

Town of Markham / Markham Public Library

INTEGRATED LEISURE MASTER PLAN

April 2010





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Prepared by:
Monteith Brown Planning Consultants
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The JF Group
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A Plan for Markham

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

If we wait five years to build facilities for them, children become teens and teens become young adults and we lose the opportunity to serve an entire generation of youth. What have they missed and what will be the consequences of this delay?

We cannot wait any longer. The Integrated Leisure Master Plan will help the Town respond to the leisure needs of all residents in a timely and efficient manner.

- Frank Scarpitti, Mayor of Markham, 2009

Community Vision – Building Markham's Future Together

Markham is proud of its reputation as a leading municipality in Canada. Since its [origin-incorporation](#) in 1971, Markham has become a place that attracts high-tech and creative industries, while also building vibrant communities where people who work in those industries choose to live.

Markham can also take pride in its leisure services, services that enrich community life and create more "liveable" communities. During its almost 40 years of growth, Markham has achieved a balanced track record in providing excellence in its parks, culture, recreation and library services, while also ensuring that service delivery is efficient and cost-effective. [However, like most municipalities](#), there are gaps in service delivery and areas where Markham is lagging behind, largely a result of increasing service demand, general population growth, and

significant shifts in Markham's demographics. Markham wishes to maintain and enhance its community life through its strategic efforts.

Markham Council recognizes that it must take the right steps today to prepare for the future. In 2007, the *Building Markham's Future Together* (BMFT) initiative was launched, with the goal of "ensuring that Markham continues to be a vibrant, successful and sustainable community." This vision describes an environment in which the community is flourishing and thriving. Through subsequent consultation, local residents have supported this by clearly expressing their desire to continue to enjoy a high quality of life and to engage in civic opportunities.





Strategic Priorities – Integrated Leisure Master Plan

One of BMFT's six strategic priorities was to enhance community parks, recreation, culture and library programs and service delivery systems, as directed by this *Integrated Leisure Master Plan* (ILMP).

The Integrated Leisure Master Plan has been developed as a tool to assist decision-makers, stakeholders and the general public in determining needs and priorities related to services and facilities encompassing the parks, recreation, cultural, and library needs of the Town of Markham.

To achieve the community vision, Council and staff have reached out to the community through both the BFMT and ILMP initiatives to gather their thoughts and suggestions in seeing these plans through. Input has been significant with over 5,000 residents, stakeholders, businesses and community groups offering sound advice on the strategic priorities of Markham now and into the future. With this guidance, Council has set goals and priorities and staff have aligned plans and initiatives to support Markham's desire to be vibrant, successful and sustainable. The ILMP's recommendations are designed to shape a vision of leisure services that will support Markham's overall prosperity in a creative and knowledge-based economy, will ensure community excellence in areas of intensification, and will play a critical role in building community and increasing social capital.

The Integrated Leisure Master Plan is a result of considerable research and analysis, as outlined in the following illustration.

The timeframe of the Plan is to 2019, but this horizon has been extended in cases where longer-term planning was needed. Implementation of the ILMP's recommendations should be monitored regularly and the entire Plan should be updated five years after its approval.





A Changing Markham

This Integrated Leisure Master Plan exercise does more than look at what we've done in the past and build upon existing patterns of service provision. It recognizes the ways Markham has changed and looks forward to the next stages in Markham's evolution. Just as Markham will be transformed, its leisure services need to be transformed. Just as the economy is undergoing a fundamental "re-set", Markham's leisure services need to be "re-set".

The Master Plan process has also taken place within the framework of many parallel and ongoing planning initiatives that will define the Markham of the future. Capturing and leveraging the knowledge and directions in these initiatives has been critical to creating a comprehensive and consistent Integrated Leisure Master Plan.

Holistic Approach

In recent years, a combination of master plans and studies has guided Markham's planning for parks, recreation, culture and library services and facilities, including a Recreation, Culture and Library Master Plan (1999) and a Draft Parks, Recreation, Culture and Leisure Master Plan (2004). Although useful, these reports are becoming outdated.

There is also a desire for long-range strategic planning to be harmonized across affected service areas. This master planning exercise recognizes that parks, recreation, culture and libraries do not operate in isolation from each other; they are part of a symbiotic social web of shared community infrastructure and residents that together and collectively build a sense of community, social capital and social cohesion, bringing Markham's diversity together. Accordingly, many recommendations in this Master Plan apply to all departments, with more specific sub-recommendations where appropriate.

Alignment with Municipal Initiatives:

- Building Markham's Future Together
- Markham Public Library Strategic Plan
- Community Sustainability Plan - Greenprint (draft)
- Development Charges Study
- Official Plan
- Growth Management Strategy
- Markham 2020 - Economic Strategy
- Pathways and Trails Master Plan
- Cycling Master Plan
- Rouge Park Implementation Task Force



The Case for Leisure

Markham is Keeping Pace and Moving Forward

Good things are happening in Markham and the community is proud of its successes. The following are just some of Markham's recent accomplishments in the parks, recreation, culture, and library sectors:

- a) A growing emphasis is being placed on cultural services. A new municipal Culture Department was created in 2007 and a cultural mapping project has since been undertaken. The continued strengthening of this department is a key objective moving forward.
- b) Markham is also home to one of the busiest library systems in Canada, and its rate of use is growing faster than Markham's population. Considerable advancements have been made in terms of library automation and self-service technologies, allowing the Markham Public Library to maximize efficiency while still providing outstanding customer service.
- c) Expansions and improvements to several facilities have led to significant gains in community use and accessibility. The Varley Art Gallery, Markham Museum, Thornhill Community Centre, Centennial Community Centre, and Markham Village Library are just some of the major venues that have been targeted for investment in recent years. Funding is also in place to further expand the Thornhill Community Centre and undertake accessibility improvements to several facilities.





- e) New facility development has also been a key to Markham's ability to keep pace with growth. Markham opened the Angus Glen Community Centre and Library in 2004 and is currently building the East Markham Community Centre and Library in partnership with the Markham Stouffville Hospital that will create a leading-edge 'Health and Wellness' campus.
- f) Partnerships have been critical to Markham's ability to provide services that are sustainable and responsive to community needs. Not only is the municipality collaborating with the Markham Stouffville Hospital, but strategic alignments with organization such as the YMCA and School Boards have produced well-used and lasting community use facilities, including the Markham YMCA Rudy Bratty Centre and soccer fields at Bill Crothers Secondary School. Plans are also underway for the partnered development of an indoor soccer facility at St. Roberts Catholic High School.
- g) Toronto was recently named the host city of the 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games and Markham will benefit from the many exciting and valuable opportunities associated with this international event. Markham was selected to host the Water Polo, Table Tennis, Badminton, and Rugby competitions. A new indoor competition pool will be built and improvements will be made to existing venues, leaving a legacy for local residents to enjoy for many years to come.



- i) The registration of nearly 15,000 children and youth in the sports of soccer, baseball, hockey, ringette, and figure skating, all of which rely heavily on volunteers within the community. Also of note, over 6 million visits are made to Markham's indoor recreation facilities every year.
- j) Special efforts have been made to engage youth and seniors in the development and delivery of a multitude of programs and activities targeted to their interests.
- k) Markham's Parks Development Section has constructed over 100 hectares of parkland between 2004 and 2007, including numerous sports fields, playgrounds, waterplay facilities, and one of the best skateparks in the country. Furthermore, with the assistance of senior government funding, plans are in place for the development of an indoor tennis centre at the Angus Glen Community Park and an outdoor artificial ice rink at the Markham Civic Centre.
- l) Rouge Park – billed as Canada's premier urban wilderness park – is the largest urban park in Canada and is multijurisdictional, with a considerable portion within Markham. The Park presents an exciting opportunity for ecosystem protection, cultural and natural heritage education, and appropriate recreational enjoyment. The

Rouge Park Implementation Task Force has been formed to explore options relating to its future use and management.

- m) Markham has demonstrated its commitment to environmental sustainability and energy efficiency through the use of LEED initiatives and 'green' technologies through several projects.
- n) Recognizing that improvements to community infrastructure, enhancements to the delivery of services, and increased protection for natural areas are all critical priorities for managing future population growth. One example of this can be seen in the planning of the Langstaff Gateway lands, which is a high density mixed use centre that will be home to 32,000 people within an area totalling 47 hectares. Despite its extremely high density, more than 25% of the land base is proposed for parks and open space, with pedestrian connections being another key objective.

A continued commitment to the objectives underlying each of these achievements is critical to ensuring that all people in Markham have the opportunity to improve their quality of life, enhance their health and wellness, [engage in lifelong learning](#), and develop their talents.



Everyone Benefits from Leisure

Individuals, households, and entire communities all benefit greatly from access to quality leisure services. Markham believes that leisure services enhance the community as a place to live and provide personal balance and health to its residents. Examples include:

- Physical benefits (health and wellness) from participation in active endeavours.
- Intellectual benefits from access to information resources [and lifelong learning opportunities](#).
- Social benefits from opportunities to be engaged in meaningful community activities.
- Environmental benefits from the protection of open spaces and the provision of alternative transportation choices.
- Economic benefits through the attraction and retention of high-tech and creative industries, made possible through the high quality of life that leisure services provides.

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, Ontario Ministry of Culture, and Canadian Library Association have produced summary documents of research findings that highlight the benefits of providing parks, recreation, culture, and library services. These benefits are identified below (adapted).





Benefits of Providing Parks and Recreation Services:

Essential to Personal Health

- Combats diabetes, heart disease, cancer and respiratory illnesses
- Prevents site specific cancers (colon, breast and lung)
- Reduces stress, depression and contributes to emotional/psychological well being
- Restores physical, mental and social capacities and abilities

Key to Human Development

- Strengthens social, motor, creativity and intellectual capabilities
- Develops adults to their full potential (social, intellectual, creative, physical and spiritual)

Essential to the Quality of Life

- Builds self esteem and positive self image
- Enhances life satisfaction levels
- Nurtures growth, acquisition of life skills for those with a disability

Reduces Anti-Social Behaviours

- Reduces self-destructive behaviours and negative social activities in youth
- Provides an antidote to smoking, substance abuse, suicide and depression
- Reduces crime, particularly effective with at risk/delinquent youths
- Builds understanding between diverse cultures
- Reduces isolation, loneliness and alienation

Builds Families and Communities

- Families that play together, stay together. Children and youth remain connected; couples that share interests are more likely to stay together
- Provides safe, developmental opportunities for children and youth who are unsupervised before and after school
- Produces leaders who support their communities in many ways
- Builds social skills and stimulates participation in community life
- Provides the catalyst that builds strong self-sufficient communities
- Strengthens community engagement

Pay Now or Pay Later

- Reduces the costs of social services, social interventions and foster care
- Reduces crime and social dysfunction – police, justice and incarceration costs





Benefits of Providing Cultural Services:

Support a thriving economy

- Strengthens the economy by revitalizing downtowns, attracting tourists and businesses and creating jobs

Enhances our quality of life

- Gives meaning and context to people's lives
- Engages our minds, improves our health and enriches the education of our children and lifelong learning

Creates a sense of pride in our communities

- Helps define the character of a community
- Develops residents' sense of pride in their unique local landmarks and history
- Attracts new residents and keeps current residents in the community

Encourage social cohesion

- Engages citizens in activities that help build a sense of community
- Celebrates different cultures and helps newcomers feel welcome





Benefits of Providing Library Services:

Foster lifelong learning, literacy and personal achievement

- Builds early literacy and school and reading readiness, the first link to an educated workforce, and workforce participation
- Strengthens family literacy behaviours
- Provides universal opportunities for lifelong free-choice learning
- Develops lifelong literacy skills, and reading proficiency for all ages, providing the building blocks for personal and community prosperity
- Helps residents of all ages access the information and tools that they need to succeed in life, school and work
- Supports newcomer/immigrant transition through access to technology and training, strengthening employment readiness and resilience
- Provides places where people can gather to learn



Support Economic Prosperity

- Provides access to the information needed to make a knowledge-based economy work
- Helps residents develop the skills required to find and evaluate information in order to adapt and succeed in a knowledge-based economy
- Nurtures learning and the human imagination, thereby supporting Markham's prosperity in the emerging creative and knowledge-based economy

Enhance Quality of Life

- Provides community places and "third place" destinations that support a high quality of life standard for all residents
- Provides collections, services and programs that enhance quality of life, and help ensure that local creative culture flourishes and thrives

Build Community Identity and Social Cohesion

- Provides welcoming civic gathering places for all residents
- Provides resources that build understanding of others and the capacity for empathy
- Fosters a sense of community, revitalizing neighbourhoods and developing social stability and a sense of belonging



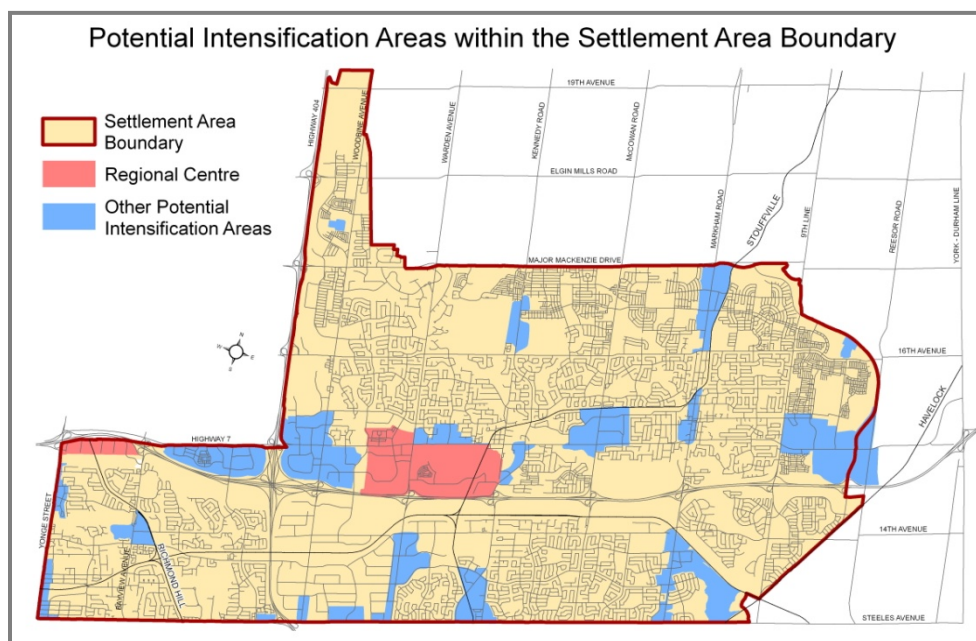
The Plan's Building Blocks

Understanding the defining characteristics of who presently lives in Markham and who will live there in the future – as well as their interests, preferences, and participation patterns – is critical to establishing a locally effective strategy for leisure services. Community-responsive planning simply cannot be done without first investigating the attributes and motivations of people that reside in Markham. Demographics, trends, and public input are the building blocks of this master planning exercise.

The Growth of Markham

Markham is a major centre within the Greater Toronto Area, with an estimated population of [302,850](#) in [mid-2009](#). Markham has grown rapidly since it was incorporated in 1971 and another 66,300 new residents are expected by 2019 (23% growth).

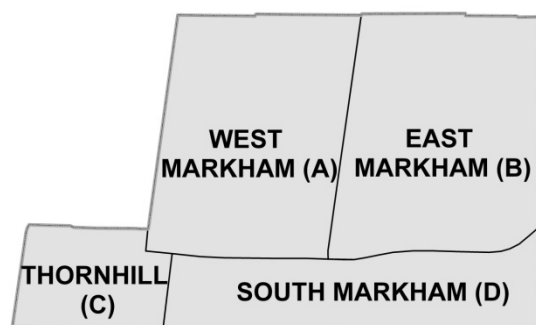
While some of this forecasted residential growth will be accommodated in greenfield areas, Markham is in the midst of developing a Growth Management Strategy and is considering a 55-60% intensification target that would bring new residents into established areas. This will place additional pressure on Markham's existing facilities and services, many of which are currently running at or near capacity.





The first priority of the BMFT initiative – “Managing our Growth” – is especially important given Markham’s recent growth and anticipated continued growth to a population of 423,468 people by 2031.

In order to better assess the geographic distribution of parks and facilities, Markham was divided into four ‘study areas’; these boundaries are consistent with the service areas used by the Markham Public Library and align with census tracts and/or regional traffic zones.



Forecasted Population by Study Area – Totals

	2009	2019	2031
Area A (West Markham)	85,631	124,374	148,804
Area B (East Markham)	78,739	99,305	136,116
Area C (Thornhill)	55,818	58,069	63,984
Area D (South Markham)	70,907	75,652	74,565
Town of Markham	291,095*	357,399	423,468

Source: Region of York (2009), adapted by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants.

* Markham had an estimated population of 302,850 in mid-2009. Forecasts aligning with this figure are not available by study area

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Data has been adjusted for Census undercount.

The [previous](#) table illustrates Markham’s population forecasts to 2031 by study area. Most of the new growth is expected to occur in East and West Markham. Adjustments to these forecasts may be forthcoming once the Markham’s Growth Management Strategy is complete.

A Note about the Population Forecasts:

The population forecasts referenced in this Plan were prepared by the Region of York in early 2009 and align with regional traffic zones. Amongst many other uses, this data is used in the analysis of park and facility distribution within this Master Plan.

These forecasts are the most current approved data available at this time. They are based on several assumptions and could vary as the result of changes to Markham’s growth model, market conditions, servicing availability, and several other factors. Planning approvals by Council could significantly alter the scale, timing, and location of Markham’s population growth.

Markham is engaged in the development of a preferred growth alternative that will identify, in broad terms, the recommended distribution of new population growth. Markham Council has not yet confirmed a preferred alternative. There may be some variation in the distribution and phasing of growth relative to that assumed by the Region in their forecasts. In addition, the preferred growth alternative will need to be monitored over time to identify variations in the pattern or timing of growth over the planning period to 2031.

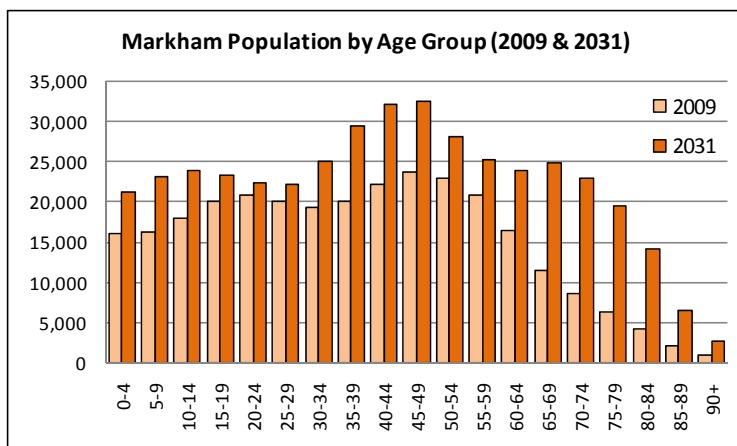
Continued monitoring of Markham’s growth is critical to the success of long-term planning within this Master Plan. Significant changes to growth assumptions may necessitate adjustments to the Master Plan’s growth-related directions.



Aging and Diversity in Markham

The aging trend that is being experienced across Canada is also apparent in Markham. The municipality's older adult population (age 65 and over) will increase by 74% over the next ten years, driven largely by the Baby Boom generation that will be entering this age category. On the whole, this group of older adults are likely to continue their participation in active types of recreation, although at a gentler pace than before. Less active forms of recreation and the arts will also remain popular amongst older adults and seniors. Within the older adult group, there is considerable segmentation of leisure interests based on ability, and this will become even more apparent as the number of people with disabilities rises.

Lesser growth is projected for all other age categories over the next ten years. The 0 to 9 and 55 to 64 age groups will each increase by about 25%, while the 20 to 34 age group will grow by about 15%. The number of teens, however, is not expected to change to any real degree.



Source: Region of York (2009), adapted by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants.

Income and ethnic diversity also influence and/or predict participation in leisure pursuits. Although Markham's median income in 2005 was 8% higher than that of the province, the municipality had the highest percentage of low income residents across the entire Region of York. There are many people in the community with social needs and Markham's leisure services provide critical supports to residents from all backgrounds.

57% of Markham's population was born in a country other than Canada and 59% have a mother tongue other than English, making Markham one of the most diverse communities in Canada. Many of these new Canadians import their traditions, including their interests in festivals and concerts, picnics and gatherings, sports such as soccer, badminton and cricket, and multi-lingual library materials.

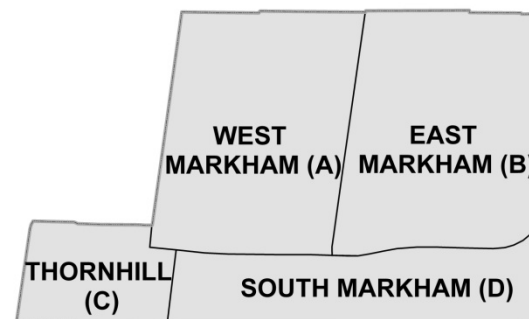




A Community of Communities

The needs and capacities of each study area are unique and different provision levels may be appropriate. Furthermore, each Study Area contains several neighbourhoods that may have different socio-demographic characteristics and growth rates, translating to different current and future needs.

The following is a high level summary of the key differences between the four Study Areas:



West Markham (Study Area A)	East Markham (Study Area B)	Thornhill (Study Area C)	South Markham (Study Area D)
Highest percentage of population aged 40-49 (34%)	Highest percentage of population under the age of 9 (13%)	Highest percentage of population over the age of 60 (20%)	Highest percentage of population between the ages of 10 and 39 (44%)
Highest percentage of population whose home language is Cantonese or Chinese (36%)	Expected to see greatest growth between 2019 and 2031 (37%)		Highest percentage of multiple-family households (15%)
Expected to see greatest percentage growth by 2019 (45%)			Highest percentage of residents whose mother tongue is neither French nor English (56%)
			Highest percentage of residents who are immigrants (68%)
			Highest percentage of population 15 years and over that are 1st generation Canadians (82%)



Trends

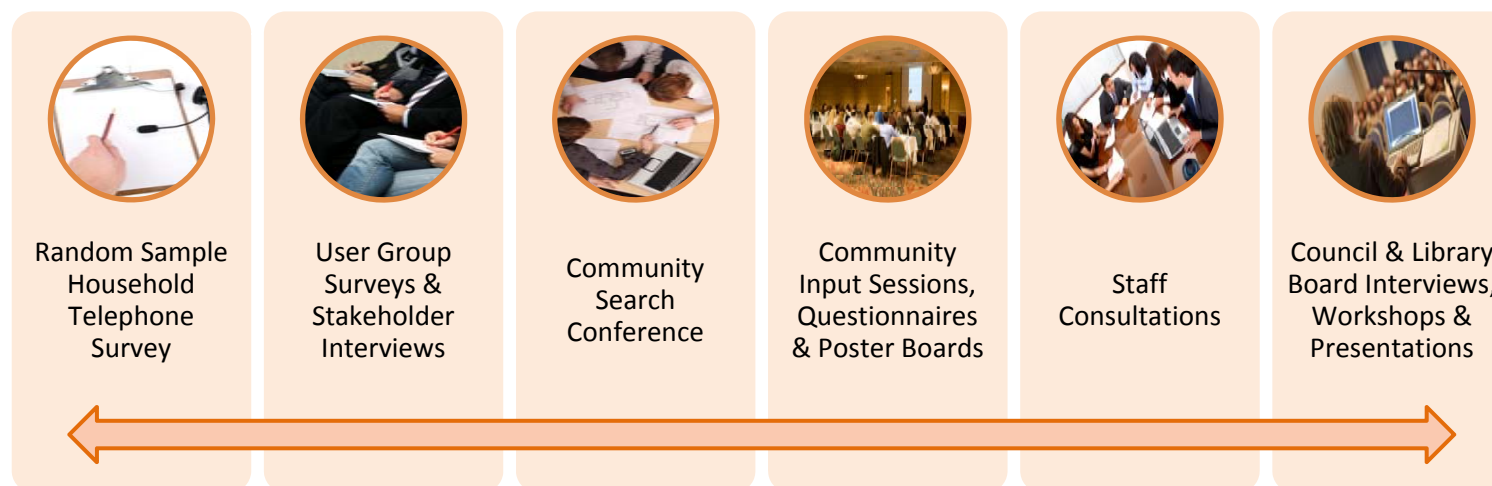
Effective long-term planning requires an understanding of existing and emerging trends that may affect service, program, and facility needs. The following graphic illustrates several high-level trends that are currently or about to shape how Markham provides leisure services; these trends form a large part of the philosophy behind the Master Plan's goals and recommendations.

Demographic and Social Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing Community Diversity • Aging Population & the "New Senior" • High Levels of Physical Inactivity and Obesity • Residential Intensification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing Youth Values and Interests • Busy Lifestyles – Convenience is Key • Movement Toward 'Ability to Pay' (Affordability) • Increase in Special Needs Customers
General Provision of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on Community Partnerships & Resource Sharing • Constant Search for Alternative Funding Options • Shifting Interests in Volunteering and Social Commitment • Growing Emphasis on Accommodating People with Disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed Residents with Greater Expectations • Funding Challenges for Schools; Recent Improvements to Community Access
The Parks and Recreation Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing Interest in Self-scheduled, Unorganized Activities • Aging Infrastructure • Emerging Activities (cricket, skateboarding, etc.) • Increasing Environmental Awareness and Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and 'Green' Facility Designs • Interests in Neighbourhood-based Options (e.g., community gardens) and Non-traditional Parkland Uses ("Living Community Centres")
The Arts and Cultural Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Impact of Baby Boomers on Arts & Cultural Participation • Stronger Ethno-Cultural Identities • Impact of Creative Class on Economy and Social Fabric • Growth of Cultural Tourism (Regional Industry) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Interest in Festivals and Special Events • Heightened Municipal Profile of 'Culture' • Greater Awareness of Place-making and Public Realm
The Library Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technological Innovations • Expanding Information Mediums (e.g., digital media) • Books and Other Print Materials Remain Popular • Expanded Role as of Libraries as Community Hubs • Growing Demand for Lifelong Learning and Academic Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage Increases in Poor Economic Times • Co-location with Other Civic Facilities • Focus on User-Friendly Designs and Amenities • Growing Interest in Self-serve Options



Community Consultation Program

Markham residents know their community well and have insightful opinions on what is working well and what needs more attention. This is why the community consultation program is an essential element of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan. Through various methods, local residents, community groups, service agencies, and Municipal officials and staff were involved in meaningful discussions throughout the Plan's development, [including](#) at the beginning when issues and potential strategies were being identified [and at the end when feedback was required on the draft Plan](#). Specific consultation and engagement approaches included the following:



The [major](#) findings from these consultations are identified [on the following pages](#). They have been integrated into the service and facility analyses [and used as a key input in developing the recommendations](#).



Household Survey

A statistically significant household telephone survey of Markham residents was undertaken in late 2008. The total number of respondents was 396, which provides a confidence interval of $\pm 4.9\%$, 19 times out of 20 for a population the size of the Town of Markham. In an effort to encourage participation in the survey from non-English speaking households, the opportunity was extended to complete the survey in other languages (Cantonese and Tamil).

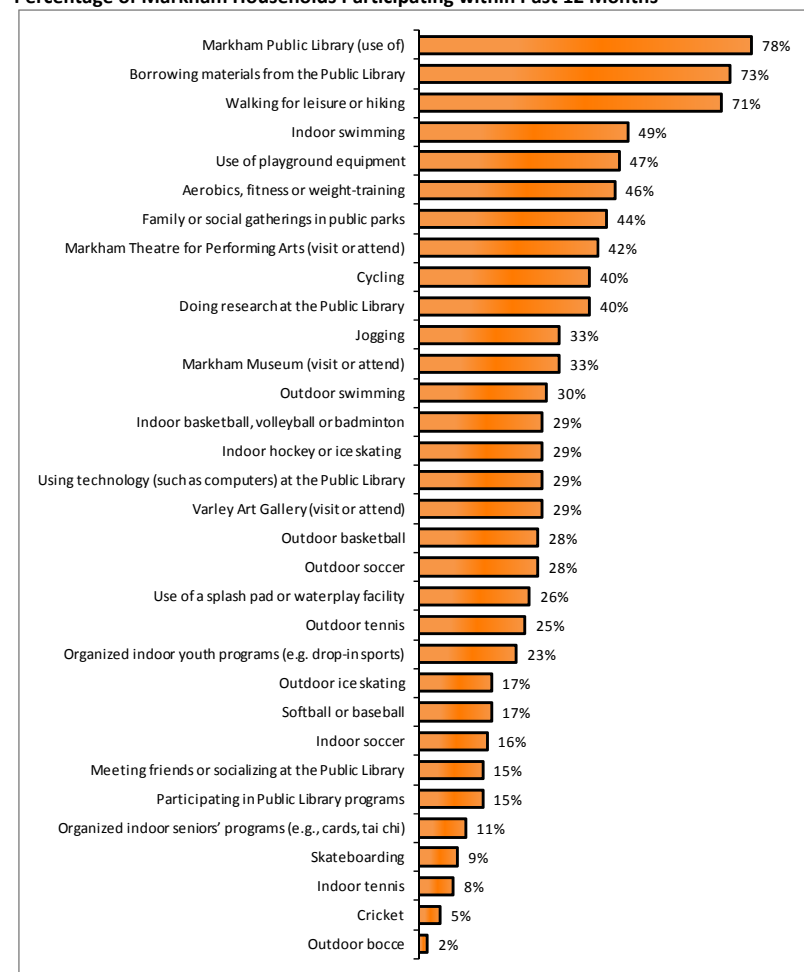
Several interesting findings can be taken away from the survey, the most significant of which are highlighted below.

Participation

Three out of every four Markham residents participated in a parks or outdoor recreation activity in the past year (76% of residents) and a high number participated in library activities (59%), indoor recreation activities (57%), and arts and culture activities (47%), underscoring the pervasiveness of leisure services within the community. Residents tend to use Town of Markham facilities most for their leisure activities, with those arts and cultural facilities located outside of Markham being the most notable exception. With that being said, comparisons to a similar survey from 2003 suggest that there has been a considerable increase in the number of households accessing arts and cultural facilities in the Town of Markham over the past five years.

The most common activities for Markham households are those that are unstructured and self-scheduled, such as library usage, walking, using playgrounds, fitness activities, and social gatherings. Organized activities such as indoor swimming (e.g., lessons, training) and attendance at the Markham Theatre for Performing Arts are also popular pursuits for local residents.

Percentage of Markham Households Participating within Past 12 Months





Barriers to Participation

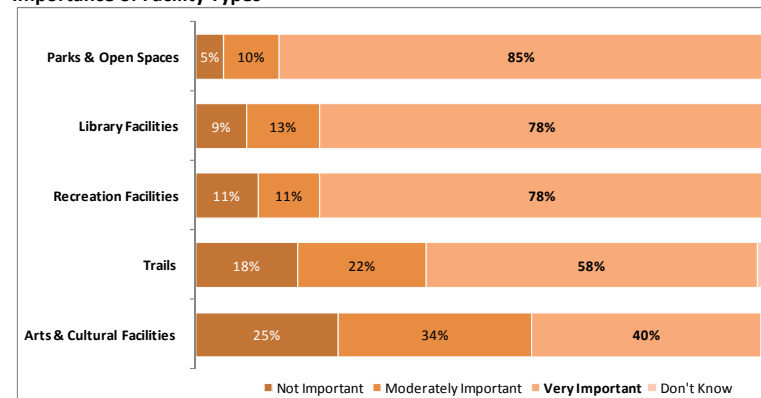
Nearly one out of every 3 households (31%) reported something that keeps them from participating in parks and outdoor recreation activities as often as they would like; a similar number (27%) reported the same for arts and culture activities. Barriers to indoor recreation and library activities were not as acute, with only 15% and 12% (respectively) indicating that they are unable to participate as often as they would like. The most common barrier cited by Markham residents was “lack of time” (39% of all households, regardless of activity), followed by “facilities not available” (19%) and “available at the wrong time” (13%). The percentage of Markham households that reported a “lack of time” has increased substantially from the 2003 survey, suggesting that residents are becoming more time pressed and having greater difficulty finding time for leisure activities.

Preferences and Priorities

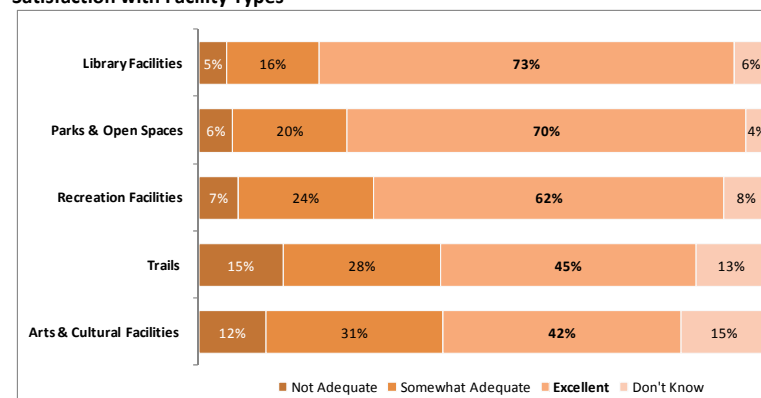
About 4 out of every 5 Markham households agreed that parks and open spaces (85%), libraries (78%), and indoor recreation facilities (78%), are very important to them. The level of importance was somewhat lower for trails (58%) and arts and cultural facilities (40%), perhaps an indication that fewer people use or benefit from these assets.

Markham households were also asked about their level of satisfaction with local leisure infrastructure. The most notable gap between the ‘importance’ and ‘satisfaction’ ratings were found in indoor recreation facilities and parks and open spaces, indicating that the expectations of the general public are not being met in these areas.

Importance of Facility Types



Satisfaction with Facility Types



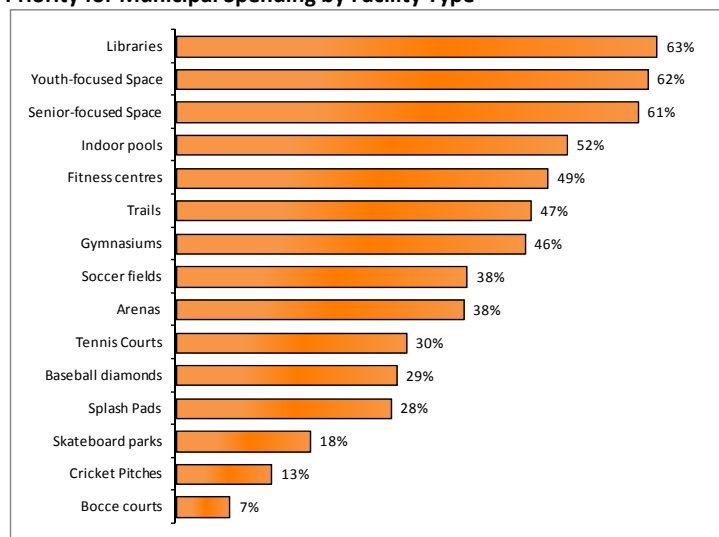
In order to gauge which types of facilities are in the greatest need of improvement or provision, respondents were asked which types of facilities should have additional public funds spent on them. The greatest demand was found for libraries (63%), youth-focused space (62%), senior-focused space (61%), indoor pools (52%), fitness centres (49%), trails (47%), and gymnasiums (46%). Fitness centres and gymnasiums generated a greater level of support in



2008 (over the 2003 survey), indicating a growing demand for these facilities.

A follow-up question was posed about the ideal library design and location; nearly four out of five Markham households indicated a preference from libraries that are combined with community centres, compared to libraries that are on their own sites, separate from community centres.

Priority for Municipal Spending by Facility Type



In order to realize these new and improved leisure services, 43% of Markham's households indicated a willingness to pay more taxes (46% were in opposition; the remainder were undecided). Respondents were somewhat less likely to be willing to pay more taxes for arts and cultural facilities (26% would pay more).

Stakeholder Group Survey

A stakeholder group survey was created to gather information from cultural and community groups regarding participation statistics, organizational mandate, facility usage and needs, and coordination and delivery issues. Responses were received from 40 groups representing sport, ratepayer and community organizations.

The survey yielded several pieces of information, including requests for new or improved facilities; two-thirds (66%) of organizations indicated that they need additional parks, recreation, cultural or library facilities now or within the next ten years. Twice as many groups preferred a multi-purpose facility design (of which Markham has many; e.g., Angus Glen Community Centre) over a single-purpose design.

Community Search Conference

In January 2009, a search conference was held with approximately 30 representatives from a wide range of community groups.

Items that the community values most about Markham:

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



Suggestions for improving indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities in Markham:

- Keep pace with demand and residential development
- Continued upgrading of recreation facilities
- School board and municipal cooperation
- Accessibility (location, physical, distribution), transportation and walkability
- Keep up with technological advancements in facilities
- More facilities for seniors and people with disabilities

Suggestions for improving parks and open space opportunities in Markham:

- More accessible and interconnected natural and groomed bike trails and pathways
- Better maintenance and funding for parks and sports fields
- Leash-free dog parks in different neighbourhoods
- Readily available bathrooms and other amenities at parks, fields, open spaces, etc.
- Protect, clean and naturalize water courses
- More natural areas, woodlots, trees, habitats

Suggestions for improving arts and cultural opportunities in Markham:

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

Suggestions for improving library opportunities in Markham:

- Increased hours of operation (i.e., Friday nights, Sundays)
- Continue to develop and improve libraries as multi-use facilities
- Keep resources current and increase the supply of books and videos
- Connect libraries with other facilities (e.g., malls, daycares, community centres, medical clinics, post-secondary institutions, etc.)
- Expand and upgrade facilities to more modern, environmentally friendly facilities
- Renovate Thornhill branch and expand Milliken Mills branch

BMFT Consultation (to date)

On March 2nd, 2009 the Town of Markham hosted an event under for Building Markham's Future Together. The event was intended to create awareness and excitement for the launch of the Plan, with over 50 members of the general public attending the presentation. Several questions were posed and, while most responses were positive, the majority of attendees disagreed with two statements, which suggests that these are areas where Markham has some challenges in meeting resident expectations:

- The Town of Markham provides many cultural venues for residents to enjoy the arts – only 43% agree that this is true.
- The Town of Markham currently meets the sporting needs of the community – only 30% agree that this is true.



Challenges and Opportunities

Markham residents have access to high quality leisure assets, including nearly 160 parks, numerous open space parcels and woodlots, 120 kilometres of trails and pathways, 6 public library branches, 4 'major' and 14 'minor' community centres, and a municipal theatre, art gallery, and museum. The Town of Markham also directly provides many programs and services; other demand-based opportunities are provided by community groups, non-profit organizations and the private sector. Through this collaboration, Markham residents have access to a diverse range of programs and services for all ages, genders, ethnicities, abilities, and incomes.

With these roles and responsibilities in mind, the following summarizes the main opportunities and challenges related to leisure services in Markham, as identified through public input and other research.

Leadership and Innovation

- Markham aims to be the best, demonstrating innovation and creativity in everything it does.
 - Recreation services are recognized provincially and nationally for providing a stellar level of service through outstanding facilities.
 - Culture has been a strong component of the delivery system through the provision of arts and heritage facilities and programs. The development of a cultural strategic plan will further strengthen this area.
 - The Markham parks system is well maintained, has an emphasis on environmental stewardship, and has an ever-developing trail system that is enjoyed by the entire community. Great communities have great parks and public spaces!
 - Markham's libraries are recognized as one of the busiest, most innovative and customer-focused public library systems in Canada.

Service Excellence & Integrated Service Delivery

- Municipal staff is committed to continue to strive to be a high performing organization. To further strengthen their capacity to be leading edge, they will need to continue to focus on policy, procedural and baseline initiatives.
- Collaborative relationships in and amongst the departments involved in parks, recreation, culture, and library services are a positive, but relatively recent, endeavour. In order to avoid duplication, address common social issues, and benefit from collective and creative thinking, it is suggested that the departments adopt an integrated service delivery model.
- Markham has established several service and facility partnerships with outside organizations and, while they have generally been successful, there is a need to consider a standard framework for evaluating potential collaborations and special requests.



Physical Inactivity

- Canadians are not improving their level of physical activity. A long-term commitment (defined in decades) is needed to prompt Markham residents to be active and to work with like-minded partners to provide education, social marketing, policy supports, and active opportunities.
- Markham residents have indicated that a lack of personal time is a barrier to participation in programs and services. Not coincidentally, the demand for self-scheduled activities outside of traditional peak times is on the rise. Markham must offer innovative alternatives, strengthen its social marketing, and emphasize the importance of participation in parks, recreation, cultural, and library activities in order to encourage residents to lead active lifestyles, enjoy creativity, and protect the time to do so. Leisure is a vital component of the work-life balance.

Population Characteristics

- Addressing Markham's diversity – including culturally diverse populations, low income residents, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups – will continue to require special and different approaches to help people feel included and to reduce barriers to participation.
- Youth and older adults require heightened focus as their patterns of participation are changing dramatically. The number of older adults in Markham will double in size by the year 2022.
- Markham residents are generally satisfied with the quality and delivery of leisure services, but their expectations are rising, particularly those of older adults.





Infrastructure

- Markham's leisure facilities are well used and several have recently been expanded. Gaps exist in some areas, particularly in Southeast Markham (Milliken), a community that is very diverse and underserved. The Southeast Community Centre and Library is one of Markham's next major capital recreation projects and efforts should be made to expedite service enhancements to this area and to confirm the future community centre site.
- The Markham Public Library is one of the busiest library systems in the country, yet it is lagging behind most other communities in terms of space per capita. The impact of technology has not lessened the demand for traditional materials, but rather led to greater space needs. New and expanded branches are required to meet needs of current and future Markham residents.
- Growth in the popularity of soccer and many other field sports has led Markham to develop several new fields and to facilitate access to school fields. Despite this, Markham has been unable to keep pace with demand, and there is a particular need for a large multi-field sports park that can accommodate league and tournament play.

Residential Intensification

- Residential intensification is being planned for several areas of Markham. This will result in a more compact urban form and higher population densities. While much of this development will not begin until beyond the Master Plan's 2019 timeframe, the advance planning needs to be started now. New approaches to community centre, library, and park provision are required in these intensified areas,

approaches that reflect the premium on land, the existence of non-municipal providers, and the unique composition of residents that will live there.

- Markham's parkland classification system also needs to evolve to reflect changes to the urban fabric, including opportunities to establish smaller and more urban parks. Examples include plazas, squares, and civic greens – containing features like seating, shade, gazebos, public art, water features, and playgrounds – that support more intense and all-season uses. Markham must take steps to balance the desire for greater densities with the provision of appropriate public spaces for outdoor recreation and socialization.

Community Engagement – Strengthening Neighbourhoods

- Each neighbourhood and community within Markham has differing needs, issues, strengths, resources, facilities and capacities. Rather than taking a standard municipality-wide approach, staff are tuned into the uniqueness of each neighbourhood and offer programs and services based on these differing needs. Strengthening neighbourhoods through community engagement and partnerships is a way of finding locally-appropriate solutions and working collectively to share responsibility. The possibilities that come to light when like-minded groups and individuals get together to address community issues are often astounding. Markham needs to further develop this approach.
- Providing and fostering activities within neighbourhoods may also reduce travel time, increasing one's tendency to participate.



Creative Cities

- Arts and culture contribute immensely to Markham's high quality of life, providing a wide range of benefits that are key to maintaining healthy and creative cities. Markham's continued commitment to the arts and cultural sector is a fundamental and critical component of building creative cities that attract creative-minded people, including residents, employees, and visitors.
- While this Master Plan provides high-level direction for arts and cultural facilities and services, there remains a need for a comprehensive municipality-wide Arts and Cultural Plan to guide Markham's arts and cultural offerings, to fully engage the arts and cultural community, and to recognize their contribution to an integrated leisure system.

Sport Development

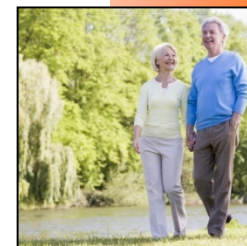
- Within Canada there is a need for communities to articulate their role and working to engage community, provincial and national organizations in the sport development continuum. Markham has articulated a need to support residents in the quest to reach their potential in a sport of their choosing and adopt a lifelong engagement.

External Communications

- Some local residents are unaware of what services Markham has to offer. There is a need to re-examine key messages, preferences, and appropriate communications vehicles will serve Markham well in getting both promotional and social messages across. In a diverse community like Markham, translation services, social networks, and other alternatives need to be considered.

Funding

- Markham has a history of not borrowing large sums for capital projects; however, funding is not always available when it is truly needed. Municipal officials have stated a desire to consider alternate sources of funding in order to provide services and facilities before children and teens have grown up and moved away. Furthermore, with the growing emphasis on arts, culture, and heritage (which are not able to be funded through Development Charges), other funding options will need to be considered, with long-term sustainability being a key objective.



Our Mission, Our Goals

Rights of Markham Citizens

Residents clearly feel that parks, recreation, culture, and library services are imperative to the quality of life and continued sustainability of Markham. The Parks, Recreation, Culture and Library Departments are committed to providing every citizen with safe, accessible and enjoyable experiences and believe that each citizen has rights in accessing these programs and services. Adapted from the Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario, the following describes these basic rights and the Departments' work to ensure equitable access.

We believe that every citizen in Markham should have access to:

- 1) Neighbourhood-Focused Participation:
Participate in quality, safe, affordable neighbourhood-based parks, recreation, cultural, and library programs that are in harmony with the diversity of the community.
- 2) Healthy and Active Living:
Inspire healthy lifestyles, build community wellness, and be physically active through participation in both organized and informal sports and recreational activities.
- 3) Access to Nature & the Outdoors:
Experience nature and to access open spaces within their communities.
- 4) Enriching Experiences:
Experience and inspire creativity in the arts, culture, and heritage in a Markham that is a creative community.
- 5) Learning Experiences:
Engage in lifelong learning experiences that develop literacy, knowledge, and personal achievement.
- 6) A Welcoming & Inclusive Community:
Be included in activities that build strong communities, engage citizens, and promote healthy family life. Experience community places that are welcoming, inclusive, and respectful.
- 7) Responsive Services:
Respond to cultural shifts and changing demographics and related demand for new activities, new public uses, new ways to be engaged, and new programs.
- 8) Community Engagement:
Be engaged in the planning of parks, recreation, culture and libraries in the community and be supported in volunteer activities.
- 9) Outstanding Public Places:
Experience incredible urban design, public realm, and parks that are based on placemaking principles.
- 10) Community Excellence:
Meet and exceed customer expectations and build community capacity, all of which are socially, financially, and environmentally sustainable.



Our Mission

Parks, recreation, culture, and library services are administered through several municipal departments, but the users of each of these services are the same – the public. Therefore, it is appropriate to articulate a common Mission Statement for parks, recreation, culture, and libraries.

Within this global over-arching Mission Statement, each Department must develop a more specific vision for how it fits into and contributes to the broader picture of community, with its own vision and mission statements.

Our Goals

Building on the Mission Statement, nine primary Goals have been established that align with Markham-wide priorities (including the draft Community Sustainability Plan – see page 28). These Goals will assist Markham in targeting resources and strategies where they will be most effective.

The Goals work together to enhance the quality of life of Markham residents. They are areas where the collective efforts of parks, recreation, culture and library staff – in concert with community partners and stakeholders – will be needed to provide specific focus and targeted resources.

Mission Statement

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

This contributes to a quality of life that attracts and retains diverse and talented residents, supports a community-wide commitment to lifelong active living and learning, and advances Markham's future prosperity in the rapidly growing creative and knowledge-based economy.

The common threads that hold the Goals together include:

- Sustainable and active living
- Lifelong learning and personal growth
- Health and fitness – physical and mental wellness
- Quality service and continuous improvement

Many Goals are inter-related; they are not mutually exclusive. Most goals relate to all subject areas, including parks, recreation, culture, and libraries. The Goals do not have a priority order.

The Goals of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan are illustrated on the following page. In the sections that follow, the ILMP Recommendations have been listed under the primary Goal that they most closely align with, recognizing that many Recommendations apply to multiple Goals.



Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

- To ensure an equitable distribution of service opportunities and facilities/open spaces, with a focus on both neighbourhood-specific and town-wide needs.



Goal 2: Align Leisure Services with the Growth Management Strategy

- To align leisure services with Markham's Growth Management Strategy (to 2031) by planning for intensification through proactive strategies for service delivery and facility and open space provision.



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

- To align leisure services with the Markham 2020 Vision and Economic Strategy, reinforcing Markham's position as one of Canada's leading communities.



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

- To strengthen neighbourhoods by building on existing leisure resources, unique identities, communication opportunities and partnerships.



Goal 5: Placemaking

- To design public spaces that actively engage communities, invest in the public realm, and create a sense of place and belonging for Markham residents and neighbourhoods.



Goal 6: Inclusion, Access and Equity

- To ensure full and equitable access to leisure services for all Markham residents.



Goal 7: Maintain an Environmental and Sustainable Focus

- To align leisure services with Markham's environmental and sustainability strategies, focussing on sound environmental practices and the health and wellbeing of future generations.



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

- To work together in addressing community issues through greater collaboration within and between Markham's departments and stakeholders.



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

- To heighten organizational capacity and inspire innovation in leisure service delivery.

Goal 9a: Recreation and Parks Programming & Service Priorities

- To enhance recreation and parks services through the provision of inclusive and accessible lifelong active living opportunities, with specific focus on physical activity and services for youth and older adults.

Goal 9b: Continuous Improvement of Markham's Parks

- To strive to enhance the parks and trail systems that connect communities and provide green spaces that are central to community life.

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

- To strengthen Markham's position as a creative community by enhancing and promoting arts, culture and heritage opportunities.

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

- To focus library services on lifelong learning, literacy skills, and inclusive community-building.

Goal 9e: A Vision for Sport Development

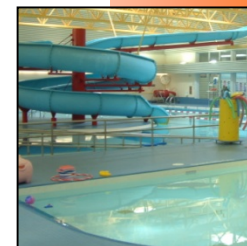
- To support lifelong active involvement in sport and physical recreation through community initiatives that celebrate and enhance the development of Markham's athletes.





ALIGNMENT TO (Draft) SUSTAINABILITY GOALS





Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

To ensure an equitable distribution of service opportunities and facilities/open spaces, with a focus on both neighbourhood-specific and town-wide needs.

Markham is frequently praised for its exceptionally designed and community responsive leisure facilities. Facilities like the Angus Glen Community Centre & Library are the envy of many municipalities. Because of Markham's rapid growth and its proactive decisions, most of Markham's leisure infrastructure is relatively new and in above average condition. Across the Province, up to 50% of community centres, arenas, and pools are at or approaching their useful life¹. This is not the case in Markham, although the municipality does have its share of older halls. Markham's capacity to plan into the future, strategically invest in its existing facilities, and find creative funding options have allowed it to stay ahead of the curve. These abilities will prove to be just as critical for ensuring that Markham continues to be a vibrant, successful, and sustainable community.

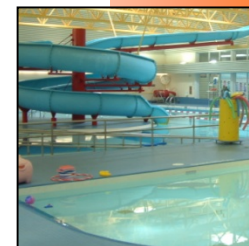
"For the first time, a higher percentage of Ontario residents placed top priority on leisure rather than on work, clearly showing that recreation is an increasingly important part of people's lives."² We believe this is also true in Markham and is

supported by the high priority residents are placing on new and expanded libraries, community centres, sports fields, parks, and trails. The Town of Markham must continue to provide the places and spaces that its citizens can access to enrich their quality of life.

The ILMP has established provision targets that will help Markham identify and plan for new leisure facilities. These assessments have found gaps in some areas, specifically in Southeast Markham where the sheer number of people (particularly the number of new Canadians and lower income residents) has created a compelling need for additional library and community centre facilities, including indoor pools and gymnasiums. There is also a desire for engaging youth in meaningful leisure activities and more services to meet the needs of the burgeoning older adult population, all of which have implications on facilities; these directions are also addressed in Goal 9a.

¹ Investing in Healthy and Active Ontarians Through Parks and Recreation Infrastructure. Parks and Recreation Ontario. 2007.

² Use of Benefits of Local Government Recreation and Parks Service: An Ontario Perspective. Parks and Recreation Ontario. 2009.



Outdoor facilities such as sports fields, skate parks, waterplay facilities, and playgrounds are also in demand. Markham must continue to secure the parkland needed to keep pace with the demand for these land-based amenities; parkland strategies are discussed in Goal 9b.

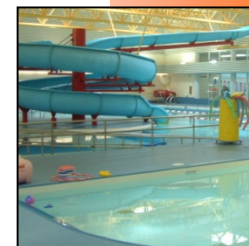
Markham residents prefer facilities that are close by, that they can walk or bike to. To achieve this, a facility model that includes both neighbourhood and community-level facilities is required, as is greater community engagement and outreach (see also Goal 4).

Continued investment in Markham's cultural facilities has allowed these venues to stay relevant and responsive to local needs. Moving forward, the focus should be on integrating arts, culture, and heritage activities into other spaces (such as parks, community centres, and libraries) through the use of flexible layouts, art displays, special events, and the animation of parks.

Libraries function well when they are combined with civic facilities such as community centres. Markham has been a leader in this area and is currently building a joint complex in East Markham in collaboration with the hospital. Even with this building project, there is less library space per resident than there once was. Markham's rapid population growth is very noticeable in its library facilities, which are extremely well used and near capacity. New and expanded libraries are needed, not only to stay in step with Markham's growth, but also to address current shortfalls.

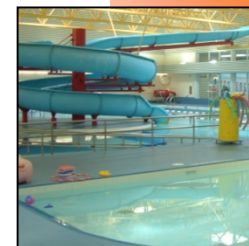
The design of new leisure facilities, their location, and how their services are delivered also need careful consideration. Out of *Building Markham's Future Together*, the municipality has begun the development of a Community Sustainability Plan – known as Markham's "Green Print". There are strong linkages between the ILMP and this Plan; leisure plays and will continue to play its part in contributing to the sustainability of Markham. Staff has worked collaboratively to ensure the ILMP responds to and is consistent with Markham's draft Community Sustainability Plan. The ILMP's directions will have a wide influence on daily life, especially in terms of where and how Markham residents access services. These recommendations will also play a critical role in shaping the implementation tasks that will support the path to achieving a Sustainable Markham.





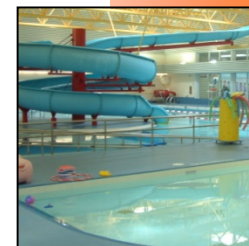
Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	1. Create a service delivery framework and funding model that is neighbourhood-based, as well as a facility and park provision model that will support this framework by providing a combination of neighbourhood-based and community-wide parks and facilities.	●		
	2. Ensure an equitable distribution of opportunities that supports a 'carbon neutral' focus, so that residents can access the services they want in their neighbourhood, and lessen need to travel to other neighbourhoods to use parks, recreation, culture, and library services.	●	●	●
	3. Ensure that community planning incorporates the role of parks, recreation, culture, and library and that ILMP recommendations are incorporated into all planning processes.	●	●	
	4. Design and build parks, recreation, culture, and library infrastructure that supports sustainability (e.g., LEED buildings).	●	●	●
	5. Continue to align with the Community Sustainability Plan.	●	●	●
	6. The Development Services and Community Services Commissions should establish a process through which development applications in areas of residential and/or mixed use intensification are jointly reviewed with regard to parks and open space, community floor space requirements, and other potential community benefits. Markham's current Official Plan includes policies and provisions for negotiating community benefits in relation to increased height and density in accordance with Section 37 of the Planning Act. These policies should be updated and enhanced to assist Markham in obtaining certain facilities, services or matters which would not otherwise be secured under the provisions of the Planning Act or the Development Charges Act, and which may be of particular benefit to a specific area (or areas) within Markham or the Town of Markham as a whole.	●		
	7. The municipality owns lands in Markham Centre that are intended for future public use (e.g., Urban Park, Markham Live), including possibilities for parks, recreation, culture, and/or libraries. Appropriate civic uses should be evaluated, determined, and/or further advanced, in keeping with this vision for this area and community needs.	●	●	
Parks Services	8. Create walkable communities through the development of attractive, safe, convenient and practical walking trails (e.g., 'paths of desire') and sidewalks that connect neighbourhoods to local parks, recreation, culture, and library facilities and that make the choice to walk the preferred option for all residents.	●	●	●



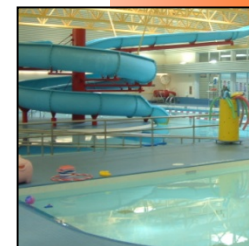
Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Recreation Services	9. Offer leisure opportunities locally by engaging community and neighbourhood stakeholders in planning and delivery.	●	●	●
Culture Services	10. Position and develop cultural event planning in the context of the community sustainability.	●	●	●
	11. Undertake cultural mapping, cultural policies and complete a Culture Plan so that Markham will lead and participate in the growing development of our cultural sector to enrich the quality of life, deliver opportunities for lifelong learning and engagement with our diverse communities, and to support the sustainability and economic goals of Markham. (see also recommendation 176)	●		
Library Services	12. Prioritize lifelong learning as an objective for library programs and services.	●	●	●
Community Centres	13. Undertake a Neighbourhood Recreation and Cultural Services Delivery Strategy that defines Markham's neighbourhoods and their characteristics, resources, needs, and program/facility options. This assessment should also examine municipal assets that are Board-operated (e.g., Box Grove and Cedar Grove Community Centres, Markham Village Train Station, etc.) to ensure that programming, community access, and organizational capacity at these facilities is appropriate. The provision and management of 'minor' community centres that serve as 'walk-to' neighbourhood facilities should also be considered as part of this planning process, particularly in response to areas undergoing residential intensification.	●	●	
	14. Continue with plans to build the East Markham Community Centre & Library in 2011.	●		
	15. Develop a 'major' community centre and library to serve Southeast Markham (Area D) by 2014, with planning commencing in 2011 . An evaluation process should be initiated to confirm the most appropriate site and development strategy for this facility; this process may result in a need for Markham to acquire land at an alternate site.	●	●	
	16. Begin planning for the provision of community recreation services to serve the growing Langstaff Gateway community (Area C) in or around 2023. Non-traditional approaches should be considered, including partnering with other delivery agencies or providing space within a mixed-use development (i.e., 'minor' community centre). Consideration should be given to combining service delivery with the library branch proposed for the area during the same time period.		●	●



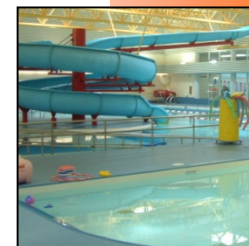
Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Community Centres (continued)	17. Well in advance of construction, acquire land for the development of a major recreation centre (greater than 100,000 ft ²) to serve the growing North Central area of Markham (generally serving Area B, east of McCowan Road in the vicinity of Major Mackenzie Drive); a facility will be required in this area between 2026 and 2031. Consideration should be given to combining the development of this facility with a library branch; a phased development approach may be required.		●	●
	18. Continue to undertake enhancements to existing community centres based on physical building and program demand requirements including, but not necessarily limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victoria Square Community Centre (conduct a feasibility study to consider facility renewal and expansion to accommodate meeting and multi-use space). Milliken Mills Community Centre (potential addition of a gymnasium, seniors' space, youth space, fitness / active living space, and expanded library – see other sections of this report for more information). Further evaluation of this facility and the site's ability to accommodate an expansion of this magnitude should be determined through a feasibility study. Armada Community Centre (expansion to be guided through a feasibility study). 	●	●	●
	19. Enhance partnerships with school boards, community agencies, places of worship, and/or ethnic-based clubs that strengthen services and accessibility .	●	●	●
Ice Pads	20. No additional arenas are recommended during the next ten years (to 2019). Local demand and participation levels should continue to be monitored and assessed to determine needs beyond this time.	●	●	●
Indoor Aquatic Centres	21. Develop an additional indoor aquatics facility to serve Southeast Markham (Area D) by 2014 , in combination with the proposed 'major' community centre. This direction should be reviewed in the event that the CSIO project proceeds.	●		
	22. Provide a multi-tank indoor aquatics facility as part of the 'major' community centre proposed for the North Central area of Markham (generally serving Area B, east of McCowan Road in the vicinity of Major Mackenzie Drive) between 2026 and 2031.			●
	23. Undertake an assessment of existing aquatic facilities to evaluate community demand and needs, provision requirements, and the need for renovations and upgrades .		●	



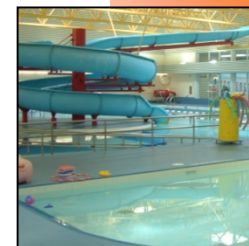
Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Gymnasiums	24. Two additional gymnasiums are required by 2019 (excluding the gymnasium proposed for the East Markham Community Centre) and more will be required beyond this timeframe. Gymnasiums should be provided as part of all future ‘major’ community centres and opportunities to add gymnasiums to existing community centre sites should be investigated (e.g., Milliken Mills Community Centre).	●	●	
Seniors’ Space	25. Provide dedicated seniors’ space (a minimum of 3,000 ft ²) and non-exclusive activity space in all new or expanded ‘major’ community centres, including the ones recommended for Southeast Markham (Area D) by 2014 and North Central area of Markham (Area B) between 2026 and 2031.	●		●
	26. Integrate dedicated seniors’ space into 1 to 2 existing community centres (e.g., Milliken Mills Community Centre), particularly in those areas with considerable seniors’ population and below average service levels. No new stand-alone seniors’ centres are recommended.	●	●	
	27. Work with local immigrant resource centres to enhance opportunities for volunteer engagement and after-hours access to community programming for all residents, not just those that are new to the country.	●	●	●
Youth Space	28. Provide dedicated youth space (a minimum of 2,000 ft ²) in all new or expanded ‘major’ community centres, including the ones recommended for Southeast Markham (Area D) by 2014 and North Central area of Markham (Area B) between 2026 and 2031.	●		●
	29. Seek options to add dedicated youth space to Milliken Mills Community Centre and/or Centennial Community Centre.	●	●	
	30. Undertake additional outreach initiatives with school boards and youth organizations in order to maximize after-school recreational drop-in and programming opportunities in local schools.	●	●	●
Fitness Centres	31. Provide fitness centres in all new or expanded ‘major’ community centres, including the ones recommended for Southeast Markham (Area D) by 2014 and North Central area of Markham (Area B) between 2026 and 2031.	●		●
	32. Investigate options for adding fitness / active living space and/or programming to Angus Glen Community Centre and Milliken Mills Community Centre by 2019.	●	●	



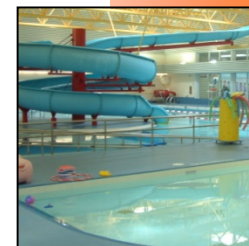
Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Fitness Centres (continued)	33. Markham should expand its focus in the fitness market to include a more inclusive active living concept that recognizes the health benefits of a physically active lifestyle. An up-to-date active living strategy should be developed to determine how this could best be accomplished. At this point in time, it is anticipated that increased delivery of active living services can be accommodated within existing multi-purpose rooms, fitness centres, and proposed future community centres.	●		
	34. Further study is required to determine the potential need and subsequent operational model for fitness components within future ‘minor’ community centres or those undertaken in partnership with other providers, particularly as these relate to areas undergoing significant residential intensification.	●		
Indoor Soccer Fields	35. Continue with plans to partner with the York Catholic District School Board to build and operate an indoor soccer/sports facility at St. Robert Catholic High School.	●		
	36. To identify demand for future indoor soccer facilities, Markham should monitor local usage at its indoor fields and evaluate partnership possibilities with other parties.	●	●	●
Other Major Indoor Recreation Facilities	37. Continue with plans to develop the 4-court domed <u>tennis</u> facility at Angus Glen Community Centre and monitor its use over time to better assess long-term requirements for indoor tennis infrastructure.	●		
	38. Identify and evaluate public-private partnership opportunities that would improve the availability of <u>table tennis</u> facilities and programs in Markham, in consultation with community providers.	●	●	
	39. No additional indoor <u>bocce</u> courts are recommended during the Master Plan’s ten-year projection period.	●	●	
	40. Municipal provision of <u>gymnastics</u> facilities is not recommended at this time.	●	●	
Trails	41. Continue to implement the Town of Markham <i>Town Wide Pathways and Trails Master Plan</i> through the proper allocation of project, operation and maintenance funding and resources.	●	●	●



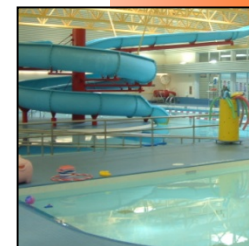
Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Soccer Fields	42. Approximately 15.5 additional soccer fields (unlit equivalents) will be required by 2019 to meet a municipal-wide target of 128 fields (unlit equivalents; including school fields permitted by Markham; including fields proposed for the large sports park). These should be provided through new park construction, expansions or conversions at existing parks, or agreements with other field providers. A strategy should be developed to guide the Town's position on and investment in artificial turf fields and the lighting of existing sports fields.	●	●	
	43. Pursue the acquisition of approximately 40 hectares of land for a large sports park (e.g., several soccer fields, some with lights; possibly other sports as well, including cricket, rugby, and/or baseball) to accommodate local sport needs and sport tourism opportunities in the North end of West Markham (Area A) or East Markham (Area B), ideally co-located with a maintenance compound to ensure adequate storage space for maintenance equipment.	●		
	44. Maintain and seek to enhance Markham's partnerships relative to the maintenance of municipally-permitted fields on school properties.	●	●	
Ball Diamonds	45. Consider including 3 to 4 adult-size ball diamonds at the recommended large sports park or in new community parks in the north end of Markham to satisfy growth requirements and demand to 2019, should demand at the adult level persist.	●	●	
	46. In cooperation with baseball groups, identify strategies and priorities for diamond improvements (e.g., installing lights, improvements to support infrastructure, etc.) in order to maximize the existing inventory of ball diamonds and extend usage opportunities.	●	●	●
Tennis Courts (outdoor)	47. Add 12 to 13 new courts (a mix of public and club courts) over the term of the Master Plan, with an emphasis on providing the majority of these courts in Areas A, B, and D to address existing gaps and areas of new residential development. Multi-use court designs that can accommodate other activities should be encouraged, where appropriate.	●	●	
	48. Review the condition and utilization of existing tennis courts in Thornhill (Area C) to determine if any can be re-purposed to other 'in-demand' uses.		●	
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	49. Develop the equivalent of 3 full basketball courts (two half courts are equal to one full court) by 2019, with an emphasis on providing the majority of these courts in East and West Markham (Areas A and B) to address existing gaps and areas of new residential development. Multi-use court designs that can accommodate other activities should be encouraged, where appropriate.	●	●	



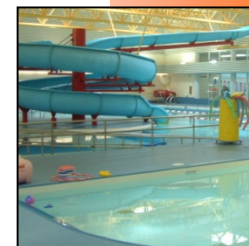
Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Playgrounds	50. As established in the Official Plan, continue to apply a target of one playground within a 400-metre service radius from all built-up residential areas, without crossing any major barriers such as waterways, railway lines, highways, etc. This will require the installation of playgrounds in new residential areas and existing gap areas, where possible.	●	●	●
	51. Continue to retrofit playground equipment and surfaces to comply with CSA standards.	●	●	●
	52. Establish minimum standards for barrier-free accessibility at municipal playgrounds and continue to locate barrier-free playgrounds in strategic locations throughout Markham.	●	●	●
Outdoor Aquatic Facilities	53. Conduct facility assessments at the appropriate time to determine the viability of the existing outdoor pools. No additional outdoor pools are recommended.	●	●	●
	54. Construct 5 to 8 new waterplay facilities by 2019; in order to achieve a goal of providing one waterplay facility in each major residential block (each being approximately 4 km ²). As a result, it is recommended that 2 to 3 new facilities be built in West Markham (Study Area A), 1 to 2 in East Markham (Study Area B), 1 in Thornhill (Study Area C), and 1 to 2 in South Markham (Study Area D).	●	●	
Skate Parks	55. Construct 4 community-level skate parks, one in each Study Area, to complement the existing Town-wide Skate Park at the Centennial Community Centre. The parks should provide intermediate level challenge and should be designed following consultation with the skateboarding community.	●	●	
	56. Consider opportunities to integrate micro skate parks (e.g., zones with fun boxes, rails, etc.) into neighbourhood-level parks in areas that have large child and youth populations and are not proximate to larger skate parks.	●	●	●
Bike Parks	57. Establish a framework to guide the development of one freestyle bike park (dirt) in partnership with the community. This facility would serve as a pilot project to determine if additional facilities will be required in future years.	●		
Cricket Pitches	58. Construct 2 additional cricket pitches by 2019 (one at the proposed Southeast Markham Community Centre site and one at the proposed large sports park in the north end of West Markham or East Markham).	●	●	



Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Off-Leash Dog Areas	59. Support the creation of additional off-leash dog areas to better provide equitable geographic distribution of this facility type, including in Rouge Park . Off-leash dog areas should only be constructed if partners exist that are willing to maintain and operate these facilities; Markham's "Guidelines for Permanent Dog Off Leash Areas" should be promoted to interested groups. To mitigate potential conflicts, efforts should be made to establish off-leash areas in advance of nearby residential development.	●	●	●
	60. Markham should continue to support the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program and its municipal outdoor ice rinks, including the artificial rink proposed for the Civic Centre.	●	●	●
Culture Infrastructure	61. As part of the development of Markham's Cultural Plan (see also recommendation 176), examine the need for major facilities, such a large venue with seating capacity in the range of 1,500 to 6,000 seats.	●		
	62. Examine the potential of existing community centres, libraries, and heritage buildings for their potential to accommodate flexible spaces for arts and cultural activities, events and cultural presentations (to the greatest degree possible).	●	●	●
	63. Provide space in new community centres suitable for arts and cultural programming and local activities, including the major community centre proposed for Southeast Markham (Area D).	●	●	●
	64. Ensure that the design and/or retrofitting of large indoor spaces gives strong consideration to the accommodation of events and cultural presentations.	●	●	●
	65. Working with the community, identify opportunities to utilize an existing multi-use space that can serve as youth-friendly venue for live music.	●	●	
	66. To address growing demand and alleviate pressure on existing parks, establish appropriate venues for large outdoor gatherings, community festivals, and special events; consideration should be given to the Southeast Community Centre Park Site and Rouge Park as potential sites.	●	●	
	67. Continue to implement the Markham Museum Master Plan.	●	●	●
	68. Promote the public display of local art by designating a municipal building (or buildings) suitable for their display.	●	●	●



Goal 1: Strategic and Sustainable Investment in Infrastructure

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 1	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Cultural Infrastructure (continued)	69. Over time, seek opportunities to accommodate local cultural performances, public art, and areas for quiet reflection in selected parks.	●	●	●
Library Facilities	70. The Markham Public Library should move toward the desired provision target of 0.6 square feet per capita through the implementation of the following capital projects (in order of timing):			
	a. Continue with plans to build the East Markham Library Branch (25,000 ft ²) in 2011.	●		
	b. Continue with plans to expand the Milliken Mills Library Branch (an additional 13,000 ft ²) in 2012.	●		
	c. Develop an additional library branch to serve Southeast Markham (Area D) by 2014 (approximately 20,000 ft ²). This is currently the most under-served and high needs area in Markham due to its lack of library space and socio-demographic profile (the area has a considerable number of multiple-family households, immigrants, and first generation Canadians; each of these factors are indicators of high demand for library and related services). The location of this community centre and library facility requires further evaluation.	●	●	
	d. Establish a library branch (approximately 20,000 ft ²) to serve the growing Markham Centre community (Area A) in or around 2019. This branch may form part of a mixed-use development; partnership and non-traditional development approaches should be considered.		●	
	e. Begin planning for the development of a library branch (approximately 15,000 ft ²) to serve the growing Langstaff community (Area C) in or around 2023. This branch may form part of a mixed-use development; partnership and non-traditional development approaches should be considered.			●
	f. Well in advance of construction, acquire land for the development of a library branch (approximately 30,000 ft ²) to serve the growing North Central area of Markham (generally serving Area B, east of McCowan Road in the vicinity of Major Mackenzie Drive); a branch will be required in this area between 2026 and 2031. This branch may be combined with the development of a municipal community centre.			●



Goal 2: Align Leisure Services with the Growth Management Strategy

Goal 2: Align Leisure Services with the Growth Management Strategy

To align leisure services with Markham's Growth Management Strategy (to 2031) by planning for intensification through proactive strategies for service delivery and facility and open space provision.

For decades, Markham's development has been typical of GTA communities – low-density, automobile-dependent – with community infrastructure aligning with the assumption of car-based access and one-stop shopping for parks, recreation, culture, and library services. This planning philosophy [still exists, but](#) new urbanist planning principles [are also being introduced in areas such as](#) Cornell and Markham Centre. With several areas of intensification identified by *Places to Grow*, [parts of Markham's urban form are expected to change](#).

With its population [now exceeding](#) 300,000, Markham is entering a new phase as a community. Markham is beginning to look like a different place, with its streetscapes in transition toward becoming a more urbanized community. This new phase requires a complex interwoven planning of all the elements that will position Markham as the first choice for the kind of industries that Markham's economic strategy is intended to attract.

Traditional planning assumptions and service standards need to be revised to meet the complex needs that will come with intensification. [Although low density residential development will continue,](#) future residents in [intensified areas \(such as](#)

Markham Centre, Langstaff, [etc.](#)) will inhabit communities that look and feel very different to most of Markham today; these areas will be defined by their dense populations, high-rise buildings, mix of land uses, access to transit, pedestrian linkages, and vibrant streetlife.

The [gradual introduction of](#) intensification [generates](#) several factors for consideration. The physical size of housing units will shrink in intensified areas and will change the nature of customer demand for community infrastructure and space. Alternative community spaces will be required to compensate for space shortfalls in smaller housing units. For example, libraries will also be used for more than simply borrowing materials; they will be relied upon to provide study rooms, children's play space, and an alternative social destination to escape crowded and noisy homes. Going forward, Markham needs to address the reality that intensification increases the need for services due to larger populations in relatively small areas who need public services. Existing community infrastructure within adjacent low density areas cannot accommodate the thousands of new residents moving into high density areas.



Goal 2: Align Leisure Services with the Growth Management Strategy

Public feedback indicates there is a growing appetite for a more localized model for service delivery, and reinforces the need for a neighbourhood-based approach, enabling residents to access parks, recreation, culture, and library services without having to drive. To achieve this, alternative facility provision approaches will be required in higher density areas, such as condominium ownership within residential and/or office complexes.

This Master Plan strives to project and define what leisure services need to look and operate like in 2020 and beyond, to

ensure quality of life and community success for that different, more urban kind of place, and to enable Markham to provide a lifestyle that is competitive with the leisure services offered by other communities in the GTA. By defining the essential service and policy elements of a successful community in the 21st century, the ILMP's recommendations will help Markham respond to the new challenges of ensuring quality of life and community excellence in a very different context.

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 2	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Parks and Recreation Services	71. Work to develop and create appropriate public spaces and ensure provision for a range of community uses in intensified areas, including consideration of both conventional and non-conventional solutions and partnerships .	●	●	●
	72. Adjust service delivery models to ensure that services and facilities are widely accessible in intensified areas.		●	●
	73. Give proper consideration to the parkland needs of future residents in areas of residential intensification by making the establishment and enhancement of parkland and trails a priority. For large developments, a blend of parkland and cash-in-lieu of parkland will likely be required in order to establish a suitably-sized park parcel for the development and to fund park improvements and/or off-site park acquisition.	●	●	●
Culture Services	74. In intensifying communities, provide spaces that contribute to building social capital and placemaking as key components of building the cultural sector and public realm by developing creative partnerships with the private sector and developing communities.		●	●
Library Services	75. Within higher density areas, library spaces should be considered to compensate for the more compact living style that will be experienced by residents in high rises.		●	●



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

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

To align leisure services with the Markham 2020 Vision and Economic Strategy, reinforcing Markham's position as one of Canada's leading communities.

Markham has recognized that the global economy is moving into a new era, the creative and knowledge-based economy, where prosperity is driven by innovation and creativity. During the recent economic crisis, it has become apparent that we are in the midst of a global economic transformation, that the true engines of economic growth are related to creativity and innovation, and that the economy is shifting away from manufacturing and towards idea-driven and creative industries. The Town of Markham's Economic Strategy is aligned with this transformation.

Markham has positioned itself as a leader in the new global economy. Through its economic strategy, "*Markham 2020*", Markham has a blueprint that will shape its future as one of Canada's leading communities in the knowledge-based economy, a place where innovation, technology and cultural diversity help fuel successful enterprises and create a high quality of life. Specifically, *Markham 2020* envisages a Markham that can successfully attract and retain investment from the creative and knowledge-based sectors.

This Master Plan provides recommendations that will shape the role that leisure services can play in helping to make Markham an attractive location for those economic sectors, and to the people – the "talent" – who operate and work in them. In the global creative economy, the creative talent has many options for where they will choose to locate. Creative businesses will want to locate in places where their employees (the creative talent) want to live. To achieve the *Markham 2020* vision, Markham needs to be a place that has created the community infrastructure – the parks, the recreational facilities, the cultural amenities and the library services – that combine to achieve quality of place with high design standards in the public and private realms that attract talented workers and retain long-term residents. Markham needs to be a place where the creative talent will choose to live, work, play, and contribute to the future community's economic prosperity.



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

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 3	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	76. Develop public and private partnerships that strengthen and model social cohesion, including those that align with knowledge-based institutions and draw on the expertise of post-secondary institutions from across the globe.	●	●	●
	77. Ensure that the development of public spaces remains a priority to create a welcoming and beautiful community.	●	●	●
Parks Services	78. Develop active greenspaces to support active lifestyles.	●	●	●
	79. Develop passive greenspaces accessible to employment areas to enable residents and employees to reflect and rejuvenate.	●	●	●
Recreation Services	80. Provide Markham workplaces with opportunities for employee wellness and programs and to promote physical activity.	●	●	●
	81. Create the social and physical infrastructure to attract and retain business and industry.	●	●	●
Culture Services	82. Develop the creative sector capacity and entrepreneurship through cooperative programs with Economic Development.	●	●	●
	83. Develop cultural mapping to better understand opportunities for greater synergies.	●		
	84. Actively participate in research in order to increase intellectual capital and knowledge.	●	●	●
Library Services	85. Design library spaces, services and programs to nurture learning and the human imagination, thereby supporting community prosperity in the creative and knowledge-based economy.	●	●	●
	86. Provide community places and “third place” destinations that enhance a high quality of life for all residents.	●	●	●
	87. Provide collections, services and programs that enhance quality of life, and help ensure that local creative culture flourishes and thrives.	●	●	●
	88. Provide welcoming civic gathering places for all residents, fostering a sense of community and belonging.	●	●	●
	89. Seek greater coordination with the Markham Small Business Resource Centre and knowledge-based institutions to enhance the library’s role in providing business and employment support.	●	●	●



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

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

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

Based on a survey of residents across the province, 89% agree that recreation programs, parks and facilities make it easier to socialize and feel included.³ Yet, like many places, Markham is experiencing the *Bowling Alone* trend; a decline in social capital (the glue that holds society together) such as service club participation. This trend is exacerbated by rapid growth and a tendency for newcomers to be more connected to family and friends, at least initially. Parks, recreation, culture and library services can be part of the solution to the *Bowling Alone* social issue, and a means of restoring social capital, raising the community, and creating a more promising future for Markham and all who live and work here.

Effective community engagement – a key area of focus of this Master Plan – involves Markham and community groups individually or collectively identifying issues and goals and then making a joint commitment to produce positive and sustainable solutions that best meet local needs. Successful community building discovers and mobilizes assets already in the community by developing appropriate partnerships to expand

and diversify the channels for delivery of parks, recreation, culture, and library services. Most importantly, this process aims to increase community awareness, strengthen neighbourhoods, and encourage residents to take responsibility in enhancing community life.

Over the years, Markham has developed strong relationships with user groups, community organizations, and agencies. Markham has recognized the importance of community engagement and works in partnership with many groups to build their capacity before offering services and programs directly. The nature of Markham's relationships with community groups differ widely as they are based on the needs and competencies of those involved.

The Master Plan is informed by the critical role that leisure services play in building social capital, strengthening local capacity, and advancing community goals. Utilizing local assets and fostering partnerships are vital parts of the tool box when seeking to strengthen neighbourhoods and engage communities.

³ Use of Benefits of Local Government Recreation and Parks Service: An Ontario Perspective. Parks and Recreation Ontario. 2009.



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

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 4	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	90. Develop a Place-based Community Building Framework that would allow and plan for a Town-wide approach to strengthening neighbourhoods and the public realm.	●	●	
	91. Strengthen community participation and engagement in neighbourhood planning and in the delivery of programs and services.	●	●	●
	92. Develop a Partnership Policy that addresses the need for and a common approach to partnership attraction, relationship management, retention and evaluation.		●	
	93. Develop a Community Volunteer Management Program with linkage to the Community Engagement Framework.		●	
	94. Build on recent successes and adopt a standardized system through which the Departments can collaboratively plan and execute a seamless delivery system (parks, recreation, culture and libraries). This would involve mapping socio and economic conditions, identifying geographical areas where services could positively impact community issues, mapping local assets (agencies, resources, and expertise), working collectively on problem solving, and developing solutions and evaluation criteria.		●	
	95. Consider a pilot whereby a neighbourhood is targeted to embrace a Place-Based approach and grow the concept once the pilot has been evaluated and changes made based on new learning. It is suggested that the pilot take place where there are pressing and evident community issues.		●	
	96. Evaluate the staffing mix to support a Place-Based approach and provide expertise on policy and resource development, training and facilitating the model.		●	
	97. Review the Commission's current approach to partnership development and ongoing agreements with community and private partners with a view to a standardized approach, better supporting existing partners and expanding the partnership base in the delivery of services.		●	
	98. Develop a grants policy and program that provides start-up funding to assist in initiating innovative and sustainable neighbourhood and place -based programs and initiatives, including increased advertising of existing programs and grant opportunities.	●	●	



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

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 4	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery (continued)	<p>99. Develop a Place-based Community Building Framework, including policy, to embrace the principles and incorporate the community / neighbourhood-based model in certain areas of the program and service delivery system. Once fully implemented, this could result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o activities that are grounded in a set a values articulating the capacity of people working together for mutual goals; o a greater sense of place and social cohesion; o the community's participation in determining required services, service goals, service delivery expectations and appropriate responses; o new types of partnerships and alliances with community organizations that have interests in specific service areas; o a sense of empowerment by community partners through providing meaningful contributions to the leisure delivery system; and o sustainability, in that solutions to community issues rely on what resources already exist in the neighbourhood. 	●	●	
	<p>100. Assign the responsibility of trend tracking and data analysis to a designated individual or team that would produce information and advice to guide proactive planning. The trend analysis would focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o global, industry wide issues that will inform departmental planning; o provincial information that would be helpful in establishing operational standards and procedures, such as quality assurance and compliance with legislative requirements; and o community and neighbourhood requirements that should be considered when developing the program and service inventories that are specific to certain jurisdictions of Markham or that are unique to certain facilities and parks. 	●		



Goal 5: Placemaking

Goal 5: Placemaking

To design public spaces that actively engage communities, invest in the public realm, and create a sense of place and belonging for Markham residents and neighbourhoods.

Markham's community planning is increasingly informed by the principles of placemaking – creating a strong sense of place for Markham and its neighbourhoods through good urban design, investing in the public realm, and active engagement with communities.

Related to their role in developing social capital, parks, recreation, culture and library services are critical placemaking agencies, vital to a community's infrastructure and its future success. Leisure infrastructure is what makes a community "work" – it encourages active participation and social interaction, it builds community cohesion, and it welcomes newcomers by enabling their participation in the local community. Public buildings and spaces make up the fabric of

community "place" and can be catalysts for place-based economic development. They tend to be people-attractors that create life and vitality and, in turn, help to develop stronger, more resilient communities that contribute to community safety and quality of life. Investment in libraries and cultural districts, for example, has jumpstarted community redevelopment and revitalization in many North American cities.

Markham understands the positive impact that placemaking can have and is beginning to integrate its principles into its planning efforts. Opportunities to create more walkable communities, bolster the public realm, encourage public art, promote culturally-sensitive designs, and animate outdoor spaces must be sought out and capitalized upon.

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 5	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	101. Establish a Public Realm Policy and Guidelines.	●		
	102. Implement the Town of Markham's Public Art Policy in order to promote the development and funding of public art for public spaces. This policy should complement and be aligned with the Public Realm Policy. The public art implementation plan will be presented to Council in 2010.	●		



Goal 6: Inclusion, Access and Equity

Goal 6: Inclusion, Access and Equity

To ensure full and equitable access to leisure services for all Markham residents.

A key objective of the ILMP is to identify demographic trends and ensure that different approaches are taken to understand and include the needs of a changing population.

Nearly 3 out of every 5 Markham residents were born outside Canada. Markham is proud of its diverse heritage and diversity is one of its corporate priorities. Markham has long recognized the changing demographics of the community and continues to be proactive in including residents in civic engagement, employment, and program and service opportunities. Diversity is seen as a clear strategic advantage in that differing approaches and opinions can only enrich the delivery of services to all residents.

16% of Markham's residents are considered to be from low income households (i.e., they live at or below the lower income cut off), which is the highest percentage across York Region. People in low income households do not typically have the time or means (financial, transportation) to participate in recreational and cultural activities and, therefore, they do not receive the extraordinary benefits that these opportunities offer. Specific approaches must be taken to reduce participation barriers for low income residents, including effective subsidy programs, a wide range of no cost / low cost programs, leadership training, and child-minding services.

It is estimated that 1.9 million Canadians have a disability; if this ratio were to translate to Markham, it would represent just fewer than 42,000 residents (16% of the population). With the aging population, it is anticipated that this percentage could increase to 20%. Markham must continue to ensure that it is compliant with legislative accessibility requirements and work with like-minded organizations in order to increase participation by people of all abilities.





Goal 6: Inclusion, Access and Equity

Markham employs many promising practices to serve all residents and especially to include under-represented populations. [For example:](#)

- [Markham's Advisory Committee on Accessibility assists Council in improving opportunities for persons with disabilities by promoting the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act; this includes the reduction and/or elimination of barriers regarding the accessibility to, and enjoyment of, facilities and services by all residents of the Town of Markham.](#)
- Markham has had a Race Relations Committee since 1985 and, since that time, significant progress has been made with governance, proactive staffing processes, translation services, and inclusion in programs.

- Markham Public Libraries are uniquely well positioned as front-facing (and free) supports to social inclusion and they are often used as a key marketing and engagement vehicle.
- The implementation of the Town of Markham's Diversity Action Plan – which provides overarching principles to service delivery and employment – will go a long way in measuring Markham's continued effectiveness in including all of its residents in civic life. [The Action Plan will also support Markham's commitment to the UNESCO's Coalition of Municipalities against racism.](#)

Equitable service delivery and engagement that reduces barriers to participation for all is a necessity. Particular focus is required for the term of this Master Plan to continue to facilitate leisure opportunities for under-represented groups, including persons of low income, culturally diverse residents, seniors, persons with disabilities, and youth.

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 6	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	103. Continue to place high priority on the subsidy program to reduce financial barriers to participation, include addressing barriers for transportation and equipment.	●	●	●
	104. Refine the Access and Financial Assistance Policy and Outreach Strategy to eliminate barriers and strive to ensure inclusiveness in all parks, recreation, culture, and library services and programs.	●		
	105. Include a statement in municipal publications (e.g., 'Markham Life') that the Recreation Services and Culture Departments and the Markham Public Library are founded on the principles of inclusion .	●		
	106. Develop a policy and staff training to ensure that municipal reports, publications, and marketing of key inclusion messages, make use of guidelines and methods as promoted by the Usability Professionals' Association (www.upassoc.org) as they relate to usability and plain language.	●		



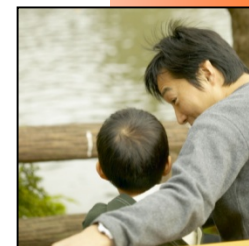
Goal 6: Inclusion, Access and Equity

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 6	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery (continued)	107. Engage in creative and a broad range of outreach efforts to deliver services to diverse groups (e.g., pilot programs) and engage a representative range of residents in the development of new and the review of existing programs and services.	●	●	●
	108. Ensure that staff are trained and aware of the supports available to engage and provide outreach to diverse communities (signers, translators, local champions etc.).	●	●	●
	109. Employ the use of Outreach Workers to promote awareness of the Town Markham's programs and services, form strong relationships, better understand leisure needs, co-develop needed programs and services, and work in partnership with organizations and institutions that support access, equity and inclusion.	●	●	●
	110. Work with community groups and stakeholders to expand their capacity to include all residents regardless of their backgrounds.	●	●	●
	111. Make it a policy and articulate the resources required to provide needed marketing, outreach, translation, signing and child-minding at community meetings in order to fully engage the community (where appropriate).	●	●	●
	112. Develop a policy that seeks to ensure that all advisory and project-related committees that support the work of the parks, recreation, culture and libraries represent the community they serve and include persons with disabilities, residents of low income, various age groups, a balance of male/female representation and cultural diversity (at a minimum).	●		
	113. Continue to provide a training program for all staff to gain the skills and competencies needed to enhance overall customer service and fully engage diverse populations. Expand this training to include staff, community groups and volunteer representatives from all departments involved in recreation, parks, culture and libraries.	●	●	●
	114. Execute an audit in parks, recreation, culture, and library facilities on a regular basis and in a systematic fashion to determine how parks and facility use is changing and how best to service the changing needs.	●	●	●
	115. Post the listing of organizations that provide support to diverse groups, the goals of the organization and contact information in 'Markham Life', other appropriate publications, and on the Town of Markham website.	●	●	●



Goal 6: Inclusion, Access and Equity

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 6	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery (continued)	116. Develop a public education and awareness campaign in Aquatics surrounding the need for all families to learn to swim including drowning and water incident prevention education. Targeted programs, presentations and assistance to families to access pools and swimming lessons should also accompany the public education plan.	●		
	117. Consider the introduction of family programming (e.g., learn to swim; learn to skate) whereby families are encouraged to learn new skills together.		●	●
	118. Continue to foster the development of existing, new and emerging sport, cultural, recreational, and learning activities that may be popular with diverse populations and ensure that these opportunities are available to all Markham residents.	●	●	●
	119. Continue to develop opportunities for all residents to learn introductory skills in sport, leisure, recreational and cultural opportunities that reflect the needs of a diverse community and encourage understanding and belonging.	●	●	●
	120. Develop a public education, training and awareness campaign surrounding the need for all families to learn to ride a bicycle safely, including cyclist and pedestrian incident prevention education. Targeted programs, presentations, and assistance to families to access Markham's bicycle network and safe cycling lessons should also accompany the public education plan.	●		
	121. Develop a Pricing Strategy that will include a balance of no cost/low cost programs and services that are accessible to all residents.	●	●	●
	122. Develop broad-based strategies to attract youth to programs and sports, including free youth leadership training opportunities for at-risk youth.	●	●	●
	123. Develop simple but meaningful performance measures and social inclusion indicators with respect to including diverse groups and report out annually to Council, respective groups and stakeholders.		●	●
	124. Develop parks and facility design criteria that would support the needs of Markham's diverse and changing population (e.g., blinds in pools, picnic shelters in parks, shade, benches and access to water on trails and pathways, shelter storage and water access for community gardens, etc).	●		



Goal 7: Maintain an Environmental and Sustainable Focus

Goal 7: Maintain an Environmental and Sustainable Focus

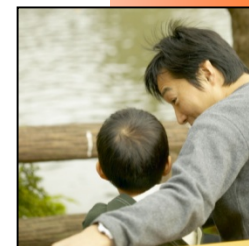
To align leisure services with Markham's environmental and sustainability strategies, focussing on sound environmental practices and the health and wellbeing of future generations.

The Town of Markham and its partners have implemented many significant environmentally-friendly policies, practices, and initiatives over the last three decades, ranging from tree plantings to energy retrofit programs to the promotion of active transportation options. Parks also make an important contribution to the quality of the environment. The effort to protect and enhance the natural environment in Markham demonstrates a proactive approach and many leading practices not seen as comprehensively in other communities.

Parks, recreation, culture and libraries play a large role in supporting the planning and implementation of Markham's Community Sustainability Plan (CSP), which is currently being developed. This Plan centres on three themes – social and

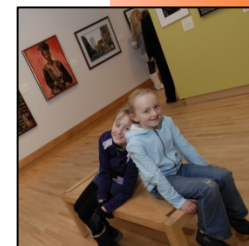
cultural well-being, economic vitality, and environmental health – and will identify where gaps exist and additional work is needed. The CSP should not be considered only for its positive environmental message, but rather as a holistic plan that will include broad high level goals, targets, and indicators. Specific targets for parks, recreation, culture and libraries should be identified, along with the resources required to achieve them over time. The CSP (presently in draft form) emphasizes, among other things, the importance of providing leisure facilities at the neighbourhood level, the establishment of community gardens to promote local food, and environmental sustainability as a primary element of design; all of these directions are consistent with the goals of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan.





Goal 7: Maintain an Environmental and Sustainable Focus

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 7	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	125. Ensure that Community Services continues to support efforts to protect and preserve clean air, land and water and encompasses parks naturalization, beautification, urban forestry targets, reduction of waste in facilities and parks, education and awareness through the facilities, programs and services, reduction of gas emissions through the use of trails for active transportation, green fleet and the engagement of children and youth in protecting and enhancing the environment.	●	●	●
	126. Upon the completion of Markham's Community Sustainability Plan, Community Services should host round tables with like-minded service providers to discuss playing a part in the implementation of prioritized actions.	●		
	127. Establish programs that support litterless lunches in camps, litterless parks sites, zero waste , and increase recycling and environmentally friendly practices in facilities.	●	●	
	128. Include more interpretive signage along trails and in parks and facilities that speak to environmental efforts and the positive results of being environmental stewards.	●	●	●
	129. Continue to place priority on energy efficiencies in parks and in facilities.	●	●	●
	130. Continue to engage and recognize environmental groups and volunteers that support the stewardship efforts.	●	●	●
	131. Promote and develop the production of locally grown food and the provision of healthy food options in publicly sponsored spaces. In addition, articulate the people infrastructure (staff, volunteers and local committees) and resources to sustain local food production and distribution.	●	●	●
	132. Ensure that cultural heritage resources that cannot be retained are advertised for relocation or salvage opportunities prior to demolition to help divert materials from landfill sites.	●	●	●
	133. Create Sustainable Design Standards for consideration in new and redeveloped facilities and parks.	●		



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

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

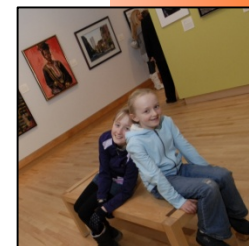
To work together in addressing community issues through greater collaboration within and between Markham's departments and stakeholders.

In order to deliver on parks, recreation, cultural, and library needs in the Town of Markham, all departments must be focused to serve and engage a similar base of residents, neighbourhoods, community groups, and businesses. Coordinated efforts to respond to common issues and emerging trends are beginning to be made. Communication and harmonized planning in and amongst departmental staff (often in concert with community partners) allows services to be delivered consistently and equitably through an agreement on priorities.

Nevertheless, there is evidence of duplication in terms of program offerings and staff efforts. A more cohesive and integrated model of service delivery is needed within Markham. Implementation of an Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) model is recommended, whereby staff work as a collective to address common issues and seek to reduce duplication of efforts. This notion rests on the adage that a collection of varied levels of expertise can address issues using multi-layered approaches and achieve greater success than they could working individually on similar issues. Staff would still have the functional responsibility of managing their respective departments and to deliver on service mandates.



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



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

Not unlike the development of this cross-Commission Integrated Leisure Master Plan, ISD promotes resource maximization, creative interaction, and innovative approaches in addressing the multi-dimensional needs of the community. As such, Integrated Service Delivery is not a wholesale change for Markham.

We believe that the application of an ISD model to many of the service priorities stated in this Plan will help to strengthen and enhance Markham's work by bringing interested and skilled stakeholders to the table, finding common ground, becoming focused on the desired outcomes, and developing creative solutions.

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 8	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	134. Develop an Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) approach including the Community Services departments and other stakeholders involved in recreation, parks, cultural, and library services delivery. The ISD approach is intended to use existing expertise to think collectively about priorities, develop solutions together, avoid duplication, and maximize existing resources. When developed, the Community Engagement Framework will guide the services delivered through an ISD approach.	•		
	135. Provide needed training and ongoing support to the appropriate levels of staff on the introduction, principles and mechanisms of the Integrated Service Delivery approach.	•	•	
	136. Pilot one project using Integrated Service Delivery and the Community Engagement framework. Based on community partnerships and outreach, refine the approach based on an evaluation.	•	•	
	137. In implementing the Integrated Service Delivery approach, work with any organizations that can meet Markham's inclusive philosophy and advance the quality of life for Markham residents (e.g., corporations, places of worship, social service agencies, community organizations, sports groups, etc.), in order to leverage knowledge and resources that can offset costs or supplement the needs of Markham.	•	•	•



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

To heighten organizational capacity and inspire innovation in leisure service delivery.

The Master Plan has found that Markham's facilities, programs, and services are responsive to community needs, that there is a balance between opportunities for both individual and community wellness, and that the public is generally satisfied with the services that are provided. Staff has developed meaningful and well-utilized services for residents and visitors. This proactive approach has positively positioned parks, recreation, culture, and library services in Markham.

Service excellence and continuous improvement are areas of emphasis for most municipalities and government agencies in Canada, and Markham is certainly no different. Local government is viewed as the frontline service provider with a mandate to ensure that the respective governance and administrative models are visionary, forward thinking, transparent, responsive to community needs, and make the difference in addressing community issues. Town of Markham departments must be nimble and respond not only to the ongoing strategic and operational requirements of their respective mandates, but be able to allocate limited resources to address pressing and emerging social issues.

Leisure facilities, parks, programs, and services touch a large percentage of the Markham population and the opportunity to influence lifestyles and choices in the community is significant. Staff and volunteers need a supportive and positive environment in order to respond to the key leading edge initiatives and the changing community needs in Markham. The climate for innovation and leadership must be nurtured and the philosophy of continuous improvement embraced. This requires meaningful dialogue, training, exposure to excellent practices in other jurisdictions, permission to take risks, and recognition.

As part of this ILMP, the practices, policies, and processes of Markham's Parks, Recreation and Culture Departments were reviewed in order to identify strengths and gaps that need to be addressed for the departments to continue functioning at a high level. Several recommendations fell out of this review, including articulating service delivery and staffing standards, enhancing allocation policies for public spaces, and implementing performance metrics to measure success. In embracing a continuous improvement philosophy, it is anticipated that the departments will strive to address the recommendations that have greater priority first and build this work into annual work plans over time.



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
General Service Delivery	138. Review commission-wide and departmental policies and procedures to ensure their relevancy and alignment with corporate priorities, as well as their application to current community and operational requirements.	●	●	●
	139. Develop a centralized audit process that articulates the legislative requirements of all of the departments in Community Services and test compliance on an annual basis, at a minimum.	●	●	●
	140. Maximize the synergies and successes within parks, recreation, culture and library departments through joint planning, integrated delivery where possible, communications and the sharing of expertise and resources.	●	●	●
	141. Develop opportunities to work more closely with post-secondary institutions to employ innovative research initiatives relative to Markham's leisure needs.		●	
	142. Articulate service delivery and staffing standards for all programs and services including customer service standards and post on the website to ensure transparency in the delivery of services.		●	
	143. Review the guiding principles, policies and procedures surrounding the allocation of public spaces, parks and facilities (including, but not limited to greenspaces, sports fields, meeting/activity rooms and gymnasiums) to ensure relevancy to current needs.	●		
	144. Create a set of achievable service delivery targets and meaningful performance measures that identify resourcing inputs, service outputs, efficiencies and effectiveness of the programs and services provided through the Community & Fire Services Commission. Ensure that these measures are tied to the strategic priorities of the corporation and department and those results are communicated annually to Council, the public and stakeholders.	●		
	145. Develop and annually update a relevant and contemporary communications and social marketing plan for the Community & Fire Services Commission that addresses key messages, the respective audience, appropriate communications vehicles and the number of communications impressions. The plan should also look at cross promotion of key messages and information sharing opportunities with community groups and partner's communication vehicles.	●		
	146. Facilitate leadership training for all staff involved with recreation, parks, culture and libraries and develop an annual Leadership Forum that sets about to share excellent and promising practices and inspire innovation surrounding the Town of Markham's Ten Key Leadership Actions.	●	●	●



Goal 9a: Recreation and Parks Programming & Service Priorities

To enhance recreation and parks services through the provision of inclusive and accessible lifelong active living opportunities, with specific focus on physical activity and services for youth and older adults.

Much has already been said in this Master Plan about the need for inclusive and accessible leisure services. Goal 9a is specific to recreation and parks services and the emphasis that needs to be placed on youth, older adults, and improving physical activity levels.

Physical Inactivity

Canada is facing a national health care crisis caused by a combination of physical inactivity, increased time in front of the television, computer screens and video games, and poor eating decisions within most populations across the country. The combined effect of these unhealthy lifestyle choices has resulted in a dramatic rise in the number of obese and inactive Canadians. The research is staggering:

- 47% of those living in York Region (ages 12 and over) are not physically active enough to achieve optimal health benefits, while 46% of adults are overweight or obese.⁴
- Despite widespread knowledge about the consequences of unhealthy weights, the number of overweight and obese people has tripled and even quadrupled in some age groups between 1981 and 2009.⁵
- Fitness levels of young adults decreased significantly between 1981 and 2009. In 1981, 5% of men and 6% of women between the ages of 20 and 39 were considered at

high risk of health problems. In 2009, 21% of men and 31% of women are considered at risk.⁶

- The problems are not just with adults. 87% of children and youth are not meeting Canada's physical activity guidelines⁷ and 26% of children are overweight or obese.⁸ There is an increasing body of evidence that suggests that, for the first time in history, the current younger generation will not have the longevity or quality of life enjoyed by their parents.
- Regular physical activity and sport participation are simple and relatively inexpensive antidotes to a number of chronic health conditions including obesity, Type 2 diabetes, and certain forms of cancer. Physical inactivity costs Canadians \$5.3 billion annually in direct and indirect health care costs.⁹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ The Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. 2009.

⁸ Canadian Health Measures Survey. Statistics Canada. 2010.

⁹ The True Sport Report. 2008.

⁴ A Balanced Scorecard for York Region Public Health. 2007.

⁵ Canadian Health Measures Survey. Statistics Canada. 2010.



The benefits of leading an active lifestyle are many, not the least of which is the ability to dramatically slow one's physical decline and improve one's psychological wellbeing.

All levels of government are responding to this issue by developing strategies to increase awareness about opportunities for greater participation in regular physical activity, as well as to encourage individuals to make wise food choices. The notion of being physically active and maintaining healthy weights through proper diet has become mainstream.

With a mandate to promote and support healthy living behaviours, Markham has become part of the growing movement. The Town of Markham has taken on several major initiatives to increase physical activity levels in Markham residents and also offers a wide range of fitness and active living classes. Nevertheless, increased efforts and long-term collaborations with community partners are required. Initiatives should be focused on education and awareness, prevention, promoting existing opportunities, neighbourhood-based options, community engagement, and outcome measurement. Markham can make a meaningful difference in the lifestyle choices of the residents over time, but these interventions will take decades to make a lasting impact.

Youth

The research on the benefits of leisure opportunities for youth is conclusive and well known. Youth that are engaged in lifelong active living and wellness pursuits will increase their chances of having positive outcomes in health, education, and income security. Young people that participate in organized activities outside of school such as sports, music, the arts, or clubs tend to have higher self-esteem, interact better with friends, and perform somewhat better in school. Investing in youth will enable them to become engaged citizens, gaining better chances of becoming successful adults.

Understanding an issue is important, but doing something about it is critical. When updating its Youth Strategy, Markham should consider the following options for improving teen services:

- Low cost or no cost opportunities must be easily accessible as a lack of money is a key barrier to their participation in leisure activities, along with a lack of time and transportation. Children from the lowest income level are three times more likely to never have participated in organized activities and sports, compared to those in the highest income level.¹⁰ Markham has a fee subsidy process that assists youth in participating in the pursuit of choice, but supporting all youth to play will be the challenge.
- Many youth prefer unstructured opportunities where they can drop-in and participate in an activity of choice. Dedicated space for youth provides a safe and

¹⁰ The Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. 2009.



welcoming environment where youth can meet with others to socialize, play games and participate in various activities.

- Youth have varied interests. Not all youth are interested in sports. Efforts must be taken to engage youth in discussions about how they chose to use their spare time and what appeals to them. Empowering youth to be self-directed in deciding and organizing events and activities leaves a legacy of skilled youth leaders.
- It is also suggested that Markham continue to strengthen its approach to maintaining a “Youth Friendly Community” designation and promote its successes in engaging youth and continuing to address gaps.



Older Adults

Markham will experience a significant increase of older adult residents over the next two decades. The wave of aging baby boomers will place stress on services for older adults in Markham. All indications are showing that the “new older adult” (don’t call them ‘seniors’!) will continue to be more physically active and may look for more adventurous activities to stimulate their interests. This may lead to increased daytime use of pools, community centres, fitness centres, and other sport, recreation, cultural and library facilities.

Because most baby boomers are more financially prepared for retirement than previous generations, some municipalities are beginning to move away from program fee discounts for older adults, instead offering subsidies for those who have an inability to pay due to lower income levels.

The emerging generation of active older adults is not the only area where Markham will feel pressure. There is considerable segmentation among older adult and seniors age groups based on both age and ability. There will continue to be a substantial number of more traditional seniors that are interested in more passive activities and socialization. Dedicated seniors space and park amenities such as shade, water, and washrooms will be needed to accommodate use by these groups. The number of seniors with disabilities and related limitations is also on the rise. Leisure services have the opportunity to play a pivotal role in the health and wellness of older adults of all ages and abilities. Understanding and adapting to the changing needs of older adults will be the key to a successful service delivery model for older adults in the future.



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9a	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Youth Services	147. Refresh the Youth Strategy (i.e., 2010-2015) in concert with the other departments in the Community & Fire Services Commission to ensure that youth engagement, empowerment, and the resulting benefits to youth and the community continue to be a priority, including the provision of dedicated space .	●		
	148. Continue to meet the designation requirements of the “Youth Friendly Community” through the Play Works collective in order to promote successes in engaging youth and to address any gaps in the provision/enabling of youth services.	●	●	●
	149. Consider the use of Youth Outreach workers in engaging youth, promoting youth leadership and civic engagement, and developing relevant programs and services.	●		
	150. Inventory <u>all</u> opportunities available in Markham for youth and promote them utilizing current technology (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and local neighbourhood communications vehicles.	●		
	151. Ensure that policies regarding staff use of technology align with the communication preferences of youth.	●		
Older Adult Services	152. Refresh the Older Adults Plan to address the changing needs of residents 55 years of age and over and the anticipated increased demand due to the aging population and the resultant impacts on resources and service delivery, including programs delivered by others .	●		
	153. Develop inclusion strategies for Older Adult segments (e.g., Older Adults; Seniors; Old Age).	●		
	154. Through the Pricing Strategy, consider the gradual elimination of reduced rates for older adults in the 55 to 65 year age range. Offer financial assistance for those who cannot afford to participate in programs and services.	●	●	
Physical Inactivity	155. Continue to work with community partners (e.g., Public Health, Education, Libraries, Social Services, sports groups , etc.) and create a Physical Activity Plan (one vision; all partners play their part) that sets about to increase the level, duration and intensity of physical activity for residents and in Markham workplaces. Further, specific targets should be set that include awareness and increasing physical activity levels. Ensure the Physical Activity Plan emphasizes physical activity opportunities that are flexible and respond to residents’ preference for unscheduled drop-in activities.	●	●	●



Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9a	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Physical Inactivity (continued)	156. Denote all ‘active’ programs publicized in ‘Markham Life’ with a symbol to demonstrate that the active choice will assist in improving physical activity levels.	●	●	●
	157. Promote the benefits of being active in ‘Markham Life’. Introduce physical activity information and interactive tools on the Town of Markham’s web-site.	●	●	●



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership



Goal 9b: Continuous Improvement of Markham's Parks

To strive to enhance the parks and trail systems that connect communities and provide green spaces that are central to community life.

Public space is vital to community health and social development and parks and trails are two of the most visible and accessible elements of public space. Markham provides and maintains parkland to satisfy the broad range of active, passive, cultural, and natural heritage needs of the community.

Markham's parks system serves residents well and accommodates both active and passive uses, prompting families to be active through the trail system, on the tennis courts, on the playing fields, or just to relax and rejuvenate under a shady tree. Parks are critical community assets that facilitate social interaction, community cohesion, and allow neighbours to get to know each other. Markham has every right to be proud of its variety and quality of parks.

Markham is known for its innovation, quality services, leisure facilities, and parks system. One key to gaining a greater competitive edge in attracting new employees and residents is through Markham's parks system. Among other things, great parks have a 'wow factor' and are flexible and responsive to user trends and preferences.

Parks can essentially be seen as community centres without walls. The concept of 'living community centres' (i.e., a way of bringing parks to life – of animating them – by optimizing their use through special events and features such as community celebrations, markets, brick bake ovens, community gardens, concerts and performances, outdoor fitness classes, public art, etc.) is one that deserves consideration in Markham.

Markham already embraces the 'living community centre' concept through many of its outdoor offerings; however, a more strategic approach positioned around feature parks, parks features, and parks programming will meet the goal of strengthening neighbourhoods and providing local opportunities.

Markham's population characteristics are changing, which is leading to a shift in interests and park uses. Markham's uniqueness and diversity are creating a rise in non-traditional uses of its parks. The community has thus far been responsive to these changing interests, but more work needs to be done.

Ethno-cultural communities are frequent users of parks as they are an ideal location for social gatherings, picnics, and casual sport; many cultures view recreation and leisure as a family events. This growing diversity also creates the need for a wider range of activities (e.g., cricket, picnicking, tai chi, etc.) that can place considerable pressure on park infrastructure.

As Markham's population ages, more residents will be participating in less vigorous activities and will seek relaxing, flexible spaces for quiet reflection and an escape from urban life. Time-pressed individuals of all ages and families are also looking for parks that they can enjoy at their own convenience. As a result, greater emphasis will need to be placed on informal park spaces that can be used for unstructured activities. Accommodating local cultural performances, public art, and community gardens in selected parks are just a few ways Markham can achieve this concept, while also enhancing community and neighbourhood engagement.



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

As Markham grows, it will become increasingly difficult to secure larger tracts of land for community parks, parks that contain features such as multiple sports fields. The Town of Markham must continue to be proactive in its efforts to secure parkland to meet future community needs. The development of a municipal-wide Parkland Acquisition Strategy, along with a review of parks classification policies, will help Markham meet this objective.

Furthermore, the ILMP is supportive of the goals and objectives set out by Markham's Rouge Park Implementation Task Force, including those relating to infrastructure that would see Rouge Park becoming a destination for group picnicking and outdoor activities that are consistent with and sensitive to the Park's natural heritage and cultural landscape. Rouge Park presents an exciting opportunity for ecosystem protection, cultural and natural heritage education, and appropriate recreational enjoyment.

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9b	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Parks Services	158. Host a forum for stakeholders and staff in order to create interest on the development of great parks, create awareness, learn from other jurisdictions and inspire discussions on possibilities in Markham.	●		
	159. Develop a strategy to evaluate the use and effectiveness of existing parks (e.g., Milliken Mills Park, Milne Dam Conservation Park, etc.) in terms of appropriate amenities and use.		●	
	160. Seek the assistance of local clubs and shared leadership with residents and resident groups to increase the programming and 'animation' of parks.	●	●	●
	161. Work toward reinventing portions or entire parks or open/public spaces to create demonstration and feature parks (potentially one in each of the Markham's four study areas). Seek out alternate sources of revenue and partnerships to create, develop and sustain these feature parks.		●	●
	162. Articulate adequate maintenance and staffing standards through the Service Planning Project to support the parks inventory and test adherence to these standards annually.	●	●	●
	163. Test park user satisfaction and maintain an 85% satisfaction level at a minimum.	●	●	●
	164. Increase parks programming and stewardship through community engagement efforts (e.g., 'Adopt-a-Park' program, etc.) with a view to meet local needs, provide 'walk to' opportunities and move toward community-directed delivery at the neighbourhood-level over time.	●	●	●



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9b	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Parks Services (continued)	165. Complete a branding exercise for ‘Markham Parks’ and develop a visual identity and consistent parks signage that creates a stronger presence for the parks system.	●		
Parkland Classifications, Supplies, and Needs	166. Through the Official Plan Review and Update process, review the municipal parkland targets (Neighbourhood, Community and Town Parks) to address current circumstances (e.g., legislated dedication amounts, available funding, etc.) and community needs. These targets may be divided into appropriate parkland categories, as appropriate. The policy framework also needs to address Town policies, procedures and guidelines pertaining to highly urbanized parks in intensification areas.	●		
	167. Develop and adopt a Parks/ Green Space Classification Policy Document that creates a new and consistent parkland classification system that reflects the types of park assets that have been built historically and are anticipated to be built as Markham urbanizes. Classification categories should be driven by park use, purpose, setting and size. This new system should be used for classifying all parks, green space , and open spaces and will serve as a general guideline for future development options. The Document shall address the role of parkland ownership (e.g., Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Ontario Realty Corporation, etc.) and its management, including the use of Memorandum of Understandings to assure clarity.	●		
Parkland Acquisition	168. Develop a Parkland Acquisition Strategy as a framework to achieve the municipal-wide provision target, recognizing that this target may differ from area to area. This Strategy should assess anticipated parkland dedication amounts and consider alternative parkland acquisition mechanisms to mitigate potential shortfalls.	●		
	169. In conjunction with its Official Plan Review and Update process, conduct a review, update, and consolidation of the Town of Markham’s Parkland Dedication By-law to ensure that it is consistent with current directions.	●		
Non-Traditional Park Uses	170. Develop a Policy or Strategy for the provision/administration of community gardens, including land acquisition, governance, partnership evaluation, and site selection, among other areas to be determined.	●		
	171. Continue to include park amenities such as shade, water and washrooms to accommodate use by older populations when designing new and refurbishing existing parks, trails and green spaces.	●	●	●



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9b	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Non-Traditional Park Uses (continued)	172. Explore the concept of parks as ‘living community centres’. This may be achieved through the introduction of programming or improved ‘animation’ of parks to maximize their use. Activities might include (but not be limited to) movie nights, concerts, walking clubs, family pick-up games and activities, neighbourhood picnics, community gardens, brick bake ovens, markets and talent nights. Targeted capital improvements may also be required, such as amphitheatres, outdoor fitness/exercise features, seating and open lawn areas, etc.	●	●	●
Rouge Park	173. Continue to work on achieving the goals and objectives of the Rouge Park initiative, particularly through the creation of an implementation schedule for addressing the recommendations presented by the Implementation Task Force (Final Report, October 20, 2008). The final report should be referred to for a full list of recommendations; however, the key ones as they pertain to infrastructure within the scope of this Master Plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The RPITF recommends that the Rouge Park be requested to review potential locations for a large group picnic area, in the East Markham Rouge Park lands and that implementation be considered a priority (Recommendation #2.c.1 – revised October 20, 2009). ○ The RPITF recommends that in light of staff concerns regarding smaller picnic sites, the Rouge Park should carefully consider the location and number of these sites proposed. Consideration should be given to a celebration forest and an arboretum/horticultural garden area (Recommendation #2.c.2 – revised October 20, 2009). ○ The RPITF recommends that staff and the Alliance identify a location for an outdoor activity centre in Eastern Markham (Recommendation #2.e.1). ○ The RPITF recommends that staff and the Alliance identify a location for an outdoor cultural centre in Eastern Markham, for plays, music, nature lectures, and volunteer planting activity coordination (Recommendation #2.e.3). Additionally, integrate the Rouge Park as a key element of Markham’s park system and promote its benefits to local residents.	●	●	
	174. Explore opportunities for heritage interpretation of natural features, First Nations, and human settlement in Rouge Park.	●	●	●
	175. Work with the Rouge Park Task Force to implement the Heritage Appreciation and Visitor Experience (HAVE) Plan to further enhance and celebrate the heritage features of the park.	●	●	●



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

To strengthen Markham's position as a creative community by enhancing and promoting arts, culture and heritage opportunities.

Arts and culture are critical components of achieving a high quality of life standard, offering a wide range of benefits to individuals and communities. These opportunities contribute to lifelong learning and wellness – key ingredients to healthy and creative cities. Creative cities attract creative-minded people, while also turning communities into desirable destinations. Investment in the arts and cultural sector is seen as a fundamental and critical component of building successful and vibrant creative industries.

The aging population bodes well for cultural participation rates, particularly when it is combined with higher levels of disposable income, as is the case in Markham. The Town of Markham's recent and ongoing upgrades to its cultural facilities will likely attract new and repeat visitors of all ages; combined with a possible increase in older adult participation, this is likely to have a positive impact upon arts and cultural spending in Markham.

Markham's commitment to enhancing its cultural offerings is crucial to achieving resident buy-in to the important role culture plays in Markham's overall leisure strategy. An essential step to advancing local arts and cultural development is for municipal leadership to act as an advocate. The Town of Markham has recently made large strides in this area by establishing a municipal Culture Department, appointing its first Director of Culture, and beginning a cultural mapping project.

Supporting the arts and culture is a holistic endeavour. Not only do the fiscal supports need to be provided (i.e., through community economic development, grants, etc.), appropriate

policy and staffing supports are required for the creative industries to thrive. Through Markham's Official Plan update process, it will be important that the municipality examine ways to strengthen policies that further recognize the great importance of arts, culture, and heritage in local land use and community development.

Awareness of local arts and cultural opportunities must exist and be developed in a manner that reaches residents (and visitors); the absence of awareness or lack of information, as with recreation services, is a barrier to participation. During the community consultation program, awareness and communication were identified as top priorities for improvement in terms of arts and culture opportunities.

Tourism contributions are a major market that benefits community economic development objectives. In this regard, working with the sector to define the local arts and culture identity, in conjunction with developing a marketable cultural tourism message, will assist in nurturing the arts and cultural sector while addressing municipal economic objectives.

One of the key local identities that Markham has to offer is its festivals and special events that are highly valued by local residents and visitors alike. Markham has a great number of cultural groups that represent its ethnic diversity and many events are organized to celebrate this diversity. Successful festivals and special events are typically built on partnerships between the municipality, the community, and the private sector. The creation of a strategy specifically dealing with local



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

festivals and special events, as well as encouraging key stakeholders within this sector to consistently dialogue, will assist in better coordination and delivery of these events.

This Integrated Leisure Master Plan provides high-level direction for the arts and cultural sector. Building from this, Markham should develop a comprehensive Arts and Cultural Plan that will fully engage the arts and cultural community and provide detailed guidance for Markham's many arts and cultural services.

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9c	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Culture Services	176. Develop a Cultural Plan, “Building a Creative Markham”, by 2011 (see also recommendation 11). The Plan (which, once completed will form an addendum to the Integrated Leisure Master Plan) shall include the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an inventory of unused buildings, heritage properties (e.g., Stiver Mill) and public spaces that can potentially be used to build on the cultural infrastructure of Markham; a review of the need for a large venue with seating capacity in the range of 1,500 to 6,000 seats; and strategies for the provision of multi-purpose and multi-disciplinary cultural centres for activities such as arts and crafts, performances, and community exhibits. 	●		
	177. Continue to develop Markham's cultural venues as places of knowledge and entertainment in the sectors of expertise within the community.	●	●	●
	178. Continue to develop and build the cultural capacity and infrastructure in Markham to keep pace with growth and needs through strategies and collaboration.	●	●	●
	179. Contribute to placemaking efforts and building social capital through public art and development of public realm policies and strategies.	●	●	●
	180. Continue to work with Economic Development on Creative City strategies that reflect the excellence and quality cultural experiences in Markham.	●	●	●
	181. Align planning and service delivery with the neighbourhood-based approach and the development of creative hubs.		●	●



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9c	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Culture Services (continued)	182. Explore alternate revenue generation approaches for creating a funding stream for cultural infrastructure.	●	●	●
	183. Position and promote the Civic Centre and surrounding assets as a cultural centre for Markham Centre.		●	●
	184. Support the development of a Special Event Policy for the Town of Markham.	●		
Heritage	185. Seek opportunities for the re-use and renewal of heritage properties in Town of Markham ownership.	●	●	●
	186. Preserve the heritage attributes of heritage properties in Town of Markham ownership through regular maintenance and restoration.	●	●	●
	187. Continue to identify and create heritage conservation districts to protect and celebrate special heritage areas in the community.	●	●	●
	188. Continue to preserve and protect heritage properties within the Town of Markham through heritage financial assistance program such as grants, loans and rebates.	●	●	●
	189. Continue to use the “Markham Remembered” interpretive plaque program to celebrate and tell the stories of historical sites, people and events throughout the community.	●	●	●



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

To focus library services on lifelong learning, literacy skills, and inclusive community-building.

Library services are a very high priority for Markham residents of all ages and backgrounds and demand is growing. Satisfaction ratings for Markham’s libraries are exceptional, with the most common request being a desire for extended hours.

Public libraries are essential for maintaining a productive community and their value is most noticeable in economically challenging times. Libraries are quickly evolving beyond what is perceived as their “traditional” scope of being book repositories and the Markham Public Library is leading this change. Public libraries are ready, willing, and able community assets that play a significant role in the achievement of many broad social and economic objectives, including:

- Early childhood reading readiness for lifelong learning
- Empowering Canadians to participate in a civic society
- Exploiting technology as enabler of innovation and equity
- Promoting equity and inclusion
- Strengthening the knowledge based economy¹¹

The Markham Public Library is many things to many people. For some, it is a community focal point and gathering place. For others, it is a centre for lifelong learning. Students rely on the library as a support for their formal education. Many value the library for its easy access to digital information, technology, and the Internet. The business community uses it as a support for training and economic development. The list goes on.

The Markham Public Library is proactive in its approach to planning, focusing on its customers’ changing needs and expectations. Through its annual strategic workplan, it routinely implements a wide range of strategies and innovations designed to move the Library forward on its journey toward becoming “the place where Markham’s communities come together to imagine, learn, and grow.”

Markham Public Library is one of the busiest yet most efficient library systems in the GTA. This reflects the success of its efforts to manage staffing resources carefully and thoughtfully, while maintaining excellence in customer service. It is also a result of strategic investments in automation and self-service technologies. The Library’s cost-effective services provide Markham residents with excellent value for their money.

This Master Plan recommends building upon the Library’s current Strategic Plan and related initiatives by continuing to implement self-service options, merchandizing strategies, and the Virtual Branch concept. Enhancing the Library’s role in community engagement and placemaking are also common themes promoted throughout this ILMP.

¹¹ [Public Libraries in the Priorities of Canada](#). Wendy Newman. 2004.



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9d	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Library Services	190. Markham Public Library should continue to implement its balanced scorecard Strategic Plan, invest in key strategies and projects, improve the customer experience, and seek efficiencies throughout its operations.	●	●	●
	191. Align library service planning and delivery framework with the proposed neighbourhood-based approach.		●	●
	192. Ensure that library building programs in areas of residential intensification respond to needs for alternative community spaces for study (e.g., including partnerships), children's play spaces, and social activities.		●	●
	193. Support sustainability and prioritize lifelong learning – <u>"mental fitness"</u> – as objectives for library programs and services.	●	●	●
	194. Continue to develop the Library's placemaking role, with branches that foster a sense of community and stability, and offer an inclusive community gathering place.	●	●	●
	195. Continue to implement self-service technology to improve customer convenience, keep pace with growth in material flow, and find operational efficiencies.	●	●	●
	196. Continue to implement merchandising strategies (e.g., C3™) to provide customers with better access to library materials.	●	●	●
	197. Continue to develop the Virtual Branch concept, which provides 24 hour and 7 day per week access to virtual information resources. This strategy enables the Library to serve customers at home, school or work, and provides a customer service option that helps to relieve some of the pressure on physical infrastructure and staff resources.	●	●	●



Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

Goal 9e: A Vision for Sport Development

To support lifelong active involvement in sport and physical recreation through community initiatives that celebrate and enhance the development of Markham's athletes.

It is generally accepted that significant personal, community, and economic benefits can be derived from a vibrant sport and recreation delivery system. Sport and recreation is seen as playing an integral role in helping to advance the social capital within a community and achieve a municipality's vision when looking at its future. Sport and recreation is something individuals, families, and business look for when choosing their destination to live, work, and play.

Social benefits of active communities include reduced adverse behaviour(s) among youth, lower medical and social costs coupled with job opportunities in sport, recreation and support services and greater social cohesion and integration of people in our community. In response to these and other factors, Markham continues to work with sport groups and associations to collectively support long-term athlete development and encourage lifelong sport and recreation involvement for all our residents.

Collaboration at national, provincial, and local levels is a prerequisite for increasing the amount of daily physical activity and sport participation by Canadians. Volunteers, community organizations, the municipality, schools, and private service providers are all important contributors toward lifelong active living and sport. There is broad consensus that one of the key tools in achieving these important physical activity and sport goals will be through the efforts of "local champions" who will be both role models and advocates for the physical activity and sport cause. Markham is well along this road through the efforts





Goal 9: Service Excellence and Leadership

of the Markham Sport Council and will need to continue its efforts to ensure that all residents have no barriers to participation and that sport participation is a lifelong endeavour.

As mentioned earlier, there is a need for Markham and its partners to articulate their roles and strategies in order to respond to all stages of the sport development continuum (the continuum moves a person through the stages from participant to elite athlete and on to adopting an active lifestyle throughout one's life). The development of a Sport Vision and Strategy – a document that would identify key goals, initiatives, roles, and responsibilities relative to sustainable athlete and skill development in Markham – would also go a long way towards achieving Markham's goals in this area.

Another aspect to consider is sport tourism, which is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry. The scale of sporting events can vary dramatically, but most offer the potential to

forge and strengthen community partnerships, enhance Markham's profile, provide economic benefits, and introduce new opportunities locally. These aspects should be considered as part of the Sport Vision and Strategy.

Several other recommendations related to sport development are embedded throughout this Master Plan, including those related to leadership, partnerships, volunteerism, training, inclusion, community engagement, and capacity building. Most recommendations are not infrastructure-based, although strategies are in place to develop additional community-serving recreation facilities, as well as regional facilities such as the Pan Am Games aquatic centre and the proposed Canadian Sport Institute Ontario (CSIO) project. A full read of this Plan provides a more complete context within which Markham and the community provide significant support to the community sport and recreation sector.

Subject Area	Recommendations – Goal 9e	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
<u>Sport Development</u>	198. <u>In partnership with the Markham Sports Council and other stakeholders, develop a Sport Vision and Strategy to establish goals and initiatives aimed at enhancing athlete and skill development and to guide the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in community sport development.</u>	●		
	199. <u>Continue to develop and build the sport and recreation capacity and infrastructure in Markham to keep pace with growth and needs through strategies and collaboration with community-based sports groups.</u>	●	●	●
	200. <u>In concert with the Markham Sport Council, sport deliverers and support organizations, coordinate an annual forum to discuss the Sport for Life Model and its implications and application in Markham, with a view to creating one vision for sport development, sport for life principles and inclusiveness, and with each organization in the collective playing a contributing role to athlete development and lifelong sport involvement.</u>	●	●	●



Implementing the Plan

Overview

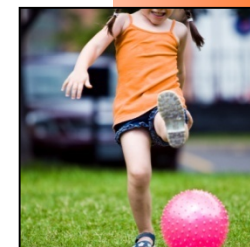
This section of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan is a long-range financial planning tool. It is intended to guide and inform Markham Council and staff in decision making in regards to the options for funding leisure services. As with any long-range financial planning document, the assumptions made in the analysis are the best estimates at the time the document was released. Various factors affecting the costing, funding, or timing of the program will require Markham to closely monitor the Plan's implementation.

The capital cost estimates, timing and quantum of infrastructure identified in this Integrated Leisure Master Plan have been examined as part of the exercise to analyze the fiscal impact of the implementation of the Plan to the Town of Markham. This includes infrastructure related to parks, recreation, and libraries. Cultural facilities are given consideration through the implementation of the Markham Museum Master Plan, as well as multi-use components within the areas captured by parks, recreation centres, and libraries.

Historically, the Town of Markham's funding of the capital program was heavily reliant on development charge revenues. The analysis undertaken herein is based on Markham's current development charge rates, which were determined by Hemson Consulting in 2009. If the *Development Charges Act* (and regulations) are changed or if any OMB decisions are delivered that relate to the development charge rate calculation method, the findings of this analysis may be impacted and should be reviewed in light of any such changes.

Timing

The timing of the projects listed in the Integrated Leisure Master Plan has recognized a need for phased implemented of the recommendations. Two time frames have been proposed; short term (2010 - 2014) and medium term (2015 - 2019) for the timing of the proposed facility developments. While the Master Plan includes a number of long-term actions (2020 and beyond), these items have not been included in the financial analysis due to their planning horizon. The proposed timing of the works is based on the need for leisure infrastructure, which relies on population forecasts approved by the Region of York. The forecast in the analysis integrates intensification housing targets to meet Provincial and Regional planning initiatives. The timing of the proposed projects is considered to be "ideal" timing to meet community needs, but may be adjusted to better align with funding abilities.



Capital Cost Estimates

The Town of Markham completed a Development Charges (DC) Background Study for their Town-Wide Soft Services, which was approved by Council in May 2009. Through this exercise, a ten-year development-related capital program was adopted by Council which included the leisure services of Library, Indoor Recreation, and Park Development and Facilities (including outdoor play fields, structures, pathways, bridges, and related outdoor parks buildings). The capital programs contained detailed project lists for each service, including the timing of the projects and the estimated capital costs.

Most project cost estimates used in this analysis are taken from the 2009 Development Charges Background Study: Town-Wide Soft Services, unless actual budget costs were used (e.g., budget costs used for the East Markham Community Centre & Library). All costs are in 2009 dollars, as the Non-residential Building Construction Price Index (legislated index used to adjust the development charge rates, and also widely used to adjust the

construction costs of facilities) has not changed significantly since the release of the Background Study. The costs are generally reflective of the current construction environment, but Markham should carefully monitor the state of the economic climate with respect to the rise of construction and labour costs. The costs used in the Integrated Leisure Master Plan are felt to be a reasonable guideline for long-term financial forecasting purposes, but costs should be examined in detail at the appropriate time. On a similar note, sizing and type of features in buildings and the number of outdoor facilities could increase or decrease, depending on changes in standards and input from Markham residents.

All project cost estimates include the design and project management fees, construction cost, fixtures, furniture, equipment, and materials. The projected timing and total estimated capital cost of implementing the Integrated Leisure Master Plan are shown on the following pages.

LIBRARY FACILITIES	Year Cost Incurred	Total Capital Cost	Grants, Subsidies, Donations	Total Net Cost	Short Term 2010 - 2014	Medium Term 2015 - 2019
Existing Libraries:						
Milliken Mills Library Expansion ¹	2011 - 2013	\$8,100,000	\$5,700,000	\$2,400,000	\$2,400,000	\$0
Thornhill Community Library Renovation	2010	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
New Libraries:						
East Markham Library	2010 - 2012	\$12,700,000	\$600,000	\$12,100,000	\$12,100,000	\$0
Southeast Markham Library	2012 - 2014	\$11,740,000		\$11,740,000	\$11,740,000	\$0
Markham Centre Library ²	2018 - 2020	\$11,740,000		\$11,740,000	\$0	\$9,392,000
TOTAL		\$45,880,000	\$7,900,000	\$37,980,000	\$26,240,000	\$9,392,000

Note 1: The Milliken Mills Library Expansion project will be subject to a feasibility study, which will define scope and costs in greater detail.

Note 2: 20% of the Markham Centre Library Costs will be incurred in 2020, outside of the planning period.

Markham Centre Library may take the form of a leased space on ground floor of a multi-storey building. Analysis assumes stand-alone branch with capital development implications.



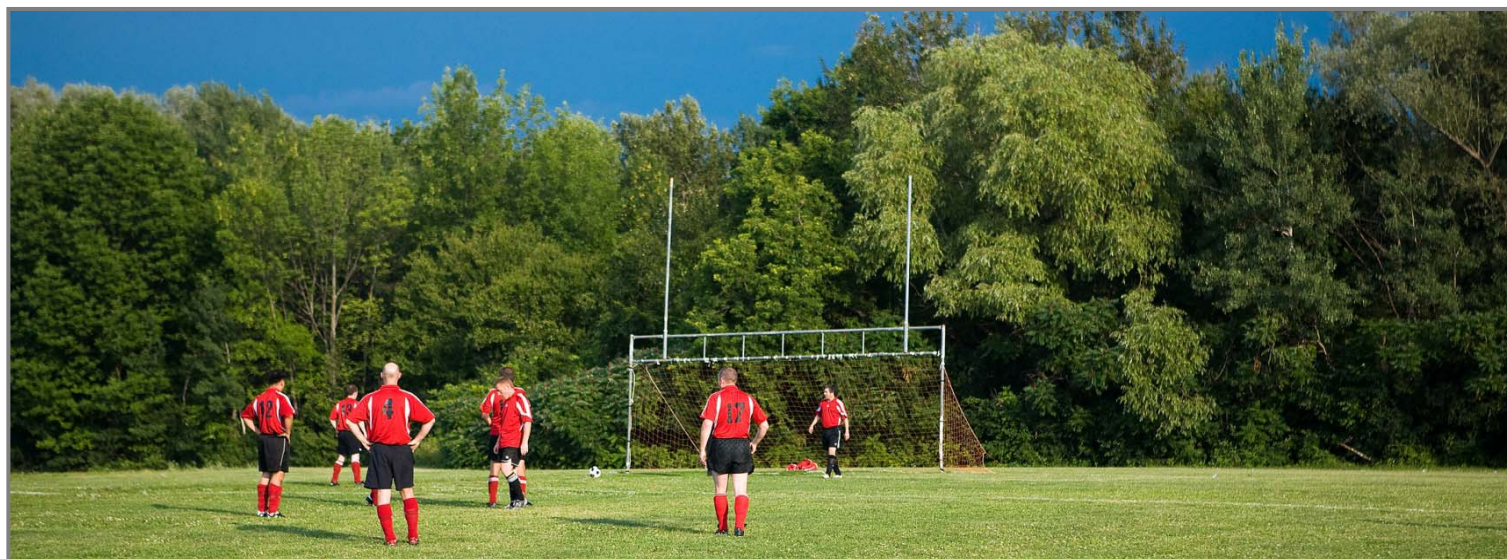
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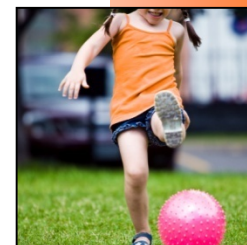
INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES	Year Cost Incurred	Total Capital Cost	Grants, Subsidies, Donations	Total Net Cost	Short Term 2010 - 2014	Medium Term 2015 - 2019
Existing Community Centres:						
Milliken Mills CC Expansion ¹	2012 - 2014	\$14,000,000		\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$0
Angus Glen CC Expansion ¹	2014 - 2016	\$8,000,000		\$8,000,000	\$1,600,000	\$6,400,000
Victoria Square CC Expansion ¹	2016 - 2018	\$4,000,000		\$4,000,000	\$0	\$4,000,000
Thornhill CC Expansion	2010	\$4,400,000	\$4,400,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
New Community Centres:						
East Markham CC	2010 - 2012	\$53,400,000		\$53,400,000	\$53,400,000	\$0
Southeast Markham CC	2012 - 2014	\$23,375,000		\$23,375,000	\$23,375,000	\$0
Other Indoor Facilities:						
Indoor Soccer Field ²	2010	\$1,088,000	\$680,000	\$408,000	\$408,000	\$0
Indoor Tennis Courts ³	2010	\$595,000	\$396,900	\$198,100	\$198,100	\$0
Indoor Pool (Pan Am)	2012 - 2014	\$36,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$16,000,000	\$16,000,000	\$0
TOTAL		\$144,858,000	\$25,476,900	\$119,381,100	\$108,981,100	\$10,400,000

Note 1: Milliken Mills, Angus Glen and Victoria Square Community Centre Expansions will be subject to feasibility studies, which will define scope and costs in greater detail.

Note 2: The Costs and grant monies for the Indoor Soccer Field have been apportioned between Indoor Recreation and Park Development & Facilities Services, 34% and 66%, respectively.

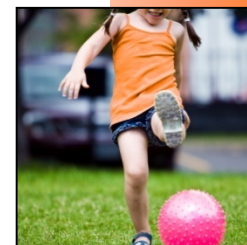
Note 3: The Costs and grant monies for the Indoor Tennis Courts have been apportioned between Indoor Recreation and Park Development & Facilities Services, 35% and 65%, respectively.





Implementing the Plan

PARK DEVELOPMENT & FACILITIES	Year Cost Incurred	Total Capital Cost	Grants, Subsidies, Donations	Total Net Cost	Short Term 2010 - 2014	Medium Term 2015 - 2019
Outdoor Soccer Fields:						
Artificial Turf - Lit	2012	\$1,800,000		\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$0
Major Lit	2013, 2017	\$1,985,236		\$1,985,236	\$1,488,927	\$496,309
Major Unlit	2010, 2012, 2016	\$587,364		\$587,364	\$440,523	\$146,841
Minor	2012, 2015	\$376,296		\$376,296	\$250,864	\$125,432
Ball Diamonds:						
Major Lit	2012	\$879,150		\$879,150	\$879,150	\$0
Major Unlit	2012	\$285,070		\$285,070	\$285,070	\$0
Minor	2012	\$230,000		\$230,000	\$230,000	\$0
Courts:						
Tennis Court - Lit	2013, 2016, 2019	\$1,968,918		\$1,968,918	\$1,125,096	\$843,822
Tennis Court - Unlit	2010, 2012, 2015, 2019	\$1,212,252		\$1,212,252	\$808,168	\$404,084
Basketball Court - Full court	2012, 2017	\$53,716		\$53,716	\$26,858	\$26,858
Basketball Court - Half court	2010, 2014	\$32,860		\$32,860	\$32,860	\$0
Playgrounds:						
Playground - Senior & Junior	2010-2019	\$5,017,052		\$5,017,052	\$3,118,708	\$1,898,344
Playground - Senior	2010-2017, 2019	\$3,234,455		\$3,234,455	\$1,755,847	\$1,478,608
Playground - Junior	2010-2017, 2019	\$1,987,980		\$1,987,980	\$927,724	\$1,060,256
Other Outdoor Facilities:						
Cricket Pitches	2011, 2013	\$554,000		\$554,000	\$554,000	\$0
Waterplay Facilities - Major	2010, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016	\$1,815,000		\$1,815,000	\$1,089,000	\$726,000
Waterplay Facilities - Minor	2011, 2014, 2017	\$495,000		\$495,000	\$330,000	\$165,000
Skateboard Park	2011, 2013, 2014, 2016	\$3,164,000		\$3,164,000	\$2,373,000	\$791,000
Outdoor Ice Rink	2010	\$3,530,000	\$2,153,000	\$1,377,000	\$1,377,000	\$0
Indoor Soccer Field ¹	2010	\$2,112,000	\$1,320,000	\$792,000	\$792,000	\$0
Indoor Tennis Courts ²	2010	\$1,105,000	\$737,100	\$367,900	\$367,900	\$0
Other Parks-related Capital Costs:						
Major Gazebos / Shelters	2010-2018	\$12,460,800		\$12,460,800	\$7,180,800	\$5,280,000
Minor Gazebos / Shelters	2010-2018	\$5,148,000		\$5,148,000	\$3,564,000	\$1,584,000
Buildings and Washrooms	2011, 2012, 2015	\$1,780,380		\$1,780,380	\$1,479,420	\$300,960
Field Houses / Worksheds	2011, 2012, 2015	\$2,851,200		\$2,851,200	\$2,405,700	\$445,500
Concrete Plaza Spaces	2010-2018	\$14,305,200		\$14,305,200	\$7,623,000	\$6,682,200



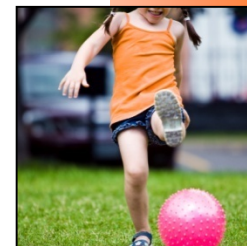
Implementing the Plan

PARK DEVELOPMENT & FACILITIES	Year Cost Incurred	Total Capital Cost	Grants, Subsidies, Donations	Total Net Cost	Short Term 2010 - 2014	Medium Term 2015 - 2019
Wooden Bridges	2017	\$387,552		\$387,552	\$0	\$387,552
Steel Bridges	2010-2013, 2015, 2017-2018	\$3,882,184		\$3,882,184	\$2,247,696	\$1,634,488
Paved Parking Lots	2010-2012, 2014-2015	\$2,541,000		\$2,541,000	\$2,211,000	\$330,000
Parking Lot Lighting	2010-2012, 2014-2015, 2017	\$820,380		\$820,380	\$711,480	\$108,900
Pathway Lighting	2010-2018	\$12,331,200		\$12,331,200	\$10,403,040	\$1,928,160
Irrigation - Sports Pitches	2010-2018	\$1,674,400		\$1,674,400	\$1,139,200	\$535,200
Landscape Irrigation Large Parks	2010-2018	\$743,050		\$743,050	\$440,900	\$302,150
Landscape Irrigation Small Detailed Parks	2011-2018	\$258,720		\$258,720	\$142,890	\$115,830
Parks Buildings	2010, 2013	\$6,094,512		\$6,094,512	\$6,094,512	\$0
Park Acquisition & Development:						
Sports Park - Land Acquisition	2010-2012	\$20,000,000		\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$0
Park Development - Community & Town-wide Parks (excl. above items)	2010-2019	\$48,060,000		\$48,060,000	\$24,030,000	\$24,030,000
Park Design & Construction	2010	\$1,311,200		\$1,311,200	\$1,311,200	\$0
Off-road Trail and Pathways:						
Concrete Pathways	2010-2018	\$3,063,750		\$3,063,750	\$2,056,030	\$1,007,720
Asphalt Pathways	2010-2018	\$1,488,148		\$1,488,148	\$800,316	\$687,832
Granular Pathways	2010-2014, 2016-2018	\$524,634		\$524,634	\$277,134	\$247,500
TOTAL		\$172,151,659	\$4,057,100	\$168,094,559	\$114,324,013	\$53,770,546

Note 1: The Costs and grant monies for the Indoor Soccer Field have been apportioned between Indoor Recreation and Park Development & Facilities Services, 34% and 66%, respectively.

Note 2: The Costs and grant monies for the Indoor Tennis Courts have been apportioned between Indoor Recreation and Park Development & Facilities Services, 35% and 65%, respectively.





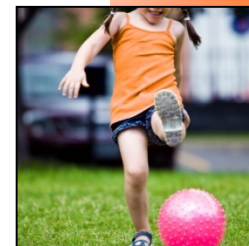
Implementing the Plan

Summary of Estimated Capital Costs of Integrated Leisure Master Plan

SERVICE	Total Capital Cost	Grants, Subsidies, Donations	Total Net Cost	Short Term 2010 - 2014	Medium Term 2015 - 2019
Library*	\$45,880,000	\$7,900,000	\$37,980,000	\$26,240,000	\$9,392,000
Indoor Recreation	\$144,858,000	\$25,476,900	\$119,381,100	\$108,981,100	\$10,400,000
Park Development & Facilities	\$172,151,659	\$4,057,100	\$168,094,559	\$114,324,013	\$53,770,546
TOTAL	\$362,889,659	\$37,434,000	\$325,455,659	\$249,545,113	\$73,562,546

* 20% of the Markham Centre Library Costs will be incurred in 2020, outside of the planning period.





Other Capital Cost Considerations

Studies and Reports

The Town of Markham will undertake an array of leisure-related studies, most of which can be recovered 90 per cent through DCs. The DC eligible studies amount to approximately \$300,000, and the municipality will be responsible for funding the legislated 10 per cent co-payment of these studies. The one study that is deemed ineligible for recovery through DCs is the Cultural Plan. The capital cost of this study is \$100,000.

Markham Museum

In July 2009, construction began on the 17,000 square feet new collections building at the Markham Museum. The total construction cost of this project amounts to \$9.2 million, of which, \$7.6 million was subsidized through the Federal Cultural Spaces Grant Program. The remainder of the cost, \$1.6 million, is not eligible to be recovered through DCs, and the Town of Markham has responsibility for funding this cost.

Potential Funding Sources

As part of the financial analysis of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan, all potential funding opportunities have been identified and included. Specific funding sources are discussed below:

1. Development Charges

Development charges are the main funding source of development-related capital projects. Under the development charges legislation, the capital costs of the projects included in

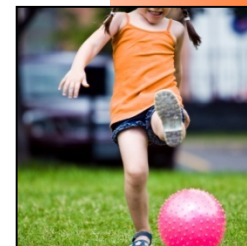
the Integrated Leisure Master Plan must be reduced by 10 per cent. As such, 90 per cent of the project cost may be funded through development charges. The remaining 10 per cent is typically financed by the municipality through a combination of other reserves, tax dollars, or other sources. It is important to note that not all projects may be funded 90 per cent through development charges. Funding limitations include replacement portions of facilities, historical service level deficiencies, or excess capacity as a result of the pre-emplacement of facilities. This may result in a situation where development-related capital projects will need other sources of revenues.

2. Partnerships

To facilitate the implementation of the program, Markham may consider engaging in partnerships with the private, non-profit sectors or other levels of government to develop various facilities. Appropriate feasibility studies and the development and use of agreements will be required to ensure the partnerships yield the desired results.

3. Other Municipal Reserves – Library Services

Starting in 2003, monies were set aside from operating accounts which were primarily funded from the tax base. The Town of Markham made the decision to set aside \$510,000 each year for 10 years as an analysis on the libraries facility requirements versus available DC funding concluded that there would be insufficient funds to achieve the desired service level. These monies assist the library to achieve its service level requirements and can be applied to any of their projects. These funds are not intended to be used to fund the 10% Non-DC eligible share of infrastructure costs. In this analysis, these monies were applied to the Milliken Mills expansion.



4. Lifecycle Reserves

Lifecycle Reserves are monies set aside annually to fund the maintenance and state-of-good-repair of existing facilities. For several of the projects listed in the Integrated Leisure Master Plan, Markham has committed funds from the lifecycle reserve [to complement other sources of funding, such as Development Charges and the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund. The projects](#) include the Thornhill Community Centre expansion, Thornhill Community Library renovation, the Indoor Soccer Field, the Indoor Tennis Courts, and the Outdoor Ice Rink. This reserve fund commitment will likely pay for the non-growth share of the Thornhill Community Centre.

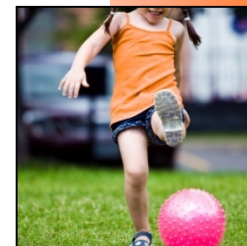
5. Grants

This includes the Recreational Infrastructure Canada Program (RIc) and the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund for the Indoor Tennis Courts, Outdoor Ice Rink, Thornhill Community Centre Library, Soccer fields, and energy retrofits / accessibility improvements at Town-owned facilities. An upper-tier level grant is also anticipated for the construction of the 50-metre Indoor Pool for the 2015 Pan Am Games.

6. Debenture Financing

Historically, Markham has never issued debt to finance development-related capital projects. They have achieved this through the ramping-up of their reserves, and internal [DC](#) borrowing. The analysis considers options to fully fund the implementation of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan, either through external or internal borrowing, development charges, grants, and reserve funds.



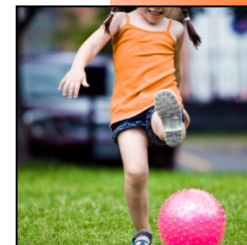


Financial Implications

It should be noted that all figures used in this analysis are based on various high level assumptions, and its intended purpose is to provide a long-range financial forecast of the implementation of the plan. The assumptions used in the analysis are present day best estimates and the timing, costing and funding of each individual project listed in the program are subject to change. As more detailed information is materialized through the recommendations of feasibility studies, Markham staff and Council will then be in a better position to analyze the financial and service delivery impacts of each individual project. The capital program contained in this Master Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The estimated capital costs of implementing the program, matched with the timing of the works and the receipt of DC revenues are examined on a service by service basis on the following pages. The analysis of the funding of the program is mainly based on DC revenues and funding from other sources may reduce the requirement to borrow. Decisions on individual projects and related sources of funding will be made annually through the Capital Budget process.

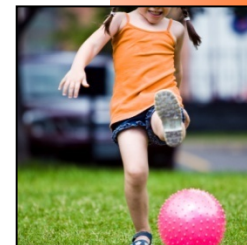




Indoor Recreation

INDOOR RECREATION	
Total Costs Identified in ILMP	
- Capital infrastructure 2010-2019	\$144,858,000
- Less: Grants and Other Subsidies	<u>\$25,476,900</u>
Total Net Municipal Cost	\$119,381,100
Non-DC Recoverable Shares	
- Benefit to Existing	\$0
- 10% legislated DCA co-payment	<u>\$11,938,110</u>
Total Non-Growth Related Shares	\$11,938,110
Net DC Recoverable Share	\$107,442,990
Development Charge Funding	
- Prior Growth (existing reserves)	\$24,770,462
- DC Revenues from 2010 to 2019	\$81,269,814
- DC Revenues from 2020 to 2031	<u>\$1,402,713</u>
Total Development Charge Funding	\$107,442,990

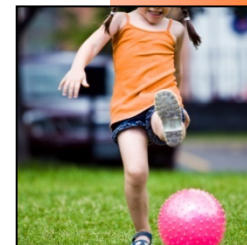
- The indoor recreation capital program for 2010-2019 is \$144.9 million, of which, \$107.44 million is DC recoverable, after the reduction of grants, subsidies, and the legislated 10 per cent municipal co-payment.
- Markham's ten-year historical service level (2000-2009) limits the ability to fund the program to \$81.3 million in the ten-year planning horizon (2010-2019).
- Markham has a significant amount of monies in the indoor recreation reserve fund balance, \$24.8 million, which will aid in funding projects in the short-term.
- The remaining portion of the program requiring funding will be collected in the post-2019 period, and this amount is \$1.4 million.
- Because the indoor recreation program is heavily weighted towards the short-term planning horizon (2010-2014), Markham may need to consider borrowing monies.
- [To fund the indoor recreation program, Markham may need to consider the borrowing of funds starting in year 2012, to an estimated maximum of \\$35 to \\$40 million in 2014.](#)



Library

LIBRARY SERVICE	
Total Costs Identified in ILMP	
- Capital infrastructure 2010-2019	\$45,880,000
- Less: Grants and Other Subsidies	<u>\$7,900,000</u>
Total Net Municipal Cost	\$37,980,000
Non-DC Recoverable Shares	
- Benefit to Existing	\$0
- 10% legislated DCA co-payment	<u>\$3,798,000</u>
Total Non-Growth Related Shares	\$3,798,000
Net DC Recoverable Share	\$34,182,000
Development Charge Funding	
- Prior Growth (existing reserves)	\$4,381,490
- DC Revenues from 2010 to 2019	\$15,416,458
- DC Revenues from 2020 to 2031	<u>\$14,384,053</u>
Total Development Charge Funding	\$34,182,000

- The library capital program for 2010-2019 is \$45.9 million, of which, \$34.2 million is DC recoverable, after the reduction of grants, subsidies, and the legislated 10 per cent municipal co-payment.
- Markham's ten-year historical service level (2000-2009) limits the ability to fund the program to \$15.4 million in the ten-year planning horizon (2010-2019).
- Based on the timing of the library capital plan, Markham will be required to interim finance development-related costs that may ultimately be funded by growth beyond 2019. Future DC recoveries can include interim financing costs.
- The remaining portion of the program requiring funding will be collected in the post-2019 period, and this amount is \$16.1 million.
- The proposed library plan sees the pre-placement of facilities ahead of future population growth [town-wide](#). [The Plan addresses the increase of library service levels in specific areas](#).
- To fund the library program, Markham may need to consider borrowing of funds starting in year 2012, to an [estimated](#) maximum of [\\$15 to \\$20](#) million in [2013](#).



Park Development & Facilities

Park Development & Facilities	
Total Costs Identified in ILMP	
- Capital infrastructure 2010-2019	\$172,151,659
- Less: Grants and Other Subsidies	<u>\$4,057,100</u>
Total Net Town Cost	\$168,094,559
Non-DC Recoverable Shares	
- Ineligible Capital Costs (Parkland	\$20,000,000
- 10% legislated DCA co-payment	<u>\$14,809,456</u>
Total Non-Growth Related Shares	\$34,209,456
Net DC Recoverable Share	\$133,285,103
Development Charge Funding	
- Prior Growth (existing reserves)	\$32,377,101
- DC Revenues from 2010 to 2019	\$70,657,202
- DC Revenues from 2020 to 2031	<u>\$30,250,800</u>
Total Development Charge Funding	\$133,285,103

- The park development and facilities capital program for 2010-2019 amounts to \$172.1 million, of which, \$133.3 million is DC recoverable, after the reduction of grants, subsidies, ineligible capital costs, and the legislated 10 per cent municipal co-payment.
- Markham's ten-year historical service level (2000-2009) restricts their ability to fund the program to \$70.7 million in the ten-year planning horizon (2010-2019).
- The park development and facilities reserve fund balance shows there is a significant amount to fund projects in the short term, of \$32.4 million.
- The remaining portion of the program requiring funding will be collected in the post-2019 period, and this amount is \$30.3 million.
- Markham staff will need to closely monitor the park development and facilities reserve fund balance and future DC revenues to ensure they are constructing facilities at an appropriate pace.
- Markham staff will closely monitor the reserve fund balance in an attempt to not rely on debt financing for parks development. This may be achieved by matching the construction of new infrastructure to the future population growth. This is a common practice used by many other municipalities.



Future Considerations

The analysis has indicated that Markham will need to consider the issuance of interim financing, as many of the projects in the Plan are recommended to be constructed in the short-term. As in the Plan, the primary reason for the need to consider the issuance of debt is the need to address service deficiencies in existing communities and the pre-emplacment of facilities ahead of total planned growth. In other words, the program suggests an increase in facilities greater than the historical 10-year average to address community needs for leisure services.

Should Markham go forward with issuing debt to fund the program, the municipality will experience fiscal pressures in debt repayments. However, DC revenues will fund a large share of annual debt payments.

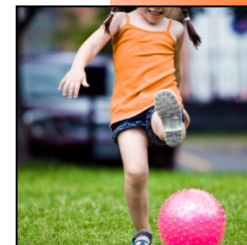
Markham should be aware that other property-tax supported services have development-related projects in the short and medium term. Funding demands from the Town-wide hard, public works, and fire services in particular are expected to require interim financing.

Although the projects contained in the program are all eligible to be recovered through Development Charges, Markham is aware of the 10 per cent legislated co-payment that must be funded from non-DC sources. Over the ten-year planning period, for all of the leisure services, the amount Markham could be responsible to fund is \$31 million.

Markham will also incur operating costs to staff and maintain facilities in advance of assessment growth. These additional operating costs could be partially mitigated through user fees and other revenue sources.

Funding decisions for the Integrated Leisure Master Plan will be done when individual items are placed in the annual Capital and Operating budgets.





Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan

On an annual basis, the Town of Markham should reconcile the recommendations with its fiscal capacity and align requests to capital planning program to ensure timing and scope meet the needs of Markham's residents. It is critical that Markham regularly monitors and reports progress on the Integrated Leisure Master Plan and its recommendations.

Subject Area	Recommendations – ILMP Implementation	Proposed Timing		
		2010-14	2015-19	2020+
Funding the ILMP	201. This Integrated Leisure Master Plan should be used as a resource in developing Markham's 10-year capital plan.	●	●	●
	202. Markham should continue to seek partners and alternative funding mechanisms to supplement existing resources and to enable full implementation of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan's capital program.	●	●	●
Monitoring and Updating the ILMP	203. Implement a system for the regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan.	●		
	204. Determine if an update or a full review of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan is required in 2015.		●	