



Markham DRAFT Community Infrastructure Strategy

VISION

“Contribute to building integrated and sustainable communities in Markham through the coordinated provision of community Infrastructure.”





What is Community Infrastructure?

This Strategy focuses on **planning for public facilities that house and support the provision of community services and networks (e.g. schools, health services, police, fire, EMS, community centres, parks, libraries, etc.)** Community infrastructure facilities solely provided by the private sector (i.e. private schools, retirement homes, places of worship, private office space used to provide public services) are not included in this Strategy as they are supported by the Town through established planning approval processes and land use designations.

Why do we need a Community Infrastructure Strategy?

The Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe requires municipalities to develop a comprehensive strategy to accommodate forecast population and employment growth to 2031. In 2010, Council endorsed a preferred growth alternative to guide growth, and form the basis for the Town's new Official Plan.

The Growth Plan also requires municipalities to take into consideration the coordination of planning and investment for community infrastructure to ensure that, among other things that

- Community infrastructure can be provided efficiently and effectively
- Community infrastructure meets the needs resulting from population changes and to foster complete communities and
- A community infrastructure strategy is prepared to facilitate the coordination and planning of community infrastructure with land use, infrastructure and investment through a collaborative and consultative process.

Community Infrastructure Strategy

This Strategy represents the Town's position in response to the need to address community infrastructure identified in the Province's Growth Plan. The focus of the strategy is to define a framework to improve upon existing processes to ensure the community infrastructure stakeholders are informed and engaged through the community planning and development approval processes, and in turn can look for opportunities to share resources and improve service delivery. The intent of this strategy is not to establish needs and priorities for the community done by community infrastructure providers (e.g. Town's Integrated Leisure Master Plan).

The Community Infrastructure Strategy builds on the recommendations of the ILMP and programs of other community infrastructure providers.

The planning and delivery of community infrastructure is shared by many levels of government, non-profit agencies, community organizations. Over 46 representatives from 20 different agencies were consulted in the development of this Strategy.

Community

Strategic Objectives

Provide Leadership in coordinating the planning of community infrastructure to contribute to integrated and sustainable communities

Build Capacity to allow all stakeholders to participate in Markham's land use planning process

Facilitate Information Sharing and the education of Markham's community infrastructure stakeholders

Recommended Actions

1. Develop policies in Markham's Official Plan to support the coordinated provision of community infrastructure.
2. Participate in and contribute to planning exercises undertaken by community infrastructure stakeholders which complement the Town's infrastructure planning (i.e. strategic plans).
3. Include representatives from Town Planning Districts and external community infrastructure stakeholders in Community/Neighbourhood Teams to ensure an integrated approach to community infrastructure planning.
4. Establish a working arrangement with the Region of York and other stakeholder groups to share information and facilitate the coordination of services in Markham.
5. Create opportunities outside of the land use planning process for education and information sharing (i.e. workshops, annual meetings, etc.) with stakeholders.
6. Work with the Community and Fire Services Commission to develop a Terms of Reference for a Community Infrastructure Plan that would be required for any new community (Secondary Plan), redevelopment area or major planning application or study.
7. Provide support in building capacity of community infrastructure stakeholders to effectively participate in land use planning.
8. Promote partnership opportunities and establish a process to maximize existing resources such as community space, funding, staffing and volunteers.
9. Commissioners will evaluate the need to commit staff resources to work together to implement the Community Infrastructure Strategy.
10. Prepare a Community Infrastructure District Inventory for each Planning District with input from all stakeholders and the Community/Neighbourhood Teams, which is to be updated on an annual basis. Establish a community benefits priority list as part of each Community Infrastructure District Inventory that can be used to assist in negotiating bonusing provisions under the Planning Act.



Infrastructure Strategy

Planning for Community Infrastructure in Markham

Based on the vision, the Strategy identifies the following objectives and actions to guide the provision of community infrastructure in Markham through 2031.

Markham plays a key role in providing or facilitating the provision of a number of community facilities that enrich life and create sustainable communities.

There are two Commissions within Markham that are responsible for the planning and provision of community infrastructure:

Improve Coordination in the planning of community infrastructure to support Markham's strategic vision and priorities

Monitor outcomes to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure, services and land use planning requirements are achieved at each phase of development

Adapt to Change by being flexible and responsive to changes in land use (i.e. intensification) and the capital and program delivery models necessary to provide community infrastructure

Community and Fire Services Commission

Community and Fire Services Commission is responsible for the provision of community infrastructure facilities and services related to parks, fire, waste management, operations, libraries, recreational and cultural facilities and services in Markham.

In 2010, Council approved the **Integrated Leisure Master Plan 2010-2019 (ILMP)**, a key document in the planning and delivery of community infrastructure in Markham. This document assessed the needs of the community against the available supply of identified facilities and services. The ILMP will assist decision makers, stakeholders and the general public in determining the needs and priorities in the areas of parks, recreation, culture and library facilities and services.

The ILMP recommends that steps be taken to improve the connection between the ILMP and the current planning process. One of recommendations of the ILMP is to establish Community/Neighbourhood Teams made up of representatives from the community involved in the delivery of community infrastructure. This will provide a venue in which planning and community service providers can connect to ensure an integrated approach to community infrastructure planning.

Development Services Commission

Markham is a primary land use approval authority for the area. The local land use planning process plays a key role in the planning of community infrastructure. In 2010, Council **endorsed a preferred growth alternative** to guide future residential and employment growth to 2031. The majority of new growth is planned to be directed to the established urban area and will take on a form that is more urban, which directly impacts the services required to meet the needs of this new population and the built form these facilities will take.

It also is through the planning process that the Town:

- Designs new communities and redevelopment areas (Secondary Plans, Community Design Plan, Precinct Plans)
- Identifies and acquires lands for certain facilities (i.e. parks, community centres, libraries, fire stations, etc.)
- Collects development charges to provide capital funds for certain types of community infrastructure
- Negotiates additional community benefits (Section 37)
- Circulates planning applications to different stakeholders for their input on required community infrastructure

The Commission recognizes that they need to build upon existing planning processes to make certain that stakeholders are engaged earlier and throughout the planning process to ensure their service needs can be delivered on time in the future.

12. Clarify community infrastructure stakeholder involvement in providing input on development applications and planning studies and build upon existing planning processes.
13. Establish a consultation process with community infrastructure stakeholders for major planning applications.
14. Evaluate through the Commissioners which recent or upcoming planning applications require a Community Infrastructure Plan.
15. Meet annually with Community and Fire Services Commission to ensure the Community Infrastructure Strategy aligns with the requirements of the ILMP and other strategic documents of this Commission.
16. Ensure that facility planning in Markham identifies and incorporates the capital and long term operational costs of Town provided community infrastructure.
17. Support flexibility and adaptability in planning and delivering of community infrastructure (i.e. Official Plan, Zoning By-laws, built form, Town wide strategic documents such as ILMP)
18. Use Community/Neighbourhood Teams as a forum to investigate specific issues or challenges related to the provision of community infrastructure in Markham.
19. Work with the Region of York and other stakeholders to advocate for the development of complementary senior government policies, processes and funding models.
20. Support continued leadership of the Region in cross-jurisdictional land use planning projects and Region wide community infrastructure issues.
21. Establish monitoring protocols and processes for community infrastructure to ensure stakeholders are kept informed of progress and allow the Town to continue to assess and refine planning tools and established targets for communities.



Markham Today



Markham has undergone considerable demographic change in the past 20 years including:

- Significant population growth in the past 10 years
- Aging population
- While remaining a family oriented community, continue to accommodate greater diversity in households
- Change in ethnic composition

These changes impact the facilities and services required for our community. In addition, the Town will reach a population projection of more than 421,000 by 2031. Much of this growth is accommodated in intensification areas established through the Town’s endorsed growth alternative. This will result in a more compact urban form and higher population densities, which will in turn place additional pressure on Markham’s existing facilities and services, many of which are currently running at or near capacity.

Intensification is challenging traditional standards on how community infrastructure is delivered and funded. There is an urgency to define community infrastructure interests in these new upcoming communities to ensure adequate facilities and services in the future. New approaches to services and facilities 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.

Key Messages from consultation with stakeholders

Consultations with community infrastructure stakeholders through interviews/workshops identified four key messages:

Growth & Intensification—Development requires new models for providing needed facilities and services to residents.

Education & Information—Identifying opportunities for coordinated community infrastructure planning requires education and information sharing. Providers need to understand each other’s needs to ensure adequate provision and identify opportunities for sharing resources.

Financing Community Infrastructure— Current funding and delivery mechanisms available for community infrastructure do not demonstrate long term sustainable funding models for delivering community infrastructure in Markham.

Strengthening Planning Process—Need to build upon existing development process to ensure it supports stakeholders needs, interests and activities.

Next Steps

The Community Infrastructure Strategy focuses on practical steps that can be taken together with our community infrastructure partners to ensure that adequate facilities and services are provided for in the future. Collaboration and continued partnerships is key in the success of delivering community infrastructure in Markham.

The first step will be to prepare a community infrastructure inventory for each Town Planning District with input from all community infrastructure stakeholders and the Community/Neighbourhood Teams to ensure alignment between planning and key community strategic plans (i.e. Integrated Leisure Master Plan, Fire Master Plan, Library Strategic Plan etc.).

We welcome your comments and feedback on this draft Community Infrastructure Strategy.

Get Involved—Send us your comments

For more information and to provide comments please contact:

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