




Town of Markham

INTEGRATED LEISURE MASTER PLAN
Phase 1: Research & Consultation

COUNCIL WORKSHOP

May 25, 2009





INTRODUCTIONS

Project Sponsor:

- Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fire Services

Project Manager:

- Catherine Biss, CEO Markham Public Library

Lead Project Consultant:

- Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (Jean Monteith)

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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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STUDY OBJECTIVES

To prepare a Master Plan that:

- a) is unique to Markham's specific needs
- b) demonstrates innovative approaches and solutions
- c) strengthens the relationship between parks, recreation, culture and library services
- d) engages all elements of the community
- e) achieves buy-in from residents, Council, and staff
- f) is financially sustainable

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STUDY OBJECTIVES

Specifically, the Master Plan will:

- Examine the roles of the Town and other agencies in the provision of programs and facilities in Markham
- Identify gaps in terms of program and facility provision
- Establish locally-appropriate service, staffing, and provision standards
- Include an implementation strategy

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CURRENT STATUS

Initial Consultation Phase is complete:

- 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)

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CURRENT STATUS

Initial Research Phase is complete:

- Demographics / Community Profile
- Trends
- Inventory
- Issue Identification

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DEMOGRAPHICS

- 2009 population estimated at 291,100
- 2019 forecast is 357,400 ... this means an average of over 6,000 new residents each year
- 55% of future growth to come from intensification

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DEMOGRAPHICS

- Markham's population is aging:
 - The size of the 10-19 age group has stabilized, though there will be 25% more children under the age of 10.
 - Growth is slowing in the adult age categories (20 to 54).
 - The 65+ age group will double over the next 12 years (the entire population will have grown by 30% during this time).

Projected Age Cohort Populations by Year

Age Cohort	2009	2019	Growth (2009-2019)	
0-9	32,403	40,528	8,125	25.1%
10-19	38,102	38,510	408	1.1%
20-34	60,320	71,067	10,747	17.8%
35-54	89,028	100,549	11,521	12.9%
55-64	37,279	47,719	10,440	28.0%
65+	33,962	59,026	25,064	73.8%
Total	291,094	357,399	66,305	22.8%

Source: Region of York (2009).

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DEMOGRAPHICS

- 57% of the Town's residents were born in a country other than Canada.
- 42% speak non-official languages at home.
- 8% of households are multi-family.
- Although Markham's median income is relatively high, the Town has the highest percentage of low income residents across the entire Region.

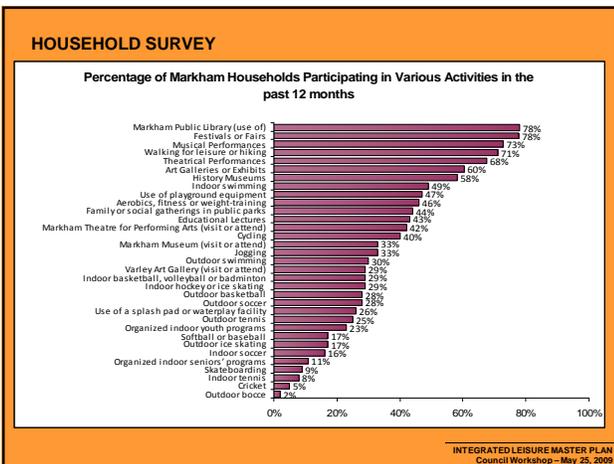
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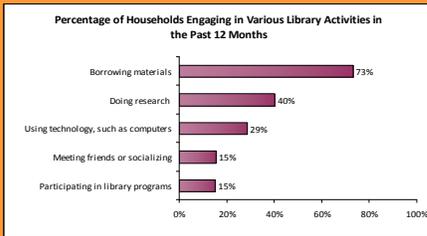
HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

- The total number of respondents to the survey was 396, which provides a confidence interval of $\pm 4.9\%$, 19 times out of 20.
- Households were chosen through a random sampling process.
- The surveys are generally representative of the Town's population characteristics, including age and location of residence.
- Surveys were undertaken in multiple languages, at the request of the respondent.

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HOUSEHOLD SURVEY



- 27% of households used a public library outside of the Town of Markham in the past 12 months.
- Nearly three-quarters of households prefer public libraries that are combined with municipal community centres over public libraries that are on their own sites, separate from municipal community centres.

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HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

- Data from a similar survey in 2003 suggests that there has been a considerable increase in the number of households accessing arts and cultural facilities in the Town of Markham over the past five years.
- 62% of respondents said their household had visited a cultural or entertainment facility outside of Markham, with half of these respondents stating they visited theatres outside of the Town.

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HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Activity Area	Percentage of Residents Participating (all household members; entire sample population)
Parks and outdoor recreation	76%
Library activities	59%
Indoor recreation	57%
Arts and culture	47%

- Parks and Outdoor Recreation are the most used Town amenities, with an estimated 76% of Markham residents using them in the past 12 months.
- 43-48% of households participate in parks and recreational activities mostly at Town-owned facilities, parks, or trails. The remainder participate mostly at home, private venues, or other public places.

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HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

- 43% of respondents said 'yes', they would be willing to pay more for improved services at parks, recreation, arts and culture, and library facilities (the average response was a 29% increase in their taxes). 46% were not willing to pay more.
- Fewer households are willing to spend more for new and improved services at arts and cultural facilities, (compared to parks, recreation and libraries), suggesting that they may already be quite satisfied in this area.

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USER GROUP SURVEY

- To date, surveys have been received completed by 40 sport, ratepayer and community organizations. Ongoing efforts are being made to engage organizations in the Master Plan.
- Common themes that have emerged include:
 - the need for new facilities (e.g., 'A' level diamonds and soccer fields, ice surfaces, rehearsal hall, community pool, etc.) that are distributed in an equitable manner and meet the specific requirements of the sport
 - the need for the Town to be involved with the provision of facilities (be it on its own or as through partnerships)
 - high facility rental costs

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SEARCH CONFERENCE

What people value most about Markham:

- Sense of community, belonging, community spirit, quality of life, and lifestyle
- Amount of green space, parks and natural areas
- High quality, accessible, affordable, mixed-use facilities that are relevant to residents' needs
- Heritage and unique heritage districts
- Physical, financial and cultural accessibility
- Safety in the community

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SEARCH CONFERENCE

Resident suggestions for improving recreational opportunities in Markham:

- Keep pace with demand and residential development
- Continued maintenance and upgrading of recreation facilities
- School board and municipal cooperation to maximize use of facilities
- Accessibility (location, physical, distribution), transportation and walkability
- Better management of competing uses
- Keep up with technological advancements in facilities
- Provide recreation facilities for seniors and people with special needs

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SEARCH CONFERENCE

Resident suggestions for improving parks and open space opportunities in Markham:

- More accessible and interconnected natural and groomed bike trails and pathways
- Maintenance and improved funding for parks and sports fields
- Accessible leash-free dog parks throughout different neighbourhoods
- Readily available bathrooms and other amenities at parks, fields, open spaces, etc.
- Development of open space (higher standards)
- Protect, clean and naturalize water courses
- Natural areas, woodlots, trees, habitats

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SEARCH CONFERENCE

Resident suggestions for improving arts and cultural opportunities in Markham:

- Increased information, promotion and awareness about programs and groups
- More festivals, special events, multicultural shows throughout the year
- Bandshell / community arts centre / amphitheatre
- Express diversity through arts and culture
- More theatres, concert halls and cinemas
- Public and/or local art on display in public places (e.g., parks, libraries, recreation centres, etc.)

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SEARCH CONFERENCE

Resident suggestions for improving library opportunities in Markham:

- Increased hours of operation (i.e., Friday nights, Sundays)
- Continue to develop and improve libraries as multi-use facilities
- Keep resources current and increase the supply of books and videos
- Connect libraries with other facilities, such as malls, bookstores, daycares, restaurants, seniors centres, schools, community centres, medical facilities, post-secondary institutions, etc.
- Expand and upgrade facilities to more modern, environmentally-friendly facilities

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TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION

- Time is the Primary Barrier to Participation
- Increasingly Sedentary Population – physical inactivity & obesity
- Emerging Sports and Facilities
- The “New” Older Adult
- Unstructured & Self-Scheduled Activities
- Lifelong Learning & Academic Support
- Increasing Arts and Culture Demand with an Aging and Diverse Population
- Increasing Importance of Libraries in Economically Challenging Times

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TRENDS IN SERVICES

- Community Building
- Ensuring Access for Persons with Disabilities / Increase in Special Needs Customers
- Financial Supports / Ability to Pay
- Shifting Interests in Volunteering and Social Commitment
- Partnerships & Resource-Sharing
- Role of Technology
- Sports / Cultural Tourism
- Integrated Service Delivery
- Creative Cities / Creative Class (Municipal Cultural Planning)

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TRENDS IN FACILITIES/PARKS

- Aging Infrastructure, Renewal, and Funding Opportunities
- Connectivity, Walkability, and Placemaking
- Technology has led to an Increase in the need for Library Space
- Balance between Neighbourhood-based Facilities and Multi-use Facilities
- Access to Schools
- Libraries as Gathering Places
- Flexible and "Green" Facility Designs
- Public Squares, Civic Greens
- Park Naturalization & Environmental Stewardship

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KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

- residential intensification – implications and approaches
- socio-demographic shifts – aging population, multiculturalism, etc.
- self-scheduled activities and services – in demand
- expectations of residents and users – on the rise
- planning for neighbourhoods / small halls – preferred approach or model; opportunities to access local schools

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KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

- CSIO Project – implications for partnership, community usage, and support for elite athletes
- 2015 Pan Am Games bid – implications
- Southeast Community Centre & Library – need, timing, size, components, funding sources
- East Markham Community Centre & Library (opening in 2012)
- large parks and natural areas (Milne Park, Rouge Park, etc.) – approach for establishing and managing connections and access

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KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

- arts and cultural facilities – funding options for capital projects
- service and facility partnerships – maximizing benefits and minimizing risks
- leveraging funding and aligning it with needs

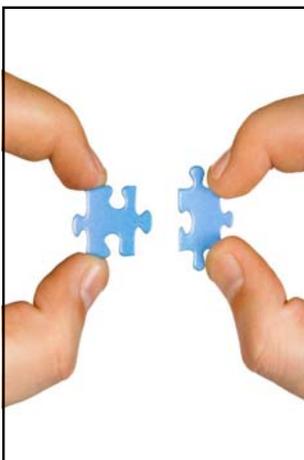
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NEXT STEPS

- 1) Additional Consultation:
 - Community Consultation Sessions (May 21, 25, 26, & 27)
 - Key Stakeholder Interviews
 - Staff Workshops
- 2) Master Plan Preparation:
 - Service Delivery
 - Programs
 - Facility / Parks Needs
 - Financial Strategy
- 3) Master Plan Finalization:
 - Public & Council Input (Fall '09)

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QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

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