



Report to: General Committee

Meeting Date: February 3, 2020

SUBJECT: City of Markham Gateway Master Plan Report
PREPARED BY: Raymond Law, Sr. Mgr. of Business, Fleet and Public Realm
Tanya Lewinberg, Public Realm Coordinator

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report dated October 2019 entitled "City of Markham Gateway Master Plan" be received; and,
2. That the strategies and guidelines outlined in the Gateway Master Plan (attachment "A") be endorsed; and further,
3. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The Gateway Mater Plan (GMP) was established to ensure the City undertakes the development of gateways, using a methodical, practical and creative process. The GMP identifies and defines a hierarchy of gateway locations, based on an approved criterion of perimeter and internal locations. The GMP will inform decision-making, funding applications, development and redevelopment and partnership opportunities for gateway development in the City of Markham.

BACKGROUND:

Through gateway exploration and development there is an opportunity to bring awareness to Markham's history, culture, growth and direction. The City's diverse set of partners and stakeholders make it challenging to identify and coordinate a message relevant and compelling to all audiences. The GMP creates a rationale for identified locations, based on the City's Official Plan and other relevant documentation (see Section 4 and Appendix A of the GMP for the Land Use Policy Background) to identify the most important locations to highlight the way Markham, as a unified City of small villages, lives, works and plays.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The GMP defines gateways as markers that indicate entrance to or exit from, the City as a whole and to its' important neighbourhoods, districts and other unique locations within Markham (see section 3 of the GMP – What are Gateways). It is intended to be a living document to be added to, from time to time, as communities mature and place making happens. The GMP identifies and highlights significant entry points, both at the City's boundary, and to important places within, while remaining in control of gateway development.

It is important to note the difference between a gateway and a subdivision entrance feature. A gateway identifies an established place, while a subdivision entrance feature defines a developed space. As the community areas identified within the GMP (encompassing potentially several subdivisions) grow, gateway projects can be undertaken when community interest, development, partnerships or granting opportunities arise.

The GMP process included consultation with internal and external stakeholders, and online public engagement (see Appendix B of the GMP for summary of stakeholder and public consultation), as well as policy reviews, site visits to all potential gateway locations (see Appendix C of the GMP for specific sites). Through this background work, two overarching gateway typologies were established: Perimeter and Internal gateways. Perimeter gateways are located at important Markham boundaries and express to users that they are entering the City. Internal gateways highlight unique areas within the boundary of the City. Sub-typologies have been created to highlight key entrances to unique features of the gateways and to provide for a clear hierarchy with the ability to function individually and as a system. The Perimeter and Internal sub-typologies address the specific location, role and function of individual gateways.

Perimeter gateways, identifying Markham's boundaries, are located at high traffic intersections, interchanges and transit nodes. The main visual cue of Perimeter gateways is the City's identity as a whole and are divided into the following sub-typologies:

- Urban
- Rural
- Rouge National Urban Park
- Public Transportation
- 400 Series Highway

Internal gateways are intended to highlight entrances to Markham's established major mixed use and employment areas, public transportation hubs and Rouge National Urban Park. The main visual cues of the Internal gateways express the City's locational identity first, followed by the City's identity and are divided into the following sub-typologies:

- Centres
- Heritage
- Public Transportation
- Rouge National Urban Park

For specific locations, please see section 5 of the GMP.

In addition to identifying locations and establishing typologies, the GMP also includes simple and effective Design Guidelines (see section 6 of the GMP) to support the process of developing gateways that leave a lasting impression, showcase public art and support the development of Markham's green and cultural assets as destinations. These design considerations include: location, scale, orientation, transition to buildings, typeface, public art, plantings and lighting. The GMP explores different gateway design elements, to provide design direction on creating distinguishable gateways by combining any number of elements. Further information is provided on linking gateway typologies. For example, it is recommended all 400-series Highway gateways be visually linked.

Guidelines for community engagement are presented for the different typologies as well as proposing partnership opportunities.

To ensure the gateway development goals outlined in this plan are met, a gateway implementation and approval process has been developed, with final approvals for projects endorsed by Council. A cross-commission working group will be established, with members from both Development Services and Community and Fire Services, to evaluate potential gateway projects and take them through the review process and to Council. The GMP will position the City for granting opportunities by identifying specific project sites and directions. The GMP presents a unified perspective on the gateway opportunities, appropriate context and interrelatedness of sites, while creating a process for project development and evaluation.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

NA

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

NA

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

NA

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Planning, Urban Design, Culture, & Economic Development were part of the staff steering committee for the project.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Morgan Jones
Director, Operations

Brenda Librecz
Commissioner, Community & Fire
Services

ATTACHMENTS:

City of Markham Gateway Master Plan
City of Markham Gateway Master Plan Presentation