

To Mayor and Members of Council,

This past March 21st - which was the International Day for Elimination of Racism - the Markham Race Relations Committee (RRC) solicited residents' feedback on race relations through the City's Facebook and Instagram pages. With assistance from the City's Corporate Communications staff, we reached >18,000 social media users. The results were positive and sparked meaningful conversation. This process also allowed us to receive feedback from Markham residents who may not be available to attend an in-person consultation session.

After personal information has been removed by Corporate Communications staff to protect privacy, a sub-committee of the RRC reviewed the feedback, comments and interactions. We were thus able to take an anecdotal pulse of Markham residents' perspective on race relations today and going forward. Based on our observations, we recommend the following to the Mayor and Council:

1. The City should continue to recognize Indigenous Peoples as the beginning of Markham's history and heritage; to emphasize Indigenous Peoples' continued presence and relevance to today's Markham; and to highlight reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples as a key objective in building Markham towards the future.

We did not observe meaningful mention of Indigenous Peoples in the feedback; this indicates to us that while the City has commenced implementing measures to recognize and reconcile with Indigenous Peoples, these efforts need to continue, be expanded and made visible to the entire Markham community. The City should lead and guide Markham and residents towards embracing reconciliation.

2. That the Markham community be better described as "a culturally-diverse community of immigrants and descendants of immigrants, who live and work on traditional Indigenous land".

In Canada, the immigrant experience and identity are often disconnected from recognition of and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples; Markham is well-positioned to take the lead in bringing these together in one seamless vision for community-building.

3. Inclusion should be emphasized as that which strengthens Markham as a community.

Markham is one community that is diverse; it is the mutual respect of differences, i.e. inclusion, that enables all to live together in harmony. Inclusive diversity is what works.

The RRC would like to thank all City staff who provided the indispensable support that made this project possible.

Thank you

Andrew Yu

Chair of the Markham Race Relations Committee