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# ***Charrette Program Data Summary***

*for the*

**East Markham Community Centre and Library  
Markham, Ontario**

**DRAFT #1**

*July 12, 2007*

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## Introduction

The following is a summary of the collected data from the charrette held on Monday June 25<sup>th</sup> in the Markham Council Chambers. Attending the charrette were various users and staff representing the different program areas, in addition to representatives from the Town of Markham, the Markham- Stouffville Hospital and Shore Tilbe Irwin & Partners Architects.

The charrette was organized around several workshop groups, each focused on a specific area of the program. These program categories included:

1. Aquatics
2. Gymnasium and Fitness
3. Library
4. Multi-Use
5. Older Adults and Youth
6. Open Session

The format of each focus group meeting was based around a sample program identifying a typical break down of spaces within each major program component. These program assumptions were designed to provide a basic understanding and starting point from which to initiate discussion.

In addition to these base assumptions, the various groups were asked a series of questions, each identifying a different set of ideas and issues, as follows:

1. How do you envision the program being used?
2. What are the key features that will make this program space work?
3. How can this space relate to the other spaces and the exterior surroundings?
4. How do you see the therapeutic (hospital) uses being integrated into the programming of the space?
5. What are the key environmental/ sustainable opportunities for this space?
6. What experiences of other community centers or building types would you bring to this facility?

Following the workshop sessions, the charrette teams reconvened in the Council and the findings from the various discussions were summarized and presented back to everyone by the architects.

The intended use of the following information is to form the basis of a functional program, which will guide in the design and development of the project as it progresses into conceptual design and serve as an early tool for identifying the needs and desires within the community. The following information has been formatted around the six questions listed above.

## Program Data Summary

### A. Aquatics

#### How do you envision using this program space?

- This space will be used for aquatic recreation, sport, training, fitness and therapy.
- The different uses should be able to occur in the space at the same time.
- All users should be able to use the space and pool tanks. Full accessibility is a key priority.
- The space will be used as a public space but must also have secluded areas. Some users will require complete or partial privacy.
- Children and young adults will wish to use this space for excitement and interactive play with the water. It will be a place of fun and learning about water safety.
- Local swim clubs will look at this program area for its ability to offer training and competitive facilities.
- The space should also be able to transform into a venue for competitive aquatic events.
- Parents and family members will use the space for viewing children at play or leaning to swim. Spectators will use the space for viewing aquatic competitions.

#### What are the key features that will make this program space work?

- Separate tanks for therapy pools, lap pools and recreation or leisure pools are required.
- There should be some ability to close off pool spaces with barriers or walls
- Wellness users will require ramps into warmer water leisure pool or therapy pools.
- It is important that wellness users at the therapy pools have the option for complete or partial privacy.
- A 'fun' zone for children and adults is important. This zone should have slides spray areas; interactive play toys and other aquatic experiences.
- At a minimum a 25m x 8 lane competition pool is required by the local swim clubs.
- Along with the competition pool the deck area would need to accommodate at least 150 participants.
- Seating for a minimum 100 spectators would also be required. This seating area is to be within the pool area but have a circulation system that does not allow access to the deck.
- If possible the competition pool should be increased to a 50m length. This need would become more important if the plans for the CSIO do not move forward.
- A 50 m pool would transform the use of this program space to accommodate larger competitive events. The facility would need the spaces to allow it to become a revenue generator during events. It is anticipated that 2 large regional meets would occur a year at this facility.
- A 50 m pool will require a bulkhead to allow multiple use of the tank.
- Control of glare and good visibility for lifeguards is a key feature for this program space.
- Storage space for starting blocks and other competitive equipment is required.

#### How can this space relate to other spaces and the exterior surroundings?

- Views into the pool space are welcome by most users. The exception will be the privacy sensitive users at the therapy pool.
- Wellness users of the therapy pool may not desire exposure to other areas.
- A balance of viewing the exterior and control of glare is required.
- Swim clubs do not have any restrictions on viewing from the surrounding spaces.
- Views to adjacent programs such as fitness, exercise rooms and lobby are compatible and engaging

#### How do you see the therapeutic (hospital) uses being integrated into the programming of this space?

- Wellness users wish to be seen as equal participants of the facility.
- The users may be participating with caregiver or on their own.
- Use of the change rooms will require attention to the location and quantity of change cubicles
- Some flexibility for providing privacy around the therapy pool will be required
- Design of the therapy pool may need to modify to accommodate specific hydrotherapy exercises. Otherwise the designs of the pool tanks to suit the community will also suit the hospital uses.
- Ample deck space for assembly of therapeutic users with ambulatory devices will be required.
- Programming of therapy uses can coexist with community programs.

**What are the key environmental/sustainable opportunities for this space?**

- Search for technologies that will reduce or eliminate the use of chlorine. Is salt water a viable alternative for a commercial size pool? Can a UV light system be added to improve water and air clarity?
- Will the Cornell centre allow for sharing energy use?
- Can the waste heat from showers be re-used?
- Can the accumulated rainwater on the roof be circulated to the grey water system (toilet use)?

**What experiences of other community centres or building types would you bring to this facility?**

- Like other successful centres, it must appeal to all community cultures and users of all abilities.
- It must work with the community and local government to be cost sustainable.
- The EMCC&L should be a landmark building that raises the profile of Markham.
- Other comparable examples or the Talisman Centre in Edmonton or the Bloorview MacMillan Centre in Toronto.

## B. Gymnasium/ Fitness

### How do you envision using this program space?

#### Gymnasium

- This area will be used for competitive events, drop in community leagues and programs as well as various social functions.
- The space should accommodate a wide range of users of all age groups and interests and be fully accessible. Programs for children and older adults were specifically mentioned as being important within this community.
- The space could also potentially serve as a venue for much larger sporting events of a district or even international caliber. This facility should be seen as a destination within the Town of Markham.
- Spectators will use the space during various sporting events. Parents and family members as well as care givers will also use the space for viewing and providing assistance within the space.
- The space should be divisible to accommodate multiple programs and accommodate a wider range of programs at peak times than currently available (i.e fencing club).
- The space should be open and generously proportioned.

#### Fitness Area

- The space should accommodate a wide range of users of all age groups and interests and be fully accessible.
- The service delivery model for this use will likely be based around paid membership and the facilities should be of a more club-like caliber in terms of the type of equipment and the look and feel of the spaces. Based on this model, the space will require its own clear control point in addition to its own dedicated washrooms and change rooms.

#### Racquet Courts

- It was generally agreed that racquet court facilities were not a priority within this facility, given the relatively small demand and large allocations of space required for this activity. If racquet courts were to be provided, international squash courts would be the preferred format

#### Running/ Walking Track

- It was generally agreed that the running track was an important part of the facility; especially with regard to the therapeutic and medical functions within the space. The track should include two or three lanes to allow for running, walking and barrier free use.

### What are the key features that will make this program space work?

#### Gymnasium

- The space should be divisible into two or three smaller spaces with dividing curtains.
- The space should have a high quality sprung hardwood floor.
- The space should accommodate a variety of different activities such as basketball, badminton, volleyball, gymnastics and indoor soccer.
- The space should be generously proportioned with adequate run out spaces on all sides in order to properly serve adult league functions and competitive events.
- The space should be equipped to handle spectator use, with retractable seating for approx. 1000 people. The spectator area should, if possible, be zoned separately from the team bench area and timekeepers desk with separate access points within the space for spectators and participants.
- The space could include a movable stage with loose and retractable seating for large social gatherings and theatrical events. This type of use would demand other support spaces such a kitchen/ servery and an enlarged storage area, in addition to adequate crush spaces and washrooms adjacent to the space.

#### Fitness Centre

- This space will include a large flexible equipment area with cardio-vascular, selectorized and free weights in addition to more specialized barrier free equipment for medical and therapeutic functions.
- The space should contain a centrally located supervisor's station, as well as a fitness testing area.
- The equipment area should provide a balance of public and private zones to accommodate different user needs and comfort levels.

- This area should also include a smaller more private studio space for aerobics, spin classes, yoga and dance classes with its own storage and sound system.

**How can this space relate to other spaces and the exterior surroundings?**

- The gymnasium should be a highly visible component of the Centre with views from adjacent internal spaces, such as the fitness area, track and lobby as well as to the outdoors.
- The gymnasium could have a physical connection to the outdoors, with outdoor amenities such as a multi-court, skateboard/ BMX park.
- The fitness area and track should also accommodate views to and from the rest of the facility, in addition to access to outdoor space.
- The fitness area should have good access to dedicated change rooms and washrooms. This space could also include its own lounge space as well as access to a juice bar type amenity.
- The gym and fitness centre should have good access from parking areas, and parking should be controlled with an automated system (i.e. card reader) for dedicated Community Centre and Library access.

**How do you see the therapeutic (hospital) uses being integrated into the programming of this space?**

- Wellness users wish to be seen as equal participants of the facility.
- The users may be participating with caregiver or on their own.
- Use of the change rooms will require attention to the location and quantity of change cubicles
- Specific wellness equipment should be well integrated within the floor space to promote a more inclusive open concept.

**What are the key environmental/sustainable opportunities for this space?**

- The Centre should be well served by other modes of transportation. The facility should be well integrated within the larger network of campus and Town pathways to encourage greater pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Bike racks should be located close to the main entry points to the facility.
- The facility should include green roofs to create outdoor amenity spaces connected with the various program uses (i.e an outdoor fitness terrace.).
- Operable windows are important to allow for passive ventilation in the summer months and to ensure good air quality.
- Wind power and possibly ground source heating could be used to increase the overall energy performance of the building.

**What experiences of other community centres or building types would you bring to this facility?**

- A facility that was cited as a successful model for this type of facility was Angus Glen.
- Some of the features that were requested within the spaces included natural materials, the use of bright colours and bold graphics, as well as plentiful natural light. It was expressed that the spaces not have an institutional feel to them and that painted block be avoided,

## c. Library

### How do you envision using this program space?

- The Library will service many constituencies including:
  - Clinicians.
  - Local Residents.
  - Walk-in Traffic [because Cornell is planned to be a pedestrian precinct].
  - The Markham Community.
- The Library constituents are a microcosm of the town itself and this should be reflected in the library planning.
- A number of terms were put forward to describe how this program space could be viewed including “community living room” and “intellectual playground”.
- Community Living Room:
  - Welcoming
  - Less institutional in character.
  - The scale of the spaces, the details, and the materials palette will be important to consider when designing this space so that there is a “domestic” character to the library.
- Intellectual Playground:
  - The library should be a metaphorical “intellectual playground” for the different constituencies that make up the user groups. These groups would be made up of children, young adults, adults, seniors, and clinicians.
- This space should be open and interactive, with good sight lines throughout for passive supervision.
- The spaces should be user friendly and intuitive with an emphasis on display and marketing of the collections and new materials.
- The space should be fully accessible and welcoming of all age groups and interests.
- Children will wish to use the library as a place for interactive play and learning. It will be a fun and stimulating environment that stimulates their interest and curiosity in reading and other types of media. It will also be a secure and intimate space within the library.
- Teens will wish to have more autonomy within the library, with a distinct area that they can call their own that is at once integrated and separated from the other spaces.
- The library should offer a venue for learning how to use new technology and a gateway to electronic resources and media.

### What are the key features that will make this program work?

- The library should facilitate the Town's model of customer service in its integration of automated systems and self-service and de-emphasis of more traditional desk-based systems.
- The design should accommodate the model of ‘roving’ staff, enabling greater point of use assistance to customers within this space.
- Thought should be given to having more than one entrance to this library.
- Flexibility of space:
  - This is particularly important in the children and young adult areas where there will be a number of different programs for the space.
  - Mobile and systems furniture is an important part of overall flexibility.
- The Media Centre should be distinct from the computer commons. This area will be for listening to music, watching DVD's, and taking online tutorials. The model for this area should be based on the listening / viewing booths often found in academic libraries.
- Various lounge spaces and reading areas should be interspersed within the floor space to create a more informal home-like atmosphere.
- The library should have a variety of clear zones of use that define the children's, adult and youth collections.

### How can this space relate to other spaces and the exterior surroundings?

- The library should take advantage of the synergies with other programs and uses within the building, in the opportunities for shared space and cross programming.
- Adjacency to multi-use areas of the center is important as potential pivot space between multiple programs and activities.
- Natural micro climatic zones around the building will create opportunities for expanding the program to the outdoors.
- Access to natural light and potentially an internal court will enhance the use of the spaces.
- The library should offer multiple entry points, encouraging walk in use from the street and create a pedestrian friendly precinct.
- Generous landscaping and connection to public space will enhance the buildings relationship to the urban and natural context.
- The library should have a strong connection to the hospital in terms of its access and connections to future phases.

### How do you see the therapeutic (hospital) uses being integrated into the programming of this space?

- For the Library the issue will be how the Medical Library is integrated into the larger Community Library.

- The Medical Library will contain a variety of clinical sciences resources.
- The Medical Library:
  - With respect to on-line resources including medical databases, only Clinicians will have access.
  - With respect to general reading material, the library will serve as a lending library to Clinicians and a reference library to the general public.
- Medical Library Access:
  - 24/7 access for the Clinicians.
  - Coordinate hours of operation with the Community Library.
- This library currently holds 28,000 titles in its collection.

**What are the environmental/ sustainable opportunities for this space?**

**What experiences of other community centers or building types would you bring to this facility?**

- A facility that was cited as a successful model for this type of facility was the Richmond City Library which was developed under the strong vision and guidance of Kate McNealy
- Other successful models included the KCLS Library in Seattle by O.M.A , the Burlington Library- Main Branch and the Desert Brooms Library in Phoenix Arizona.

## D. Multi-Use/ Common Spaces

### How do you envision using this program space?

- Markham Concert Band will use Multi-Use Rooms for rehearsals for their 70-member band.
- Hospital will hold medical rounds in the room (150 people max).
- Other medical related associations that might use the Multi-Use Rooms include: The Arthritis Society, Canadian Cancer Society, Heart & Stroke Foundation, etc.
- Cooking classes in a teaching kitchen. Markham currently has a limited number of teaching kitchens. Recommend locating the teaching kitchen adjacent to a large public space to provide overflow space for cultural fairs. Kitchen is a good way to promote healthy living.
- Other fitness related uses might include: tai chi, yoga and dance.
- Babysitting room or supervised play area with an indoor interactive playground with rock climbing, slides, or tubes (similar to IKEA or McDonald's). To be used by children while their parents are using the facility.
- Licensed Daycare for children.
- Snoozelon Room or Safe Room for children with Autism or physical challenges, Alzheimer's Patients.
- Other community and cultural uses might include: community meetings (150 people max), public forums, theatre groups, and art groups.

### What are the key features that will make this program space work?

- Accessible ground floor location or elevator access (ground floor location preferred).
- Multi-Use Rooms requires a movable stage for MCB rehearsals (3 tier 2 ft high) and for medical presentations (2 tier). Stage could include storage space underneath.
- Full audio/visual provisions, dimmable lighting, projection screens, acoustic finishes and acoustic separation from adjacent spaces (especially important for band rehearsal space).
- Large storage capacity for music stands, instruments (incl. 4 timpanis), sheet music library (50 shelves), chairs, etc.
- Snoozelon Room or Safe Room to be textured and padded with music and sounds to stimulate the senses.
- Large Multi-Use rooms to be flexible.
- Provide small-scale meeting rooms to accommodate 20 to 25 people that are flexible.
- Provide sufficient common areas or lounge areas with flexible movable furniture.
- Public washrooms to be fully accessible with automatic plumbing fixtures, and no doors at the entrance.
- Provide a nursing washroom complete with a bottle warmer.

### How can this space relate to other spaces and the exterior surroundings?

- Multi-Use rooms should not necessarily be clustered together. Multi-Use rooms should be located adjacent to various programmatic spaces, ie next to Library, next the Aquatic Centre, and next to the Fitness Centre.
- Locate on the ground floor or adjacent to an elevator.
- Provide access to an outdoor room or theatre, ie a small park environment.
- Access to an exterior classroom environment for teaching or training.
- Access to a mini-amphitheatre with a small stage for plays that could be used by community groups.
- Tai chi and yoga classes could be held outdoors.
- Provide a concert band shell similar to Orillia.

### How do you see the therapeutic (hospital) uses being integrated into the programming of this space?

- Educating the public to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle through programs such as the Teaching Kitchen, interactive Babysitting area, fitness classes, etc.
- Multi-Use rooms should be located close to the fitness areas. Cardiac patients have access to the fitness areas.
- Provide a classroom environment for teaching health and lifestyle courses.

### What are the key environmental/sustainable opportunities for this space?

- The Multi-Use rooms should include real plant life, similar to a breathing wall.
- Should include a green roof.
- No carpet finishes should be used.

**What experiences of other community centres or building types would you bring to this facility?**

- Snoozelon or Safe Room similar to Bloorview Kids Rehab centre.
- Vellore Village Community Centre in Vaughan provides a large open space for public arts shows, wellness fairs, etc. Large Multi-Use rooms are located directly off of the public space.
- For the outdoor band shell refer to the Orillia Aqua Theatre.

## E. Older Adults/ Youth

### How do you envision using this program space?

#### Older Adults

- Similar seniors centres in Markham run approximately 48 different active and passive programs per week:
  - Table Games i.e. card, board and dice
  - Exercise programs – line dancing, stretching, Tai Chi and ballroom dance
  - Snooker
  - Table Tennis
  - Educational events such as:
    - Lunch and learn
    - Current event lectures
    - Art classes
    - Cooking classes
    - Hospital partner organized mental and physical health classes and meetings
- There is also a need for relaxation spaces like a lounge or small dedicated library. This space could also include one or two dedicated computer stations for Internet access and training.

#### Youth Room

- The Youth Room should be a very flexible space that will allow a variety of activities.
  - Possible activities include:
    - After school drop in casual space
    - Computer stations with Internet access
    - Access to television and music listening
    - Games Foosball, table tennis and snooker/pool
    - Coffee House and Jam music sessions

#### Educational activities

- Employment strategies lectures and meetings
- Peer tutorial service
- Hospital partner organized mental and physical health classes and meetings
- Intergenerational meetings and social events

### ***What are the key features that will make this program space work?***

#### Older Adults

- Dedicated program and storage space specifically designed for the Older Adults programs – A space to call their own and able to take ownership.
- Inviting paint colours and materials – users would like to participate in the interior design of the space
- Staff spaces dedicated to the program
- Careful thought to accessibility and special needs including requirements of the caregiver.
- Possible connection to exterior for lounge or program spaces.
- Safe and secure.

#### Youth Room

- Dedicated program and storage space specifically designed for the Youth programs – A space to call their own and able to take ownership.
- Flexible space that will allow non structured and structured programs
- Interior design should be non- institutional in colours and materials.
- Variety of lighting.
- Connection to AV and internet. Lots of power hook up.
- Exterior access for bringing in equipment (musical instruments).

### How can this space relate to other spaces and the exterior surroundings?

#### Older Adults

- Environmentally friendly.
- Parking needs to be close to the program space.
- There are two kinds of groups within Older Adults.
  - The 55 to 65 age group are recently retired (or not) and want individual activities rather than group activities. They are likely to use many other parts of the Community Centre and do not want to feel segregated in the Older Adults area.
  - The second group, 65 and up, want mostly group activities in their own space. They are not likely to participate in as many of the other areas of the Community Centre with the exception of the Library.
- General request to have Older Adults area near/ outside, library, café, and parking.
- Request for all entry doors to facility to be automatic sliding.
- Roof garden would be a nice feature.

#### Youth Room

- Close to exterior.
- Close to other program areas in Community Centre such as: pool, gym and library.

### How do you see the therapeutic (hospital) uses being integrated into the programming of this space?

- Co op program for hospital and general public.
- Out patient program in Community Centre.
- Educational classes for Older Adults and Youth programs.

### What are the key environmental/sustainable opportunities for this space?

- Use of natural light - daylight harvesting.
- Solar panels.
- Rooftop garden tended by seniors. – Green space may be maintainable.
- Natural ventilation.
- Temperature control.
- Environmentally friendly selection of materials and finishes.

### What experience of other community centres or building types would you bring to this facility?

- Skylights.
- Glass walls like Angus Glen CC.
- Curved spaces.
- Room sizes that are big enough to suit program.
- A 3000 sq.ft. multi-purpose room for Older Adults and Youth to share.
- Family change rooms.
- Commitment to supervision of Youth Area.

### General Summary Notes (mostly repeat)

- Make space big enough to accommodate a developing program.
- Provide lots of storage.
- Dedicated space for Older Adults and Youth. Not shared.
- Flexible to accommodate range of activities.
- Commitment to accessibility.
- Commitment to energy conservation and the environment.
- Careful design of space and use of materials to suit the needs of Older Adults or Youth.
- Home away from home atmosphere.
- Will this be a town run facility or community run?
- Great opportunity for teaching space – partnership with the hospital.
- Need for sense of ownership of the space.
- Proximity to library and close to parking is a must for Older Adults.

- Choice of environmentally friendly materials and finishes.

## Sustainable Design

- Daylight harvesting.
- Natural ventilation.
- Roof garden.
- Share of energy with hospital.
- Share of open space with hospital.
- Share of vehicle parking and public transportation with hospital parking

## F. Open Session

### Transportation and Site Access

- Important that users do not have to depend on their cars.
- Free parking
- Connect with existing Community Centre on other side of Bur Oak, either over-road or underground.
- Access not to be compromised for residents.
- Pathway access
- Create option for access other than by car
- Connection to Rouge Park Pathways
- Bur Oak pedestrian access should be a pleasant walk
- Provide a town square with a civic focus for the community.

### Community Centre Considerations

- Outdoor bandshell for concert band use
- Multi-Use rehearsal hall room (could be used for music therapy).
- Skateboarding (with strict code of conduct)
- Artificial outdoor skating rink
- Indoor track
- Outdoor multi-court for tennis (4-6 courts) and basketball
- Basketball
- Curling rink with seating
- Ice pads
- Gym
- Climbing Wall
- Meeting rooms
- Fitness facility
- Indoor and outdoor pool
- Daycare centre
- Cafeteria/ lunch counter
- Green space, fields, ice pads
- Play structure for children
- Storage spaces (secure and permanent)
- Music room
- Multi-Purpose room to be a space for use in inclement weather.
- Smaller meeting rooms for max. 25 people (in Library?) Rooms should not be booked to the same groups on a regular basis.
- Drop-in day care
- Multi-Purpose or Theatre Room

### Library

- Interactive, visual and historical information and material
- IT facilities/ instruction material
- Seniors Centre with crafts area (i.e. ceramics, painting), research technology lab and lounge/ display areas.

### Building Concept & Design

- Environmental/Sustainability Opportunities
  - High tech lighting
  - Heating/Cooling- solar panels, heat pumps
  - Healthy Indoor Environment -indoor planting, waterfall atrium wall
  - Solar Wall
  - Waste management recycling facility
  - Energy efficient – position of entrances (north, west)
  - Heat recovery building – Could it be located underground? Will probably be moved to another location.

- User Friendly
  - Accessible- easy access to parking
  - Covered Entrance with heated paving
  - Community Centre should present a “friendly” face to Bur Oak.
  - Compliment existing community
  - Facility should be open longer hours – early morning to late at night.
  
- Miscellaneous
  - Signage – do not use the colour red
  - Hi-tech surveillance
  - Durable landscaping
  - Modular/expandable structure
  - “One-stop” shopping facility
  - Build for now and the future
  - Facility will attract visitors from all of Markham
  - Estimated population of 40,000.
  - Interior design to focus on walls
  - Provide places to hang art.
  - Provide trophy cases.
  - Co-operative effort with surrounding facilities.
  - Compromises for residents, eg scaled down library
  - Outdoor fields – cooperate with planned high school
  - Privacy for users in therapy – special considerations in pool, gym and fitness areas.
  - Clubs will meet for outdoor activities, ie walking club in the facility.
  - Central area for meeting, displays, etc.