



## **BRIEFING NOTE**

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services

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Date: April 20, 2023

**Re: Formal Launch of the Sustainability Metrics as part of Development Application Review**

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### **PURPOSE/ISSUE:**

This memo is to inform the Mayor and Members of Council that the formal launch of Markham's Sustainability Metrics Program will be in June 2023. Council endorsed the Sustainability Metrics as Markham's green development standard in [May 2022](#). The Sustainability Metrics 'scoring tool' will be a submission document provided as part of an application for Plan of Subdivision and Site Plan Control to demonstrate how applications are achieving the minimum sustainability score endorsed by Council. The Sustainability Metrics builds on Markham's leadership in green building through past initiatives such as the requirement for medium and high density residential buildings to be certified to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) 'Silver' standards and the Markham Centre Performance Measures.

### **BACKGROUND:**

#### **Background on the Sustainability Metrics**

- [Council endorsed the Sustainability Metrics](#) as Markham's green development standard in May 2022, and as part of the partnership with the cities of Brampton, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.
- With the formal launch of the Sustainability Metrics, all four municipal partners will require a minimum sustainability score of 27 for Plans of Subdivision and 41 for

Site Plans. In addition, a minimum sustainability score of 55 replaces Markham's LEED Silver requirement for medium and high density developments (see Table 1 below).

- Council also endorsed a [pathway to net zero energy buildings by 2030](#), in keeping with the direction in the City's Municipal Energy Plan, at the May 2022 meeting of the Development Services Committee. Staff will provide a Recommendation Report to Council in late 2023 to confirm the energy performance steps and a verification approach.
- The municipal partners have implemented the original Sustainability Metrics since 2014. The revised Sustainability Metrics were implemented in Brampton starting July 1, 2022 and in Richmond Hill and Vaughan since January 2023. The City of Markham joined the municipal partnership in 2019 to contribute to the update of the Sustainability Metrics.

Table 1 – Sustainability score thresholds to achieve using the Sustainability Assessment Tool (scoring tool).

Performance Level	Draft Plans of Subdivision	Site Plans	Site Plans (for medium and high density residential and mixed use) *
Bronze	27-40	41-61	55-81
Silver	41-49	62-75	82-101
Gold	50+	75+	102+

\* A minimum sustainability score of 55 replaces the LEED Silver requirement for medium and high density residential and mixed use developments

### Background on Green Development Standards

- Green development standards improve the sustainability of new construction by being integrated in the development application review process. They are complementary to third-party green building certification systems such as [LEED](#), [Energy Star](#) for New Homes, and [Passive House](#).
- In addition to Markham and the municipal partners, several municipalities in Ontario are implementing a green development standard, including Toronto, Whitby, Mississauga, and Halton Hills. Other municipalities are preparing a green development standard as part of the development process (e.g., Aurora, Pickering, Ajax).
- While Bill 23 amended the *Planning Act*, including section 41 related to sustainable design, the amendments do not affect the ability of municipalities to implement a green development standard.
- Integrating the Sustainability Metrics into the development application review process considers changes under Bill 109 to meet legislated review timelines and will not delay the processing of applications.

## **STATUS:**

### **Actions Taken Since the May 2022 Council Endorsement**

- Finalized the Sustainability Metrics Program Guidebook as a reference tool for applicants and staff following additional staff review and feedback.
- Developed an Excel-based scoring tool, the Sustainability Assessment Tool, as a new submission document for Plan of Subdivision and Site Plan Control applications to demonstrate the sustainability score. It should be noted that the version of the 'scoring tool' available for applicants in Brampton, Richmond Hill and Vaughan is a web-based form. Markham staff aim to develop a similar web form scoring tool in 2024.
- Held an [information session](#) in November 2022 coordinated by the City of Richmond Hill for all municipal partners to provide an update on the Sustainability Metrics Program to the Building and Land Development Association (BILD).
- Web page has been developed for the Markham Sustainability Metrics Program that will be launched shortly.

## **NEXT STEPS:**

### **Immediate Next Steps**

- Early to Mid May 2023 – Provide a working session for the development community on the Sustainability Assessment Tool and seek final feedback before formally launching the Sustainability Metrics.
- June 2023 - Formal launch of the Sustainability Metrics.

### **Mid Term Next Steps**

- Q2 to Q4 2023 - Research and stakeholder consultation to prepare a Recommendation Report for Q4 2023 to confirm the energy performance targets for buildings and a verification protocol.
- Q4 2023 – Recommendation Report on energy performance of buildings.

### **Longer Term Next Steps**

- 2024 – Undertake a review of financial and non-financial incentives to encourage higher sustainability scores and highest energy performance.
- 2024 – Create a web form to replace the Excel-based Sustainability Assessment Tool, which allows for easier submission of information by applicants and more efficient tracking of program implementation by staff.

- Continuously report on the performance of the City's Sustainability Metrics Program.