvements, Raleigh Durham Airport, dated March, 1977 (stamped by the FAA), "A recreation area under the jurisdiction of the Odd Fellows Club of Raleigh is located adjacent to the proposed project site. This recreation facility will not be adversely affected by airport expansion."
- The land has been deeded to 4 public entities since "acquired" in the 1970's: Wake County, Durham County, Raleigh (city), and Durham (city).
- The Raleigh Durham airport (RDU) is adjacent to Umstead State Park. Umstead State Park existed PRIOR to the airport.
- The land in question fell within the jurisdiction of the airport when it was deemed needed for aviation.
- Per RDU's master plan approved in about 2017, the land is not needed for aviation. Thus, the deeded owners must have a say in what happens to the land especially if it will be destroyed and/or lead to liability to the four owners.
- The RDU Airport Authority (RDUA) is attempting to "lease" the land to Wake Stone Corporation for a new quarry pit. But within this so called "lease", they are selling the mineral rights to Wake Stone.
- The RDUA is the governing board of the RDU airport and is made up by two representatives of each of the four owners.
- Per law, the RDUA is supposed to get permission from the 4 owners if they sell or long term lease the land. The RDUA has done neither. They have not involved the public in discussions as to what happens to the land. The RDUA claims they have. But the conversation has been only in one direction...with them telling the public what they will do.
- Given this land was taken from private citizens for public use, it should remain as land for public use. Public use includes projects that will have a benefit to all citizens. Things like schools and parks are for public use. The quarry is not public use. It is private use. The vast majority of income produced from the rock quarry goes to the owners of the rock quarry, not to the public.
- RDU Forest Village creates a win-win for all – an airport campus that provides long-term financial income to our airport, supports local businesses, attracts visitors from near and afar, preserves the Odd Fellows land, and protects Umstead State Park.