



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: April 11, 2016

---

**SUBJECT:** Markham Village Interpretive Project – Status Update  
**PREPARED BY:** Regan Hutcheson, Manager, Heritage Planning, ext 2080

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the staff report entitled “Markham Village Interpretive Project – Status Update”, dated April 11, 2016, be received.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the current status of the Markham Village Interpretive Project, initiated by the Main Street Markham Committee.

**BACKGROUND:**

**The need for interpretation**

The rich history of Markham Village is reflected in the many heritage buildings and sites that are found within the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District. The Heritage District consists of three distinct areas: *Vinegar Hill* (the nucleus of the original settlement), *Markham Village* (north of Highway 7) and *Mount Joy* (north of the railway line). At present, there is minimal historical interpretation to expand on the cultural heritage of Markham Village for the benefit of local residents and visitors.

**Main Street Markham Committee Initiative**

In 1998, the Council created the Main Street Markham (MSM) Committee - a committee of residents, business owners, heritage advocates, ratepayer representatives, environmentalists, and Councillors interested in conserving and enhancing Markham Village. The work of the Committee, still ongoing, is intended in part:

- to develop a Vision for Main Street Markham that would make the street a pleasant place to work, to shop, to play and to live; and
- to recommend to Council a series of plans and activities that would enable the Vision to be achieved;

A Vision document was created and part of the Vision includes the development of enhanced interpretive experiences for Main Street.

To address this objective, the Main Street Markham Committee initiated a project to create an innovative interpretive program for Markham Village. The program is to create a “*museum of the streets*” interpretive walking experience with information stations focused on specific themes of importance to Markham Village throughout the village.

**Markham Village Interpretive Project**

The Markham Village Interpretive Project is being undertaken in three phases:

Phase 1 – Research;

---

Phase 2 - Development of Interpretive Messages and Technology; and

Phase 3 - Detailed Design, Production and Installation of Interpretive Panels.

**Comprehensive research and theme development was undertaken as a first step**

The objective for the first phase of the project was primarily research oriented with the following tasks:

- to establish key historical interpretive themes;
- to undertake background research on the village history as well as specific properties to provide the basis for the interpretive material;
- to source imagery, photographs, illustrations, stories, quotations etc, which could be used for the interpretive experience (preparation of a resource file to serve as resource material to be used in subsequent interpretive signage development);
- to determine potential locations and options for the themes to be interpreted

Markham retained Su Murdoch Historical Consulting to undertake research on the cultural heritage of Markham Village and develop key themes for interpretation. The contract amount was \$19,464 and was completed in 2009. The research document is published under separate cover in two parts and is available from the City:

- Markham Village Interpretive Project Final Report, November 2009
- Appendix A: Historical Research Text and Suggested Illustrations and Appendix B: Sources

The objective of this component of the project was to plan for a pedestrian experience with interpretive or “information stations” focused on specific historical themes of local importance. Long term plans included the information stations to be integrated with a guidebook, walking tours and potentially audio recordings.

**Sixteen themes were developed**

Based on the research undertaken, sixteen themes were developed for the three areas that comprise Markham Village. Each theme analysis included: the Theme; Sub-theme(s); Brief History; Key Messages to be Delivered; Resource Availability, Material Availability (location of Material) and Possible Information Station Location(s).

The themes are:

Vinegar Hill (3)

- *Aboriginal Presence in the Rouge Valley*
- *Rouge Valley Mills and Vinegar Hill*
- *Markham Agricultural Fair*

Markham Village (11).

- *Development of Highway 7*
- *Stonehouse Robbery*
- *Markham Village Churches*
- *Speight Wagon Company*
- *Main Street*

- 
- *Markham Village and the Town Hall*
  - *Morgan Park*
  - *Robinson Farm*
  - *Franklin Street Public School*
  - *H.R. Wales Dwelling and Carriage Shop*
  - *The Railway in Markham*

#### Mount Joy (2)

- *History of Mount Joy*
- *Health Care in Mount Joy*

#### **Phase 2 involved the development of interpretive messages**

In 2011, the Main Street Markham Committee modified the scope of work for the second phase. Originally, Phase 2 was to include the creation of the interpretive signage text and illustrations and a supporting brochure to expand upon the themes introduced on the interpretive panels. The concept of a supporting brochure was abandoned in favour of introducing new technology in the form of linking the future on-street, interpretive panels with web-based interpretive material similar to a project in Moncton, NB. This would allow those who have access to technology through smart phones, iPads, etc. to use QR codes or other linking mechanisms to access additional audio and visual materials related to the interpretive panels.

This phase involved the development of the interpretive signage message text and illustrations as a web-based resource. This is now located on the City website and includes an audio-visual aspect and key text messages plus ability to obtain additional information on each of the theme areas. Corporate Communications and Heritage Section staff worked together to develop the landing page, messages and layout on the City's website. The new landing page includes 16 fully accessible video vignettes with sub-titles prepared by Keeframe Productions, and corresponding 150 word descriptions of each theme.

#### **Phase 3 will introduce the interpretive panels into Markham Village**

Phase 3, the final stage of the project, was initiated in 2015, and involves the design, layout and installation of the interpretive panels within Markham Village. Initially, the plan was to retain consulting services to coordinate the layout and design of the interpretive panels, but this task was assumed by staff from Markham's Corporate Communications Department with assistance from Heritage Section staff. The production and installation of the interpretive panels is to be provided by a company specializing in this service. Figure 2 illustrates other similar interpretive panels.

The timing of this phase was delayed by the road and streetscape improvements which were occurring in the core area of Markham Village between 2013-2015.

#### **OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

##### **Design of the interpretive panels**

The preferred interpretive panel design is a pedestal mounted, rectangular panel approximately 24" x 36" in size with a half circle feature centred along the top. Inside

the half circle feature is the Markham Village logo with the words “Markham Village Heritage”. The background colour of the panel will be a light beige similar to the Markham Remembered interpretive panels. Along the bottom of the panel will be a small Markham Remembered logo (to indicate it is part of the Markham Remembered family of interpretation), a QR code and the City of Markham logo. The panel is proposed to be aluminium with SunGlaze enamel or equivalent. See Figure 1.

**Interpretive panel content layout**

The panel content layout is being designed by Corporate Communications staff and will include generally the same interpretive message as found on the website with a variety of illustrations. Accessibility considerations will be addressed including angle and height of the panel as well as font size/type face.

**An orientation panel is desired.**

It has been suggested that the program would benefit from the introduction of an orientation panel to explain the interpretive concept and the theme stations, as well as illustrate where the interpretive panels are located. The plan is to introduce the orientation panel in a central location.

**Location of interpretive panels**

The proposed locations of the interpretive panels are based on the following:

- recommendations from the Phase 1 research project
- detailed review/site walk by Heritage Section staff
- input from Corporate Communications
- review by Operations staff (Roads-East and Public Realm staff)
- review by Main Street Markham Committee

Appendix “A” summarizes the proposed locations for each interpretive panel and is based on the specific theme itself. For those panels which are proposed for private property, permission will be obtained from the owner and may involve a legal agreement.

**Review by Heritage Markham and Main Street Markham Committee**

The design aspects and proposed locations were reviewed by the Main Street Markham Committee on March 16, 2016. The Committee also considered a number of potential names for this interpretive panel program and agreed on “Markham Village Heritage”. Heritage Markham Committee will consider this project as part of a Heritage Permit Application on April 13, 2016.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Funding for the three phases of this project has been approved through the capital budget process in previous years.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not Applicable

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

This project aligns with the policies and recommendations of a number of strategic City documents:

**Markham Official Plan (2014)**

- 4.5.5.4 To commemorate cultural heritage resources, where appropriate, through means such as interpretive signage programs...
- 4.5.5.5. To commemorate significant cultural heritage resources, which have been lost in the past or removed from the property...through a form of interpretation, where appropriate.

**City of Markham Cultural Policy and Plan (2012)**

- Recommendation 1- Work with the community to facilitate cultural activity in public spaces.
- Recommendation 25 – Create or enhance cultural spaces within parks and public buildings for display...

**Integrated Leisure Master Plan (2010)**

- Goal 5 – to design public spaces that actively engage communities, invest in the public realm and create a sense of place and belonging
- Goal 9c – to strengthen Markham's position as a creative community by enhancing and promoting arts, culture and heritage opportunities
- Recommendation 190 – Continue to use the 'Markham Remembered' interpretive plaque program to celebrate and tell the stories of historical sites, people and events throughout the community.

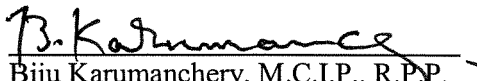
**Main Street Markham Vision Plan**


- In the near future...
  - A program of identifying and interpreting subjects worthy of commemoration is in place.
  - Historical elements in parkettes will include photos, maps and the historical story mounted in a permanent display
  - a walking circuit goes past historical building and sites

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The following have been or are being consulted as part of Phase 3 of the project: Heritage Markham Committee, Main Street Markham Committee, Operations, Legal and Purchasing.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

  
Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Director, Planning and Urban Design

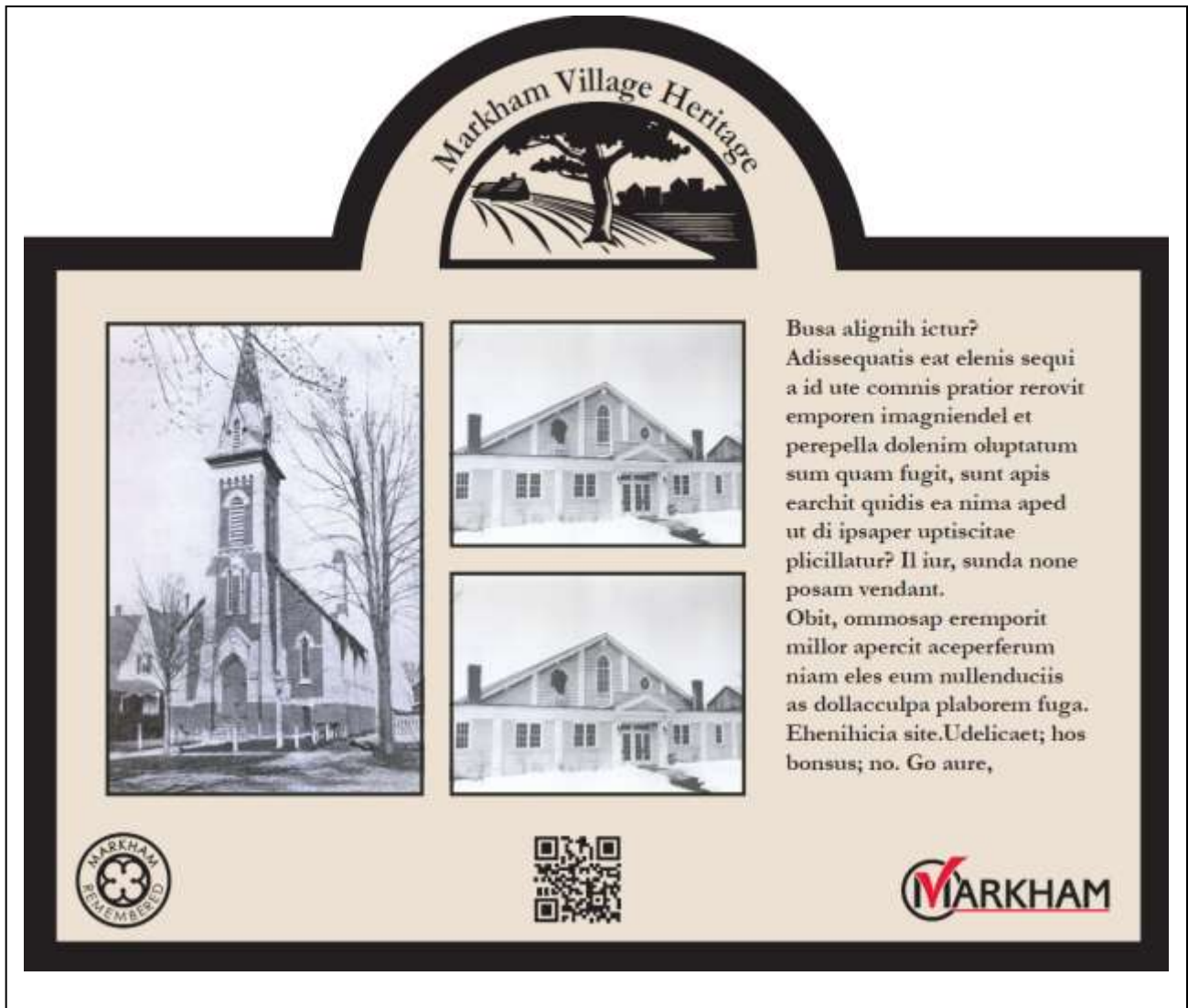
  
Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Commissioner of Development Services.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Figure 1     | Illustration of the Interpretive Panel Design |
| Figure 2     | Examples of Similar Interpretive Panels       |
| Appendix "A" | Proposed Location of the Interpretive Panels  |

File Q:\Development\Heritage\SUBJECT\Main Street Markham Committee\Interpretive Project\DS Committee April 11 2016 Update.doc

**FIGURE 1**  
**Illustration of the Interpretive Panel Design**



## FIGURE 2

### Examples of Similar Interpretive Panels

Interpretive Panel in historic Unionville



Interpretive Panel in Port Perry

Interpretive Panel in Markham Heritage Estates





## APPENDIX “A”

### Proposed Location of the Interpretive Panels

<b>Title of Panel</b>	<b>Preferred Location</b>
<b>Orientation Panel</b>	Town Square Parkette 98 Main St. N. (Private) (this area may be redeveloped in future due to tree replacement and poor condition of wooden timbers)
<b>1. Aboriginal Presence in the Rouge Valley</b>	East side of Main St. S., edge of Markham Village Library property or Main St South Bridge – east side (Public)
<b>2. Rouge Valley Mills &amp; Vinegar Hill</b>	In the new Linear Park – “Vinegar Hill Parkette” (Public)
<b>3. Markham Agricultural Fair</b>	In front of community centre, east of pathway to west entrance, 6031 Highway 7 – keep away from walkway which may be redeveloped as part of Veteran Park plans. (Public)
<b>4. Highway 7</b>	Next to walkway to Starbucks, 5695 Highway 7 (Public-Region)
<b>5. Stonehouse Robbery</b>	Grass boulevard in front of community centre (across Hwy 7 on south side). (Public- Region)
<b>6. Markham Village Churches</b>	Berm in front of 32 Main St (St. Andrew’s United Church)(Private) Alternate Site: paver “bump out” in front of site (Public)
<b>7. Speight Wagon Company</b>	Berm in front of 1 Thompson Court Apartments (Private) Alternate Site: paver “bump out” in front of site. (Public)
<b>8. Main Street</b>	Decorative paver area at NE corner of Main Street North and Robinson Street (Public)
<b>9. Markham Village &amp; Old Town Hall</b>	Old Town Hall 96 Main Street North (not on north side of stairs as this would interfere with Festival stage) (Private)
<b>10. Morgan Park</b>	Morgan Park, Southeast corner of Parkway Ave. & George Street (keep off to side to avoid potential future walkway as part of park redevelopment) (Public)
<b>11. Robinson Farm</b>	Public Boulevard, south side of Parkway Ave, west of Grace Anglican Church. (Public)
<b>12. Franklin Street Public School</b>	Green space east of tennis court (Public) MSM Committee did not support on chain link fence or school wall
<b>13. Henry R. Wales Dwelling &amp; Carriage Works</b>	East side of Main Street North, within road allowance in front of St. Andrew’s Church vacant lot. (Public)
<b>14. The Railway in Markham</b>	Landscape strip at NW corner of Main Street North and Station Street (south of concrete walk into station property). (Public)
<b>15. The History of Mount Joy</b>	266 Main Street North – Dentist Office in old Mount Joy Post Office and General Store. (Public/Private)
<b>16. Health Care in Mount Joy</b>	South end of 300 Main Street North (Public/Private)