

# MARKHAM'S OLDER ADULT STRATEGY

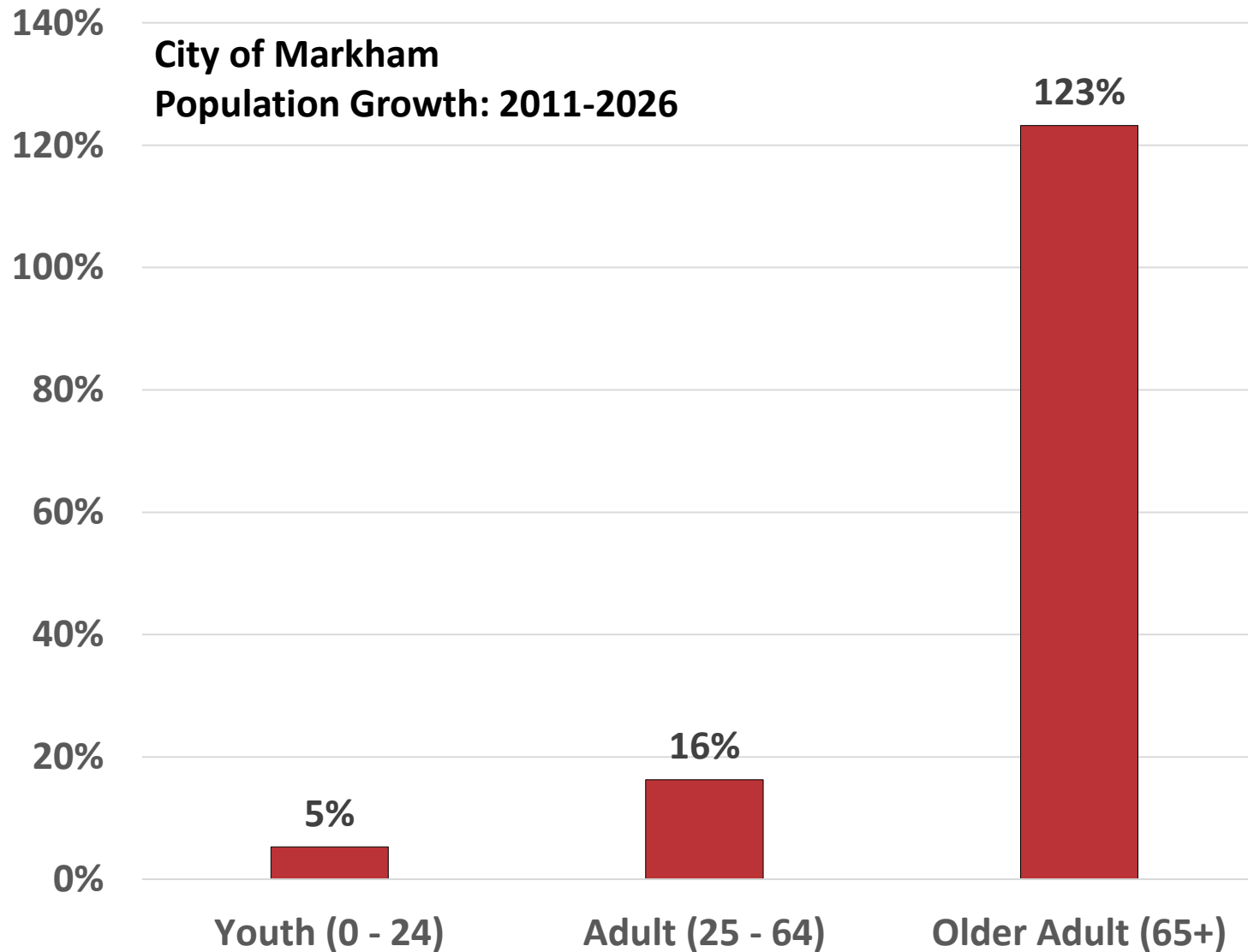


# AGENDA

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 OAS Priorities**
- 3 Related Initiatives**
- 4 Vision & Mission**
- 5 Listening to Markham Residents**
- 6 Goals & Recommended Actions**
- 7 Age Definition**
- 8 Eligibility for Subsidy**
- 9 Conclusions & Next Steps**



# BACKGROUND



- Older adults (**65+**) are the fastest growing segment of Markham's population
- **Older adult population** is forecast to increase by **123%** between 2011 and 2026, compared to only 5% for youths and 16% for adults
- Older adult population growth is projected to outpace future budget increases



# 65+ POPULATION GROWTH BY MARKHAM WARDS

## 2011 vs. 2026



# PURPOSE

- 1) Establish a series of goals, outcomes and recommended actions based on community input to make Markham an Age-Friendly Community**
- 2) Recommend an appropriate age definition for older adults in Markham**
- 3) Recommend an affordable and sustainable subsidy framework for older adult programs and services**



**WHO Global Network  
for Age-friendly Cities  
and Communities**

# AGE-FRIENDLY

## What is an age-friendly community?

- Age-friendly communities promote healthy active aging by delivering policies, programs, services and spaces that help residents maintain their independence as they age (*Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, 2015*)
- Age-friendly communities share the following principles:
  - Recognize the wide range of capacities and resources of older adults
  - Flexibly respond to aging-related needs and preferences
  - Promote participation and contribution to community life
  - Respect lifestyle choices of older adults
  - Support vulnerable older adults

# OAS PRIORITIES

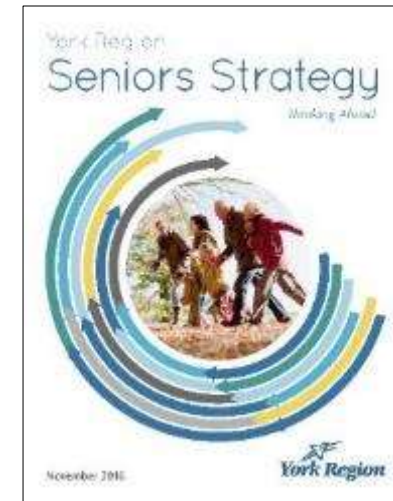
The OAS has focused on the following six dimensions:

-  **Community Support Services**
-  **Outdoor Spaces & Buildings**
-  **Social Participation**
-  **Respect & Social Inclusion**
-  **Civic Participation & Employment**
-  **Communication & Information**





# RELATED INITIATIVES



# OLDER ADULTS STRATEGY



# Older Adult Strategy

## Vision & Mission

### VISION

Markham – a leading Age-Friendly Community in Canada – is responsive to older adult citizens and promotes independence, respect, innovation, diversity and community engagement.

### MISSION

The City of Markham will provide spaces, programs and services that are inclusive, flexible and accessible for older adult citizens of all backgrounds and abilities.



# LISTENING TO MARKHAM RESIDENTS

## CITY COUNCIL

- One-on-one Interviews with Mayor and each member of City Council to identify local issues (x9)



## MUNICIPAL STAFF

### Meetings (x3)

- Meetings with Executive Leadership Team, comprised of staff from various departments at the City of Markham

### Staff Survey

- 210+ responses



## PUBLIC INPUT



### Public Survey

- **970 responses**
- Available in all community centre and public libraries (paper and electronic)
- Majority completed online

### Public Workshops (x4)

- 150+ residents participated and 300+ community partners were directly invited
- 54% of participants had completed the survey

## OAS TEAM

### Meetings (x3)

- Meetings with Markham Seniors Advisory Committee



## AGE FRIENDLY GUIDELINES

- Ontario Seniors Secretariat Age Friendly Communities



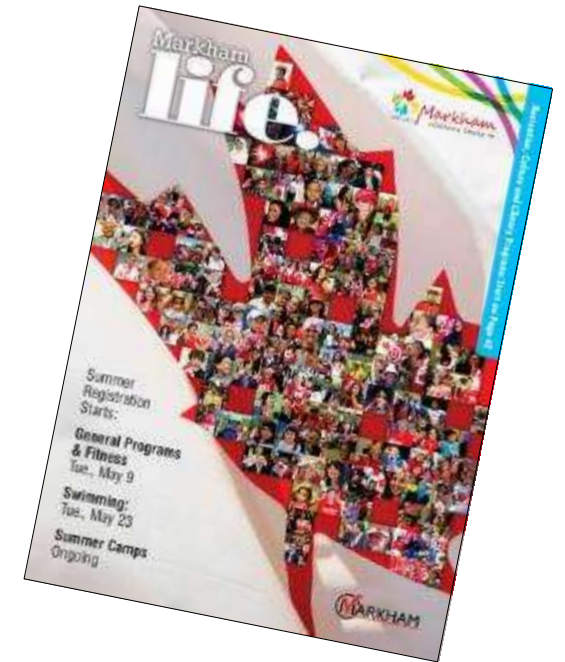
- World Health Organization Age Friendly Cities & Communities Network



# WHAT WE HEARD FROM MARKHAM RESIDENTS

The **most important improvements** according to feedback from older adults in Markham included:

- 1) Coordinate Communication to Connect users to service**
- 2) Removing Barriers to Participate**
- 3) Preparing for Different Needs as we Age**







# **Purpose #1**

Transforming the City of Markham  
Into An  
Age Friendly Community

# GOALS & RECOMMENDED ACTIONS



## COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

- 3 OUTCOMES
- 7 ACTIONS
- 4 PERFORMANCE MEASURES



## OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

- 3 OUTCOMES
- 15 ACTIONS
- 5 PERFORMANCE MEASURES



## SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

- 4 OUTCOMES
- 16 ACTIONS
- 6 PERFORMANCE MEASURES



## RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

- 4 OUTCOMES
- 7 ACTIONS
- 3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES



## CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

- 2 OUTCOMES
- 5 ACTIONS
- 3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES



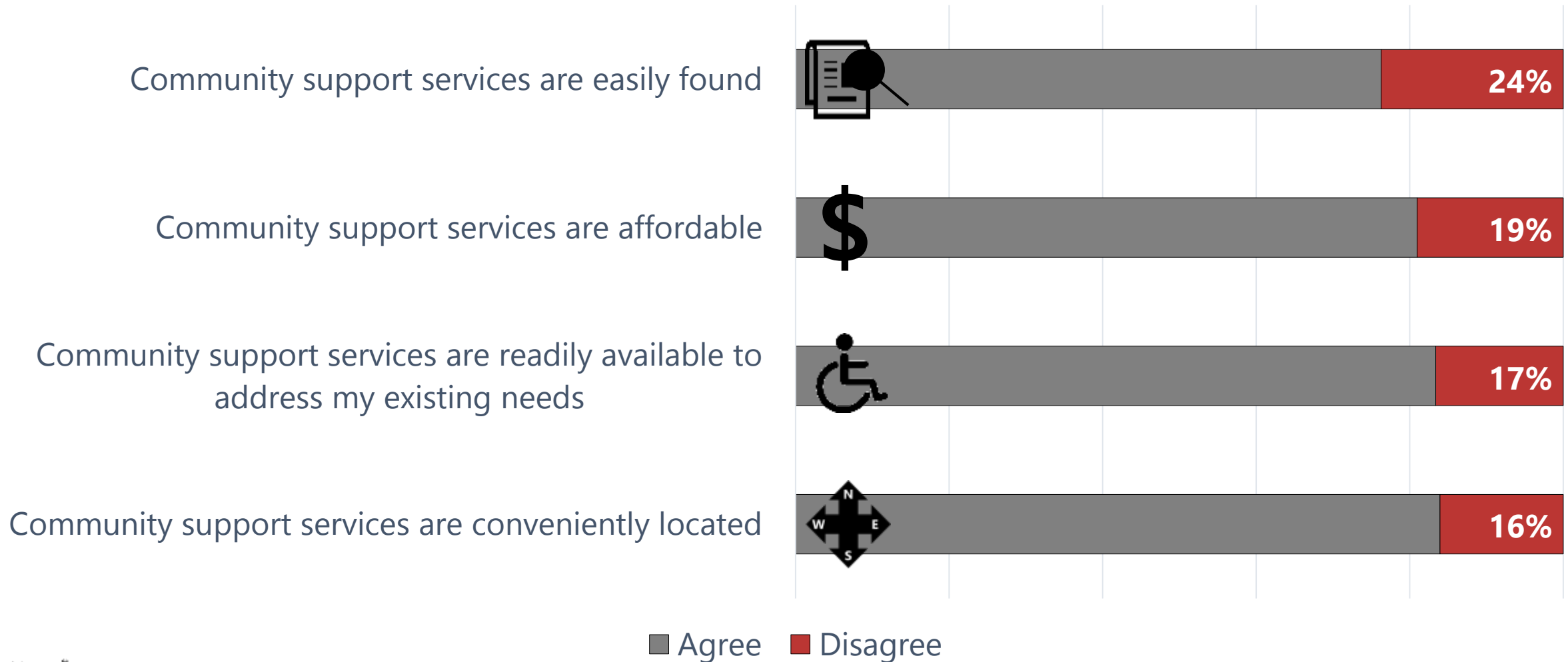
## COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

- 4 OUTCOMES
- 15 ACTIONS
- 3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

WHAT WE HEARD  
FROM MARKHAM  
RESIDENTS

## Agreement with Statements Regarding Community Support Services in Markham





# **COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

**GOAL:** The City of Markham will work collaboratively with local agencies, community organizations, private businesses, citizens and other community partners to ensure that a broad range of community support services are available across Markham

## **OUTCOMES**

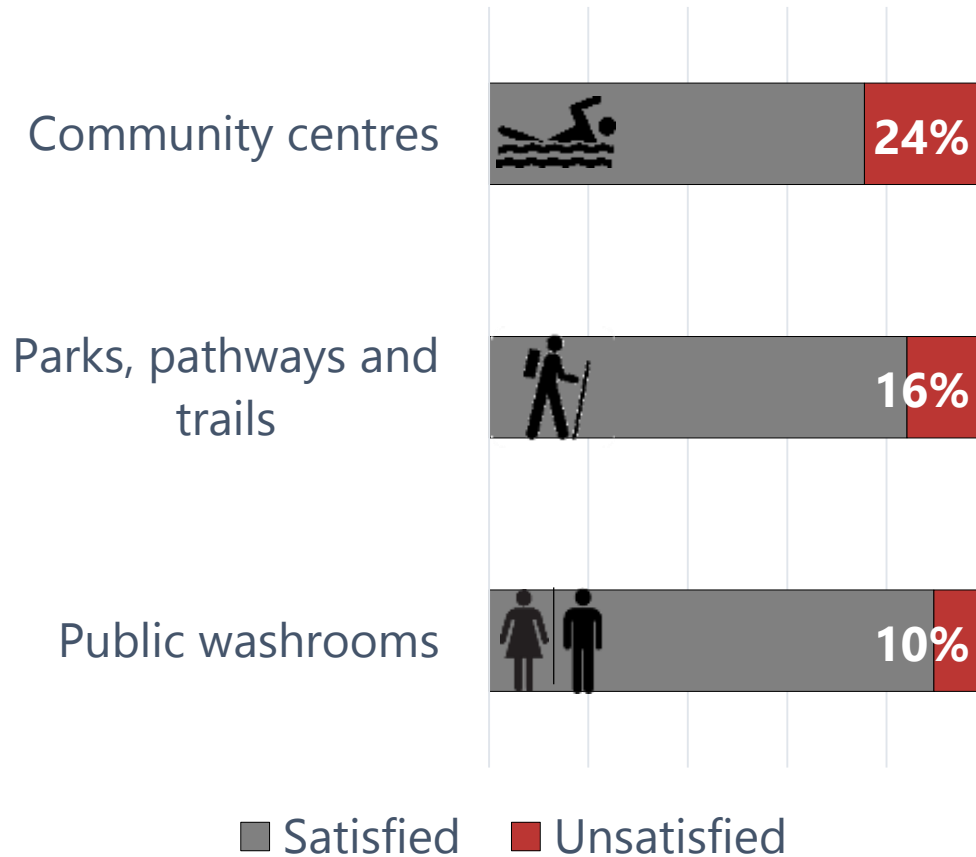
- 1.1** Ensuring for a coordinated delivery model to improve the clarity of roles of community support services resulting in increased access for older adults in Markham.
- 1.2** Ensuring that community support services for older adults in Markham are easy to identify.
- 1.3** Improving the affordability of community support services available for older adults in Markham.



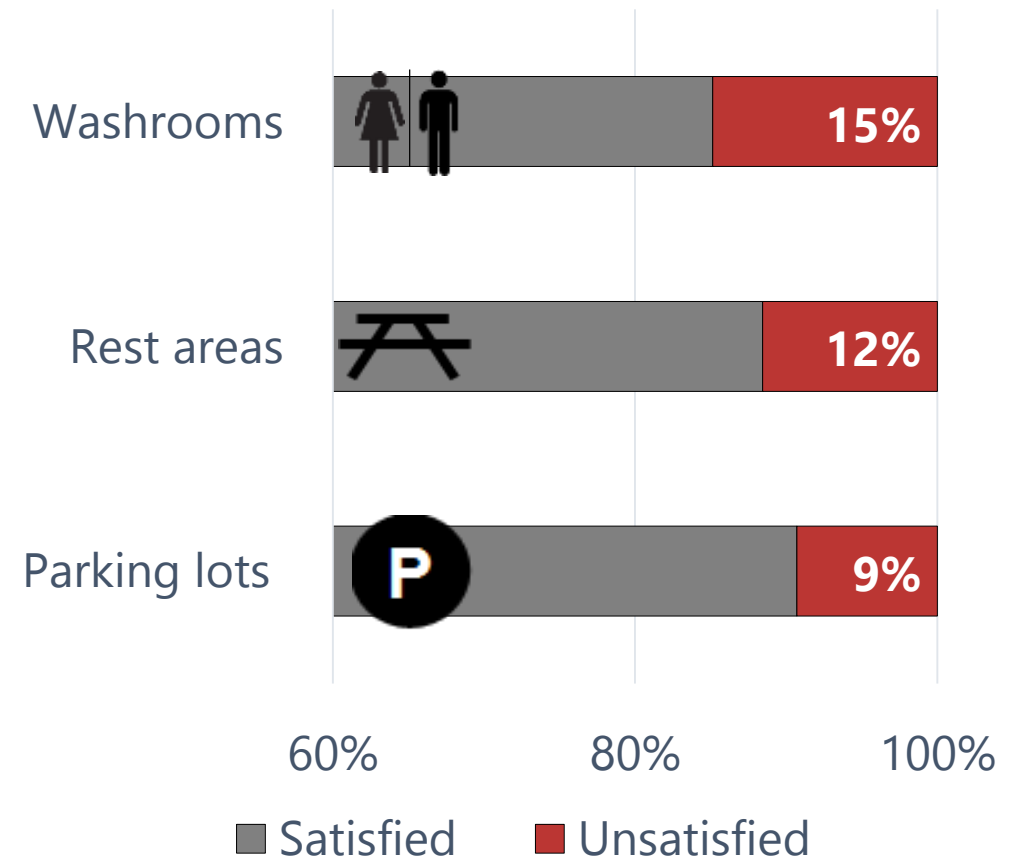
# OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

WHAT WE HEARD  
FROM MARKHAM  
RESIDENTS

Satisfaction with the Quality of  
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings in  
Markham



Satisfaction with the Accessibility of  
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings in  
Markham



# **OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS**

**GOAL:** The City of Markham will ensure that there is equitable access to City roads, trails, pathways, parks and facilities for older adult residents through the implementation of sustainable community planning and infrastructure management

## **OUTCOMES**

- 2.1** Improving the quality and coverage of seating nodes (i.e. rest areas) throughout the City
- 2.2** Improving the coverage and maintenance of public washroom facilities throughout the City
- 2.3** Align with Age Friendly practices to effectively manage facilities and infrastructure in Markham for all residents

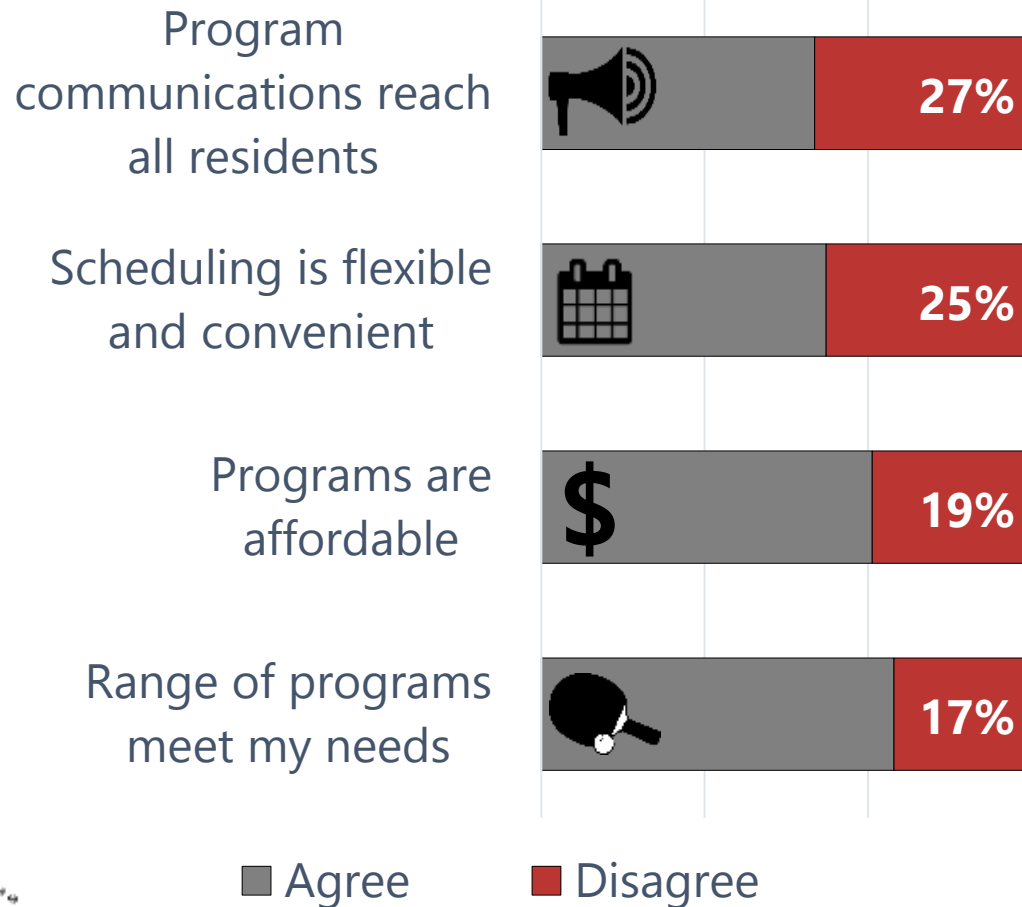




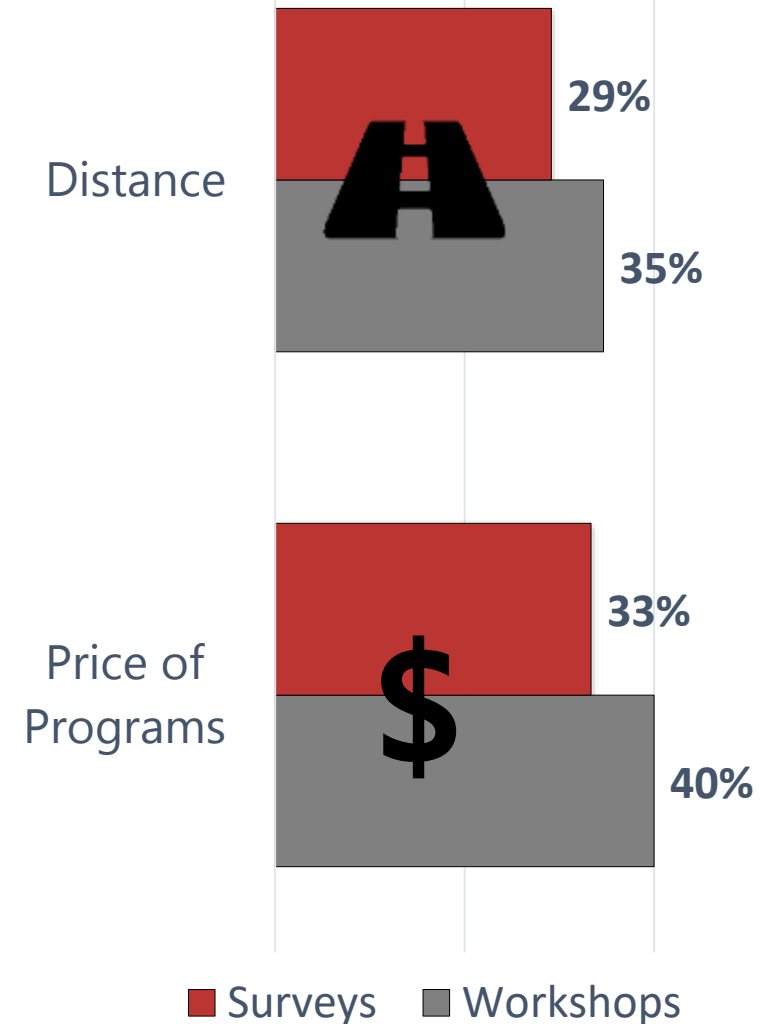
# SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

WHAT WE HEARD  
FROM MARKHAM  
RESIDENTS

## Agreement with Statements About City of Markham Programs and Facilities



## Primary Barriers to Participation





# SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

**GOAL:** The City of Markham will encourage social participation and community engagement by delivering programs and services that reflect the dynamic needs and expectations of older adult residents

## OUTCOMES

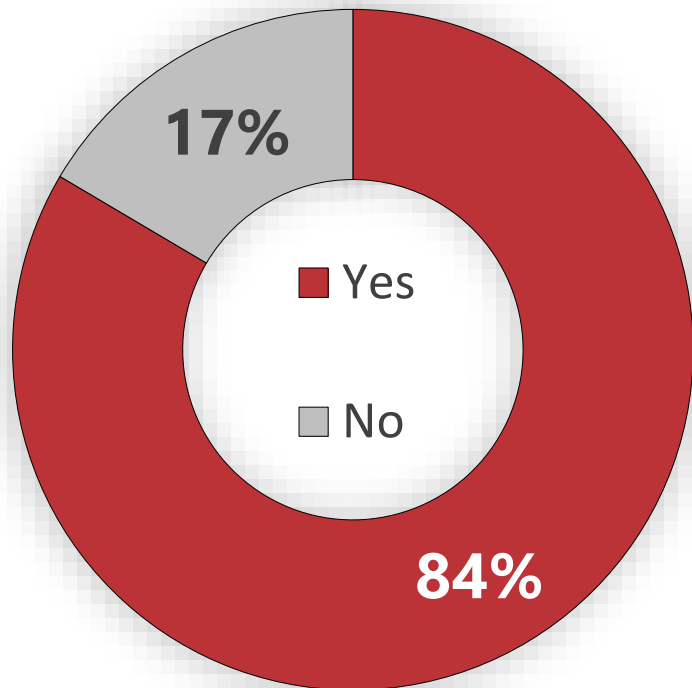
- 3.1** Delivering clear, concise communications about new social, leisure and recreation programs to a diverse audience
- 3.2** Increasing the variety and flexibility of social, leisure, educational and recreation programs
- 3.3** Improving the affordability of social, leisure and recreation programs
- 3.4** Proactively addressing changes in demand for social, leisure and recreation programs



# RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

WHAT WE HEARD  
FROM MARKHAM  
RESIDENTS

Is your opinion  
valued in Markham?

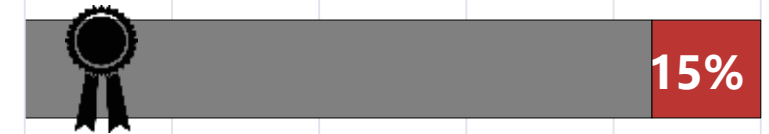


Agreement with Statements Regarding Respect and  
Social Inclusion in Markham

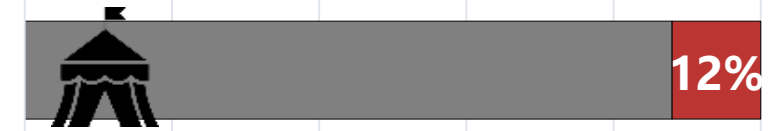
Older adults are regularly invited  
to provide input on public issues



Contributions by older adults are  
recognized and valued in the  
community



Community events are offered  
that appeal to older adults



■ Agree

■ Disagree





# RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

**GOAL:** The City of Markham will promote respect and social inclusion for older adult residents of by embracing diversity, inclusivity and compassion, in order to create a more interconnected community

## OUTCOMES

- 4.1** Providing more opportunities for older adults to provide public input
- 4.2** Ensuring that older adults continued to be recognized for their contributions in the local community
- 4.3** Providing opportunities and environments that promote social integration, where residents can learn various cultures and celebrate diversity in Markham
- 4.4** Ensure that events hosted by the City are accessible and appealing to older adults in the community.



# CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

WHAT WE HEARD  
FROM MARKHAM  
RESIDENTS

## Agreement with Statements Regarding Opportunities for Civic Participation and Employment in Markham





# CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

**GOAL:** The City of Markham will demonstrate leadership with respect to employment and volunteerism by identifying opportunities for older adult residents to work or volunteer with the City and community partners to make a meaningful impact in the local community

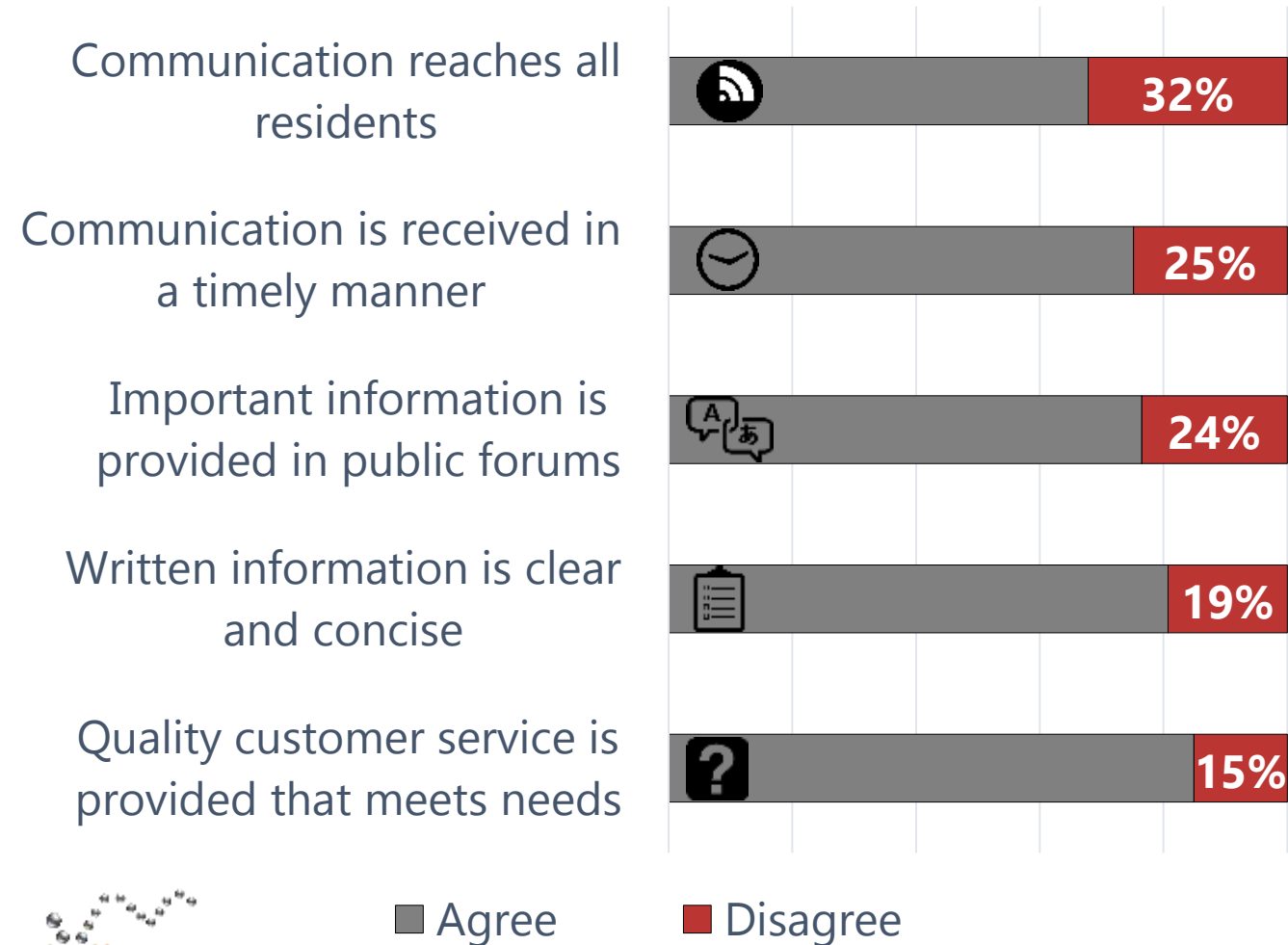
## OUTCOMES

- 5.1** Advocate to increase awareness of skills, knowledge and life experiences of our older adults, so that older adults can make meaningful ongoing contributions to the local community
- 5.2** Ensuring that there is adequate representation from older adults on boards and committees

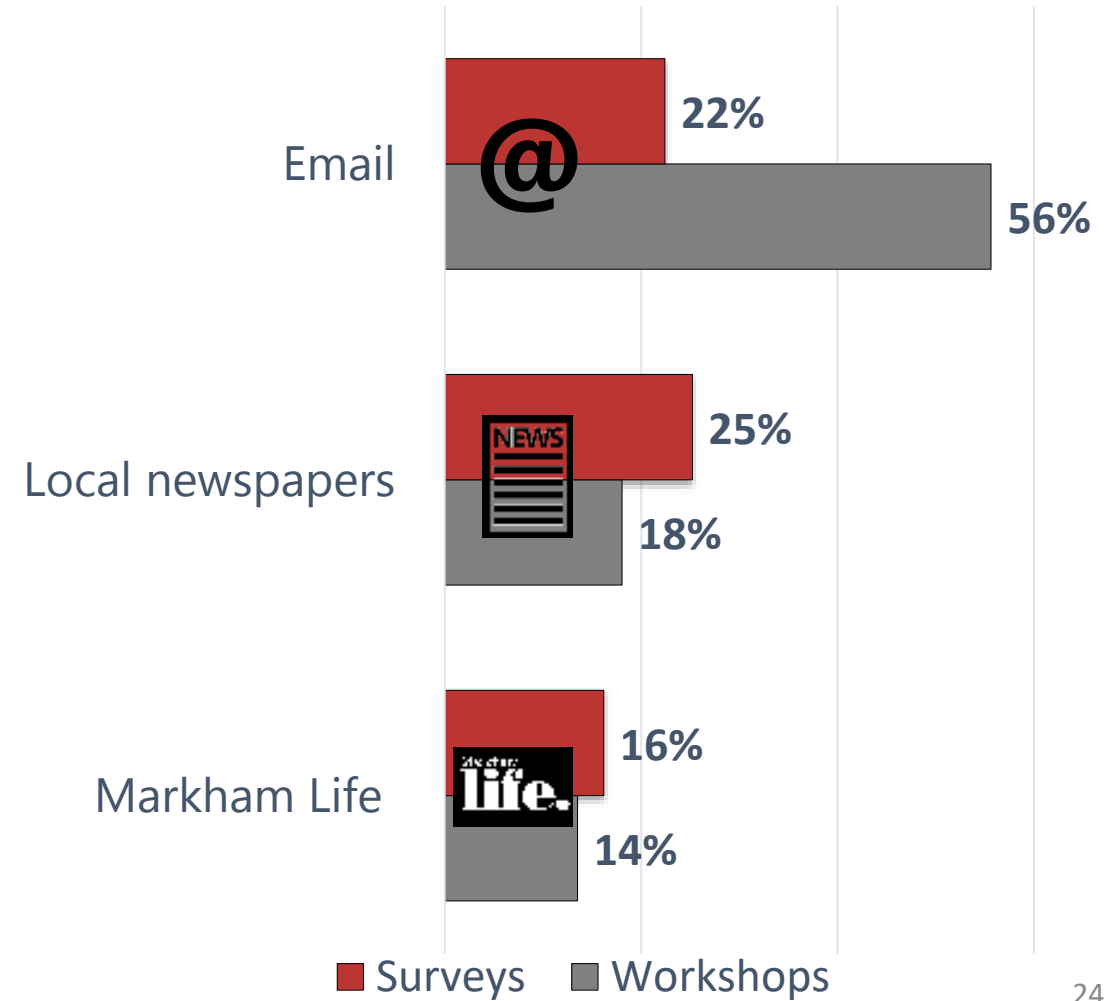
# COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

WHAT WE HEARD  
FROM MARKHAM  
RESIDENTS

## Agreement with Statements Regarding Communications and Information in Markham



## Preferred Methods of Communication for Older Adults in Markham



# **COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION**

**GOAL:** The City of Markham will deliver communications in multiple formats to ensure that all residents have unencumbered access to information about the programs and services available in the community

## **OUTCOMES**

- 6.1** Coordinating a centralized, interactive database of programs and services from all community partners that deliver services to older adults
- 6.2** Connecting with local residents using communications that are clear and understandable for all audiences
- 6.3** Ensuring that communications and information distributed by the City are accessible
- 6.4** Ensuring customer service standards address older adult needs





# **OAS Purpose #2**

Recommend an  
Age Definition for Older Adults  
In the City of Markham

# AGE DEFINITION

## Current Context

Program or Service	Eligibility	Subsidies
Recreation	55+	Access to Older Adult Clubs ( <i>with annual membership</i> )
	65+	30% discount on adult fees
Windrow Removal *	60+	Free windrow snow removal assistance based on physical ability
Library	65+	Most library services are free; 30% discount on adult fees for paid-programming
Waste Collection & * Assisted Recycling	n/a	Free recycling collection assistance based on physical ability
Pet Licensing	65+	50% discount on standard animal licensing fees
Property Tax	55+*	{ Total or partial deferral of property taxes, with deferred and outstanding taxes not exceeding 75% of the assessed value of the property based on income
	65+	
Culture	65+	15% discount on selected tickets at Flato Markham Theatre; 25% discount on all art programs at Varley Art Gallery; and discounted admission to the Markham Museum

\* Additional assessment required

# AGE DEFINITION

Harmonize the definition of older adults across all City departments to:


**RECOMMENDATION:**

**ALL RESIDENTS WHO ARE 65+ YEARS OF AGE**



# AGE DEFINITION

## Rationale

- 1) Consistent with the age definition used by  and other municipalities (e.g. Vaughan, Milton)
- 2) Harmonizing the definition of older adults across all City departments (and with York Region) would help to **minimize confusion and communication** for older adults in Markham
- 3) Future older adult **population growth will greatly outpace all other age segments resulting in budget pressure** – reforms will be necessary to ensure continued commitment to service excellence in Markham



A photograph of an older man, an older woman, and a young child walking away from the camera down a path in a forest. The man is on the left, wearing a dark vest over a light shirt and grey trousers. The woman is on the right, wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers. The child is in the center, wearing a striped shirt and jeans, holding hands with both adults. The path is covered in fallen yellow leaves, and the trees have sparse yellow foliage, suggesting an autumn setting. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

# **OAS Purpose #3**

**Recommend an Affordable and Sustainable  
Subsidy Framework for  
Older Adult Programs and Services**

# ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSIDY

## Current Context

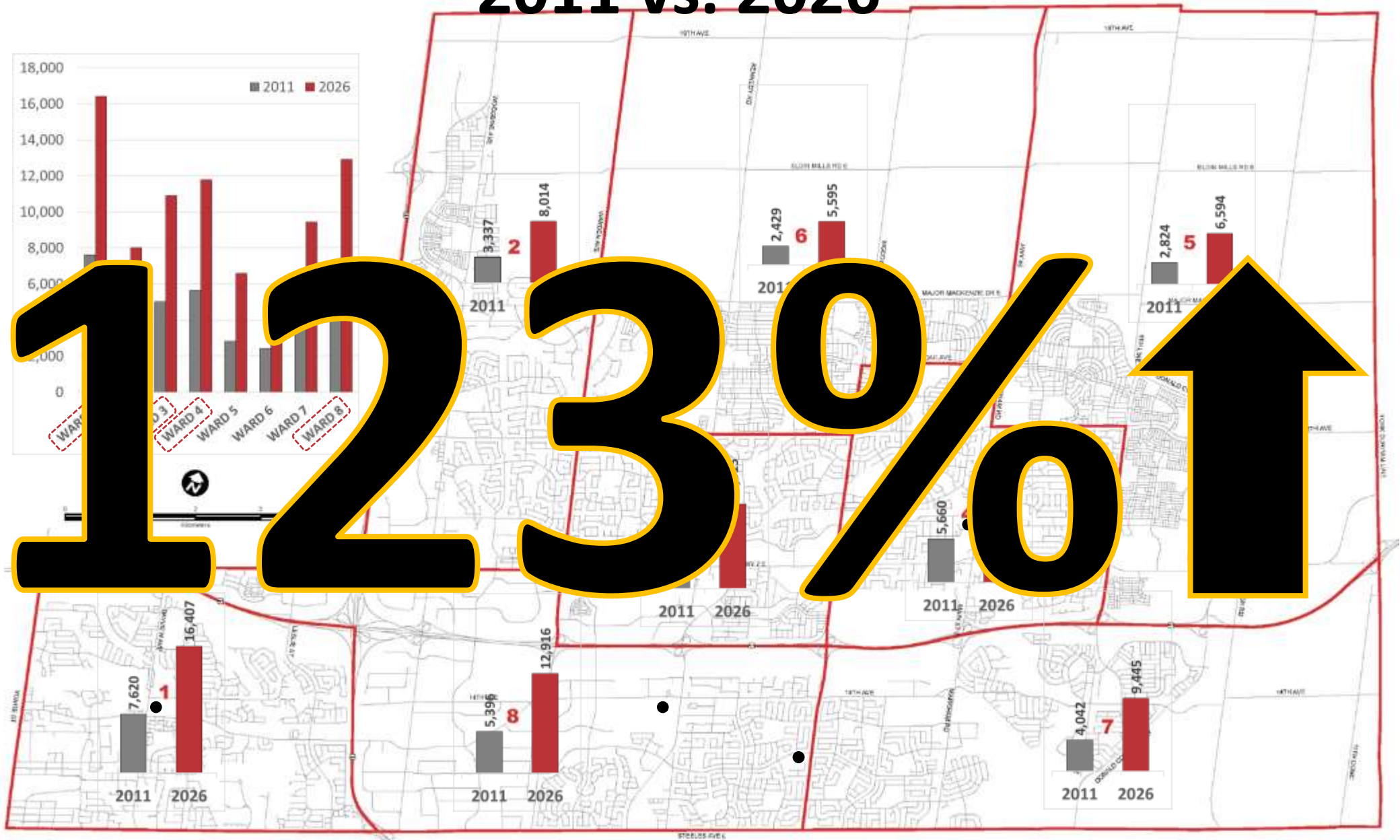
- Stewardship of money and resources is one of the four primary goals of the City's Strategic Plan
- The City's objective is to *“demonstrate sound, transparent and responsible financial and resource management to mitigate risks while ensuring efficient and effective service delivery”*
- Recommendation #104 of the City's ILMP places priority on the subsidy program to reduce financial barriers to participation (e.g. transportation and equipment)
- Age-Friendly Cities adapt services to promote inclusion and open access for older adults with varying needs





# 65+ POPULATION GROWTH BY MARKHAM WARDS

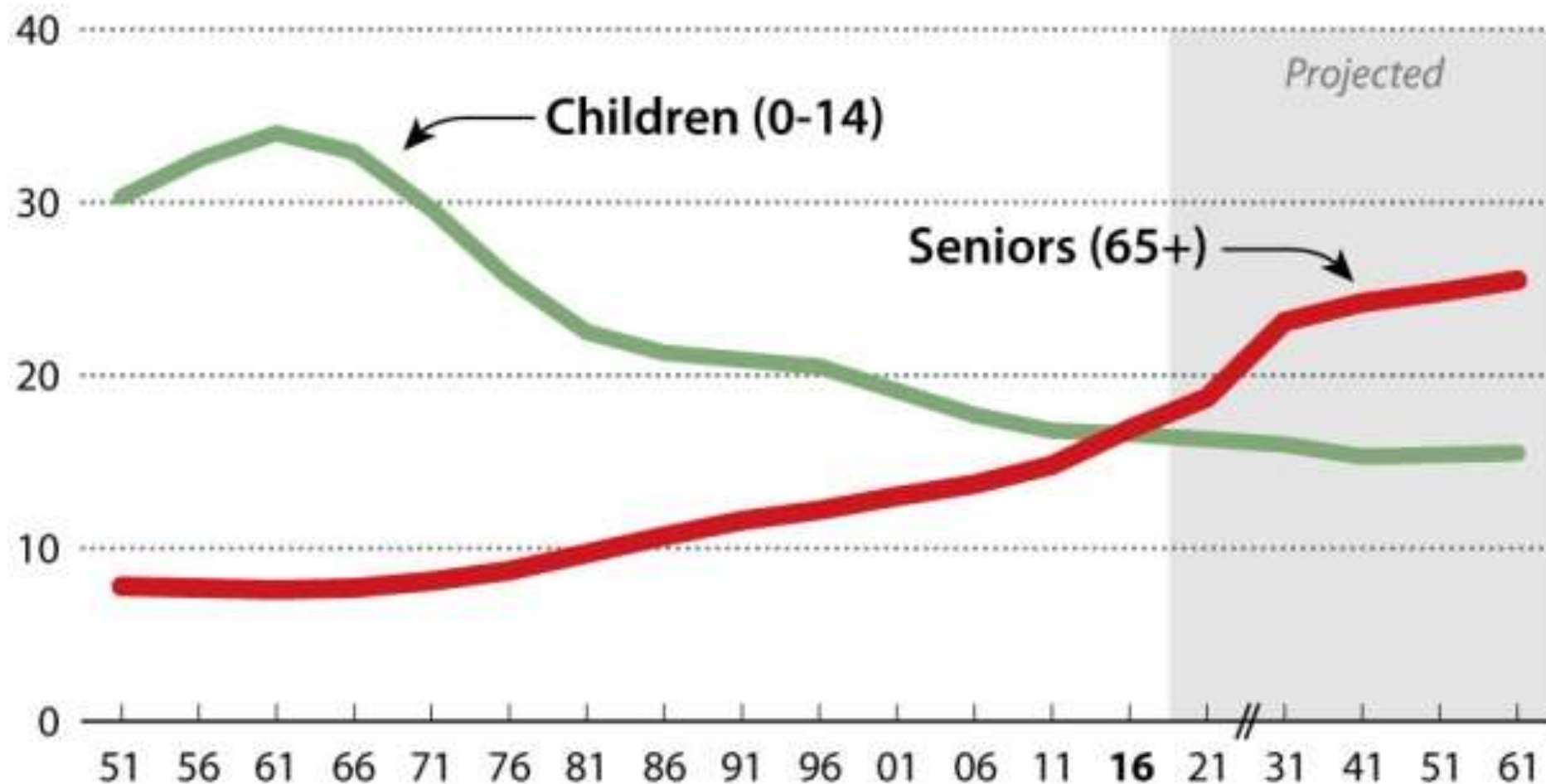
## 2011 vs. 2026



# MORE SENIORS THAN CHILDREN

*In 2016, for the first time, the share of seniors (16.9%) exceeded the share of children (16.6%).*

## PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

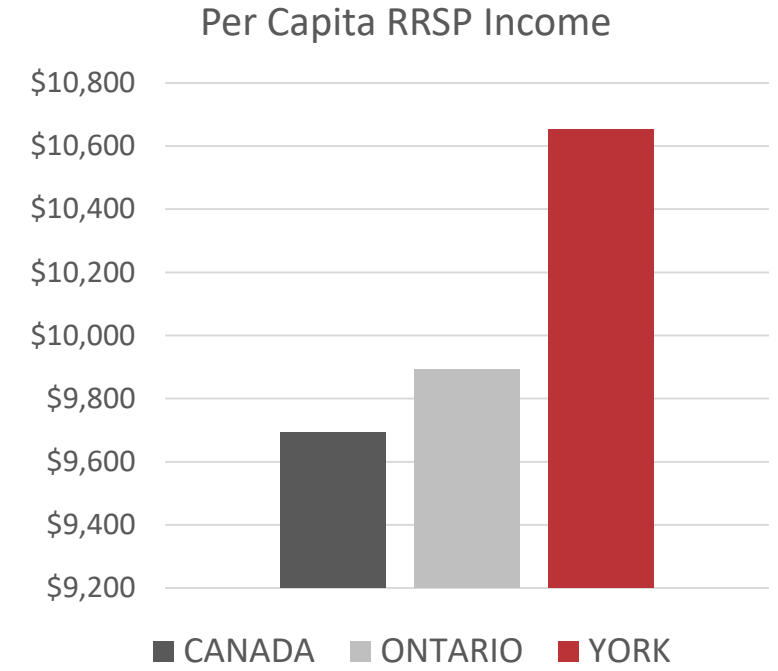
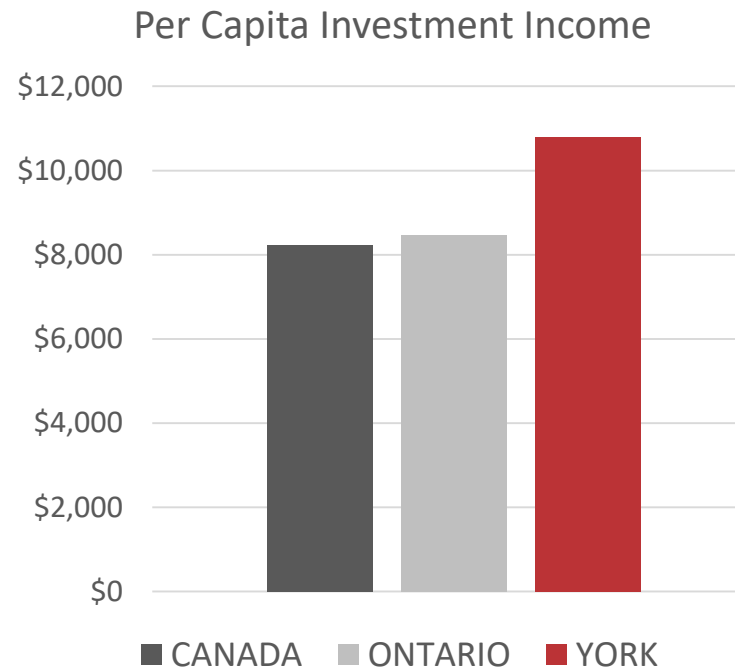
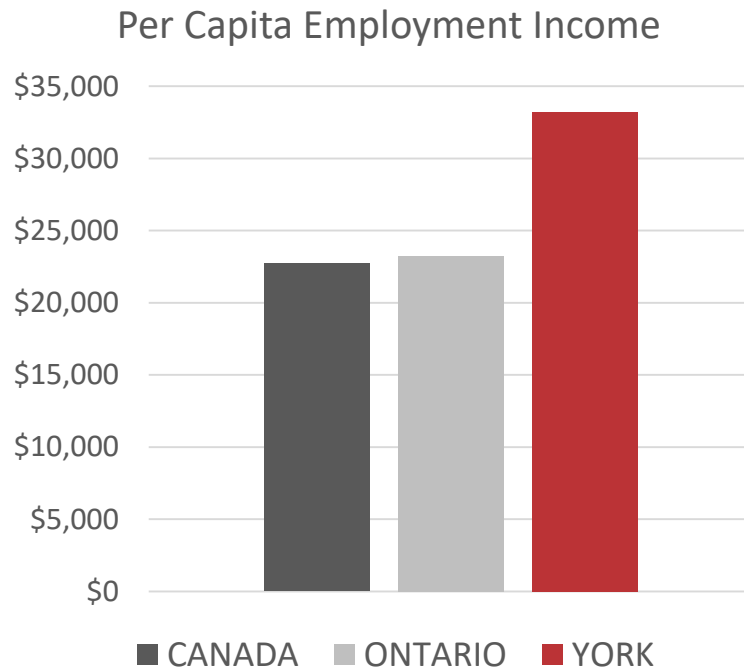
THE CANADIAN PRESS



# ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSIDY

## Current Context

- Older adults are now generally better-positioned for retirement compared to previous generations

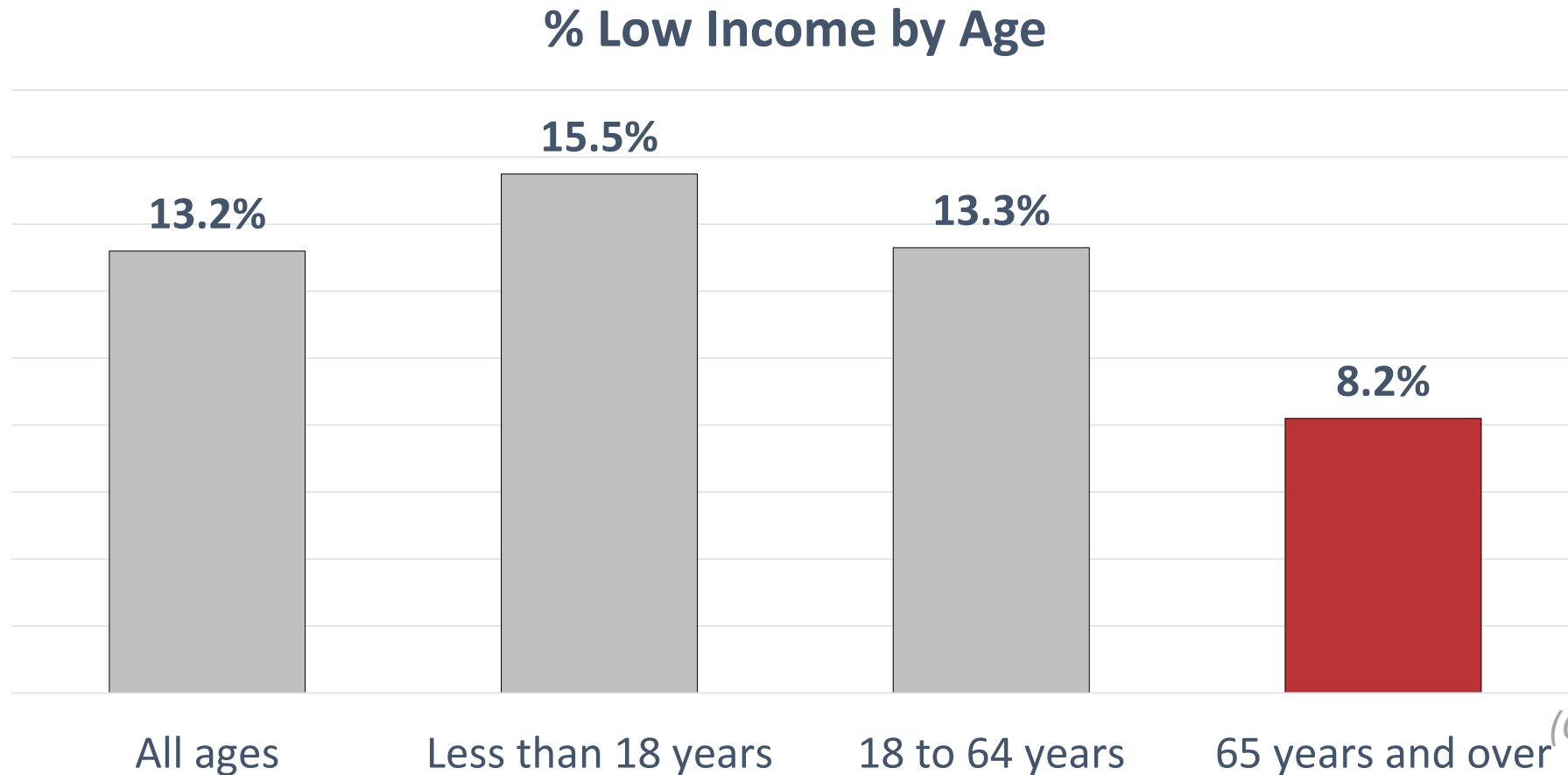


*(Census Data, 2011)*

# ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSIDY

## Current Context

- The prevalence of low-income for older adults in Markham is considerably lower than youths and adults



(Census Data, 2011)

# ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSIDY RECOMMENDATION



- Explore an **ABILITY-TO-PAY** model that would be used to determine eligibility for subsidized services based on residents' needs and financial capacity to pay for programs and services
- *Objective is to:*
  - Proactively address Markham residents with the greatest needs;
  - Ensure access to participate in programs and services for all ages;
  - Ensure that the City does not impose a financial burden on low income residents with limited financial means.

# ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSIDY

## Rationale



- Alignment with **York Region Seniors Strategy**
- Consistent with similar studies undertaken in **other municipalities in Ontario**, for example:

MUNICIPALITY	RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT FEES, DISCOUNTS & PRICING FRAMEWORK FOR OLDER ADULTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore ability-to-pay models with a sliding scale of discounts, rather than one low-income threshold</li> <li>- Implement a holistic approach to eligibility that considers income, assets, existing support from family and/or friends and risk of isolation</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trend: other municipalities implementing ability-to-pay models</li> <li>- Undertake a comprehensive pricing strategy</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create an "Access Policy" based on a sliding user fee scale that determines subsidies based on ability-to-pay (e.g. personal income and number of dependents)</li> <li>- Issue access card for each participant indicating ability-to-pay</li> <li>- Allow for transition period to phase out former discounts and subsidies</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete a User Fee Review Study to evaluate the opportunities and implications of changing to an ability-to-pay model</li> </ul>

# CONCLUSIONS

- The OAS report summarizes the background analysis, community engagement and strategic planning stages of this initiative
- The next step is **implementation** – specific initiatives and timelines will be identified by City departments
- The OAS will also assist the City with outreach and the establishment of **new partnerships with public, private and community organizations**





# NEXT STEPS - Recommendations

- 1. Approve the City of Markham Older Adult Strategy;**
- 2. Council to support in principle that staff investigate the implementation of an Ability to Pay model;**
- 3. Council to support staff to investigate partnership opportunities with York Region services;**
- 4. Council to approve the age of 65+ as a definition of an older adult across all City of Markham's departments.**