



Shared Places Our Spaces

Markham's Public Realm Draft Strategy

May 5, 2014



Acknowledgements

Public Realm Advisory Committee

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City of Markham staff

Initiated in 2011, the Public Realm Advisory Committee (PRAC) works with the City to develop strategies which enhance and animate Markham's public spaces through partnerships, community engagement and City leadership. The PRAC advocates, promotes and supports public realm programs and initiatives within new and

existing communities in Markham. The PRAC reviews the annual public realm programs, engages community involvement, establishes priorities, assists with the evaluation of submissions and recommends actions to Council (such as projects as part of an annual Public Realm partnership funding program).

Public Realm Staff Working Team

This interdepartmental staff team consists of members from Operations, Urban Design & Planning, Heritage Planning, Development Engineering & Transportation, Capital Works, Asset Management, Recreation, Culture, Markham Public Library, Corporate Communications, Bylaws

and Sustainability Office. The team was assembled to coordinate and develop the City of Markham *Public Realm Strategy*.

Peter J. Smith & Company, Inc.

Peter J. Smith & Company, Inc. is a full-service urban design, urban and regional planning and economic development firm with offices in Buffalo, New York and Fort Erie, Ontario. The company was hired to assist the Public Realm Advisory Committee and the Public Realm Staff Working Team in the development of the strategy. Their experience in public realm reviews for other jurisdictions provided an insight in what functions well elsewhere.



A Message from Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Placeholder text for Mayor's introduction.



Mayor
Frank Scarpitti





A Message from Our Commissioners

A vibrant Public Realm is vital for City life. It can enrich the community experience, create a sense of identity and promote a City's competitive edge, by making it an attractive place for people to live, work, play and invest.

Shared Places, Our Spaces is Markham's strategic plan for achieving successful public realm with public spaces that are well planned, designed and managed. Spaces where our heritage, culture and diversity can be celebrated, where there are opportunities to recreate and enjoy nature – and where daily life in the City is enhanced.

We are especially pleased that this strategy document is the result of the combined efforts of Markham's Community & Fire Services and

Development Services Commissions. With the assistance of a multi-departmental staff team and the Public Realm Advisory Committee, we have developed a unified vision for Markham's public realm with shared municipal and community responsibility for its management, enhancement and success.

We hope that *Shared Places, Our Spaces* proves to be an excellent guide for achieving a vibrant public realm in Markham as our City develops over the coming years. We welcome your feedback and support in making Markham's public realm the best it can be.



Commissioner, Community & Fire Services
Brenda Librecz



Commissioner, Development Services
Jim Baird



A Message from Advisory Committee

The public realm is the entity which helps the City of Markham comes alive. The public realm includes the development of diverse public spaces, the animation of our neighbourhoods; and brings together residents, businesses and visitors to celebrate the rich culture and heritage of our growing vibrant community.

Shared spaces shape the contours of our way of life. It is the place where work meets play, where economic vitality is molded by community building, and where we work as one to make our City our home. The public realm is where opportunities thrive, building dynamic and innovative public spaces reflective of Markham's diversity and beauty. People come together in these spaces which should be accessible to all. They create destinations that

cultivate civic pride by celebrating Markham's artistic and architectural talents.

Through shared responsibility, collaboration, community engagement, sustainable use of resources, and partnerships between the public and private sectors, we hope that all stakeholders in Markham recognize the unique opportunity we have to contribute to our public realm. By harmonizing our efforts, we strengthen our resolve to achieve our goal of making the City of Markham a truly enjoyable destination to live, work, study, play and visit.



Chair
Hanif Nori

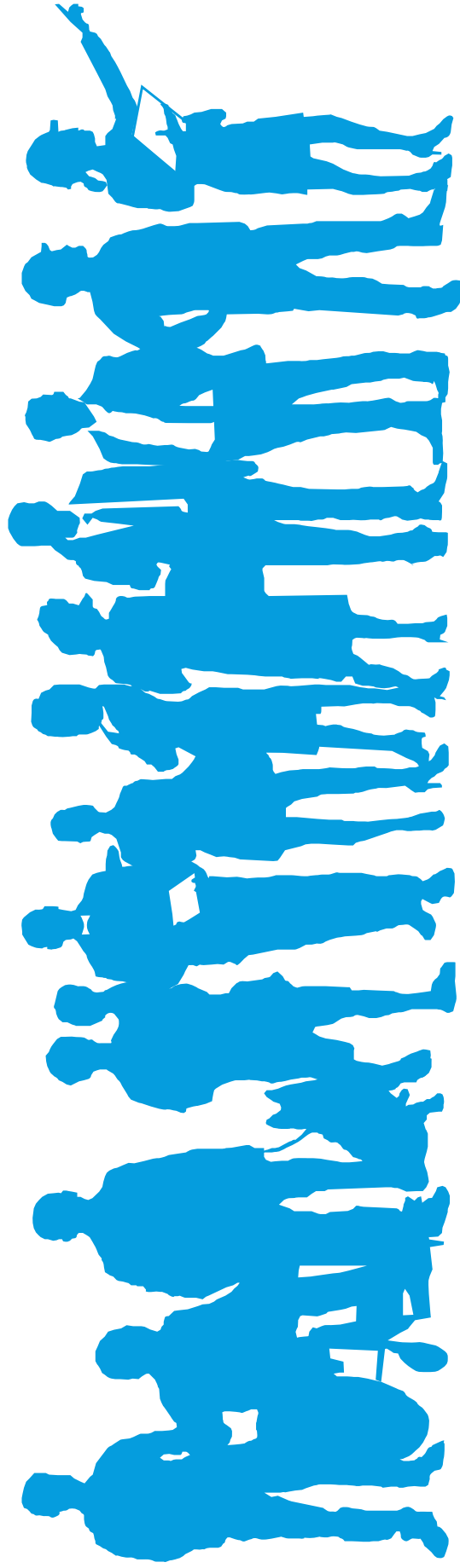


Vice-Chair
Councillor Alex Chiu



A Great Public Realm for all people of Markham

“A great community does not happen by chance. It is the people, shared interest and collective efforts of everyone that makes a difference.” Keep Cornell Beautiful, a voluntary non-profit group founded as a result of inspiration from the community of Cornell, Markham and the *Keep Markham Beautiful (Maintenance) Bylaw*.



“We believe in the *Trees for Tomorrow* initiative.”

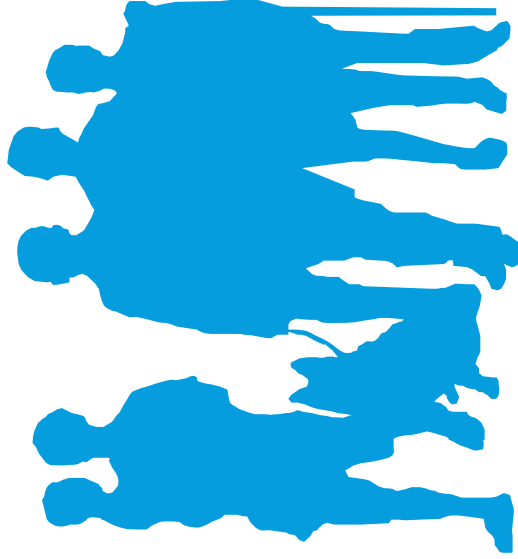
TACC Development donated a tree nursery and provided funding to the street tree program.

“The retail offerings, restaurants, art installations and green spaces will all contribute to a terrific environment and an engaged work force.”

Aviva Canada chose LEED certified commercial space in Markham.

Residents, Businesses, Developers, City Staff

“Markham’s public realm is a demonstration of civic pride and a celebration of our great City.” Stephen Chait, Director, Economic Development



The public realm is an essential component of the City.

This document notes the importance and issues impacting Markham’s Public Realm and develops a vision and action items to guide the collaborative design, implementation and maintenance of Markham’s public realm. The document will be used by citizens, community groups, developers, builders, utility providers, businesses, the City, York Region, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, as well as Provincial and Federal stakeholders.

The document and the strategy will:

- 1 Educate residents about their role in helping to create a great public realm;
- 2 Inform businesses of the importance of a successful public realm;
- 3 Help developers understand how they can contribute to the public realm; and
- 4 Provide a better framework for the City to implement the public realm.

Planning a Great Public Realm Together

The public realm does not just happen. Staff from across the corporation collaborate and cooperate to bring their area of expertise and experience to the creation, construction, maintenance and use of the public realm.

Each area of expertise comes together and contributes to the public realm in the following ways:

Community & Fire Services Commission Operations

The Operations Department maintains the city-owned parks and open spaces, roads, traffic controls and fleet. Operations reviews and assesses maintenance impacts of new and capital developments related to the street, park and open space infrastructure. Through effective

maintenance and care of these City assets, we ensure they remain safe and accessible to residents and user-groups.

Asset Management

Asset Management manages street lights, bridges, culverts, sewer outfalls and the City's storm water system. The group also manages the inventory of the City's built assets and parks and open spaces. An up to date inventory assists in keeping our public spaces safe and well managed.

Recreation

The Recreation Department promotes wellness, fitness and engagement through recreation and leisure programming for all ages. These activities are programmed in community centres and parks. Programs range from day camps in parks, and organized sports in partnership with sports groups such as hockey, baseball, soccer and cricket to individual opportunities such as yoga, swimming and fitness.

Culture

The Culture Department is the catalyst for creativity, innovation and artistic expression in all disciplines. The *Culture Policy and Plan* guides programming and exhibition development in the Flato Markham Theatre, the Markham Museum, the Varley Art Gallery, and Public Art. Prominently positioned in public spaces, Public Art is a key component and vital tool for shaping, enhancing, and contributing to all elements of the public realm.

Markham Public Library

Markham Public Library, through its seven branches, provide residents with lifelong learning opportunities. Its many partnerships with the community include health, wellness and reading programs, film screenings, author talks, as well as arts and culture appreciation. Public art, managed by the Culture Department, is an essential component of the *Public Realm Strategy*. Staff at the libraries can play an important role in educating and receiving input into public realm planning.

Our City Public Realm Working Team



Development Services Commission

Planning and Urban Design

The Planning and Urban Design Department create long-range strategic plans and manage current development through the formulation of plans, policies, regulations and guidelines on land use, development, urban design, heritage conservation and growth management. Additionally, the department processes and evaluates development applications; manages and analyzes data on land use; designs and oversees the implementation of projects and digital mapping related functions. Strategic planning of new growth is important to the creation and integration of the public realm within our communities.

Development Engineering & Transportation

The Development Engineering Division of the Engineering Department is responsible for the planning, approval and construction of essential services such as sanitary sewers, water mains, storm sewers, storm water management

system as well as the planning, approval and construction of new roads, bridges, sidewalks, streetlights and transportation planning and finally the administration of construction within subdivisions. Key to the public realm is the combining of good engineering practices with innovative and sustainable streetscape design.

Capital Works

The Capital Works Division of the Engineering Department is responsible for the design and implementation of infrastructure projects throughout the City. These include roads/streetscapes, cycleways, walkways and bridge projects. There are opportunities to provide significant public realm design within the scope of these projects.

Corporate Services Commission

Corporate Communications

The Communications & Community Relations Division, through its many services, is dedicated to supporting and promoting Markham's

events and activities and communicating public information in a timely and accurate manner. We help build community awareness of municipal activities, monitor and manage issues, and promote accessibility to Markham's many features and activities. Community awareness, engagement and funding opportunities are areas that relate to the public realm.

Bylaws

Markham Bylaw Enforcement provides proactive enforcement services for all the City's regulatory and licensing bylaws including the Keep Markham Beautiful and property standards bylaws.

Sustainability Office

The Sustainability Office leads the way, together with related departments and the community, towards liveable neighbourhoods, healthy people and continuing prosperity. The environmental, social and accessibility components of the *Greenprint* are important public realm components.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Planning a Great Public Realm Together		Where are we Now?	16
Acknowledgements	i	Current initiatives	17
A Message from Mayor Frank Scarpitti	iii	What works Elsewhere?	24
A Message from Our Commissioners	v	Who is working in Markham?	28
A Message from Advisory Committee	vii	Where can we improve?	30
A Great Public Realm for All People of Markham	ix	Markham's Public Realm Strategy	33
Our City Public Realm Working Team	xi	Goals and Objectives	35
Leading While Remembering	1	Made in Markham Innovation & Design	37
Markham's Plan for a Successful Public Realm	3	Keeping Markham Beautiful	43
What is the Public Realm?	4	Animating Our Neighbourhoods & Districts	49
What are the Benefits of Public Realm?	8	Harmonizing Our Efforts and Sharing Resources	57
Building Community Spirit on a Daily Basis	9	Creating Gateways and Destinations	63
Sustaining Economic Vitality & Employment	11	Appendices	68
Integrating Healthy Physical Activities into Our Daily Lives	13	Appendix 1: Current Programs, Festivals and Events	71
Integrating Diverse Environmental Features into Communities	15	Appendix 2: Current Public Realm Policies	75
		Appendix 3: Community Resources	78



LEADING WHILE REMEMBERING

ground work for our Public Realm

Markham Township, originally surveyed in 1793-94, was incorporated in 1850. Over time, specific communities grew within the Township around mill sites and transportation routes. One of the largest and most prosperous communities was Markham Village, which was incorporated in 1872 and by 1891 had a population of 1,100 residents. Today, the City of Markham, with a population of over 330,000, includes the former historic villages of Thornhill, Markham Village, Unionville and Buttonville. These areas are still prominent today, and are designated and protected as heritage conservation districts. The historic foundation on which to improve and build our Public Realm in Markham is strong. Incorporating the City's motto into the *Public Realm Strategy* vision provides a

clear direction in which to develop a modern, creative public realm that reflects our rich history. Markham has welcomed people of all backgrounds from around the world who have contributed to the success of this community. Early immigration included settlers from Germany and Pennsylvania led by William Moll Berczy in 1794. The first settlement was in the Thornhill area, initially focussed on Yonge Street. During the early 1800s, Pennsylvania Germans settled most of the northern and eastern parts of Markham Township. From the 1830s on, there was a great influx of Irish, Scottish and English immigrants who were escaping the famine and over-population of their homelands. Modern Markham continues to attract a diverse population. Over 70 per cent of residents represent visible

minorities. This is the highest proportion found in any Canadian city."(source) and, of these new residents, almost 53% are from China. To celebrate this diversity, streets such as Sun Yat Sen, Rizal Avenue and Karachi Drive reflect the Chinese, Filipino and South Asian cultures respectively.

Markham's *Official Plan* anticipates that by 2031, the population will be approximately 422,000. This is an increase of approximately 100,000 more people and 75,000 more jobs. Approximately 60% of the new residential growth will be located in mixed-use centres, along rapid transit corridors within the current urban areas of the City. With this increased intensity, it is critical for Markham to have a high quality public realm.



MARKHAM'S PLAN

for a Successful Public Realm

Markham's plan for a successful public realm will help clarify how everyone can contribute and what needs to be done to achieve a great public realm. Great Public Realm originates with a consistent and cohesive design, the implementation and maintenance of a diversity of facilities and the creation of open spaces that provide safe, clean and uncluttered environments for residents, visitors and businesses.

It includes the simplest actions such as picking up litter; maintaining our residential, corporate and vacant properties; planting trees; hosting concerts, street parties, and festivals of all scales; creating architectural excellence; maintaining historical relevancy;

promoting public art; and advancing our cultural foundation for future generations.

All this and more enriches the community experience and contributes to the overall sense of identity for Markham residents and their neighbourhoods, historical districts and business parks. It is important to educate residents, developers, business owners, and the City about how important the public realm is. Clearly defining everyone's role will ensure a high quality public realm is created across the City. Creating excitement around the importance of a strong vision for our public realm is a vital component in the creation of a sustainable community in which Markham residents want to live, work, play and invest in.

The intent of this document is to:

- 1 Define what the public realm means to Markham;
- 2 Raise awareness of the importance of a high quality public realm for our community;
- 3 Educate the community about the public realm and everyone's role to ensure its success;
- 4 Define the vision and goals;
- 5 Provide a framework for the delivery and maintenance of high quality public realm; and
- 6 Provide recommendations and action items for implementation.

What is the Public Realm?

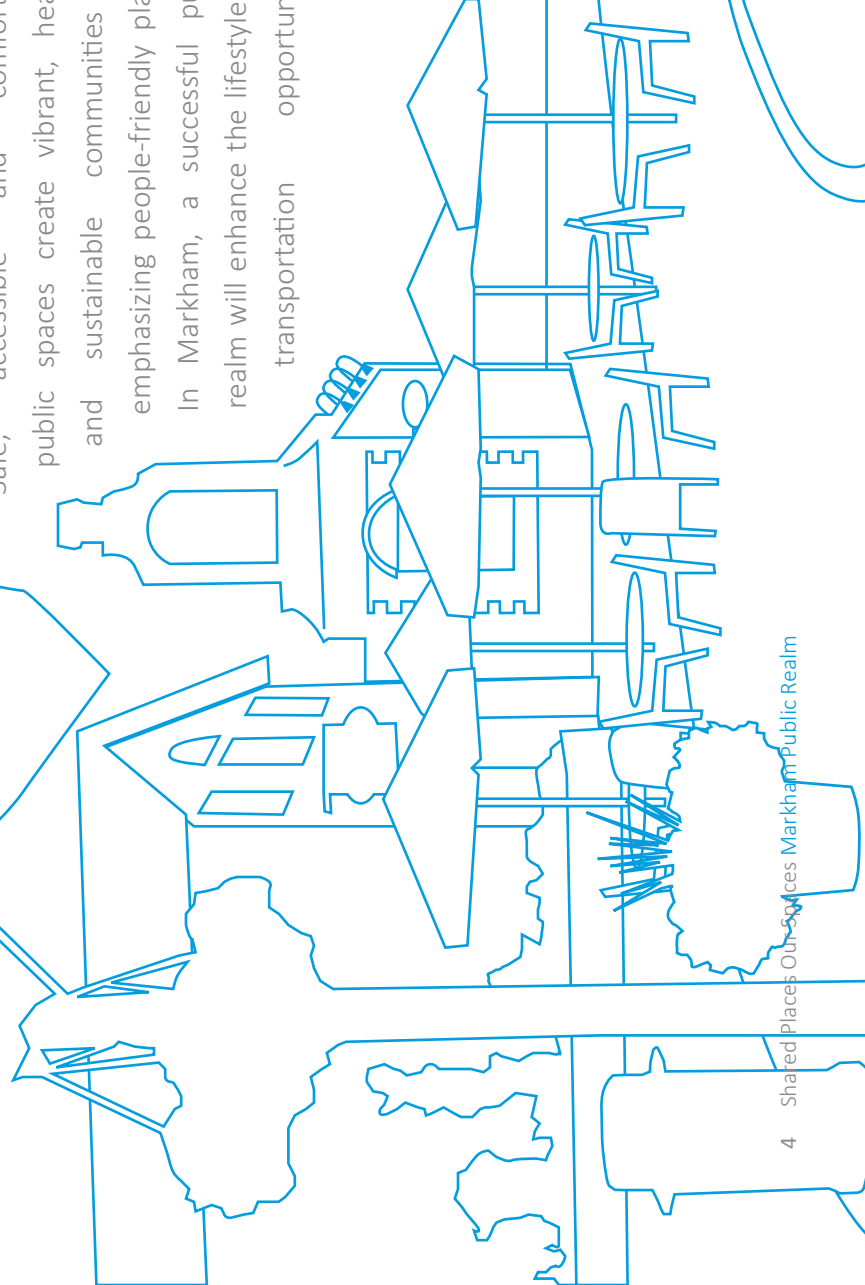
Our Public Realm is defined as the spaces, connections and buildings, which are visible or accessible, that enhance public life, promote civic pride and enliven the spirit of the City.

These spaces and connections include streets, boulevards, walkways, bikeways, trails, bridges, parks, open spaces, plazas, squares, wetlands, natural features, views, landmark structures, public art, transit facilities, frontyards and building exteriors.

Safe, accessible and comfortable public spaces create vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities by emphasizing people-friendly places.

In Markham, a successful public realm will enhance the lifestyle and transportation opportunities

for citizens by integrating pedestrian and transit-oriented land uses that offer improved recreation, gathering, walking, cycling and transit opportunities. Community infrastructure is an integral part of creating a functional, yet memorable and sustainable public realm. It provides the facilities and services that meet the needs of the residents and visitors, builds community networks and enhances the overall quality of life. The City of Markham plays a central role in the planning and implementation of a wide range of community facilities and services for its residents including libraries, community



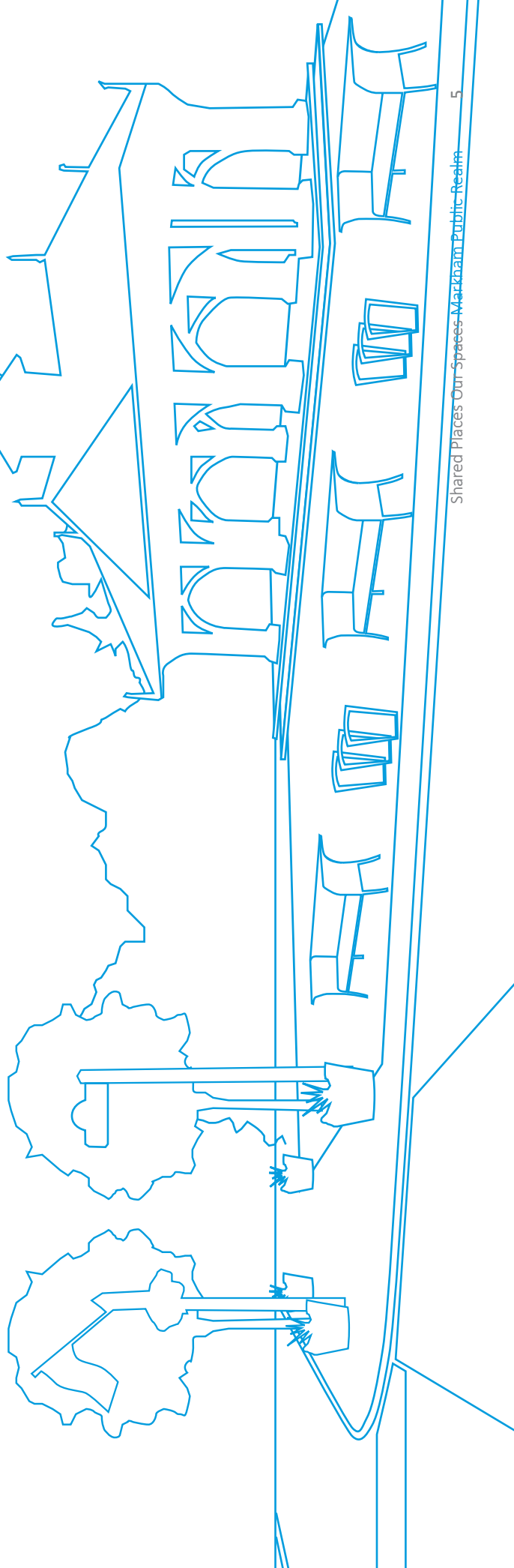
The space where Public Life takes place

centres, parks, open spaces, transportation networks, arts and culture resources as well as fire and emergency services. The Public Realm is the framework that provides community identity and forms the cohesive approach to connect diverse communities within the City. The public realm provides an opportunity for a municipality to affect our lives for the better, improving how we connect to people and places. Streets, public spaces, buildings and views will be

designed to be human scale and context sensitive, and provide for a diverse mix of uses that are pedestrian, bike and transit friendly. (*Official Plan*)

The City of Markham is dedicated to enhancing, improving and sustaining a unique and vibrant place to live, work and play. It is predicated on providing quality designed, sustainable communities and developments

which reflect/recognize a rich historical legacy. This strategy aims to deliver an enhanced and complete public realm across the entire City.



Shared Places, Our Spaces Engaging, Sustaining, Beautiful

Plant a Tree

Create Architectural
Excellence

Promote
Public Art

Participate in
Community Cleanup

Celebrate an Event



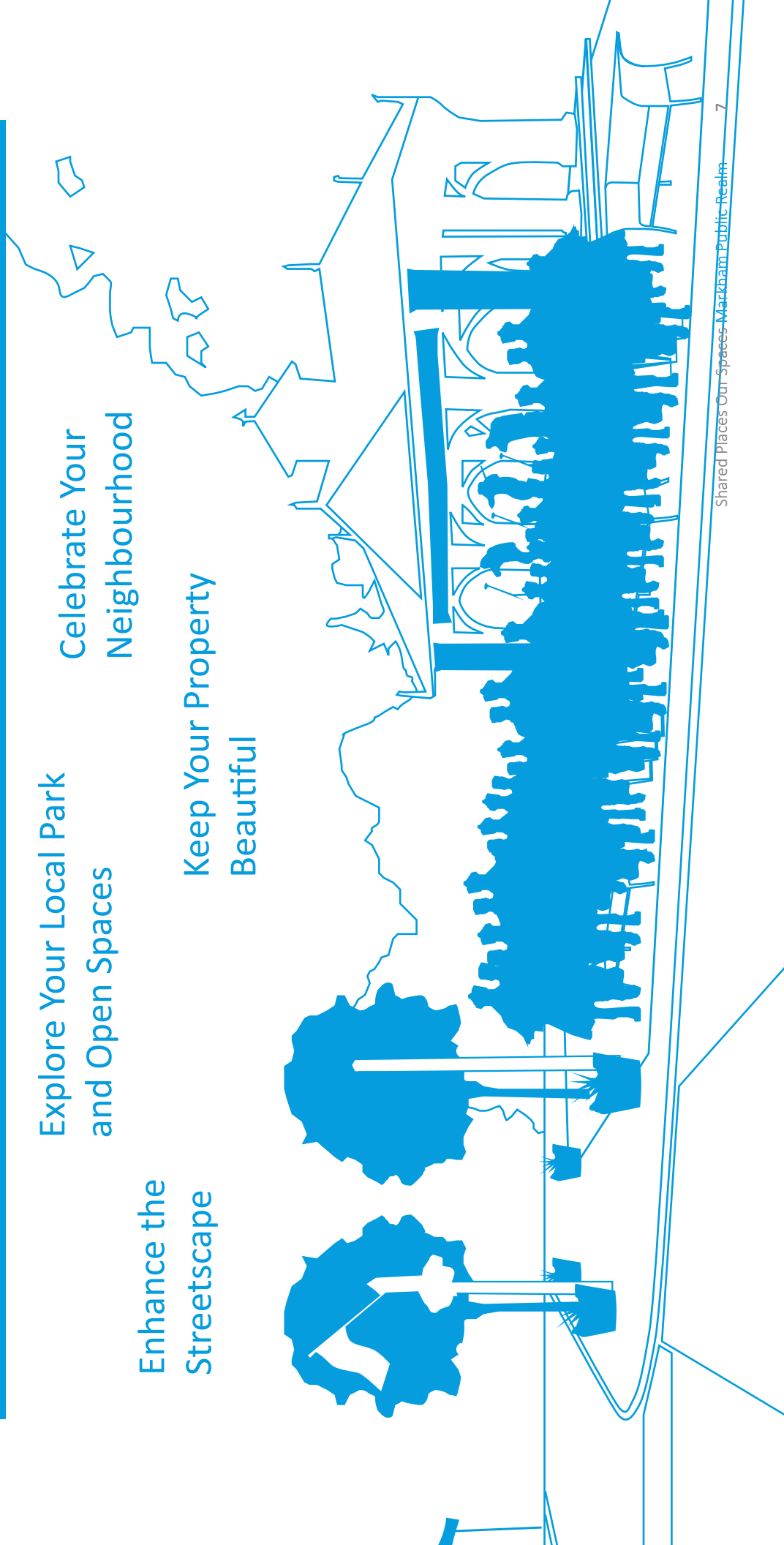
Come Together to Create a High Quality, Vibrant Public Realm

Enhance the
Streetscape

Explore Your Local Park
and Open Spaces

Celebrate Your
Neighbourhood

Keep Your Property
Beautiful



What are the Benefits of Public Realm?



Building Community Spirit on a Daily Basis

The public realm is the place where we live, work, socialize and play. It engages our citizens on a daily basis as well as providing opportunities to gather and celebrate on a wide range of scales: Canada Day festivities; Ribfest; Taste of Asia festival; farmers markets; Jazz festivals; family picnics; organized and unorganized sports.

As one of the most culturally diverse municipalities in Canada, the vitality of Markham is dependent on the provision of a public realm that welcomes everyone to recognizable, safe, functional and memorable spaces.

Community events, in particular, help keep neighbours in touch with each other and reinforce the relationships that make neighbourhoods strong. Participation in cultural and recreational programs have been found to promote social connectedness in communities and shape civic behaviour.

Engaged and active people who walk and cycle as part of their daily routines provide a presence or 'eyes on the street' which in turn enhances the social safety net. Vital public spaces offer opportunities to, engage people, encourage civic pride and reduce

isolation. Participating in litter cleanup in a park, planting a tree, caring for an off-leash dog park, flooding a neighbourhood rink, caring for your property and volunteering at a community garden all provide opportunities to interact and help define a sense of place. A shared responsibility for the public realm encourages people of all ages and abilities to feel they belong, creating stable and desirable neighbourhoods and city.

What are the Benefits of Public Realm?

Sustaining Economic Vitality & Employment

Investing in Markham's public realm is critical for sustainable economic growth.

Markham is Canada's High Tech Capital with nearly 900 high technology and life sciences industries including Canadian headquarters for international companies such as IBM, Honda Canada, Hyundai, Advanced Micro Devices, American Express, Johnson & Johnson, Apple Inc., and Honeywell. In addition, institutional facilities such as Seneca College and the Markham Convergence Centre nurture professional advancement and knowledge exchange.

Investment in the public realm has a positive economic effect and can act as a catalyst for development and regeneration.

A vibrant, safe and well-maintained city that provides a diversity of opportunities is key for businesses and associated labour force relocation. Placemaking through vibrant public realm provides civic identity and pride. A successful and positive public realm has a significant impact on the public perception of a community or communities, ensuring that they continue to be a highly desirable places to live, work, play and enjoy. This is what makes Markham unique and distinct.

A diverse, interactive public realm attracts shops and restaurants that are dependent on pedestrian traffic. Employees and their families select places to live based on the quality of life offered there. A great public realm attracts residents, tourists and businesses to the community.

"The deciding factor for many individuals in choosing where to work is often the quality of life in the geographic vicinity of the business."
- *Trust for Public Land*.

What are the Benefits of Public Realm?



Integrating Healthy Physical Activities into our daily lives

Health Canada estimated for each \$1 invested in physical activity, there is a long-term savings of \$11 in health care. (Haldane 2000) In Ontario, obesity is now an epidemic: 60%, or over 3 in 5 of Canadian adults are overweight or obese (Statistics Canada, 2012b). This is putting a massive financial strain on the health care system. Markham is committed to creating healthier communities through quality urban and architectural design guided by the City's current *Official Plan* and *Greenprint Strategy*. Healthy activities can be integrated into our daily lives when we develop walkable communities

with interconnected parks, open spaces, shopping areas, community centres and workplaces. Well-designed, and well-maintain streets, cycleways and walkways enhance our commuting experience and promote alternative and healthy ways to get around.

People who live close to a public park or open space are three times more likely to meet recommended physical activity levels (Milbank Quarterly 2009). Participation in recreation and regular physical activity has been shown to improve self-esteem, reduce depressive symptoms, decrease stress and anxiety,

improve self-acceptance, enhance psychological well-being and create changes in anti-social behaviour. The presence of public art coupled with access to physical activity within the public realm triggers positive feelings, intellectual thoughts and creativity.

“Markham can build on and continue to provide an accessible and safe public realm that encourages residents to use active transportation modes and to gather and connect with neighbours year-round. The City can provide access to all public facilities and programs for Markham residents regardless of means or ability and can use such facilities to assist residents in times of need.” - *Greenprint*

What are the Benefits of Public Realm?



Integrating Diverse Environmental Features into Communities

Natural areas offer a sanctuary from the everyday stress of life and enables citizens to reconnect with the wonder of nature. Trees, shrubs and grasses along with streams and ponds provide a contrast to buildings. Interconnected natural areas provide opportunities for walkways and trails, improve air quality, microclimates, and support our wildlife.

Preservation of our natural areas creates a legacy for future generations. Experiencing seasonal changes and spotting wildlife during a walk in the park provide continued interest and for many, a sense of awe.

By enhancing our efforts to integrate natural areas as part of the public realm, Markham is working towards the goals of providing a sustainable, environmentally responsible community. Markham's *Official Plan* integrates parks, open spaces, storm water management (SWM) ponds, woodlots, channels, environmental areas and valleylands into the development fabric of communities. SWM ponds control runoff, reduce the risk of flooding and erosion. Further, SWM ponds are designed to replicate natural ponds complete with appropriate plantings, provide beautiful amenities, and serve as community gateways. Woodlots and wetlands have been identified as significant

and, in conjunction with our community partners, have been preserved within the development of new communities.

The Rouge Park, with an area of approx. 3,800 hectares in Markham, is currently transitioning into a National Urban Park, led by the Federal Government under Parks Canada. Once established, the park will celebrate and protect a diverse landscape which offers a connection to and provides protection of terrestrial, aquatic, aboriginal, pioneer cultural, and heritage resources while presenting a significant opportunity for recreational and educational engagement.

Where are we Now?



Current Initiatives: Community Programs

As shown in the graphic on the left, there are currently many initiatives in place that use and facilitate improvements and animate the City's public realm. Programs occur year round in our facilities and parks and open spaces. The public sector contributes policy, design guidelines and standards and the capital to implement and maintain our public realm. Our advisory committees make recommendations to Council based on input from our residents and the City. The BIA's and businesses provide an economic foundation to draw on within our business and commercial

areas. A few of these initiatives are explained in more detail below and on the preceding pages:

Community Programs

There are many community programs that engage the community to enhance their public spaces. Programs such as Trees for Tomorrow encourage and facilitate community tree plantings. Other programs such as Adopt-a-Park allow residents to help care for our public spaces and take pride and ownership. Often, as a result of these programs, partnerships develop between community ratepayers and environmental

groups, service clubs, horticultural societies, local businesses and schools. *Appendix 1* contains a listing of programs. These initiatives area are important contributions to creating, and maintaining great public spaces.

Current Public Sector Initiatives: Markham

The City of Markham contributes policy, design guidelines and standards to guide how public realm should be improved as the City grows. Below are a few of these documents. *Appendix 2* contains references and links to other documents.

Markham's Official Plan (OP)

Markham's *Official Plan* (adopted by Council in 2013) provides a vision to guide future development in Markham over the next 20 years. *Section 4 Healthy Neighbourhood & Community* and *Section 6*



Urban Design and Sustainable Development within the *Plan* sets out public realm policy that is based on the principles of protecting

cultural heritage resources, the natural environment and agricultural lands, building healthy communities, increasing travel options and maintaining a strong economy.

Section 6.1.2 outlines Council's policy to require the design of high-quality, attractive and sustainable developments that contribute to a successful public realm and include the following elements: connections to the street network that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities; streetscapes that are safe and attractive; enhanced views and vistas of identified landmarks; well-designed public and private open spaces; enhanced landscaping and tree planting; public art that promotes a sense of place; and sustainable development practices.

The public realm policies outline the need for innovation planning and design that focus on pedestrian experiences. Public realm should consist of publicly accessible spaces, such as streets and boulevards, open spaces and parkland. These places would provide shared use and an opportunity for community interaction. Together with a street network, the public realm organizes buildings, structures and open-space elements that define the character of Markham communities. It is vital to integrate public realm priorities at the planning stage in the development of buildings and neighbourhoods, transportation and municipal infrastructure projects, mixed-use and employment areas and the Greenway system.

Markham Greenprint



The *Greenprint*, *Markham's Community Sustainability Plan*, is a long-term plan that addresses environmental health, social and cultural well-being, and economic vitality. It is a plan to deliver positive change that helps prepare Markham for future challenges, both locally and globally, and to ensure that Markham continues to be a great place to live, work and play for all residents and visitors. The *Greenprint* focuses on 12 sustainability priorities and 241 recommendations that were developed through a systems thinking approach with significant community input. The *Greenprint* and Markham's *Public Realm Strategy* are intertwined. A prime example of this is the Community and Allotment Garden Program. This initiative is the embodiment

Trees for Tomorrow Guidelines & Program



This manual communicates the benefits of the urban forest and provides policy guidelines to help the City of Markham move toward achieving a sustainable ecosystem in a compact, urban environment. It sets the framework for best management practices in planting, maintenance, and inspection, and letter of credit release. Tree planting targets are achieved through partnership with developers of new and revitalized communities and through an associated community tree planting and outreach program.

Pathways & Trails Master Plan

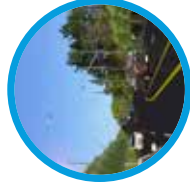


The *Pathways and Trails Master Plan* sets out the means for improving and expanding Markham's trail system in order to provide a wide range of leisure, learning and healthy lifestyle opportunities for Markham's residents. With the intention to improve walking and off-road cycling routes, the *master plan* identifies a city-wide off-road pathway and trail system that connects destinations within Markham as well as design guidelines and standards to achieve these objectives.

Current Public Sector Initiatives: York Region

Markham's street network is comprised of both local and regional roads. Regional roads such as Yonge Street, Highway 7, Warden Avenue, Highway 48 and Kennedy Road represent some of Markham's most active streets with a concentration of developments. The Region has partnership funding programs and design guidelines to improve the street environment, making it more pedestrian and bike-users friendly.

York Region's Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program (MSPP)



The Regional Municipality of York is committed to creating great streets and an efficient transportation network across its nine municipalities. In 2001, York Region endorsed a Regional streetscape policy and in 2006 the *Towards Great Regional Streets* strategy which integrates design elements for both pedestrians and cyclists. The MSPP staff help support transportation planning on environmental assessments and streetscape construction. Staff are also responsible for the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program and providing input on local municipal streetscape master plans and urban design guidelines.

York Region encourages partnerships with local municipalities by funding and supporting the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program and contributing towards locally-initiated streetscape design initiatives. Since 2010, the City of Markham has leveraged funding from this program for Warden Avenue, Highway 7, and Yonge Street projects totaling approximately \$2 million in Regional contributions. As York Region experiences growth and planned intensification in its Regional centres and corridors, the importance and value of streetscape design, especially along Yonge Street and Highway 7, is paramount. York Region has been collaborating with VivaNext to integrate streetscape design on all their projects and future development. In late 2010, York Region worked extensively with the City of Markham, City of Vaughan, Town of Richmond Hill, City of Toronto, and Ontario Ministry of Transportation to

develop the South Yonge Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan which establishes streetscape standards for Yonge Street, York Region's primary urban corridor.

York Region's Designing Great Street: Context Sensitive Solutions



York Region's *Designing Great Streets* guidelines recognize that the function of regional roads has evolved from being primarily a conduit for automobiles to street connections that provide mobility for all road users including transit users, pedestrians and cyclists. Regional roads not only serve as transportation structures, they are also an important element of the public realm that should accommodate and promote the activities of multiple modes of

transportation in a manner that is safe for the public and addresses the requirements of provincial legislation such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The development of the *Designing Great Streets* guidelines help the Region design streets that are safe, clean and beautiful for the public and strengthen communities.

Sensitivity to land uses and reflecting the needs of the community are key principles that form the basis of the *Designing Great Streets* guidelines. This means an approach that considers all elements of the public realm, surrounding communities as well as other road design elements. This design approach leads to customized outcomes that improve mobility and safety for the public while preserving the scenic, historical and cultural elements of the community. The *Designing Great Streets* guidelines

are intended to be used as a menu of many possible solutions, so that there is not "a one-size fits all" solution for roads. This means that there could be various potential solutions for the same road as that road bisects different communities. The *Designing Great Streets* guidelines introduce six street types and offer design solutions that are catered to each street type. The guidelines will help inform the planning process to provide better design of future roads as part of the Environmental Assessment process (EA) and detailed design processes.



Valuable inputs from Markham advisory committees and communities strengthen the local character of public realm projects.

Current Citizens Initiatives

Advisory Committees



Both the Public Realm Advisory Committee and the Public Art Advisory Committee provide input, suggestions and help to guide the development and implementation of our public realm. Heritage Markham provides guidance on public realm improvements in the City's heritage conservation districts. Representatives from local citizens and the City sit on these committees.

Business and BIA's



Our Business Improvement Areas (BIA's) work to draw customers to their place of business. Within the public realm, they host events such as sidewalk sales, parades and festivals. They work with the City to improve the public realm with flowers, signage and seasonal streetscape enhancements.

Residents



Throughout the City, we have many citizens who organize and participate in ratepayers' or residents' groups representing their neighbourhoods. These organized groups not only maintain a voice about what goes on in their neighbourhood, they also host events within our public realm. *Appendix 3* include information for citizens interested in establishing a Ratepayers Community Association. In addition, there are historical associations and village conservancies that promote and undertake special public realm projects throughout Markham.

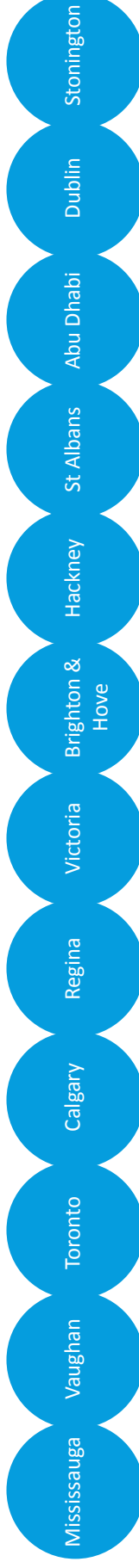
What works Elsewhere?

Opportunity for **city-wide strategy**

Have a Vision to achieve long term goals

Discover needs from the “heart” of the community through community consultation

Identify area of focus by **mapping existing and future spaces**



Coordinate strategy across multidisciplinary practises

Develop **policy**

Have an **action plan**

Establish design guidelines to set standards

Use **demonstration projects**

Manage implementation of action items

Seek **public and private funding sources**

Best Practice Analysis

World-wide, the improvement of the public realm is considered to be the state-of-the-art approach to defining a city's future form, quality and identity. Major cities are focusing on the planning, design and development of the public realm and engaging residents, businesses and community groups to actively participate and play an essential role in the improvement of the urban experience. More and more communities are recognizing the benefit of looking at the public realm holistically, as an urban system and developing an overall strategy for the public realm.

A review of national and international best practices identifies some general approaches as well as the different types of public realm planning tools that municipalities are using and how these tools relate to Markham.

In older cities, the public realm strategies target revitalization of a neglected public realm and refocus the public realm on pedestrian rather than auto-oriented circulation. In newer cities, public realm strategies look to identify, in advance of development, the appropriate level of standards in order to build connections, instill a sense of place and promote a pedestrian friendly community.

With a combination of newer and older areas, Markham has the potential to apply both of these approaches to the City.

Most cities focus their public realm planning at the neighbourhood level. However, city-wide public realm planning was found in the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates. The City of Markham has the opportunity to be at the cutting edge in planning for its public realm. The City of Markham *Public Realm Strategy* has the potential to serve as a template for other Canadian cities, building on global efforts to improve the public realm for an enhanced public life and for engaging social interaction.

More specifically, the best practice review identified several key public realm planning tools:

Physical Inventory

To provide a foundation for public realm planning, many municipalities identify and



More and more communities are recognizing the benefit of looking at the public realm holistically, as an urban system and developing an overall strategy for the public realm.

map the existing system of public realm spaces. This information provides a basis for a future public realm framework and for the development of public realm standards that are specific to the municipality.

Planning Inventory

Because the public realm involves such a wide range of community resources, the majority of municipalities conduct an overview of plans that impact the public realm. The public realm planning inventory facilitates a coordinated approach to public realm planning across multidisciplinary practices.

Consultation

The public realm is the heart of the community. A community consultation process can help to ensure that the future public realm meets the needs of the public.

Visioning Framework

A visioning framework identifies the vision as well as the goals and objectives that set the direction for future public realm development. This framework also helps to guide the completion of the plan towards achieving long term goals for the future public realm.

Physical Framework

Identifying and mapping both the existing and the future public realm spaces outlines where the municipalities should focus development efforts for a complete public realm system or framework.

Policy Framework

Policy guides the future; developing public realm policy ensures that as development occurs, the public realm is enhanced based on the objectives of the *Public Realm Strategy*.

Action Plan

An action plan provides the next steps for public realm development and details how the plan objectives are achieved.

Design Guidelines

For new and/or improved public realm spaces, design guidelines set the standards for development based on planning objectives and/or community consultations to ensure that each space meets the needs of the community.

Demonstration Projects

The significance of public realm improvements can be difficult to visualize; demonstration projects illustrate what public realm development could look like based on the directions of the strategy.

Management Recommendations

How the public realm is dealt with in practice can be a complicated process. Since the public realm is a complex and multi-disciplinary field, many municipalities provide management recommendations to ensure that strategy actions and directions are implemented.

Funding Recommendations

As cities face limited budgets, some plans suggest potential opportunities for funding of public realm projects, including public and private options.

In Markham, each of these planning tools could potentially be applied as part the *Public Realm Strategy* or as part of future public realm development efforts.

What is working in Markham?



The creation of a world class public realm is vital to all that are involved to plan, design and maintain our City. The focus is creating an enriched urban experience and an enhanced sense of identity for the neighbourhoods, heritage districts, commercial areas and open spaces in Markham.

Markham recognizes the significance of educating residents on the importance of the public realm in their day to day lives and identifying opportunities for residents to participate in developing and maintaining an attractive public realm. Through a detailed consultation process with key stakeholders, opportunities and gaps on how we deliver currently our public realm were identified. Highlighted here are some of the findings of what is currently working well in Markham:

Markham is transitioning into a great Canadian city. Resident needs and demands are changing and the municipal services to fulfill these needs must change to reflect the evolving demographics. The use of parks, open spaces, streets and other public realm facilities will change as

demands vary. Markham has implemented a series of policies that will guide the development and implementation of public realm as growth occurs. Growth and change offers Markham the opportunity to develop a wide range of innovative solutions in order to create unique public realm opportunities.

Markham is continuing to develop its public realm, address existing elements of its public realm and create consistency and connections with the public realm in new development areas. Markham is developing a context sensitive design of quality streets that focused on safe pedestrian and vehicular flow.

Markham understands the need for communication. Communication will be the backbone of the public realm

development process as it balances the interests of all creating a high quality public realm. Many of the public realm implementation tools are already in place including design review, implementation and site inspection, especially for the new growth areas. Furthermore, the City has recently developed the Public Realm Coordinator position to facilitate a comprehensive approach to the development of the public realm.

Markham's public realm will characterize the City. To develop and maintain a quality public realm, alternative funding opportunities will need to be defined and multiple solutions targeting public and private partnerships will need to be explored. The City has been working on high quality public realm development as well as, developing and funding various projects.

Where can we improve?



Although there are many initiatives currently underway and the City is working to create a great public realm, there are areas in which we can improve:

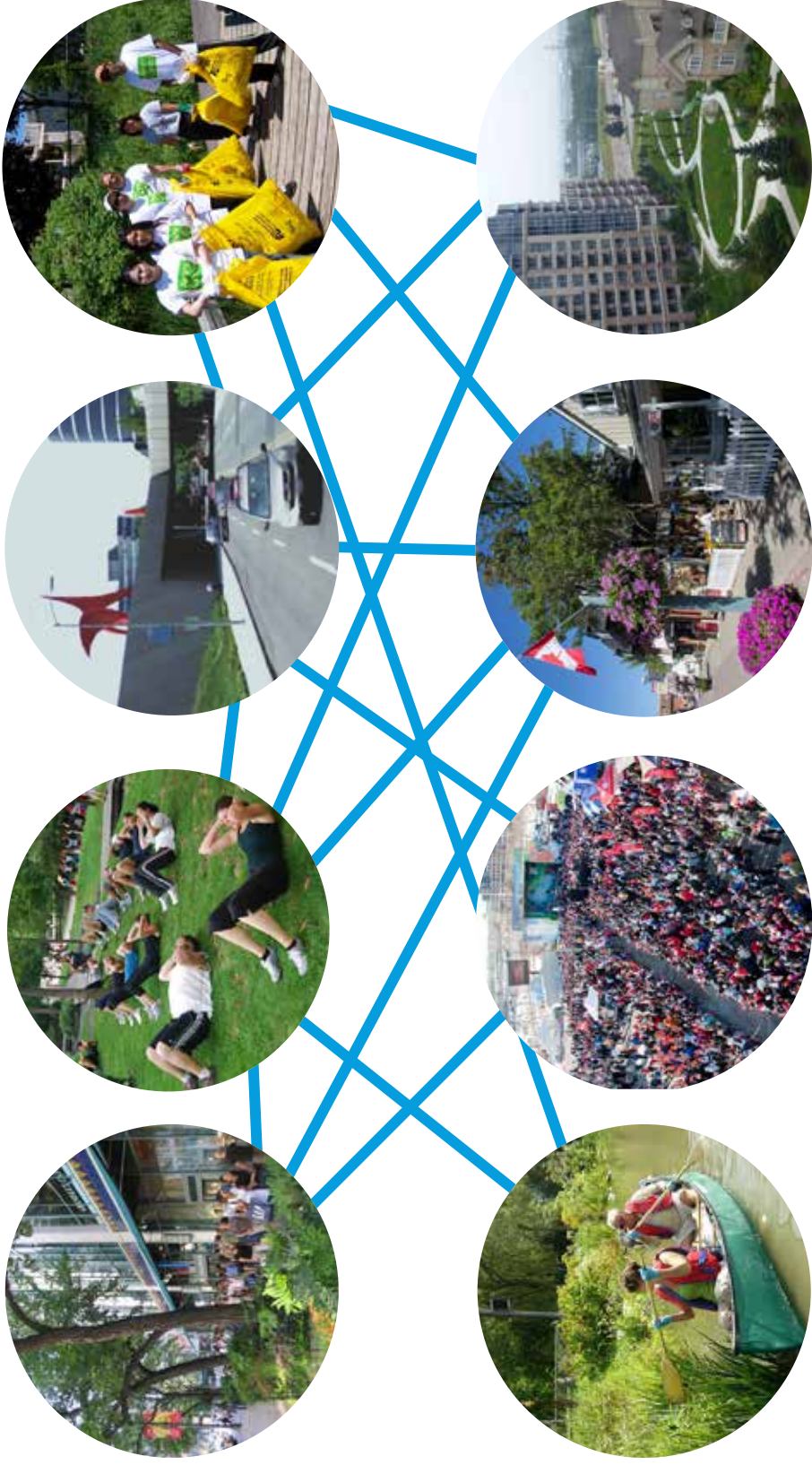
Instill a greater sense of community ownership in public. As residents are confronted with increased growth and development, people are feeling less involved and there is a need to instill a greater sense of community ownership in the public. Residents must be engaged in their communities and feel that they are empowered.

Instilling community ownership in the public realm and extending public realm enhancements to older neighbourhoods are vital to its success.

The intensity and commitment must be focused on the funding, design and implementation of facilities within older communities. The same rigor and standards developed for our growth areas need to be applied to the re-development of our existing, time worn parks, open spaces and buildings in order to provide a consistent approach to the delivery of the public realm. There is a need for neighbourhood gathering places, accessibility to public art and multi-functional community spaces. Parks in older communities will need improvement to meet the current resident needs. There is a need for public realm design standards to support the redevelopment of multi-purpose spaces that serve a variety of user groups and require reduced maintenance. Employing standards will ensure neighbourhood identity is enhanced with high quality public realm and neighbourhood is well integrated with the rest of the City.

A team approach is needed in the approval process from design initiation to maintenance. The approvals process requires a team approach to enhance community growth from the initiation of the design to the review of design. Similarly, a team approach is required from the implementation through to the maintenance of the public realm. These parameters and protocols should be extended to capital infrastructure projects and the redevelopment of existing facilities. Interdepartmental interaction and communication between the City, relevant stakeholders and the community at large is fundamental to the creation of a quality public realm. The process should be facilitated through the development and application of comprehensive standards, protocols and approvals.

Need to identify priority areas, target funding sources and potential partnerships. The development of a seamless public realm is reliant on the funding commitments for the design, implementation and maintenance of the public realm within developing and existing communities. Public realm improvements and maintenance must be prioritized by decision makers and the community as essential infrastructure - as important as paving, sewers and pipes. When budgeting for projects, all expenditures (such as ongoing maintenance and life-cycle) need to be taken into consideration. There is a need to identify priority areas and target specific funding sources and potential partnerships.

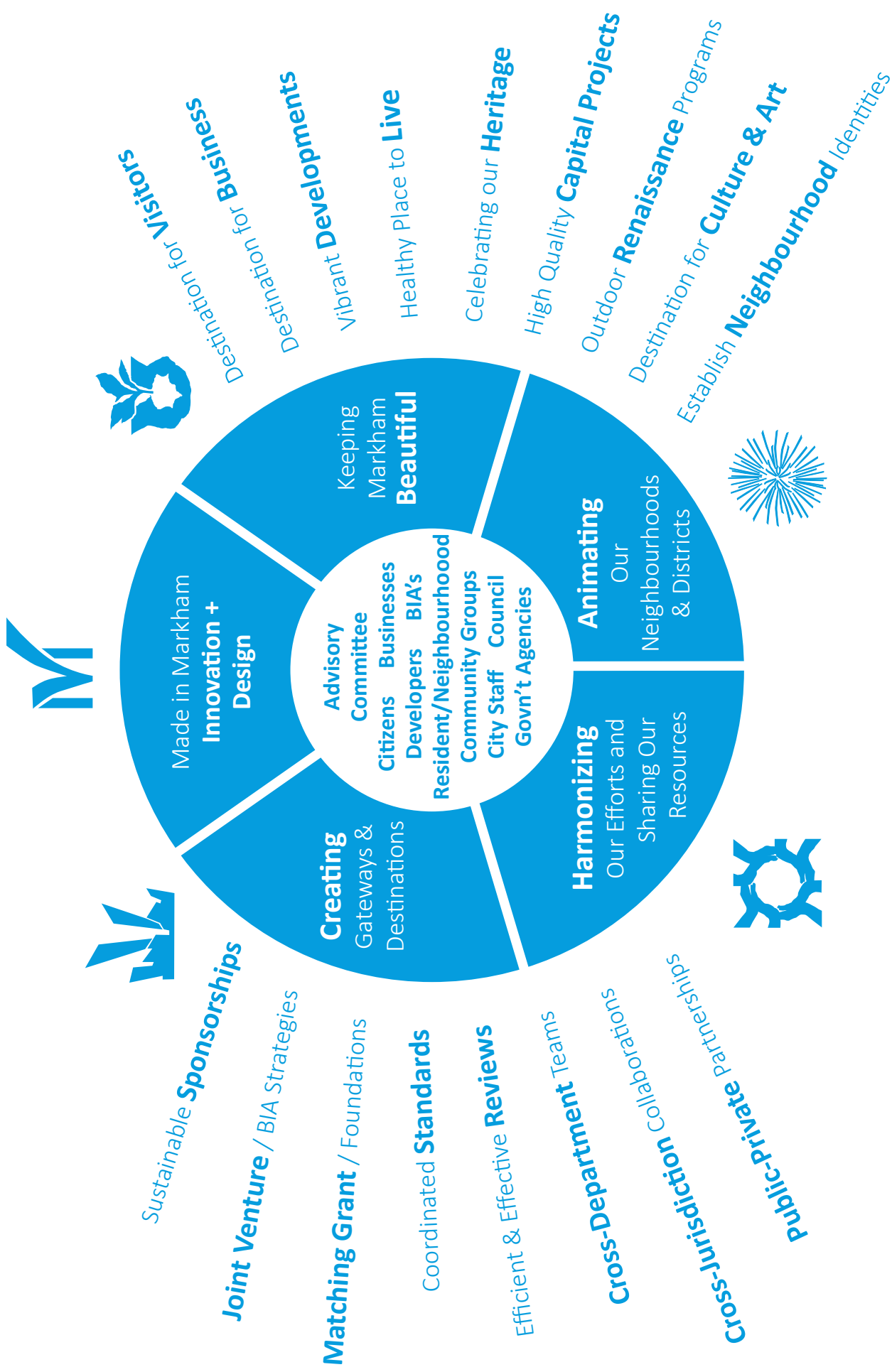


A Vision for Markham's Public Realm

A place for all that is engaging, sustaining and beautiful.

Our Strategy

Markham's public realm is the foundation which enables the spirit of the community to flourish. As we grow from our heritage roots as a town to a great and vibrant city, the public realm is a fundamental component of a successful, sustainable community. Markham's *Public Realm Strategy* is a plan to ensure that all who *live, work, play and visit* our city share ownership and responsibility and aspire to create and maintain great public spaces.



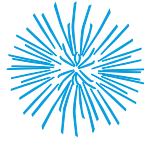
Goals and Objectives



Made in Markham
Innovation + Design



Keeping Markham
Beautiful



Animating Our
Neighbourhoods
& Districts



Harmonizing Our
Efforts and Sharing
Our Resources



Creating Gateways
and Destinations

Deliver high quality public realm city-wide by applying innovative design standards, comprehensive oversight measures , precise construction practices and thorough inspection processes within our new developments, capital and redevelopment projects.

Support residents and businesses to maintain and beautify private and public properties.

Celebrate Markham's cultural diversity by assisting in event organization and promoting community use.

Increase funding opportunities through public-private partnerships, government grants and private donations.
Enhance the collaboration between residents, BIA associations, community groups, the City and public agencies.

Prioritize the city-wide public realm delivery, improvement and maintenance in the budgeting process.

Showcase Markham's unique areas and destinations with beautiful public spaces, great public art, memorable arrivals, sustaining and engaging neighbourhoods and city districts.



A public realm that is used and enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities is key to creating a great public realm and vibrant city.

Our Strategy

Made in Markham Innovation + Design



Markham is known for its design excellence. In the 90's, the City (then Town) created an Urban Design Department with a Town Architect. Unique to local municipalities, this move elevated Markham and its focus on great design and city building. Innovation is found throughout the corporation from our water works and asphalt re-surfacing program to our award-winning library systems and award-winning buildings.

It is important that we continue our high-quality design and innovation within our public realm. The City

continues to strive for better design in everything that we do from our newly adopted Official Plan, Greenprint, Accessibility Guidelines to energy efficient street lights, benches made out of recycled material, increased soil volume for our trees and Leed accredited buildings.

This strategy allows us to build on the foundation of our current innovation and design, improving and distinguishing our public realm to reflect a world class city. Reviewing and improving our existing public realm will empower the sense of pride and ownership

within our existing neighbourhoods. Applying innovative design standards, comprehensive oversight measures, precise construction practices and thorough inspection processes to all City projects, will ensure the delivery of high quality public realm throughout the City.. Educating the City about the importance of the strategy, including innovation and design, is vital to successful implementation and management of a great public realm. Collaboration and cooperation throughout the corporation is key to the delivery of a cohesive, well designed public realm.



A review of our existing spaces is needed to identify areas for improvement that respond to the needs of our residents.



It is paramount that we work closely with developers, architects, landscape architects, engineers and planners to ensure our processes deliver the highest quality public realm.



Our Strategy

Made in Markham Innovation + Design



(Continue)

Review our existing spaces: Better Design-Accessible Spaces

A vibrant city containing a great public realm provides a variety of public spaces that are used and enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. A comprehensive review of our existing parks, open spaces and public spaces is essential to identify areas for improvement that respond to the needs of all our residents. The review needs to address the benefits of the improvements to the public realm for the entire community by encouraging inclusion over seclusion and isolation and begins to breakdown the NIMBYS (Not In My Backyard Syndrome). A renaissance park and open space master plan and a pedestrian masterplan will identify service gaps, opportunities and areas of improvement.

Align our current policies

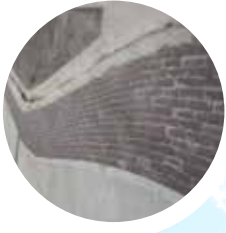
We have many important documents, such as the *Greenprint*, *BMFT*, and *Streetscape Manual*, which guide our decision making. It is important that our current policies, guidelines and standards are aligned to achieve a successful public realm. These must be applied consistently throughout our development, capital and redevelopment projects.

Deliver high quality public realm

A great deal of our public realm is being delivered through new developments. It is paramount that we work closely with developers, architects, landscape architects,

engineers and planners to ensure our processes deliver the highest quality public realm. Improving our control over the construction and inspection of our public realm is important. Similar controls and protocols need to be applied cross-departmentally to the design, implementation, inspection and maintenance of capital and redevelopment projects. The importance of a well designed, constructed and maintained public realm must be extended to the various service operators and providers that impact public spaces throughout the City. It is essential to align our design, construction and maintenance standards with these service providers in order to clearly establish expectations. The public realm responsibilities for service providers must be clearly established and enforced.

A great public realm builds on great communities. Sensitivity to community needs and area context are vital to the success of great public realm design.



High-quality public realm should be applied cross-departmentally through design, implementation, inspection and maintenance of capital and redevelopment projects.

How to Get There?

Made in Markham Innovation + Design



ACTION 1.1

Develop a Parks and Public Realm Renaissance Plan for our existing areas to identify gaps, opportunities and set priorities for improvements of public spaces such as parks and open spaces, heritage assets, trail and pathways including connections to and within these resources. The plan should provide policies, standards, guidelines and protocols that are consistent with current public realm development.

ACTION 1.2

Ensure policies and standards used in new developments are aligned with the *Public Realm Strategy*.

ACTION 1.3

Develop a Pedestrian Masterplan to identify gaps in the existing sidewalk network and connections to pathways and trails. Set priorities for the construction of sidewalks across the City to ensure an accessible, safe and walkable community for all ages and abilities.

ACTION 1.4

Update our processes and oversight measures associated with our new developments and capital works projects to improve integration, quality of construction and supervision to ensure these align with the *Public Realm Strategy* and meet community expectations.

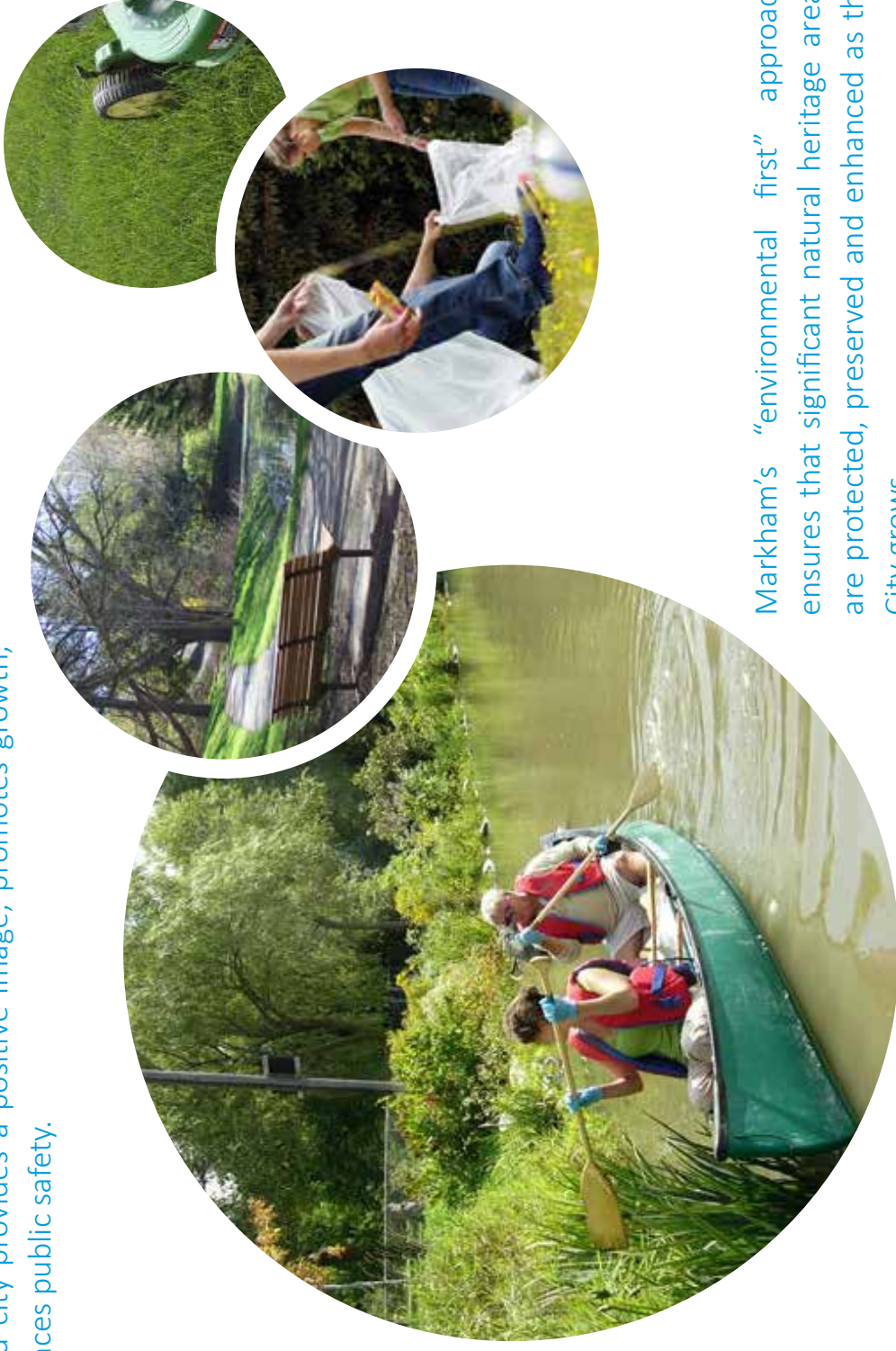
ACTION 1.5

Deliver workshops to promote the importance of the public realm and illustrate the community and individual roles that will ensure its success.

ACTION 1.6

Support the implementation of a Design Review Panel and ensure the mandate of the panel aligns with the *Public Realm Strategy*.

Maintenance of both our private and public lands is key to the success of public realm. A clean, uncluttered and well-maintained city provides a positive image, promotes growth, and enhances public safety.



Markham's "environmental first" approach ensures that significant natural heritage areas are protected, preserved and enhanced as the City grows.

Our Strategy

Keeping Markham Beautiful



Maintenance of both our private and public lands is critical to the success of public realm. A clean, litter free and well-maintained city provides a positive image and enhances public safety. Markham currently has bylaws to ensure private land owners and businesses maintain their respective properties. The City also has programs to help keep our public spaces cared for and maintained. This supports and engages current businesses and residents while reinforcing Markham as a vital place to live, work and play. An attractive and safe public realm sends a clear message that the residents, businesses and users care for their living environment. It provides a welcoming

impression to residents, businesses and visitors. We can keep our City beautiful by promoting, caring, and maintaining our parks and open spaces, our public and private properties and our heritage areas. As our City grows and intensifies, our maintenance activities will need to change and their effectiveness and efficiency will be examined. Currently, in response to these changing needs, Markham works around the clock to deliver some maintenance services throughout the year. For example, our urban boulevards have less room for snow storage. As a result, snow needs to be removed from some areas. This requires load and haul maintenance that occurs on a 24 hour basis.

Maintaining our Green Assets

Markham's "environmental first" approach to land-use planning ensures that significant natural heritage areas are protected, preserved and enhanced as the City grows. These natural heritage areas such, as Milne Park, Toogood Pond and the Rouge Park, are valuable public assets that provide natural beauty, habitat diversity. These are places for active uses such as biking, running, walking, as well as passive uses like meditation, reflection and restoration. It is essential that these natural and environmentally significant areas remain protected and well maintained as they are part of the public realm.



Protection and maintenance of heritage resources is an important shared responsibility that provides a legacy that can be passed on to future generations.

Our Strategy

Keeping Markham Beautiful

(Continue)



Preserving and Enhancing our Heritage Assets

Cultural heritage resources are a fragile and non-renewable resource in our community. Once lost or diminished, they are gone forever. Protection and maintenance of these resources is an important shared responsibility that provides a legacy that can be passed on to future generations. Our distinctive heritage conservation districts include historic Thornhill, Markham Village, Unionville and Buttonville. District Plans, which include policies and guidelines for restoration, redevelopment, new construction and streetscape improvement have been adopted to preserve and enhance each district's historic character. These unique areas provide us with a tangible link

Maintaining our Private & Public Properties

An essential component to a successful city is having clean, well-maintained public and private spaces. It is important that everyone who lives, works and visits here understands their role in keeping the City clean and tidy. Everything from picking up litter, mowing grass and weeding gardens, planting trees and flowers, to keeping driveways, sidewalks, walkways and areas surrounding shops and business clear of snow, ice and debris year-round contribute to a great public realm.

to our past as well as a sense of continuity in our rapidly changing world. They contribute to an identifiable sense of place that belongs to the entire community. Ensuring ongoing restoration and maintenance of the heritage resources, compatible new developments, complementary streetscapes and public realm investments help make these areas community magnets for residents, businesses and visitors. It is another key element to keeping Markham beautiful.



It is important that everyone who lives, works and visits here understands their role in keeping the City clean and tidy.

How to Get There?

Keeping Markham Beautiful



ACTION 2.1

Develop a Public Awareness Campaign to reduce litter and keep the City clean.

ACTION 2.2

Continue to develop and nurture the value of public and private maintenance and the *Keep Markham Beautiful (Maintenance) Bylaw* and promote the value of landscaping.

ACTION 2.3

Continue to educate Businesses, BIA's and various user groups about the value of public realm and their role in maintaining and improving it.

ACTION 2.4

Conduct a Public Realm Maintenance Review Study to determine sustainable long-term maintenance strategies that reduce the financial impacts of maintenance programs on current and future asset based budgets (life cycle). The study should identify and examine the feasibility of alternate funding opportunities.

ACTION 2.5

Develop a Maintenance Standards Manual to determine sustainable long-term maintenance strategies for parks, open spaces, public spaces, roads, streetscapes etc.

The Power of 10 framework suggests that a great city needs at least 10 great districts, each with at least 10 great places, which in turn each have at least 10 things to do.

- *Project for Public Spaces (PPS)*



Places to sit, playgrounds, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet are all elements to be incorporated into great places.

Our Strategy

Animating Our Neighbourhoods & Districts



A successful public realm is an animated one. Animation can happen through programmed sports fields, bike paths, open spaces for outdoor fitness classes and storytelling, spaces for people to relax or participate in festivals, have picnics or quietly reflect under a big shade tree. Our spaces need to be designed and maintained to facilitate animation and use at various scales and magnitudes. These range from a single meditative use in a local park, to a Canada Day celebration in Milne Park, and to festivals at the Civic Centre. Engaging the community in the design process will ensure our spaces celebrate Markham's cultural

diversity, meet programming needs and will evolve over time. By providing assistance in event organization, our community builds a strong sense of ownership and shared responsibility of the public realm.

Informing Design and Wayfinding

Our spaces need to be designed to reflect the desires of the local people who use them most. These residents can be the best source of ideas for what will work. The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) organization notes that a great place needs to offer at least 10 things to do or 10 reasons to be there. Places to sit, playgrounds, art to

touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet are all elements to be incorporated into these spaces. Activities can be unique to that particular spot and should be interesting enough to keep people coming back. Ideas that revolve around innovative seating such as moveable chairs, microclimate amelioration, such as shade umbrellas and activities that encourage the use of public spaces, need to be incorporated within our public realm. The PPS also notes that successful communities need to be made up of different and connected neighbourhoods. Wayfinding within neighbourhoods and within Markham is another element to help animate and connect our spaces.



Artwork from Markham Varley Art Gallery's *Cul-de-Sac, Know Your Neighbourhood* project. Artist Tracy Walker was commissioned to produce this artwork for an educational component of the project.

Our Strategy

Animating Our Neighbourhoods & Districts



(Continue)

Updating current Bylaws

In order to enable public users to animate our neighbourhoods, it is essential that residents understand the full range of opportunities and the respective protocols for the use of public space. Bylaws may need to be created to include uses that have not been considered and updated for changes to existing uses. This goes hand-in-hand with educating residents and businesses about their responsibilities and obligations about their use of the public realm.

Interpreting our City

Animating our City involves educating our citizens about our resources. It is important that users are able to clearly understand the nature of our public realm. Interpretive signage, use of technology through QR codes, and themed walks/presentations provide ways of unlocking the rich natural, historical and cultural tapestry that Markham offers.

Engaging the Community

Awareness around animation within the public spaces is important. Animated spaces are safe, exciting, and support the character and identity of its neighbourhoods. Initiatives to engage the community around the type of programming and events they would like to see need to be developed. It is important to work with all interested parties to identify what areas in their community are important to them, what activities they would like to see and evaluate the ways in which these activities can be implemented. Established programs and events should be audited on a regular basis to evaluate respective roles of responsibility, funding, expectations and return on investment.

Part of the City's mandate is to encourage the engagement, inclusion and integration of diverse communities, as well as to promote and celebrate the arts, our culture and our diversity.

Markham has established a draft *Community and Allotment Garden Manual* to promote an interactive opportunity to grow food locally.



Our Strategy



Animating Our Neighbourhoods & Districts

(Continue)

Community Gardens Growing in the Park

Community gardens, as identified in the Greenprint are important elements of the public realm. Markham has established a draft *Community and Allotment Garden Manual*. It is based on Greenprint recommendations on the importance of the social, cultural and environmental benefits of providing an interactive opportunity to grow food locally. The importance of community gardens is reinforced by the York Region and Markham Food Charters. It is important to refine elements within the draft document specifically regarding the protocol and methodologies for site selection, design and implementation of the community and allotment gardens within

Markham neighbourhoods. Under utilized spaces should be reviewed and identified with a focus on areas where there are limited opportunities for residents to grow their own gardens. Community gardens can be integrated at various scales within these park and open spaces while addressing the appropriate services, spatial relationships and support infrastructure.

Resourcing Events

Cultural and community events are an integral part of Markham's public realm and the City has a long history of hosting and supporting events and festivals. These events enhance the quality of life and provide significant value to residents and visitors by

showcasing the diversity and values of the community. Part of the City's mandate is to encourage the engagement, inclusion and integration of diverse communities, as well as to promote and celebrate the arts, our culture and our diversity. As the population increases, the demand for more events increases. Markham will continue to support festivals and events as part of our municipality's commitment to community engagement, but resources are limited. A balance between the City's input and public's input will be required to ensure future success.

Our current permitting processes and Bylaws should be reviewed and updated to facilitate greater animation of our public spaces, for example, food trucks, private events in parks, picnicking in parks, etc.



Markham promotes all year round animation of the public realm.

How to Get There?

Animating Our Neighbourhoods & Districts



ACTION 3.1

Explore opportunities to work with Project for Public Spaces (PPS) on a pilot project within an existing neighbourhood using the 'Power of 10' philosophy.

ACTION 3.2

Develop a Festival and Event Resource Plan that identifies funding, fee schedules and the City's role to assist community events and festivals. Establish a protocol for review and audit of event proposals to evaluate expectations and returns in investment.

ACTION 3.3

Align existing beautification programs to focus on community improvements by community and partnerships.

ACTION 3.4

Promote the installation of permanent interpretive signage throughout the City by encouraging developers and community organizations to utilize the 'Markham Remembered' interpretive plaque concept or develop new interpretive signage that celebrates and commemorates Markham's cultural heritage, its environment or its people. Current significant events and people in our community should also be recognized in order to animate the public realm.

ACTION 3.5

Review and Update our permitting processes and Bylaws to facilitate greater animation of our public spaces. For example; patios, food trucks, private events in parks, picnicking in parks, etc.

ACTION 3.6

Develop a Public Realm Promotional Guide for the community that highlights elements of this document and the Strategy and encourages people to get involved. It should include a toolkit to assist community groups with organizing and managing community events and festivals in the public realm.

ACTION 3.7

Complete the draft Community and Allotment Garden Manual. Refine the protocols and methodologies for site selection, design and implementation of community and allotment gardens within neighbourhoods.

Investment in public realm rests on educating the community on its vast benefits, recognizing partnership opportunities, and setting clear practices for investment.



Our Strategy

Harmonizing Our Efforts and Sharing Resources



A common concern in Markham is limited funding for public realm projects. While the City supports high quality public realm development, Markham can make the most of its potential to develop a world class city through partnerships. Currently, many different agencies and stakeholders are investing in Markham's public realm. The benefits extend across the entire community. Further investment in the public realm rests on educating the community on its benefits, recognizing partnership opportunities, and setting clear practices for investment.

Improving BIA Partnerships

In great cities around the world, Business Improvement Area Associations (BIA's) promote, contribute to and enjoy the benefits of their public realm. Markham needs to work closely with our BIA's to enhance their contribution to the public realm. This includes the possible establishment of BIA associations within other parts of the City.

Corporate Sponsorships and Joint Venture Strategy

Markham has long standing relationships with corporate and community groups. These are typically either project or event specific and can be direct or indirect relationships.

Investment has been in the form of direct funding or volunteer work efforts to support projects. Ceremonial tree plantings, Trees for Tomorrow tree plantings, Adopt-a-Park have all benefitted from either direct funding or volunteer efforts from our corporate or community partners. Corporate initiatives such as office expansions, new locations and achievements are often celebrated through community events and/or project involvement. Markham needs to work closely with our corporate and community partners to identify and maximize joint venture public realm opportunities and programs that are engaging for residents and workforce. An organized and unified approach should be developed to maximize our opportunities and minimize the duplication of requests.



Public-Private Partnerships are an alternative approach to fund and implement projects within a municipality.

Matching Grant / Community Foundation

Markham needs to examine various corporate and community funding strategies that could be used for public realm projects. Governmental agency funding; grassroots community foundations; corporate, personal or, memorial donations should be explored. In addition, current BIA relationships should be examined in order to identify potential funding initiatives that may be available or that can be leveraged with support.

Our Strategy

Harmonizing Our Efforts and Sharing Resources



(Continue)

Continuing Collaboration and Cooperation

Within Markham's civic organization, projects are ongoing within the public realm. The City must continue to coordinate efforts to ensure all affected business units are consulted and their expertise used. It is essential that the design, implementation and maintenance of public realm initiatives within capital works and redevelopment projects are prioritized and supported with appropriate funding.

Exploring Partnerships and Different Funding Opportunities

The public sector is facing aging infrastructure, population growth and budget constraints. One example of an

unique funding partnership is called Public-Private Partnerships (P3s). This type of initiative maximizes the expertise of both the private and public sector to expand the number and scale of infrastructure investments for public benefit. Public-Private Partnerships are an alternative approach to fund and implement projects within a municipality. Some other partnership models include grants, loans, bonds, sales tax, philanthropy, corporate sponsorship, foundations, friends groups, crowd funding, earned income- concessions, user fees, special uses, concerts, TIF (tax incremental financing), BIA contributions and developer incentives.

Budget Priority

The success of the public realm is dependent on the support and priority provided by civic leadership. Budget and funding for public realm projects, implementation and maintenance must become a priority for our community. It is an essential component of making Markham into a world class city and demands our focus and support within the budget process. By doing so we establish ourselves as leaders, when we approach corporate partners, and Federal or Provincial stakeholders for funding partnerships.

Bloor Street Transformation, Toronto

\$20 million in public investment
200% increase in retail lease rates
10-15% increase in retail sales
+\$10 million increase in property taxes



Times Square, New York City

\$300 million in public investment
\$2500 million private sector investment
52% increase in lease rates
Vacancy rates dropped from 20% to 5%



State Street/ Michigan Avenue, Chicago

\$36 million in public investment
18%-100% increase in retail lease rates
Vacancy declined from 10% to 1.6%
66% increase in new retail space

How to Get There?

Harmonizing Our Efforts and Sharing Resources



ACTION 4.1

Encourage the City's BIA's to review their current roles and relationships and to explore how they can contribute to the public realm.

ACTION 4.2

Explore opportunity to establish new BIA associations within other parts of the City to assist with ongoing contribution to the public realm.

ACTION 4.3

Increase funding opportunities through Joint-venture public realm projects between BIA associations, developers, community groups, public agencies; sponsorship around crowdsourcing; grants; private donations; and philanthropy, etc.

ACTION 4.4

Build on the efforts of the cross-commission team created to develop this strategy by investigating a formalization of a city-wide Public Realm Review and Implementation Team. Establish a cross-jurisdiction review team & review and approval protocols.

ACTION 4.5

Improve the financing of new and redevelopment capital projects by ensuring the required budgets include appropriate business units, costs and that the *Public Realm Strategy* and desired elements are included at the design stage and will be implemented through to final construction.

ACTION 4.6

Prioritize the city-wide public realm delivery, improvement and maintenance in the budgeting process.

Memorable gateways provide lasting impressions to visitors and residents coming to Markham.



Public art brings value to the City by providing unique and interesting experiences that delight residents and visitors.

Our Strategy

Creating Gateways and Destinations



A great public realm creates memorable gateways and destinations within our City that provides lasting impressions for visitors and residents of Markham. Our public realm defines our City and distinguishes our neighbourhoods. The expression of the public realm is critical in 'placemaking' and supports the development of civic identity and pride. Residents and visitors to Markham should immediately recognize our community as they enter our city limits and move throughout our neighbourhoods.

Creating Lasting Impressions

Memorable gateways provide lasting

impressions to visitors and residents coming to Markham. Gateways can provide day and night interest, as well as express the City's dynamic, creative, and rapidly evolving nature. They can include architecture, natural features, and public art. Highly visible structures can be designed with a themed approach to provide way-finding cues, aid navigation and present a positive image of the City. Gateways are important to differentiate Markham from its neighbours and assist in creating a sense of pride and ownership to the City.

Showcasing Public Art

Public art brings value to Markham by providing unique and interesting

experiences that delight residents and visitors. Markham has a vision for the establishment of a robust public art program. Cities across North America have proven that Public Art increases the economic value of a development project by generating public interest. The City of Markham's Public Art Policy supports the display of Public Art within the public realm and within private and public development projects. Working together with public and private sectors, Markham encourages the inclusion of public art within our public spaces. This will give Markham a strong identity and sense of place. Public art can create destinations, places people want to visit and unique experiences where people want to return again and again.

Markham's cultural sites are essential arts and cultural destinations that connect our visitors, residents and businesses with the City.



Markham has been an active participant in the management of Rouge Park lands since the Rouge Park formed in the early 1990s. This park is currently transitioning into a natural urban park.

Our Strategy

Creating Gateways and Destinations



(Continue)

Developing Green Assets as Destinations

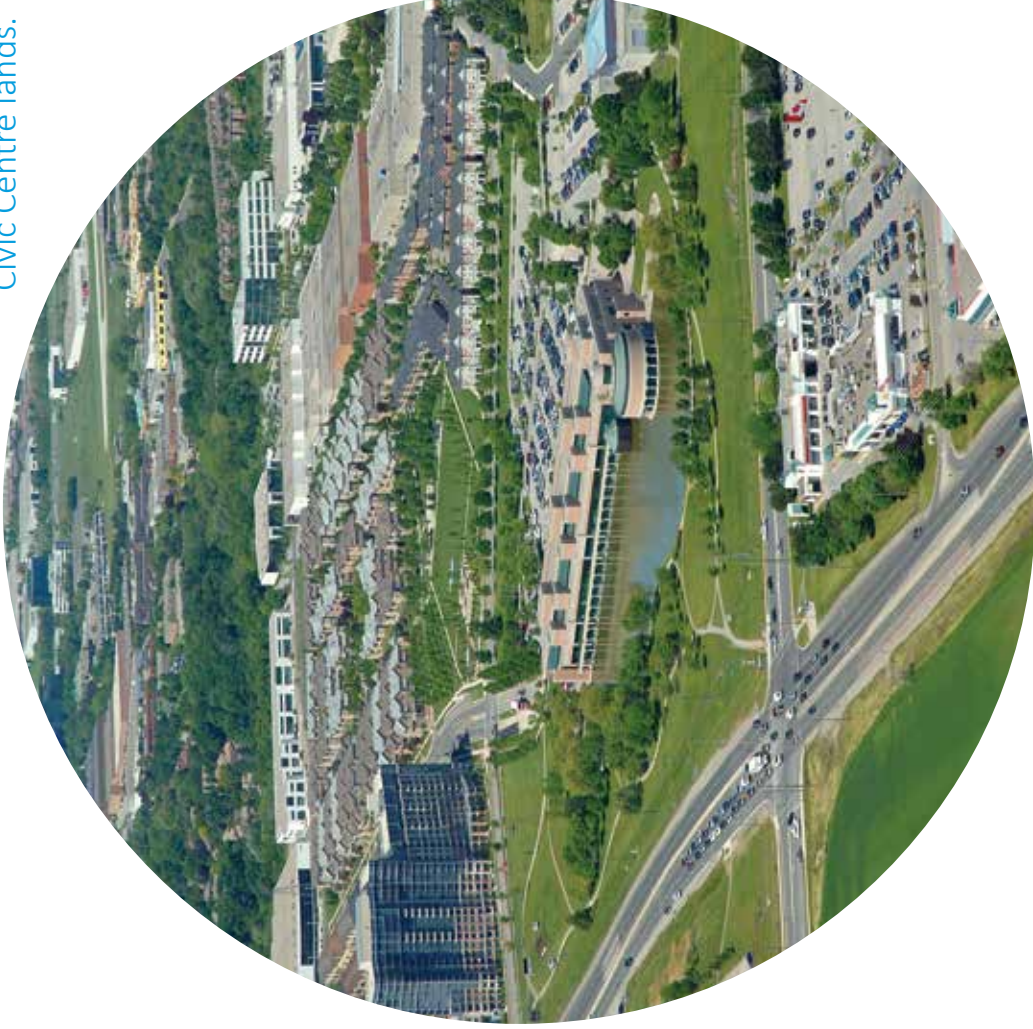
Markham’s “environmental first” approach to land-use planning ensures that significant natural heritage areas are protected, preserved and enhanced as the City grows. These natural heritage areas are valuable public assets that provide destinations. For example, Rouge Park in Markham is located along the Rouge and Little Rouge rivers forming part of a larger inter-regional and inter-jurisdictional parks system. The park is a significant ecological area extending from the mouth of the Rouge River in Toronto into Pickering and Markham, with approximately 1,540 hectares located in Markham. The City has been an active participant in the management of Rouge

Park lands since the Rouge Park formed in the early 1990s. This park is currently transitioning into a natural urban park, led by the Federal Government under Parks Canada. The federal government has made a commitment to support the creation of the Rouge National Urban Park with approximately 3,800 hectares of the park in Markham. Once established, Rouge National Urban Park will celebrate and protect a diverse landscape in Canada’s largest metropolitan area offering connections to its natural beauty, rich history, and vibrant farming community.

Identifying Cultural Assets as Destinations

There are destinations that draw people to Markham and destinations within the City that draw residents. Markham’s cultural sites, the Markham Museum, the Varley Art Gallery and the Flato Markham Theatre are essential arts and cultural destinations that connect our visitors, residents and businesses with the City. Areas such as Unionville and Markham Village heritage districts also function as “museums of the street” and are major cultural attractions.

A masterplan should be developed for the Civic Centre lands.



How to Get There?

Creating Gateways and Destinations



ACTION 5.1

Showcase Markham's unique areas and destinations with beautiful public spaces, great public art, memorable arrivals, sustaining and engaging neighbourhoods and city districts.

ACTION 5.2

Develop a Gateway Masterplan to ensure people arriving and leaving the City feel a sense of pride and identity that distinguishes Markham from other surrounding municipalities.

ACTION 5.3

Continue to promote the City's public art program and encourage developers, businesses and residents to participate.

ACTION 5.4

Develop a masterplan for the Civic Centre lands to enhance the public realm opportunities.

ACTION 5.5

Prepare promotional material to promote our unique destinations and areas to both visitors and residents.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 Current Public Realm Programs, Festivals and Events

APPENDIX 2 Current Public Realm Policies, Guidelines and Standards

APPENDIX 3 Recreation Programming and Contacts



APPENDIX 1

Current Public Realm Programs, Festivals and Events

Leash Free Markham Committee

The Committee is responsible for overseeing all off-leash dog parks established under guidelines approved by the City of Markham and for reviewing proposals for new off-leash dog parks in Markham. The community is encouraged to consider new leash free areas following set guidelines.

Rouge National Urban Park

Recognizing the potential of Rouge Valley, in the eastern sector of the Greater Toronto Area, with its abundance of natural and cultural treasures all within easy reach of 20 per cent of the nation's population, Parks Canada is looking to seize the opportunity as a "people's park" to protect this unique urban space. Guided hikes and interpretive programs have engaged residents to explore and appreciate the park.

Keep Markham Beautiful Program

This program encourages residents and businesses to take pride in their properties and public spaces. The *Keep Markham Beautiful Bylaw* states that boulevards and front yards be kept tidy and maintained on a regular basis.

Adopt-a-Park Program

Community groups are encouraged to help keep our neighbourhood parks beautiful and safe places to enjoy. Clean up supplies are provided free of charge. This is a great way to get to know the neighbours and neighbourhood. In 2013, 74 groups had adopted their local parks and many of these groups have graduated far beyond their biannual clean up events. Woodlot and Riparian buffer rehabilitation, invasive species removal and naturalization planting

are a few examples of ongoing park projects. The Grandview Area Residents Association, won the 2010 Communities in Bloom Special Category Award for their multi-year woodlot rehabilitation project.

Volunteer Ice Rink Program

Markham encourages the community to build their own ice rinks in parks. The City provides a water service in mutually agreeable park spaces. To date 10 communities are involved. It is a great way for the community to be active in their parks and beat the winter blues.

Public Art Program

Public art creates dynamic urban landscapes and contributes to a city's identity. Public art is considered to be a key component to the attractiveness and uniqueness of



a city, connecting distinct city centres and neighbourhoods and demonstrating the character of communities. Free and accessible to all, public art emphasizes a city's distinctiveness and makes creative public spaces that enhance the visual quality of a city and engages residents and visitors.

[Public Realm Speakers Series](#)

Public Realm talks were held in 2013, to raise awareness and provoke creative thought. Two talks were held about Art in Public Spaces and Gardens with Meaning.

[Festivals](#)

Markham is home to many festivals such as the Unionville and Markham Village Festivals, Canada Day, A Taste of Asia and the Milliken Children's Festival, to name only a few. They are important to bring people together while celebrating our culture, food and diversity.

[Farmers Markets](#)

The Main Street Markham, Stiver Mill Market in Unionville and the York Farmers Market in Thornhill, along with private vegetable stands are ways for residents to access locally grown food.

[The Colour Your Corner Program](#) encourages community groups to establish and maintain a perennial bed at significant entry corners into their community. The Operations Department helps with the design and site preparation, and the community weeds and maintains the bed.

[Sustainable Gardens/Colour Your Corner Programs](#)

Sustainable Gardens - perennial and native plant gardens grow year after year, with no need for annual bed preparation, planting and watering. These plants can give a longer season of colour, and provide pollen, nectar and seeds to feed insects and birds. Twenty four beds have been planted with perennials.

[Susie Garden Recognition Program](#)

The Susie Garden Recognition Program promotes and celebrates beautiful front gardens in Markham. Residents can nominate their own or a neighbour's garden, or business, and a recognition sign is posted for people to enjoy. This program encourages pride in the public realm.

[Community/Allotment Gardens](#)

Markham has 8 community gardens with over 115 plots, giving residents the ability to grow food locally.

[Hot Summer Nights](#)

The Markham Fire and Emergency Services outreach program initiated in 2012, with a goal to introduce themselves to the community with their fire truck and provide fire safety information. Waste Management and Waterworks Departments also contribute with information and the Water on Wheels display. Four communities will be visited in 2014.

[Library Community Engagement](#)

Markham Public Library has developed numerous partnerships with the community. At Cornell, working with the Markham Stouffville Hospital a series of health and wellness programs have been developed. Film screenings, art displays and talks with local authors, along with the One Book One Markham has been popular in encouraging literacy and expanding an appreciation for art and culture. Outreach to schools and reading programs for adults and children are also very popular.



[Doors Open Markham](#)

Doors Open is a celebration of community spaces and places. It provides the public with an opportunity to explore unique and sometimes hidden treasures, some of which have never been open to the public. Markham held its first Doors Open in 2003 and since that time, Doors Open has been an annual city-wide event. Doors Open Markham is a free event supported by the City, its community partners and local businesses.

[Markham Remembered Interpretive Program](#)

Markham has a program for interpreting the rich history and architecture of the City known as “Markham Remembered”. There are over 40 interpretive panels throughout the municipality on both public and private spaces celebrating subjects of cultural heritage value or interest. Many of these panels were obtained as a condition of development application approvals.

[Markham Village Interpretive Walk](#)

The City will soon be implementing a new interpretive experience in historic Markham Village. Interpretive panels celebrating specific village subjects will be introduced on the street along with the opportunity to connect to a website offering additional audio, visuals and text.

[Heritage Districts](#)

Each heritage conservation district has a district plan with streetscape/ public realm policies and guidelines relevant to the specific district. Many of our heritage districts have received enhanced heritage-character streetscapes through community improvement projects, such as the 2013-14 streetscape enhancement project for Main Street Markham. Streetscapes have been enhanced with special lighting, street furniture and boulevard/sidewalk improvements. All our districts also have unique district street name signage and entry/identification signage complete with a district logo and colour scheme to help further identify these special areas in our community. Commercial signage

in districts is also enhanced through the Sign Bylaw to ensure heritage-friendly signage on both public and private properties.

[Heritage Financial Assistance](#)

Through financial assistance programs offered by Markham, heritage resources and the public realm are improved for the benefit of the community. Grant assistance is available to restore or replicate features on designated properties, to restore or improve exterior facades on commercial properties, and to replace inappropriate commercial signage in heritage districts.

[Markham Heritage Estates](#)

Markham is home to Canada’s first heritage subdivision. Markham Heritage Estates is a unique environment created through a public/private partnership that attracts both local residents and visitors. This is a subdivision of last resort for threatened heritage buildings that cannot be retained on their original sites. The buildings are restored as private residences and individual property landscapes are created appropriate to the restoration period.

How Do We Use Our Streets?



How Do We Use Our Outdoor Space?



How Do We Get to Work?

APPENDIX 2

Current Public Realm Policies, Guidelines & Standards

Markham's New Official Plan

It is the policy of Council to:

6.1.1.3 To support the integration of the planning and development of the built form and public realm with land use and transportation planning and municipal infrastructure projects to improve connectivity of neighbourhoods, mixed-use and employment areas and the Greenway System.

6.1.1.5 To develop comprehensive urban design guidelines to guide new development and redevelopment to achieve a public realm consisting of streets and boulevards, open spaces and parks providing places for shared use and community interactions.

6.1.2.1 To support the development of a public realm that will contribute to the urban form and function of Markham's communities by creating safe, accessible, and comfortable spaces and places that enrich the urban experience.

6.1.2.2 To design and organize the public spaces as places of shared use; to place priority on pedestrians, cycling and transit; contribute to placemaking; and ensure consistency in quality and design.

6.1.2.3 To define the streets and blocks, buildings and structures, and public spaces that support the public realm based on their functional requirements and locate and configure them to enhance the

safety, accessibility and attractiveness of Markham's communities.

6.1.2.4 To incorporate natural and cultural heritage features, landmark buildings and open spaces, streetscapes and view corridors, and public art that contribute to the overall sense of identity of Markham's neighbourhoods, heritage districts and business parks.

Integrated Leisure Master Plan

The Integrated Leisure Master Plan, approved in 2010 by Markham Council, identified that parks and open spaces were very important to residents, that there is a need to build community identity and social connectivity. Self scheduled, unorganized and non traditional outdoor activities (examples such as walking and cricket) are of growing interest, along with the development of more social gathering areas.

Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT)

This long term strategy highlights ways to make Markham a diverse, safe and active city. It strives to maintain and enhance healthy, green, accessible and beautiful communities, while providing excellent services in programming of our public spaces. Citizen input will be sought that reflects and respects the needs of Markham's diverse population.

Accessibility Design Guidelines

The City of Markham intends to be a leader in developing accessible environments for all, embracing the principles of universal design and recognizing diversity, barrier removal, provincial directions and changing demographics. The Guidelines builds on the

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) that lays the province-wide mandatory standards on accessibility in all areas of daily life including employment, transportation and built environment.

Culture Policy and Plan

The Culture Policy and Plan defined public realm as all privately or publicly owned spaces, indoors and outdoors, which are generally accessible, either visually or physically, to the public free of charge. Also referred to as public places or the public domain; the Public Realm can be defined as a social space, a forum for discussion, a place to reach consensus.

Pathways & Trails Master Plan

The Pathways and Trails Master Plan sets out the means for improving and expansion Markham's trail system to provide a wide range of leisure, learning and healthy lifestyle opportunities for the residents of Markham. With the intention to improve walking and off road cycling routes, the master plan identifies a City-wide off road pathway and trail system that connects destinations within Markham as well as design guidelines and standards to achieve objectives.

Public Art Policy

The City of Markham's Public Art Policy supports the display of Public Art within the public realm within private and public development projects. Public art that creates a landmark or a gateway, creates a sense of place and an identity for Markham and its neighbourhoods, brings people together, and engages people through thoughts add value to the Markham public realm. In 2012, Council approved two Public Art Policies – one for municipal projects and one for private sector projects. These policies will help to bring more public art to Markham's public places and municipal buildings, and encourage the private sector to do the same. There are many opportunities for community art creation, donations of artwork and commissions for art. We have a highly dynamic, talented and multicultural community. Increasing the presence of art in our community is a means to recognize and celebrate our local talent and engage all residents as we beautify our public space. Our public art policies help to create opportunities for Markham residents and visitors to be enriched by our community's heritage and diverse culture."

York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership (PCMP)

In June 2007, York Regional Council endorsed the Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program. Through this Program, York Region covers up to 50 per cent of the eligible construction cost for qualifying local municipal and agency pedestrian and cycling projects that contribute to meeting sustainable objectives of the Region's Official Plan, Transportation Master Plan, and Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. The Program, which has an annual capital budget of \$500,000, supports the development of a regional scale, commuter walking and cycling infrastructure network. Since its launch, the Program has contributed a total of over \$1.1 million to five projects within the City of Markham including multi-use paths and trails on Major Mackenzie Drive (2 phases), Warden Avenue, and the Rouge River Valley area (2 phases). These projects help to create an attractive and vibrant public realm to improve mobility and promote sustainable communities.

York Region Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors (Sept. 2013)

The Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors is a compilation of innovative approaches to overcoming some of the key challenges to implementing the vision for Centres and Corridors. The Public Realm is an important aspect of creating vibrant, healthy and successful Regional Centres and Corridors and innovative approaches to planning and implementing, streets, open spaces and a high quality of design in our communities are encouraged.

Section 2.2 Streets – highlights best practices for designing vibrant active streets, such as the use of complete street policies, context sensitive design and streetscaping master plans.

Section 2.4 Open Space – highlights best practices for establishing a network of open spaces, such as the development of comprehensive municipal park strategies and encouraging creativity in open space design

Section 2.9 Place-Making – highlights best practices for establishing design excellence, including taking a form based approach to zoning, establishing comprehensive design guidelines, establish a design review panel and create incentives for design excellence

York Region Transit Oriented Development Guidelines (Sept. 2006)

York Region's Transit Oriented Development Guidelines aim to create an urban form adjacent to public transit services that is transit supportive, pedestrian-friendly and well-designed. These guidelines support the implementation of the Regional Centres and Corridors and supports current and future investments in rapid transit infrastructure.

APPENDIX 3

Recreation Programming and Contacts

Ratepayers Groups

Citizens dedicated to representing the interests of residents in Markham have formed Ratepayers Groups with their neighbours. A full listing of the Ratepayers Groups is available on the Markham website at the following link;

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/Residents/>

Ratepayer Associations

Citizens interested in forming a ratepayers group can find the information and forms online by following the link;

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/Residents/RatepayerAssociations/EstablishNewRatepayersGroup>

Mapping

Interactive maps help you locate facilities and amenities, business areas and vacant land within Markham's borders.

- City of Markham Street Guide Map
- Navigate Markham Map
- Parks & Pathways Map
- Roads Map
- Vacant Land Map
- Ward Map
- City Ash Trees Map

Please use the following link to the Markham website.

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/MunicipalGovernment/HowCanWeHelp/interactivemaps/marrkhammaps>

Markham Heritage

Our cultural heritage is a major part of what makes Markham unique. Cultural heritage resources can take many different forms:

- buildings and structures;
- streetscapes and landscapes;
- cemeteries and archaeological sites; and
- documents, photographs and artefact collections.

Our cultural heritage resources tell us who we are, where we have come from and what we have accomplished. For additional information, please use the following link to the Markham website.

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/AboutMarkham/Heritage/heritageoverview>

Varley Art Gallery

The Varley Art Gallery of Markham features frequently changing exhibitions from the permanent collection as well as historical contemporary exhibitions drawn from local, national and international sources. New ways of seeing and appreciating art are enhanced through a broad range of dynamic hands-on art-related activities, including group tours, school programs, and studio workshops and lectures, and children's seasonal programs and camps designed to appeal to audiences of all ages and interests. For additional information on events and programs, please use the following link to the Markham website.

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/RecreationCulture/VarleyArtGallery>

Markham Museum

If you are looking for a unique family experience, Markham Museum offers 25 acres of parkland including an orchard and heritage gardens. Our site features a variety of buildings representing the on-going growth of our community. See mills, re-created businesses and family homes. Enjoy a personal tour and then stroll the village. Bring a picnic or pick up food at one of our many local establishments and find a quiet spot to unwind. Customized tours are available for families with young children except on special event days.

The historic church and outdoor pavilion are ideal for weddings and family or company picnics. Indoor rental space is also available. For additional information on events, please use the following link to the Markham website.

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/RecreationCulture/MarkhamMuseum>

Markham Theatre for Performing Arts

Markham Theatre for Performing Arts is one of Canada's premier theatre houses serving the GTA and Markham residents. With over 300 live performances each year, the Theatre presents a performance calendar that showcases the cultural diversity of the community. Live theatre, concerts, comedy shows and family entertainment provide an ever-changing array of performing arts. Markham Theatre continues to honour respected international artists and Canadian talent in performances offered throughout the annual professional entertainment season held September through May. For additional information related to events and programs, please use the following link to the Markham website.

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/RecreationCulture/MarkhamTheatre>

Recreation Services

Recreation Services Department has many events, activities, programs and opportunities for community participation. We're constantly reviewing and adjusting our programs to help enrich the community experience for everyone who calls Markham home. For additional information on Community Centres, locations, hours of operations and programs, please use this link to the Markham website.

<http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/RecreationCulture/recreationandculturelandingpage>

Markham Public Library

The Libraries support the dreams and aspirations of all members of the community, nourishing growing minds, refreshing the human spirit, and celebrating the power of reading and information to change lives and enrich leisure time. The Markham Public Library offers a wide range of programs for all age groups. For additional information, branch locations, hours of operation and programs, please use the following link to the Markham website.

<http://www.markhampubliclibrary.ca>

 MARKHAM

