

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Friends of the Rouge Make Moves**

*the well-known environmental group announces relocation to Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex coming in September 2018*

For thirty two years, the Friends of the Rouge (FOTR) have provided the greater Rouge River watershed community with services that have enhanced the quality of life for people in the region. Over the past several years, the FOTR has grown their programmatic offerings to the community. As a result of this success, they have increased their need for additional operating space.

The Friends of the Rouge (FOTR) selected the Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex (PARC) located in downtown Plymouth as their new home. Currently housing over 25 other nonprofit organizations, the FOTR will be moving into a community that fosters collaboration and provides a great networking opportunity. The new space will be significantly larger than the existing office currently located on the University of Michigan-Dearborn campus, allowing for much needed room to operate and grow the organization.

“Friends of the Rouge is excited to be moving its offices to PARC in downtown Plymouth. The history of Plymouth and its connection to the Rouge River is a natural fit for FOTR. We’re looking forward to continuing and expanding our programs from our new home and being able to interact with the other organizations located at PARC,” stated FOTR Board President Michael Darga.

The new 2,760 square foot office would be located on the second floor library of the former Central Middle School in downtown Plymouth, Michigan. This L- shaped room will feature a 20 seat conference room, 24 seat classroom and teaching laboratory, open concept office floor plan, one private office, copy room and a reception - public education area.

Other benefits to the PARC space include access to shared conference rooms, two auditoriums, much needed outside storage, plant material staging area and exciting collaborative opportunities, to name a few.

“This space will allow Friends of the Rouge to further develop our programs, making a greater impact on the environment, and on the quality of life for our community,” shared Marie McCormick, executive director.

“We hope to hire additional employees once we move to our new space. Our current space only has space for 8 work stations, and with our regular interns, volunteers and need for more staff – we no longer have room. Our new office would have 13 work stations, with potential for more if necessary.”

As a 501(c)3 public charity, PARC leads the effort to repurpose the historic Plymouth High-Central Middle School building and the 16.6 acres on which it stands, into an arts, education and recreation destination serving Plymouth and the surrounding area.

PARC Board President, Don Soenen, shared his excitement regarding the addition of Friends of the Rouge, “We are pleased to add FOTR to our impressive list of tenants. Plymouth has always had an affection for the Rouge River. Having FOTR located in the heart of our community is a major achievement.”

In tandem with the planned move, the Friends of the Rouge have been working on a capital campaign to help fund renovations, upgrade furniture, and make the space move-in ready. Interested donors can directly contact Marie McCormick for more information regarding the opportunity. To see progress on our capital campaign, please visit our CrowdRise page at <https://www.crowdrise.com/o/en/campaign/new-fotr-office-space-capital/friendsoftherouge>

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*The mission of Friends of the Rouge is to promote restoration and stewardship of the Rouge River ecosystem through education, citizen involvement and other collaborative efforts, for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the people, plants and animals of the watershed.*