



Town of Markham

INTEGRATED LEISURE MASTER PLAN

COUNCIL UPDATE

December 7, 2009



INTRODUCTIONS

Project Sponsor:

- Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fire Services

Project Manager:

- Catherine Biss, CEO of Markham Public Library

Lead Project Consultant:

- Jean Monteith, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants

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INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS – MAYOR’S MESSAGE

“Markham’s youth are vital to the future of our community – they are the leaders of tomorrow.

If we wait five years to build facilities for them, children become teens, and teens become young adults, and we lose the opportunity to serve an entire generation of youth. What have they missed and what will be the consequences of this delay? We cannot wait any longer.

The Integrated Leisure Master Plan will help the Town respond to the leisure needs of all residents in a timely and efficient manner.”

- Mayor Frank Scarpitti, 2009

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STUDY PURPOSE

- The Master Plan is a comprehensive 10 year strategy to address parks, recreation, culture and library needs
- Once approved, the Plan is intended to guide the Town's decision-making and resource allocation strategies
- The project is supported by the Council priorities outlined in the *Building Markham's Future Together* initiative

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OVERVIEW

- Markham is well regarded and delivers a high level of service
- For the most part, residents are satisfied with the level of service
- Innovation, raising the bar, effectiveness and efficiencies are key drivers for the Plan
- Vision and integrated direction for parks, recreation, culture and library services is required

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AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

CROSS-COMMISSION PROJECT TEAM

- Catherine Biss
- Barb Cribbett
- Nadine Daley
- Paul Ingham
- Linda Irvine
- Tim Lambe
- Brenda Librecz
- Victoria McGrath
- Cathy Molloy
- Kevin Ross
- John Ryerson
- Colin Service
- Sara Tam
- Glen Taylor
- Debbie Walker
- Meg West

PROJECT CONSULTANTS



in association with:

Tucker-Reid & Associates
Hemson Consulting Limited
The JF Group

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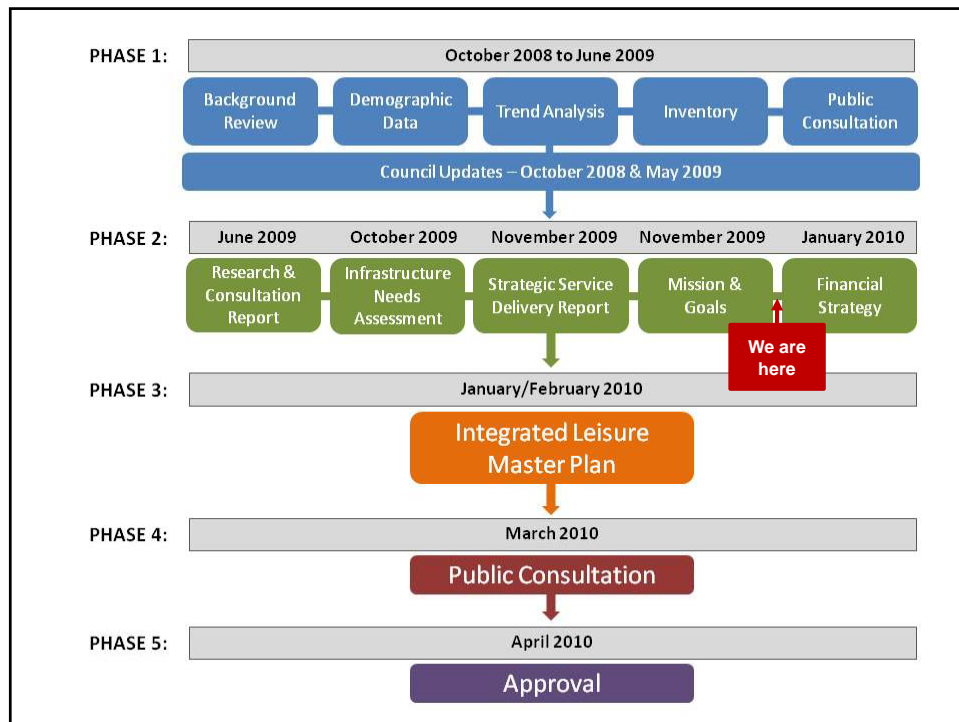



CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

Analyses are being developed based heavily on consultation and research:

- Council briefing (Oct. '08)
- Staff Workshop (Oct. '08)
- Household Survey (Oct./Nov. '08)
- Staff Interviews (Oct. - Jan. '09)
- Council Interviews (Oct. - Jan. '09)
- User Group Surveys (Dec. '08)
- Search Conference (Jan. '09)
- Library Board briefing (Jan. '09)
- BMFT Sessions (Feb/Mar. '09)
- Council Workshop (May '09)
- Community Input Sessions (June '09)

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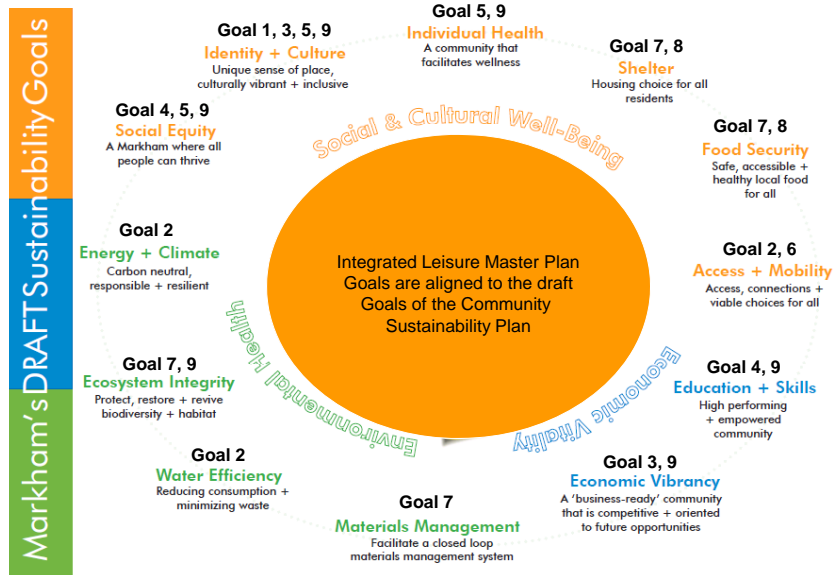


Proposed Mission Statement

Markham's Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Library Services provide inclusive, accessible, safe, enjoyable, and sustainable leisure opportunities essential to vibrant places.

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ALIGNMENT TO (Draft) SUSTAINABILITY GOALS



THE 'GLUE' THAT HOLDS THE GOALS TOGETHER

The Goals work together to enhance the quality of life of Markham residents.

The 'glue' or common outcomes to be achieved by the Goals are:

- Sustainable and active living
- Lifelong learning and personal growth
- Health and fitness – physical and mental wellness

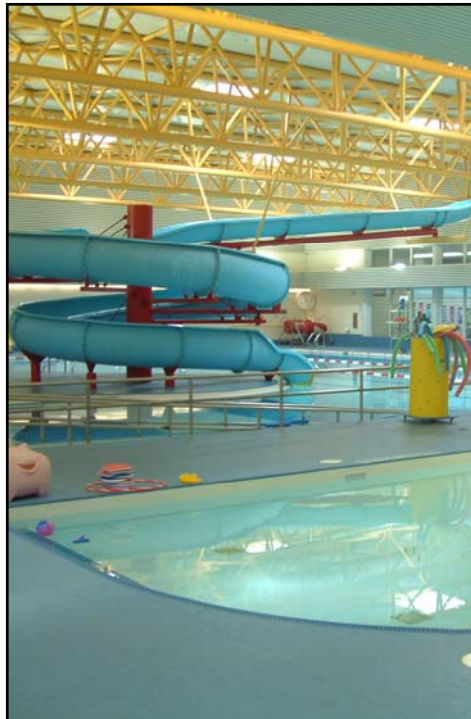


Goal 1: Align with Growth Management Strategy

To align Markham's leisure services delivery strategies with the Town's emerging Growth Management Strategy (to 2031), specifically addressing services in proposed intensification areas.

- Prepare for intensification – consider alternative provision approaches
- Ensure an equitable distribution of opportunities
- Review funding model and financial resources
- Be proactive in land acquisition for active recreation

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Goal 2: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

To help ensure a sustainable, resilient and relevant Markham by providing equitable service delivery and distribution of community-specific and Town-wide facilities.

- Ensure alignment with Community Sustainability Plan, including green-building practices
- Develop a model that includes both community and neighbourhood-level facilities
- Address next community centre, location of facilities, priorities, and timing

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Goal 3: New Strategies for Markham 2020 – the Creative Knowledge-Based Economy

To align leisure services delivery strategies with the Markham 2020 Vision and Economic Strategy, helping to position Markham as one of Canada's leading communities in the creative knowledge-based economy.

- Develop creative sector capacity and entrepreneurship
- Attract post secondary research to increase intellectual capital / knowledge
- Contribute to making Markham a welcoming and engaging creative place for people to live and work
- Design spaces, services and programs to nurture learning and creativity

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Goal 4: Community Engagement and Outreach: Building Social Capital and Strengthening Neighbourhoods

To strengthen neighbourhoods by building on existing neighbourhood resources, local capacities, unique identities, communication opportunities, and partnerships.

- Develop a Community Engagement Framework to strengthen community involvement in neighbourhood planning
- Develop a Neighbourhood Strategy, including alternate service delivery options
- Work to standardize partnership development and agreements

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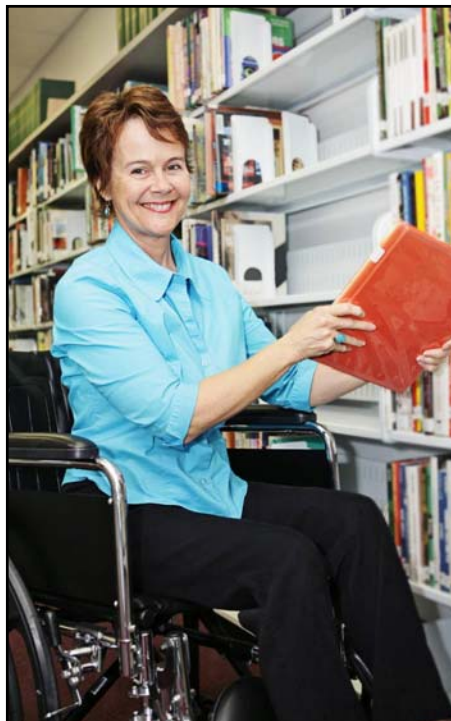


Goal 5: Placemaking

To design leisure service delivery in accordance with placemaking principles, actively engaging communities, investing in the public realm, and creating a sense of place for Markham and its neighbourhoods through good urban design that is responsive to local needs.

- Make walkable communities a planning priority
- Establish Public Realm Policy and guidelines
- Develop a public art program
- Position and promote the Civic Centre and surrounding assets as the cultural centre for Markham
- Animate and program outdoor spaces (e.g., amphitheatre)

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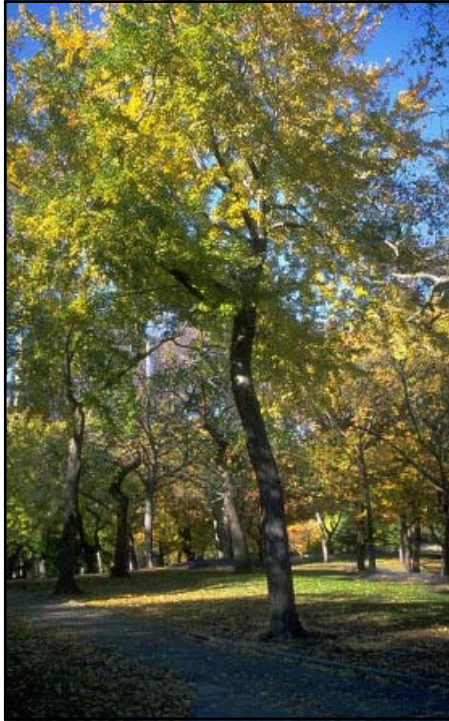


Goal 6: Inclusion, Access and Equity

To ensure full and equitable access to leisure services for all Markham residents by continuing to remove participation barriers and actively supporting Markham's Diversity Action Plan.

- Develop a Facility Access Policy and Plan
- Continue to ensure that affordable programs are accessible to all residents, including free youth leadership programs
- Ensure that advisory and project-related committees represent the communities they serve

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Goal 7: Maintain an Environmental and Sustainable Focus

To align leisure services delivery with Markham's environmental and sustainability strategies by protecting, connecting, restoring, and enhancing natural heritage and biodiversity, while maintaining a focus on sound environmental practices.

- Implement recommendations of the Community Sustainability Plan
- Provide more interpretive signage and stewardship programs
- Support the Rouge Park initiative
- Support community gardens – local food, food security
- Support implementation of natural environment protection and enhancement initiatives

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Goal 8: Collective Focus on Community Issues – Integrated Service Delivery

To work together in addressing community issues through greater collaboration within and between Town departments and stakeholders.

- Develop an Integrated Service Delivery approach incorporating all Town departments and stakeholders in the process of service planning and prioritization, in order to avoid duplication and to maximize existing resources.

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Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

To strengthen organizational capacity and increase efficiencies, effectiveness, and innovation in leisure service delivery.

- Articulate service delivery and staffing standards
- Enhance allocation standards and policies for public spaces, facilities and parks
- Implement performance metrics to measure success

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Goal 9a: Recreation and Parks Programming & Service Priorities

To focus recreation and parks programming, development, and service delivery on accessible and inclusive physical activity opportunities and lifelong active living for all, with specific focus on youth and older adults.

- Develop a long-term plan to lessen inactivity and reduce obesity
- Develop a new Youth Strategy and Older Adults Plan
- Address parks and trails priorities for all users (e.g., shade, water and washrooms)
- Ensure rate structures are competitive, while still being affordable

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Goal 9b: Continuous Improvement of Markham's Parks

To continue the improvement of the parks and trails system through responding to the needs of all residents and placing a focus on connecting communities, encouraging active transportation, and creating public parks and open space that are engaging, meaningful, and varied.

- Enhance the concept of parks as "Living Community Centres"
- Implement the Pathways and Trails Master Plan to connect communities
- Encourage unstructured activities and community-based events in parks
- Develop a Parks Classification Policy
- Develop outdoor fitness/exercise features in parks for all ages

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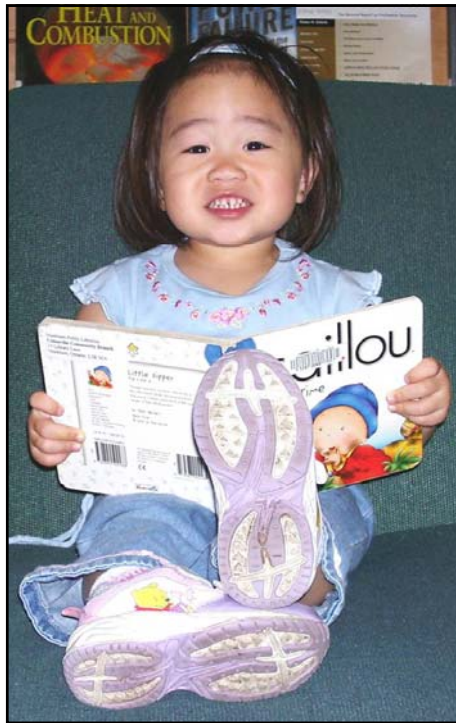


Goal 9c: Building on Markham's Strengths in Arts, Culture and Heritage

To enhance and promote arts, culture, and heritage in order to share diverse experiences and strengthen the creative community.

- Undertake cultural mapping and complete a Culture Plan
- Continue to integrate arts and culture into community centres
- Develop a Special Event Policy
- Establish a Town-wide venue for large outdoor gatherings, community festivals, and special events

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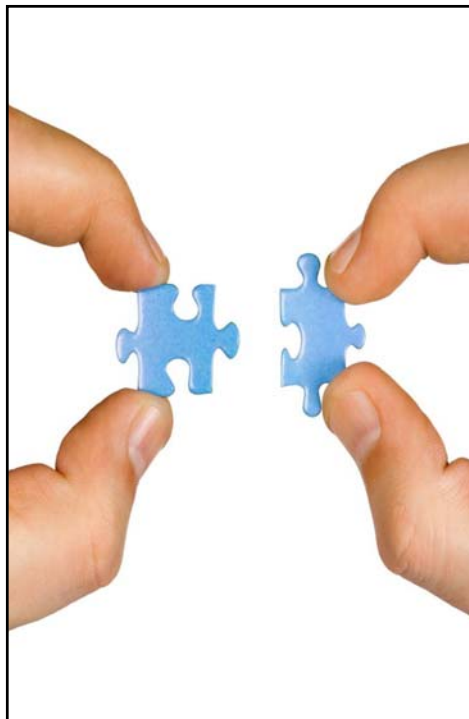


Goal 9d: Libraries as Learning Places – where Markham’s communities come together to imagine, learn, and grow

To focus library service development on lifelong learning, literacy skills, and inclusive community-building, thereby enriching lives, fostering personal growth, supporting economic prosperity, and building community identity and social cohesion.

- Continue to develop the Library’s place-making role to foster a sense of community and offer an inclusive community gathering place
- Continue to implement self-service strategy to optimize the range of Library services
- Continue to implement merchandizing strategies to enhance access to collections
- Develop the Virtual branch concept as an alternative service delivery channel
- Enhance community awareness and engagement through the provision of access to information

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NEXT STEPS

- 1) Financial Strategy
Identification of priority projects, timing, capital cost implications, and funding opportunities (by January 2010)
- 2) Master Plan Preparation
Preparation of full Master Plan by January 2010, based on Background Reports (currently being finalized).
- 3) Council Consultation on Draft Plan
February/March 2010.
- 4) Public Meeting(s)
March 2010 (date tbd)
- 5) Council Consultation & Project Completion
Targeting April 2010.

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QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

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