



***Markham's Affordable and  
Special Needs Housing Strategy***  
**Presentation to the Development  
Services Committee**

February 2011



# Markham's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy



## **OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENTATION**

**MURRAY BOYCE  
TOWN OF MARKHAM**

- An Affordable and Special Needs Housing Study for Markham
- Policy Context and Defining Affordable Housing
- Approach to Study
- Key Findings
- Recommended Housing Actions
- Next Steps



# MARKHAM Purpose of Today's Presentation



- To present an overview of the purpose of and approach to completing the Town's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Recommended Framework (the Framework)
- To share the key findings and recommended housing actions outlined within the Framework

# Markham's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy



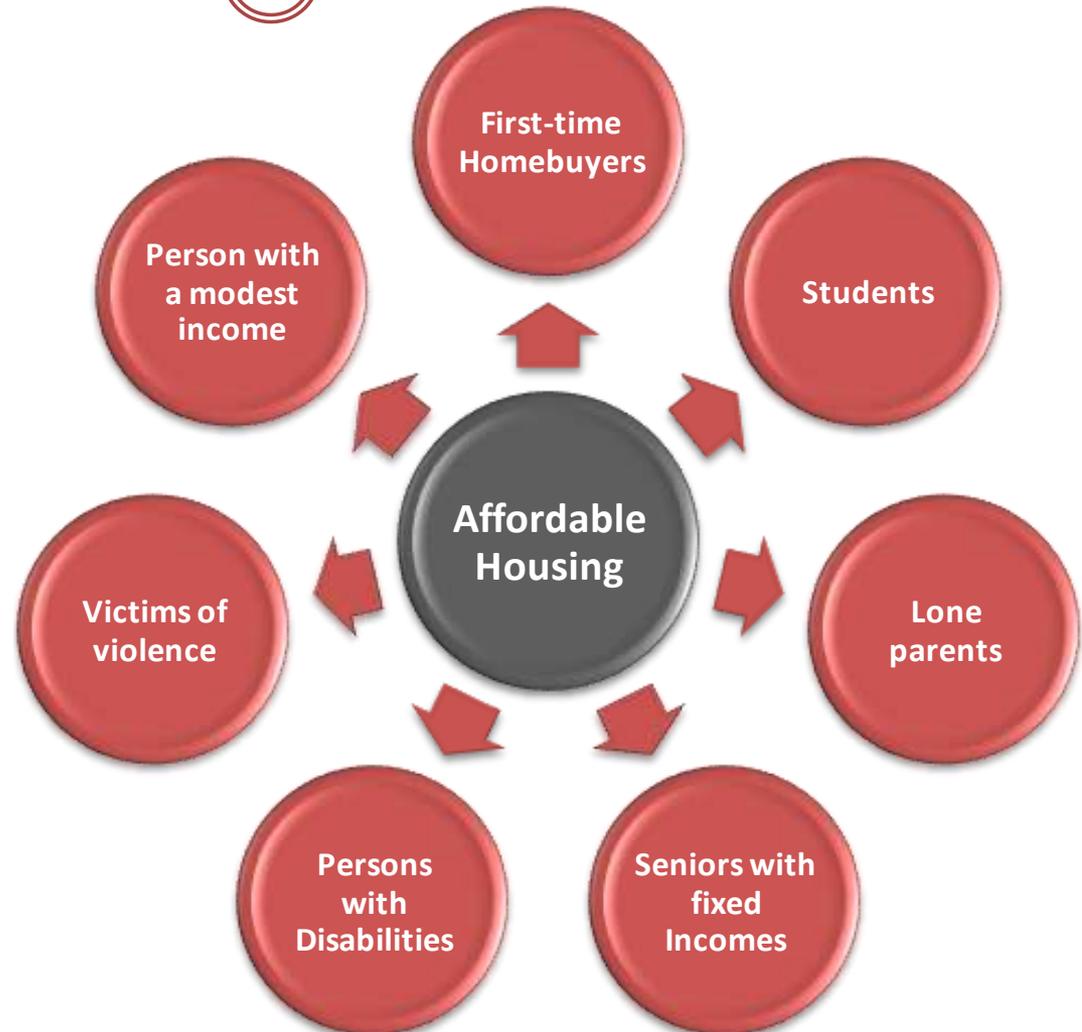
## **AN AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING STUDY**

**MURRAY BOYCE  
TOWN OF MARKHAM**

- Maintaining a high quality of life, a vibrant local economy, and a healthy community requires a range of housing options
- The Town currently has limited housing options for low and moderate income households
- High land values and rising construction costs make it increasingly difficult to achieve housing options to accommodate all households



- The need for affordable housing impacts almost all of us at one point or another:



- Although Markham has taken a supportive position on achieving affordable housing objectives, the Region of York is designated by the Province as Service Manager for housing responsible for policy, planning, financial management and service delivery
- In 2003, Council adopted a strategy for affordable housing that defined an advocacy / partnership, policy and financial role for the Town in support of the provision of affordable and rental housing

## Markham's Affordable Housing Related Policy Initiatives:

- Housing Stock Analysis
- Intensification Strategy
- Strategy for Second Suites
- Financial Incentives for Affordable Housing Policy Framework
- Fast-track Affordable Housing Opportunities/Proposals
- Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy
- Monitoring Program for Housing Stock including rental and affordable housing



### **Old Kennedy Village – Main Street**

- In 2005, the Old Kennedy Coop in partnership with the Canada-Ontario AHP and the Town of Markham got approval to construct 135 affordable ownership townhouse/apt units



### **Tony Wong Place – Deverill Court**

- In 2008, East Markham Non-Profit Homes in partnership with the Canada-Ontario AHP, York Region and the Town of Markham got approval to construct 120 affordable rental apartment units



### **Hawkins House – Cornell**

- In 2008, York Region Habitat for Humanity in partnership with Mattamy Homes and the Town of Markham got approval to restore a 1500 sq ft heritage dwelling in Cornell

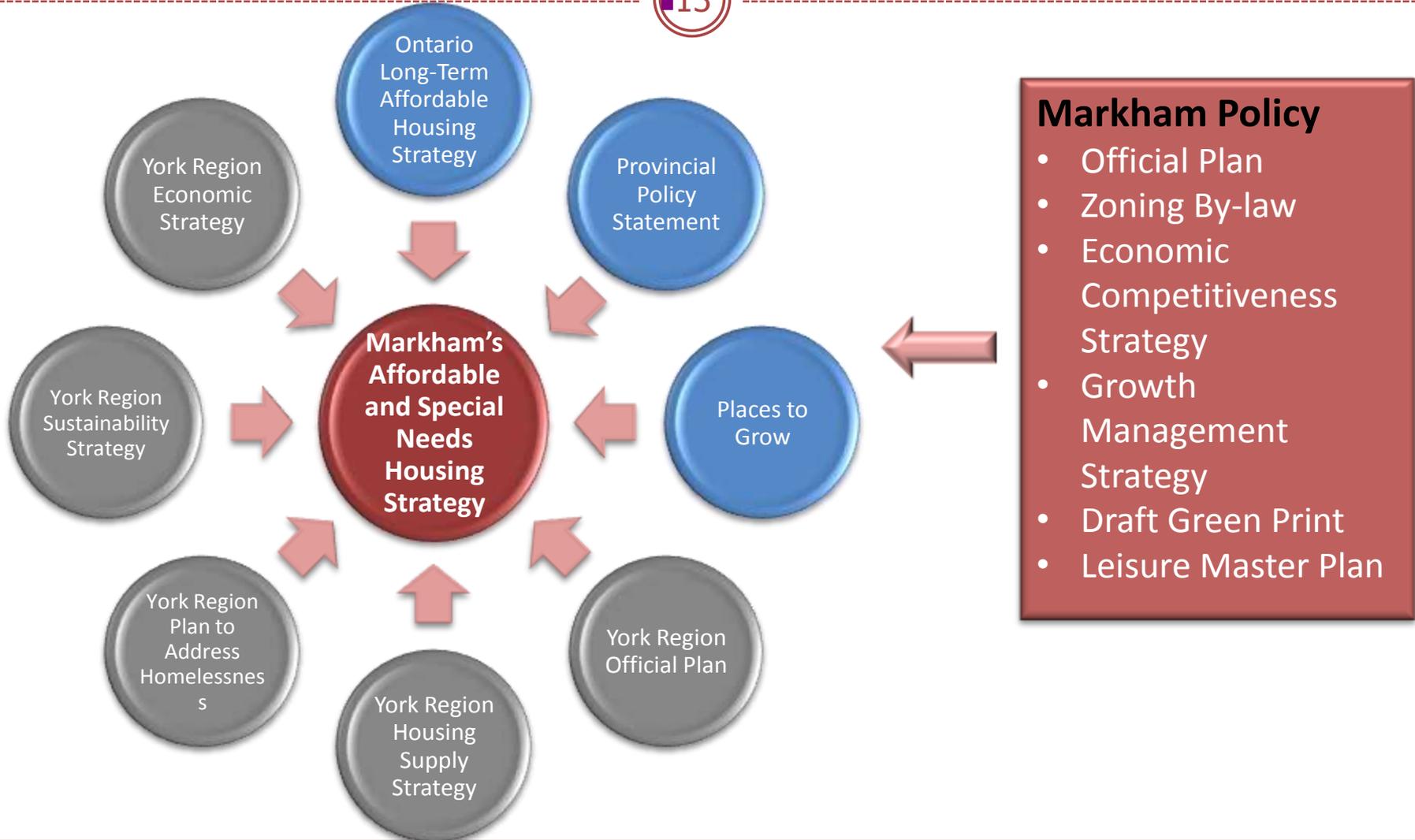
- While Markham must rely on senior government policy and funding, the Town can have an effective role in creating opportunities for affordable housing through policy development, financial incentives, advocacy, partnerships and education.
- In 2009, SHS Consulting were retained to review the Town's current role in the provision of affordable and rental housing, assess its current relevance, and put forth recommendations for a new policy framework which responds to current senior government policy, initiatives and targets.

# Markham's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy



## **POLICY CONTEXT AND DEFINING AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**MURRAY BOYCE  
TOWN OF MARKHAM**



## Provincial Policy:

- Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)
- Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)
- Ontario Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy

## Regional Policy:

- York Region Official Plan
- York Region Housing Supply Strategy

## Local Policy:

- Markham's Endorsed Growth Alternative to 2031
- Greenprint Community Sustainability Plan
- Integrated Leisure Master Plan
- Markham 20/20
- Diversity Action Plan

# Partners in Housing

Town of Markham

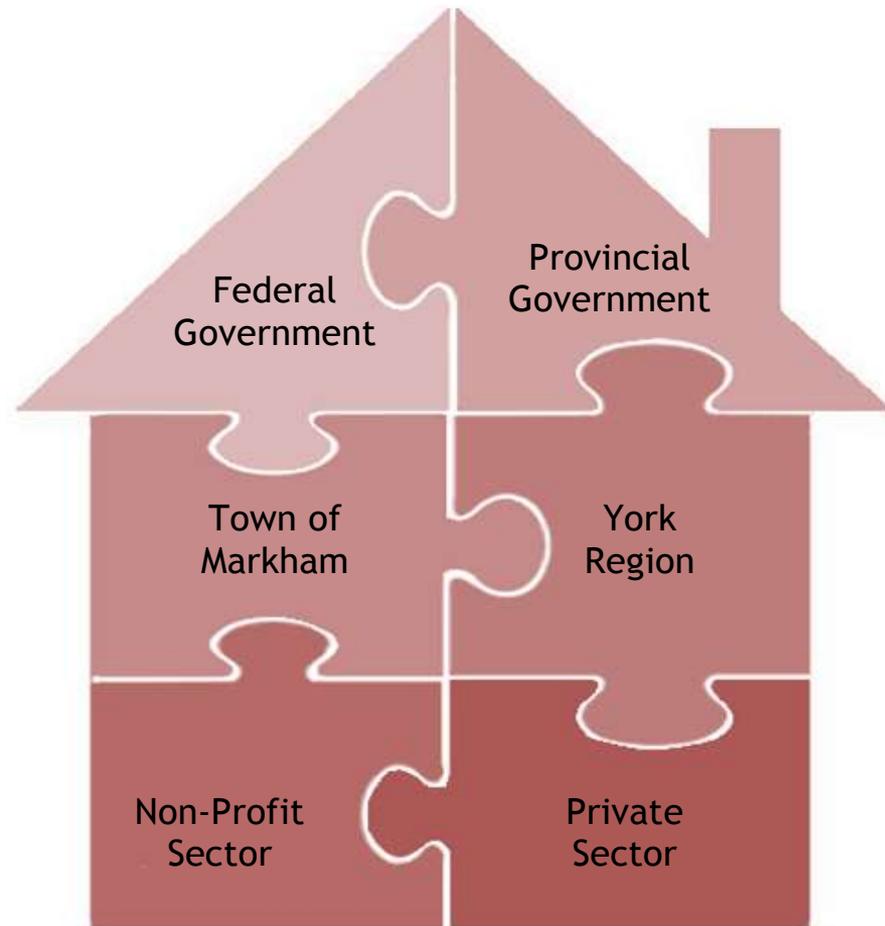
York Region

Provincial Government

Federal Government

Non-Profit Sector

Private Sector



- According to the PPS, *affordable* in Markham means:
  - a) In the case of **ownership housing**, housing for which the purchase price of the dwelling unit results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households (ie. households in the lowest 60 percent of the income distribution); and
  - b) In the case of **rental housing**, a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.
- In both instances, Markham households should not be exceeding 30 percent of their gross annual income on ownership or rental housing

- **Affordable Ownership Housing**
  - Housing which is affordable to households earning less than about \$103,000 per year
  - In Markham, this represents about 46,000 households
- **Affordable Rental Housing**
  - Housing which is affordable to households earning less than about \$40,000 per year
  - In Markham, this represents approximately 15,000 households
- **Special Needs Housing**
  - Housing that is used by people who have specific needs beyond economic needs including, but not limited to, needs such as mobility requirements or support services needed for daily living

# Markham's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy



## **APPROACH TO STUDY**

**CHRISTINE PACINI  
SHS CONSULTING**

- It was the aim of the study to identify key issues related to the planning and provision of affordable and special needs housing and assess the Town's role regarding the provision of such housing through to 2031

- Identify current and future issues related to planning and provision of affordable and special needs housing
- Assess Town's current role regarding the provision of affordable housing
- Review requirements of the Provincial Policies and York Region Official Plan
- Identify planning activities, strategic actions and funding mechanisms to be taken by the Town to encourage development of affordable and special needs housing
- Prepare a framework for a new Strategy

*The Markham Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy is comprised of two documents:*

- **The Background Document**

- Provides a complete **analysis of the demand and supply** of housing across the entire housing continuum in Markham
- Provides a complete review and **analysis of current policy** (local and senior levels) guiding the development of housing in Markham
- Provides a **review of current funding programs and planning tools** available to help promote the development of affordable and special needs housing in Markham

- **The Recommended Policy Framework**

- Provides a summary of the key findings of the Background Document as well as an **outline of the proposed recommended housing actions**





## Community Agency Survey

- Received 10 surveys via email



## Telephone Survey

- Conducted 20 telephone surveys



## Interviews

- Conducted 5 interviews



## Community Workshop

- Held session for approximately 60 people including housing providers, Councillors, etc.



## Meetings with Stakeholder Groups

- Region of York
- Markham Landowners Association Group
- Unionville Ratepayers Group
- Central LHIN

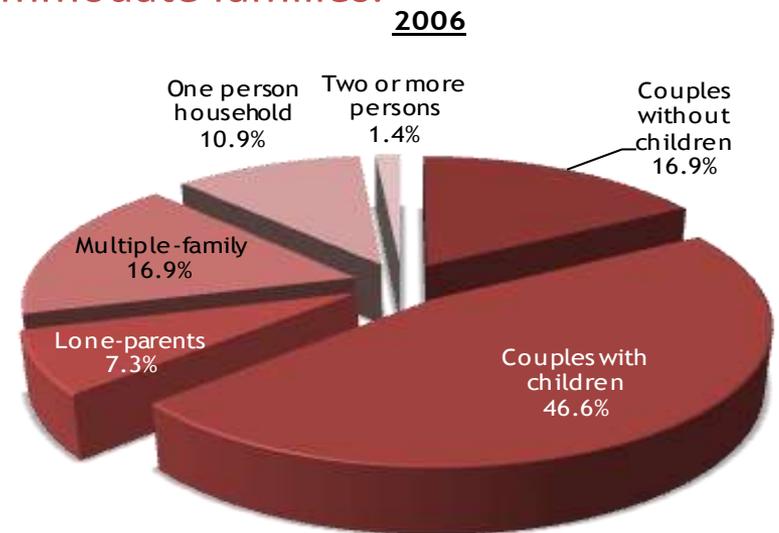
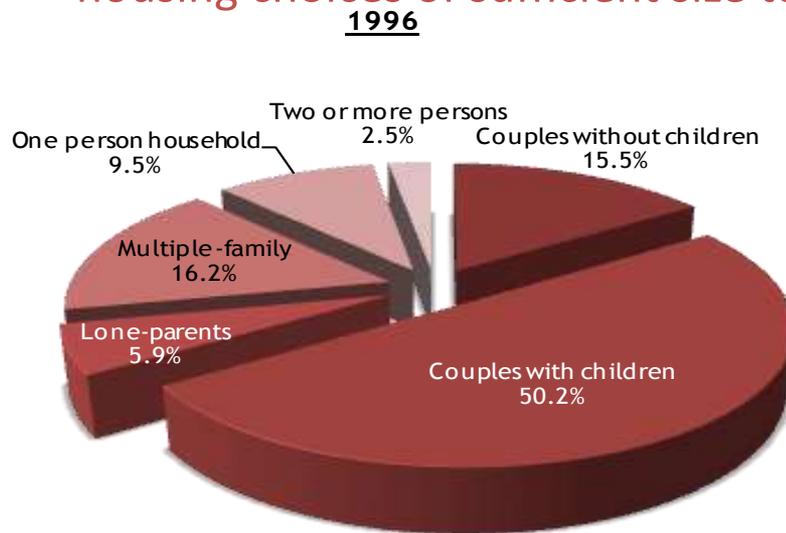
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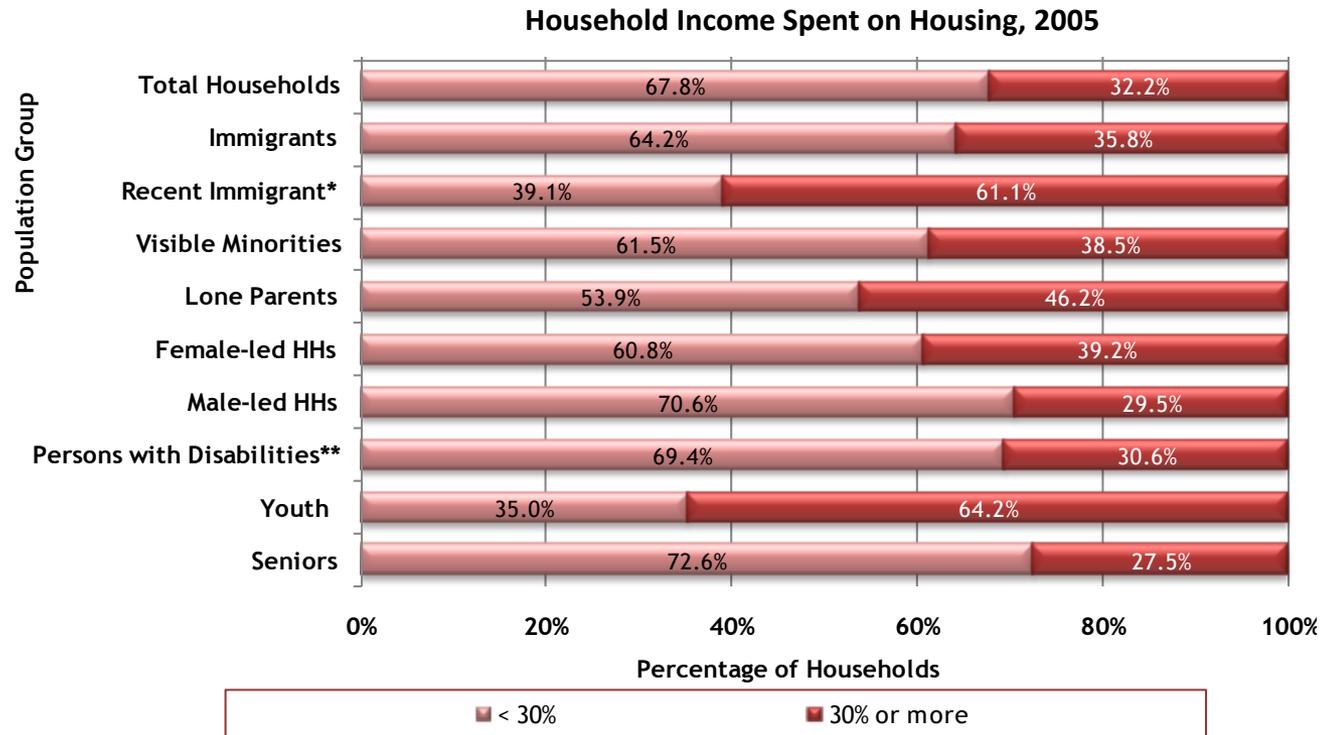
## **KEY FINDINGS**

**JODI BALL**  
**SHS CONSULTING**

- Household composition is changing and diversifying
  - Increasing number of one and two person households, senior led households, immigrant households and lone parent households looking for more choices in housing types and tenures.
  - At the same time, almost 70% of Markham households have children requiring housing choices of sufficient size to accommodate families.



- More Affordable Housing Options Are Needed
  - Affordability remains an issue in both rental and ownership markets in particular for lone-parent families, single-person households, youth-led households



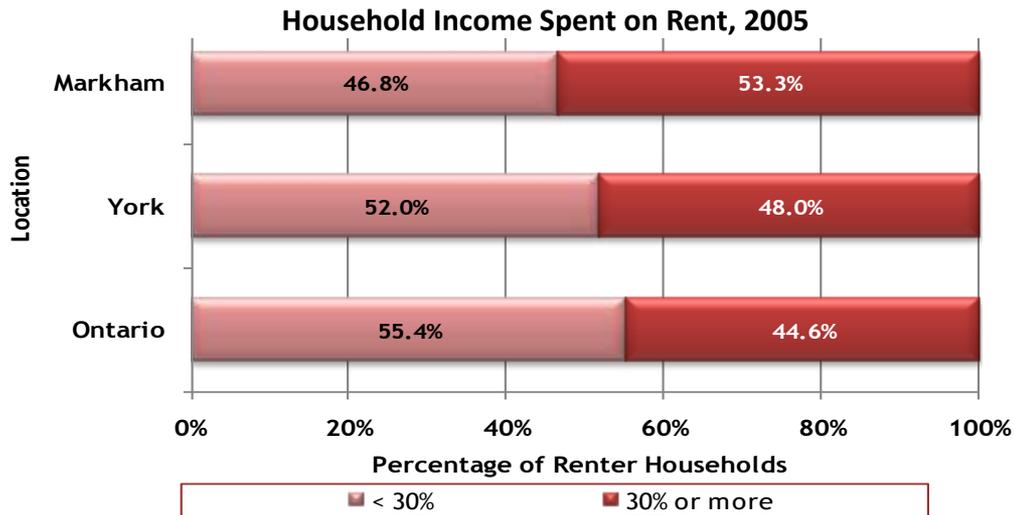
Source: Statistics Canada Custom Tabulations, Census 2006

\*Recent Immigrants are immigrants arriving within the past 5 years of the census year.

\*\* Persons with Disabilities are households where any member of the household has difficulty hearing, seeing, communicating, walking, climbing stairs, bending, learning, or doing any similar activities.

- **More Affordable Housing Options Are Needed**

- Average market rents in Markham are higher than neighbouring municipalities including Richmond Hill and Vaughan
- Markham’s average market rent of \$997 per month is only affordable to households with annual incomes of about \$40,000 while 20% of households in Markham earn less than \$40,000 per year
- Waiting lists for social housing are substantial, with an average wait time of about 10 years



Source: Statistics Canada Custom Tabulations, Census 2006

- Limited Supportive Housing Choices
  - Housing choices for residents requiring additional supports and/or home design features are limited.

Housing Provider	Client Group	Supply (Markham)	Demand
Ontario March of Dimes	Persons with physical disabilities	14 units	21 applicants in Markham
Participation House - Markham	Persons with physical disabilities	105 units	265 applicants (for South East area which includes Markham)
Community Living York South	Persons with developmental disabilities	40 beds	111 applicants in Markham
Cedar Heights Residential Living	Youth	8 beds	100% occupancy in Markham
Alternative Community Living Program	Seniors	30 beds	12 applicants within Cedar Crest Manor in Markham Approximately 350 total applicants (York Region)
York Support Services Network	Persons with developmental disabilities / dual diagnosis		653 applicants (York Region) 116 applicants (Markham) Maintains centralized wait list for 20 organizations



# Markham's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy



## **RECOMMENDED HOUSING ACTIONS**

**CHRISTINE PACINI  
SHS CONSULTING**



- At a stakeholder workshop in May 2010, Markham's housing partners collectively set a direction for housing in Markham by identifying a community vision statement along with seven identified goals to support the vision and guide the development of the Town's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy

*“To support the social and economic vitality of the Town of Markham through the facilitation and provision of a range of housing options (by type, tenure, and affordability) for Markham residents and workers throughout their lifetime in order to sustain a more complete community.”*

## Goals to Support the Vision Statement:

- *Ensure a diverse range of housing choices*
- *Increase supply of affordable home ownership housing*
- *Increase the supply of affordable rental housing*
- *Increase housing options for seniors, youth, new immigrants, and single person households*
- *Provide a range of housing options for families*
- *Examine further emergency and supportive housing needs*
- *Increase supply of accessible housing*

## 1. Policy Development

- Adopt housing targets for housing type, tenure and affordability and evaluate options for developing special needs housing targets
- Develop alternative design standards to support the development of affordable housing
- Adopt definitions of affordable housing and special needs housing in Markham Official Plan
- Develop rental demolition and conversion guidelines
- Recognize continuing public interest in the provision of second suites and consider future policy options
- Monitor changes to inclusionary zoning regulations

## 1. Policy Development (cont.)

- Develop a Seniors' Plan to identify further the housing and other needs of an aging population
- Encourage mix of family housing types in urban growth centres and key development areas
- Review zoning provisions for group homes
- Develop policy to encourage accessibility features in new housing

## 2. Financial Incentives

- Defer, lower, or provide conditional grants for development charges and parkland dedication fees in exchange for affordable housing and special needs housing
- Consider adding social / affordable housing as a charge under the Town's development charges by-law
- Continue to support projects that receive funding under senior government programs

## 3. Advocacy

- Advocate to senior levels of government to commit to sustainable provincial and national housing strategies
- Advocate for more coordinated and long-term funding for homelessness, affordable housing and special needs programs
- Advocate for capital funding to assist landlords and developers to make rental units more accessible

## 4. Partnerships

### *With the Central Local Health Integrated Network*

- Ensure funding for seniors housing and support services is allocated to Markham
- Identify opportunities to increase number of supportive housing units in Markham

### *With the Region of York*

- Develop an annual report system to monitor the housing targets
- Support any new home ownership incentive programs
- Work with new Welcome Centres to ensure housing information is available and accessible
- Develop feasibility study for creation of family crisis beds in Markham
- Examine potential for housing help centre
- Adopt accessibility guidelines for affordable and special needs housing

## 4. Partnerships (cont.)

### *With Community Agencies*

- Support agencies in provision of emergency and special needs housing (i.e. in accessing funding, bringing stakeholders together, etc.)

### *With the Region, Housing Providers and Private Sector*

- Identify lands suitable for affordable housing
- Work on application of new Section 37 Official Plan policies
- Identify opportunities to locate new affordable and special needs housing in close proximity to transit and other amenities
- Encourage range of affordable housing options

### *With Habitat for Humanity*

- Identify opportunities to support Habitat initiatives in Markham

## 4. Education

### *As part of a comprehensive education campaign*

- Identify opportunities to incorporate a range of housing forms and designs
- Develop educational material on various energy efficiency and housing rehabilitation programs and funding opportunities

### *As part of a comprehensive education campaign*

- Increase awareness of economic and social advantages of affordable and special needs housing
- Increase awareness of issues related to homelessness
- Promote use and awareness of '211' information line
- Provide information on new and existing standards developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

# Markham's Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy



## **NEXT STEPS**

**MURRAY BOYCE  
TOWN OF MARKHAM**

- Staff Report to DSC on Recommended Policy Framework
- Staff review Policy Framework and report back to DSC on:
  - a draft Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy
  - public input and participation in the review of the strategy
  - a work program to develop a plan, in collaboration with the Region of York and other key stakeholders, to implement the actions outlined in the draft strategy
- Establish Technical Advisory Group
- Develop an Implementation Plan
- Complete Additional Work Underway
  - The Shared and Supportive Housing Study
  - Develop Community Infrastructure Guidelines
  - Complete the Financial Incentives Study
- Develop new Official Plan Policies



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