

# Youth Engagement Summary Report

**November 2019**  
**Prepared by Urban Minds**

City of Markham engaged Urban Minds to increase youth participation both online and in-person:

- Creation of a Youth Instagram Contest to drive youth to the BMFT site
- Two in-person pop-ups:
  - Youth event @ Angus Glen CC
  - Markville Mall
- Goals:
  - Educate Youth – youth of today are tomorrow's leaders
  - Collect Feedback – everyone's feedback counts



cityofmarkham

cityofmarkham 🍎 GIVEAWAY CONTEST PART 11:4 DAYS LEFT! We want to hear your input on how we can best serve you in the next 4 years! Register on Your Voice Markham and fill out our survey for Building Markham's Future Together! . Swipe ➡️ to see how you can win!

Spotify Premium winner announced on our stories on September 28! Grand prize winner announced on October 29! Winners must be able to pick up prizes in Markham.

#giveaway #contestgiveaway #contest #win #giveawaycontest #prizes #markham #cityofmarkham #yourvoicemarkham #markhambmft



cityofmarkham

suruthin @varshee\_ @shanusan7 @sharangan09  
9w Reply

tasteleslee @grace.leece @rico.cco @vivianhongxx  
8w Reply

ipkaitlin @jadenzhu @matilda.pez @marin.holmes  
7w 1 like Reply

ipkaitlin @carlyip\_ @maddie.caswell @kailynlyn\_29\_  
7w 1 like Reply

Liked by aaron\_madar and 72 others  
SEPTEMBER 25

Add a comment... Post

cityofmarkham

suruthin @varshee\_ @shanusan7 @sharangan09  
9w Reply

tasteleslee @grace.leece @rico.cco @vivianhongxx  
8w Reply

jennnnle @toekneerad @runnybutt @vonsing !!!  
7w Reply

suruthin Where do we pick up the prize  
6w Reply

Liked by aaron\_madar and 49 others  
SEPTEMBER 29

Add a comment... Post



# Youth Instagram Contest



ENTRIES

17

12

8

3



COMMENTS

48

14

20

3



DAYS

35

28

14

5

\*Based on number of entries into grand prize (Fitbit Inspire HR); does not include completed surveys from pop-up engagements. City of Markham to verify actual number of completed surveys through Your Voice Markham.



City of Markham

Published by Sprout Social (7) - October 5

We're so please to see how engaged our youth is last night at the Markham Mayor's Youth Council's network event! Our youth are our future, so tell us what priorities you think we should be focused on - Complete our survey and win great prizes at [YourVoiceMarkham.ca/BMFT](http://YourVoiceMarkham.ca/BMFT)

Follow us on Instagram and get a chance to win great prizes, like Michael Lee did! He followed us on Instagram and filled out our survey online and won a 3-month superscription to Spotify Premium. Go to [Markham.ca/StrategicPlan](http://Markham.ca/StrategicPlan) to learn how to win.



1,588

People Reached

109

Engagements

Boost Post

## “What’s your pick?”



**Safety & Sustainability**

93  
picks



**Diversity & Economy**

30  
picks



**Stewardship of Resources**

16  
picks



**Customer Service**

13  
picks

At the pop-ups, we talked to

152



people

95

high school students

57

young children and adult residents



**BUILDING MARKHAM'S  
FUTURE TOGETHER**  
2020-2023 Strategic Plan

Tell us how we can better serve you in the next 4 years!

## HOW TO PLAY

- 1 Spin the wheel + Answer a trivia question
- 2 Take a Timbit + Vote with your toothpick

Which of the following is the most important to you?



**Customer Service**

Excellent services provided in person, on the phone or online

**Things we measure:**  
- Customer satisfaction  
- Employee engagement  
- Digital services available online



**Diversity & Economy**

Inclusive community and a strong, growing economy

**Things we measure:**  
- Economic growth  
- Cultural vibrancy  
- Positive City brand



**Safety & Sustainability**

Protecting people, infrastructure and the natural environment

**Things we measure:**  
- Environmental targets  
- Range of housing options  
- Progress of infrastructure development



**Stewardship of Resources**

Responsible, transparent use of money and resources

**Things we measure:**  
- Government transparency  
- Growing City buildings use and maintenance  
- Property tax per capita



Learn more at [markham.ca/StrategicPlan](http://markham.ca/StrategicPlan)

# Youth Engagement Summary Report



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**November 2019**

Prepared by Urban Minds  
for City forMarkham



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A group of four students are gathered around a table in a workshop-like setting. A male student in a white shirt with a blue and red stripe stands behind the table, which holds a circular game board with segments labeled 'POWER', 'ART', 'SUSTAINABILITY', and 'RESILIENCE'. The board is positioned over a tray of small, round food items on sticks. A female student in a blue dress is in the foreground, looking at the board. To her left, another female student in a grey jacket is also looking at the board. On the right, a male student in a blue plaid shirt is looking at a tablet device. The table has a blue cloth with the word 'ARKHAM' visible. The background shows a brick wall and some industrial equipment.

1

## Project Background

# Building Markham's Future Together: 2020-2023 Strategic Plan



The City of Markham is updating its strategic plan for the next four years. The plan serves as an important guiding document for Council and senior staff as they make decisions for the future of Markham. The City embarked on a month-long public engagement process to identify goals and priorities that resonate most with residents and stakeholders.

# Why engage youth?

As the City plans for its future, it is important to highlight the value of engaging youth in the conversation. In the span of four years, youth ages of 13 to 19 today will come of age. Many will become voting residents, either continue their education or start their careers, and eventually build families in Markham.

At the same time, both City staff and our team recognize the unique challenge of reaching out to this demographic. Unlike adults, youth often do not participate in civic engagement initiatives and are largely under-represented.



Images: Markham Youth Expo



# The Team



Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT) is led by the City of Markham who enlisted Urban Minds to conduct youth engagement.

During the engagement process, Urban Minds worked with City staff to increase youth participation, both in-person and online.

# Objectives

1. **Educate youth** on City's role in building infrastructure and providing services
2. **Collect feedback** from youth on City's four new strategic priorities
3. **Increase long-term retention** of youth participants





## 2: How did the Community Participate?

# Engagement Timeline

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>September 23</b> | BMFT Launch & Open House (Markham Civic Centre) |
| <b>September 24</b> | Youth Instagram Contest Launch                  |
| <b>October 4</b>    | Collage pop-up (Angus Glen Community Centre)    |
| <b>October 26</b>   | Markville Mall pop-up                           |
| <b>October 29</b>   | End of Youth Instagram Contest                  |

# Youth Instagram Contest

Urban Minds assisted the City of Markham in creating and launching the Youth Instagram Contest aimed to drive youth to register on the Your Voice Markham platform and complete the BMFT survey.

Prizes were selected based on consultation with youth, including one \$30 Spotify gift card, one \$50 Cineplex gift card, one \$50 Zumiez gift card, and one Fitbit Inspire HR.

From September 23 to October 29, Urban Minds reached out to different youth organizations in Markham to share the contest.



# Pop-Up Engagements



Urban Minds designed and facilitated interactive activities that catered to youth in order to collect feedback in a fun, casual, and engaging manner:

1. Spin-the-wheel trivia about the City of Markham
2. Free Timbits on toothpicks; toothpicks used to vote on top “pick” of the four BMFT goals (Customer Service, Diversity & Economy, Safety & Sustainability, Stewardship of Resources)

Informational graphic panels were displayed at each pop-up engagement, explaining how to play, the four BMFT goals, and promoting the Youth Instagram Contest.

# Pop-Up Engagements

Urban Minds held pop-up engagements at Angus Glen Community Centre as part of the “Collage” event hosted by Markham Mayor’s Youth Council on October 4, and at Markville Mall on October 26 alongside the Mayor and City staff.

Two staff members and two youth ambassadors from Urban Minds were present to facilitate the interactive activities at each pop-up engagement. City staff were given materials to run an additional pop-up at First Markham Place on October 26.

The booth was set up in places where community members would typically go, pass through, or gather. This method was great for capturing thoughts from those who might not have known about the initiative and would not have otherwise participated.








# 3 Engagement Results at a Glance

# Youth Instagram Contest



|  |           |           |           |          |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
|  <b>ENTRIES</b>  | <b>17</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>8</b>  | <b>3</b> |
|  <b>COMMENTS</b> | <b>48</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>3</b> |
|  <b>DAYS</b>     | <b>35</b> | <b>28</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>5</b> |

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# At the pop-ups, we talked to

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## "What's your pick?"



**Safety &  
Sustainability**

**93  
picks**

OCT 4:



58 picks

OCT 26:



35 picks



**Diversity &  
Economy**

**30  
picks**

OCT 4:



20 picks

OCT 26:



10 picks



**Stewardship  
of Resources**

**16  
picks**

OCT 4:



10 picks

OCT 26:



6 picks



**Customer  
Service**

**13  
picks**

OCT 4:



7 picks

OCT 26:



6 picks





# 4 Recommendations



# Youth Instagram Contest

Instagram is the **main social media platform** that youth engage with on a daily basis. As a result, the Youth Instagram Contest was effective in reaching youth who were already following @cityofmarkham, @urbanmindsto, and other youth organizations.

The **informational graphic panels** displayed at the pop-up engagements were effective in garnering further youth participation as they waited in line to partake in the pop-up activities.

Youth are drawn to **short, catchy videos**. To reach a greater audience of youth in the future, it is recommended that a paid promotional video be created to advertise the initiative.

# Pop-Up Engagements

“Collage” was a highly successful pop-up engagement as we **met youth where they were at**, at an event created solely for high school students.

Although Markville Mall would have been a great location to meet youth, the **timing** of the pop-up engagement was not best suited for youth who typically visit the mall mid to late afternoon. We spent the busiest time of the pop-up, between 12PM to 1PM, engaging mostly families with young children who were headed to the food court for lunch.



# Pop-Up Engagements



While the interactive activities were designed to cater to high school students, they also proved to be appealing to young children and older adults alike. Participants enjoyed the act of spinning the wheel to win a free Timbit while also learning fun facts about the City of Markham. It is recommended that the City of Markham follow a similar model for future youth engagement that is **fast, fun, and offers free food**.

Based on the success of the Collage pop-up engagement, it is recommended that the City of Markham continue to **piggyback on events organized for youth**, particularly those organized by Markham Mayor's Youth Council.

# Pop-Up Engagements

The City of Markham should consider **reducing the length of the online survey** to a maximum of 3 minutes as youth tend to lose interest quickly. Any open-ended questions should be moved to the end so as not to intimidate and deter youth from filling it out.

As youth today are digital natives, many of them have already learned to be protective of their digital privacy. This means that they are weary of registering online for anything that asks for personal information. **Printed short surveys** at pop-ups would provide a good alternative.





# 5 Next Steps





# Learning from the data

Nearly two thirds of all respondents picked “Safety & Sustainability” as their top priority for the future of the City of Markham. A larger portion of high school students, compared to younger children and older adults, picked “Safety & Sustainability” over all other goals.

These results spoke loud and clear that **youth in Markham today are very concerned about safety and sustainability**. This aligns with their heightened sense of urgency for climate action as exemplified in the recent climate strike across the world. Issues of bullying and traffic safety are also close to home for many teenagers.



Image Source: CP24

# Learning from the data



Image Source: Markham Review

- At 20% of votes, the second priority was “Diversity & Economy”. Markham is one of Canada’s most diverse communities and the makeup of the youth that we engaged with was a very clear reflection of this diversity. They expressed the importance of a **vibrant community that celebrates and preserves the spirit of diversity**.

Moving forward, the City of Markham should invest more resources into projects and initiatives related to sustainability and safety. **Fostering civic participation among youth** is key to Building Markham’s Future Together.



**BUILDING MARKHAM'S  
FUTURE TOGETHER**  
2015-2019 Strategic Plan

