



2006 Evaluation Form

Municipality: Town of Markham
 Province: Ontario
 Category: Over 100000

The municipality is evaluated on the efforts of the community in the following criteria:

Tidiness	111.5	/	125
Environmental Awareness	117	/	125
Community Involvement	112	/	125
Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation	115.5	/	125
Tree/Urban Forest Management	113	/	125
Landscaped Areas	107.5	/	125
Floral Displays	103.5	/	125
Turf and Groundcovers	107	/	125
Total Marks :	887	/	1000

Percentage : 88.70

Bloom rating: 5 Blooms

Mention : Markham Heritage Estates

Representative (s) of Community

Name: Catherine Harrison Function : Manager of Communication Services
 Name: Shanon Elliot Function : CIB Manager
 Name: Tina Murphy Function : Special Events Co-ordinator

Judges

Name: Ken O'Brien Name: Ed Lawrence

Evaluation date: July 23-25, 2006

IMPORTANT NOTES:

All criteria are adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the municipality.

Some criteria might not be applicable: in such cases, scoring will be prorated.

The 2006 evaluation score may vary from the previous year based on the facts that the evaluation form is subject to modifications each year and that the evaluation is based on the perception of the current judges.

APPENDIX "A"

TIDINESS		
Tidiness of green spaces, medians, boulevards, sidewalks, streets, ditches, road shoulders, signage, vacant lots and buildings, with regards to garbage, weeds, maintenance and repair, dog droppings, notices/posters, graffiti and vandalism.		
	Max	Actual
Municipality / Public Properties		
⊕ Tidiness, order, cleanliness and first impressions	10	9
⊕ Community anti-litter awareness and support for community organizations in clean-up efforts	9	8
⊕ Effective bylaws and/or policies and operational programs for notices, posters and graffiti prevention / removal	9	8
⊕ Maintenance of public roads and shoulders: weed – free sidewalks, curbs, streets and roads, regular hard surface / street sweeping program	9	8
⊕ Condition of buildings and urban furniture: benches, litter and recycling containers	8	7
Commercial / Industrial Sector		
⊕ Tidiness, order and cleanliness	8	7
⊕ Condition of buildings, grounds, sidewalks and parking lots	8	7
⊕ Condition of urban furniture: benches, litter and recycling containers	8	7
⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind - for community clean-up programs	8	7.5
Service clubs, Schools, Churches, Not-for-profit groups		
⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind	9	8
⊕ Involvement – organization, participation	9	8
⊕ Impact of efforts on community	9	8.5
Residential / Citizens		
⊕ Tidiness, order and cleanliness	7	6
⊕ Condition of buildings and yards	7	6.5
⊕ Involvement in block or individual street tidiness	7	6
Tidiness		
	125	111.5

Comments and Suggestions - Tidiness

Tidiness is in view all over Markham. That's not easy to accomplish, so hats off to all those litter-busters. We saw lots of people out and about on the streets, in parks and playing fields, but with almost no litter in sight. This is a credit to Town staff and to people who are in the habit of not littering and in helping clean up after those who do. We also saw no graffiti and thus were not surprised to learn that a hot line leads the municipality to quick response.

The change to the property standards by-law enabling property clean-ups (cutting tall grass and weeds) with 72 hours' notice rather than 45 days is a good move forward.

Prevention is better than clean-up after the fact, so it is encouraging that Markham is expanding its recycling programs at community mailboxes, playgrounds, parks, public spaces, streets, and public events. The 20-Minute Makeover program is a great way to focus efforts and get people thinking and doing something about litter. The story of Mary Brown, the 7-year-old in Vinegar Hill who walks her dog and picks up litter each day, is an example for others. At public events and sports fields, people should be encouraged to pick up after themselves when the event or game is over.

For the longer term, prevention is the way to go, and Markham is doing that with posters, stickers, mugs, and resident focus groups to generate ideas.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Sustainable development, policies and bylaws, waste reduction, landfill sites, hazardous waste collection, sewage disposal, transfer/recycle stations, recycling initiatives, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), water source, treatment and conservation, naturalization, environmental clean up activities and friendly transportation

	Max	Actual
Municipality / Public Properties		
⊕ Sustainable development strategy: bylaws, policies, guidelines and long-term planning/vision	10	10
⊕ Waste management programs such as recycling, re-use, composting, shredding of Christmas trees, hazardous waste including e-waste collection, waste water (sludge, leach ate) treatment	6	6
⊕ Community Outreach	4	4
⊕ Water conservation and reduction programs: efficient appliance incentives or promotion, reduced reliance and efficient irrigation and use of non-potable water, water restriction policies	10	9.5
⊕ Watershed management plans and alternative storm water management: retention ponds, pervious hardscapes, green roofs, shoreline erosion control programs		
⊕ Energy conservation and use of alternate forms of energy: geothermal, biomass, wind, solar	4	4
⊕ Conversion programs for efficient lighting and shielding for night skies issues		
⊕ Promotion of energy audits and energy efficient buildings and landscapes		
⊕ Greening of operations fleet: conversion to higher efficiency vehicles, use of alternative fuels	4	4
⊕ Efficient use of vehicle fleet such as use of crew cabs, bicycles		
⊕ Conversion of older maintenance equipment to more efficient and reduced emissions		
⊕ Transportation management strategies: promotion and incentives of public transit and car pooling	4	4
⊕ Conversion of roads to integrate new bike lanes, expanded recreational pathways		
⊕ Air quality programs: monitoring, urban heat island mitigation initiatives, anti-idling advisory / bylaws, promotion for the reduced reliance/use of high air polluting small engine equipment	4	4
⊕ Use of Integrated Pest Management / Plant Health Care principles: timing, policy, bylaws	4	3.5
⊕ Innovation: through green buildings, green roofs; reuse of sites and buildings	6	6
⊕ Green procurement policies (use of local products, material energy lifecycle considerations)		
⊕ Brownfield redevelopment, remediation		6
Commercial / Industrial Sector		
⊕ Participation in the environmental effort	6	5.5
⊕ Corporate environmental innovation / stewardship, initiatives, activities	6	5.5
⊕ Sustainable development strategies, safety and emergency preparedness	6	5
⊕ Energy efficient buildings / landscapes.	6	5.5
⊕ Greening of operational fleet and equipment.	6	5
Service clubs, Schools, Churches, Not-for-Profit groups		
⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind	7	6
⊕ Involvement –organization, participation	7	6.5
⊕ Impact of efforts on community	7	6.5
Residential / Citizens		
⊕ Participation in the environmental effort	9	8
⊕ Involvement / support / direction to municipality	9	8.5
Environmental awareness	125	117

Comments and Suggestions - Environmental Awareness

Markham's awareness of environmental issues is excellent all around. The Town is developing a larger employment base, thus avoiding a role as simply a bedroom suburb of Toronto. Employment levels are quite solid and growing. This allows more opportunity to live and work in Markham, reducing the need for longer commuting. The Town's growth strategy sees another 8,000 acres of urban development but preserves one-third of all land as agricultural, in line with the Province's policy for regional farmland.

Markham is championing New Urbanism as the model for land development -- striving for walkable neighbourhoods where local commerce is near residential areas, with good parks and public squares close by. This is being built now at the Cornell neighbourhood and in the developing Markham Centre. The result: buildings closer to the street, an emphasis on good design (such as a community mailbox that was tucked under an archway out of the weather, next to local shops and a play area). The neighbourhood was quite pleasant to stroll around, and we could see that many neighbours knew one another and chatted back and forth. Our hope is that there will be possibilities for people of all income levels, not just the well-to-do. The "granny suites" (accessory dwelling units) over garages in Cornell show that Markham is aware of the need for affordable housing.

The Markham district energy system, providing heating and cooling to a grouping of buildings (including townhouses in future), is an outstanding example of economies of scale. The combined system is much more efficient than individual systems for each building. An added bonus: the new houses will have to unsightly air-conditioning units and no noise from same.

Waste diversion has been set at the ambitious target of 70%. In 2005, diversion went from 37% to 68% after Mission Green (a three-stream waste disposal system) was implemented. Hopefully Markham will work with other partners in the Greater Toronto Area to eliminate the practice of shipping solid waste to Michigan, USA, for disposal.

The Markham Energy Conservation office (MECO) is a good innovation, particularly its Better Buildings Partnership and the Taking Work Home program, encouraging Town staff to conserve energy at home. This could be adapted by large businesses.

Markham's approach to transportation is apparent, with demand management, improvements in public transit (the VIVA bus system), carpooling, and better bicycle paths. The Green Roof initiative at the Tridel Condominiums is worthwhile and hopefully will become more widespread. Flying over Markham and seeing vast expanses on flat roofs in the industrial parks shows the potential for Green Roofs to improve the environment.

We did not see laundry being dried on backyard clotheslines. This uses free solar and wind energy and should be encouraged.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Citizens' involvement in various community projects, including horticulture and garden clubs, service groups, recreation and sports clubs, school children, teens, seniors, municipal workers and local businesses

	Max	Actual
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Municipal / Public Properties

⊕ Volunteer recognition	8	8
⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind for volunteer activities	8	8
⊕ Information and educational programs	8	8
⊕ Promotion of local businesses, products, tourism	8	7
⊕ Organization/facilitation of local events/festivals, fundraising, support –financial or in-kind	8	7
⊕ Innovation; involvement with youth / seniors and other initiatives towards broader social inclusion	7	6

Commercial / Industrial Sector

⊕ Involvement in community projects, volunteer initiatives, community outreach programs	10	8.5
⊕ Sponsorship – financial or in kind – of the local CIB program	10	9
⊕ Innovation; involvement with youth / seniors and other initiatives towards broader social inclusion	10	8

Service clubs, Schools, Churches, Not –for - Profit Groups

⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind	8	7
⊕ Involvement –organization, participation	8	7
⊕ Impact of efforts on community	8	7.5

Residential / Citizens

⊕ Involvement in projects / programs	8	7
⊕ Promotion of community programs through contests, tours and media	8	7
⊕ Fundraising and other initiatives	8	7

Community involvement	125	112
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Comments and Suggestions - Community Involvement

The range of people and groups active in Markham is impressive. Young and old, all are active, with support from their volunteer groups, the corporate, and the municipality. The volunteer recognition provided by the annual corn roast, recognition luncheon, and the biennial civic recognition wards is good reinforcement.

Volunteer effort is important to a community, but it needs nurturing and support to make it successful, and recognition to help keep it going. Markham appears to have put together these elements.

The Mayor's Youth Task Force supports Communities in Bloom by planting and selling flower barrels as a fundraiser (while also beautifying the streets), planting trees, being CiB Ambassadors in their communities and schools, and volunteering at special events. Speaking of the schools, they appear to be quite active with recycling, composting, Green Teams, Schools in Bloom, and the Sowing Seeds of Good Character program (a gardening echo of Mayor Cousen's emphasis on Markham as a Character Community. We quite like the idea of the Seniors' Hall of Fame.

Seniors' clubs at Thornhill, Markham Village and elsewhere have focused on Communities in Bloom. That is gratifying to CiB, but more importantly it demonstrates CiB's benefit of bringing various groups -- seniors and otherwise -- together for the common good. The continuation of Markham's various programs will help the Town's growth as a vibrant community with a small-town feel. These programs will require dedicated staff and budget to keep the momentum going beyond Communities in Bloom alone.

It is interesting that Markham's CiB Committee invites places of worship to beautify their grounds and participate in community clean-ups, as well as growing food for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Local service clubs have also been active with various projects.

The Markham community garden is a fantastic resource, and we were pleased to meet Carman Lewis and friends. This slice of former farmland, now surrounded by development, is still giving people pleasure as they keep busy growing things and socializing.

We echo the comments above in the Environmental Awareness section -- the Taking Work Home program, which encourages Town staff to practice environmental awareness at home, is an excellent means of promoting community involvement. Municipalities are often major employers, and this model could be adapted to the private sector fairly readily, for environmental matters and for other purposes.

During our visit, we saw good representation by Markham's corporate sector in many aspects of the community in general and CiB in particular. As an example, the environmental improvements done by IBM at its building shows a real interest in the natural world, from butterfly boxes to tree plantings to stormwater run-off. MDA Space Systems also has outreach to local schools with scholarships and school visits.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Heritage policies, bylaws and natural heritage management plans; preservation and restoration of buildings, homes, churches, monuments, artefacts, sites, parks, heritage gardens, trees; preservation of traditions and customs; festivals/celebrations; heritage foods and the arts.

	Max	Actual
Municipality / Public Properties		
⊕ Heritage policies, by-laws and procedures	10	10
⊕ Natural and cultural heritage management plan and preservation initiatives: cultural landscapes, use of native plants, heritage gardens, trees	10	9
⊕ Preservation, restoration and reuse programs	8	7.5
⊕ Information and support programs	6	6
⊕ Promotion of heritage by Historical Society, Heritage Committee, Tourism Association	5	5
⊕ Interpretative and signage programs, walking tours, museums, festivals/celebrations	6	5.5
⊕ Cultural heritage programs: first nations, explorers, first and subsequent settlers	5	4.5
⊕ New program and initiatives	5	4.5
Commercial / Industrial Sector		
⊕ Conservation, restoration and reuse of sites/buildings	7	6
⊕ Building façade and improvement plan. (original colours, styles, materials, lighting)	7	6
⊕ Participation in municipal, provincial or federal programs	7	6
⊕ Innovation; participation in open door programs, promotion of local heritage	7	7
Service clubs, Schools, Churches, Not-for-profit Groups		
⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind	7	6
⊕ Involvement –organization, participation	7	6
⊕ Impact of efforts on community	7	6.5
Residential / Citizens		
⊕ Conservation / restoration and reuse of sites / buildings	7	7
⊕ Preservation of traditions, customs, food and crafts	7	6.5
⊕ Participation in heritage community events/activities	7	6.5
Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation		
	125	115.5

Comments and Suggestions - Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation

In its natural setting at the interface between urban growth and farmland, Markham is attempting to manage both. It has set aside large areas for new urban development at the same time as one-third of its land base will remain as farmland and protected areas. The Rouge North Management Plan and Rouge Park fit into the provincial Greenbelt Plan. Other parks complement the Town's open space system.

The Small Streams Study will protect small water courses during development. A tree protection by-law is being prepared. And the Environmental Land Acquisition Fund gives the Town the finances to buy properties to add them to the park system.

The Town's Heritage Department and its planner, George Duncan, have done yeoman service in formulating policies, creating heritage conservation districts at Thornhill, Markham Village, Unionville, and Buttonville, and helping to restore various sites and properties, all with the support of Council. One of the showpieces is Markham Heritage Estates, where buildings facing demolition can be moved into a small subdivision. The Town sold lots at less than market value to help make the moving and restoration of the houses viable, and even held off on finalizing the roadwork until flatbeds could move houses into place. The main entrance road now has a beautiful boulevard with plantings and a split-rail fence -- a setting that complements the old houses.

The Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program is another way that the Town supports heritage buildings and their owners. If these buildings are a resource that have a public value, then it makes sense for public money to help support them. We suggest that the Town ensure the preservation of a cross-section of building types and styles, including especially the houses built by working-class people and those of more modest means.

Doors Open is a great way to showcase heritage buildings and generate support by allowing people inside. The work of historical societies and committees, such as at Heintzmann House, do a great service to the conservation and appreciation of the past. In the same vein, the care shown at the Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery (the Berczy cemetery), where some of Markham's pioneers are buried, is much appreciated. And people like Lorne Smith, Town Historian, ensure that Markhamites pay attention to the past and appreciate the hard work and dedication of their forebears that led to today's prosperous community.

In the cultural field, the early settlers from the British Isles and elsewhere in Europe have been joined over time by people from a diversity of cultures. This presents opportunities for new ways of thinking, opens the community to different areas of the world, and gives an appreciation for different traditions. There are also challenges -- in languages, customs, and mutual understanding. We appreciated the chance to see some of the diversity, such as in one of the Asian malls. We had the impression that Markham is seeking ways to embrace its many cultures and traditions within the overarching principles of pride of place, love of Canada (for long-time citizens and new immigrants), and respect for different traditions.

TREE / URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT

Written policies, bylaws and regulation plans both long and short-term. Distribution of trees, inventory, variety, suitability, new plantings, main street programs, new survey developments, preservation of heritage trees, commemorative trees, woodlots, succession planting, Plant Health Care and Integrated Pest Management, qualified/trained individuals (volunteer or on staff)

	Max	Actual
Municipality / Public Properties		
⊕ Policies, regulations and tree by-laws, tree protection and planting on public and private lands	10	9
⊕ Plan of action: procurement, species diversity, selection of hardy species with potential to contribute towards	10	9.5
⊕ Strategic, Management, Operational and Emergency Plan in place, an inventory of trees, demonstration of good planting techniques and a maintenance program	8	7
⊕ Measures to preserve, protect, manage and expand woodlots	7	6
⊕ Qualified personnel and crew training	7	7
⊕ Integrated Pest Management/Plant Health Care, plan of action for invasive pest detection and control, information on current infestations and diseases	7	7
⊕ Participation and recognition in programs such as Green Streets Canada	7	6.5
⊕ Concept, design and planting for commercial enterprises	7	6
⊕ Maintenance programs	7	6
⊕ Existing tree protection and preservation during construction: in by-law and in practice	7	6
⊕ Involvement and promotion of tree planting programs and conservation through groups such as Business Improvement Association	7	7
Service Clubs, Schools, Churches, Not - for - Profit Groups		
⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind	7	6
⊕ Involvement – organization, participation	7	6.5
⊕ Impact of efforts on community	7	6.5
Residential / Citizens		
⊕ Selection of varieties – inclusion of native, hardy species	10	8
⊕ Maintenance	10	9
Tree / Urban Forest Management	125	113

Comments and Suggestions - Tree / Urban Forest Management

Markham's urban foresters follow International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) standards and training. Jeff McMann and his team can take pride in their work. The Town has inventoried 250,000 trees on municipally owned lands. Tree preservation plans are required during the development process. A new tree preservation by-law, expected to be approved in 2007, will protect trees on private property -- a commendable initiative, and one that is difficult to implement without the support of the public and Council.

The Town received a Green Streets Canada award in 2005, and has a commemorative tree program. Staff use integrated pest management (IPM), and there is almost no use of pesticides. Monitoring is underway for the emerald ash borer and the Asian long-horned beetle, as these can be quite destructive in the forest (urban or rural).

The expansion of woodlots since 1998, going from 3.2% of upland forest cover on the land base to 8%, is impressive. Markham works with developers to maintain woodlots as development takes place.

LANDSCAPED AREAS

This criteria supports all efforts to create an environment wherein plants form an essential element of the overall surroundings: design and suitability for location and use; native and introduced materials; balance of plants, materials and constructed elements; harmony (colour, texture, shape); tasteful integration of hard surfaces and art elements; standards of maintenance.

	Max	Actual
Municipality / Public Properties		
⊗ First impressions of the community including gateway / entrance treatments	10	9.5
⊗ Development of policies, standards and best practices	7	6
⊗ Plan of action: distribution through the community	8	6.5
⊗ Urban and civic design standards for streetscape and other public places: flags, banners, public art, fountains, site furnishings, lighting design, walkways and paving materials, control of signage	7	6.5
⊗ Specifications for planting (with suitable varieties) and maintenance	7	7
⊗ Sustainable designs: energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping	6	5
⊗ Site rejuvenation, rehabilitation and maintenance (life cycle management)	6	5
⊗ Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and training	7	7
Commercial / Industrial Sector		
⊗ Innovation in concept and design	6	4.5
⊗ Public involvement: support – financial or in-kind, participation	6	4.5
⊗ Sustainable designs: energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping	6	4.5
⊗ Contribution to urban and civic design and public greenspaces above and beyond requirements: public art, streetscape, site furniture, fountains	6	5
⊗ Adequate ongoing maintenance (life cycle management)	6	4.5
Service clubs, Schools, Churches, Not-for-profit groups		
⊗ Support – financial and/or in-kind	6	5
⊗ Involvement – organization, participation	6	5
⊗ Impact of efforts on community	6	5.5
Residential / Citizens		
⊗ Streetscape appeal of landscapes	7	6
⊗ Overall maintenance	6	5.5
⊗ Inclusion of sustainable plant materials	6	5
Landscaped Areas		
	125	107.5

Comments and Suggestions - Landscaped Areas

Markham extends a splash of flowers and colour to visitors entering from the highways. The Colour Your Corner program adds to this by co-ordinating the work of community groups, who plant flowers and shrubs at the entrances to their neighbourhoods.

The system of parks and open spaces runs through Markham, with significant additions in the past few years. In the New Urbanist neighbourhoods of Cornell and Markham Centre, public squares give neighbourhoods a natural gathering place and attractive focus for many activities. The foundation for an exceptional 1-acre park is being laid at Markham Centre, with the park plan winning a design award. We saw some of the first work in handling a watercourse and stormwater via a meandering streambed.

Public art adds a new element to the public realm. In addition to the traditional statuary and plaques and monuments, Markham is experimenting with environmental art, as at Beaupre park with *cj fleury*.


High quality golf courses are expected to have fine landscaping to complement the game. Angus Glen Golf Course has gone beyond that to create an exceptional setting, in which there are still echoes of the old farms that once dotted the countryside. Naturalized areas will complement the course and provide habitat for different species; they will also keep the course challenging for those who stray from the fairways.

FLORAL DISPLAYS

Arrangements of flowers and plants (annuals, perennials, bulbs, ornamental grasses), originality, distribution, location, diversity and balance, colour, harmony, quality and maintenance. These pertain to flowerbeds, carpet bedding, containers, baskets and window boxes.

	Max	Actual
Municipality / Public Properties		
⊕ Diversity of displays: flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, mosaics	12	10
⊕ Plan of action: programs, distribution through community. Concept and design including sustainable design	12	10
⊕ Diversity of plants: annuals, perennials, bulbs, grasses, woody plants, natural flora	12	9.5
⊕ Quality, maintenance, best practices	10	9
⊕ Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and training	7	6
Commercial / Industrial Sector		
⊕ Concept and design	9	7
⊕ Quality and maintenance	9	7.5
⊕ Contribution to overall floral program	9	7.5
Service clubs, Schools, Churches, Not-for-profit Groups		
⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind	9	7
⊕ Involvement – organization, participation	9	7.5
⊕ Impact of efforts on community	9	7.5
Residential / Citizens		
⊕ Arrangement, diversity, colour	9	7.5
⊕ Quality and maintenance	9	7.5
Floral Displays		
	125	103.5

Comments and Suggestions - Floral Displays



Markham is a place that flowers. The streets in the heritage conservation districts like Unionville and Markham Village present a beautiful streetscape of planters, hanging pots, and flower beds. These give zip and visual interest. Indeed, flowers beautify residential neighbourhoods, increase the pedestrian attractiveness of shopping areas, and soften industrial parks. They also lend dignity to public buildings, as at Markham's Civic Centre, where the beautiful gardens and even the parking lot have a floral signature. Frank Shields and his staff install colourful beds of annuals that are popular for wedding photos. We like the addition of ornamental grasses to the mix and would encourage the use of perennials.

The Town should integrate the floral displays in streetscapes with the specific character of each neighbourhood. For example, in Unionville, the Varley-MacKay property sets the stage for Main Street, but some of the exotic plants there are out of place. Consider using plants related to the era, and certainly native plants.

Many residents of Markham are fine gardeners. Alex Jarvie's garden is one excellent example. The front yard is a feast for the eyes of passersby, but it is only a taste of the variety, colour, and care exhibited behind the house.

TURF AND GROUNDCOVERS

Quality, naturalization, use of groundcovers and wild flowers, turf management (manicured to rough), maintenance (mowing height and frequency), Integrated Pest Management (IPM), fertilization programs, irrigation and water restrictions. Areas include private homes, public buildings, municipal and private sports fields and athletic parks.

	Max	Actual
⊕ Plan of action, distribution of turf and ground cover areas	10	9
⊕ Diversity / species, types of plantings / drought tolerance	9	8.5
⊕ Turf Management / Integrated Pest Management / Plant Health Care, alternative solutions to diseases	9	8
⊕ Review of maintenance plans to consider increased naturalization, alternate mowing frequency for reduced	9	8.5
⊕ Information programs for water requirements, mowing frequency and height, rain gardens	9	9
⊕ Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and training.	7	7

Commercial / Industrial Sector

⊕ Concept and design, use of alternative ground covers	8	6
⊕ Quality and maintenance	8	6.5
⊕ Site naturalization	8	6.5

Service clubs, Schools, Churches, Not-for-profit Groups

⊕ Support – financial and/or in-kind	8	6
⊕ Involvement –organization, participation	8	6.5
⊕ Impact of efforts on community	8	6.5

Residential / Citizens

⊕ Concept and design, use of alternative ground covers	8	6
⊕ Quality and maintenance	8	7
⊕ Participation in lawn watering conservation programs	8	6

Turf and Groundcovers	125	107
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Comments and Suggestions - Turf and Groundcovers

The trend in Ontario and elsewhere in the country these past few years has seen dry summers. Despite this, the turf areas in Markham look grand. There is a high quality of maintenance for Town staff, using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and different techniques such as more frequent mowing.

Eco-grass, gout weed, and other ground covers are being used, plus naturalization in selected areas. This can reduce staff time and effort (freeing them up for other activities), provide some wildlife habitat, and reduce the amount of fossil fuels used for turf care. Public education will be a key component.