

Integrated Leisure Master Plan (draft - March 2010)

Get Involved!



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

Markham takes pride in its parks, culture, recreation and library services, which enrich community life and create a more "liveable" community. Like any community, however, there are gaps in services and facilities and areas where Markham is lagging behind, largely a result of increasing service demand, general population growth, and shifts in Markham's demographics.

Markham Council recognizes that it must take the right steps today to prepare for the future. In 2007, Markham launched the **Building Markham's Future Together** (BMFT) initiative, with the goal of "ensuring that Markham continues to be a vibrant, successful and sustainable community." One of BMFT's six strategic priorities was to enhance community parks, recreation, culture and library programs and service delivery systems.

The **Integrated Leisure Master Plan** (ILMP) has been developed as a tool to help decision-makers, stakeholders and the general public determine the community's needs and priorities relating to parks, recreation, cultural, and library services and facilities in Markham. The timeframe of the ILMP is 2010 to 2019.

The Integrated Leisure Master Plan is a result of considerable research and analysis, including extensive public consultation. The Town of Markham has 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 Markham's current and future strategic priorities. Local residents have clearly expressed their desire to continue to enjoy a high quality of life and to engage in civic opportunities.

Consultation Activities



Proposed Mission Statement for Parks, Recreation, Culture & Libraries

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

Proposed Goals for Parks, Recreation, Culture & Libraries

Goals have been developed to help the Town of Markham target resources and strategies where they will be most effective. The Goals represent areas where the collective efforts of parks, recreation, culture and library staff – in concert with community partners and stakeholders – will be needed. Most goals relate to all subject areas; they do not have a priority order.

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 the Town'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 the Town'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 Town 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 & services for youth & 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.

Summary of Draft Recommendations for Parks, Recreation, Culture & Libraries

The Integrated Leisure Master Plan's Draft Recommendations are designed to shape a vision of leisure services that will: support Markham's overall prosperity in a creative and knowledge-based economy; ensure community excellence in areas of intensification; and play a critical role in building community and increasing social capital. Key recommendations are summarized below.

Key Service Delivery Actions

- a) Develop a Neighbourhood Service Delivery Strategy / Community Engagement Framework
- b) Ensure alignment with Markham's Community Sustainability Plan
- c) Create a Physical Activity Plan
- d) Develop a Partnership Framework
- e) Develop an Access & Financial Assistance Policy / Outreach Strategy for low income households
- f) Refresh the Youth Strategy and the Older Adults Plan
- g) Establish a Public Realm Policy and guidelines



Key Recreation Actions

- a) Develop a 'major' community centre to serve Southeast Markham prior to 2016 (pool, gym, youth & seniors' spaces, fitness, etc.)
- b) Undertake a Feasibility Study on the expansion of Milliken Mills Community Centre (gymnasium, seniors' space, fitness / active living space, expanded library)
- c) Consider expansion of Angus Glen Community Centre fitness / active living space
- d) Undertake a Feasibility Study on the renewal / expansion of Victoria Square Community Centre
- e) Confirm the infrastructure plan for hosting the 2015 Pan Am Games (including a 50m pool and Centennial Community Centre upgrades)
- f) Continue discussions around the future Canadian Sport Institute of Ontario
- g) Begin planning for the provision of community recreation and library services to serve the Langstaff Gateway community and the North Central area of Markham (both beyond 2019)
- h) Consider adding youth space to Milliken Mills and/or Centennial Community Centres
- i) All new / expanded community centres should (at a minimum) have gymnasiums and dedicated space for youth and seniors



Key Library Actions

- a) Expand Milliken Mills Branch (~2012)
- b) Develop a Southeast Markham Branch (with Community Centre; prior to 2016)
- c) Develop a library branch to serve Markham Centre (~2019)
- d) Continued implementation of Library Strategic Plan
- e) Self-service technology improvements
- f) Continue to recognize the library's role in lifelong-learning and as a community hub



Summary of Draft Recommendations for Parks, Recreation, Culture & Libraries (continued)

Key Parks Actions

- a) Establish a large Sports Park for town-wide sports fields (eg. soccer, cricket, baseball)
- b) Continue to invest in park infrastructure, including sports fields, tennis and basketball courts, playgrounds, waterplay facilities, skate parks, etc.
- c) Consider options for a bike park, off-leash dog parks, and community gardens
- d) Implement the Pathways and Trails Master Plan
- e) Develop a Parkland Acquisition Strategy and examine the parkland classification system
- f) Promote non-traditional activities in parks and the role of parks as 'living community centres'
- g) Support the Rouge Park initiative



Key Cultural Actions

- a) Complete Cultural Mapping Project
- b) Develop a Cultural Policy and Plan
- c) Implement a Public Art Policy in Markham
- d) Establish a Special Event Policy
- e) Ensure that community centres have flexible spaces for arts and cultural activities
- f) Consider the Southeast Community Centre Park Site for a special event park
- g) Continue to implement the Markham Museum Master Plan



Get Involved!

The Town of Markham's Integrated Leisure Master Plan is in draft form – your input is needed so that we can finalize it! Public feedback is critical to ensuring that we are on the right track and that we are continuing to offer the facilities, programs, and services that meet your needs.

Markham is gathering public input on the Draft Plan through a Public Meeting, Questionnaires, Stakeholder Presentations, and Information Displays. The **draft plan** and **public feedback questionnaire** are available online at www.markham.ca.

In early April 2010, the Master Plan will be revised to account for public and Council input. The Plan will then be presented to Markham Council for approval.

If you have any questions about the Integrated Leisure Master Plan, please contact Colin Service, Project Lead, Town of Markham, at 905-477-7000 ext. 7543 or cservice@markham.ca.

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request.

Note: The information on this handout is consistent with what was presented to Town Council in February 2010. Comments from that session have not yet been incorporated into the Plan and the information contained herein is subject to change.