



2019 INTEGRATED LEISURE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

2019 - 2031

Approved by City of Markham Council,
November 13, 2019



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all of those who contributed their effort and expertise to the development of the **2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan Update**. We are confident that the leadership and passion of City of Markham officials and staff, with guidance from this Master Plan Update, will enable the City to continue to provide responsive and leading-edge parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services and facilities well into the future.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan (ILMP) Update (2019-2031) is a long-range planning study for Markham's parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities and services. Its purpose is to identify current needs, service improvements and future facility provision strategies, consistent with the City of Markham's commitment to providing safe, accessible, and community-responsive services and facilities that appeal to a wide range of interests and abilities. Given that Markham is one of the fastest growing and dynamic communities in Canada, increasing by 119,700 residents from 2016 to 2031, timely short and long-range planning is critical to ensuring that facility and service provision that addresses the needs of the public coincides with the pace of development. This ILMP Update will guide planning for parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services and facilities to the year 2031, with a particular focus on the next five years.

A Fact-based Methodology That Works

The firm, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC), was commissioned to guide the cross-Commission, multi-disciplinary Project Team, working closely with the Project Manager. MBPC has over 40 years of planning experience with a solid reputation as a provider of land use planning expertise to municipalities, major Canadian retailers, school boards, hospitals, land developers and community organizations. Some of MBPC's recent municipal clients included the City of Mississauga, City of Toronto, City of Vaughan, Richmond Hill Public Library, Town of Aurora and the Town of Oakville.

The following consultations and review of trends, benchmarks and data, such as demographics and progress made on the 2010 ILMP, were used to inform this Update:

- Engagement with City officials, Library Board members, City officials and staff;
- Stakeholder input sessions regarding areas of pressure (ice sports, racquet sports, sports fields);
- Further community input through an online survey;
- Trends in leisure services locally and across Canada;
- Benchmarking against comparable municipalities;
- Socio-demographic factors (current and forecasted), including age;
- Review of the City's past strategic studies and findings;
- Detailed assessment of the City's existing parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities, with consideration of their location, geographic distribution, AODA compliance and user patterns;
- Usage data and trends; and
- Current and anticipated development.

The update process included the preparation of a comprehensive needs assessment for parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities, including verification of the provision targets established in the 2010 ILMP. **The provision targets outlined in this document are consistent with neighbouring municipalities and customized to Markham's context. These targets are necessary to guide the delivery of services in order to achieve the**

Engaged, Diverse & Thriving City goal set out by the City of Markham Council. Recommendations and an implementation strategy were developed to identify the timing and other considerations for the sustainable provision of services to the public.

Building on the Successful 2010 Integrated Leisure Master Plan

As part of the process, it was a necessity and a good practice to review the status of the 2010 plan. We concluded that 77% of the recommended short-term actions have been completed or are in progress. Some notable deliverables were achieved, providing significant benefits to the community. Through the leadership of the City of Markham Council and its staff, two new major community centres (Cornell and Aaniin) and a regional sport centre (Markham Pan Am Centre), have been built since the approval of the first Integrated Leisure Master Plan in 2010. They were significant investments in the social infrastructure of Markham. Examples of other deliverables included the opening of over 90 new parks, completion of strategies such as the Older Adult Strategy, Culture Policy & Plan, Public Realm Strategy, Sport Development Plan and Public Art Program, and the creation of the Parks Renaissance Program to guide reinvestment in existing parks and open spaces. In almost all cases, provision of outdoor sports fields and amenities is in accordance to the provision targets recommended in the 2010 ILMP.

The Council approved ILMP provided staff with focus and direction, as illustrated by Mayor Frank Scarpitti's quote in 2009, and supported our effort in accessing funding from the provincial and federal governments. By expending the effort to develop and approve a strategic plan, the return on investment is generally greater efficiency and effectiveness in decision-making, including short and long-range resourcing discussions. Through lifecycle reserve models, Markham funds ongoing capital replacements and rehabilitation of existing assets to maintain heavily-used facilities and parks in "state-of-good-repair" while also ensuring compliance with regulatory changes such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The positive results achieved by the 2010 ILMP confirmed the value and importance of keeping the ILMP updated.

A Changing City of Markham

Effective strategic planning requires an understanding of existing and emerging changes and trends that may affect service and facility needs. The most fundamental change occurred in the growth and demographics of Markham's population since 2010. Together, they have created a strong and growing demand for parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services. Markham's population is projected to reach 460,200 in 2031 (representing growth of 119,700 people from 2016). Markham is emerging as a destination city with a robust economy and exceptional quality life.



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 [2010] Integrated Leisure Master Plan will help the [City] respond to the leisure needs of all residents in a timely and efficient manner.

- Frank Scarpitti, Mayor of Markham, 2009



In addition to the anticipated population growth, the 2019 ILMP Update process has been informed by the emergence of the following changes and trends:

- City of Markham continues to experience significant growth and development, resulting in substantive changes to built form and pressures to create communities that are ‘complete’;
- Social demographic shifts and changes have impacts on user needs and expectations, service planning and facility delivery, e.g., ‘tsunami of seniors’, aging in place, growing poverty and economic disparity, multi-generational living and demand for greater housing choices;
- In addition to new greenfield development, there is increased development of high-density, vertical neighbourhoods within intensification areas, such as the Markham Centre;
- Significant changes are anticipated to a number of provincial legislations that affect municipalities;
- Need to adapt and revitalize existing policies, services and facilities to meet evolving user expectations in a timely manner;
- Informed residents with rising expectations demand changes in the use of parks, open spaces, arts & culture facilities, libraries and recreational activities, e.g., passive leisure activities, drop-in programs, dog parks and related facilities; and
- A desire for walking and biking infrastructure that connects communities, e.g., sidewalks, connected trails, bike paths.

The 2019 recommendations are intended to strengthen the network of facilities and social infrastructure distributed across the city and prioritize those investments over the next 12 years. New and enhanced facilities are also needed to address existing gaps and respond to growth and changes in demographics and user preferences. In order to meet current and future facility needs, the Plan identifies the need to revitalize and replace existing facilities and develop new and enhanced facilities.

Intensification Areas Require New & Innovative Service Delivery

The 2019 ILMP Update applied a policy lens to Markham’s rapidly developing intensification areas of growth: Vertical growth changes the game. The shift from low-density suburban housing to high-density housing in intensification areas disrupts the provision models (based on population ratios) that have guided us in the past. For example, applying “suburban” population ratios for sports fields in intensification areas yields a quantum of hectares that far exceeds the active parkland achievable through the 2014 Official Plan. Early discussion on development will be vital to realizing co-location opportunities at the early planning stages of a new development. We envision a new facility model for these vertical communities – the adaptable, flexible **Neighbourhood Centre**. Accordingly, the challenges of providing parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities and services in “vertical” neighbourhoods call for new thinking and innovative strategies. This Update proposes innovative options for addressing these challenges and implementing the plan, focused on investing in the right facilities, at the right time and in the right places. It calls for a commitment to finding new and innovative ways of providing services – including partnerships with developers and private sector operators, schools, community organizations and other service providers.

Implementing the 2019 ILMP Update

Recommendations can be found within Sections 6 to 11 of this document, complete with supporting rationale. Each recommendation has been assigned a preferred timeframe for initiation based on an assessment of need. The “timing” of major capital projects is generally synonymous with “priority”, meaning that projects identified in earlier years should generally be higher priorities.

Implementation generally will be dependent on several factors, including the pace of population growth, funding options, land availability and partnerships, and capacity based on user patterns. In many cases, proposed timeframes are linked to the population forecasts approved by the Region of York; should these forecasts change, the Plan should be reviewed and adjustments made to the implementation strategy. The City will prepare business plans prior to developing or expanding major facilities to ensure that projects are aligned with community needs, facility capacities, partnership opportunities and financial capabilities.

Ontario’s Bill 108, *More Homes, More Choices Act, 2019*, received Royal Assent on June 6, 2019. It allows municipalities to develop a Community Benefits Charge Strategy to offset the capital costs of growth-related facilities and services. We anticipate an approved 2019 ILMP Update will help Markham develop its future Community Benefits Charge Strategy.

Each recommendation provides value and, if properly implemented, will enhance Markham’s overall quality of life and make the city a vibrant destination to live, work, play, learn, grow and belong.

1. ABOUT THE ILMP UPDATE

1.1 Introduction to the Plan

The City of Markham is committed to building high-quality parks, recreation, arts & culture and library systems for the enjoyment and wellbeing of its residents and businesses. Strong satisfaction levels have been achieved through consistent investment and strategic initiatives that respond to the needs of the community, in concert with growth and trends. Parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services continue to be a high priority for City Council, particularly as Markham prepares itself for additional population growth within the greenfield areas and intensified neighbourhoods. Markham's evolving urban structure, shifting demographics and changing community needs present many new challenges and opportunities that need to be considered as the City plans for the future.

The 2010 ILMP identified over two hundred recommendations that have successfully guided the City's investment and policy development in the areas of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services. Given the success in implementing the 2010 ILMP and the variety of changes that have occurred in Markham, the time has come to update the plan.

*M*arkham Council takes pride in the previous Integrated Leisure Master Plan, approved in 2010. It was tremendously successful in expanding the city-wide network and reach of our community centres, libraries, parks, and arts and cultural facilities. These municipal services help us create a desirable Markham, which is key to our economic prosperity.

We continue to take bold actions and embrace change, all for the good of Markham.

Our work is not done. We will focus our 2019 plan on deepening the connections within our diverse and ageing community, while strengthening partnerships, and devising new and innovative social infrastructure and service delivery models to benefit all of our residents, including high-rise neighbourhoods.

Together, we are building Markham. We are building our home.

- *Frank Scarpitti, Mayor of Markham, 2019*

This 2019 ILMP Update will guide the City's provision of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services and facilities to 2031. The Update sets the parameters for investment in the social infrastructure required to maintain Markham's enviable quality of life, making it a vibrant destination to live, work, play, learn, grow and belong.

The 2010 ILMP was the point of departure for the analysis phase of this project, as its recommendations have been reviewed and updated to reflect current circumstances and needs. This Update concentrated on targeted focus areas. This includes facility needs in areas where the City is currently experiencing pressure – such as arenas, sports fields and racquet courts – and facilities that will require greater emphasis and different approaches in areas of residential intensification – such as community centres, libraries and various park features.

The following **objectives** have been established to guide this Update:

1. Update the ILMP background study, including changes in inventories, demographics, emerging sports, activities and trends.
2. Ensure alignment with foundational studies and strategies, such as Building Markham's Future Together.
3. Seek community input through an online survey of residents regarding their leisure needs and priorities.
4. Undertake targeted stakeholder consultation with groups representing: arena sports; sports fields; and racquet sports, including pickleball.
5. Develop provision strategies, including innovative approaches.
6. Assess the implications of intensification and growth.
7. Update the 2010 ILMP recommendations and implementation timeline for specific areas, including:
 - a. changes to park programming and design;
 - b. provision standards for ice pads, cricket pitches, pickleball courts and baseball diamonds; and
 - c. provision standards for library space and recommended facility strategy.
8. Prepare a final report that will guide future service, capital and financial planning efforts.

Scope of the ILMP Update

The scope of this Update is different from that of the 2010 ILMP in the following ways:

- This Update placed a greater focus on intensification areas for the delivery of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services. Given the context of the 2014 Official Plan and the need to plan for Markham's current and future intensification areas (characterized by high-density, transit-supportive and mixed-use design), Section 10 of this Update includes recommended and innovative strategies for the provision of community services and facilities to meet the needs of residents living in vertical neighbourhoods.
- The 2019 Update focused on the target areas described above.
- The 2010 geographic boundaries of the ILMP Service Areas have not been changed for the purposes of this Update. Updating the boundaries to reflect population growth should be considered as part of the next update.
- The identification of detailed financial requirements and funding sources are outside the scope of the project. In light of the substantive changes proposed by the Provincial government, there is too much uncertainty regarding funding sources to complete a financing plan at this time. It is anticipated that this plan, if approved, will be used to inform and guide multi-year and annual financial planning, with more detailed analysis being completed at that time.

1.2 About Markham

The City of Markham is a municipality of nearly 350,000 residents centrally located in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Markham was incorporated as a City in 2012 and abuts the City of Toronto, City of Vaughan, City of Richmond Hill, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and City of Pickering. The City includes four historic communities: Markham Village, Milliken, Thornhill and Unionville.

Markham is a prosperous and dynamic community that continues to experience remarkable growth. Founded in the 1790s, Markham has evolved into a diverse community, enjoying a rich heritage, outstanding community planning and facilities and services, and a thriving local economy with an inspirational vision for the future. By providing exemplary leadership, Markham has developed a reputation for prudent fiscal management while continuing to enhance service levels to its residents through investment in state-of-the-art facilities, enhanced community planning, substantial infrastructure investment and the introduction of innovative green initiatives.

The unique characteristics of Markham, from having a deeply rooted heritage, combined with a progressive approach to government, has made it one of the best municipalities within the GTA for both residents and businesses alike. The diversity within the community has attracted more residents as the City continues to enjoy population growth. High-value businesses remain committed to their presence here and help towards creating a strong foundation for re-investment, aiding economic prosperity. As we move forward, Markham will maintain its commitments towards making the municipality an enviable and thriving region, as well as maintaining its hard earned and well-deserved reputation.



1.3 Alignment to City of Markham's Strategies

The recommendations of the 2019 ILMP Update are informed by relevant current City strategies and plans, including:

- 2020 Economic Strategy (2016 update)
- Asset Management Plan (2016)
- Building Markham's Future Together, Strategic Plan (2015-2019)
- Culture Policy & Plan (2012)
- Destination Markham (underway)
- Development Charges Background Study (2017)
- Digital Markham Strategy (2016)
- Diversity Action Plan (2010)
- Greenprint Sustainability Plan (2011)
- Library Strategic Plan (2015-2019)
- Lifecycle Reserve Study (ongoing)
- Official Plan (2014)
- Older Adult Strategy (2017)
- Parkland Dedication Report (2013)
- Parkland Provision Strategy (underway)
- Parks Renaissance Strategy (2016)
- Pathway and Trails Master Plan (2009)
- Public Realm Strategic Plan (2014)
- Sport Development Plan (2017)

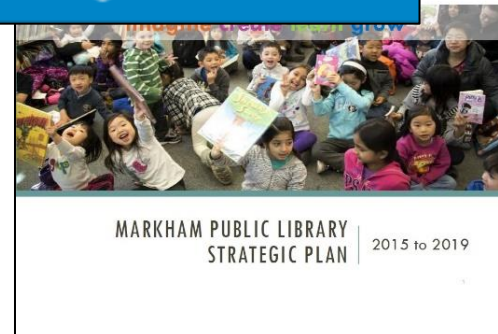
Should this plan receive Council approval, other strategies and plans will undertake the necessary actions to align with this plan.



OFFICIAL PLAN POLICY

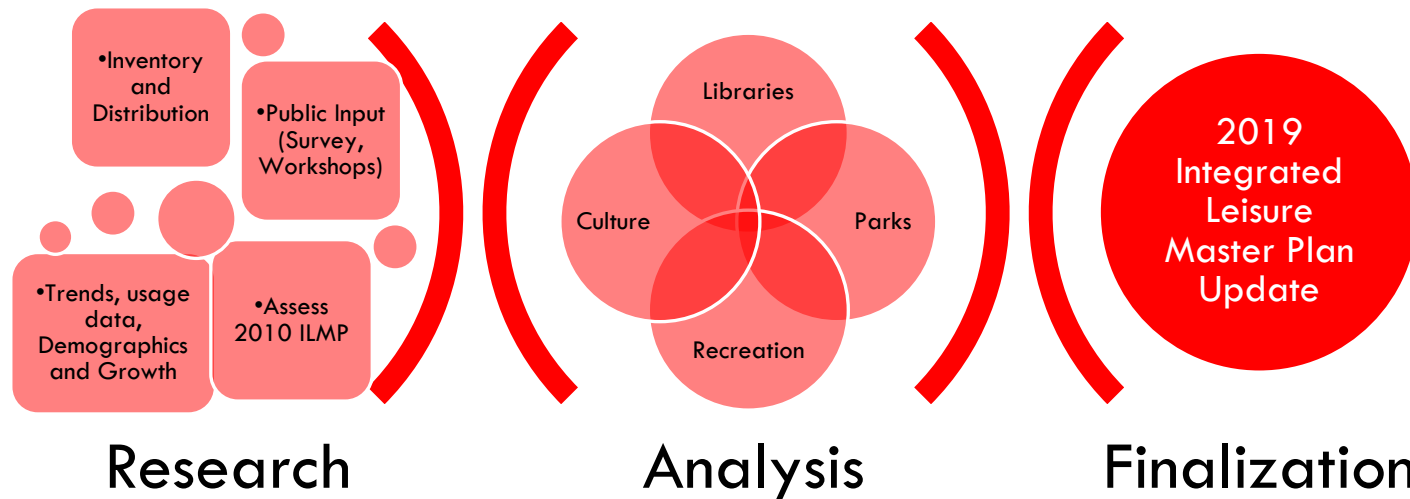
Section 4.2.1.2 of the 2014 Markham Official Plan indicates that it is a policy of Council:

To support the development and implementation of Markham's Integrated Leisure Master Plan and the strategic plans of other community infrastructure providers."



1.4 Our Planning Process

The 2019 ILMP Update was initiated in late 2017 and was undertaken in three stages:



Monteith Brown Planning Consultants was retained to assist with the ILMP Update. A Project Team consisting of representatives from the following service areas was responsible for developing the 2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan Update:

- Community & Fire Services Commissioner's Office
- Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship
- Markham Public Library
- Parks & Open Space Development (Planning & Urban Design)
- Parks, Horticulture and Forestry (Operations)
- Recreation Services

Together, these departments will be responsible for the implementation of the approved 2019 ILMP Update.

Project Considerations

The 2019 ILMP Update makes use of provision targets that will help Markham identify and plan for new facilities and parks. These targets are based upon a combination of market-driven factors (such as demand, trends and demographics), public input expressing local desires and expectations, supplies in other municipalities, and the past and present conditions within the City. They are intended to be applied flexibly and may be modified over time to remain responsive to needs. Most provision targets are population-based (one facility per “x” residents). For more localized facilities to which residents expect to be able to walk or bike (e.g., playgrounds, waterplays, etc.), geographic distribution also becomes an important consideration. Assessing spatial distribution requires sensitivity, as each community exhibits distinct socio-economic characteristics, built form, traffic patterns and expectations.

For years, Markham’s built form has largely been low-density and automobile-dependent. Amenities have been distributed based on this model through the development of a network of larger, community-level facilities. However, residential intensification has led to changes in Markham’s urban form. Many of these areas will be characterized by dense populations, high-rise buildings, mixed land uses, and access to transit and alternative transportation choices. In these areas, the reliance on the public realm to provide respite, accommodate gatherings and protect community identity is heightened. In some cases, existing community infrastructure within these areas will not be sufficient to accommodate new residents. Parks and community facilities are vital to community health and social connections; thus appropriate access is a necessity.

As a directional document, each recommended ILMP action will undergo further analysis or adjustments when it undergoes implementation. The timing and priority of most proposed capital projects are linked to expected participation rates and population forecasts. New information, changing trends, public input, partnership alignment, and the availability of land and funding all have the potential to influence priorities. Implementation of this report should be monitored regularly and the entire plan should be updated as part of a regular cycle.

1.5 Benefits of Leisure

High quality leisure facilities are essential to Markham’s ability to offer efficient and responsive services that meet community expectations. Individuals, households and entire communities all benefit greatly from access to quality parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services. These benefits have been well documented and include (but are not limited to):

- Physical health and wellness benefits from participation in active endeavours.
- Intellectual and mental health benefits from access to information resources and lifelong learning opportunities.
- Social benefits from the engagement in meaningful community activities and interactions among residents.
- Environmental benefits from the provision of parks, trails, open spaces and connection to nature.
- Economic benefits from the attraction and retention of residents and businesses who are drawn to Markham’s exceptional quality of life, in part due to the provision of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services.



2. OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The City of Markham has taken significant strides in implementing the recommendations established in the 2010 Integrated Leisure Master Plan. This section provides a summary of the status of the 2010 ILMP, including its key initiatives and achievements.

2.1 Key Initiatives & Projects

Notable achievements and initiatives undertaken by the City are highlighted below. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Park and Facility Development

The City has shown its commitment to equity and innovation through several new facilities, including its investment in:

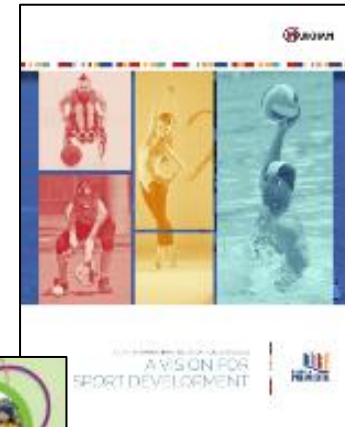
- Markham Pan Am Centre as a sport event destination - York Region's only 50-metre Olympic-sized pool
- Aaniin Community Centre & Library – leading edge, LEED Gold facility offering services from dozens of community service agencies and partners
- Cornell Community Centre & Library – received an Award of Excellence for Innovation from Parks and Recreation Ontario
- St. Roberts Indoor Soccer Dome
- Angus Glen Indoor Tennis Centre
- Markham Civic Centre Outdoor Skating Rink
- Over 90 new parks
- Accessibility Retrofits
- Renovation and expansion of Varley Art Gallery
- Opening of the Markham Museum's new Reception, Exhibits and Collections Building
- Acquisition of land for a future 101-acre sports park
- Creation of the Rouge National Urban Park
- Parks Renaissance Program – reinvestment in existing parks and open spaces to meet current standards and diverse leisure needs



Strategy Development and Service Delivery

The City has also advanced and strengthened its strategies and its approach to service delivery of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services. Since 2010, the completion and implementation of many of plans and priorities were achieved, in the following areas:

- 2014 Official Plan – parkland classification system and policies
- Culture Policy & Plan
- Flato Markham Theatre Strategic Plan
- Markham Museum Strategic Plan
- Markham Public Library Customer Service Revolution – won the Minister’s Award for Innovation (Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport)
- Older Adult Strategy
- Public Art Policy
- Public Realm Strategy and Parks Renaissance Program
- Sport Development Plan – Markham in Motion Program
- Varley Art Gallery Strategic Plan



2.2 Status of the 2010 ILMP

The 2010 Integrated Leisure Master Plan contained 205 numbered recommendations. Of this, 110 recommendations¹ identified project-specific actions and 100 recommendations were best practices that provide overall direction on facility provision and design. The majority of the recommendations have been completed or are in progress. However, over time new options and pressures have emerged. The 2019 Update of the ILMP is intended to address such changes and provide a flexible road map that will guide us through future ongoing change and shifting directions in terms of community needs and priorities.

Of the 110 project-specific recommendations put forward in the 2010 ILMP, 95% (106) were identified for initiation or completion between 2010 and 2019, while the balance are longer-term actions. Of the short-term actions that have reached the target timeframe, **77% have been completed** or are in progress. 23% or 24 actions have not been started for various reasons, such as resourcing, delayed growth, other priorities or a change in direction; all of these have been reviewed through this update.

2010 ILMP Implementation to Date

Action (to date)	Project- Specific Recommendations	Percent
Completed / In Progress	82	77%
No Action / Further Review Required	24	23%
Total	106	100%
Timeframe Not Yet Reached	5	--

The status of the 2010 ILMP recommendations is documented in **Appendix A**.

NOTABLE 2010 ILMP ACHIEVEMENT

All the major facility priorities were achieved, including the opening of three major community centres (including a sport centre) within six years.



¹ Six recommendations were subsets of one larger recommendation, thus there were a total of 210 recommendations in the previous ILMP.

3. COMMUNITY CONTEXT & TRENDS

This section outlines key growth and socio-demographic characteristics in the City of Markham that may impact the demand for parks, recreation, arts & culture, and library facilities and services. Social trends and broader market factors are then examined to develop a more complete picture of service delivery and infrastructure needs. In addition, this section provides a summary of the input received through public engagement activities.

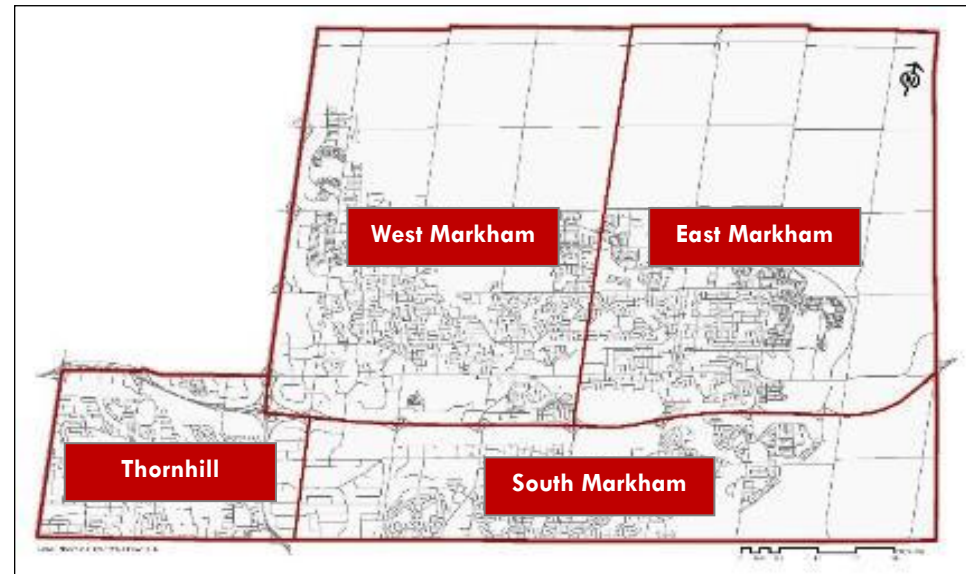
3.1 Population & Growth

Current Population

As the largest local municipality in York Region and one of the fastest growing in Ontario, Markham is a rapidly growing and maturing city. As of July 1, 2018, Markham had an **estimated population of 347,000**² and is forecasted to grow to 460,200 by 2031³, an increase of 113,200 people (nearly 9,000 people per year for the next thirteen years). Several sources of population data were used to support ILMP analyses and recommendations. They included Statistics Canada, the Regional Municipality of York (also known as York Region), and the City of Markham Policy and Research Group.

The 2010 ILMP divided the City into four study areas (Thornhill, South, East and West Markham) to allow for analysis to be undertaken at both City-wide and district levels in support of the principle of geographically equitable facility distribution⁴. These study areas have been defined by major physical barriers such as highways and/or historic settlement areas; most have boundaries that align with census tracts and/or regional traffic zones to improve the ease of data analysis. These study areas remain unchanged in this Update, although the City may wish to reassess their boundaries through the next ILMP Update process.

Study Areas for the Integrated Leisure Master Plan



² York Region Population Estimates, July 1, 2018.

³ City of Markham, Policy and Research Group, Development Services Commission, 2019

⁴ The use of study areas is not intended to suggest that each area should contain the same service provision levels as the needs and capacities of each area are unique.

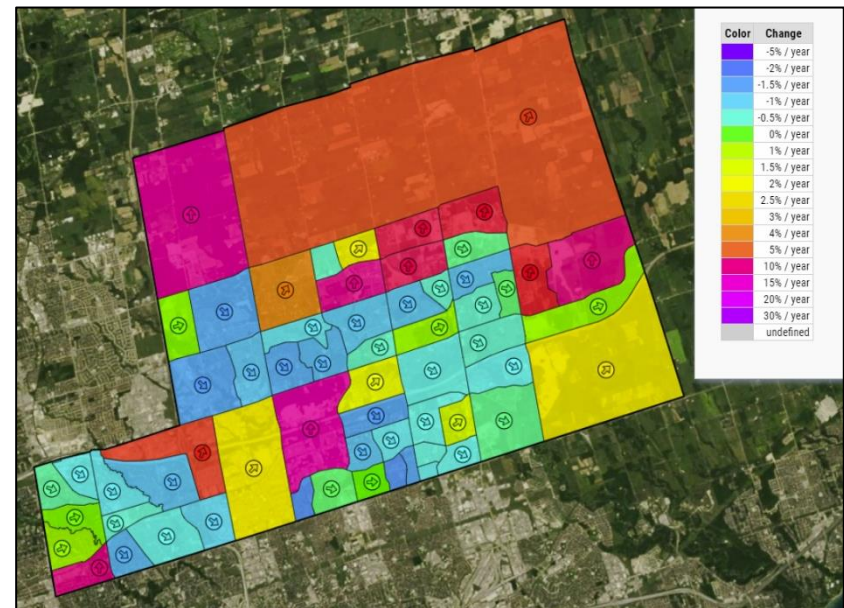
Data indicated that all study areas experienced population growth during the period from 2006 to 2016. The average increase was 26% or 67,391 additional residents. The West Markham and the East Markham study areas experienced the majority of the population growth, together accounting for 55,615 individuals or 83% of the increase.

Population Change by Study Area, City of Markham, 2006-2016 (not adjusted for undercount)⁵

Study Area	Change (2006-2016)	
West Markham	27,172	36%
East Markham	28,443	48%
Thornhill	3,342	7%
South Markham	9,477	12%
TOTAL	67,391	26%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Data has not been adjusted for Census undercount. Totals may not add due to rounding.

This map illustrates the population change from 2011 to 2016. The areas experiencing higher rates of population growth are colour coded in dark orange, pink, red, or magenta hues. The majority of these colour occurred in the West Markham and East Markham study areas.



⁵ Census undercount (also known as census undercoverage) refers to the number of Canadian residents not recorded in the Statistics Canada Census. In each census, despite census officials working hard to count the entire population on Census Day, some Canadian residents are missed and some are counted more than once. Statistics Canada adjusts official population estimates to include net undercoverage estimates (persons missed minus persons counted more than once).

Population Growth

The ILMP provides a means for the City to ensure that new community facilities are provided in a coordinated manner, aligned with growth and emerging needs. The City of Markham is forecasted to continue to experience strong levels of population growth both through intensification and greenfield development, guided by the 2014 Official Plan.

Markham is anticipated to continue its strong growth in intensification through development of Centres and Corridors, including Markham Centre and Langstaff Gateway (which are designated Provincial Urban Growth Centres):

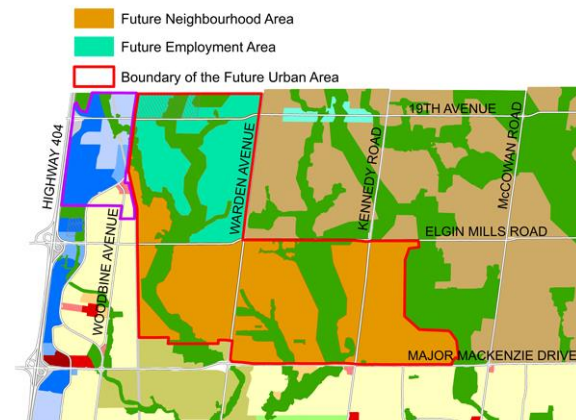
- **Markham Centre** – the City is now planning for approximately 50,000 residents in this area (with a build-out beyond 2031), as well as potentially student needs associated with the York University Project⁶. The Markham Pan Am Centre is adjacent to this community, but this is considered a regional sport destination rather than a community centre/recreational facility serving the community. The City currently does not own land in Markham Centre for recreation or library facilities to serve future residents.
- **Langstaff and Leitchcroft** in the Thornhill Study area – These intensification areas will add substantial height and density to the northern part of the Thornhill Service Area. Langstaff's population at full build-out is forecasted to be at least 32,000. Additional intensification is also anticipated for Leitchcroft. However, the City does not currently have land for the parks, recreation facilities and libraries that will be required to meet the needs of future residents of these “vertical”/urban neighbourhoods.



Intensification will likely be in the form of high-rise apartments and condominiums. Secondary Plans are also underway in certain intensification areas, including Cornell Centre and Milliken Centre, which will guide further infill growth.

The development of North Markham Future Urban Area will be a major source of greenfield residential growth in the coming years. A conceptual master plan for the **North Markham Future Urban Area** was endorsed by City Council in September 2017. This area is intended to accommodate approximately 14,000 residential units (largely low-rise development) with a population of approximately 45,000 persons. New parks and community facilities will be required to serve this area. Secondary plans for this area will identify required parks and other community facilities, with guidance from the ILMP and other background studies.

North Markham Future Urban Area



Source: City of Markham

⁶ Due to the cancellation of provincial funding for the York University Markham Campus, the status, timing and scope of a future campus in Markham Centre are unknown at the date of this Report.

The following population forecasts were prepared by the City’s 2017 Development Charges Background Study. The forecasts are currently being updated as part of the Region’s municipal comprehensive review (which will extend the forecast period to 2041) and through the update of secondary plans. These ongoing revisions will be captured and reported as part of the annual ILMP Update reporting cycle. The map on the following page provides the locations of the planned Intensification Areas and the North Markham Future Urban Area within the city.

Population Forecasts by Study Area, 2016 to 2031 (adjusted for undercount)

Study Area	2016 Population	2031 Population	Growth	Study Area Growth	Proportions		
					2016	2031	Growth
West Markham	111,400	181,000	69,600	62%	33%	39%	58%
East Markham	97,000	110,200	13,200	14%	28%	24%	11%
Thornhill	57,600	67,800	10,200	18%	17%	15%	9%
South Markham	74,500	101,200	26,700	36%	22%	22%	22%
Total	340,500	460,200	119,700	35%	100%	100%	100%

Source: City of Markham, Policy and Research Group, Development Services Commission, 2019.

Note: 2016 and 2031 population figures have been adjusted for Census undercount.

A compact urban form means that land for community facilities will be scarce and costly. Conventional thought suggests that young adults and older adults will be attracted to live in these denser communities due to factors related to mobility, employment, affordability and entertainment. However, evidence from intensifying communities suggests that families with children are increasingly living in high rises or vertical neighbourhoods.⁷

It is clear that new approaches for the provision of ILMP services and facilities need to be examined in intensification areas where vertical lifestyles predominate and families live in tall buildings. Preliminary analysis indicates that smaller housing units tend to result in higher levels of need for community space in the following categories:

- Play space (indoor and outdoor) for children living in housing units that do not include dedicated interior play spaces or backyards.
- Seating/study space for students of all ages to compensate for lack of study space at home, particularly in the case of small condo units.
- Social gathering and meeting space – “urban living rooms” for downtown populations, to serve as places for community interaction.
- High volume of dog ownership – residential buildings need to design their spaces with dogs in mind.

The characteristics of Markham’s various communities are unique, as are their needs. As identified in the 2010 ILMP, it will be imperative to determine what, when and how to meet the needs for facilities and services in areas of urbanization and residential intensification. Nearly ten years later, the demands are on Markham’s doorstep and substantial work remains. Opportunities may be presented through mixed-use developments, services embedded within condominium podiums, strata development, urban parks and privately-owned public spaces.

⁷ City of Toronto. Growing Up: Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities. Draft Urban Design Guidelines 2017.

Planned Growth to 2031 - Intensification Areas and Future Urban Area

- Greenway System
- Transportation and Utility Area
- Neighbourhood Area
- Mixed Use Neighbourhood Area
- Employment Area (including Commercial Lands)

- Future Urban Area
- Intensification Areas

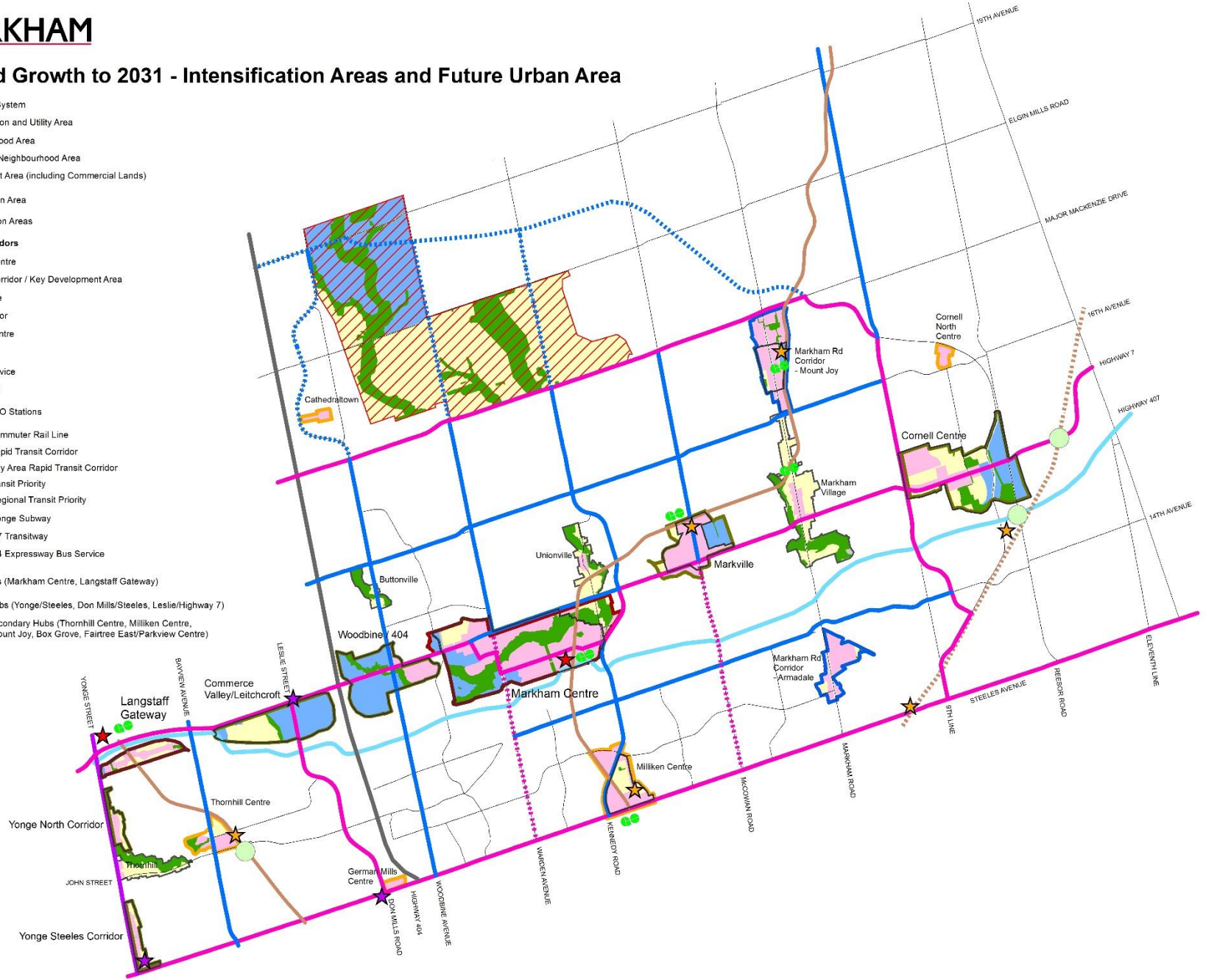
Centres and Corridors

- Regional Centre
- Regional Corridor / Key Development Area
- Local Centre
- Local Corridor
- Heritage Centre

Transit Network

- GO Rail Service
- GO Stations
- Proposed GO Stations
- Potential Commuter Rail Line
- Regional Rapid Transit Corridor
- Special Study Area Rapid Transit Corridor
- Regional Transit Priority
- Proposed Regional Transit Priority
- Proposed Yonge Subway
- Highway 407 Transitway
- Highway 404 Expressway Bus Service

- Anchor Hubs (Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway)
- Gateway Hubs (Yonge/Steeles, Don Mills/Steeles, Leslie/Highway 7)
- Potential Secondary Hubs (Thornhill Centre, Milliken Centre, Markville, Mount Joy, Box Grove, Fairtree East/Parkview Centre)



Age of Population

Age is a significant factor in determining the types of services that are needed – younger age groups are inclined to participate in more physically active forms of recreation, while the propensity to participate in more passive activities tends to increase as a person ages.

Like most communities, Markham's population is aging – its median age has increased from 38.1 years in 2006 to 41.1 years in 2016 (the Region of York's median age was also 41.1 years in 2016). Further, 51% of Markham's population was 40 years of age and over, driven by 77% growth in the older adults over the last ten years. The City's younger age groups are still increasing in sheer numbers, but are representing smaller proportions of the City's population as time goes on. Notably, the City's youth population was the slowest growing age group in this Census period.

Population by Age Group, City of Markham, 2006-2016

Age Cohort	2006	2011	2016	Change (2006-2016)	
Children (ages 0 to 9)	29,580	33,745	36,140	6,560	22%
Youth (ages 10 to 19)	37,465	40,055	40,320	2,855	8%
Young Adults (ages 20 to 39)	70,980	78,745	83,405	12,425	18%
Mature Adults (ages 40 to 59)	83,400	93,540	97,870	14,470	17%
Older Adults (ages 60 and over)	40,150	55,615	71,225	31,075	77%
TOTAL	261,575	301,700	328,960	67,385	26%
Median Age	38.1 years	39.6 years	41.1 years		

Source: Statistics Canada, Census

Data has not been adjusted for Census undercount. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Population by Age Group and Study Area, City of Markham, 2016

2016 Population	West Markham		East Markham		Thornhill		South Markham		TOTAL
Children (ages 0 to 9)	11,045	10.6%	11,500	13.0%	4,175	8.2%	9,420	11.0%	36,140
Youth (ages 10 to 19)	13,345	12.9%	11,275	12.7%	4,980	9.8%	10,720	12.5%	40,320
Yong Adults (ages 20 to 39)	25,450	24.5%	21,475	24.3%	12,300	24.3%	24,180	28.1%	83,405
Mature Adults (ages 40 to 59)	32,380	31.2%	26,550	30.0%	14,625	28.9%	24,315	28.3%	97,870
Older Adults (ages 60 and over)	21,555	20.8%	17,740	20.0%	14,570	28.8%	17,360	20.2%	71,225
TOTAL	103,775	100%	88,540	100%	50,650	100%	85,995	100%	328,960

Source: Statistics Canada, Census

Data has not been adjusted for Census undercount. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Although detailed age cohort forecasts are not available for the City of Markham, it is anticipated that the aging of the population will continue. The City's Older Adult Strategy forecasted that the number of residents age 65 and over will increase by 123% between 2011 and 2026, compared to only 5% for youth (ages 0 to 24) and 16% for adults (ages 25 to 64).

Another information source to be considered are the age cohort forecasts prepared for York Region as part of the Provincial Growth Plan (see table below). These forecasts show continued growth in the older adult market, but more balanced growth across other age groups, particularly young adults and children. Based on this data, planning for the older adult community should remain a high priority for the City, while there will continue to be increasing needs within the growing child and young adult age groups.

Forecasted Population Change by Age Group, Region of York, 2016-2031

Age Cohort	Forecasted Change
Children (ages 0 to 9)	54% increase
Youth (ages 10 to 19)	10% increase
Young Adults (ages 20 to 39)	43% increase
Mature Adults (ages 40 to 59)	0% no change
Older Adults (ages 60 and over)	62% increase
TOTAL	32% increase

Source: Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041. Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

Other Socio-Demographic Factors

Markham is Canada's most **ethnically diverse city** – 59% of its population is foreign-born and this percentage is increasing. 20,660 of Markham's residents immigrated to Canada between 2011 and 2016, representing 6.3% of the City's population. 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.

Two-fifths (41%) of Markham residents most often speak a non-official language at home. One-tenth (10%) of Markham residents reported having no knowledge of either English or French, the highest in York Region (2016 Census). Top five non-official languages spoken at home include (2016 Census; residents speaking a single language most often at home): Cantonese (19%); Mandarin (12%); Tamil (3%); Persian (Farsi) (2%); and Urdu (1%).



Trends suggest that the proportion of immigrants will continue to increase.⁸ The City is also witnessing a rise in temporary accommodations for international boarding school students. Depending on the prominent regions of immigration, ethnic diversity can have a strong influence on facility design and activity/program preferences, such as increasing demand for cricket and soccer, cultural events and family gatherings.

Parks, arts & culture, recreation facilities and libraries are safe and reasonably affordable spaces for gathering and community building and provide critical spaces that support newcomers and marginalized populations. However, it is noted that many newcomers face additional barriers to participating in recreation activities – past research indicates that 32% of children of immigrants participate in sports, compared with 55% of their Canadian-born counterparts⁹. Common barriers for newcomers are high costs, lack of time, difficulty navigating the system and transportation¹⁰.

According to the 2016 Census, the median **household income** in Markham was \$89,028 in 2015, lower than the Region (\$95,776). However, the disparity between low- and high-income neighbourhoods across the City is notable, with lower-income communities in the south – the prosperity gap is widening, driven by factors such as escalating costs (including housing – 8% of Markham’s households are multi-family) and precarious employment. 15% of Markham residents are in low income situations (based on the Low-income measure, after tax), including 18% of residents age 17 and under; this is higher than the Region (12% and 14% respectively). There are many people in the community with socio-economic challenges and Markham’s leisure services provide critical supports to residents from all backgrounds.



Numerous studies have identified the many barriers that low-income families face in accessing leisure opportunities. In addition to the barriers identified for newcomers – high costs, lack of time, difficulty navigating the system, transportation – levels of access for low-income families may also be affected by lack of awareness of programs, parental mistrust, lack of knowledge about the importance of active lifestyles, social stigma regarding subsidies, transportation costs, equipment costs, and lack of places for both informal and structured activities.

⁸ Forecasts regarding immigration status of Markham residents indicate that, as a percentage of total population, immigrants will increase from 56.94% in 2018 to 62.91% in 2028. Source: *Environics Analytics DemoStats Trends Report* run on March 28, 2019.

⁹ Statistics Canada. *2005 General Social Survey*. 2005

¹⁰ Social Planning Toronto. *Newcomer Youth Access to Recreation in Toronto*. March 2016.

Summary of ILMP Study Areas

The following findings help to establish a profile for each of the ILMP study areas¹¹:

West Markham

- second greatest population growth rate between 2011 and 2016 (13%, a gain of over 11,800 persons)
- highest average household income (Environics Analytics)
- highest growth forecast amongst the four study areas (69,600 additional residents by 2031), representing 58% of the City's growth

East Markham

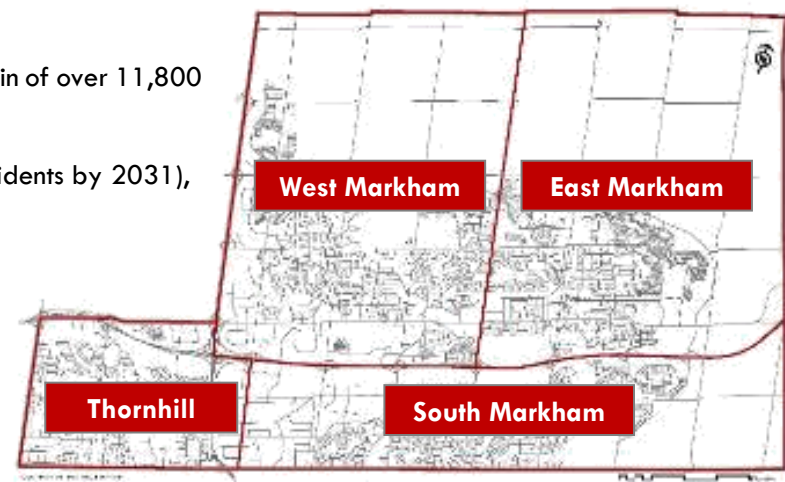
- greatest population growth rate between 2011 and 2016 (18%, a gain of nearly 13,700 persons)
- highest proportion of children and youth (26%, ages 0-19) in 2016
- highest proportion of persons with a mother tongue language other than English or French (77%) in 2016
- lowest percentage of residents that identify as immigrants – 47% (Environics Analytics)
- lowest proportion of apartments, including duplexes – 9% (Environics Analytics)
- second lowest growth forecast amongst the four study areas (13,200 additional residents by 2031)

Thornhill

- highest proportion of older adults and seniors (36%, ages 55+) in 2016
- smallest household size (2.6 persons) in 2016 and lowest proportion of multiple family households (4%, Environics Analytics)
- lowest proportion of persons with a mother tongue language other than English or French (56%) in 2016
- highest proportion of apartments, including duplexes – 39% (Environics Analytics)
- lowest growth forecast amongst the four study areas (10,200 additional residents by 2031)

South Markham

- lowest population growth rate between 2011 and 2016 (11%, a loss of nearly 900 persons)
- highest proportion of young adults (28%, ages 20-39) in 2016
- largest household size (3.8 persons) in 2016 and highest proportion of multiple family households (16%, Environics Analytics)
- highest percentage of residents that identify as immigrants – 63% (Environics Analytics)
- lowest average household income (Environics Analytics)
- second highest growth forecast amongst the four study areas (26,700 additional residents by 2031)



¹¹ Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census; Environics Analytics, 2017

3.2 Trends & Best Practices

Effective planning requires an understanding of existing and emerging trends that may affect needs and demands. Building on the trends identified in the 2010 Integrated Leisure Master Plan, the list below identifies the high-level forces, trends and best practices that are influencing the way in which Markham's services and facilities are provided, now and into the future. Some represent broad, system-wide directions or movements affecting day-to-day operations and spanning various sectors. Many of these have widespread ramifications for the future of parks, recreation, arts & culture and libraries. Other trends, such as urbanization and population aging, are already starting to impact how facilities and services are being delivered. Some, such as climate change and physical inactivity, require a longer-term perspective, but are no less important.

The trends identified below are not intended to be exhaustive or to identify specific implications and responses for Markham, but rather to look at system-wide considerations that may touch on several service areas. Specific implications on the City's parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities and services are addressed in subsequent sections of this report.

Demographic and Social Factors

- Changing Urban Structure – Intensification and higher densities have created land scarcity and need for new service provision models
- Aging Population – Baby Boomers are now “Older Adults”
- Increasing Ethnic Diversity – Emerging Activities and Usage Patterns
- High Levels of Physical Inactivity and Obesity
- Busy Lifestyles – Convenience is Key
- Increasing Economic Disparity – Widening gap between ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’
- Equity for all – Accessibility and Inclusivity
- Surplus School Sites due to aging infrastructure, fewer children and families locating elsewhere



General Provision of Services and Facilities

- Emphasis on Community Partnerships and Resource Sharing
- Rising Demand for Alternative Funding Options
- Shifting Interests in Volunteering and Social Commitment
- Growing Emphasis on Accommodating Persons with Disabilities
- Informed Residents with Rising Expectations
- Demand for Placemaking and Engaging Public Spaces
- Use of Technology and New Customer Service Options
- Recognition of Cost Recovery Targets
- Increasing Segmentation of Customers



The Parks and Recreation Sector

- Growing Interest in casual, drop-in, passive and unstructured activities
- Emerging Activities (cricket, pickleball, picnicking, etc.)
- Increasing Requests for Affordable Programs and No Cost Activities
- Sport Training – Demand for Year-round Access, Support for Athletics and Competitions
- Community Hubs, Multi-use and Multi-generational Places and Spaces
- Need for Facilities for a Growing Population of Dogs
- Growing Interests in Events, Neighbourhood-based Options and Non-traditional Parkland Uses
- Environmental Awareness and Stewardship – Connecting with Nature and reducing environmental footprint



The Arts and Cultural Sector

- Rising Arts Attendance – Focus on High Quality, Value-added Programs and Events
- Recognition of Role in Creating Vibrant and Livable Communities
- Integrating Technology to Provide Engaging Educational Learning Experiences
- Contributing to a Growing Creative Economy and Culture of Innovation
- Recognition of Role in Animating Communities and Building Dynamic Business Environments



The Library Sector

- Emerging Technologies and Shift to Digital (But Traditional Library Activities are still Popular)
- Libraries as Welcoming “Third Places”
- From Consumption to Creation
- Focus on Customer Experience
- Growing Demand for Programs, Events, Lifelong Learning and Academic Support
- Extended Services – Self-serve, Outreach and 24/7 Access
- Co-location with Other Civic Facilities
- Focus on User-Friendly Designs and Amenities, such as Creation Zones and Study/Collaborative Spaces

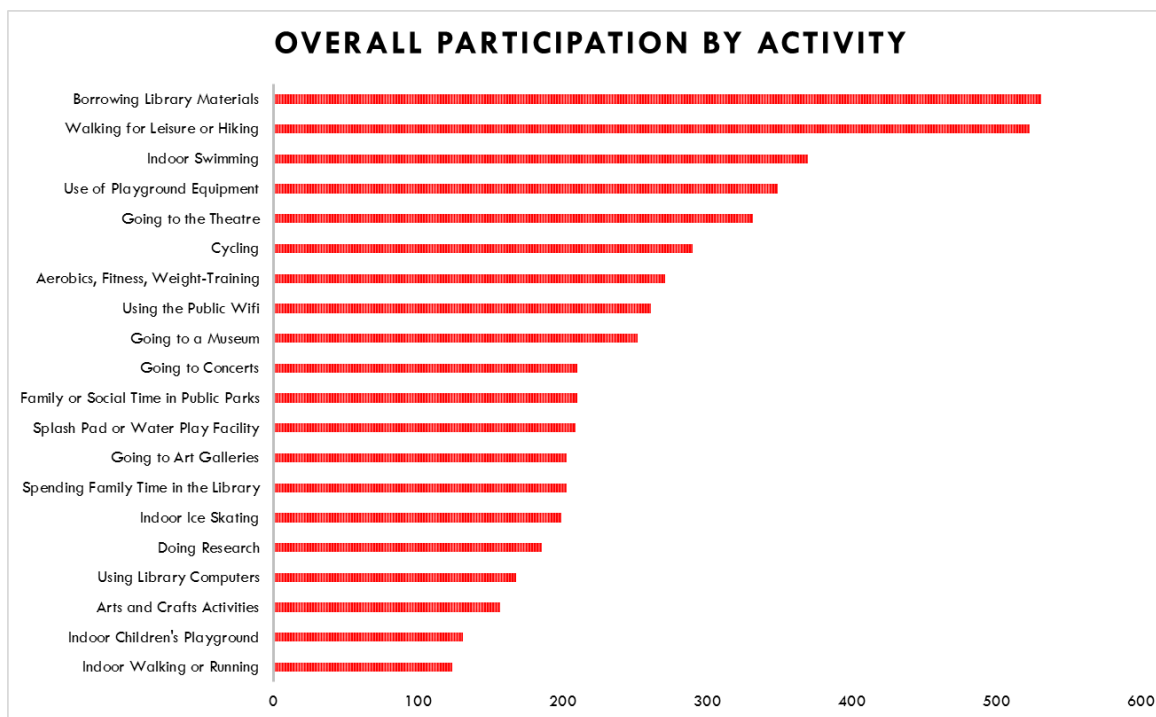


3.3 Community Input (Online Survey)

A community survey was conducted online from March 20 to May 7, 2018 to gather input from residents on community needs and areas for improvement. Given that this was a self-administered online survey, the sample of the City’s population is not random and therefore cannot be considered statistically significant. However, it has been taken into account when using the data to shape the recommendations. The survey respondents mirrored the evolving interests included in the **Key Challenges and Opportunities** section of this report. More specifically, survey responses indicated growing expectations of municipal resources as well as growing needs for informal use of parkland and library facilities as part of leisure opportunities.

Overall, survey respondents participate in self-directed, independent activities that can be easily integrated into their busy lifestyles such as walking, playground use and cycling. They are avid users of similarly unstructured resources like fitness centres and libraries. They are cost-conscious and tend to participate in local programs and events in nearby facilities instead of for-profit activities by necessity. They are motivated to participate in leisure activities with their families and reported a tendency to participate more frequently in activities based on their family status, however, need more flexibility in their choice of activities. Similarly, they are trying to coordinate leisure and recreation activities around family life and are often frustrated when these activities do not occur on a schedule that aligns with their free time. They participate in leisure activities in City-owned facilities, parks and libraries or in their neighbourhood, however, feel that these facilities are often under-resourced to meet their needs and tend to be overcrowded. If given a choice, their resourcing would go toward making outdoor and indoor recreation resources more accessible with increased amenities such as ice pads and pools.

Activities Participated in within the Past 12 Months, ILMP Survey (2018)



The results of the survey are summarized below. For some multiple choice questions, the number of answers may not equal to the number of respondents and the resulting percentage of answers can exceed 100%. Detailed data are contained in **Appendix B**.

Summary of Participation Preferences and Barriers, Online Survey (2018)

	Parks and Outdoor Recreation	Indoor Recreation	Arts & Culture	Libraries
Top 5 Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walking for Leisure/ Hiking 2. Playground use 3. Cycling 4. Family/Social gatherings 5. Splash pad/Water feature 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indoor Swimming 2. Aerobics, Fitness, Weight Training 3. Indoor Ice Skating 4. Children’s Indoor Playgrounds 5. Indoor Running/Walking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Going to the theatre 2. Going to a museum 3. Going to concerts 4. Going to art galleries 5. Arts and crafts activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Borrowing materials 2. Using the Wi-Fi 3. Spending family time at the library 4. Doing research 5. Using library computers
Top 5 Opportunities for Participation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walking for Leisure/Hiking 2. Cycling 3. Outdoor Swimming 4. Outdoor Ice Skating 5. Outdoor Fitness/Exercise 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indoor Swimming 2. Aerobics, Fitness, Weight Training 3. Indoor Running or Walking 4. Indoor Ice Skating 5. Indoor Badminton 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Going to the theatre 2. Going to concerts 3. Going to a museum 4. Going to art galleries 5. Art classes for adults 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participating in classes, camps and programs 2. Borrowing materials 3. Attending events 4. Spending family time at the library 5. Working/Using the library as a co-work space
Top 5 Barriers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of time 2. Located too far away 3. Facilities not available 4. Overcrowded facilities 5. Lack of information 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Times don’t fit my schedule 2. Inconvenient hours 3. Lack of time 4. Facilities not available 5. Overcrowded facilities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Costs too much 2. Lack of time 3. Located too far away 4. Times don’t fit my schedule 5. Lack of information 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of time 2. Times don’t fit my schedule 3. Lack of information 4. Doesn’t have the materials I want 5. Overcrowded facilities

3.4 Stakeholder Engagement (Workshops)

Workshops were used to engage key stakeholders on the key focus areas and create awareness of the ILMP. A total of three workshop sessions were completed in January/February 2018, with 23 organizations attending the following sessions:

- Ice Sport organizations (January 31, 2018);
- Sports Field organizations (February 1, 2018); and
- Racquet Sports organizations (February 15, 2018)

The purpose of the sessions was to provide a forum for targeted stakeholders to voice their needs and concerns, share experiences with like-minded individuals, and discuss priorities and opportunities to be considered within the ILMP. The discussions were facilitated by the consultants and summaries of the sessions were shared with invitees prior to finalizing the record of input. Key findings from the sport-specific stakeholder workshops are discussed in the topic-specific sections of this Plan and detailed notes are contained in **Appendix C**.



3.5 Internal Engagement

In early 2018, internal consultation sessions were facilitated with Members of Council, Markham Public Library Board and key staff. These sessions surfaced valuable and thoughtful insights regarding community trends and constituent needs. Feedback from these consultations has been considered and addressed within this report.



4. KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Development of this Master Plan requires an examination of changes already taking place in Markham and elsewhere, as well as changes likely to impact municipal services and facilities in the coming years. The high cost of infrastructure and service delivery – balanced against the important benefits provided by parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services – require that they are planned and designed to meet both current and future needs.

Viewed through a socio-economic lens, the local challenges facing Markham are consistent with national challenges, such as access to education, access to transportation, the need for affordable housing, increasing rates of mental health issues, an aging-in-place senior population, and the need to be inclusive and celebrate diversity. But stresses and challenges in our community are also opportunities to be intentional and define our shared preferred future.

The community context, trends, public and stakeholder input, and document review provide several valuable insights into Markham’s current state of facility and service provision. The observations address a variety of themes, including population and growth, provision and design, and evolving interests. The challenges and opportunities shown on the following page will have widespread ramifications for the future of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library provision in Markham. Some, such as intensification and changing demographics, are already starting to impact what and how facilities and services are being delivered. Others, such as climate change and physical inactivity, require a longer-term perspective, but are no less important.

Consideration of the implications of these challenges and opportunities has informed the analysis and recommendations provided in subsequent sections of this Report.



Challenges and Opportunities influencing the 2019 ILMP Update

Population & Growth

Greenfield Growth

Addressing needs in North Markham and other growth areas

Residential Intensification

Keeping pace and considering new models of provision

Changing Demographics

Responding to a population that is aging, more diverse, and concerned about affordability

Unique Communities with Unique Needs

Recognizing that resident needs may be different across the City

Potential Post-Secondary Presence

The development of a post-secondary campus would bring students to Markham Centre

Provision and Design

Parkland Acquisition

Adjusting to changing policies, park models and costs (alignment with related studies)

Community Hubs

Positioning Community Centres and Libraries, and working with others

Aging Infrastructure

Reinvesting and updating facilities to make them accessible, efficient and robust

Balancing Local v. Regional

Demand for both neighbourhood activities and multi-use district-level facilities

101-acre Sports Park

Establishing a strategy to address growing sports field needs

Rouge National Urban Park

Supporting the establishment of this unique national park, a great opportunity to connect with nature

Environmental Design and Climate Change

Designing facilities, including parks and amenities to be resilient and sustainable

Working with Others

New partnerships to create more shared uses and unique locations (developers, schools)

Funding

Exploring new implementation strategies and managing public expectations for costly infrastructure

Evolving Interests

Growing Expectations

Greater pressure on spaces and services, such as prime time access for older adults

The Evolving Library

Diversifying through digital resources, creation spaces and flexible services

Casual Use of Parks

Increasing demand for pavilions, washrooms, shade and age-friendly spaces

Emerging Activities

Rising interest in cricket, pickleball, drop-in activities, indoor sports and more

Sport Development

Mounting demand for year-round training and sport development (align with Sport Plan)

5. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The achievement of vibrant neighbourhoods and complete communities requires quality community facilities and services. With growth and evolving interests, residents demand convenient access to parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities and services. By planning ahead, the ILMP contributes to individual and community wellness, goals that position Markham as a healthy city, a city of culture, and a knowledge and technology community.

Vision statements and strategic directions are important tools that can assist the City in decision-making and directing municipal investment.

Since the 2010 ILMP was prepared several key documents have been developed that offer additional direction to the planning, design and provision of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities including Building Markham's Future Together, department-specific plans and sector-specific guidelines such as "A Framework for Recreation in Canada"¹². Equity and geographic balance are the key principles embedded within these guiding documents and forms an important aspect of the assessment methodology used in this ILMP Update.

To provide a strategic foundation to this ILMP Update, this section reintroduces the mission statement and goals embedded within the 2010 ILMP, with slight revisions to align to current conditions and relevant goals and objectives from other guiding documents. They continue to remain valid and reflective of the City's priorities.

5.1 2010 ILMP Strategic Framework

The 2010 ILMP included a mission statement and several goals to assist the City in targeting resources and strategies that respond effectively to Markham's needs and priorities. Together, they represent areas where the collective and integrated efforts of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library staff – in concert with community partners and stakeholders – are needed to provide specific focus and targeted resources.

Mission Statement – 2010 ILMP

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.

¹² Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2015. <https://www.cpra.ca/about-the-framework>

Goals – ILMP Update

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 city-wide needs.
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.
3. **Adapt Approaches to Provision of Leisure Services in Intensification Areas:** Seek opportunities to create multipurpose flexible spaces within residential/office/retail buildings within growth centres and pursue shared uses with others such as schools.
4. **Economic Strategies for Markham – Focusing on the Creative Knowledge-Based Economy:** To align leisure services with the Markham Economic Strategy, reinforcing Markham's position as one of Canada's leading communities.
5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **Inclusion, Access and Equity:** To ensure full and equitable access to leisure services for all Markham residents.
8. **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.
9. **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.
10. **Service Excellence and Leadership:** To heighten organizational capacity and inspire innovation in leisure service delivery.
 - a. **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.
 - b. **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.
 - c. **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.
 - d. **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.

5.2 Building Markham's Future Together Strategic Plan

Building Markham's Future Together provides the blueprint for how Council and senior staff will make thoughtful decisions about the City's future to ensure its success.

Corporate Vision

Markham, the leading Canadian municipality – embracing technological innovation, celebrating diversity, characterized by vibrant and healthy communities – preserving the past and building for the future.

Corporate Values:

- Cooperation and teamwork
- Focus on continuous improvement
- Respect for the individual
- Process-driven and prevention-based strategic planning
- Primary focus on the customer
- Responsibility to society
- Leadership through involvement
- Factual approach to decision-making
- People encouraged to make a contribution



Goals and Strategic Objectives from Building Markham's Future Together 2015-2019 Strategic Plan:

1. Exceptional Services by Exceptional People
 - Improving customer service
 - Transforming services through technology and innovation
 - Strengthening organizational capacity and effectiveness
2. Engaged, Diverse & Thriving City
 - Increasing community engagement
 - Ensuring Markham is welcoming and inclusive
 - Promoting Markham as the best place in Canada to invest and locate knowledge-based industries
3. Safe & Sustainable Community
 - Managing our transportation and road network
 - Managing growth in Markham
 - Ensuring the reliability of the Corporation's services
 - Protecting and respecting our built and natural environment

4. Stewardship of Money & Resources

- Ensuring a fiscally prudent and efficient municipality
- Stewardship of the City's assets
- Increasing transparency and accountability

The City of Markham is currently updating the Building Markham's Future Together Strategic Plan. The 2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan is well-positioned to support the direction of the 2018-2022 Council term.

5.3 Other Notable Guiding Documents

Parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services are developed and provided within the context of an extensive web of local, municipal, provincial and federal laws, strategies, plans and reports. The recommendations contained in this ILMP Update have considered several key supporting documents, as well as the City's past approaches to facilities planning and the current funding environment.

A sampling of key Provincial and National frameworks that have provided direction to this ILMP Update include:

- A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015)
- Canadian Sport Policy (2012) and Game ON – Ontario Sport Plan (2015)
- Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario (2009)
- Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan (2015)
- Ontario's Culture Strategy (2016)
- Ontario Public Library Guidelines (2017)
- Ontario Trails Strategy (2005)
- Parks For All – Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community (2017)



6. PARKS SERVICES AND FACILITIES

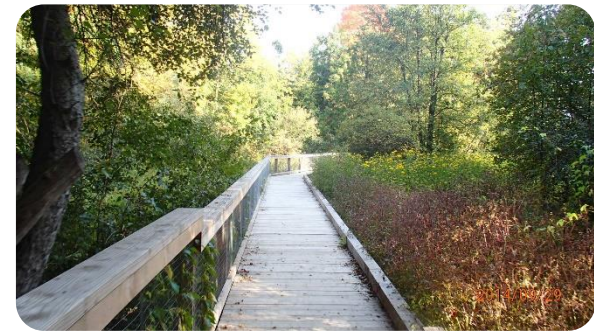
This section contains an assessment of parkland and outdoor recreation needs extending to 2031, when the City's population is forecasted to reach 460,200 residents. The analysis generally adheres to the methodology established in the 2010 ILMP and has been influenced by public and stakeholder input, recent City initiatives, emerging trends and new demographic data. Where possible, provision targets reference per capita metrics as the city's actual population (not housing units) directly influences demand for parks, recreation and cultural programs and facilities.

The City is responsible for the maintenance of over 350 parks and open space properties totalling more than 1,900 hectares and containing hundreds of park assets and recreational amenities. According to the City's 2017 Asset Management Plan, park infrastructure has a replacement cost of \$123 million (2017\$s) and represents approximately 1.5% of the City's total infrastructure portfolio.

'Parks' refers to all active, passive and natural lands owned or maintained under the authority of the City of Markham and for public recreational use, containing facilities such as sports fields, playgrounds, historic monuments, trails, open space, etc. For the purposes of this Plan, the focus is on the assets managed by the Operations Department (Parks, Horticulture and Forestry Division) and the Recreation Services Department.

All inventory information has been provided directly by the City and is understood to be accurate to year-end 2018. The inventory includes City-owned facilities and those that are under municipal control, such as permitted school assets (which may change from year to year). Inventory management has improved considerably in recent years, thus not all facility types may be comparable to figures included in the 2010 ILMP. Maps showing the location of municipal facilities, including sports fields and park amenities are contained in **Appendix D**.

A Note about "Recommended Provision Targets": As described in Section 1.4 (Planning Process), the 2019 ILMP Update makes use of provision targets that are based upon a combination of market-driven factors (such as demand, trends and demographics), public input expressing local desires and expectations, supplies in other municipalities, and the past and present conditions within the City. All provision targets are generally consistent with those used in other municipalities across the Greater Toronto Area.



Inventory of Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Amenities (as at Year-End 2018)

Facility Type	2010 Supply	2018 Supply	Location	Current Population Ratio (2018)
Soccer Fields*¹³	108 (112.5)	117 (129.5)		
Artificial Turf	0	4 (12)	<u>Artificial Turf:</u> Bill Crothers SS (2), Mount Joy, St Robert CHS	1 field per 2,700 residents;
Major lit**	9 (13.5)	9 (13.5)	<u>Major Lit:</u> Berczy North, Bill Crothers SS, Bishops Cross, Centennial, Gordon Stollery, Huntington, Milliken Mills HS, Milliken Mills, St. Brother André CHS	1 field (ULE) per 81 participants
Major unlit	41	47		
Minor/Mini	58	57	<u>Others:</u> Located at a total of 71 parks/schools	
Ball Diamonds*	70 (80)	60 (71)		
Major lit**	20 (30)	22 (33)	<u>Major lit:</u> located at a total of 16 parks	1 field per 4,900 residents;
Major unlit	19	24	<u>Major unlit:</u> located at a total of 23 parks	1 field (ULE) per 115 participants
Minor unlit	31	14	<u>Minor unlit:</u> located at a total of 12 parks # of school diamonds	
Cricket Pitches	3	3	Yarl Cedarwood Park, McCowan Reservoir (2)	1 pitch per 115,700 residents
Rugby Field	1	1	Austin Drive Rugby	1 field per 347,000 residents
Tennis Courts	59	61		
Public lit	14	15	<u>Public lit:</u> located at a total of 6 parks	1 court per 5,700 residents
Public unlit	12	16	<u>Public Unlit:</u> located at a total of 8 parks	
Club	33	30	<u>Club lit:</u> located at a total of 6 parks	
Basketball Courts	19 hoops	34 hoops		
½ court	7	14	<u>½ courts:</u> located at a total of 14 parks	1 court per 10,200 residents (all ages);
Full court***	6 (12)	10	<u>Full courts:</u> located at a total of 10 parks	1 hoop per 1,200 youth (ages 10-19)

¹³ Regarding Soccer Fields, the numbers in brackets express the extended use potential of Lit Fields compared to Unlit Fields, i.e., Lit Fields = 1.5 equivalent to (1) Unlit Field.

Facility Type	2010 Supply	2018 Supply	Location	Current Population Ratio (2018)
Playgrounds	119 locations 159 features	155 locations 207 features	Located at a total of 155 parks	1 location per 2,200 residents; 1 location per 235 children (ages 0-9)
Outdoor Fitness	n/a	20	Located at a total of 20 parks	1 location per 17,400 residents
Waterplay Features	15	26	Located at a total of 26 parks	1 location per 13,300 residents; 1 location per 1,400 children (ages 0-9)
Outdoor Swimming Pools	2	2	Morgan Park, Rouge River CC	1 pool per 173,500 residents
Skate Parks Major Minor	1 1 0	6 1 5	<u>Major</u> : Markham Skate Park <u>Minor</u> : Berczy South, Gordon Stollery, Greensborough Williamson, Ray Street, Saddlecreek	1 park per 57,800 residents (all ages); 1 park per 6,700 youth (ages 10-19)
Off-Leash Dog Areas	1	2	Miller Avenue Off Leash Dog Park, Huntington Park	1 area per 173,500 residents
Outdoor Ice Rinks (artificial)	1	1	Markham Civic Centre	347,000 residents

Notes: *Includes permitted school fields: 5 minor ball diamonds, 3 artificial turf fields, 3 major lit soccer fields, 13 major unlit soccer fields and 2 minor soccer fields.

**Lit fields are counted as 1.5 unlit equivalents (ULE) due to extended playing hours available. Artificial as 3 unlit equivalents (ULE).

***Full courts are counted as two ½ court equivalents for consistency in comparison.

****For intensification areas, further review and interpretation will be required to properly apply the provision target in the context of urban built form.

Population Estimate = 347,000 (July 1, 2018)

6.1 Parkland Policy & Provision

Markham’s parks and open spaces are a vital component of the City’s structure and overall public realm. They contribute to leisure and recreation opportunities, connected and complete communities, nature appreciation, and distinctive character of the City. To ensure sufficient parks and open spaces are delivered to meet the needs of existing and future residents, developments must continue to be planned in a comprehensive manner, ensuring an equitable distribution of parks and open space, and keeping pace with growth.

The City of Markham currently maintains a supply of nearly 489 hectares of Active Parks, for an average level of provision of **1.41 hectares per 1,000 residents**. This is supplemented by several hundred hectares of municipal Open Space, as well as lands owned by schools (many of which provide sports fields for community use), the conservation authority and other public institutions. The following table summarizes the supply of active parkland as described at right.

Active Parks Supplies by Study Area (2019)

Study Area	Active Park Area (ha)	Active Park Provision Level (2016 pop.)
West Markham	132.2	1.19 ha / 1,000
East Markham	140.0	1.44 ha / 1,000
Thornhill	78.9	1.37 ha / 1,000
South Markham	137.7	1.85 ha / 1,000
City-wide (2018)	488.8	1.41 ha / 1,000

Inventory Source: Parks Operations (2019). Parks include parcels categorized as Park, Parkette and Strata Park.

Note: Study area population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount. City-wide population source is Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018)

While the City’s current supply of active parkland is 1.41 hectares per 1,000 residents, it is recognized that this supply is enhanced by **school properties that provide sports fields for community use** – fields that the community would otherwise look to the City to provide if they were not available. If these school fields were considered alongside the City’s public active parkland supply, the current level of provision would rise to 1.54 hectares of active parkland per 1,000 residents.

For the purposes of the 2019 ILMP Update:

“**Active Parks**” or “**Active Parkland**” refers to all lands owned, leased and/or managed by the City and classified as Destination Parks, City-Wide Parks, Community Parks and Neighbourhood Parks. Active parkland typically consists of tableland suitable for the development or installation of built recreational amenities (such as sports fields, playgrounds, courts, etc.) that may be used for both organized and unorganized activities, although these parks may also incorporate natural features.

“**Open Space**” refers to sites with no to low development potential and are primarily designated for purposes such as environmental protection/conservation, stormwater management, buffers, etc. Open space lands are not a direct focus of this plan. While the City may choose to assume open space lands, they should not generally be accepted as part of the parkland dedication requirements.

The 2010 ILMP recommended an active parkland provision target of 2.2 ha per 1,000 residents to secure sufficient land for outdoor park and amenities, whereas the City’s 2014 Official Plan (under appeal) states that “the City will seek to exceed a minimum provision of 1.2 hectares of City Parks per 1000 persons...Where Markham communities fall short of active and passive parkland targets as established in the Integrated Leisure Master Plan, these areas will be considered priority areas for additional public parks and open space acquisition and improvements.” (Policy 4.3.5).

On their own, current and proposed parkland dedication tools and funding mechanisms are insufficient for meeting all parkland needs and could lead to declining parkland provision rates across the province. It is becoming more complex and costly to secure quality parcels for parkland within new higher intensity forms of development. Intensification generates less parkland per capita than traditional greenfield development, making it very difficult to accommodate the desired sports fields and other recreational activities residents have come to expect. With more people and less active park space per capita, our existing parks will also feel the pressure and require additional maintenance, repair and revitalization.

In addition, several parkland policy changes and evolving land economics have affected parkland dedication in Markham since the 2010 ILMP was prepared and more have recently been proposed through changes to the Planning Act under Bill 108. The implications of these changes are currently being assessed; however, it is evident that the City’s ability to secure sufficient active parkland supplies through the development process is becoming more challenging.

A high-level projection of future active parkland requirements was completed based on the outdoor facility needs recommended in this 2019 ILMP Update. To accommodate the required parks and related amenities recommended in this Plan, it is estimated that **a minimum of 190 hectares of new active parkland (tableland) will be required by 2031**. With forecasted growth of 113,200 persons between 2018 (the base year for the current inventory) and 2031, this translates into a ratio of **1.7 hectares per 1,000 residents**. This assessment is based on the application of dimensions and grossing factors to account for playout spaces, support amenities (e.g., parking, etc.), setbacks and buffers, and unallocated open space, as well as a small adjustment to account for unanticipated amenities and un-programmed space. Other providers, such as schools, may assist in meeting a portion of this demand. However, school closures and reductions in schoolyard size are threats to the long-term availability of existing and new sports field sites. The pressure for additional municipal parkland provision – particularly to satisfy the parkland needs associated with sports and active recreation – is growing.

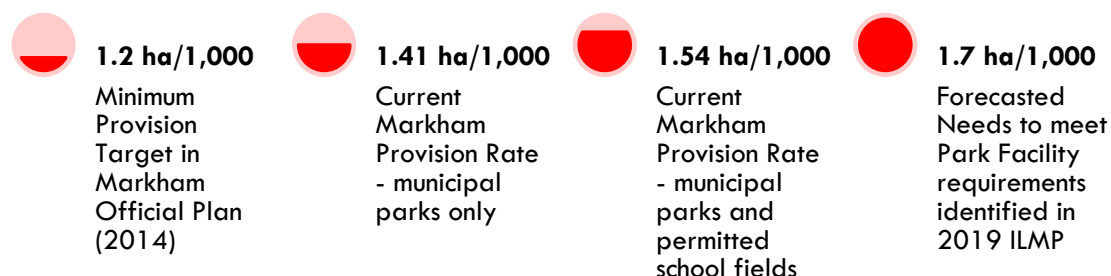
OFFICIAL PLAN AND THE ILMP

“It is the policy of Council...to support the implementation of Markham’s Integrated Leisure Master Plan by ensuring that the standards for the provision of parkland are met or exceeded and that parkland facilities are sufficient to meet or exceed the needs of projected residential populations.”

- City of Markham Official Plan policy 4.3.1.3 (under appeal)

As a basis for comparison, a review of actual provision rates for active parkland in selected communities¹⁴ finds an **average of 2.0 hectares per 1,000 population across the GTA**, though there are indications that per capita supplies are declining. As for established provision targets within this comparator group, these range from 1.2ha/1,000 (Mississauga) to 2.2ha/1,000 (Oakville) – the median is 1.6ha/1,000 (Brampton). While these communities are also facing increased pressure to meet their demonstrated parkland needs, all have established targets at or above the minimum rate prescribed in Markham’s 2014 Official Plan (1.2ha/1000).

City of Markham Active Parkland Per Capita Ratios



These findings support an increased provision of active parkland – in the range of 1.7ha/1000 residents – to serve existing and future residents. To achieve this range, further discussion is needed to identify other opportunities in addition to the minimum provision target set out in the Markham Official Plan (2014). By setting appropriate per capita targets, the City can establish tools and policies that ensure a sufficient supply of active parkland that addresses the needs of current and future residents of all ages. An equitable distribution of parks is critical to developing complete and walkable communities and a range of park types is necessary to respond to the wide variety of needs and urban forms across Markham.

We must maximize all opportunities to provide a quality parks system for Markham residents. While the changing policy landscape has impacted approval of specific policies in Markham’s Official Plan (the Official Plan’s parkland dedication policies – including but not limited to Section 4.3 – are under appeal), it has prompted the City to undertake additional study and justification. As recommended in the 2010 ILMP, the City is currently preparing a Parks and Open Space Acquisition, Design and Implementation Study. The study will take into account recent changes to Provincial legislation and develop a parkland deficiency and acquisition analysis to guide future policies and priorities. It is anticipated that additional options for addressing the gap between active parkland supply and provision will be addressed through this work. Alignment with the ILMP is critical as both reports will become long-term planning documents for the City.

¹⁴ The comparator group includes Mississauga, Brampton, Richmond Hill, Oakville and Vaughan as each of these communities has recently completed and approved Parks/Recreation Master Plans.

Recent and ongoing park development projects and programs may also influence how the City achieves its parkland goals. These include:

- Rouge National Urban Park – The creation of the Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) across the watershed of the Rouge River, and including hundreds of hectares of land along the City’s eastern perimeter, presents an exceptional parkland amenity for current and future Markham residents. As a large and unique Destination Park (see Section 4.3.3 of the Markham Official Plan), attracting residents from across Markham and the Region, the RNUP will provide uses and opportunities not typically provided by City Parks, such as long-distance hiking/jogging/dog-walking, trail biking, fishing, bird-watching, nature observation, camping and canoeing. The RNUP Management Plan includes public activity areas that support family gatherings and group picnicking, as well as community, cultural, artistic and recreational events. The ILMP Survey found that “walking for leisure or hiking” and “family or social time in public parks” are among Markham’s most popular leisure activities, and the RNUP will provide outstanding opportunities for these activities. However, the RNUP should not be viewed as compensating for the parks and open space facilities and services that would otherwise be required under the Planning Act as City Parks.
- 101-acre Sports Park – The 2010 ILMP found support for the acquisition of a large sports park both for sports tourism and to address the needs of intensified areas where sports fields would be difficult to provide. The provision of a large multi-sport destination park would enable the City to meet a portion of existing and future sports field needs (e.g., soccer, cricket, rugby and/or baseball) and bridge gaps created through intensification. This land has been acquired (Warden Avenue, north of Elgin Mills Road – adjacent to North Markham Future Urban Area), but the project is on hold pending further assessment. The strategy of land banking and planning ahead for large-scale needs is appropriate and should be continued wherever possible.
- Surplus Schools – The City has recently purchased two surplus school properties for park purposes and additional opportunities may be presented in the future.
- Expedited Park Development Program – Since 2014, the City set a goal to expedite the delivery of parks with the goal of providing residents access to parks as soon as possible after they move into a new community. Despite these efforts, the timing of park development continues to be a challenge commonly raised by the public.



Rouge National Urban Park

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#1. Acquire active parkland at the maximum applicable rate as permitted by the Planning Act, via the City’s implementing documents. The City should continue its practice of not accepting environmentally significant lands or hazard lands as part of parkland dedication requirements.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
<p>#2. A. Explore acquisition and non-acquisition based options if available parkland dedication tools are insufficient to achieve parkland requirements. This may include, but not be limited to: options available through current planning policies or the Planning Act, land purchases (including land banking; e.g., surplus schools, greenfield areas, etc.), land exchanges, conservation easements and land trusts, partnerships (e.g., long-term land leases, joint-use agreements, use of Hydro corridors, etc.), privately-owned publicly accessible spaces, specific Council-approved usage of Section 37 monies, donations, etc.</p> <p>B. Explore and capture opportunities within hydro corridors for sports fields and to serve as linear parks, including multiuse trails for walking, cycling and other non-motorized uses, and off-leash dog parks and trails, thereby connecting neighborhoods, parks (including the Rouge National Urban Park), public access points, and other trail systems.</p>	<p>New</p> <p>New</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>#3. In areas of residential intensification, evaluate existing parks, open space lands and other municipal properties in the area for their potential to accommodate the needs of the additional residents.</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>#4. Develop policies and guidelines to prioritize on-site parkland dedication and ensure front-end acquisition and build out of parkland in intensification areas.</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>#5. Work across City Departments to establish and maintain a single database of active public parks and open space properties in Markham for the purposes of planning, operations and life cycle management. Identify clear roles and responsibilities and develop and implement protocols and responsibilities for updating the database on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>#6. Support the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Rouge National Urban Park initiative, with a particular focus on securing access and promoting its benefits to Markham residents.</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>#7. Enhance City-wide east-west connections to the Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) and coordinate Markham's trail networks and bike lanes to enable easy access to the RNUP gateways and trails from adjacent neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>#8. Facilitate direct trail links and better transit service to Rouge National Urban Park access points, most particularly park welcome areas.</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#9. Actively seek to establish in-park programming and activities with the Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) and partner with community organizations. Work with the RNUP to maximize the benefits of the RNUP for Markham residents, including use of RNUP lands for leisure and recreational activities, such as event spaces, theatre in the park, community gardens, picnic areas, camping opportunities, freestyle bike trails, off-leash dog parks and trails, adventure playgrounds, and winter activities.	New	Ongoing
#10. Collaborate with school boards to identify opportunities to work together in the maximization of existing sites and planning of future park/school campuses, with appropriate adjacencies.	New	Ongoing

6.2 Park Design & Programming

The City of Markham’s parks are vibrant, high quality and well designed spaces that respond effectively to the changing needs of residents. In recent years, the City has placed an emphasis on the development of casual, unstructured use amenities such as skate parks, waterplay features, tennis and basketball courts, as well as a gradual shift toward an urban park level of service¹⁵. Increasingly, the City is designing services and facilities for people of all ages – this includes improvements relating to elements such as shade, seating, pathways, washrooms, open spaces and multi-use amenities.

In terms of who does what, Markham’s new parks are constructed by Markham’s Urban Design Group (Development Services Commission). They are managed by the Parks, Horticulture & Forestry Division (Community and Fire Services Commission), ensuring their stewardship through maintenance, asset management, forestry care, upgrades as they age and resident engagement. Collectively, these two departments work together on the planning and design of new parks.

In 2016, a Parks Renaissance Strategy was prepared that builds on the principles from Shared Places, Our Spaces – Markham’s Public Realm Strategy, as well as the urban design and sustainable development policies in Markham’s Official Plan. The focus of this program is on renewing older parks in the City, as well as engaging the community in the identification of park enhancements. The Parks Renaissance Strategy contains a framework and guiding principles for the re-imagination and reinvestment in Markham’s parks and open spaces to meet current standards and diverse community needs. An implementation program has been initiated that has led to

**Parks Renaissance Strategy
Guiding Principles**

- Inclusivity / Diversity
- Connected
- Innovative & Beautiful
- Responsive
- Sustainable
- Flexible
- Fiscally Responsible

¹⁵ However, it should be noted that park service levels are Council-approved. An urban service level requires approximately substantially more funding on a per hectare basis than non-urban service levels.

park improvements through “light touches” that respond to the needs of changing neighbourhoods. Further improvements will be developed based on community feedback and continued evaluation. It should be noted that any identified projects that exceed the criteria for Parks Renaissance funding will require independent funding complete with the resources to plan, develop and execute.

Compared to past generations, park users today are seeking more choice and better quality amenities and experiences. As the quality of park amenities increases, so too does the cost to build and maintain them. Residents are requesting parks that contain a greater number and variety of hardscape surfaces that can withstand more intense use (e.g., paved pathways), extended use facilities (e.g., lit and artificial turf sports fields), and higher cost amenities (e.g., washrooms¹⁶, skate parks, waterplay pads, fitness equipment), all of which are leading to higher park construction and maintenance costs. Modifications to make parks more physically accessible for persons with disabilities – an objective supported by the City – also puts pressure on budgets and lifecycle programs.

Variety and creativity in park design are important as it encourages unique spaces that foster a sense of place and community pride. However, this too can have an impact on costs due to enhanced design features, use of non-traditional materials and challenges in securing replacement parts. Some level of standardization in park design and development is required to ensure consistency with Markham’s quality assurance guidelines and branding. Standardization will also ensure equitability across the City and support efficiencies in pricing during equipment replacement.

The 2010 ILMP recommended that the City enhance programming and ‘animation’ of parks to maximize their use (e.g., unstructured uses, special events, activities for all ages, etc.). This concept was further defined and guided by the Public Realm Strategy and Parks Renaissance Program. Continued implementation of these strategies is important to engaging the community and supporting the active and passive use of parks through a neighbourhood-based approach.

The following objectives should be used to guide the design of new parks and reinvestment in existing parks:

- Incorporate spaces and amenities encouraging physical activity, wellness and informal use opportunities for people of all ages (as envisioned by the Markham Older Adult Strategy).
- Consider the needs of a diverse and aging population through the provision of washrooms, seating, pathways, picnic areas and pavilions, etc. (shade structures with seats were by far the most requested amenity through the surveying completed by Park Renaissance engagement in 2017).
- Preserve and emphasize natural, cultural and heritage environments, including interpretive content.
- Follow accessibility legislation and guidelines to accommodate persons with disabilities.
- Apply CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles.
- Promote designs that encourage sustainable maintenance practices.
- Incorporate native and drought resistant vegetative features that are biologically robust.
- Utilize materials that are durable and mindful of future maintenance requirements, and consider the total cost of ownership.
- Seek innovative and engaging initiatives that encourage naturalization and environmental stewardship.

¹⁶ A note about public washrooms in parks: Current park policies limit washroom facilities to community and destination parks. Provision of washroom facilities in other types of parks would require Council approval and associated funding.

- Encourage public art in the development of new urban parks.
- Encourage active transportation connections and a linked open space system.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#11. Continue to implement contemporary park design guidelines and practices . This includes (but is not limited to) the provision of park amenities such as shade (trees, shelters, shade sails, etc.), seating, access to water stations, pathways, and signage within new and updated park sites to accommodate use by older populations, where appropriate.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#12. Establish a City-wide sustainable standard of provision for park washrooms , giving consideration to sustainability, financial impact, actual usage and seasonality of use in various types of parks. Consider piloting unique options as a means of testing effectiveness and actual usage.	New	2020
#13. Implement the Parks Renaissance Strategy to enhance existing parks with support and consultation from the community. Have regard to the Strategy’s guiding principles when planning and re-designing existing parks.	New	Ongoing
#14. Ensure that sufficient open spaces are allocated to facilitate informal activities within all types of parks through the parkland design process. Informal spaces should be designed to accommodate casual play, respite areas and gathering opportunities, including enhanced municipal or community programming.	New	Ongoing
#15. Review and expand park permitting policies and procedures with the goal of improving convenience and maximizing community usage of park amenities.	New	2020
#16. Review service levels for park maintenance and woodland management to ensure that they reflect best practices, emerging requirements, public expectations and related impacts on Council-approved operating budgets.	New	2020
#17. Designate multiple existing community parks as “ event parks ” and put into place a plan to install the proper support amenities, features and new permitting options. When new parks are designed, they should be assessed for their suitability for accommodating special events, particularly in intensification areas.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#18. Promote appropriate and sustainable community and public-private partnerships in the municipal parks system in order to leverage additional resources, expedite development, improve accessibility, and enhance maintenance and programming.	New	Ongoing
#19. Review existing programs for community gardens . Develop a policy or strategy for the effective utilization of space for – as well as provision and sustainable administration of – community gardens, including land acquisition, governance, partnership opportunities and site selection, among other areas to be determined. The strategy should include opportunities for accessible gardening to address the needs of the aging population.	2010 ILMP - outstanding	2021
#20. Develop a Shade in Parks Plan to create shaded locations (trees, structures) within existing parks which do not impact active or passive recreational open space.	New	2020

6.3 Soccer & Multi-use Fields

Current State

The City of Markham currently has an effective supply of 129.5 soccer and multi-use fields (unlit equivalents - ULE), including 21 school fields (28.5 ULE). The City has a strong partnership with local school boards for field maintenance and permitting; – school fields account for 22% of the capacity within the City’s permitted inventory.

Since the 2010 ILMP, the supply of permitted soccer and multi-use fields has increased by 17 fields (ULE) – most of these have been realized through the construction of school fields and installation of artificial turf.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Artificial turf	2	1	1	0	4
Major lit	4	1	2	2	9
Major unlit	17	11	9	10	47
Minor	2	11	1	5	19
Mini	4	20	9	5	38
Total Soccer Fields (ULE)	35	46.5	25	23	129.5
Residents per Facility	3,200	2,100	2,300	3,200	2,600*

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area
Includes permitted school fields: 3 artificial turf fields, 3 major lit soccer fields, 13 major unlit soccer fields and 2 minor soccer fields.
Lit fields are counted as 1.5 unlit equivalents (ULE) due to extended playing hours available. Artificial as 3 unlit equivalents (ULE).
*GTA standard is 1 field per 3,500 residents.

Future Considerations

Soccer has experienced tremendous growth over the past two decades; however, the growth rate has stabilized and increases in demand are largely a result of population growth or changing standards of play, such as higher levels of play or increased practice time. Field permits for 2017 were reviewed to better understand usage levels and trends – overall, rentals increased by 12% over 2016. Nearly one-half of permitted fields were rented more than 300 hours during the year (and 20% over 500 hours), indicating a degree of pressure on the current supply. The more a field is used, the more difficult it is to maintain it in a safe and usable condition.

Information provided by the City and local organizations indicates that there are 10,430 registered participants (7,240 youth and 3,190 adults); this includes soccer, football, touch football, ultimate frisbee and other sports that would use a soccer or multi-use field template. Registration has increased by 6% since the 2010 ILMP was prepared. Through our focus group meeting with users, we learned the participants are playing more frequently with an increased focus on skill development as prescribed by provincial sport governing bodies. Utilization of a participant-based provision target is the preferred approach to estimating future needs where participation data is available as it better accounts for local demand factors. The City is currently providing one field for every 81 registered rectangular field users.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one soccer field per 85 registered participants. Employing this standard, the City currently has a sufficient supply of outdoor fields, but will require an additional 22.5 fields by 2031, assuming that current participation rates remain stable.

Projection of Soccer Field Needs

Year	Youth Pop. (5-19)	Estimated Youth Participants (12.2% participation rate)	Adult Pop. (20-49)	Estimated Adult Participants (2.4% participation rate)	Estimated Total Participants	Provision Target	
						1 field (ULE) per 85 participants	
						Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2016	59,400	7,240	131,825	3,190	10,430	122.5	7.0
2031	20% more	8,690	33% more	4,240	12,930	152.0	(22.5)

2016 population source: 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

2031 population source: Region-wide estimates from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041.

Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

To achieve the additional 22.5 fields (unlit equivalents), new fields will be required through park development projects. Opportunities to enhance existing fields with lighting within current parks may also assist in adding capacity. The proposed large sports park is a key initiative that will enable the City to meet long-term soccer and multi-use field needs, particularly for hosting tournaments and competitive play.

Local sports organizations expressed demand for additional fields, particularly 9v9 fields (introduced through the LTPD model) and lit artificial turf fields. Interest was also identified for a multi-use stadium. As a stadium is not required to meet community-level needs – but rather to host competitions, events and potentially higher-level sport teams – it is best assessed through a separate needs and economic impact assessment.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#21. Provide 22.5 additional soccer fields (unlit equivalents; including school fields permitted by the City) to satisfy growth requirements and demand to 2031 to meet the City-wide target of 152 fields. These should be provided through new park construction, lighting or improvements at existing parks. Multi-field development is preferred and design should consider field dimensions articulated by the Ontario Soccer Association's Long Term Player Development model (e.g., 9v9, etc.). At its discretion, and subject to monitoring participation rates, the City may choose to provide more fields than are recommended based on geographic distribution and demand for casual use.	2010 ILMP - updated	2019-2031
#22. Consult with soccer clubs to support higher playing capacities by enhancing existing soccer fields through field-resizing and multi-sport lining.	New	2020

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#23. Conduct a feasibility study on the usage of primetime artificial turf soccer fields to examine how best to maximize facility usage for defined seasonal periods.	New	Ongoing
#24. Monitor demand for rugby fields and work with local clubs and other field providers to ensure that long-term needs are addressed.	New	Ongoing

6.4 Ball Diamonds

Current State

The City of Markham's current effective supply of ball diamonds is 71 unlit equivalents (where lit diamond as being equal to 1.5 unlit diamonds due to extended play opportunities). This includes 22 major lit (33 unlit equivalents - ULE), 24 major unlit and 14 minor unlit diamonds; the supply includes school diamonds that are permitted by the City. The supply is unchanged since the 2010 ILMP, although some diamonds may have been reclassified through the upgrading of selected diamonds.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Baseball - major lit	8	2	5	7	22
Baseball - major unlit	6	3	3	12	24
Baseball - minor unlit	6	2	4	2	14
Total Ball Diamonds (ULE)	24	8	14.5	24.5	71
Residents per Facility	4,600	12,100	4,000	3,000	4,800

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area

Includes permitted school fields: 5 minor ball diamonds.

Lit fields are counted as 1.5 unlit equivalents (ULE) due to extended playing hours available.

Future Considerations

At the time of the 2010 ILMP, baseball and softball (particularly youth leagues) were experiencing declining participation rates and had been for some time. Recent trend data and input from user groups indicate an increased interest in ball in Markham and the broader region. The surge can partially be attributed to heightened interest in the Toronto Blue Jays, demographic changes and the cyclical nature of sports. It is expected that current growth in the sport will continue in the short-term and then stabilize.

Information provided by the City and local organizations indicates that there are 9,200 registered participants (2,900 youth and 6,300 adults) – unlike soccer, the proportion of players heavily favours adults. Registration has increased by 10% since the 2010 ILMP was prepared, with notable recent growth in the number of youth players. Utilization of a participant-based provision target is the preferred approach to estimating future needs where participation data is available as it better accounts for local demand factors. The City is currently providing one diamond for every 115 registered players.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one ball diamond (unlit equivalents) per 110 registered participants. Employing this standard, the City is currently deficient by 3.5 diamonds (ULE) and will require a total of 108 diamonds by 2031 (28 more ULE diamonds than at present), assuming that current participation rates remain stable.

Projection of Ball Diamond Needs

Year	Youth Pop. (5-19)	Estimated Youth Participants (4.8% participation rate)	Adult Pop. (20-49)	Estimated Adult Participants (4.8% participation rate)	Estimated Total Participants	Provision Target	
						1 diamond (ULE) per 110 participants	
						Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2016	59,400	2,900	131,825	6,300	9,200	83.5	(3.5)
2031	20% more	3,480	33% more	8,380	11,860	108	(28.0)

2016 population source: 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

2031 population source: Region-wide estimates from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041.

Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

The majority of the long-term needs are associated with adult diamond demands – the leisure choices of adults are influenced by a variety of factors and many are more mobile and may play at various locations within the region. **Given this and the recent fluctuations in participation, registration levels should be monitored and the long-term growth target should be regularly reassessed.**

The City has plans to expand its diamond inventory through new park development. It should be a priority to expand the inventory of full-size lit diamonds for organized use. This emphasizes the need for appropriately-sized and outfitted diamonds for adults (primarily slo-pitch, but also hardball). Multi-field (clover-leaf) development is preferred, with lights provided in Community and City-wide Parks. This will improve distribution of facilities, league play and tournament potential.

In addition to new diamond development to serve growth-related needs, the 2010 ILMP recommended that lights and other diamond improvements be undertaken where possible to improve capacity and the playing experience. This direction continues to be supported by user groups. It is recommended that the City revisit its parks capital program to identify opportunities to optimize ball diamonds in cooperation with local organizations.

Recommendation

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#25. Subject to monitoring participation rates, provide up to 28 additional ball diamonds (unlit equivalents; including school fields permitted by the City) to satisfy growth requirements and demand to 2031 to meet the City-wide target of 108 diamonds. These should be provided through new park construction, improvements at existing parks, or agreements with other diamond providers (e.g., school boards). Multi-field development is preferred and design should consider the needs of specific age groups, with a preference for full-size lit diamonds.	2010 ILMP – updated	2019-2031

6.5 Cricket Pitches

Current State

The City currently provides three cricket pitches, including two at McCowan Reservoir and one at Yarl Cedarwood Park. There has been no change in the supply since the 2010 ILMP was prepared.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Cricket Pitches	0	2	0	1	3
Residents per Facility	n/a	48,500	n/a	74,500	113,500

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area

Future Considerations

Markham's diverse population, including residents from traditional cricketing backgrounds (e.g., Caribbean, East Indian, Pakistani, West Indian, etc.), contributes to the local popularity of cricket. Registration in youth and adult cricket in Markham is estimated at 1,760 participants, although clubs have indicated that there is significant latent demand that is unable to be accommodated due to a shortage of playing surfaces. Rental data on the City's current supply of fields confirms that they are highly utilized.

Cricket is similar to other field sports in terms of the time of day that it is played (primetime field use, practice/training on weeknights and games on weekends, etc.). The field surface requires a large amount of space on a natural grass oval with a diameter between 75m – 90m, generally equivalent to 2 hectares of land, including buffers. Cricket requires a space that is comparable to two (2) full-size soccer fields and is challenging to establish within a mature park system due to its substantial land base.

Recognizing cricket’s growing appeal to Markham’s multi-ethnic residents, the 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one pitch per 75,000 residents. This target was verified through consultation with the local cricket community. The 2010 ILMP recommended two additional cricket pitches by 2019, to be located at the Aaniin Community Centre and the 101-acre sports park – to date, neither of these options have been realized. As a result, there is currently a deficit of two (2) cricket pitches, growing to three (3) by 2031. The large sports park may also be considered for the second cricket pitch. If the large sports park does not move forward, the City should examine alternatives, although the land base required to accommodate the sport makes this a challenge.

Projection of Cricket Pitch Needs

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 pitch per 75,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	3	5	(2)
2031	460,200		6	(3)

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

Some cricket organizations indicated that a higher standard of field design and maintenance is required to support their sport. This is a common request from cricket clubs, who prefer turf that is shorter and regularly fertilized, rolled, mowed and repaired. Although specialized maintenance beyond Markham’s sports field standard is not recommended, the City is encouraged to review its practices and communicate its standard to local clubs.

Apart from short-term solutions to the cricket inventory deficit, overlays of cricket pitches on soccer fields are problematic, since they can cause issues related to quality of play and City standards for maintenance expectations as soccer and cricket are cut at two different heights. Also, damage to the facility caused by soccer players can promote dangerous playing conditions for cricket users (holes, etc.)

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#26. Construct three (3) additional cricket pitches (at least one with lights) by 2031. The proposed 101-acre sports park is the preferred location for the majority of these fields; however, additional locations will need to be considered.	2010 ILMP – updated	2020 - 2031
#27. Existing cricket pitches should be optimized and usage opportunities extended. Priority strategies for cricket improvements (e.g., natural turf wickets, netting, batting cages and improvements to infrastructure, etc.) should be identified in cooperation with cricket organizations.	New	Ongoing

6.6 Tennis & Pickleball Courts

Current State

The City of Markham currently provides 61 tennis courts, 30 of which are operated by 6 tennis clubs. The highest per capita supply of tennis courts is in Thornhill, while the lowest is in East and South Markham. The municipal tennis court supply has increased by six courts since the 2010 ILMP was prepared, including the indoor four-court tennis facility at the Angus Glen Tennis Centre.

The City does not currently provide any outdoor pickleball courts; however, this is becoming more common in municipalities across the Province as the sport grows in popularity. The City is planning to develop outdoor pickleball courts in Cornell Community Park.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Club	9	6	6	9	30
Public lit	4	2	9	0	15
Public unlit	8	4	4	0	16
Total Tennis Courts	21	12	19	9	61
Residents per Facility	5,300	8,100	3,000	8,300	5,600

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area; 2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

Future Considerations

Tennis Courts

Tennis courts are neighbourhood-level facilities and their geographic distribution is a key factor in assessing requirements. Participation in the sport has been on the rise since the 2010 ILMP was prepared, driven by the City's older adult population, ethnic composition and success of several high-profile athletes from the area. Local tennis clubs also indicated a growing focus on youth player development. Recent research found that, in 2016, nearly two in ten (18%) Canadians say they played tennis in the past year. Among those that have played, the most common location is an outdoor public court (54%), followed by an outdoor public space or park (30%). In 2016, 5% of Canadians reported frequent participation (once a week in season) in tennis, the same percentage as pickleball.¹⁷

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one court per 5,000 residents, with most courts being provided in complexes of two or more and consideration be given to flexible court designs that allow for multiple uses (e.g., basketball, etc.). Stakeholders suggested building complexes containing four or more courts to enable conversion to tennis clubs in the future. The City's current level of provision is approximately one court per 5,700 residents, which is similar to the municipal comparator group. To achieve the provision target, approximately 31 new courts would be required

¹⁷ Charlton Strategic Research Inc. 2016 Canadian Tennis Brand Health Study. November 2016.

by 2031, an average of two to three each year. Provision rates are lowest in East and South Markham, while growth will lead to additional demands in East Markham.

Provision of Tennis Court Needs

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 court per 5,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	61	69	(8)
2031	460,200		92	(31)

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

Focus should be placed on tennis court revitalization, with consideration to creating multi-use courts capable of accommodating other sports (such as pickleball, basketball, ball hockey, etc.) where feasible. Stakeholders expressed interest in specific design elements – such as acrylic surfaces – and are seeking to be consulted on the design of new or improved courts.

Indoor Tennis

The City of Markham opened the Angus Glen Tennis Centre in 2011 in response to demand from the tennis playing community for an indoor tennis facility. The facility features four (4) indoor hard courts that are available year-round. The Centre has over 1,000 members and operates at near capacity for eight (8) or more months of the year; usage in April to June and September is lower but can be weather dependent as many players migrate to play outdoors. Summer usage is also high due to summer camp offerings.

Indoor tennis is largely played by those seeking club-type experiences with instructional programs and clinics, house leagues and social events, along with those looking to train in the sport year-round. Accordingly, indoor tennis courts have long been dominated by private sector racquet clubs, though many GTA municipalities – such as Markham – also offer a single indoor tennis facility to facilitate affordable access to residents. The growth in indoor sports facilities is driven by an increasing desire to play year-round, as well as recent growth in sports, such as youth and adult tennis. Anecdotal evidence suggests that usage of public outdoor tennis courts by casual users is inconsistent; however, demand from experienced players for higher quality club courts is on the rise. This trend translates to increasing demand for indoor tennis opportunities within a membership structure.

The City of Markham already offers its residents an affordable venue to participate in indoor tennis activities. Tennis clubs consulted for this study indicated that there is strong demand for additional indoor courts to serve growth and an expanding youth program. This facility could take the form of a seasonal sport bubble over existing clubs courts. Seasonal bubbles can be developed to make use of existing infrastructure, thereby optimizing their impact and mitigating costs (including for land acquisition).

Further study is required to confirm market demand for an additional indoor tennis facility, along with possible operating, construction and funding models. It is recommended that the City engage local clubs to further discuss needs and possible partnerships that emphasize financial sustainability

through a user pay model, community access and a site that can be supported by the broader community. Pursuing a private operator would be a good consideration.

Pickleball Courts

Pickleball is an emerging sport and was not considered in the 2010 ILMP. Stakeholders indicate that Markham is becoming a “hub” of pickleball in the GTA. Although the sport is played almost exclusively indoors at this point, there is considerable interest in developing an outdoor multi-court complex to accommodate the growing sport. This could be achieved through purpose-built courts or conversion of under-utilized public tennis courts, although pickleball players will also be seeking nearby parking and washrooms (thus City-wide or Community Parks may be the best candidates). Groups are also seeking additional indoor court time, which places additional pressures on both the Angus Glen Tennis Centre and indoor gym facilities.

Pickleball Canada indicates that it is the fastest growing sport in North America, with the number of places to play nearly doubling between 2010 and 2016¹⁸. Popularized in the southern United States, the sport has been introduced to many Canadian snowbirds and has spread to Canada in recent years. The Sports & Fitness Industry Association 2015 Participation Report indicates that there are 2.5 million people playing Pickleball in the United States, with projections to grow to eight million by 2018. Tennis Industry Magazine reports that 68% of pickleball players are over 60 years of age and fears that the sport may erode participation in tennis¹⁹. The fact that players are largely seniors and retired persons has helped to support the proliferation of clubs across Canada. Most players are recreational, although there is a growing number of competitive players registered as members of Pickleball Canada (including younger adults). It is possible that the demographic may skew younger as it receives additional exposure and children become introduced to pickleball.

Played indoors or outdoors with a paddle and a plastic ball, the sport is a hybrid of badminton, tennis and table tennis. The court is the same size as a doubles badminton court (20 by 44 feet), though the net for regulation pickleball is slightly lower than a tennis net. Many municipalities in Ontario (such as London, St. Thomas, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Mississauga, etc.) have responded to this trend and have modified under-used tennis courts and/or built dedicated courts. Although not ideal, adding pickleball lines on existing tennis courts is a very low-cost method of quickly creating a shared use facility and for testing demand.

With the number of older adults expected to increase at a faster rate than the overall population, continued demand for pickleball can be anticipated. Fortunately, due to the smaller size of the courts, it is possible to fit two to three pickleball courts within the same footprint of one tennis court, making it easier to accommodate the sport within existing park sites. Like tennis, multi-court complexes are recommended.

Potential demand for outdoor pickleball in Markham is relatively untested; however, the growing popularity of the sport – combined with several local requests – supports additional investment. In addition to the two pickleball courts planned for Cornell Community Park, other purpose-built, shared or converted courts should be considered. Due to the strong social aspect of the sport, a location that can accommodate multiple courts (ideally

¹⁸ Pickleball Canada. Strategic Plan. December 2016.

¹⁹ www.tennisindustrymag.com/articles/2015/11/15_pickleball_and_tennis_can_t.html. Accessed January 2017.

four or more) in a location in West Markham should be sought. Monitoring of the Cornell courts should be undertaken to establish a longer-term provision strategy. As discussed earlier, it is anticipated that the sport will continue to be accommodated indoors through gymnasiums.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#28. Add up to 31 new public tennis courts over the term of the Master Plan (by 2031), with an emphasis on providing the majority of these courts in East, West and South Markham to address existing gaps and areas of new residential development. Multi-use court designs that can accommodate other activities should be encouraged, where appropriate.	2010 ILMP - updated	2019-2031
#29. Engage the local tennis community to facilitate the development of an additional indoor tennis facility (e.g., seasonal bubble) in response to demonstrated demand, favourable site conditions and sustainable partnership conditions. A variety of different funding and operating models should be considered. Financial sustainability and community access will be important considerations.	New	2020
#30. Review utilization of existing tennis courts (particularly in Thornhill) to determine whether court resurfacing/relining options are available in supporting other 'in-demand' uses such as pickleball.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#31. Establish a longer-term provision strategy for pickleball . The strategy may consider purpose-built courts, shared courts (relining of public tennis courts) or converted tennis courts.	New	2021
#32. Subject to further analysis, develop a pickleball complex (four courts or more) in West Markham at a site with adequate parking, washrooms and setbacks from residential properties.	New	2031

6.7 Basketball Courts

Current State

The City's current supply of basketball courts consists of 14 half courts and 10 full courts for a total of 34 hoops. The highest per capita supply of courts is in South Markham, while the lowest is in East Markham. This supply is supplemented by courts and hoops provided at schools and residential settings.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Full Courts	2	1	3	4	10
Half Courts	8	1	0	5	14
Total Hoops	12	3	6	13	34
Residents per Facility (ages 10-19)	1,100	3,750	800	800	1,200

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

The City has expanded its supply by 79% since the 2010 ILMP – a total of 15 hoops (4 full courts and 7 half courts). Basketball courts have become a staple in the design of many new parks.

Future Considerations

Basketball is especially popular among youth and the City has made investment in this age group a high priority. Courts are most often provided at community parks; however, accessible locations within neighbourhoods are important and distribution has been an important objective for the City.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one hoop per 1,500 youth ages 10 to 19 years. It was anticipated that demand for basketball courts would stabilize as very modest growth was forecasted for the City's youth population; however, an improved distribution was recommended as several large gaps were noted.

The City is currently providing one outdoor basketball hoop per 1,200 residents ages 10 to 19 years. The City's recent focus on installing courts in new parks has led to a dramatic improvement in service levels in recent years. The current level of provision is slightly higher than that typically seen in other GTA communities. However, there is a deficiency in certain areas of Markham in terms of the full courts required to play regulation basketball games. There are only 10 full courts provided in the City. To address the need for full courts the provision target should be slightly higher than the current provision target, as full court needs are currently under-served.

The youth age cohort is forecasted to increase by 2031, but at a slower rate than the rest of the population. Additional courts will be required to address growth and gaps in distribution. Moving forward, the City's current level of provision – one hoop per 1,200 youth ages 10 to 19 years – is recommended as the target for provision. Approximately 4 additional hoops (2 full courts) will be required to achieve this target, however, additional full courts will also be required to improve geographic accessibility. Any additional hoops that are added should be added in pairs to address the

need for full-court play opportunities. Using a 1.5-kilometre radius, gaps currently exist in East Markham (Markham Road and Highway 7; 16th Avenue and Ninth Line) and Thornhill (Leslie Street and John Street).

Provision of Basketball Court Needs

Year	Population (ages 10-19)	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 hoop per 1,200 youth residents (ages 10-19)	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2016	40,320	34	34	0
2031	10% more		37	(3)

2016 population source: 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

2031 population source: Region-wide estimates from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041.

Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

Recommendation

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#33. Continue to include the provision of basketball courts within appropriate park locations to address existing gaps (East Markham and Thornhill) and areas of new residential development (West Markham). Each major residential block should have a minimum of one public full basketball court, where regulation basketball games can be played. Multi-use court designs that can accommodate a variety of activities should be encouraged, where appropriate. Lights may be added to courts at City-wide parks, where appropriate.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing

6.8 Playgrounds & Outdoor Fitness

Current State

The City of Markham provides playgrounds at a total of 155 sites; these sites contain 207 unique playground features. The highest per capita supply of playgrounds is in Thornhill – however, these are the oldest playgrounds in the City. The lowest per capita supply of playgrounds is in West Markham. Playgrounds are an integral element of a community’s leisure offerings, as they provide spaces within which children are encouraged to be active and build social skills. The modern design of playgrounds involves a focus on providing safe and accessible structures that meet Canadian Standards Association (CSA) criteria, compliance with the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) and opportunities for creative play.

In recent years, the City has introduced 20 outdoor fitness locations to its parks system. These features – along with open space exercise zones – have proven effective at facilitating unstructured physical fitness activities. These locations provide fitness equipment that feature low-impact, joint-friendly equipment that use resistance created by a person’s own body weight. These have been a key element of the City’s Parks Renaissance Strategy and new park builds. Sometimes the fitness features are grouped together, other times they are spaced out to form a circuit along a trail or throughout a park. The highest per capita supply of outdoor fitness locations is in West Markham, while the lowest is in South Markham.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Playground Features	63	55	34	55	207
Playground Locations	47	44	30	34	155
Residents per Facility (ages 0-9)	235	260	140	215	235
Outdoor Fitness Locations	10	4	3	3	20
Residents per Facility (all ages)	11,100	24,300	19,200	24,800	17,000

Note: Population source for playgrounds is 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount. Population source for outdoor fitness is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area.

Future Considerations

Playgrounds are a neighbourhood-level amenity for which geographic distribution must be the primary consideration. As such, the 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one playground within 400 metres (roughly a five-minute walk time) of all built up residential areas, unobstructed by major barriers. The City has excellent coverage in existing residential areas – only one notable gap has been identified at this time (northeast corner of Kennedy Road and 16th Avenue).

Minimum standards for barrier-free accessibility at municipal playgrounds should be established, with a focus on providing barrier-free playgrounds (including rubberized surfacing) in strategic locations and accessible features upgrades to existing playgrounds throughout the City, such as City-wide and Community Parks.

We should continue to provide outdoor fitness locations to encourage improvement in balance, speed, coordination and endurance. They also provide a further engagement option for parks, as recommended in the Older Adult Strategy. It is recommended that the City continue to consider the installation of outdoor fitness stations in new and existing parks where there is a need to improve geographic distribution to the adult population.

Furthermore, the establishment of open space exercise zones – where the community can organize fitness classes (yoga, tai chi, etc.) – should be a focus moving forward. These spaces require nearby access to shade (shelters, trees, etc.) and potentially washrooms. A pilot project should be considered to help gauge demand and design requirements for these spaces, through the Park Renaissance program.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#34. Provide playgrounds within a 400-metre service radius of 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. Design parks to include innovative playground amenities (e.g. accessible play features, adventure playgrounds), where appropriate.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#35. Continue to support the playground renewal program to address aging infrastructure and accessibility requirements. Review and make recommendations on rubberized playground surfaces (rather than sand) in response to community preferences as identified through stakeholder consultation.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#36. Install outdoor fitness stations in new and existing parks where there is a need to improve geographic distribution to the adult population.	New	Ongoing
#37. Establish a pilot project in a community park to gauge demand and design requirements for the provision of open space exercise zones (yoga, tai chi, etc.). At a minimum, these spaces require nearby access to shade and washrooms.	New	2022

6.9 Outdoor Pools & Waterplay Features

Current State

The City currently offers 26 waterplay facilities within its parks, which are available for use free of charge. The highest per capita supply of waterplay facilities is in West Markham, while the lowest is in East Markham. Eleven new waterplay facilities have been installed since the 2010 ILMP was prepared, which has enabled the City's level of provision to eclipse that of most municipalities in the GTA.

The City also provides 2 outdoor swimming pools – one at Morgan Park and one at Rouge River Community Centre.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Outdoor Pools	0	1	0	1	2
Residents per Facility (all ages)	n/a	97,000	n/a	74,500	170,300
Waterplay Facilities	12	5	3	6	26
Residents per Facility (ages 0-9)	900	2,300	1,400	1,600	1,400

Note: Population source for outdoor pools is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area. Population source for waterplay facilities is 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

Future Considerations

Waterplay facilities are interactive amenities with features such as spray jets, water cannons and buckets, often complemented by washrooms, seating, shade and playgrounds, and are required in community-level and City-wide parks. They appeal to young children and families looking for a fun and affordable way to cool off during summer months. A variety of designs and themes can be employed to create unique and engaging experiences. Waterplay facilities respond very well to growing demands for unstructured, spontaneous forms of recreation.

These amenities offer some benefits compared to a traditional outdoor pool given that they are free, drop-in facilities that can be enjoyed by people (often young children) with no swimming experience. They do not, however, provide a true aquatic experience (e.g., instructional and recreation swimming) and are focused on a narrower age segment (usually under age 10). Because they contain user-activated features and do not require lifeguards, they are generally more cost effective to operate than outdoor pools and are available during daylight hours beginning earlier in the season and ending later.

Accessibility is a key factor in the provision of waterplay facilities and the 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one per residential block (representing about a ten-minute walk)²⁰. However, given the growing variation in built form and levels of density per residential block, this 2019 Update recommends a revised provision target of one waterplay feature per 20,000 residents going forward. Forecasted growth translates into a need for six (6) additional waterplay facilities by 2031. In the past, the City has used the terms “major” and “minor” to distinguish between different sizes of waterplay facilities; however, the demand for multiple features at each location means that provision is trending closer to the “major” category and this will likely continue into the future.

Despite their high costs, fluctuating usage and increasing alternatives, outdoor pools are often considered a basic level of municipal service by residents. With the 1960s and 1970s being the golden age for outdoor pool construction in Ontario, many facilities are approaching or beyond their functional lifespan and several municipalities are making difficult choices between closure and redevelopment. In some communities, outdoor pools are being phased out in favour of waterplay facilities and indoor aquatic centres that can be used year-round. The 2010 ILMP did not recommend

²⁰ However, given that the current distribution of “community parks” does not cover all residential blocks, the achievement of this guideline may require some exceptions to the park classification system defined by the 2014 Official Plan (c.4 Healthy Neighbourhoods and Communities).

any new outdoor pools for Markham, although it was suggested that condition assessments be undertaken to identify asset management requirements to safely maintain the City’s two outdoor pools into the foreseeable future. A revitalization project is currently planned for Morgan Pool.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#38. Apply a provision target of one new waterplay facility per 20,000 residents by 2031 (i.e., six additional installations by 2031). Waterplay facilities are ideally located in parks that have access to washrooms and parking; shade is also desired.	2010 ILMP - updated	2019-2031
#39. No additional outdoor pools are recommended, but revitalization of existing assets may be considered. Having completed the feasibility study for Morgan Pool, conduct a feasibility study for the Rouge River outdoor pool to determine demand for a revitalization project.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing

6.10 Skate & Bike Parks

Current State

The City currently provides 1 major and 5 minor skate spots. All 5 minor skate spots have been installed since the 2010 ILMP was prepared. The highest per capita supply of skate parks is in West Markham, while the lowest is in South Markham (which has none). The City does not presently provide authorized bike parks.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Major	1	0	0	0	1
Minor	3	1	1	0	5
Total Skate Parks	4	1	1	0	6
Residents per Facility (ages 10-19)	3,300	11,300	5,000	n/a	6,700

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

Future Considerations

Skate Parks

Markham has recognized the mainstream appeal of skateboarding and wheeled sports through the provision of skate parks, which are well used by children and youth, and an increasing number of young adults.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one major skate park per 7,500 youth (ages 10 to 19 years). At the time, the City had only one skate park and interest in minor skate parks was untested – the City has since expanded its skate park development program and the provision target should be reviewed to reflect this change. Spatial distribution of these facilities is also important given the fact that youth have limited transportation opportunities.

Given the evolution of skate park design and provision in Markham, it is recommended that the City revise its skate park typology to address the variation in design and function. Consideration may be given to using the following typologies: City-wide (e.g., Markham Skate Park); Community (e.g., Berczy Park South); and Neighbourhood. The intent of the Neighbourhood designation is to promote the use of “skate spots” as convenient walk-to locations for beginner skateboarders.

The City may not build any additional City-wide skate parks. Future provision should generally take the form of Community or Neighbourhood facilities that serve more localized populations. The provision target should be adjusted to reflect this shift toward more modestly-sized, local-level facilities – a revised target of one skate park (all types) per 5,000 youth is recommended. This equates to a demand for three (3) additional skate parks by 2031.

Provision of Skate Park Needs

Year	Population (ages 10-19)	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 park per 5,000 youth residents (ages 10-19)	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2016	40,320	6	8	2
2031	10% more		9	3

2016 population source: 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

2031 population source: Region-wide estimates from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041.

Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

Geographic accessibility is also an important consideration given the target market for these facilities. Using a 2-kilometre service radius, notable gaps exist in the following areas:

- West Markham – 16th Avenue and Woodbine Avenue area (community-level facility)
- South Markham – McCowan Road and 14th Avenue area (community-level facility)
- East Markham – Ninth Line and 16th Avenue area (neighbourhood-level facility)
- Thornhill – Bayview Avenue and John Street area (neighbourhood-level facility)

Bike Parks

Unlike some communities, the City does not currently provide freestyle bike parks. Enthusiasts can utilize authorized trails, skate parks and a private indoor bike park. Bike parks offer opportunities for BMX riders of varying skill and experience to enjoy off-road cycling and build skills. Well-

designed bike parks offer a diversity of progressive and technically challenging features such as dirt jumps, ramps and pumptracks. The provision of purpose-built parks is one strategy to help promote responsible riding outside of the natural heritage system (e.g., ravines, woodlots, etc.), which is sometimes used for unauthorized biking that can damage natural features.

Off-road cycling, including mountain biking and BMX, experienced rapid growth in the 1980s and 90s and remains popular among people who prefer individual recreational activities. In keeping with this trend, there are an increasing number of bike parks in Canada, several of which can be found in the GTA. The 2010 ILMP recommended that the City establish a framework to guide the development of one freestyle bike park (dirt) in partnership with the community. However, given that bike parks are not currently a core public service, the ILMP Update recommends encouraging private commercial vendors to address this recreational need²¹.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#40. Revise the skate park typology to reflect the full range of designs, functions and markets (e.g., city-wide, community and neighbourhood). Construct a minimum of three (3) additional skate parks by 2031, with a focus on geographic gap areas (South Markham, West Markham and Thornhill). The parks should be designed in consultation with youth and the skateboarding community.	2010 ILMP - updated	2021-2031
#41. Continue to encourage private commercial vendors to provide freestyle (off-road bike/BMX) parks for Markham residents.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing

6.11 Outdoor Ice Rinks

Current State

The City has one outdoor artificial ice rink, which is located at the Markham Civic Centre. In addition, several volunteer-operated natural ice rinks are offered each year within selected neighborhood and community parks through volunteer and municipal support. Due to safety concerns, the City no longer authorizes ice skating on natural water bodies.

²¹ There is currently one freestyle indoor park facility in Markham.

Future Considerations

Historically, Canadians have had an affinity for outdoor skating rinks and they help to improve access for residents seeking low to no-cost winter activities. While natural outdoor ice rinks are unreliable due to changing weather conditions, artificial rinks are much more costly to build and operate. The City should continue to support community volunteer groups that wish to take responsibility for the maintenance and monitoring of natural ice surfaces (where water sources are provided by the municipality). To assist in meeting community rink demands, the City may also consider designing new basketball and tennis courts as ‘multi-use courts’ so that they may be used as ice surfaces in the winter months. However, such multi-use courts tend to be expensive.



Recommendation

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#42. Continue to support the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program . All departments to increase winter activity programs , as appropriate, through annual operational planning and working with partners.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing

6.12 Off-leash Dog Areas

Current State

The City of Markham currently provides two off-leash dog areas, one more than in 2010. The Leash Free Markham Committee is an Advisory Committee that is run by volunteers and is responsible for the overall organization of leash-free areas under the guidelines approved by Council.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Off-leash Dog Areas	0	0	1 (Ward 1)	1 (Ward 8)	2
Residents per Facility	n/a	n/a	57,600	74,500	170,250

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area

Future Considerations

With pet ownership on the rise, off-leash dog areas are becoming more common in municipalities throughout North America. Research from the Trust for Public Land suggests that off-leash dog parks are growing faster than any other type of park in America's largest cities – the number of off-leash dog parks grew 20% in the past five years²².

Dedicated off-leash areas provide pet owners with the opportunity to exercise and socialize their dogs in a controlled area and these parks also facilitate interaction between pet owners. However, the development of off-leash areas can raise a number of operational challenges, including enforcement, liability, fencing and disposing of waste; most municipalities encourage partnerships with volunteer associations in order to address several of these issues. Site selection is also an ongoing challenge for most municipalities, many of which are actively seeking to enhance their supply of off-leash areas.

The 2010 ILMP did not recommend a provision standard for off-leash dog areas, but did support the creation of additional locations to improve geographic accessibility. In addition, with land use policies encouraging higher residential densities, space for dogs is a growing concern in intensification areas. All high-density developments should be required to provide dog-walking facilities, such as dog-runs and dog-washing facilities. Approaches could include providing smaller dog-friendly spaces to serve intensification areas and localized gap areas; such approaches are being considered in several communities across the GTA. Parkland in intensification areas should not be planned or anticipated to fulfill the requirements of pet owners. The City is currently preparing an Off-leash Dog Park Study that will provide additional direction on their provision and design. *Reference should be made to Section 10 of this ILMP for additional considerations and recommendations regarding park facilities in intensification areas.*

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#43. Move toward the provision target of a minimum of one off-leash dog area per Ward (for a minimum total of 8 locations in the city, of which 2 are existing) to enhance accessibility for residents throughout the City, including in intensification areas.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#44. In intensification areas, high-density development must provide dog walking and dog washing amenities for their residents. The provision of dog facilities (including private off-leash areas) must be required, as a condition of planning approvals, as part of condo amenity packages.	New	Ongoing

²² Trust for Public Land. [2015 City Parks Facts](http://www.tpl.org/cityparkfacts). www.tpl.org/cityparkfacts

6.13 Recreational Trails

Current State

The City currently offers 174 kilometres of paved pathways and trails, as well as a wide variety of sidewalks and cycling routes that form part of Markham's active transportation network.

The expansion of the recreation trail network has been a point of interest for Markham since the 2010 ILMP was prepared. For example, the City commenced the multi-year Rouge Valley Trail project in 2013 to build over ten-kilometres of off-road trail from 16th Avenue and Kennedy Road to Bob Hunter Memorial Park at the gateway of the Rouge National Urban Park. To date, the City has built nearly six-kilometres with more to come. In addition, work on the Rouge Valley Trail continues with the completion of additional six kilometres of multi-use pathways. Work also continues on the Lake to Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail²³, which will ultimately link Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario.

Current trail networks tend to align with watercourses. This has resulted in gaps across the City in terms of walkable access to trails – notably in Milliken, Langstaff, Leitchcroft, Ward 2 and Ward 6.

Future Considerations

Trails are highly desired facilities for people of all ages and abilities, including those seeking lower impact active pursuits. City Parks Staff have indicated that walking trails are the number one request that they hear from residents. The ILMP Update Online Survey found that “walking for leisure or hiking” is one of Markham's most popular leisure activities. Linked trails, pathways, cycling routes and associated support infrastructure are in high demand in Markham and efforts should be made to expand these systems within the City's means and without causing negative environmental impacts.

The City completed a Pathways and Trails Master Plan in 2009, which aims to provide an interconnected system of pathways and trails and provide guidance for future delivery of these amenities. The master plan identifies a city-wide, off-road pathway and trail system that connects destinations within Markham, as well as design guidelines and standards to achieve these objectives. An Active Transportation Master Plan was recently initiated, which will update the proposed network and address regional connections. In addition, section 4.3.4 of the Markham Official Plan provides policies relating to pathways and trails.

²³ A project of the TRCA (Toronto and Region Conservation Authority).

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#45. Continue to implement the City's Pathways and Trails Master Plan (to be updated through the Active Transportation Master Plan) through the proper allocation of project, operational, and maintenance funding and resources.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#46. Continually seek and evaluate opportunities to establish a recreational trail system that safely connects to all neighbourhoods and key destinations within Markham.	New	Ongoing
#47. Develop and implement a policy that clearly articulates the parameters and standards relating to signage at recreational trail access points and along trails . In general, promotion of trails to improve public awareness of trail locations, routes, surfaces and support facilities (e.g., washrooms) should be made a priority.	New	2021

6.14 Other Parks Facilities

Within the City, there are leisure activities and sports that appeal to a narrower margin of the population. Although these pursuits are worthwhile and beneficial, there are limitations on the ability and/or responsibility of the City of Markham to supply such groups with the needed facilities.

Lawn bowling, equestrian riding, track and field, field lacrosse and bocce are just a few sample activities that may use City facilities, parks and trails to some degree, now, or in the future. It is possible that representatives of these sports may request additional facilities in the future. However, many of these and other specialized activities appeal to a relatively small group of residents and municipal funding decisions must consider the number of persons that benefit from an investment in any particular activity. In these cases, the City's role is to monitor requests and to determine if and when participation numbers warrant municipal support, financial or otherwise. The City should remain open to discussions from new and emerging sport and leisure groups and provide advice and assistance where appropriate.

Recommendation

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#48. Develop a standardized framework that guides decision-making for non-core parks facilities and services, and is aligned with municipal principles and objectives.	New	Ongoing

7. RECREATION SERVICES AND FACILITIES

This section contains an assessment of indoor recreation needs extending to 2031, when the City’s population is forecasted to reach 460,200 people. The analysis adheres to the methodology established in the 2010 ILMP and has been influenced by public input, recent City initiatives, emerging trends and new demographic data. Where possible, provision targets reference per capita metrics as the city’s actual population (not housing units) directly influences demand for parks, recreation and cultural programs and facilities.

‘Recreation’ can be broadly defined as activities consisting of all sporting, fitness and physical endeavours that a person or group pursues for the purposes of personal satisfaction and development, physical health and/or competition. Within the context of this Plan, the focus is on recreation (both indoor and outdoor) services, programs and facilities provided by the City’s Recreation Services Department.

All inventory information has been provided directly by the City and is understood to be accurate to year-end 2018; the inventory includes City-owned facilities and those that are under municipal control, such as permitted school assets. Maps showing the location of municipal recreation facilities are contained in **Appendix D**.

Inventory of Municipal Indoor Recreation Facilities

Facility Type	2010 Supply	Change since 2010	2018 Supply	Location	Current Population Ratio (2018)
Regional Sport Facility	0	Markham Pan Am Centre	1	Markham Pan Am Centre	1 location per 347,000 residents
Major Community Centres*	4	Aaniin, Cornell	6	Aaniin CC, Angus Glen CC, Centennial CC, Cornell CC, Milliken Mills CC, Thornhill CC	Major: 1 centre per 57,800 residents
Minor Community Centres (City-operated)	4	Added: Thornlea; Heintzman; Stiver Mill Non-operating: Buttonville CC; Warden House	7	Armada CC, Rouge River CC, Heintzman House, Old Unionville Library CC, Thornlea Pool, Stiver Mill, Unionville Train Station	Minor (all): 1 centre per 27,000 residents

Facility Type	2010 Supply	Change since 2010	2018 Supply	Location	Current Population Ratio (2018)
Minor (Advisory Board-operated)	7	City assumed operations of Heintzman House (moved to Minor Community Centres inventory)	6	Box Grove CC, Cedar Grove CC, German Mills CC, Markham Craft Guild, Markham Village Train Station CC, Victoria Square CC	
Indoor Pools (locations)	4	Aaniin, Cornell, Markham Pan Am Centre	7	Aaniin CC, Angus Glen CC, Centennial CC, Cornell CC, Milliken Mills CC, Markham Pan Am Centre, Thornlea Pool (note: small therapy pool at Thornhill CC not included)	1 location per 49,600 residents
Gymnasiums	4	Aaniin, Cornell, Markham Pan Am Centre, Thornlea (City)	8	Aaniin CC (3), Angus Glen CC (2), Armadale CC (2), Centennial CC (1), Cornell CC (3), Markham Pan Am Centre (4), Thornhill CC (1), Thornlea Gym (1)	1 location per 43,400 residents
Fitness Centres	2	Aaniin, Cornell, Markham Pan Am Centre	5	Aaniin CC, Centennial CC, Cornell CC, Markham Pan Am Centre and Thornhill CC	1 location per 69,400 residents
Ice Pads	10	none	10	Angus Glen CC (2), Thornhill CC (2), Centennial CC (1), R.J. Clatworthy Arena (1), Crosby CC (1), Markham Village CC (1), Milliken Mills CC (1), Mount Joy CC (1)	1 pad per 34,700; 1 pad per 485 participants (ages 5-19)
Older Adult Space	3	Aaniin, Cornell	5	Markham Seniors Activity Centre, Aaniin CC, Angus Glen CC, Cornell CC, Thornhill CC	1 location per 18,950 residents (ages 55+)
Youth Space	1	Aaniin, Cornell, Thornhill	4	Aaniin CC, Angus Glen CC, Cornell CC, Thornhill CC	1 location per 10,080 residents (ages 10-19)

Facility Type	2010 Supply	Change since 2010	2018 Supply	Location	Current Population Ratio (2018)
Indoor Turf Facilities	2	St. Roberts	3 (plus two private)	Milliken Mills Soccer Dome, Mount Joy Field, St. Roberts CHS	1 location per 115,700 residents
Indoor Bocce Facilities	1	none	1	Centennial CC (4 courts)	1 location per 347,000 residents
Indoor Tennis Facilities	0	none	1	Angus Glen (4 courts)	1 location per 347,000 residents

*Major community centres are greater than 100,000 s.f. and operated by the City, Minor City-operated centres are less than 100,000 s.f. and operated by the City, and Minor Advisory Board-operated centres are less than 100,000 s.f. and operated by an Advisory Board not under the purview of the City. Classification system excludes stand-alone arenas.
Population Estimate = 347,000 (July 1, 2018)

7.1 Recreation Service Delivery & Programming

The Recreation Services Department advocates for health and wellness, creating a sense of community, belonging and enjoyment. The Department is committed to improving the quality of life for Markham residents through the provision of quality leisure programming and well-maintained and welcoming community facilities. The Department combines a direct service delivery approach in the provision of recreational, aquatic, camps, fitness and lifestyle programming for individuals of all ages with ongoing community development work with minor sport organizations, community groups, not-for-profit organizations and other key stakeholders. The Department also works in partnership with private operators to supplement the City's services. Through its network of facilities, thousands of hours are permitted annually to various community-based organizations.

The Recreation Services Department extends beyond the walls of the City-owned and operated facilities. The Department builds on creative partnerships to deliver services in schools, parks and elsewhere based on community needs. Through a combination of both direct program delivery and staff support for community organization initiatives, the City strives to ensure a diverse and accessible range of recreational programs and/or opportunities for all ages, genders, ethnicities, abilities and incomes. The City must continue to ensure that delivery approaches are balanced and sustainable. In an environment of declining resources, all efforts should be made to reduce duplication, streamline communications where possible and work toward the common good.

Requests are increasing for drop-in activities (including pickleball), adult recreational league, child skill development programs and academic opportunities. With a diverse population across the City and many other service providers, the needs are different in each community. Neighbourhood-based planning is essential to understanding these unique considerations and possible strategies.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#49. Develop a plan, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to identify opportunities to implement intergenerational programming and under-represented groups as identified in the Older Adult Plan.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#50. Implement an Ability to Pay subsidy for programs for low-income children and families, and undertake a review of fees within the framework of an Ability to Pay model.	New	2020
#51. Develop a gymnasium, hall and room allocation framework meant to support equitable access to spaces for City programs, community rentals and casual use.	2010 ILMP - updated	2020
#52. Work collaboratively across the organization to increase volunteer opportunities for all ages and to ensure volunteer opportunities remain accessible.	New	Ongoing
#53. Implement Recreational Sports Leagues as a skill-based learning progression in recreation sport programming. Commit to the growth of sports programs at all levels as a pathway to the success of Sport Development in the City of Markham.	New	Ongoing
#54. Enhance the growth and functionality of the community hub model , within new and existing community centres and non-community centre spaces.	New	Ongoing
#55. Develop more diverse and inclusive programming for the LGBTQ2 community .	New	Ongoing
#56. Enhance the current Community Service Group Registry Program Policy to support local not-for-profit organizations governed by volunteers who provide community services for the City of Markham.	New	2022
#57. Undertake neighbourhood-based / place-based planning to engage residents in local problem-solving to ensure unique neighbourhood needs are met, and that data is gathered to measure progress and project outcomes. Pilot a neighbourhood team with York Region, United Way and other stakeholders.	New	Ongoing

7.2 Sport Development Program Delivery

The Sport Development Plan was prepared in 2017 as recommended in the 2010 ILMP and spurred on by emerging sport tourism opportunities, long-term athlete development models, high-level facilities and demands for year-round athletics. The purpose of this Strategy was to identify key goals, initiatives, roles and responsibilities related to sustainable athlete and skill development in Markham. An overarching vision was established to guide future initiatives: “To support lifelong active involvement in sport and physical recreation through community initiatives that celebrate and enhance the development of Markham’s athletes”. The sport development staff based out of the Pan Am Centre will be responsible for the implementation of this Strategy, which will include working with local clubs and provincial and national sport organizations. Selected outcomes/actions with relevance to the ILMP Update include:

- Continue to promote, educate and integrate Markham in Motion, physical literacy, throughout all recreation and sport programs within the City of Markham
- Continue to implement strategic events hosting strategy for Markham Pan Am Centre and other City assets
- Develop Sport Park for tournament hosting opportunities
- Maintain and promote facility inventory with all stakeholders
- Host the annual Pickleball Tournament



Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#58. Implement the Sport Development Plan to guide the development of the community sport network and raise the profile of Markham through sport tourism.	2010 ILMP – updated	Ongoing
#59. Develop a plan to support the City's commitment in developing a Sports Park for tournament hosting opportunities and to address field needs for growth centres/intensified areas. Regularly report on the Strategy's progress.	New	Ongoing
#60. Noting that the provision of a stadium with an artificial turf field for local, City and regional events is beyond the scope of traditional parks and recreation services, explore the feasibility of such an initiative at the Sports Park. This would need to be evaluated with consideration to demand, partnerships, funding, operating model, cost/benefit and local impact.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#61. Host a Sport Summit focused on showcasing sport, providing opportunities for networking, training and best practice models related to sport group governance, financial planning, administration and organizational structure.	New	2020
#62. Determine the applicability and implications of the Canadian Sport for Life Model (CS4L) and the Long Term Athlete Development Program (LTAD) on the sport delivery system (allocations) of sport assets in Markham.	New	Ongoing
#63. Through implementation of the Sports Development Strategy, position the Markham Pan Am Centre as an international sports hub .	New	Ongoing

7.3 Community Centres

Current State

The City of Markham has a total of six (6) “major” community centres and 1 regional sport facility, which are multi-purpose recreation facilities that are greater than 100,000 square feet in area:

- Aaniin Community Centre
- Angus Glen Community Centre & Library
- Centennial Community Centre
- Markham Pan Am Centre (Regional Sport Facility)
- Cornell Community Centre
- Milliken Mills Community Centre & Library
- Thornhill Community Centre & Library

In addition, the City operates seven (7) “minor” community centres (less than 100,000 ft²). These local-focused facilities²⁴ offer a variety of different activities, including organized sports and leisure programming, drop-in activities and multi-purpose public spaces:

- Armadale Community Centre
- Heintzman House
- Old Unionville Library Community Centre
- Rouge River Community Centre
- Thornlea Pool and Gym
- Stiver Mill
- Unionville Train Station

²⁴ Classification system excludes stand-alone arenas.

The City is also home to six additional centres (mostly smaller community halls) that are operated by volunteer Advisory Boards but owned by the City:

- Box Grove Community Centre
- Cedar Grove Community Centre
- German Mills Community Centre
- Markham Craft Guild
- Markham Village Train Station Community Centre
- Victoria Square Community Centre

These facilities are mostly used for local activities and gatherings ranging from meetings to weddings. They are not included in the needs assessment due to their unique profiles.

In terms of distribution, all study areas have at least one major City-operated community centre. West Markham stands out as having the highest per capita ratio at 1:111,700 for a major community centre. An additional population of 45,000 residents is forecasted for the Future Urban Area within West Markham.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham*	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Major Community Centres	1	2	1	2	6
Residents per Facility	111,700	48,500	57,600	37,300	56,800
Minor Community Centres	3	0	2	2	7
Residents per Facility	37,233	0	28,000	37,300	48,700
Board-operated Centres	1	2	1	2	6

Notes: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area.

Excludes Markham Pan Am Centre (Regional Sport Facility).

*Centennial CC is located on the boundary of East and West Markham, but has been attributed to East Markham.

Future Considerations

Markham’s community centres are among the highest quality municipal facilities in Ontario – they are spacious, well designed, multi-purposed and located within areas of need. This is supported by Section 4.2.1.5 of Markham’s Official Plan, which encourages the development of flexible multi-purpose facilities that can be adjusted to meet the varied needs of residents.

The City’s model of developing larger multi-use community centres has been successful from both a user standpoint, as well as generating economies of scale in construction and operation. However, as the distribution of these facilities has improved with recent projects – and as the city begins to grow through intensification of existing neighbourhoods – adjustments to this model will be required. Over time, it is anticipated that the City will continue to strengthen its partnerships with other providers and that smaller local-level activity centres or community hubs (with flexible and multi-use spaces) will become the norm²⁵. This shift towards neighbourhood focussed facilities was identified in the 2010 ILMP as a longer-term model, however, the horizon is now at our doorstep given the changes to the city’s growth patterns and land economics. While major community centre development

²⁵ The City’s 2016 Digital Strategy recommends: “Build more collaboration hubs in city spaces, such as community and recreation centres, tailored to the user groups in that area.”

may still be appropriate in the northern part of West Markham, where low-density greenfield development is planned, facility development in existing communities and intensification areas will require new approaches.

The demand for community centres is largely driven by the need for major components, such as libraries, pools, arenas, gymnasiums, fitness centres, etc. An appreciation of these needs (discussed in the following subsections) is required to fully understand community centre requirements. Geographic distribution is also a key factor in determining needs as facilities are needed to support the development of complete communities. Section 4.2 of the Markham Official Plan states that “Community infrastructure will be focused in mixed-use neighbourhoods and intensification areas providing human services and cultural facilities required to meet the needs of people of all ages, backgrounds and capabilities.”



Many growing municipalities have set targets of one major multi-use community centre for every 40,000 to 60,000 population, which generally coincides with the definition of a ‘community’ or collection of neighbourhoods. The City is currently providing one major centre per 57,800 residents. The 2010 ILMP applied a provision target of one “major” community centre for every 60,000 residents. “Major” centres include some combination of the following amenities: indoor pools, fitness centres, gymnasiums, program space, youth space, older adult space, ice pads and libraries. To meet long-term needs, and subject to the pace of growth to 2031, up to two (2) additional major centres may be required.

Projection of “Major” Community Centre Needs

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 facility per 60,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	6	6	0
2031	460,200		8	(2)

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

An additional major community centre serving the northern portion of West Markham (also known as the Future Urban Area) – which is intended to accommodate approximately 45,000 residents and 16,000 to 18,000 jobs – should be a priority. The Angus Glen Community Centre & Library is located on the southern boundary of the Future Urban Area; however, as one of the City’s busiest community centres, Angus Glen does not have capacity to fully serve an additional 45,000 residents at the full build-out of North Markham Future Urban Area. The identification of a site and land acquisition (if necessary) for an additional Community Centre in the northern part of West Markham should be made a priority well in advance of construction. There may be potential to develop a facility on lands shared with future schools, or to leverage sites already in City-ownership. For example, the Victoria Square Community Centre is an older facility on Elgin Mills Road East. As a small satellite facility run by a Community Centre Board, the centre is not able to meet current or growing community needs. However, Victoria Square has the potential to accommodate greater usage

if it was rebuilt as a major community centre with additional components, multi-use spaces and partners (e.g., Region). Additional study should be undertaken to confirm the viability of this or alternate sites to serve the northern part of West Markham.

The northern portion of East Markham (around Bur Oak Avenue between McCowan Road and Ninth Line) also represents a potential gap in “major” community centre provision. The 2010 ILMP recommended a major centre for this area. However, the City’s 2014 Official Plan shifted the expansion of Markham’s urban area westward to the Future Urban Area (i.e., the northern part of the West Markham Service Area). Potential population growth in the East Markham area is now slower than anticipated in the 2010 ILMP. However, in the context of resident concerns about the lack of a conveniently located major multi-use community centre in the Wismer area, the City may reconsider long-term needs in East Markham at the appropriate time.

As the City transitions to urban growth patterns and land costs increase, the large community centre model will also need to transition. One option is placing a greater emphasis on smaller, more neighbourhood-based community centres. The 2010 ILMP recommended a target of one “minor” centre for every 25,000 residents (including smaller Board-run centres). Application of this provision target suggests there is currently a shortfall of one “minor” community centre, growing to five (5) by 2031.

Projection of “Minor” Community Centre Needs (including Board-run facilities)

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 facility per 25,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	13	14	(1)
2031	460,200		18	(5)

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

In the context of intensification, there is merit in re-defining the concept and building programs of future “minor”/satellite community centres. The existing “minor” community centres are largely legacy facilities from the 20th century, conceived and built around one primary function (e.g., ice rinks – facilities with large “footprints”) with a few meeting/program rooms attached. Often inefficient to operate and maintain, such “minor”/satellite community centres should not be replicated.

Going forward, and particularly for **intensification areas**, Markham should develop a new model for minor / satellite community centres as appropriate responses in intensifying areas (such as Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway, etc.) where land costs are high, communities are designed to be “complete” and walkable, and the “big-box” mall concept surrounded by extensive surface parking is not appropriate or sustainable. The new concept/building program – **“Neighbourhood Centres”** – should incorporate the principle of serving multiple purposes over time, through flexible design and accommodating multiple community partners. Planning for facilities in intensifying areas should occur as development applications are received and through the development of secondary plans. Collaborations with schools may also be considered, a concept that is supported by the Greenprint: “Schools can become flexible community resources, offering space to the broader community for recreation, leisure, programs and events.” Furthermore, Section 4.2.1 of the Markham Official Plan states that “Markham will continue to work with its community infrastructure partners to develop new approaches to improve stakeholder consultation and the delivery of services and facilities, particularly in intensification areas, to ensure

that community infrastructure continues to meet the needs of the growing community.” Reference should be made to Section 10 of this ILMP for additional considerations and recommendations regarding community facilities in intensification areas.

Many of Markham’s existing community centres such as the Armadale Community Centre, are located in areas of need and may require renewal and/or expansion to meet future requirements. In South Markham, both Armadale and the “major” Milliken Mills Community Centre, as aging facilities, require further review to understand the impact of the opening of the Aaniin Community Centre. Potential renovation and/or expansion of Milliken Mills will be considered by Council following two full years of Aaniin Community Centre's operation, while opportunities for repurposing or reprogramming at Armadale should also be considered. In 2017, there were over eight million visits to the City’s community centres (**an increase of over 53% since the 2010 ILMP**), with Milliken Mills Community Centre being the most visited facility in Markham. A further consideration for this evaluation will be the proposed Milliken Centre Area of Intensification, at Kennedy and Steeles, which is anticipated to add upwards of 15,000 new residents in close proximity to the Milliken Mills Community Centre.

It is recognized that the development, expansion and enhancement of community centres will be a significant financial challenge for the City. The Development Charge service levels for community centres are currently oversubscribed. Nevertheless, it remains necessary for the City to strive to keep pace with growth pressures and put plans in place to address future needs, noting that new models of delivery will be required. As noted in Section 11 of this Plan, the City will prepare **business plans** prior to developing or expanding major facilities to ensure that projects are aligned with community needs, facility capacities, partnership opportunities and financial capabilities.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#64. Subject to the pace of growth within the northern part of the West Markham area, advance the development of a “major” community centre and library by approximately 2026. The timing will be determined by Council based on considerations such as population growth, partnership opportunities and user patterns. A recommended location is the Victoria Square Community Centre which will address current and future service needs. A phased development approach may be required.	2010 ILMP – updated	2026 (to be confirmed through future study)
#65. Monitor the pace of growth and development in the East Markham area and consider a major or minor community centre in the area east of McCowan Road in the vicinity of Major Mackenzie Drive. A phased development approach may be required.	2010 ILMP – updated	2029-2031

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#66. Implement a new facility provision model (Neighbourhood Centres) that reflects the realities of high-density residential communities, while ensuring convenient public access to needed spaces (e.g., flexible community spaces in private developments and schools). Partnerships, co-sharing of spaces, and other innovative opportunities and tools be pursued.	2010 ILMP – updated	Ongoing
#67. Continue to undertake enhancements to existing programming and community centres based on physical building, utilization rates and program demand requirements. For example, an evaluation of needs and options for Milliken Mills Community Centre and Armadale Community Centre (e.g., repurposing or reprogramming) should be undertaken by 2021 following two full years of operation at Aaniin Community Centre, and prior to the forecasted population increase (17,000+) in Milliken Centre. In addition, opportunities should be examined to maximize use and/or repurpose the indoor bocce courts at Centennial Community Centre.	2010 ILMP – updated	2020

7.4 Indoor Aquatic Centres, Gymnasiums & Fitness Centres

Current State

The City of Markham operates indoor aquatic facilities at seven (7) locations:

- Aaniin Community Centre: 6-lane 25-metre pool, leisure tank and therapy pool
- Angus Glen Community Centre: 6-lane 25-metre pool, leisure tank and indoor splash pad
- Centennial Community Centre: 6-lane 25-metre pool, diving well with spring boards and tot-teaching pool
- Cornell Community Centre: 8-lane 25-metre pool, leisure tank, therapy pool and slide
- Markham Pan Am Centre: 10-lane 50-metre competition pool
- Milliken Mills Community Centre: 6-lane 25-metre pool with a tot-teaching pool
- Thornlea Pool (now operated by the City): 6-lane 25-metre pool

In addition, the City offers a small therapeutic pool at the Thornhill Community Centre. The Markham YMCA also contains an indoor pool that offers community access through memberships, day passes and occasional rentals. Various private operators also provide aquatic services throughout Markham.

The City of Markham offers gymnasiums at eight (8) facilities: Aaniin, Angus Glen, Armadale, Centennial, Cornell, Markham Pan Am Centre, Thornhill and Thornlea. Most of the newer facilities are larger gymnasiums capable of accommodating multiple activities at the same time. Local schools are a major provider of gymnasiums, with many facilities being available for community rentals and City programs.

The City of Markham offers fitness centres at five (5) community centres: Aaniin, Centennial, Cornell, Markham Pan Am Centre and Thornhill. All fitness centres provide exercise areas, free weights, and cardiovascular and resistance equipment; other components (e.g., squash courts), vary by location. The YMCA and private sector are also major service providers in the fitness field, with numerous locations throughout Markham.

West Markham has the lowest supply of all three facility types across the ILMP study areas.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Indoor Aquatic Centres	2	2	1	2	7
Residents per Facility	57,500	48,500	57,600	37,500	48,600
Gymnasiums	1 site (2 gyms)	2 sites (4 gyms)	2 sites (2 gyms)	3 sites (5 gyms)	8 sites (13 gyms)
Residents per Facility	111,400	48,500	28,800	24,800	42,600
Fitness Centres	0	2	2	1	5
Residents per Facility	0	48,500	28,800	74,500	68,100

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area

Future Considerations

Indoor Aquatic Facilities

Swimming is an activity that is enjoyed by all ages and generally constitutes a base-level municipal service in most urban communities. A study commissioned by the Lifesaving Society (Canada’s Drowning Prevention Authority) identified that new Canadians especially those living here for less than 5 years have a higher risk for drowning. Many believe that swimming is a life skill that everyone should learn. Markham supports this through the Swim to Survive program which provides free access to Grade 3 students who learn basic lifesaving skills if they were ever to fall into water unplanned. The City of Markham offers a range of programming choices, including swimming lessons, recreational and lane swims, leadership courses, etc.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one indoor aquatic centre per 60,000 residents, which is the same as the “major” community centre target. Since that time, the City has built three indoor aquatic centres (Aaniin and Cornell Community Centres and the Markham Pan Am Centre) and assumed responsibility for operating the Thornlea Pool from the school board. The new Markham Pan Am Centre is included in this count as it is used by local swim clubs, in addition to events and competitions. Looking to the future, application of the provision target suggests that one (1) additional indoor aquatic facility will be required to meet long-term needs.



Projection of Indoor Aquatic Facility Needs

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 pool location per 60,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	7	6	1
2031	460,200		8	(1)

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

One indoor pool gap identified in the 2010 ILMP has been resolved through the development of the Aaniin Community Centre. One longer-term gap remains in the northern part of West Markham (the Future Urban Area). Although the Angus Glen Community Centre is located in proximity to the Future Urban Area, this facility is operating near capacity and further assessment will need to take place to determine if Angus Glen Community Centre is the appropriate site and whether it has the capacity to support future growth. Moving forward, consideration for additional pools should include an understanding of the impact of the addition of the Aaniin Community Centre. Potential renovation and/or expansion to alternative pools should also be considered by Council following five full years of Aaniin Community Centre’s operation.

As has been the case with all new construction, and/or expansions to, future aquatic centres should be multi-tank venues that can support a range of activities simultaneously.

Recommendation

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#68. Monitor growth and usage of aquatic facilities and evaluate the need for an additional aquatic facility within the future West Markham community centre.	2010 ILMP – updated	2026

Gymnasiums

Gymnasium sports continue to exhibit high levels of demand, especially among youth and younger adults who participate in traditional sports such as basketball, volleyball, badminton, etc. In Markham, there is considerable demand for gymnasiums from the immigrant population, including badminton, table tennis and the emerging sport of pickleball. Several of these sports are offered by the City through drop-in opportunities. With Markham becoming a regional location for the fast-growing sport of indoor pickleball, gymnasium space is at a premium not only during evening prime time, but also daytime.

The 2010 ILMP applied a provision target of 1 municipal gymnasium per 50,000 residents. Growing demand supports a slightly more aggressive service level and a target of 1 municipal gymnasium per 45,000 residents is now recommended. The following table presents an extrapolation of gymnasium needs based on this target. Two (2) additional municipal gymnasiums will be required to meet long-term needs, with the understanding that the City and/or community may also gain access to school gymnasiums to supplement this supply.

Projection of Gymnasium Needs

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 gym per 45,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	8 sites	8 sites	0
2031	460,200		10 sites	(2)

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

Gymnasiums should be supplied in all new “major” community centres (e.g., the northern part of West Markham) and “Neighbourhood Centres” in intensification areas (e.g., Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway, etc.), where space permits or with schools in a shared-use facility. In addition, the 2010 ILMP recommended that the Milliken Mills Community Centre be examined for its potential to be expanded to house a gymnasium, which might require other space to be repurposed.

Recommendation

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#69. Provide gymnasiums (double or triple) in all new or expanded “major” community centres (including the community centre proposed for the northern part of West Markham and any expansion of the Milliken Mills Community Centre in response to the Milliken Centre Secondary Plan) and in partnership/co-location with schools in intensified areas. Facilitate a shared-use agreement together with the School Boards to enhance public access to existing and future school gymnasiums. Municipal participation in co-location projects may be considered.	New	Ongoing

Fitness Centres

Fitness centres are equipment-based training clubs that include amenities such as treadmills, free-weight benches and other exercise machines. The City’s fitness centres are a successful municipal service that provides introductory-level fitness facilities to residents of Markham. There are also many private fitness centres in our community. The provision of municipal fitness centres within “major” community centres is a complementary service to the

active living programs provided by the City (including aquatic facilities) and allow the City to promote healthy living in an affordable manner. Trends indicate a steady to growing market for fitness centres, including group-based activities that require studio space. The City recently prepared a Fitness Review to guide future service delivery in this area.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one fitness centre per 60,000 residents, which is the same as the “major” community centre target. The number of fitness centres has more than doubled since that time with the addition of spaces at Aaniin Community Centre, Cornell Community Centre and Markham Pan Am Centre. Application of the provision target suggests that up to three (3) additional fitness centres will be required to meet long-term needs.

Projection of Fitness Centre Needs

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 fitness centre per 60,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	5	6	(1)
2031	460,200		8	(3)

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft



Beyond those that have since been built, the 2010 ILMP recommended fitness centres in West and East Markham (now realigned to serve North Markham Future Urban Area) and in higher density residential developments (such as the one proposed for the Langstaff Gateway area). Based on community feedback, options for adding fitness / active living centres to Angus Glen Community Centre and Milliken Mills Community Centre should also be evaluated. The size and scope of each fitness location should be reflective of the needs within each specific community.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#70. Perform a study to evaluate the need for additional fitness centres and fitness programming at new, expanded or existing community centres, including a review of partnership in Neighbourhood Centres.	2010 ILMP – updated	2022
#71. Update and revitalize all fitness centres to be accessible to all ages and fitness levels. Establish indoor and outdoor spaces to accommodate fitness activities year-round.	New	2025

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#72. Conduct a fitness centre membership review that will meet the needs and emerging demands of users by conducting a fee structure analysis regarding a sustainable subsidy strategy, personal training fees and corporate memberships (including business and community partners).	New	2021

7.5 Arenas

Current State

The City of Markham currently has 10 indoor ice pads, located within 8 facilities. Single pad arenas are provided at R.J. Clatworthy Arena, Crosby Memorial Community Centre, Centennial Community Centre, Markham Village Community Centre, Milliken Mills Community Centre and Mount Joy Community Centre. Twin pad arenas are located at Thornhill Community Centre and Angus Glen Community Centre.



The City's arena supply (10 ice pads) has not changed since the Angus Glen Community Centre opened in 2005. Although there are several private arenas in surrounding municipalities, there are none in Markham.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Indoor Ice Pads	3	3	3	1	10
Residents per Facility	37,100	32,300	19,200	74,500	34,100

Note: Population source is 2016 Census, adjusted for undercount (City-wide population of 340,500); updated data is not available by Study area

Future Considerations

In 2010, Markham's arena supply was not being used to capacity and no additional ice pads were recommended at that time. In fact, the 2010 ILMP forecasted a slowdown in ice sport participation due to Markham's aging and diverse population. Since this time, the trend has been reversed and demand is rising. This can be partly attributed to the fact that the previous plan did not anticipate changing standards of play that have created increased ice time demand for skill development and practice time for competitive teams. Some Markham residents also play in Toronto leagues and use arenas outside the City (and vice versa for Vaughan residents served by Thornhill leagues), which complicates any projection of local participation and demand.

The City monitors ice demand through the annual ice allocation process; the ice allocation policy was last amended in 2016. Registration data from the 2017/18 season indicates that there are approximately 4,850 youth (Markham residents) registered in ice sports within Markham's arena facilities

(e.g., minor hockey, ringette, figure skating, speed skating).²⁶ Registration data is not collected for adult groups as these organizations are not part of the ice allocation process; however, it is estimated that adult groups currently account for approximately 2,275 players. Overall registration in ice sports has increased by 28% since the 2010 ILMP – most of this growth can be attributed to increased demand for youth hockey (including learn to skate, skill development and competitive hockey). Discussions with arena user groups suggest that there have been increases at both the house league and competitive/rep levels and some organizations have wait lists. In addition, many competitive teams are seeking access to additional time for skill development and extra practice, which places greater pressure on the system.

The 2010 ILMP established a provision target of one ice pad per 450 youth registrants. The City presently has an average of 485 youth at each ice pad, a level that indicates an arena system that is running near capacity during prime time hours during the traditional ice season. This finding is supported by the City’s usage data (98% capacity during prime-time hours) and many user groups indicate that they are going outside Markham to rent ice time. To address a portion of their needs, many groups are also renting ice time at private venues outside of Markham.

The following table illustrates the demand for ice sports by applying the current youth capture rate to population forecasts and then dividing by the recommended participant-based target.

Projection of Indoor Ice Pad Needs

Year	Population (ages 5-19)	Estimated Youth Participants (8.2% participation rate)	Provision Target	
			1 pad per 450 youth participants (ages 5-19)	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2016	59,400	4,850	11	(1)
2031	71,280	5,820	13	(3)

2016 population source: 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

2031 population source: Region-wide estimates from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041.

Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

Based on the recommended provision target, the City currently has a deficit of nearly one ice pad, growing to three ice pads by 2031. The combined requests of stakeholders consulted for this study suggested that the current need could be as many as three ice pads; however, our analysis suggests that this should be a long-range target. New arena development should be emphasized in East Markham, along with sites having good access to highway networks. New arenas may form part of a “major” community centre or built along with other community space to create a “minor” community centre. Private operators of multi-pad facilities could also be pursued to address gaps.

A strategy for addressing arena needs is required. While the City has traditionally been the provider of arenas in Markham, other municipalities are partnering with private and non-profit sector providers to meet needs. New models of arena development may be required to address needs in a financially sustainable manner, such as the divestment of single pad facilities in favour of multi-pad arena development, particularly in areas where

²⁶ Note: these are residents only. Additional analysis may be required to capture more precise usage levels.

land economic factors can assist in offsetting costs. As a degree of the current and forecasted demand is from regional organizations, discussions with adjacent municipalities may help to identify options for collaboration.

In addition to access to ice (including the shoulder months of April and September), many organizations are seeking dryland training space to accommodate the changing requirements associated with the evolution of sport and athlete development models. User groups suggested that new arena development should consider multi-pad design with full-size ice rinks (including lines for ringette) and accommodations for amenities such as dryland training space and appropriately sized change rooms. The minimum standard for new arena development is a twin pad facility, which offers maximum efficiency.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#73. Prepare an Arena Strategy that confirms the directions contained within the Integrated Leisure Master Plan and defines an implementation strategy (with a focus on partnership options that meet demonstrated needs, including a transition from single pad to multi-pad facilities). The City's priority should be to facilitate private sector investment in building and operating a multi-pad facility.	New	2021
#74. Assess the potential of existing arenas and other indoor recreation facilities to accommodate dryland training space (e.g., running tracks, fitness/studio rooms, small gymnasium spaces, etc.) suitable for youth ice organizations.	New	2020

7.6 Indoor Sports Facilities

Current State

The City offers community access to three (3) indoor turf facilities (Milliken Mills Soccer Dome, Mount Joy Community Centre; and St. Robert Catholic High School). In addition to these facilities, the private sector runs a sports dome at Father Michael McGivney Catholic Academy, as well as on City lands at Mount Joy Community Centre.

The City also operates four (4) indoor bocce courts at Centennial Community Centre.

Future Considerations

Indoor Turf

Soccer is becoming a four-season sport and the development of artificial turf indoor facilities is a widespread trend across Ontario. Indoor soccer appeals to a smaller market segment than the outdoor game, but has the potential to continue to grow in popularity, particularly with trends suggesting increased interest by adult participants. The demand for indoor turf facilities has been largely driven by an increased emphasis on year-round training, skill development and competition. Provincially, the number of indoor soccer players registered by the Ontario Soccer Association increased by 41% between 2006 and 2015 (compared to a 9% decline in outdoor registration in the same time period).



The 2010 ILMP noted the growth in indoor sports, particularly soccer, and supported the establishment of the dome at St. Robert Catholic Secondary School. The Plan established a provision target of one municipal indoor field per 100,000 residents and that demand be monitored, with a view toward adjusting this target in the future. Based on current growth, existing usage levels and input from stakeholders, this target is being adjusted to one indoor field (municipal, non-profit or private) per 75,000 residents. Application of this revised target suggests demand for one additional indoor turf venue by 2031.

Projection of Indoor Turf Facility Needs

Year	Population	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 facility per 75,000 residents	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2018	347,000	5*	5	0
2031	460,200		6	(1)

* Supply includes municipal, non-profit and private indoor facilities

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

West Markham is the only study area without an indoor turf facility. Indoor sports fields are best provided at sites with outdoor soccer fields (potentially in partnership with schools and/or private operators) and do not need to be associated with community centres. Seasonal air-supported structures tend to be the preferred building form due to their lower initial cost and flexibility. The City may consider covering a turf field at a park or facility site, or it may evaluate potential partnership opportunities that may arise, such as the enclosure of fields at secondary school sites.

Indoor Bocce

Bocce is known for its popularity among the Italian community, particularly older adult males. Based on the limited market for bocce and questionable long-term viability, a provision target is not recommended. The indoor bocce courts at Centennial Community Centre are underutilized and may be a possible conversion candidate should higher order needs be identified. No additional indoor bocce courts are recommended. The City is encouraged to continue monitoring usage and membership trends.

Recommendation

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#75. One additional indoor turf facility is recommended by 2031. To address future needs, the City may consider covering a turf field at a park or facility site in West Markham, or evaluating the potential to participate in partnership opportunities that may arise (such as the enclosure of fields at secondary school sites or collaborations with private sector).	2010 ILMP - updated	2029-2031

7.7 Age-specific Spaces

Current State

The City has one (1) stand-alone facility for older adults (the Markham Seniors Activity Centre) and four (4) major community centres with exclusive use older adult space: Aaniin, Angus Glen, Cornell and Thornhill. Each of these four (4) community centres also contain youth-specific spaces. In addition, the City offers extensive youth and adult programming out of shared spaces at other facilities.

Future Considerations

Older Adult Space

The older adult population is the fastest growing age segment in Markham and the demand for age-appropriate services and spaces is increasing. The aging baby boomers are fitter and more interested than previous generations in maintaining an active lifestyle, which is leading to greater participation in active recreation pursuits and demand for amenities, such as fitness centres, aquatic centres, gymnasiums and multi-use activity spaces. At the same time, there are many older or less active older adults that are seeking more traditional activities, such as cards, hobbies, travel and social opportunities.

Many immigrant older adults do not confidently speak English (Cantonese is the primary second language in Markham). This can lead to isolation, especially those with limited mobility or social connections. Programs and services at accessible locations such as community centres (as well as libraries, cultural venues, parks, etc.) are vital to engaging this demographic and reducing isolation.

The preferred provision model for older adult space is dedicated and/or shared space within multi-use community centres, which allows for extended programming to be delivered through common spaces such as gymnasiums, pools, etc. No additional stand-alone senior centres are recommended.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one older adult facility location per 20,000 residents ages 55+; this target includes both stand-alone and dedicated space within community centres. Application of this target suggests a need for two (2) additional dedicated older adult spaces by 2031.



Projection of Older Adult Space Needs

Year	Population (ages 55+)	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 facility per 20,000 residents (age 55+)	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2016	94,715	5	5	0
2031	137,337		7	(2)

2016 population source: 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

2031 population source: Region-wide estimates from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041.

Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

The geographic distribution of older adult space in Markham leaves a considerable gap in South Markham, where no facilities currently exist and population growth will create a particular need for additional older adult space in West Markham (e.g., North Markham Future Urban Area). Specific locations for these facilities will require further investigation; however, integration into existing or proposed community centres is the preferred approach. New older adult spaces should be a minimum of 3,000 ft², large enough to provide space for informal socialization and to contain a mix of shared and dedicated rooms that allow for multiple activities to occur at one time.

As recommended in the 2010 ILMP, the City prepared an **Older Adult Strategy** in 2017 in order to improve age-friendliness for all Markham residents. This Study provides a roadmap on how the City of Markham will respond to a growing older adult population over the next ten years with respect to municipal policies, service delivery, design standards and community partnerships. The Study focuses on six of the eight dimensions of age-friendly communities established by the World Health Organization. The City's goal of addressing a dimension related to the ILMP – outdoor spaces and buildings – is to ensure that there is equitable access to City roads, trails, pathways, parks and facilities for older adult residents through the implementation of sustainable community planning and infrastructure management.

Key outcomes for this goal from the 2017 Older Adult Strategy include:

- Improving the quality and coverage of seating nodes (i.e., rest areas) throughout the City.
- Improving the coverage and maintenance of public washroom facilities throughout the City.
- Aligning with Age Friendly practices to effectively manage facilities and infrastructure in Markham for all residents.

Other key recommendations of the Older Adult Strategy with relevance to the ILMP include:

- establishing the age of 65+ as the definition for older adults across all City of Markham programs and services
- development of an Ability-To-Pay model
- expanding partnership opportunities with York Region, Province of Ontario and other stakeholders to improve coordination of Older Adult Services in Markham

Youth Space

Youth are traditionally a very challenging market for municipal recreation departments to serve due to their wide range of needs, segmentation of interests, and matters of accessibility and affordability.

With these objectives in mind, many municipalities are placing a greater focus on unstructured drop-in activities. Not all youth want to participate in organized activities and sports programs; therefore, major municipal community centres should provide a place for youth to occupy their time constructively in a social setting. The City's youth population is forecasted to grow at a slower pace than many other age groups, which will temper longer-term space and service needs.

The 2010 ILMP recommended a provision target of one youth facility location per 10,000 residents ages 10 to 19; this target applies to dedicated space within community centres. Based on this target, the City is currently well supplied, although there may be demand for up to one additional dedicated youth space by 2031.



Projection of Youth Space Needs

Year	Population (ages 10-19)	Existing Supply	Provision Target	
			1 facility per 10,000 residents (ages 10-19)	
			Projected Needs	Surplus (Deficit)
2016	40,320	4	4	0
2031	10% more		4.5	(0.5)

2016 population source: 2016 Census, not adjusted for undercount

2031 population source: Region-wide estimates from the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041.

Technical Report (November 2002) Addendum. Hemson Consulting Ltd. June 2013.

The City’s newest community centres have included youth rooms and the 2010 ILMP contemplated them for future “major” community centres – one may be considered for the centre proposed for West Markham at Victoria Square. To enhance accessibility and the provision of affordable activity options close to home, opportunities to establish dedicated space for youth at existing centres may be considered on a case-by-case basis (e.g., Milliken Mills and/or Centennial Community Centre), as recommended in the 2010 ILMP.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#76. Continue to implement the Older Adult Strategy to respond to the changing needs and anticipated increases in demand attributed to the growing population of older adults.	2010 ILMP – updated	Ongoing
#77. Continue to develop and provide flexible multi-use spaces for programs, events and rentals in new community centres. Provide (a minimum of 5,000 ft ²) multi-purpose/age friendly and non-exclusive activity spaces in all new or expanded “major” community centres.	2010 ILMP – updated	Ongoing
#78. Create a Youth Strategy , including dedicated space requirements in new and existing community centres, aimed at facilitating youth engagement and partnerships with youth service providers.	New	2022

8. ARTS & CULTURE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Arts and culture animate communities, build dynamic business environments and bring the community together in common interests, passions and talents. Cultural arts contribute to the quality of life for residents, as well as Markham’s tourism economy.

This analysis adheres to the methodology established in the 2010 ILMP and has been influenced by public input, recent City initiatives, emerging trends and new demographic data.

‘Culture’ refers to local arts, cultural and heritage resources including, but not limited to, music, theatre, dance, visual arts, literature and heritage. The City’s involvement in this sector is managed through the Department of Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship.

Current State

The City of Markham’s major arts and cultural venues include the Varley Art Gallery, Flato Markham Theatre and Markham Museum, all of which are owned and operated by the City. The Gallery, Theatre and Museum are each supported by a Foundation / Advisory Board, with City Council as the voting members.

At the time of the 2010 ILMP, Culture Services were a department of the Commission of Community and Fire Services – Culture & Economic Development are now integrated in the new Department of Economic Growth, Culture & Entrepreneurship located within the Development Services Commission.

Culture in Markham, Culture Policy & Plan (2012)



Key guiding documents include:

- 2012 **Culture Policy & Plan**
- Section 4.4 of **Markham Official Plan**
- **Destination Markham:** Destination Markham will provide a strategy for how to promote the City as an attractive place for investment and business; a place where people want to visit; where residents boast about all there is to do, learn and see in their community; a place where talent wants to work, learn, play and live. The strategy aims to leverage city strengths to inspire active participation from its residents, visitors, investors, and current and future talent.

The Department's cultural mandate is centred on the following four business functions:

1. The Flato Markham Theatre (FMT)

Operating at virtual capacity, the Theatre serves more than 150,000 patrons annually. The Theatre delivers a Diamond Series of 50+ shows and performances plus a Discovery program that supports education and community outreach. Core business areas include:

- Diamond Series of 50+ shows and performances
- Summer theatre camps at FMT and in the community
- Discovery workshops and performances
- Theatre rental space
- Teaching and performance facilities for Unionville High School

2. The Varley Art Gallery

Responsible for actively promoting and celebrating the life and work of Frederick H. Varley and other Canadian artists, the gallery inspires local and national audiences to engage with art, culture and creativity. Core business areas include:

- Schedule of rotating themed exhibitions
- Summer, winter and March break camps
- Art classes and professional development
- McKay Art Centre show and studio space
- Public Art policy and program administration
- Serves as a cultural and creative hub

Canadian Index of Wellbeing

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing identifies participation in leisure and culture activities as one of eight contributors to better physical and mental health, and a creator of opportunities for socializing, relaxation and learning new things.



Varley Art Gallery Assets and Activities (2018)

Permanent Collections	
Permanent Collection Works	558
% Permanent Collection Works on display	5.4%
% of Permanent Collection Works Acquired/Catalogued	100%
Permanent Collection Works Loaned to Other Centres	0
Acquisitions	
New Works Donated to the Gallery Annually	3
New Works Purchased for the Gallery Annually	0
Exhibitions Mounted	
Curated In-House	3
On loan from Elsewhere	2
Annual Attendance	
Programs	12,355
Exhibitions	9,978
Rentals	11,019
Education	2,566
Other (Walk in, etc.)	5,062
Fundraising	88
Total Attendance	41,068



3. The Markham Museum

The Museum presents the history of Markham from First Nations to its founding by the Berczy settlers to today’s diverse new residents by researching, showcasing and presenting the City’s physical and built environment, tools and legacies. Core business areas include:

- Interpretive exhibits and presentations
- Summer, winter and March break camps
- Art classes and professional development
- Archives and restoration and preservation of historic buildings
- Private event rentals, storage and performance space for arts groups



Markham Museum Activities (2018)

Annual Attendance	
Public Programs	12,923
General Admissions	6,000
Rentals	12,868
Education Programs	2,913
Special Events	8,000
Research	104
Interns & Volunteers	1,223
Community Outreach	6,083
Other	292
Total Attendance	50,406

Curatorial	
Permanent Collections	
Artifact	38,944
Archaeological Collections	31
Archives (photographs/narrative)	38,993
Gigabytes of Records Converted to Digital	487
% of Collections on Display (all means/ locations)	10.1%
Acquisitions	
Donated or by Transfer from Another Collection	62
Purchased	0
# of Objects Evaluated as part of Collections Review	1,200
# of Objects Removed from Permanent Collection	478
Exhibitions	
Permanent Exhibits (Outer buildings, South Gallery)	13
Temporary Curated In-House	2
Temporary on Loan from Elsewhere	1
Outreach (curated in-house displayed elsewhere)	4

4. The Public Art Program

The Public Art Program is in the process of developing a Public Art Master Plan that will help guide the program over the next several years. The current major public art installations in the City of Markham include:

- Cloudflower: Reflecting Community (2016) by Douglas Walker (Cornell Community Centre)
- For the Love of Sports and Art (2016) by Bill Crothers Secondary School students (Markham Pan Am Centre)
- Gambrel Journey (2015) by kpjones (Markham Museum)
- Monument to Benjamin Thorne (2017) by Les Drysdale (Thornhill Community Centre and Library)
- Monument to William Berczy (2016) by Marlene Hilton Moore (Berczy Square Park)
- Pan Am Public Art Project (2015) by Shane Cloud, Laurence Roberts and eight Unionville High School students (Markham Pan Am Centre)
- Quarry (2015) by Mary Anne Barkhouse (Toogood Pond)
- Shifting Landscapes - Henderson Bridge Mural (2015) by James Ruddle, with assistance by students and alumni at Markham high schools (CN Rail Bridge in Thornhill)

Public Art Activities (2018)	
Permanent outdoor works in the Public Art (PA) collections	5
Temporary outdoor works in the PA Collection	2
Permanent outdoor works in progress	2
Indoor works in the PA Collection	230
Number of indoor works on display	180
Percentage of indoor works on display	78.3%

Public art installations are also developed pursuant to Markham’s Public Realm Strategy. A recent example is the Seven Grandfather Teachings mural installed at the Aaniin Community Centre and Library to link Markham’s newest community centre facility to Canada’s indigenous narrative.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#79. Encourage opportunities to integrate cultural programs, spaces for creative pursuits and activities through shared spaces within existing and future community recreation facilities, libraries and parks.	New	Ongoing
#80. Complete and implement the Public Art Master Plan . Recognizing that public art connects residents to Markham’s built and natural environment, the Master Plan will help with placemaking and will provide direction for future public art installations and programs.	New	Ongoing
#81. Conduct a new theatre feasibility study to assess growth and determine future needs of the performing arts sector in Markham. This may include examining future infrastructure needs as well as programming demands.	New	2021
#82. Establish a framework for governance, business plans, financial accountability, fundraising requirements and corporate policies for the Flato Markham Theatre Foundation to support programs, expansion of capital assets and infrastructure, and contribute to the development and sustainability of a vibrant performing arts community in Markham.	New	2020

9. PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

This section contains an assessment of public library needs extending to 2031, when the City’s population is forecasted to reach 460,200 people. The analysis adheres to the methodology established in the 2010 ILMP and has been influenced by public input, recent City initiatives, emerging trends and new demographic data.

‘Library’ refers to the Markham Public Library system, which serves as a civic resource that promotes free and open access to information, materials, public gathering spaces and services to all members of the community to develop multiple literacies, advance knowledge, foster creativity, encourage the exchange of ideas, build community and enhance Markham’s quality of life.

9.1 Service Delivery & Programming

The world is a fundamentally different place than it was when the Markham Public Library (MPL) was founded in 1971. As we move deeper into the 21st century, and the world continues to change at an accelerating and exponential rate, MPL, like public libraries everywhere, is adapting and innovating to keep pace with ever-expanding community expectations, interests, needs and priorities.

Markham Public Library is responsible for the delivery of library services through eight branches and its website. Administratively, it reports to the Markham Public Library Board and the Commissioner of Community & Fire Services. The Library’s Vision is to be “the place where Markham comes together to imagine, create, learn and grow.”

MPL is committed to providing exceptional library services through innovative business models that respond to resident needs and priorities, use resources efficiently and maximize return on investment for tax dollars. Markham’s library branches serve as community learning hubs – accessible and inclusive places that strengthen neighbourhoods, connect newcomers, celebrate diversity, support local innovation and creativity, and advance Markham’s position as an engaged, literate and digitally-skilled city. MPL services, collections and programs are focused on lifelong self-directed learning, development of literacy skills (print, media and digital), support of educational and career achievement, collaborative partnerships, technology that meets residents’ learning, creative and business needs, and inclusive community development.

As one of the most innovative and most efficiently operated public libraries in Canada, MPL’s innovations include the award-winning C3™ (Customer Centred Classification) system, the Learning Place business model for library programs, and the Customer Service Revolution initiative which won the 2014 Gold Award for Innovative Management from the Institute of Public Administration of Canada and the Minister’s Award for Innovation in 2015. MPL is also a library sector leader in the implementation of RFID-based self-service technology – in 2016, 84% of borrowing transactions were completed by customers through self-service options.

Strategic Themes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Connecting People & Communities2. Digital Inclusion3. Content That Transforms Lives4. Community Learning Hubs
- Markham Public Library Strategic Plan (2015 to 2018)

Public Libraries in Canada are responding to emerging needs in new and effective ways. In 2015, MPL prepared a Strategic Plan identifying key trends and factors influencing service delivery, including those related to economics (e.g., the knowledge economy), the digital world (e.g., digital literacy and innovation), learning (e.g., collaboration), lifestyle (e.g., high aspirations), content (e.g., eBooks) and place (e.g., community hubs). The Library’s Strategic Plan was based on intensive community engagement and its community-based librarians regularly engage partners and the community in conversations through their outreach services. It marked a shift away from transaction as a primary mode of service to the creation of human-centered services and experiences. In recent years, MPL has recognized the need to offer non-traditional tools and resources, adapt and adopt new models of service, expand organizational skill sets and strengthen community relationships. These innovations have enabled MPL to effectively and intentionally continue to fulfill its mission to develop multiple literacies, support lifelong self-education and build community.

Through the ILMP consultation and research, it is evident that the needs of each library community across the City are different. Through MPL’s customer-focused and collaborative service delivery model (including community outreach), the Library is able to extend their reach and serve as true hubs that foster a sense of community and belonging.

Within its facilities and programs, MPL delivers safe, vibrant and welcoming spaces for children, teens and the community at large. Despite the expansion of online and digital options, bricks and mortar branches remain popular and well-used. Borrowing of printed materials continues to grow, while programming and digital services are on the rise. These findings align with broader library trends that suggest **an evolution from consumption to creation** and encourage the development of creative spaces, personal study and flexible open space, and non-traditional collections (e.g., games, toys, equipment, etc.).

Markham’s recent library facilities have been designed with these needs in mind, such as enhanced study areas and a digital media lab at Cornell Library, and the co-work space and digital collaboration hub at Aaniin Library. Going forward, all branch designs (new/renovations) will include digital literacy as an organizing concept (as per the Digital Markham Strategy), and will be aligned with the "third place" strategy to support resident quality of life with welcoming, comfortable social gathering places that foster a sense of community belonging.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#83. Keep pace with customer requirements within the Library’s digital branch (website and related information technology supports).	New	Ongoing
#84. Implement Digital Markham Strategy recommendations regarding the Library’s role as “Markham’s centre for excellence in digital literacy”.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#85. Engage the community on a regular basis to learn more about area-specific (neighbourhood) needs, generate awareness of library services and identify options for engaging new users.	New	Ongoing
#86. Undertake a strategy to adjust library hours to meet the ongoing expectations of our community.	New	Ongoing
#87. Work collaboratively with City of Markham Recreation Services in program and facility planning to maximize existing offerings, fill gaps and align efforts.	New	Ongoing
#88. As a best practice, engage library systems in adjacent municipalities to assist in coordinating collections and services.	New	Ongoing
#89. Regularly undertake program reviews to identify and evaluate opportunities that enhance and extend programming and partnerships.	New	Ongoing
#90. Foster social connections both “in real life” through bricks-and-mortar library branches, applying “third life” and “community hub” principles, and through virtual library services.	New	Ongoing
#91. Look outward – convening community conversations and embedding librarians with partners and organizations across the City – to develop a deeper understanding of the community landscape.	New	Ongoing
#92. Focus on creating, experiencing and celebrating the arts in Markham through both cultural events and providing access, entry-level opportunities, and tools that foster the development of creative talents and interests.	New	Ongoing
#93. Advance civic engagement and civic literacies through convening civic dialogue, and providing a platform for constructive and respectful civic engagement.	New	Ongoing
#94. Advance inclusion and belonging by creating opportunities for people to experience, express, and celebrate cultures and diversity, ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, accepted and included, enabling them to fulfill their full potential.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#95. Build community capacity for economic activity and resiliency by assisting the business community and assisting individuals to meet their economic, financial and career goals.	New	Ongoing
#96. Support pathways to a healthy community — specifically physical, mental and emotional health — and foster health and wellness as a foundation to learning, full participation in society and quality of life. Provide access to resources, opportunities, and tools that foster health and wellbeing.	New	Ongoing
#97. Foster critical 21st century literacies , including early literacy, digital literacy, scientific and numerical literacy, visual literacy, civic literacy, health literacy, environmental literacy, and financial and economic literacy as the basis of an individual's ability to participate fully in the economy, their community and wider society.	New	Ongoing



9.2 Library Space & Facility Strategy

Current State

Markham Public Library operates eight (8) physical library locations throughout the City, totalling 165,041 square feet of space and ranging from approximately 4,300 square feet (Thornhill Village) to 29,700 square feet (Angus Glen). Maps showing the location of municipal library facilities are contained in **Appendix D**. Since the 2010 ILMP, the Library has added two new library facilities (Cornell and Aaniin Libraries).

Markham Public Library – Library Branch Inventory

Library Branch	Study Area	Size (sf)	Characteristics
Aaniin	South Markham	20,000	Co-located with community centre
Angus Glen	West Markham	29,700	Co-located with community centre
Cornell	East Markham	25,000	Co-located with community centre
Markham Village	East Markham	29,500	Stand-alone
Milliken Mills	South Markham	16,865	Co-located with community centre
Thornhill Community	Thornhill	26,053	Co-located with community centre
Thornhill Village	Thornhill	4,283	Stand-alone
Unionville	West Markham	13,640	Stand-alone
TOTAL		165,041	

Markham's library facilities are well distributed, with two locations in each study area. In terms of space, the lowest per capita supply is currently in West Markham (0.39 square feet per capita in 2016). Based on a population estimate of 347,000, Markham is currently providing 0.48 square feet of library space per resident City-wide.

Current Inventory	West Markham	East Markham	Thornhill	South Markham	Total
Library Locations (#)	2	2	2	2	8
Library Locations (sf)	43,340	54,500	30,336	36,865	165,041
Square Feet per Capita (2016)	0.39	0.56	0.53	0.49	0.48

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018)

Future Considerations

Strong library systems are the cornerstones of strong communities. Markham Public Library’s Strategic Plan underscores this through its theme relating to “Community Learning Hubs”, where it seeks to plan for the future, renew existing facilities, launch the Aaniin Library (completed in early 2018) and improve the experience. Markham’s library facilities are operated to support resident quality of life with welcoming, inclusive places that foster a sense of community and belonging.

Markham Public Library has been purposeful in the planning and designing of new library facilities. In 2017, the Library participated in a study to explore how its library space and services are used by customers, which provided many learnings that can be applied to future library renewal and development.²⁷ For example, there is high demand for study space from student and children’s space from families; space is needed not only to accommodate these uses, but also to ensure proper separation.

Increasingly, Markham’s libraries are being designed to include additional gathering space and expanded seating options. There is also a shift toward digital media and technology such as Wi-Fi, makerspaces and media labs, and non-traditional collections. At the same time, demand for traditional library services remains strong (the 2017 CULC Space Use Study found that 36% of patrons reported borrowing a book as the primary reason for visiting the library).

With the development of the Cornell and Aaniin branches, the Markham Public Library continues to innovate its facility model and extend its reach. Fuelled by population growth, facility expansion and increasing demand for library services, MPL has witnessed strong growth in the total number of visits and circulation of library materials as illustrated in the following tables.

Markham Public Library Usage Data, 2011 to 2018

	2011 (6 branches)	2018 (8 branches)	Difference 2011 to 2018	
			Amount	%
Reported Population	315,800	348,718	32,918	10%
Library Materials Borrowed (including ebooks)	4,402,392	5,460,747	1,058,355	24%
In-Person Visits	2,122,986	2,771,331	648,345	31%
Program Attendance	68,914	150,356	81,442	118%

Source: http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/statistics_2018.shtml

²⁷ Brightsail Research and Consulting for Canadian Urban Libraries Council. Space Use Study: Brampton Library, Calgary Public Library and Markham Public Library. November 2017.

In-Person Library Visits per Square Foot by Branch Location

Library Branch	Square Feet*	2011		2018	
		Total In-Person Visits	# of In-Person Visits per Square Foot	Total In-Person Visits	# of In-Person Visits per Square Foot
Aaniin	20,000	--	--	523,820	26.2
Angus Glen	29,700	553,651	18.6	463,944	15.6
Cornell	25,000	--	--	374,496	15.0
Markham Village	29,500	447,459	15.2	296,130	10.0
Milliken Mills	16,865	469,825	27.9	382,310	22.7
Unionville	13,640	294,790	21.6	298,370	21.9
Thornhill Community	26,053	266,300	10.2	372,803	14.3
Thornhill Village	4,283	90,961	21.2	59,458	13.9
Total	165,041	2,122,986	17.7	2,771,331	16.8

*Total library square footage was 120,041 in 2011, before the addition of Cornell (2013) and Aaniin (2017) branches. Source: Canadian Public Library Statistics, CULC.

MPL regularly benchmarks its activities with other libraries in the GTA to look for improvement opportunities. The table below showed the Markham Public Library system to be performing very well in most of the areas compared.

2018 Benchmarking with Library Systems in the GTA - Ontario Public Library Statistics

Library System	Annual In-Person Visits (per capita)	Annual Electronic Visits via Internet Access (per capita)	Annual Library Material Borrowed (per capita)	Annual Program Attendance (per capita)	Library Space per capita (per capita)
Brampton Library	3.35	8.34	6.37	0.23	0.32
Burlington Public Library	6.48	5.88	9.44	0.46	0.58
Mississauga Library System	6.99	1.24	7.53	0.2	0.45
Oakville Public Library	6.11	8.25	8.11	N/A	N/A
Oshawa Public Library	5.38	2.71	7.65	0.21	0.56
Richmond Hill Public Library	4.48	6.79	9.49	0.31	0.46
Vaughan Public Libraries	5.42	8.07	9.28	0.25	0.52
Average of Above Systems	5.46	5.90	8.27	0.28	0.48
Markham Public Library	6.74	7.87	15.66	0.43	0.47

The City is still very much in the growth stage and will continue to expand at a rapid pace for the foreseeable future. As such, the Markham Public Library will require a building programme involving the creation of new library buildings and expansion of existing facilities that will extend to 2031 and beyond.

In 2004, the Markham Public Library Board endorsed a target of 0.6 square feet of library space per capita and reaffirmed this through the 2010 ILMP. This is a service standard commonly used by public libraries across North America. At present, MPL is providing 0.48 square feet of library space per resident, with good balance across the City. A standard of 0.6 square feet of library space per capita remains relevant as a long-term target for the Markham Public Library and will be used to project space needs in this Master Plan. Given the current level of service in the City, it must be recognized that this standard is a longer-term target that will take some time to achieve. Furthermore, while efforts will be made to ensure an equitable distribution of library space and service locations to serve Markham residents, this space standard is not intended to be stringently applied to each community in the City.

The 2010 ILMP recommended that most new branches, particularly those in areas where sufficient land can be acquired (e.g., greenfield areas), be in the 20,000 to 30,000 ft² range. This neighbourhood branch model has been effective in the Cornell and Aaniin Libraries, although the demand for program rooms in particular can be significant. Co-locating libraries with municipal community centres remains the preferred approach (where possible) as this enhances user convenience and generates efficiencies and economies of scale.

It also recognized that new approaches to library provision in higher density areas undergoing residential intensification will be required. For example, there are several projects in the City of Toronto and other high growth municipalities of library space within condominium podiums (1st or 2nd floor), schools or urban storefront models that offer convenient locations with extended hours. Although the concept remains untested in Markham, MPL has been working on a service model for an urban storefront branch in preparation for the future.

Population growth will continue to place increasing demands on library services and space requirements. The following table provides the space requirements for library provision based on the population forecasts and the 0.6 square foot per capita standard being employed by this Master Plan.

Projection of Library Space Needs based on Recommended Provision Target

Year	Population	Existing Library Space (sf)	Provision Target	
			0.6 sf per capita	
			Library Space Needs (sf)	Surplus/ Deficit (sf)
2018	347,000	165,041	208,200	43,159
2031	460,200		276,120	111,079

2018 population source: Region of York estimate (July 1, 2018);

2031 population source: City of Markham, Planning & Urban Design Department, 2018 – Draft

With a current provision level of 0.48 square feet per capita and a target of 0.6 square feet per capita, the Markham Public Library is currently in a deficit situation of over 43,000 square feet. This deficit will grow to 111,100 square feet by 2031 unless further space is provided. There are several areas where the Library may choose to evaluate prospects for future library locations (as discussed below), including:

- Areas of residential intensification and growth (e.g., Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway, etc.)
- North Markham Future Urban Area
- Geographic gap areas (e.g., East Markham, West Markham)
- Expansions to existing locations

A 20,000 square foot library serving Markham Centre was also recommended in the 2010 ILMP. Markham Centre is Markham's downtown core that is now forecasted to be home to about 50,000 residents and thousands of employees. Growth in this area has proceeded more slowly than anticipated, but is now occurring and the City has been seeking opportunities for siting the library in condominium podiums. Options for co-locating the facility with the York University Markham Campus were also explored but are no longer considered feasible. A working group has been established to explore and develop alternative approaches to collaboration for a future library branch in Markham Centre as a priority project.

The Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan was approved in June 2010 and carried forward into the 2014 Official Plan. The Secondary Plan provides for a population of up to 32,000 residents and 15,000 employees, potentially served by the Yonge Subway Extension. Preliminary planning has proceeded on the expectation that there will be “complete community” facilities, including a full library branch. The delivery of library space is to be phased in with population growth.

Monitoring of development opportunities within the Leitchcroft community suggests that this area may also support future library services. Once more is known about anticipated growth in this or other residential intensification areas, needs should be assessed and alternate facility delivery models considered (e.g., partnerships, school co-locations, community hubs, etc.) that assist in the provision of community spaces and library services. *Reference should be made to Section 10 of this ILMP for additional considerations and recommendations regarding library facilities in intensification areas.*

It is suggested that libraries generally be located within 1.5 or 2.0 kilometres of all urban residential areas. Based on this measure, the area in West Markham generally west of Warden Avenue between Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 7 represents a gap in service. In addition, the North Markham Future Urban Area is located in West Markham, to the north and east of this gap area. Secondary plans are well underway in this area and opportunities to create a shared site/facility with library, recreation and/or school uses are possibilities. Recognizing that the 0.6 square foot per capita target is not achievable in all areas of the City, if it were applied to West Markham, an additional 65,300 square feet of space would be required. While the Angus Glen Library may appear to be well-positioned geographically to serve future residents of North Markham Future Urban Area, it is already operating above capacity. There is strong current and future demand in this area to support one to two library facilities.

The area in East Markham generally bounded by Major Mackenzie Drive, Markham Road, 16th Avenue and McCowan Road is outside the catchment area of existing public libraries. The 2010 ILMP recommended a new library in East Markham (i.e., North Central) to address this gap, along with a new community centre. Due to a shift in population growth westward, the multi-use community centre in East Markham is no longer being recommended, although options for arena development in this area may be examined further (which could serve as a co-location opportunity). Opportunities to co-locate a new library branch with other municipal building projects in East Markham is now recommended. Provision options in both West and East

Markham should be further considered as it is unlikely that there will be sufficient funding to develop three libraries within these areas; however, a goal should be set to develop two new libraries across these study areas.

In response to high usage levels and pressure for additional space, the 2010 ILMP supported a 13,000 square foot expansion to the Milliken Mills Library as part of a broader community centre project. This option was studied through a Feasibility Study and Council provided direction to re-evaluate the need for expansion following two full years of operation at Aaniin Community Centre; this anniversary will be achieved in 2019. There remains local interest in moving forward with this project, which is further encouraged by the facility’s close proximity to Milliken Centre (an area of intensification forecasted to accommodate in upwards of 15,000 new residents).

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#98. The Markham Public Library should continue to utilize a provision target of 0.6 square feet per capita to guide future space needs. An additional 111,100 square feet will be required by 2031 to achieve this target. MPL should reassess the long-term space provision target to inform a library distribution plan that evaluates potential service gaps as identified from time to time.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#99. Prioritize the establishment of a library branch (up to 20,000 ft ²) to serve the growing Markham Centre community. The delivery of library space is to be phased in with population growth. This branch may form part of a mixed-use development; partnership and non-traditional development approaches should be considered.	2010 ILMP - updated	2021
#100. Begin planning for the development of a library branch (less than 20,000 ft ²) to serve the growing Langstaff community . The delivery of library space is to be phased in with population growth. This branch may form part of a mixed-use development; partnership, school co-location and non-traditional development approaches should be considered.	2010 ILMP - updated	2026
#101. Develop one library branch to serve West Markham (approximately 20,000 to 30,000 ft ²) in conjunction with a major community centre. A location for this facility should be studied in the short-term, with the goal of securing land well in advance of construction.	2010 ILMP - updated	2026
#102. Monitor the pace of growth in East Markham for future consideration of a library (20,000 to 30,000 ft ²) branch in conjunction with a major or minor community centre.	2010 ILMP - updated	2029-2031

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#103. Re-evaluate the demand for renewing and expanding the Milliken Mills library once the Aaniin Library is open for two years.	2010 ILMP - updated	2020
#104. Develop alternative library service and funding models (e.g., neighbourhood libraries, pop-up libraries, unstaffed kiosks, storefronts in intensification areas, etc.) for libraries in intensification areas (such as Markham Centre, Leitchcroft, Langstaff, Milliken Centre, etc.) and consider co-location with a range of community partners (e.g., cultural organizations, social service agencies, schools, malls, etc.). Consider these models at the planning stage of areas of significant residential intensification.	New	Ongoing
#105. Through space optimization and strategic renovations, maintain existing facilities as welcoming destinations and community hubs.	New	Ongoing
#106. Establish flexible space for programs/events, collaborative spaces, creative spaces and digital innovation within new and updated libraries, where possible.	New	Ongoing

10. INTENSIFICATION AREAS

Sections 6 to 9 of this ILMP Update provide recommendations regarding Markham’s future parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services. These recommendations and related service standards rely upon sector benchmarks and strategies commonly applied within the suburban context (i.e., low density ground-based housing stock) across the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA).

This section outlines the unique challenges of intensification areas, and provides an additional lens to be applied in the case of community master-planning for Markham’s intensification areas.

10.1 Background

Over the last decade, Markham’s built landscape has undergone a transformation. We are becoming more urban and less suburban. Specifically, across the City’s landscape of primarily ground-based suburban housing, “cityscapes” – spikes of vertical growth – have emerged, with compact urban built forms (condominium towers and townhouses), diversifying the housing mix, increasing population density and putting pressure on existing systems such as road networks and recreation centres.

Markham as a Leader in Urban Planning Innovation

Preparation for this urban transformation has been many years in the making. Among GTHA municipalities, Markham has been one of the most progressive in adopting a “new urbanist” approach to planning. Planning for Markham Centre (the City’s downtown) began back in the 1990s. The “new urbanist” Cornell neighbourhood was planned twenty years ago. Both planning exercises drew upon the expertise of global leaders in new-urbanist planning and were ahead of their time in terms of offering alternatives to the then existing growth patterns of unsustainable suburban sprawl.

Provincial Land Use Policy – Places to Grow

When, more than a decade ago, the Provincial government launched innovative and progressive policy for land use planning in the GTHA – The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 – Markham was already ahead of the game as a leader in planning for sustainable growth. The 2006 Growth Plan provided a robust policy framework for building stronger, more prosperous and more sustainable communities by better managing growth in the GTHA. This visionary policy shift has driven more compact development patterns across the GTHA, a greater variety of housing types, more mixed-use development in urban growth centres, and greater integration of transit and land use planning.



Markham's Official Plan – Intensification Areas

Markham will continue to be one of the main engines of population increase in York Region. The City's 2014 Official Plan, developed to conform with the provincial Growth Plan, captured the provincial policy shift and directed Markham's growth to several future intensification areas:

- Regional Centres: Markham Centre and Langstaff Gateway.
- Regional Corridors/Key Development Areas: Yonge Steeles Corridor, Yonge North Corridor, Commerce Valley/Leitchcroft, Woodbine/404, Markville and Cornell Centre.
- Local Corridors: Markham Road Corridor (Armada), Markham Road Corridor (Mount Joy)
- Local Centres: Thornhill Centre, German Mills Centre, Milliken Centre, Cathedraltown and Cornell North Centre.

The changes in built form and population growth associated with these intensification areas will require innovative approaches to the delivery of leisure and community services.

10.2 Planning Leisure Services for Intensification Areas

The ILMP Update process has provided an opportunity to develop and deepen our understanding of how people live in urban neighbourhoods. This understanding grounds our strategies for the delivery of leisure services that will ensure that Markham's urban neighbourhoods are well-designed and functional. Linking the timely provision of community infrastructure to urban growth early in the development process will ensure that our intensification areas are walkable "complete communities", offering a quality of life that is competitive in today's economic environment, attracting both the talent and the business investment on which the continued success of Markham depends.

To respond to the 2014 Official Plan policy direction for Markham's future growth, the ILMP Update provides further guidance, in addition to the Official Plan, to guide master planning in intensification areas across the City. These recommendations are intended to guide planning and future decision-making regarding the provision of parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services in intensification areas. They should be read in conjunction with the facility/amenity-specific recommendations provided in the balance of this plan (Sections 6 to 9).

Vertical Living Needs

The scale and intensity of growth in intensification areas drive the formation of urban/"vertical" lifestyles that differ in several ways to those of traditional suburban households. Neighbourhoods in Markham's intensification areas currently are characterized by high density concentrations of workers and residents living in mid to high-rise buildings. Residents include international students and postsecondary students sharing relatively small housing units. However, in terms of household composition, and in the context of housing affordability challenges, families are increasingly turning to condo ownership as places to raise their children, and the market is responding by



constructing more two and three-bedroom condo units. Condo amenities (see examples below) can include leisure-activity spaces; however, it should be noted that York Region’s affordable housing apartment buildings do not provide condo-type amenities.

People living in intensification areas use public space differently to how people living in suburban areas use public space. The public realm becomes an extension of their homes – both because of smaller housing units and a desire to live an urban lifestyle, which depends on public amenities.

Potential Implications of Vertical Lifestyles

Leisure-Type	Suburban Lifestyles	Vertical Lifestyles	
		Considerations	Implications for ILMP Services and Facilities
Aquatics	Backyards provide space for outdoor pools. However, pool costs affect affordability. No qualified swimming instruction (unless private).	Condo amenities sometimes include indoor pools. However, no swimming instruction is provided.	Increased pressure on programs of swimming instruction at City aquatic facilities. Longer wait lists.
Cultural Facilities	Large “drive-to” cultural facilities.	Expectation of smaller “walk-to” and transit-accessible cultural facilities.	Need to develop concepts and business models for smaller cultural facilities to meet local needs.
Dog Ownership	Backyards provide space for play and dog waste.	No backyards. Some condo amenities include dog runs.	Increased pressure on parks, trails and off-leash areas for dog play, exercise and waste. This can lead to increased conflicts
Fitness	Housing units can provide space for indoor fitness equipment. No fitness instruction (unless private).	Condo amenities sometimes include fitness rooms. However, no instruction is provided (unless private).	Increased pressure on City and non-municipal fitness centres and training programs.
Indoor Play	Housing units typically include indoor play areas for children (family/recreation rooms)	Some condos are now providing indoor playrooms.	Increased pressure on indoor play areas in Community Centres and Libraries.
Indoor Recreation	Generally rely on drive-to access to large multi-purpose community centres for gym activities.	Condo amenities sometimes include recreation rooms. May need to rely on transit to access large multi-purpose community centres for gym activities.	Increased pressure on indoor gyms, etc. for the development of physical literacy and essential life skills. Longer wait lists.

Leisure-Type	Suburban Lifestyles	Vertical Lifestyles	
		Considerations	Implications for ILMP Services and Facilities
Indoor Social Gathering	Housing units typically are large enough for large gatherings of family and friends.	Condo amenities sometimes include social gathering rooms. However, they require fee-based booking and some may not provide space for informal drop-in social gatherings.	Increased pressure on informal drop-in social gathering spaces in Community Centres and Libraries, and parks/public realm.
Libraries	Generally rely on drive-to access to large library branches.	Expectation of smaller “walk-to” and transit-accessible library branches.	Need to develop concepts and business models for smaller libraries to meet local needs.
Meditation and Mindfulness	Activities can take place inside the home or in the backyard with plenty of space and quiet.	Limited space due to smaller housing units, more noise and less space.	More demand for outdoor spaces and access to public spaces that are engaging and inspirational.
Outdoor Activities	Backyards provide space for outdoor exercise, gardening and entertaining.	No backyards.	Increased pressure on parks for exercise and connection to nature. Site constraints on park sizes and availability of parks nearby.
Outdoor Play	Backyards provide space for outdoor children’s play areas.	Limited backyards or other outdoor play opportunities.	Increased pressure on outdoor play areas in Parks, including playground, exercise stations, waterplay features.
Parks	Most people typically go to the park with their family on weekends.	Parks are used for daily activities – hanging out with friends, eating dinner, exercising, and reading.	Increased pressure on parks on an everyday basis. Greater use of hardscape and plaza designs to accommodate more intense use and events.
Sports Fields	Large, land-intensive sports fields are commonly provided in community parks, situated in accessible locations and often associated with community centres and schools.	Parkland is generally not appropriately sized to accommodate multiple sports fields. In cases where land may be available, the use of artificial turf may be required to support high levels of use.	Increased pressure on existing spaces to accommodate modified versions of sport. Travel to other areas may be required to participate in organized sport.

Leisure-Type	Suburban Lifestyles	Vertical Lifestyles	
		Considerations	Implications for ILMP Services and Facilities
Study	Housing units typically provide space for study – dens, separate bedrooms for children.	Limited study space due to smaller housing units.	Increased pressure on libraries for study and the development of literacy and digital skills

Generally, vertical living for families and others results in a need for compensatory local access to municipal parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services.

Parks are crucial amenities for neighbourhoods, especially those lacking private green space, and community service facilities provide a foundation for a diverse range of programs and services that build communities, contribute to quality of life and act as neighbourhood focal points where people gather, work, learn, socialize and access services. ILMP facilities are essential to fostering complete communities. Playing a distinct and separate role from private amenity spaces that may be required as part of development, these facilities provide non-profit programs and services for local residents and community groups. They are fundamental components of a neighbourhood's liveability and must be planned for and provided in a timely manner to support future growth.

10.3 Keeping Pace with Growth in Intensification Areas

New space and facilities should keep pace with growth to ensure that residents and workers will be served by new, improved, and expanded community service facilities and resilient physical infrastructure. The City's ability to grow depends on responding in a timely and coordinated way to the demand for new or additional services and facilities.

The recommendations below are intended to provide a comprehensive approach to securing required infrastructure, ensuring collaboration amongst sectors and aligning strategic, capital and operational directions and decisions where possible.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#107. Support growth in Markham's intensification areas through community service facilities and public open spaces that support complete communities and the health of residents, workers and visitors. Consider alternative options in intensification areas (such as leases within buildings under development) to reduce costs of purchasing lands for stand-alone spaces.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#108. Where development is phased, include community service facilities as part of the first phase of development in intensification areas. To ensure timely provision, initiate assessment, capital planning and design of additional parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities early in the development process.	New	Ongoing
#109. Where appropriate, require development in intensification areas to accommodate temporary community service facilities until such time as the permanent community service facilities are constructed and outfitted.	New	Ongoing
#110. To ensure timely provision, initiate assessment, capital planning and design of additional parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities as part of the regular review of the ILMP and in advance of exceeding the capacity of current and planned facilities.	New	Ongoing
#111. Consider innovative approaches/tools to fund and provide community services facilities in intensification areas, including leveraging land value, incentivizing landowners (e.g., expedited approvals), partnerships with the Region (e.g., affordable/seniors' housing), municipal corporations pursuant to the Municipal Act, Section 37 contributions, cash-in-lieu of parkland, leasing vs. ownership, etc.	New	Ongoing

10.4 Community Design for “Complete Communities” in Intensification Areas

The recommendations for intensification areas below are based on the following assumptions:

- Development in intensification areas will be designed to provide for the creation of complete communities, as defined in the 2014 Official Plan.
- All neighbourhoods in intensification areas will provide walkable and transit-accessible access to a range of amenities, services and infrastructure that support complete communities. Regional recreation provision areas will further support communities City-wide.
- New buildings will fit within their existing and planned context, expand and improve the public realm, and include indoor and outdoor amenities for both residents and workers.
- Public spaces will be diverse, accessible, flexible, dynamic and safe, supporting year-round public life and setting the stage for daily social interaction and community building.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#112. Locate all parks and community service facilities in highly visible locations with strong pedestrian, cycling and transit connections for convenient access. Locate indoor facilities in gateway building forms to aid in identification of all public spaces.	New	Ongoing
#113. Evaluate development based on the availability and provision of infrastructure (community service facilities, parkland and open space) relative to the number of people it will generate to ensure the creation of complete communities. Assessing these elements, both on-site and within the surrounding area (including adjacent and nearby areas) will ensure that development contributes to complete communities.	New	Ongoing
#114. Require the Secondary Plan process in intensification areas to include the completion of a Community Services, Facilities and Parks Plan . The assessment study area will include, at a minimum, the site and block in which the development is located, as well as all of the surrounding blocks. A larger area of assessment may be required where the development intensity is greater than the planned context. In addition, development applications will have to undertake a Community Services, Facilities and Parks Plan if the application is in an area outside of the Secondary Study area described above (e.g., where employment areas are converted into a residential neighbourhood). Approval of Secondary Plans in intensification areas should be contingent upon the identification, in the Community Services, Facilities and Parks Plan, of: (a) the minimum service levels for parks, recreation (including indoor and outdoor recreation facilities), arts & culture and libraries within the community; (b) methods for securing these facilities, including the amount of land required and locations; and (c) a strategy to address the issue of the spillover of need for parks, recreation, arts & culture and library services into existing facilities in surrounding residential neighbourhoods, including the identification of an additional amount of land to be provided to the City in the surrounding area to respond to these spillover needs, such as sports fields.	New	Ongoing
#115. In the case of multiple landowners, consider the consolidation of all park requirements into one central larger park , to maximize green space opportunities for intensification areas.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#116. In intensification areas, encourage the creation of privately-owned public spaces – parkettes, plazas, dog runs/off-leash areas, courtyards or walkways – not to replace new public spaces, but to help balance density and provide places of retreat, relaxation and moments of reprieve from the bustle of city living.	New	Ongoing
#117. Design parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities in intensification areas as Neighbourhood Centres that are flexible, accessible, multi-use, inclusive and age-friendly spaces that provide active spaces and people places . This model allows for increased cross-programming and creates a critical mass that supports the facilities' role as community hubs and destinations. It also encourages facilities that can be adapted over time to meet the varied needs of different user groups.	New	Ongoing

10.5 Partnerships & Co-Locations

Innovative and integrated service delivery models are necessary to address parks, recreation, arts & culture and library needs in a growing and maturing Markham to promote cost-effectiveness, sustainability and the long-term viability of public investments. Schools are a community resource that serves not only as learning institutions but also as socio-cultural centres and a source of valuable community space that can be used by community members when school is not in session. City of Markham's positive experience in partnering with schools allows the exploration of innovative approaches with this and other sectors, such as the development community and community organizations.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#118. Encourage and promote the shared use of schools (e.g., gymnasiums) and adjacent parks and public open space for active sports fields.	New	Ongoing
#119. Collaborate with School Boards to develop standard terms to facilitate co-location and community access to City and school facilities and spaces.	New	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#120. Locate partnered/co-located services in partnership with developers within resident/office/retail spaces.	New	Ongoing
#121. Encourage partnerships and co-locations between landowners and public agencies, boards and community-based organizations to support the improvement, provision and expansion of community service facilities.	New	Ongoing
#122. Encourage and promote community services and facilities providers to support the creation of community hubs in intensification areas.	New	Ongoing

11. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This section identifies considerations for the full implementation of this Integrated Leisure Master Plan, including a process for monitoring and updating the plan. Financial costing of the 2019 ILMP Plan will be undertaken through the City's annual capital budget process as priorities are brought forward for review and consideration.

It should be noted that the development of a detailed-level financial strategy for implementation of the ILMP was not within the scope of the ILMP Update project.

It should also be noted that the recommendations of the 2010 ILMP are in many cases carried forward, into the 2019 ILMP or have become embedded as best practices. Otherwise, they may be considered superseded by the 2019 ILMP.

11.1 Implementation Tools

Sustained efforts should be made to implement these strategies through a variety of appropriate and acceptable means. The recommendations in this Plan are based upon community needs using forecasts of current population and anticipated growth. The full implementation of this Plan may require the pursuit of alternative funding and the establishment of various partnerships and cost-sharing agreements with community organizations, schools, agencies, developers and other partners.

By approving this Plan, the City is not bound to implementing every recommendation or providing facilities in the order, amount or timing indicated. Rather, this Plan provides guidance on community priorities and sets a general course for meeting the needs as they are presently defined. If growth is slowed or accelerated, the timing of implementation may require adjustment. It is expected that the City will make decisions on individual projects and funding sources annually through the budget process.

The timing of the capital projects proposed in this ILMP Update recognizes the need for phased implementation. In some cases, the proposed timing may not align with the City's funding capacities on a year-to-year basis. As part of the annual budget process, this report should be reviewed to identify areas where the availability of resources may affect the timing of facility development. Project efficiencies, innovations, partnerships and alternative service delivery will be considered as part of project implementation.



Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#123. Develop a five-year rolling parkland capital plan that incorporates the latest ILMP provisions through new and renovated parks, as well as innovative park amenities (e.g., accessibility features, adventure play). Urban Design (Development Services) and Parks, Horticulture & Forestry (Community & Fire Services) will jointly develop the framework for the rolling plan in 2019, including an annual review on plan progress and adherence to the approved provisions and timelines for completion. Undertake a variety of options to accelerate park completion to align with subdivision completion.	New	2019 (framework) - Ongoing
#124. Conduct feasibility studies, business plans, site assessments and/or public engagement prior to developing or expanding major parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities to ensure that projects are aligned with community needs, facility capacities, partnership opportunities and financial capabilities.	New	Ongoing
#125. Review City policies that address community access to facilities, including active parks (e.g., allocation, user fees, affiliation, etc.) on a regular basis, ideally not exceeding four years.	New	2022
#126. Ensure the ILMP is a core component of the required Community Benefit Charges strategy and by-law and consider the ILMP in tandem with the City's Official Plan policies relating to community infrastructure, parks and open space system, arts and culture, environmental systems, urban design and other related topics.	New	Ongoing
#127. Develop and utilize a formal partnership framework to seek and evaluate capital proposals from community organizations, with consideration given to the City's ten-year capital forecast and the City's capacity to participate in such projects.	New	2021 (develop framework), then Ongoing
#128. Continue to place an emphasis on partnerships with school boards, community agencies, places of worship, sports groups, private recreation facilities and/or ethnic-based clubs that strengthen services and accessibility.	2010 ILMP – outstanding	Ongoing

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#129. As older community centres approach or reach their renewal/redevelopment lifecycle , the City should evaluate the ability to consolidate activities/programming where groups of smaller centres are located in order to maximize capital dollars, including the potential closure of one or more facilities. Programming and capital investment should be reflective of current and anticipated future demands.	New	Ongoing

11.2 Financial Considerations

Markham's policy of fiscal restraint has resulted in great success in terms of minimizing tax rate increases. At the same time, the City has been able to build new facilities and infrastructure to keep pace with growth and maintain service levels. The Cornell and Aaniin Community Centres and Libraries are recent examples of Markham's ongoing investment in community infrastructure.

Much like the 2010 ILMP approval process, each recommendation of the 2019 ILMP Update will be brought forward through the annual budget process for approval, within the following fiscal options:

1. Development Charges²⁸. Parks development fees, Library and Recreation DCs (recognizing the deficit within the Recreation reserve).
2. Exploring partnership opportunities: Cost savings could be achieved through combining resources and co-locating with partners such as public schools, post-secondary institutions and social service providers (as per the Provincial community hub policy).
3. Section 37 of the Ontario Planning Act (Community Benefits)²⁹: Section 37 currently provides municipalities with a planning tool that allows them to grant an increase in height and/or density and receive additional services, facilities and matters ("community benefits") from the owner of a contributing development. For example, in the case of a high-rise condominium development, space for community services and facilities (such as libraries, recreation facilities, community centres, cultural space, public meeting spaces and multi-use facilities) could potentially be secured as a Section 37 community benefit. However, it should be noted that contributions can also be directed toward a wide range of alternative community benefits such as public realm improvements and public art.
4. Leasing/Purchasing Spaces in intensification areas through negotiations between City and new condominium developments.
5. Private Sector or Partnerships to have others provide the needs of the ILMP. The City doesn't have to be the only provider.
6. Tax increases: However, Markham has a well-established and popular budget policy of enacting tax rate increases that do not exceed increases in the inflation rate. A departure from this policy appears unlikely.
7. Borrowing to fund community infrastructure projects: To date Council has not indicated an appetite for debt.
8. Provincial and Federal Grant Funding: Based on the City of Markham's successful track record in making the case and receiving grant funding in the past, Markham should continue to seek out and leverage current and future funding opportunities to fund recommended projects, such as new facilities or facility renovations.

²⁸ Through Bill 108 (introduced in May 2019 and currently in partial effect), the Province is proposing significant changes to the Development Charges and Planning Acts, among others. The proposed amendments will combine all growth-related parks, recreation and library charges – including development charges, cash-in-lieu for parkland dedication and bonusing provisions (Section 37 of the Planning Act) – into a single community benefits charge.

²⁹ Ibid.

9. Re-evaluating the requirement for and/or the timing of proposed infrastructure: For example, 2010 recommendations for the expansion and renovation of the Milliken Mills Community Centre and Library (MMCL) could be re-evaluated in terms of the impact of the opening of Aaniin on usage levels at the MMCL.
10. Reviewing the quality of infrastructure: The 2004 opening of the award-winning Angus Glen Community Centre and Library set an ambitious new Markham standard in terms of construction cost per square foot and the quality of its design and finishes. New infrastructure constructed at a lower cost per square foot could be successful functionally, but might not meet community expectations regarding quality.
11. Utilizing existing City-owned lands for facilities to reduce costs.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#130. Scope out and conduct a detailed Financing Strategy for the ILMP within the multi-year City budget.	New	2020 and Ongoing
#131. Where appropriate and consistent with municipal policies and priorities, encourage cost-sharing partnerships and alternate funding sources in the provision and delivery of facilities and services, such as (but not limited to) surcharges, fundraising, grants, sponsorships, Section 37 community benefits and various forms of collaboration.	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#132. Review the status of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan and priority projects as part of the City's annual budgeting process .	2010 ILMP - updated	Ongoing
#133. Ensure that the funding requirements for parks, recreation, arts & culture and library facilities are evaluated as part of the City's multi-year budget and that lifecycle reserves are maximized to address the replacement of aging infrastructure.	New	Ongoing

11.3 Monitoring & Updating the ILMP

The ILMP Update is a living document that will evolve over time. To ensure that facility priorities are up to date, review the ILMP every five years and update based on its progress, current data and emerging needs.

Trends change and often unforeseen factors emerge which create unanticipated increases or decreases in participation and which, in turn, may impact demand. Continued monitoring of the participation levels (as well as overall population figures) in local parks, recreation, arts & culture and library activities is necessary to identify changes and to assess the impact on the provision targets and capital recommendations. As a result, the direction of the Master Plan may need refocusing from time to time.

The ILMP’s recommendations should be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain reflective of municipal priorities and responsive to community needs. The best time to undertake a review is leading up to the development of the Development Charges (DC) Background Study. Recently introduced Bill 108 has proposed the introduction of a new Community Benefits Charge (CBC) Strategy to replace DC Studies for potentially ineligible infrastructure such as parks, recreation and libraries. Future ILMP Updates should be undertaken about every five years to coincide with DC or CBC studies.



Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation Status	Timing
#134. Re-establish a system for the regular monitoring and reporting of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan, including participation rates, customer satisfaction and other performance measures.	2010 ILMP – ongoing	2020
#135. Consider new business intelligence tools to assist in engaging the public, understanding user needs and future requirements using an evidence-based approach.	New	Ongoing
#136. Secure growth-related funding to offset costs for updating the ILMP and undertaking related studies (as growth in the City is driving the changes and demand for services addressed in the ILMP).	New	Ongoing

Appendix A – Status of 2010 ILMP Recommendations

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
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 services and facilities.	●			Ongoing	Project-specific
	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.	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	3. Ensure that community planning incorporates the role of parks, recreation, culture, and library and that ILMP recommendations are incorporated into all planning processes.	●	●		Ongoing	Best practice
	4. Design and build parks, recreation, culture, and library infrastructure that supports sustainability (e.g., LEED buildings).	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	5. Continue to align with the Community Sustainability Plan.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	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 <i>Planning Act</i> . 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 <i>Planning Act</i> or the <i>Development Charges Act</i> , and which may be of particular benefit to a specific area (or areas) within Markham or the Town of Markham as a whole.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	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 the vision for this area and community needs.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
Recreation Services	9. Offer leisure opportunities locally by engaging community and neighbourhood stakeholders in planning and delivery.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Culture Services	10. Position and develop cultural event planning in the context of community sustainability.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
	11. Undertake cultural mapping, develop cultural policies, and complete a cult 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 177)	●			Completed	Project-specific
Library Services	12. Prioritize lifelong learning as an objective for library programs and services.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
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 are 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	14. Continue with plans to build the East Markham Community Centre & Library in 2011.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	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.	●	●		Completed	Project-specific
	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.		●	●	In progress	Project-specific
	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.		●	●	Timeframe Not Reached	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	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"> o Victoria Square Community Centre (conduct a feasibility study to consider facility renewal and expansion to accommodate meeting and multi-use space). o 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. o Armadale Community Centre (expansion to be guided through a feasibility study). 	●	●	●	Further Review Required	Project-specific
	19. Enhance partnerships with school boards, community agencies, places of worship, sports groups, private recreation facilities, and/or ethnic-based clubs that strengthen services and accessibility and enhance opportunities for the residents of Markham.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
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 timeframe.	●	●	●	Completed	Project-specific
Indoor Aquatic Centres	21. Develop an additional indoor aquatic 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	22. Build, in partnership with the 2015 Pan Am Games, a 50m pool in the Town of Markham and pursue further recreation facility opportunities in the Town of Markham as a result of the Games.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	23. Provide a multi-tank indoor aquatic 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.			●	Timeframe Not Reached	Project-specific
	24. Undertake an assessment of existing aquatic facilities to evaluate community demand and needs, provision requirements, and the need for renovations and upgrades.		●		Completed	Project-specific
Gymnasiums	25. 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).	●	●		Completed	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Seniors' Space	26. 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.	●		●	Completed	Project-specific
	27. 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.	●	●		Further Review Required	Project-specific
	28. 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.	●	●	●	No Action	Best practice
Youth Space	29. 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.	●		●	Completed	Project-specific
	30. Seek options to add dedicated youth space to Milliken Mills Community Centre and/or Centennial Community Centre.	●	●		Further Review Required	Project-specific
	31. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
Fitness Centres	32. 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.	●		●	In progress	Project-specific
	33. Investigate options for adding fitness / active living space and/or programming to Angus Glen Community Centre and Milliken Mills Community Centre by 2019.	●	●		Further Review Required	Project-specific
	34. 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.	●			Further Review Required	Project-specific
	35. 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.	●			Further Review Required	Project-specific
Indoor Soccer Fields	36. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	37. To identify demand for future indoor soccer facilities, Markham should monitor local usage at its indoor fields and evaluate partnership possibilities with other parties.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Other Major Indoor Recreation Facilities	38. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	39. 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	40. No additional indoor <u>bocce</u> courts are recommended during the Master Plan's ten-year projection period.	●	●		Completed	Project-specific
	41. Municipal provision of <u>gymnastics</u> facilities is not recommended at this time.	●	●		Completed	Project-specific
Trails	42. Continue to implement the Town of Markham <i>Town Wide Pathways and Trails Master Plan</i> through the proper allocation of project, operational, and maintenance funding and resources.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
Soccer Fields	43. 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	44. 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.	●			Further Review Required	Project-specific
	45. Maintain and seek to enhance Markham's partnerships relative to the maintenance of municipally-permitted fields on school properties.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
Ball Diamonds	46. 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	47. 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.	●	●	●	Further review required	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Tennis Courts (outdoor)	48. 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	49. 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.		●		Further review required	Project-specific
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	50. 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 West and East 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
Playgrounds	51. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
	52. Continue to retrofit playground equipment and surfaces to comply with CSA standards.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
	53. Establish minimum standards for barrier-free accessibility at municipal playgrounds and continue to locate barrier-free playgrounds in strategic locations throughout Markham.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
Outdoor Aquatic Facilities	54. Conduct facility assessments at the appropriate time to determine the viability of the existing outdoor pools. No additional outdoor pools are recommended.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
	55. Construct 5 to 8 new 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).	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
Skate Parks	56. 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	57. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
Bike Parks	58. 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.	●			Further review required	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Cricket Pitches	59. 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).	●	●		Further review required	Project-specific
Off-Leash Dog Areas	60. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
Outdoor Ice Rinks	61. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best Practice
Culture Infrastructure	62. As part of the development of Markham's Cultural Plan (see also recommendation 177), examine the need for major facilities, such a large venue with seating capacity in the range of 1,500 to 6,000 seats.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	63. Examine the potential of existing community centres, libraries, and heritage buildings to accommodate flexible spaces for arts and cultural activities, events, and cultural presentations (to the greatest degree possible).	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	64. 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).	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	65. Ensure that the design and/or retrofitting of large indoor spaces gives strong consideration to the accommodation of events and cultural presentations.	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	66. Working with the community, identify opportunities to utilize an existing multi-use space that can serve as a youth-friendly venue for live music.	●	●		Completed	Project-specific
	67. 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.	●	●		Completed	Project-specific
	68. Continue to implement the Markham Museum Master Plan.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	69. Promote the public display of local art by designating a municipal building (or buildings) suitable for their display.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
	70. Over time, seek opportunities to accommodate local cultural performances, public art, and areas for quiet reflection in selected parks.	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Library Facilities	71. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	b. Continue with plans to expand the Milliken Mills Library Branch (an additional 13,000 ft ²) in 2012.	●			Further Review Required	Project-specific
	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.	●	●		Completed	Project-specific
	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.		●		Timeframe Not Reached	Project-specific
	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.			●	In progress	Project-specific
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.			●	Timeframe Not Reached	Project-specific	
Parks and Recreation Services	72. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	73. Adjust service delivery models to ensure that services and facilities are widely accessible in intensified areas.		●	●	In progress	Project-specific
	74. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Culture Services	75. In intensifying communities, provide spaces that contribute to building social capital and placemaking as key components of building the cultural sector and public realm; such spaces may involve the development of creative partnerships with the private sector and developing communities.		●	●	Further review required	Project-specific
Library Services	76. 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.		●	●	In progress	Project-specific
General Service Delivery	77. 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 locally and from across the globe.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
Parks Services	78. Ensure that the development of public spaces remains a priority to create a welcoming and beautiful community.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	79. Develop active greenspaces to support active lifestyles.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	80. Develop passive greenspaces accessible to employment areas to enable residents and employees to reflect and rejuvenate.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
Recreation Services	81. Provide Markham workplaces with opportunities for employee wellness and programs and to promote physical activity.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	82. Create the social and physical infrastructure to attract and retain business and industry.	●	●	●	Further Review Required	Best practice
Culture Services	83. Develop the creative sector capacity and entrepreneurship through cooperative programs with Economic Development.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
	84. Develop cultural mapping to better understand opportunities for greater synergies.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	85. Actively participate in research in order to increase intellectual capital and knowledge.	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
Library Services	86. Design library spaces, services and programs to nurture learning and the human imagination, thereby supporting community prosperity in the creative and knowledge-based economy.	●	●	●	In Progress	Best practice
	87. Provide community places and “third place” destinations that enhance a high quality of life for all residents.	●	●	●	In Progress	Best practice
	88. Provide collections, services and programs that enhance quality of life, and help ensure that local creative culture flourishes and thrives.	●	●	●	In Progress	Best practice
	89. Provide welcoming civic gathering places for all residents, fostering a sense of community and belonging.	●	●	●	In Progress	Best practice
	90. 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.	●	●	●	In Progress	Best practice
General Service Delivery	91. Develop a Place-based Community Building Framework that would allow and plan for a Town-wide approach to strengthening neighbourhoods and the public realm.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	92. Strengthen community participation and engagement in neighbourhood planning and in the delivery of programs and services.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	93. Develop a Partnership Policy that addresses the need for and a common approach to partnership attraction, relationship management, retention and evaluation.		●		No Action	Project-specific
	94. Develop a Community Volunteer Management Program with linkage to the Community Engagement Framework.		●		Completed	Project-specific
	95. 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.		●		Further Review Required	Project-specific
	96. 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.		●		Completed	Project-specific
	97. Evaluate the staffing mix to support a Place-Based approach and provide expertise on policy and resource development, training and facilitating the model.		●		In progress	Project-specific
	98. 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.		●		In progress	Project-specific
	99. 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.	●	●		Completed	Project-specific
	100. 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ activities that are grounded in a set a values articulating the capacity of people working together for mutual goals; ○ a greater sense of place and social cohesion; ○ the community's participation in determining required services, service goals, service delivery expectations and appropriate responses; ○ new types of partnerships and alliances with community organizations that have interests in specific service areas; ○ a sense of empowerment by community partners through providing meaningful contributions to the leisure delivery system; and ○ sustainability, in that solutions to community issues rely on what resources already exist in the neighbourhood. 	●	●		Completed	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	101. 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ global, industry wide issues that will inform departmental planning; ○ provincial information that would be helpful in establishing operational standards and procedures, such as quality assurance and compliance with legislative requirements; and ○ 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. 	●			Further Review Required	Project-specific
General Service Delivery	102. Establish a Public Realm Policy and Guidelines.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	103. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
General Service Delivery	104. Continue to place high priority on the subsidy program to reduce financial barriers to participation, including barriers related to transportation and equipment.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	105. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	106. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	107. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	108. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	109. Ensure that staff are trained and aware of the supports available to engage and provide outreach to diverse communities (signers, translators, local champions etc.).	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	110. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	111. Work with community groups and stakeholders to expand their capacity to include all residents regardless of their backgrounds.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	112. 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).	●	●	●	No Action	Best practice
	113. 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).	●			No Action	Project-specific
	114. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	115. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	116. Post a list of organizations that provide support to diverse groups, including the goals and contact information of each organization, in 'Markham Life', other appropriate publications, and on the Town of Markham website.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	117. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	118. Consider the introduction of family programming (e.g., learn to swim; learn to skate) whereby families are encouraged to learn new skills together.		●	●	In progress	Project-specific
	119. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	120. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	121. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	122. Develop a Pricing Strategy that will include a balance of no cost/low cost programs and services that are accessible to all residents.	●	●	●	Further Review Required	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	123. Develop broad-based strategies to attract youth to programs and sports, including free youth leadership training opportunities for at-risk youth.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	124. Develop simple but meaningful performance measures and social inclusion indicators with respect to the participation of diverse groups in leisure activities, and report out annually to Council, respective groups, and stakeholders.		●	●	No Action	Project-specific
	125. 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.).	●			In progress	Project-specific
General Service Delivery	126. 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, development of education and awareness through its facilities, programs and services, reduction of gas emissions through the use of trails for active transportation, the green fleet program, and the engagement of children and youth in protecting and enhancing the environment.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	127. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	128. Establish programs that support litter less lunches in camps, litter less parks sites, zero waste, and increase recycling and environmentally friendly practices in facilities.	●	●		Completed	Best practice
	129. Include more interpretive signage along trails and in parks and facilities that speak to environmental efforts and the positive results of being environmental stewards.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	130. Continue to place priority on energy efficiencies in parks and in facilities.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	131. Continue to engage and recognize environmental groups and volunteers that support the stewardship efforts.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	132. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	133. 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.	●	●	●	Further review required	Best practice
	134. Create Sustainable Design Standards for consideration in new and redeveloped facilities and parks.	●			In progress	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
General Service Delivery	135. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	136. Provide needed training and ongoing support to the appropriate levels of staff on the introduction, principles and mechanisms of the Integrated Service Delivery approach.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
	137. 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.	●	●		Further Review Required	Project-specific
	138. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
General Service Delivery	139. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	140. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	141. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	142. Develop opportunities to work more closely with post-secondary institutions to employ innovative research initiatives relative to Markham's leisure needs.		●		Timeframe Not Reached	Project-specific
	143. Articulate service delivery and staffing standards for all programs and services, including customer service standards, and post the standards on the website to ensure transparency in service delivery.		●		In progress	Project-specific
	144. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	145. 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, the Commission, and the department, and that the results are communicated annually to Council, the public, and stakeholders.	●			In progress	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	146. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	147. 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.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
Youth Services	148. 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.	●			No Action	Project-specific
	149. 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.	●	●	●	Further Review Required	Best practice
	150. Consider the use of Youth Outreach workers in engaging youth, promoting youth leadership and civic engagement, and developing relevant programs and services.	●			Further Review Required	Project-specific
	151. Inventory <u>all</u> opportunities available in Markham for youth and promote them utilizing current technology (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and local neighbourhood communications vehicles.	●			Further Review Required	Project-specific
	152. Ensure that policies regarding staff use of technology align with the communication preferences of youth.	●			No Action	Project-specific
Older Adult Services	153. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	154. Develop inclusion strategies for Older Adult segments (e.g., Older Adults; Seniors; Old Age).	●			Completed	Project-specific
	155. 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.	●	●		In progress	Project-specific
Physical Inactivity	156. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	157. Denote all 'active' programs publicized in 'Markham Life' with a symbol to demonstrate that the active choice will assist in improving physical activity levels.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
	158. Promote the benefits of being active in 'Markham Life'. Introduce physical activity information and interactive tools on the Town of Markham's web-site.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
Parks Services	159. Host a forum for stakeholders and staff in order to create interest in the development of great parks, create awareness, learn from other jurisdictions and inspire discussions on possibilities in Markham.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	160. 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.		●		In progress	Project-specific
	161. Seek the assistance of local clubs and shared leadership with residents and resident groups to increase the programming and 'animation' of parks.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	162. 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.		●	●	In progress	Project-specific
	163. Articulate adequate maintenance and staffing standards through the Service Planning Project to support the parks inventory and test adherence to these standards annually.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	164. Test park user satisfaction and maintain an 85% satisfaction level at a minimum.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	165. Increase parks programming and stewardship through community engagement efforts (e.g., 'Adopt-a-Park' program, etc.) with a view to meeting local needs, providing 'walk to' opportunities and moving toward community-directed delivery at the neighbourhood-level over time.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	166. <i>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.</i>	●			Completed	Project-specific
Parkland Classifications, Supplies, and Needs	167. 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 parkland categories, as appropriate. The policy framework also needs to address Town policies, procedures and guidelines pertaining to highly urbanized parks in intensification areas.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	168. 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 and green space assets that have been built historically and are anticipated to be built as Markham urbanizes. Classification categories should be driven by use, purpose, setting and size. This new system should be used for classifying all parks, green space, and open spaces located in Markham 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
Parkland Acquisition	169. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
	170. 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.	●			In progress	Project-specific
Non-Traditional Park Uses	171. 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.	●			No action	Project-specific
	172. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	173. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
Rouge Park	174. 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.	●	●		Ongoing	Project-specific

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	175. Explore opportunities for heritage interpretation of natural features, First Nations, and human settlement in Rouge Park.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	176. 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.	●	●	●	Further review required	Best practice
Culture Services	177. 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. 	●			Completed	Project-specific
	178. Continue to develop Markham’s cultural venues as places of knowledge and entertainment in the sectors of expertise within the community.	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	179. Continue to develop and build the cultural capacity and infrastructure in Markham to keep pace with growth and needs through strategies and collaboration.	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	180. Contribute to placemaking efforts and building social capital through public art and development of public realm policies and strategies.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
	181. Continue to work with Economic Development on Creative City strategies that reflect the excellence and quality cultural experiences in Markham.	●	●	●	Ongoing	Best practice
	182. Align planning and service delivery with the neighbourhood-based approach and the development of creative hubs.		●	●	Completed	Project-specific
	183. Explore alternate revenue generation approaches for creating a funding stream for cultural infrastructure.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
	184. Position and promote the Civic Centre and surrounding assets as a cultural centre for Markham Centre.		●	●	Completed	Project-specific
	185. Support the development of a Special Event Policy for the Town of Markham.	●			Completed	Project-specific
Heritage	186. Seek opportunities for the re-use and renewal of heritage properties in Town of Markham ownership.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	187. Preserve the heritage attributes of heritage properties in Town of Markham ownership through regular maintenance and restoration.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	188. Continue to identify and create heritage conservation districts to protect and celebrate special heritage areas in the community.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	189. Continue to preserve and protect heritage properties within the Town of Markham through heritage financial assistance program such as grants, loans and rebates.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	190. Continue to use the “Markham Remembered” interpretive plaque program to celebrate and tell the stories of historical sites, people and events throughout the community.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
Library Services	191. 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.	●	●	●	In Progress	Best practice
	192. Align library service planning and delivery framework with the proposed neighbourhood-based approach.		●	●	In Progress	Project-specific
	193. Ensure that library building programs in areas of residential intensification respond to needs for alternative community spaces for study, children’s play spaces, and social activities. Consider partnerships as a means of delivering such alternative community spaces.		●	●	In Progress	Project-specific
	194. Support sustainability and prioritize lifelong learning – “mental fitness” – as objectives for library programs and services.	●	●	●	In Progress	Best practice
	195. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	196. Continue to implement self-service technology to improve customer convenience, keep pace with growth in material flow, and find operational efficiencies.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	197. Continue to implement merchandising strategies (e.g., C3™ – Customer Centred Classification) to provide customers with better access to library materials.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
	198. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
Sport Development	199. 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.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	200. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
	201. 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.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice
Funding the ILMP	202. This Integrated Leisure Master Plan should be used as a resource in developing Markham’s 10-year capital plan.	●	●	●	In progress	Best practice

Subject Area	2010 ILMP Recommendations	2010-14	2015-19	2020+	Status	Type
	203. 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.	●	●	●	Completed	Best practice
Monitoring and Updating the ILMP	204. Implement a system for the regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan.	●			Completed	Project-specific
	205. Determine if an update or a full review of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan is required in 2015.		●		Completed	Project-specific

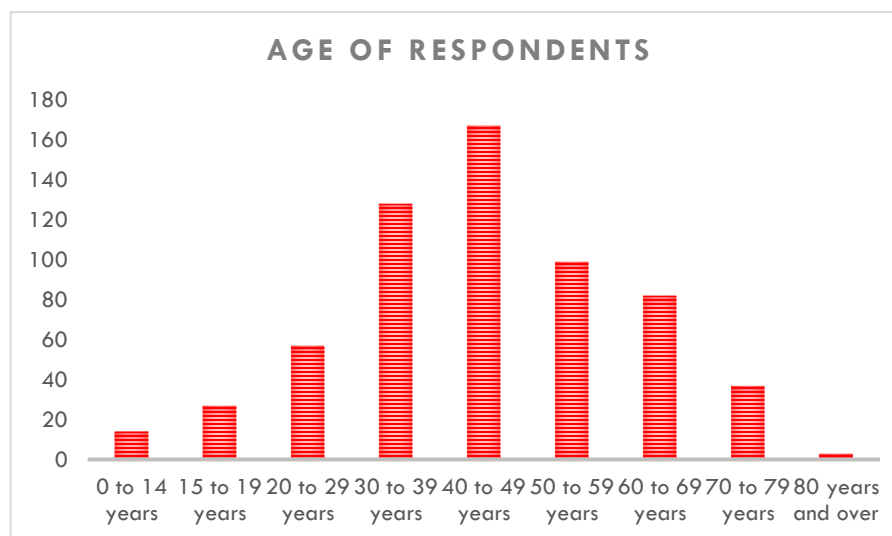
Appendix B – Community Survey Results

The ILMP Survey was distributed both online and in major community centres and libraries between March 20 and May 7, 2018. Overall, 631 responses were collected. As mentioned in Section 3.3, given the methodology of the survey, this sample size is not statistically significant. With this in mind, there are insights to be gained that support other surveys conducted as well as other trends noted as part of this update. Within the survey, participants were asked similar questions about different sectors of leisure provided by the municipality. These were multiple choice responses where respondents were able to select as many responses as illustrated their use or participation. In some cases, the number of answers is not equal to the number of respondents and the resulting percentage of answers can exceed 100%. They were given the opportunity to provide their own responses to the questions asked as well. Responses reflected a picture of current use of facilities and participation in activities, opportunities for increased participation and main barriers to participation for each sector included in this report.

Demographics

The age ranges of the survey respondents do not accurately reflect the population of Markham based on 2016 Census data; however, the survey was intended to be completed by residents age 16 and above (thus the needs of children were to be identified by adults within their household). The majority of respondents were between the ages of 30-49 years with 50-69 making up the next most prominent age group.

While difficult to discern, based on the responses, it is possible that 42 of the respondents live in a multi-family home and 186 live in the same house as their grandparents or adult children. Of those that live in the same house as other families, most are young adults (20-29).

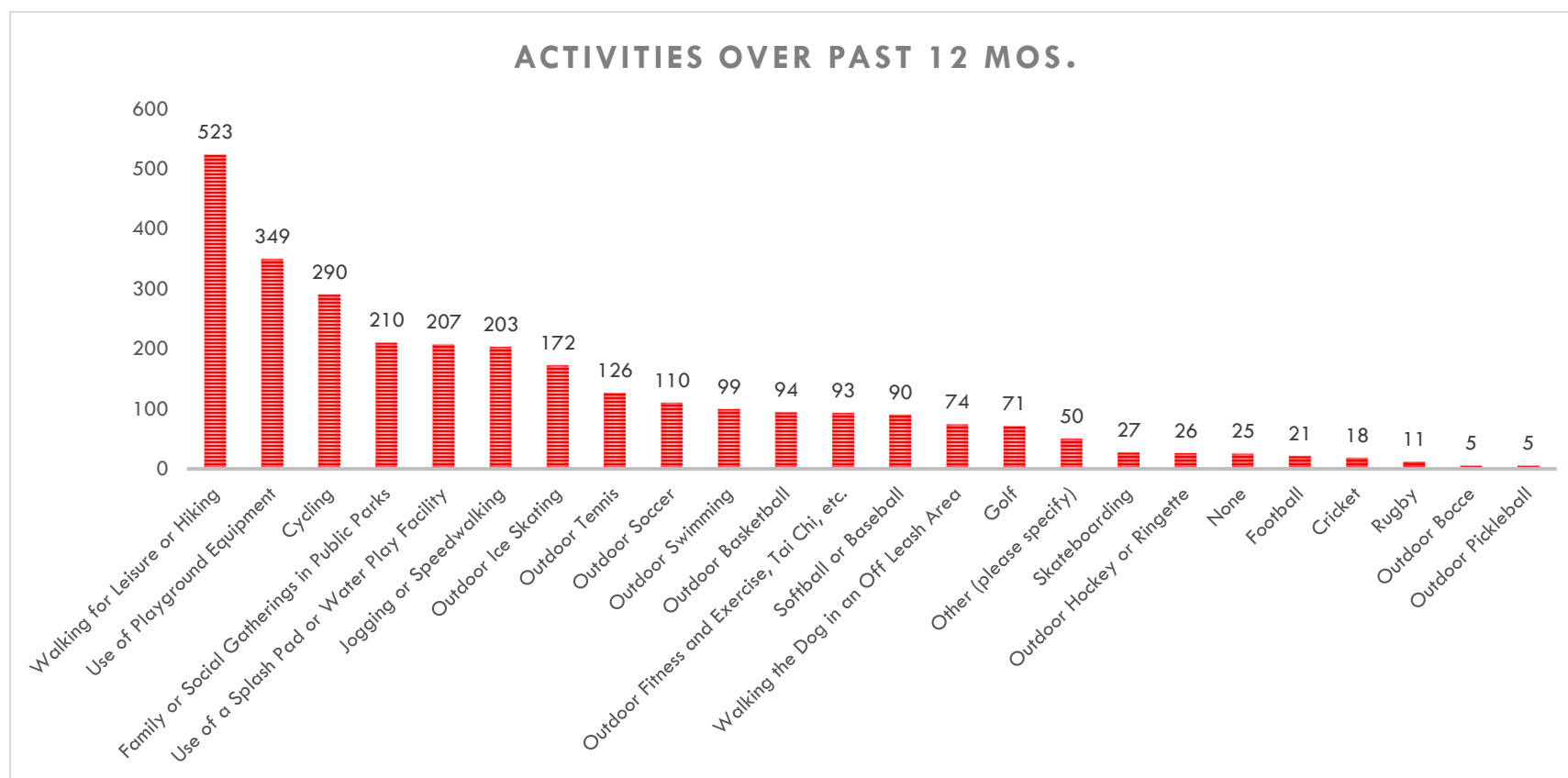


Age Range	1 Person	2 People	3 People	4 People	5 People	6 People	7 People	N/A
Under 10 years	124	93	12	3	1	0	3	106
10 - 19 years	113	81	14	0	2	0	2	90
20 - 34 years	96	80	18	2	1	1	3	65
35 - 54 years	92	282	7	1	1	0	2	40
55 years and over	88	202	5	5	0	0	2	52

1. In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household participated in any of the following parks or outdoor recreation activities?

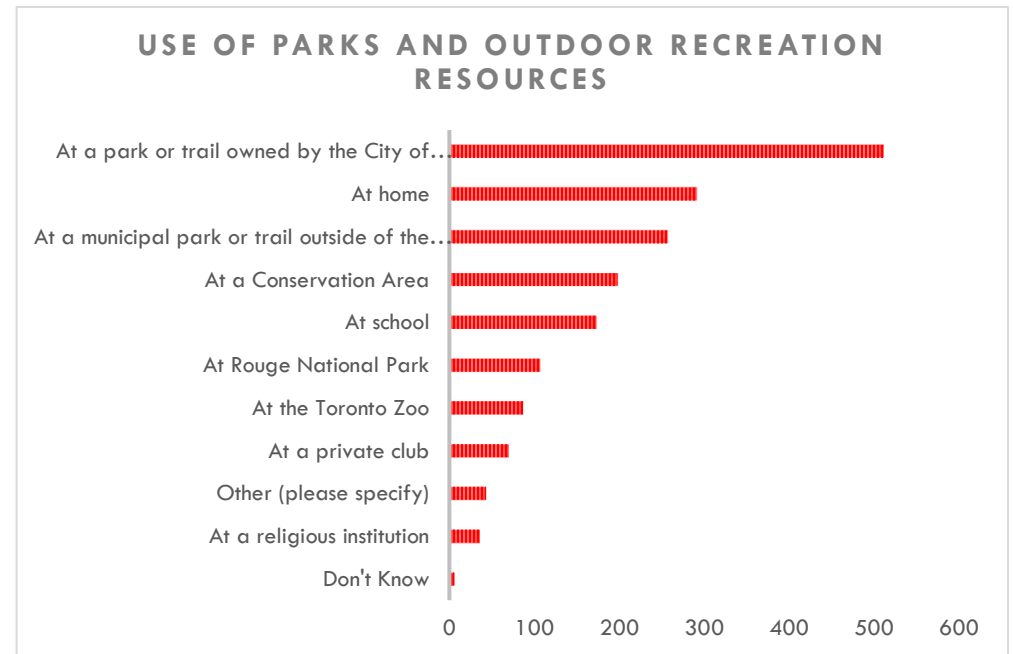
The survey responses reflected a high use of parks and amenities in the pursuit of activities that are self-directed in nature. Activities that are scheduled or based on facility usage were not as high.

Top 5 Activities	Count of Responses	% of Responses
Total Responses: 629		
Walking for Leisure /Hiking	523	83.2%
Playground Use	349	55.5%
Cycling	290	46.1%
Family/Social Gatherings	210	33.4%
Splash Pad/Water Play	207	33%



2. Where does your household tend to participate in your parks and outdoor recreational activities most of the time?

Most survey respondents participate in these activities in City of Markham parks or in their own neighbourhoods. Most participants indicated using easily accessible sites for outdoor recreation when possible. The open-ended responses reflected this as well – most participants were best able to participate in their chosen activities in their own neighbourhoods and other municipally-owned locations or at provincial parks.



3. Are there any parks and outdoor recreation activities that you or other members of your household cannot do as often as you would like?

Participants reflected the opportunity to provide outdoor recreation activities linked mainly to facilities and infrastructure. While many residents enjoy walking or hiking and cycling, there are still opportunities to improve through increased trail accessibility, connectivity and infrastructure. Additionally, the majority of top activities indicated as missed opportunities for participation are directly linked to specific facilities like swimming, ice pads and tennis courts.

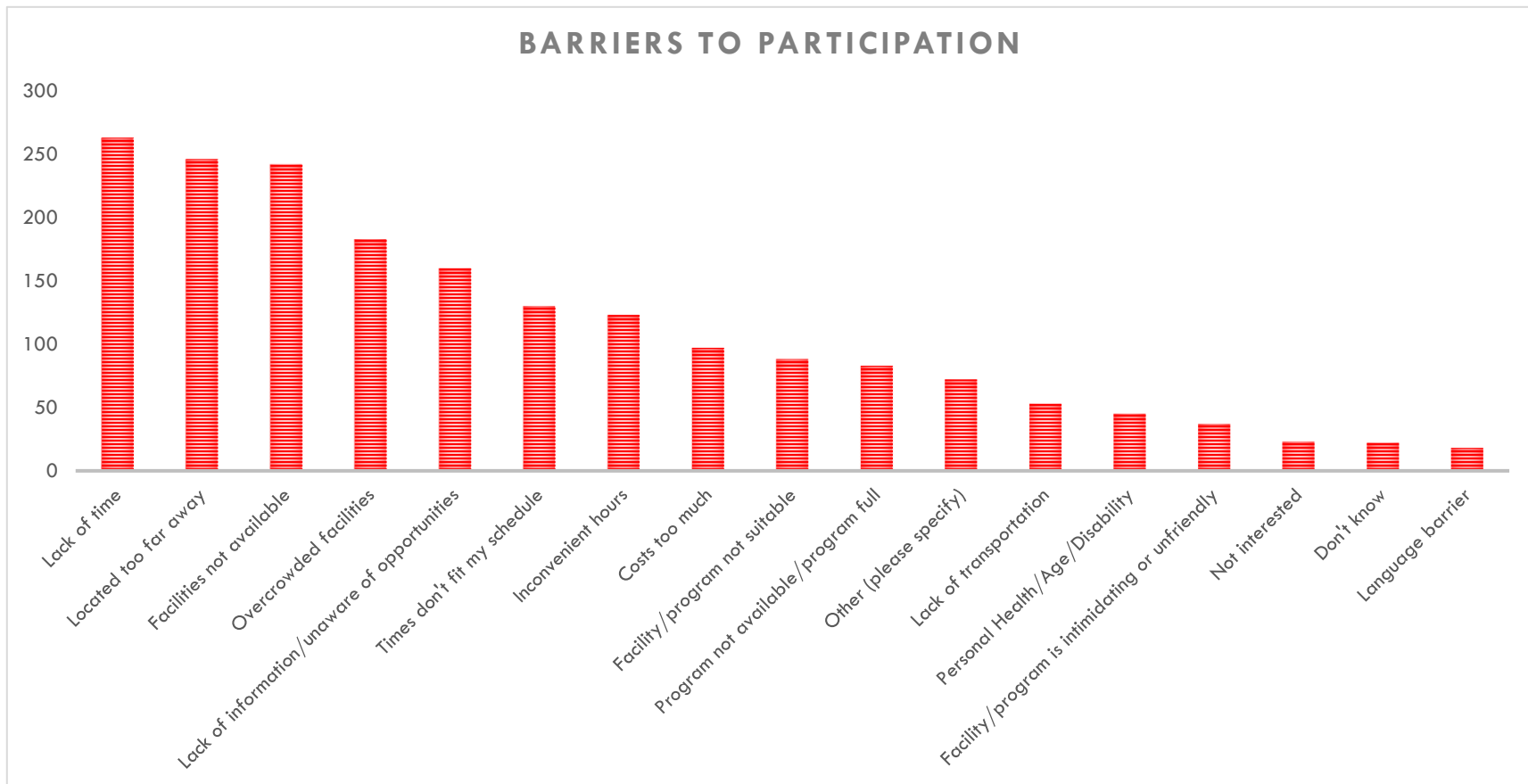
Activities in red text with the following table indicate opportunities for possible expansion based on those responses that indicated that there was a greater number of participants who wished to participate than actually did in the past 12 months.

Top 10 Desired Activities, in order of preference

1. Walking for Leisure/Hiking
2. Cycling
3. Outdoor Swimming
4. Outdoor Ice Skating
5. Outdoor Fitness and Exercise
6. Outdoor Tennis
7. Family or Social Gatherings in Public Parks
8. Use of a Splash Pad or Water Play Facility
9. Use of Playground Equipment
10. Walking the Dog in an Off Leash Area

4. What are your household's main reasons for not participating in these parks and outdoor recreation activities?

Markham's residents are busy and many don't have as much time for outdoor recreation as they would like. This is reflected not only in the most popular response indicating lack of time, but of the time that the participants did have, many found that the programs in which they wished to participate were not offered at convenient hours. Additionally, as reflected in the responses around opportunities for participation, they would like to see more facilities available. Finally, financial barriers remain a main motivator for about 16% of the respondents. Again, this reflects some of the responses around missed opportunities as activities like hockey are quite expensive.



5. In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household participated in any of the following indoor recreation activities?

Reported use of indoor recreation facilities as indicated by the participant group is lower overall than outdoor recreation, likely due to the access to the facilities and associated cost. The majority of respondents take advantage of Markham’s indoor pools, fitness facilities and indoor ice rinks. Other notable differences in responses are that team sports, even those traditionally outside like soccer, have a much higher representation here than in the outdoor recreation section. In addition to the activities specified within the survey, yoga, martial arts, archery, racquet sports and dance are all popular.



6. Where does your household tend to participate in your indoor recreational activities most of the time?

The majority of survey participants use City of Markham recreation facility or participate in these activities at home. Respondents also indicated that they were more likely to have used a privately-owned facility rather than a publicly owned facility in another municipality for indoor recreation activities, several participants mentioned the Markville Mall as a non-traditional destination for walking as well as senior’s centres for programming. This preference illustrates the proliferation of yoga studios, private workout facilities, clubs and school-based programs.

Response	Count	Percentage
At a facility owned by the City of Markham	470	75.08%
At home	237	37.86%
At a private facility such as the YMCA or fitness club	201	32.11%
At school	164	26.20%
At a municipal facility outside of the City of Markham	96	15.34%
Other (please specify)	43	6.87%
At a religious institution	41	6.55%
At a cultural centre (not including art galleries, theatres, or museums)	19	3.04%
None	16	2.56%
Don't Know	4	0.64%

7. Are there any indoor recreation activities that you or other members of your household cannot do as often as you would like?

In general, survey participants indicated that they would like to do more of the activities in which they are currently participating. Racquet sports, indoor walking/running and bocce were notable in that the respondents who reported a desire to participate, but had not in the past 12 months surpassed the number of respondents who participated in the past 12 months.

8. What are your household’s main reasons for not participating in the specified indoor recreational activities?

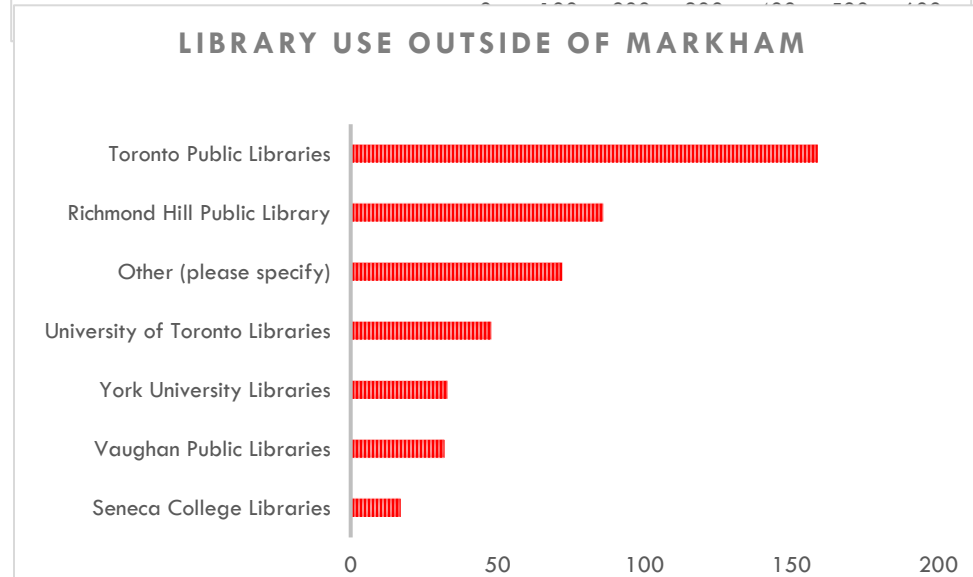
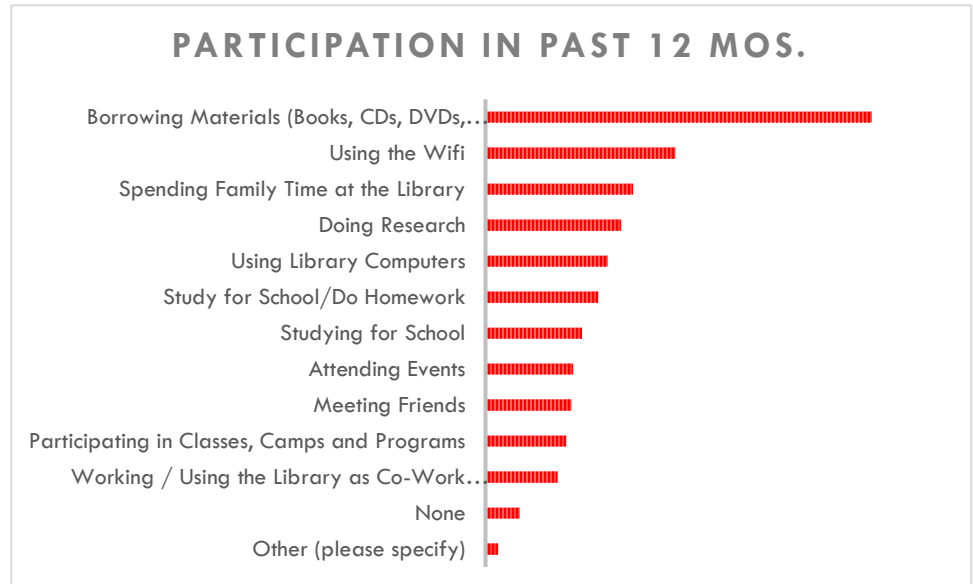
Generally, respondents felt that the greatest barrier to their participation was the schedule that indoor recreation programs are offered or the hours the facilities were open. This was supported by the comments in the open-ended responses, indicating that schedules for programs conflict with bedtimes or working hours. Lack of time is also another common reason, although significantly less common than on the outdoor recreation survey. Facilities not available and overcrowded facilities are also common responses. Overcrowding is also a much more common response than in the outdoor recreation survey as is cost. For non-users of indoor recreation facilities, lack of information is also a common reason for lack of participation.

9. In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household participated in any of the following library activities?

The majority of the respondents are regular library users, likely due to the distribution method of the surveys. However, this is not representative of the demographics of Markham as a whole. Respondents tend to use the library for borrowing materials as well as resources like the Wi-Fi and computers. They often use the library as a “third place” to spend time with their families or do academic work like studying or research. The library was the only sector on the survey with most activities numbering over 100 responses (or 16% of the total responses). This indicates a high rate of library users contributing to the survey.

10. Within the last 12 months, have you or other members of your household used any libraries outside Markham?

Out of the 319 respondents who answered this question, approximately one-half also utilize Toronto Public Libraries although other libraries in the York Region Public Libraries Network are also provided like Richmond Hill and Vaughn. Presumably Toronto Public Library is not free for Markham residents so it’s possible they are using the space due to convenience, for leisure space, and with family who may live in Toronto, North York or Scarborough. Most of the open-ended responses reflected use of either public or academic libraries. The public libraries most frequently used other than those listed here included Durham Region and Whitchurch-Stouffville. The disparity of public libraries; from elsewhere in Ontario to Florida to “wherever we travel” suggests that libraries are an integral part of family activity and leisure time.



11. Are there any library activities that you or other members of your household cannot do as often as you would like?

The majority of the 526 respondents felt satisfied with their access to library services overall. The greatest opportunities for increased involvement were in the area of programs, borrowing materials and attending events.

12. What are your household's main reasons for not participating in the specified library activity?

Approximately 22% of the respondents indicated that there were no barriers to using the library as desired for themselves or their family. Similar to indoor recreation, respondents cited lack of time, inconvenient hours and lack of information as the top reasons for lack of participation.

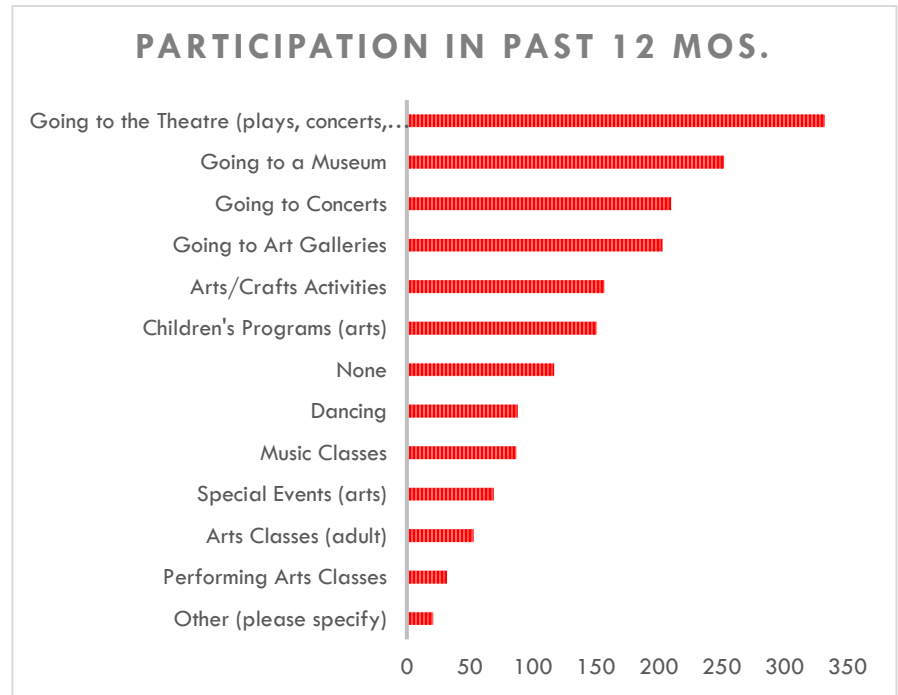
More specifically, respondents who felt they would have liked to participate more frequently in library events and programs cited lack of time, lack of awareness of opportunities and the schedule offered. Those that felt they were prevented from borrowing materials indicated shortage of popular materials as the main barrier, which is consistent with other studies conducted by the library.

Respondents who wanted to use the library for work or study were unable to do this due to the lack of space available in the libraries as well as the restriction with library opening hours. Respondents who use the library more casually – for family and social time were prevented from doing so due to lack of personal time as well as opening hours that don't align with their free time.



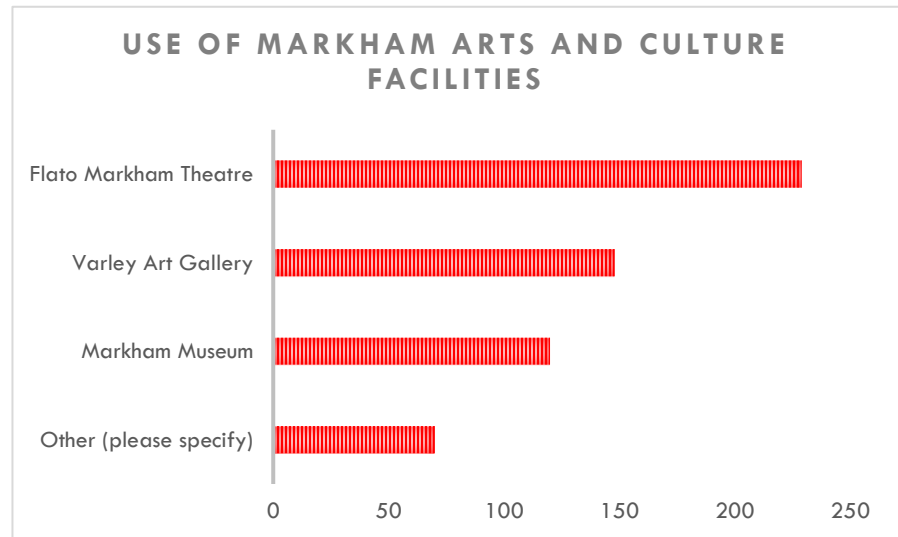
13. In the past 12 months, have you or members of your household attended or participated in any of the following arts and culture activities.

This survey reflected a culturally well-rounded community of respondents. Out of 601 responses, more than half of the responses indicated that they have been to the theatre in the past 12 months. 42% have been to a museum 34% have been to an art gallery. 35% have been to concerts in the past 12 months as well. Generally, as with other sectors, participants seemed more likely to participate in activities that were family-oriented or for their children.



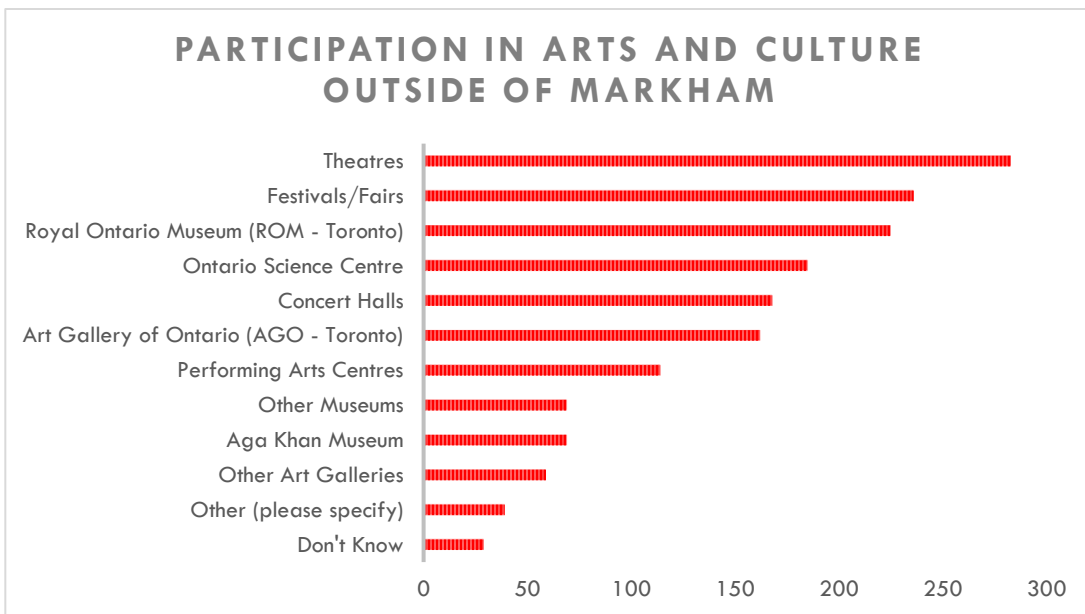
14. Which of the following Markham arts and culture facilities did you or members of your household visit in the past 12 months?

Respondents reported using the Flato Markham Theatre most frequently (58%) as well as the Varley Art Gallery and the Markham Museum. The open-ended responses suggested that most participation in arts and culture events or activities happens outside of Markham.



15. Which arts and culture facilities outside of Markham did you or other members of your household visit in the past 12 months?

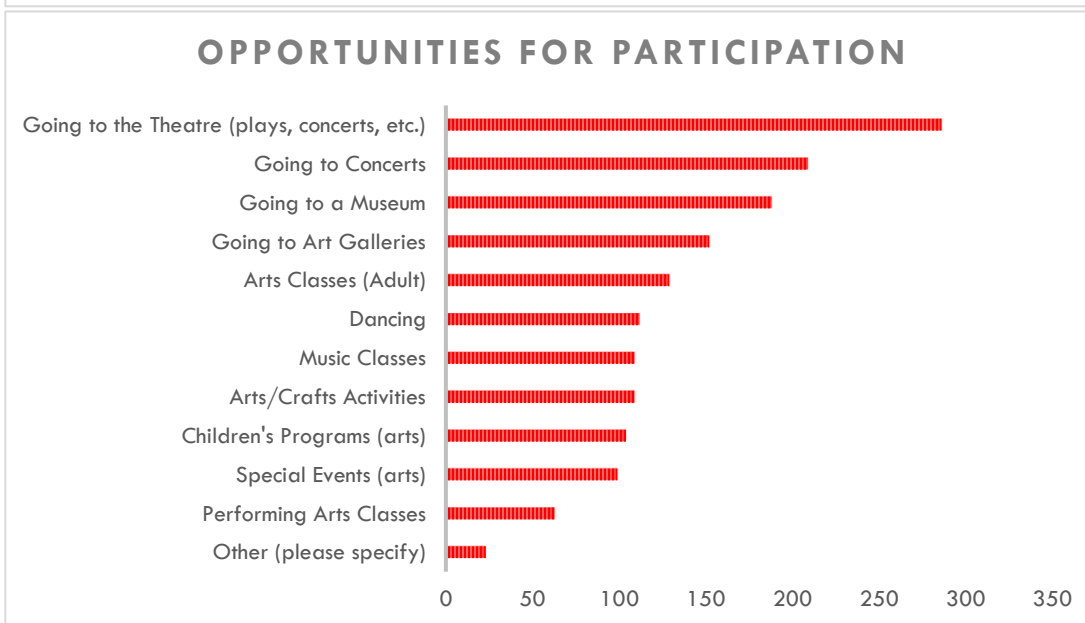
As noted in the previous question, respondents tend to visit cultural institutions outside of Markham more frequently. Respondents who identified as non-participants in arts and culture activities tend to choose activities that are family oriented and not traditionally “culture” activities such as festivals and the Ontario Science Centre. Open-ended responses reflected a preference for theatres in Toronto, art institutions in Toronto as well as the McMichael Gallery and other recreation activities like Ripley’s Aquarium.



16. Are there any arts and culture activities that you and your household cannot do as often as you would like?

With 466 respondents to this question, this area showed the largest opportunity for desired participation. Most of the activities were mentioned by more than 20% of participants who responded.

Of the 77 non-users who answered this question, 51% would like to attend theatre programs, 45% would like to go to museums, and 40% would like to attend concerts. Most of these respondents do not currently participate due to the cost of cultural programming.



17. What are your household's main reasons for not participating in the specified arts and cultural activities?

The largest barrier for participation in cultural activities is financial. 250 of 553 respondents (45%) identified cost as the primary barrier responsible for their lack of participation in these activities. Similar to other sectors, respondents also cited lack of personal time as the second most common barrier and distance to the activities as the third. Most respondents seem to participate in activities primarily outside of Markham and overcoming distance can be difficult depending on transportation and time. Although language barriers were listed as a low barrier by respondents, this is likely due to the fact that the survey was distributed predominantly in English.

18. If you had \$100 to invest in Markham's leisure facilities, where would you choose to invest?

The majority of respondents reflected a focus on improving indoor recreation. Open-ended responses indicated that pools and tennis courts were both in high demand. Parks and outdoor recreation also were in favour and were heavily reflected in the open-ended responses in the form of sports fields, trail infrastructure for cycling and hiking and outdoor pools.



Sector	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Indoor Recreation	310	50.0%
Parks and Outdoor Recreation	295	47.5%
Libraries	246	39.7%
Arts and Culture	141	22.7%

Appendix C – Stakeholder Workshop Notes

Ice User Stakeholder Workshop

The following is a record of input received from City of Markham Arena Users through a stakeholder workshop on January 31, 2018. The session was facilitated by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC) in support of the City of Markham's 2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan (ILMP) Update. This input will be considered by the City as it identifies future directions for arena facilities and services. We thank all organizations for taking the time to participate in this important initiative.

At each workshop, participants were provided with an overview of the ILMP process and challenges that the plan will contemplate and seek to respond to. Following this presentation, participants engaged in facilitated discussions guided by a series of focus questions (see below).

This summary was written by MBPC and is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting but instead captures the perspectives and advice provided by participants. These notes were distributed to workshop participants to provide an opportunity for any clarification or additional information that they wished to share on the subject matter. Any recommended changes are reflected in this final version.

Attendance

12 representatives from the following 9 groups:

Organization	Approximate Registration
Markham Islanders & Majors	500+
Markham Men's Hockey League	320
Markham Ringette Association	120
Markham Skating Club	600
Markham Waxers	1,250
Thornhill Figure Skating	400
Unionville Men's Hockey League	180
Unionville Minor Hockey Association	600+
Unionville Skating Club	900

Absent: Thornhill Community Hockey & Markham Speed Skating

1. What are the strengths of Markham's parks, facilities and services?

- Arenas are fairly well distributed (geographically)
- Rinks are well-maintained and well staffed
- All groups agree that they have a good working relationship with Recreation Services staff
- Friendly and service-oriented employees – they are very available
- Staff are especially responsive to special requests and take feedback seriously
- While all might not agree with the allocation formula, they recognize that the City has been making attempts to work with the groups
- Pleased with recent upgrades to some facilities
- Accessibility renovation to create a sledge hockey arena – the City did a magnificent job

2. What trends are impacting your organization? Are there barriers to participation?

Figure Skating

- Very popular as a result of cultural change in Markham. Adults and children (both male and female) want to learn to skate. Both private and municipal learn to skate lessons are **at capacity**. Programs fill within two days.
- Demand for group and private (competitive) lessons; have wait lists every session.
- All disciplines demanding more time (power, competitive, synchronized, adult, etc.)
- Need to offer **dryland training** to meet Skate Canada athlete development requirements. Currently meeting needs on the side of rinks, in parking lots, churches, and schools because rooms in community centres are not always available to them.

Youth Hockey

- **Long term athlete development:** Generally the same number of kids registered, but they need more ice time and access to dryland training space to accommodate the requirements for “A” level play and above. There is more interest from players but leagues and teams are full with no room to grow. Have started running clinics and those registrations fill quickly as well.
- **Renting ice from private arenas outside City:** One group estimates that 45% of its ice is bought from the private sector, which is more expensive and farther away. Markham residents are travelling outside of the City to access ice despite taxes being paid here.
- Have kids who want to play and try to add the teams to increase membership (per allocation policy) but don't have ice for practices and league play (kids as young as 10 years old are practicing at 9pm – this is unacceptable). Also seeing increased demand for power skating, goalie schools, clinics, etc.
- Parents no longer tolerate weekday morning practices –both parents work in most families
- Chinese Hockey Federation expressed interest in joining house league but could not be accommodated due to a lack of ice.
- Estimate that there are 650 Markham youth playing rep hockey in the GTHL, but only 300 are served by local organizations – the remainder play with other organizations because they have stable access to arenas closer to home.

Adult Hockey

- Demand for young adult play and continuing growth in older adult cohorts (i.e., bell curve keeps moving and the whole average ages goes up).
- Some groups have **waiting lists** for existing age groups and demand for teams below the artificial cut-off. Multiple leagues and divisions – all competitive, but friendly.

Ringette

- Biggest barrier is **line markings on the ice**, really hard to play without the free play lines. Availability is limited to only Milliken and Mount Joy which makes it difficult to participate in buying and selling of ice. Limited in opportunities to reschedule if games are cancelled. Want to gain access to Angus Glen for summer ice.

3. How well are existing parks and facilities meeting your needs? Are additional facilities and services required? Why? Where?

Concerns with existing facilities:

- Quality of ice at **Markham Village** is an issue (too soft), but members are tied to the facility and appreciate proximity
- **Milliken** has issues with teams coming on and off the ice (more with parents), but are currently allowing one team at a time to avoid conflict in the halls
- **Crosby** needs larger dressing rooms (also Mount Joy and Thornhill East Rink)

Additional rinks are needed:

- Additional ice requests total approximately **200 hours (equivalent to about 3 arenas)**:
 - Islanders/Majors: 110 hours (includes 60 additional hours for rep hokey and 50+ hours for growing House League and Chinese Hockey group)
 - Waxers: 50 to 60 hours (now renting privately)
 - Thornhill Community Hockey: they did not attend, but was suggested they need 20 hours
 - Unionville Skating: 10 hours
 - Ringette: 5 hours
 - Pickup hockey groups: needs are unknown, but feeling that there is latent demand
 - Thornhill Skating would add more hours if a twin pad was available due to coaching availability
- Need to add something new, somewhere else (maybe East Markham?). All existing facilities are “legacy” arenas that are aging. Concerns that municipal laws prohibit private rinks in Markham.
- Would be difficult to remove an existing arena – would create geographic gap.
- **Shoulder-season** and summer ice offerings: More competitive teams are seeking ice pads in the spring and fall. Would like to hold tryouts in the spring (ringette), prepare for ice shows (figure skating), host pre-season tournaments or clinics (hockey), etc. Figure skating would like to

keep the same location (Markham Village) to offer consistency to members. Used to be post-Labour Day, but teams are now wanting access mid-August.

- **“Must-haves” for new construction include:** Multi-pads (2, 4 or 6) with full size ice, dryland training space, stands/seating, change rooms, ample parking, etc.
- Would prefer to have **multiple pads** at one location. Would be beneficial for tournament hosting, running parallel programming, etc. Would love to have a 4-6 pad rink like in Oshawa, Whitby or Mississauga. Used to be able to host large tournaments but now teams are attracted to four-plex facilities
- **Dryland training spaces:** currently nothing available to ice users. If facilities do have space the rooms are booked by the City to run [seniors] recreation programs. Using the side of the rink for training is distracting and dangerous (i.e., hockey teams coming on and off the ice, figure skaters distracted during testing, etc.). Seeking space to do some cardio and body-weight exercise. Does not need to include equipment. Local private gyms don’t allow access to fitness centres for under 18s. Overall just about improving fitness for the kids.
 - Quick fix might be a portable in a parking lot or use of squash courts
 - Maybe the ice at Crosby could be replaced and the arena could be repurposed to a year-round dryland training venue
- **Ice pad size:** figure skating clubs have issues with the size for training vs. competition and some hockey leagues require certain dimensions for various divisions
- **Stands/bleachers:** for figure skating shows at the end of season. One club has purchased portable seating as a result of limited amenities at City arenas/inability to move to another location once informed that seating could not be accommodated.

4. What are the most pressing issues and priorities facing your group?

Figure Skating

- Don’t have enough coaches. Skate Canada requires highly trained and skilled coaches for star levels and above and they’re difficult to find. Twin-pad facilities would allow for easier transition between groups and programs (i.e., not having to drive from one facility to another to coach a second group). Also need to follow ratios for the number of skaters on the ice per coach.
- Expanding programs, particularly learn to skate

Youth Hockey

- Programs are at capacity, many with waiting lists.
- Parent aren’t able to make late evening or morning practices due to work commitments, so losing some athletes due to scheduling.
- City/arena operator rules on getting off the ice at the end of a rental – buzzer sometimes sounds before game clock. Has caused issues, especially with out of town teams. Delays are often out of players/coaches control (injuries, etc.).
- Inconvenient for house league teams to travel across the City (i.e., ice allocated in Unionville for Thornhill Minor Hockey). Doesn’t feel community based – would like to have a home rink.

Adult Hockey

- Some leagues are frustrated with allocation policies that prioritize children and youth programs during prime time. Prefer to not have to play games at 10:00 pm.

Ringette

- Turning (older) players away and working with Richmond Hill to field a AA team. Markham has enough players but don't have ice.

5. How can your organization, the City and others work together to meet future needs?

- Collaboration and "trading" ice. Have tried to pair people up when possible (i.e., figure skating worked with Waxers to find efficiencies).
- City takes ice for their programs first. If registration is low and program is cancelled, there is an opportunity to sell the ice to user groups and not sit empty.
- Allocation process: Some groups felt that the process used to be more collaborative. Some find that the new system works well, others disagree (e.g., adult pick-up hockey is being pushed out; not all groups can use 4pm weekday ice but not permitted to sell to others).
- Curious about potential to convert the indoor soccer field at Mount Joy to an arena (was designed with option this in mind).

Field Sport Stakeholder Workshop

The following is a record of input received from City of Markham Field Sport Users through a stakeholder workshop on February 1, 2018. The session was facilitated by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC) in support of the City of Markham's 2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan (ILMP) Update. This input will be considered by the City as it identifies future directions for sports fields and related services. We thank all organizations for taking the time to participate in this important initiative.

At each workshop, participants were provided with an overview of the ILMP process and challenges that the plan will contemplate and seek to respond to. Following this presentation, participants engaged in facilitated discussions guided by a series of focus questions (see below).

This summary was written by MBPC and is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting but instead captures the perspectives and advice provided by participants. These notes were distributed to workshop participants to provide an opportunity for any clarification or additional information that they wished to share on the subject matter. Any recommended changes are reflected in this final version.

Attendance

15 representatives from the following 10 groups:

Organization	Approximate Registration
Bloomfield Cricket Academy	60+
Markham Cricket Association	350
Markham District Baseball Association	1,000
Markham Irish Rugby Club	250
Markham Soccer	6,000 (indoor, outdoor)
Thornhill Baseball	1,100
Thornhill Soccer Club	2,000 (indoor, outdoor)
Unionville Milliken Soccer Club	3,200+ (indoor, outdoor)
Unionville Minor Softball League	700
York Region Cricket Association	200 to 250

Absent: Markham Premier Cricket League, Markham Chinese Soccer, Ladies of Unionville Slo-pitch, Unionville Men's Slo-pitch

1. What are the strengths of Markham's parks, facilities and services?

- **Staff:** Parks employees are very open and willing to listen. They are accommodating and will meet to discuss issues. Usually receptive to adapting and making changes.
- **Ball Diamonds:** Well distributed throughout the City, especially in residential neighbourhoods. Very happy to see kids playing pick-up games on diamonds or soccer fields for fun.
- **Rugby fields:** Markham has some of the best-maintained facilities in the province at a rugby club level.

2. What trends are impacting your organization? Are there barriers to participation?

Cricket

- Ethnic diversity in Markham has fuelled interest in the sport; many Visa students in South Markham are interested.
- Barrier is knowledge of the sport. Difficult for parks staff to properly prepare the field if they aren't aware of specific dimensions, grass lengths, etc.
- No policies or procedures in place for the sport as it is still fairly new to Canada.
- One group felt that there was demand to add another 14 teams (350 players) if there were enough pitches.

Rugby

- 7's rugby in Pan Am and Olympics has caused growth in popularity as well as potential for a professional league in Canada. Seeing this echo through younger age groups with registration growth in younger programs.

- Very pleased with the facilities currently allocated, but participation is growing and availability at Fletcher's Fields is limited/costly for older age groups.

Soccer

- Soccer governing bodies are changing to implement long term development programs. This means changes in field size requirements (especially 9v9) and playing/practice times. Pushing to get on field both earlier and later in the season – requires lit artificial turf fields.
- Registration to date has plateaued and according to YRSA survey re: player retention, it seems like registrations are being lost to alternative sports (not competing clubs). Groups are expecting soccer to “blow up” this year as a result of the upcoming World Cup and TFC's success in the 2017 season.
- Huge number of seniors in the City and would love to add programs like walking soccer.
- Increasing costs are a barrier to participation. Also, some of the biggest competition for programming is from the City because of low-cost programs – competing with drop-in youth and adult soccer. Concerned that rentals are offsetting the costs of City drop-in rates so that cost recovery targets are met.

Softball and Baseball

- Tremendous growth in youth registration in the last few years (30% for Thornhill Baseball in last two years, and 60% in last five years – Markham District Baseball 63% growth since 2012 with no advertising), a combination of sport renaissance and the Jays success.
- Trend is growth in younger age groups and barrier is not enough places to play – leagues have waiting lists before the season starts in April as a testament to popularity of ball in Markham. Could expand further if they had more diamonds
- Same challenges as soccer re: meeting requirements from governing bodies. Girls programs and accessible diamonds are growing in popularity. Programs are currently co-ed but would love to offer a girls-only league. Competing against activities such as soccer, dance and gymnastics.
- Also seeing increasing registration in young and older adults. Would like to add lights to diamonds so that multiple games can be accommodated in the evenings while still starting late enough for people to get off work.

3. How well are existing parks and facilities meeting your needs? Are additional facilities and services required? Why? Where?

Concerns with existing facilities:

- **Cricket:** Grounds were laid years ago and need to be re-laid. Grass also needs to be cut shorter than 2.5” for ideal playing conditions. The existing grounds are not regulation size (e.g., Reservoir) and some of the markings are incorrect; parking can also be a challenge. Would love to have lights to play into the evening. Staff are willing and have the right intentions, but execution is lacking – would love for them to be more proactive (an example is turning the sprinklers off sooner on Friday nights so the fields are dry enough to play on for Saturday).
- **Rugby Fields:** Heavily impacted by the weather. The existing fields do not have proper drainage so they are not able to absorb and the water can't runoff. This is shortening the season because they can't get on the pitch early in the spring or stay later into the fall. Would love

access to multi-use turf fields with lighting, but constantly in competition with soccer. Fletchers is heavily used throughout the week for other sports and users, so seeking additional fields in Markham. Opportunities to extend the season are the biggest need.

- **Soccer Fields:** Some of the goal posts are old and in need of replacement, some fields have stones that are not removed and pose a safety hazard. Difficulty finding appropriate sized fields for various divisions (9v9 are hardest). Organizations are doing what they can to comply with governing bodies but difficult to accommodate given existing facilities.
- **Ball Diamonds:** Disappointed that some of the diamonds weren't built with lights because they can no longer be added to some facilities. Existing diamonds are not receiving the capital reinvestment that they require (e.g., washrooms, etc.).

New facilities to be considered:

- There has been significant investment in indoor recreation facilities but **very little spent on sports fields**. Sports field users have been neglected because they've been "playing nice" and have an established working relationship with staff.
- **Cricket Grounds:** Demand is outpacing supply. Very amenable to **cricket pitches** over two soccer/multi-use fields. This works well in Mississauga and believe it could in Markham because cricket wants weekends and soccer is usually away on weekends. There are some issues that cannot be resolved at existing sites (parking, draining, depth, etc.) but users would be happy with the addition of two regulation-size pitches (with lights). Would love to have a multi-field facility to run parallel games (similar to King City). Also seeking **indoor space** for off-season practice (120' x 10' is one lane). Would love to have 5 lanes available so multiple teams can practice at once. Soccer clubs indicated that there may be opportunities to provide lanes at existing indoor facilities.
- **Ball Diamonds:** Would love a multi-field facility for hosting tournaments (e.g., Richmond Green in Richmond Hill). Groups believe that indoor facilities would be great but want the focus to be on greater in-season use of outdoor facilities as it serves a larger membership. Future development should consider simple things like access to power so pitching machines can be used for younger age groups or using mounded diamonds for junior-rookie teams.
- **Soccer:** Seeking additional fields with lights for growing adult population. City hasn't provided any new fields in years – all have been at schools.
- **Multi-sport Stadium:** There is local interest in adding a semi-pro soccer league and building a reasonable size community stadium (e.g., Hershey Centre, Esther Shiner, Oshawa Civic Recreation Complex). Could accommodate a number of different user groups: cricket, rugby, football, soccer, etc. Does not have to be huge, but would need bleacher seating on one side and a regulation size field to play. Potential to be a benchmark facility for a variety of different events and tournaments.

4. What are the most pressing issues and priorities facing your group?

- **Rental rates:** Rates for outdoor sports field rentals just increased 98% to 247%. For indoor facilities, groups are paying comparable rates between City facilities and private facilities. User groups believe city facilities should be subsidised so the groups aren't forced to increase registration costs to cover overhead fees like rentals.
- **Allocation of fields:** With long term athlete development model and increased number of elite/ high performance teams, clubs are required to hold more training sessions. Difficult to accommodate with the current allocation formula.

5. How can your organization, the City and others work together to meet future needs?

- Suggest that the City should allow **advertising** on fences to help groups offset their costs. Also interested in using Community Centre **signage** to advertise sport registration.
- Interested in **public-private partnerships** for naming rights to fields. Would help offset the costs of field provision/maintenance/rentals and support some of the major businesses in the City.
- Would love for the City to offer **introductory cricket programming** to support growth of youth athletes (might be offered at Aaniin).
- City needs to look at **alternative funding** for indoor sports facilities – domes should pay for themselves.
- Suggest that the City create a **strategic plan** to guide sport development and allocation. This would provide direction to the master plan and help to avoid ad-hoc decision-making.
- Concerned that the 2010 Master Plan identified cricket as a high growth sport, but nothing was developed. What happened to the **101-acre sports park**? User groups would like some clarification on why nothing has moved forward.
- Perhaps the **Markham Fairgrounds** is an opportunity for field development – would make efficient use of existing resources.

Racquet Sports Stakeholder Workshop

The following is a record of input received from City of Markham Racquet Sport Users through a stakeholder workshop on February 15, 2018. The session was facilitated by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC) in support of the City of Markham's 2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan (ILMP) Update. This input will be considered by the City as it identifies future directions for racquet courts and related services. We thank all organizations for taking the time to participate in this important initiative.

At each workshop, participants were provided with an overview of the ILMP process and challenges that the plan will contemplate and seek to respond to. Following this presentation, participants engaged in facilitated discussions guided by a series of focus questions (see below).

This summary was written by MBPC and is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting but instead captures the perspectives and advice provided by participants. These notes were distributed to workshop participants to provide an opportunity for any clarification or additional information that they wished to share on the subject matter. Any recommended changes are reflected in this final version.

Attendance

10 representatives from the following 4 groups:

Organization	Approximate Registration
Unionville Tennis Club	900
Markham Tennis Club	350
German Mills Tennis Club	200
Pickleball (various Markham groups) + representatives from Pickleball Canada and Pickleball Association of Ontario	1,700 (registered provincially)

Absent: Northernpharm Table Tennis, Canadian Chinese Table Tennis Association, My Table Tennis Club

1. What are the strengths of Markham's parks, facilities and services?

- **Staff:** Impressed with the quality of management at community centres and within the City itself. Clubs have a good relationship with staff and find them to be supportive and responsive. Tennis Clubs have been particularly impressed with the City for creating a single point of contact between sport organizations and management.
- **Facilities:** very impressed with new facility development (i.e., Cornell, Pan-AM, Aaniin). New multi-use facilities allow for large-scale competitions bringing thousands of people to Markham. Users are appreciative of capital investment plan/schedule for court resurfacing, etc.

2. What trends are impacting your organization? Are there barriers to participation?

Tennis

- Tennis is regaining popularity and remains fairly inexpensive compared to other sports and activities making it appealing. Long-term athlete development model encourages year-round training and it is difficult to accommodate those players with only 4 indoor courts.
- One barrier or cause for concern is parking at existing sites, especially shared sites (i.e., Unionville's location within the park and close proximity to a church).
- Not losing ground to pickleball, believe there is enough room in the racquet sports market for both.

Pickleball

- Markham is becoming a pickleball hub in the GTA
- A facility trend is under-utilized tennis courts being re-purposed a pickleball courts. Can fit four pickleball courts onto one tennis court. This has potential to increase revenues with more players per court surface.
- Participation is driven by seniors who played tennis previously or want to try a new sport to remain active as they age. There has been some interest from youth and young adults, but popularity has not grown as quickly as with older adults and seniors.
- The sport is so popular that there are players with a variety of skill levels participating giving everyone an opportunity to play for fun or challenge themselves with higher calibre games.

- Pickleball is thriving in Markham. Non-residents drive 30-60+ minutes from other communities to play in the City. Markham has responded to the trend and the sport has developed quicker than anywhere else in the region. Credited largely to the community centre staff for accommodating needs and finding a variety of times and locations for indoor drop-in play.
- Pickleball players and supporters are teaching pickleball in schools and hosting events like Family Day pickleball sessions, but difficult to recruit children and youth if there's no available courts to play and learn the game.

3. How well are existing parks and facilities meeting your needs? Are additional facilities and services required? Why? Where?

Concerns and opportunities with existing facilities:

Tennis:

- Existing facilities do not have enough courts to host large OTA tournaments (most are played at academies with 10+ courts at one location).
- Existing courts need resurfacing and should be done properly with acrylic and supervision and/or consultation with the tennis community.

Pickleball:

- Currently no outdoor pickleball courts in Markham. Would love to re-purpose derelict public tennis courts in neighbourhood parks into outdoor pickleball courts (may cause significant parking concerns) as a stepping stone to eventually providing purpose-built pickleball courts, ideally in close proximity to community centres.
- Would like for pickleball lines to be added to gymnasium floors the next time they're being resurfaced so players don't need to rely on tape or game modifications.
- Some indoor courts get very dusty and slippery making it difficult to play (especially for seniors). Solution would be for maintenance to do an additional wet mop to make the floors more "squeaky"

New facilities to be considered:

- **Indoor tennis facility:** would be satisfied with a bubble over existing courts during winter months for training. Clubs may be willing to front the money for a bubble if the City was willing to work with an operator, and the club would need City land to build on. If installed, a bubbled facility would also require additional supports such as an all-season clubhouse, grade-beam, storage, change rooms, etc. The expectation is that a private company would want to run for "x" number of years so they can get a return on their investment.
- **Less glass** in design of indoor facilities, or if glass is to be used to provide natural light appropriate blinds need to be in place to reduce glare and sun-blinding for players.
- Appropriate **line markings** on pickleball courts. The game can be adapted to use tennis and/or badminton lines, but players would prefer regulation courts. For example, the Aaniin Community Centre has a dotted line for the 7' mark and that works.
- Recommendation for any new builds to **consult experts and reach out to provincial sport organizations** in the field to provide recommendations to avoid costly renovations after facilities are built (i.e., lighting at Angus Glen and glass walls at Pan Am).

- **Avoid future installation of two-court facilities** and focus on **quality**. A four court facility could eventually become a club and be bubbled. The bubble extends the lifecycle of courts because they are not subject to winter weather conditions. A higher quality court will draw players from further distances and positively impact the level of play.

4. What are the most pressing issues and priorities facing your group?

Tennis

- **Scheduling existing tennis courts:** large clubs with hundreds of players trying to accommodate various levels of play and training opportunities. This includes public access requirements, inter-county teams, lessons/camps, and elite training. It is difficult for operators to find the time to fit all necessary programming onto existing courts. Even if there was an 8 court facility it would fill quickly and scheduling would remain an issue.
- Clubs are **missing out on youth opportunities** because they go elsewhere to train indoors and find coaches/players at other facilities. It is believed that if they could play more indoor in Markham the courts would fill quickly and players would remain in the City.
- **Fluorescent lighting at Angus Glen:** existing lighting makes it difficult for players to see the ball overhead. LED lighting is preferred (both indoor and outdoor sites) and cost-effective one installed, but expensive to initially transition.
- **Declining volunteerism:** volunteer base tends to be older and participation has been declining. Markham recently implanted a hybrid model with a third party operator and volunteer support/day-to-day management. Not all clubs struggling with volunteerism, might be based on community investment in the sport and ebb and flow of residents.
- **Advertising:** Tennis (and pickleball) clubs would like to advertise programs and tournaments in Markham community centres

Pickleball

- **Exponential growth and facilities to keep up:** Pickleball continue to gain popularity and groups are constantly struggling to find adequate playing time and space to meet the needs of a growing body of participants. Might eventually become a structured/organized club with appropriate membership rates and governing board. Have some high-calibre athletes looking to access courts for training to participate in high-level competition, but courts are not available unless for drop-in use and those times are very busy.
- **Summer access to pickleball:** once day camps and other programs are added in July and August pickleball players get bumped off the courts for daytime uses.
- **Natural lighting in community centres:** many pickleball players are seniors and have difficulty with vision. Bright natural light reflected off shiny floors makes it difficult to navigate play and clearly see the ball.

5. How can your organization, the City and others work together to meet future needs?

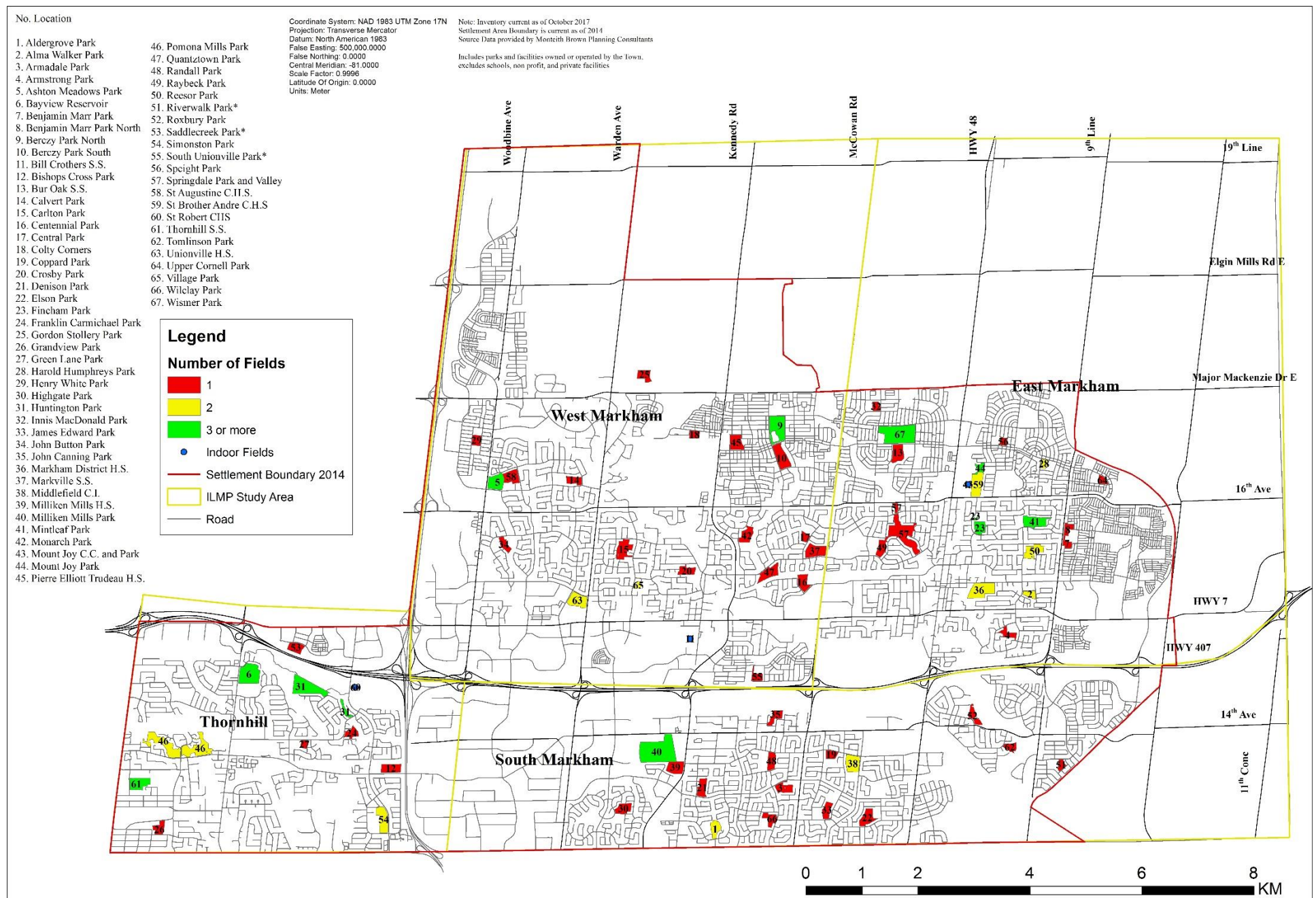
- Believed that **tennis and pickleball can work together** to make both sports more vibrant. For example, future tennis clubs could also be pickleball clubs offering purpose-built courts for both sports at one location.

Appendix D – Parks, Recreation, Arts & Culture and Library Facility Maps

See accompanying maps for details on:

- Soccer Fields
- Ball Diamonds
- Tennis Courts
- Outdoor Basketball Courts
- Playgrounds
- Other Recreation Facilities
- Community Centres
- Aquatics Facilities
- Arenas
- Arts & Culture Facilities
- Public Libraries

Soccer Fields



Ball Diamonds

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: North American 1983
 False Easting: 500,000.0000
 False Northing: 0.0000
 Central Meridian: -81.0000
 Scale Factor: 0.9996
 Latitude Of Origin: 0.0000
 Units: Meter

Note: Inventory current as of October 2017
 Settlement Area Boundary is current as of 2014
 Source Data provided by Monteth Brown Planning Consultants

Includes parks and facilities owned or operated by the Town,
 excludes schools, non profit, and private facilities

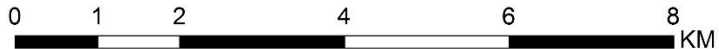
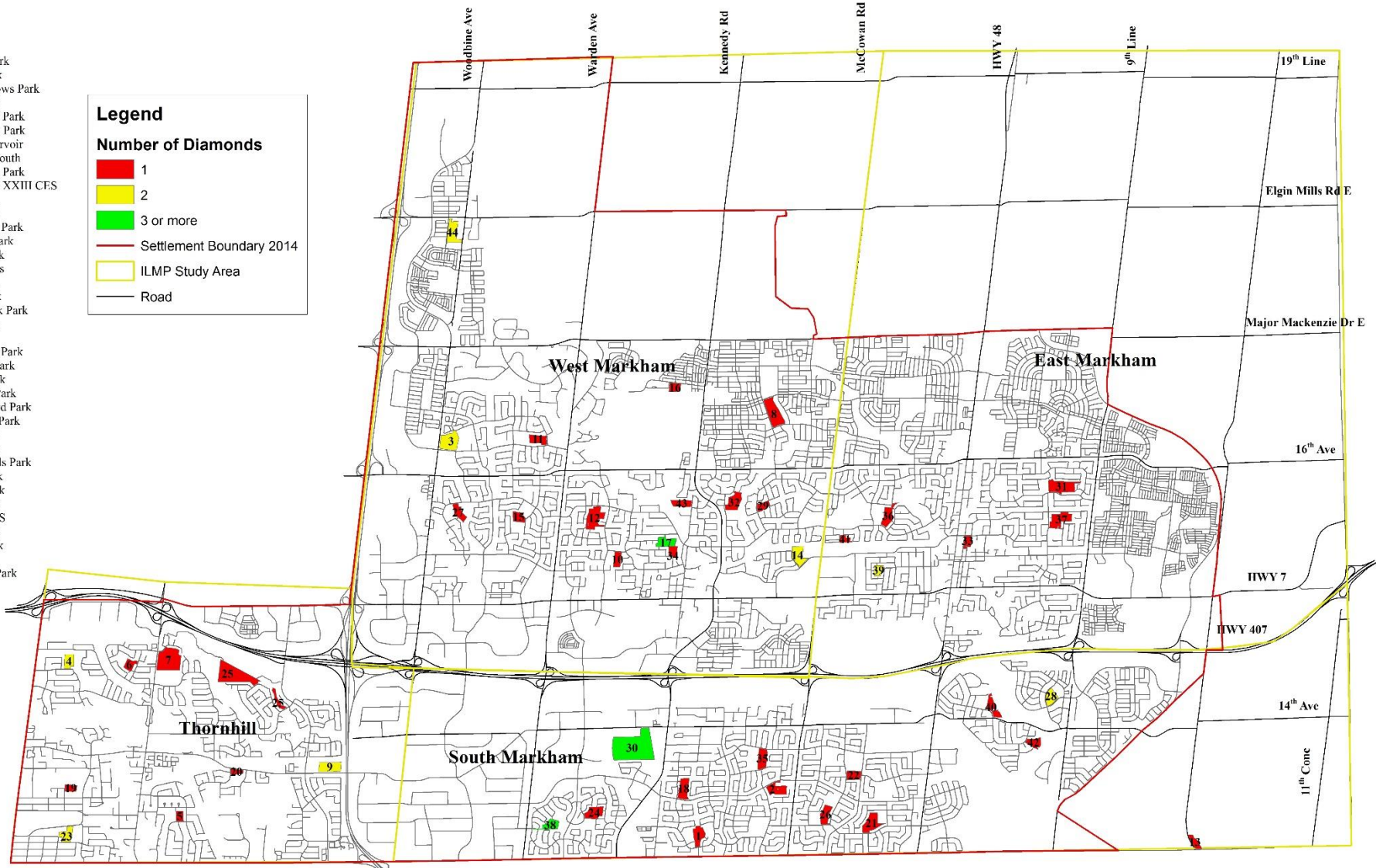
No. Location

1. Aldergrove Park
2. Armadale Park
3. Ashton Meadows Park
4. Baythorn PES
5. Bayview Glen Park
6. Bayview Lane Park
7. Bayview Reservoir
8. Berezny Park South
9. Bishops Cross Park
10. Blessed John XXIII CFS
11. Calvert Park
12. Carlton Park
13. Cedar Grove Park
14. Centennial Park
15. Coledale Park
16. Colty Corners
17. Crosby Park
18. Dension Park
19. Doreen Quirk Park
20. Duncan Park
21. Elson Park
22. Featherstone Park
23. Grandview Park
24. Highgate Park
25. Huntington Park
26. James Edward Park
27. John Bulton Park
28. Legacy Park
29. Lincoln Park
30. Milliken Mills Park
31. Mintleaf Park
32. Monarch Park
33. Morgan Park
34. Parkview PES
35. Randall Park
36. Raybeck Park
37. Reesor Park
38. Riscbrough Park

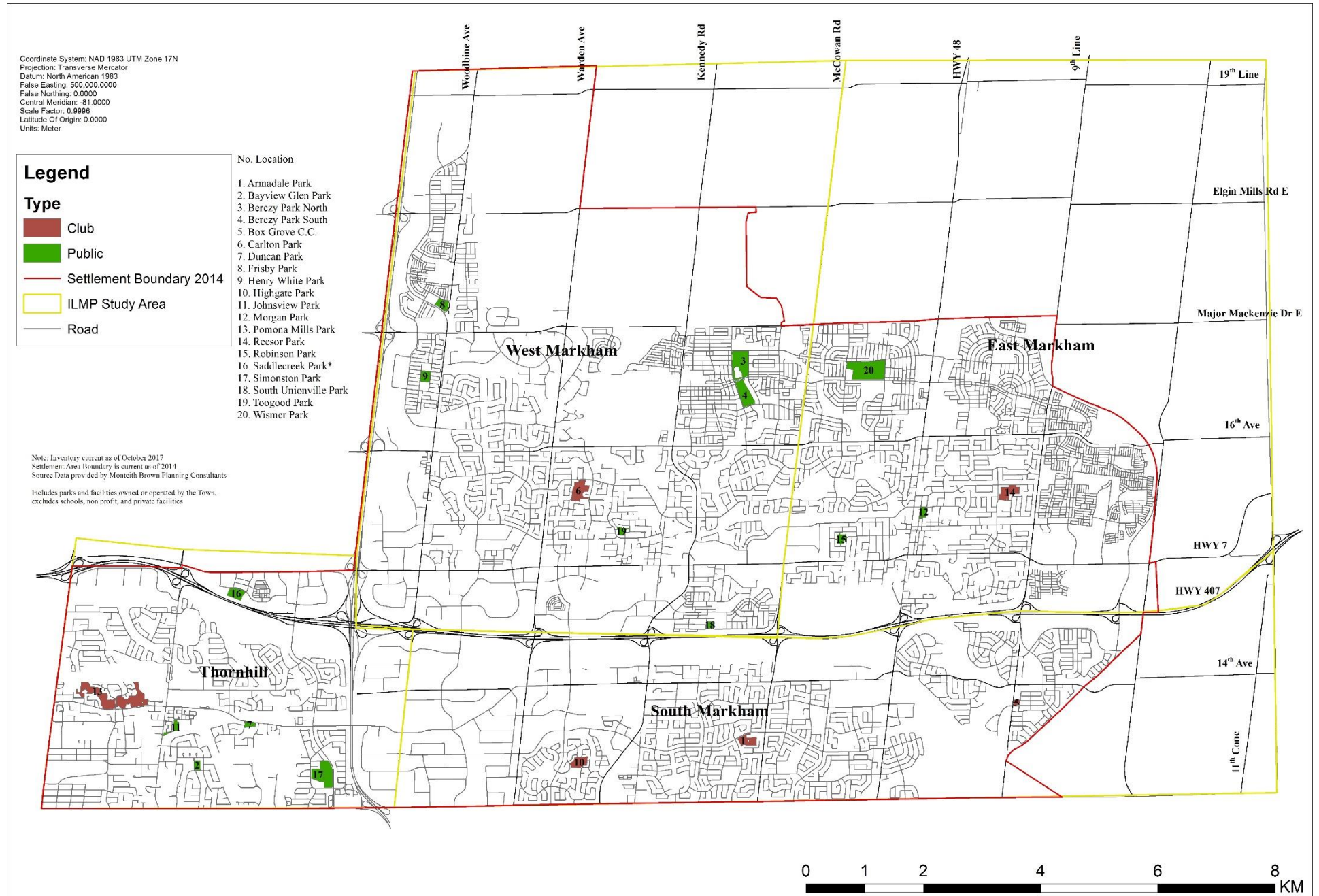
Legend

Number of Diamonds

- 1
- 2
- 3 or more
- Settlement Boundary 2014
- ILMP Study Area
- Road



Tennis Courts



Outdoor Basketball Courts

Note: Inventory current as of October 2017
 Settlement Area Boundary is current as of 2014
 Source: Data provided by Monticli Brown Planning Consultants

Includes parks and facilities owned or operated by the Town,
 excludes schools, non profit, and private facilities

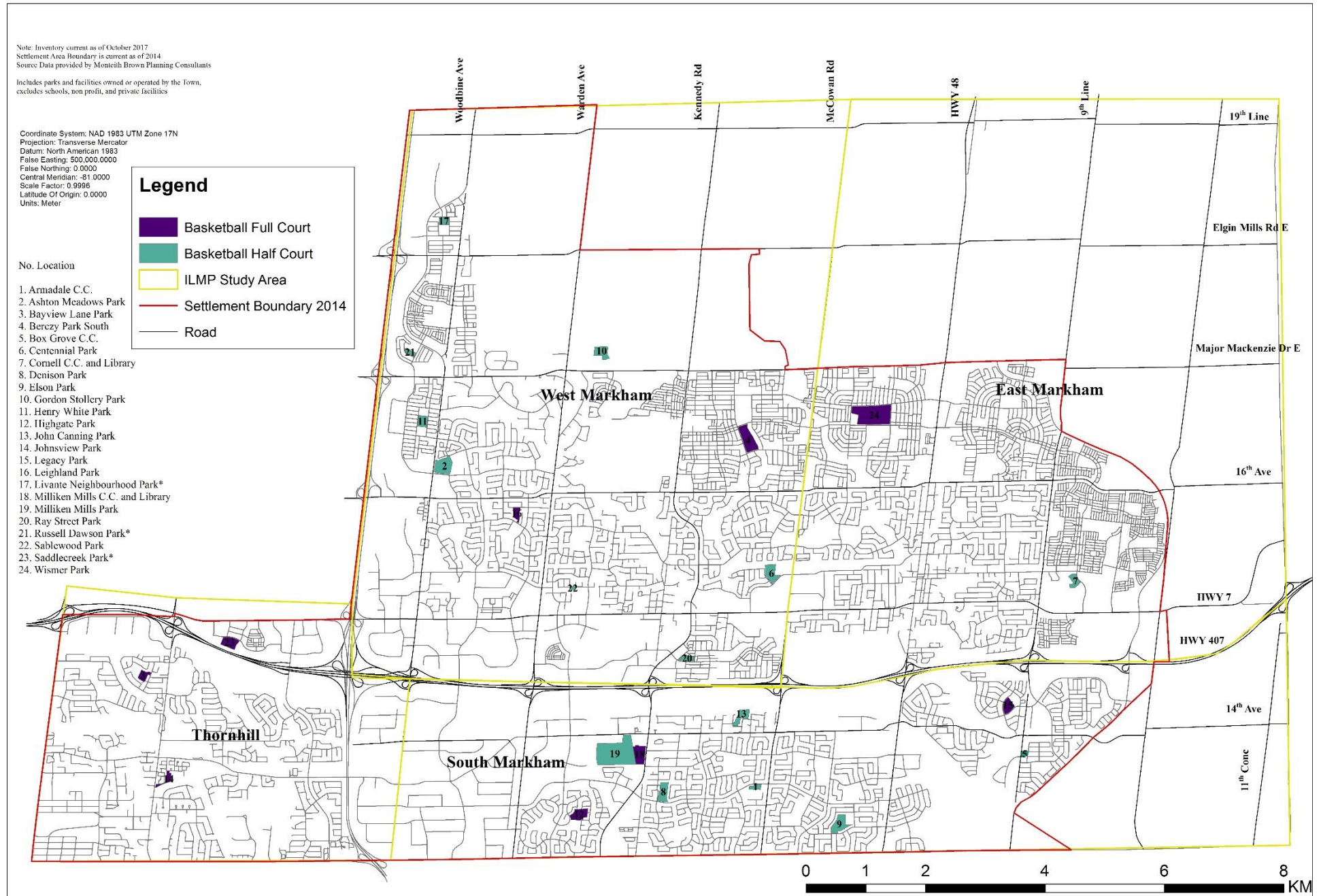
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 Projection: Transverse Mercator
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 False Northing: 0.0000
 Central Meridian: -81.0000
 Scale Factor: 0.9998
 Latitude Of Origin: 0.0000
 Units: Meter

Legend

- Basketball Full Court
- Basketball Half Court
- ILMP Study Area
- Settlement Boundary 2014
- Road

No. Location

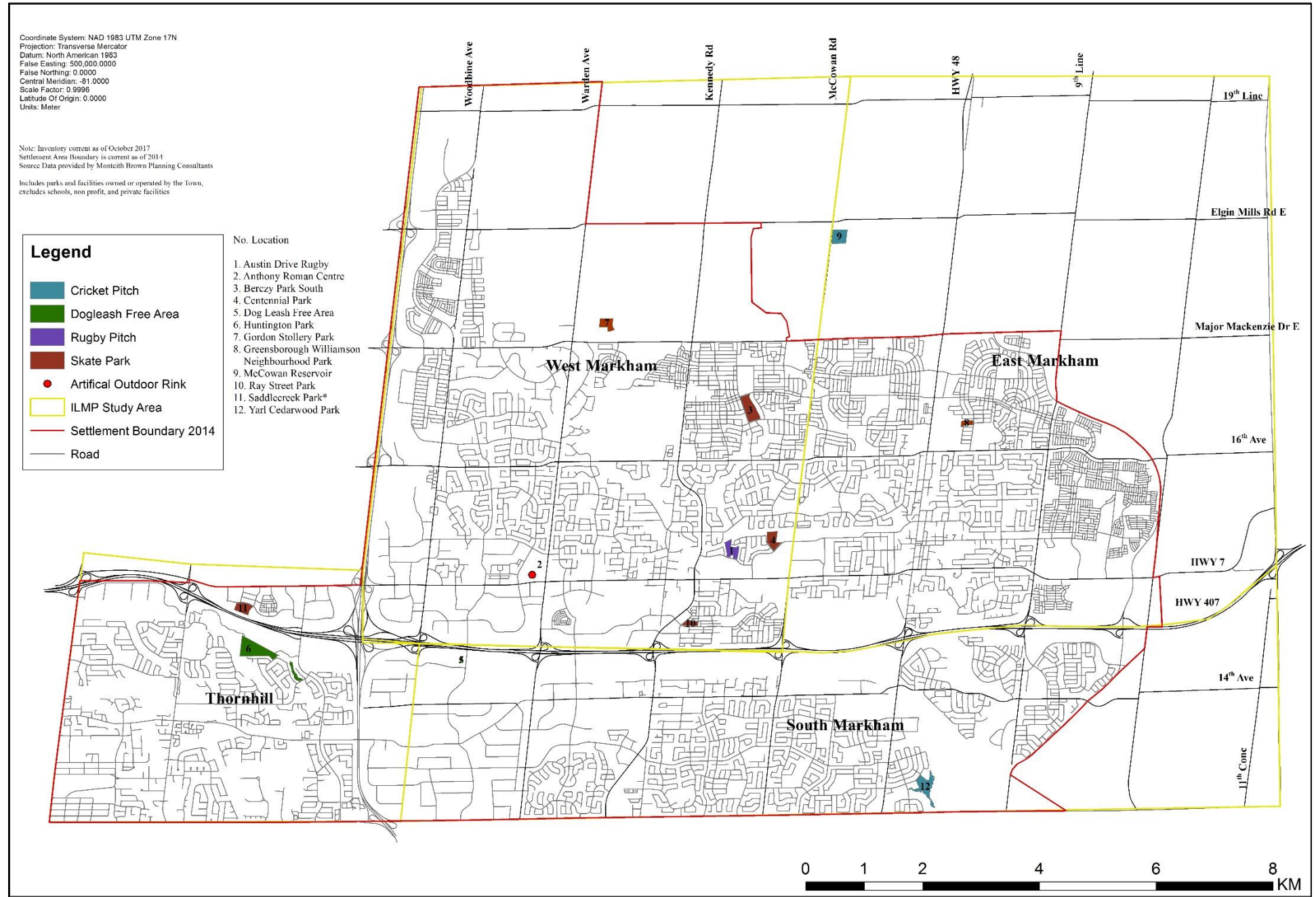
1. Amadale C.C.
2. Ashton Meadows Park
3. Bayview Lane Park
4. Berczy Park South
5. Box Grove C.C.
6. Centennial Park
7. Cornell C.C. and Library
8. Denison Park
9. Elson Park
10. Gordon Stollery Park
11. Henry White Park
12. Highgate Park
13. John Canning Park
14. Johnsvie Park
15. Legacy Park
16. Leighland Park
17. Livante Neighbourhood Park*
18. Milliken Mills C.C. and Library
19. Milliken Mills Park
20. Ray Street Park
21. Russell Dawson Park*
22. Sablewood Park
23. Saddlecreek Park*
24. Wismer Park



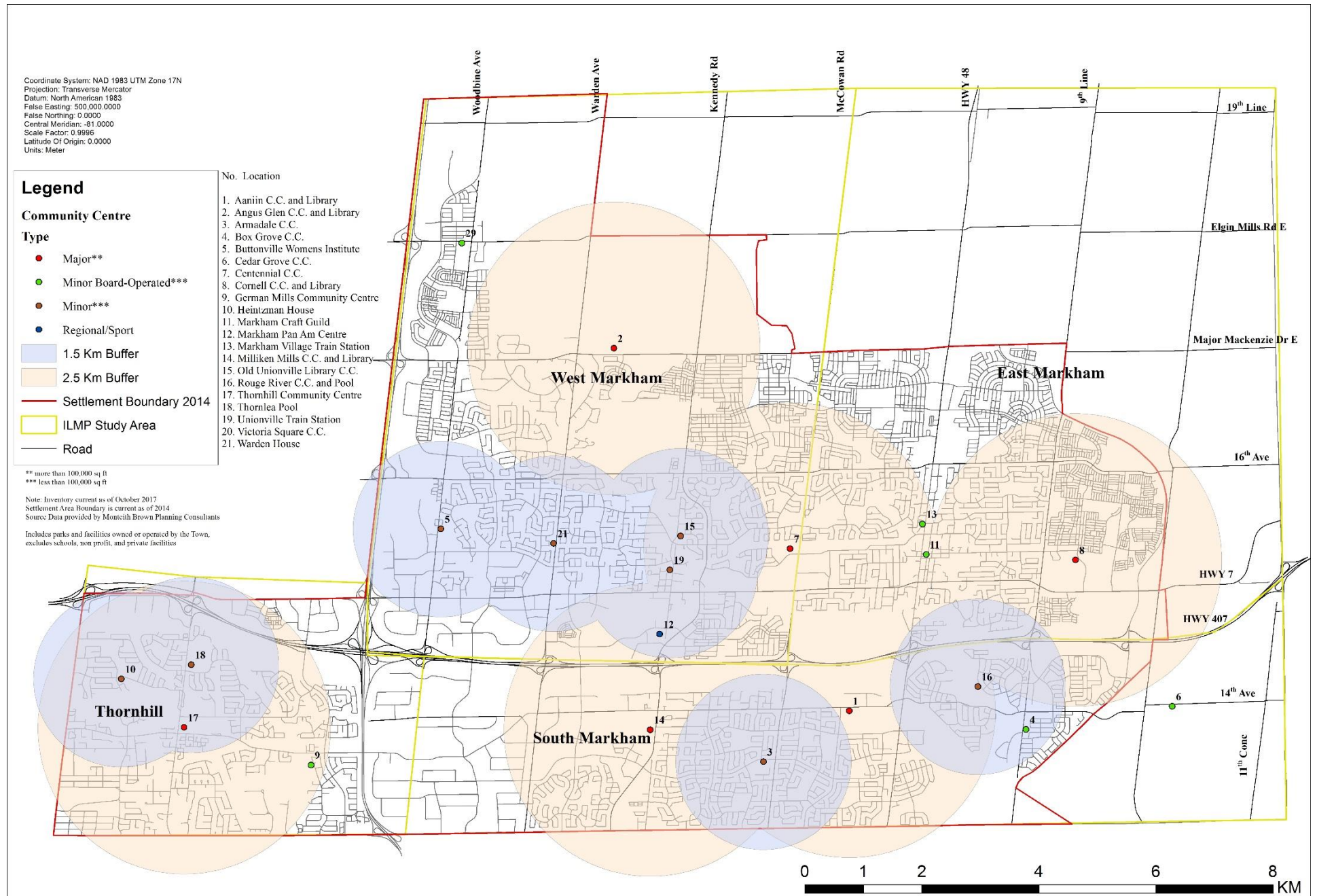
Playgrounds



Other Recreation Facilities



Community Centres



Aquatic Facilities

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: North American 1983
 False Easting: 500,000.0000
 False Northing: 0.0000
 Central Meridian: -81.0000
 Scale Factor: 0.9996
 Latitude Of Origin: 0.0000
 Units: Meter

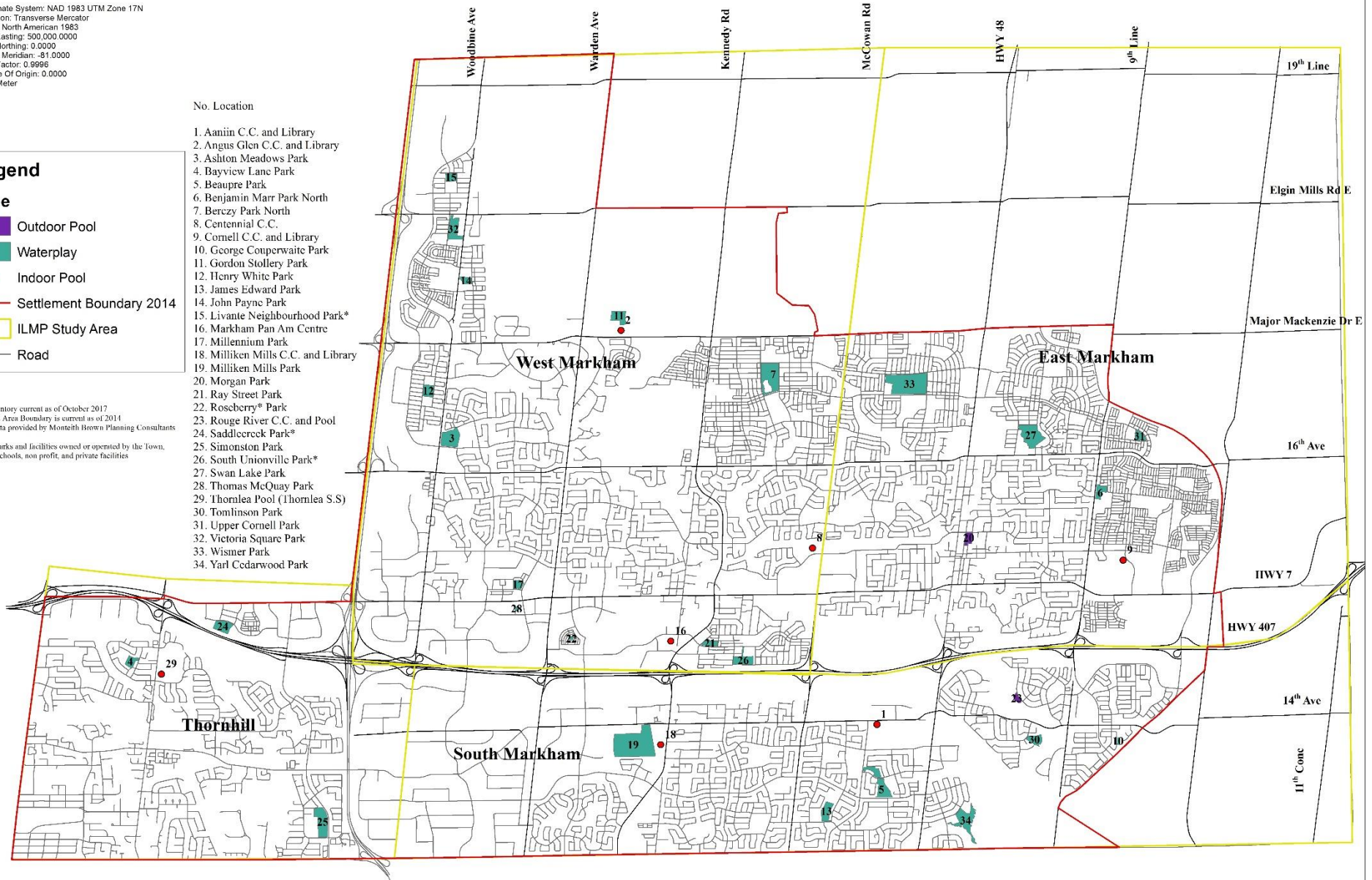
Legend

- Type**
- Outdoor Pool
 - Waterplay
 - Indoor Pool
 - Settlement Boundary 2014
 - ILMP Study Area
 - Road

No. Location

1. Aaniiin C.C. and Library
2. Angus Glen C.C. and Library
3. Ashton Meadows Park
4. Bayview Lanc Park
5. Beaupre Park
6. Benjamin Marr Park North
7. Berczy Park North
8. Centennial C.C.
9. Cornell C.C. and Library
10. George Couperwaite Park
11. Gordon Stollery Park
12. Henry White Park
13. James Edward Park
14. John Payne Park
15. Livante Neighbourhood Park*
16. Markham Pan Am Centre
17. Millennium Park
18. Milliken Mills C.C. and Library
19. Milliken Mills Park
20. Morgan Park
21. Ray Street Park
22. Roscberry* Park
23. Rouge River C.C. and Pool
24. Saddlcreek Park*
25. Simonston Park
26. South Unionville Park*
27. Swan Lake Park
28. Thomas McQuay Park
29. Thornlea Pool (Thornlea S.S.)
30. Tomlinson Park
31. Upper Cornell Park
32. Victoria Square Park
33. Wismer Park
34. Yarl Cedarwood Park

Note: Inventory current as of October 2017
 Settlement Area Boundary is current as of 2014
 Source Data provided by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants
 Includes parks and facilities owned or operated by the Town, excludes schools, non profit, and private facilities



Arenas

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: North American 1983
 False Easting: 500,000.0000
 False Northing: 0.0000
 Central Meridian: -81.0000
 Scale Factor: 0.9996
 Latitude Of Origin: 0.0000
 Units: Meter

No. Location

1. Angus Glen C.C. and Library
2. Centennial Community Centre
3. Crosby Memorial Community Centre
4. Markham Village C.C. and Library
5. Milliken Mills C.C. and Library
6. Mount Joy C.C. and Park
7. RJ Clatworthy Arena
8. Thornhill Community Centre

Legend

Ice Pads

- 1
- 2

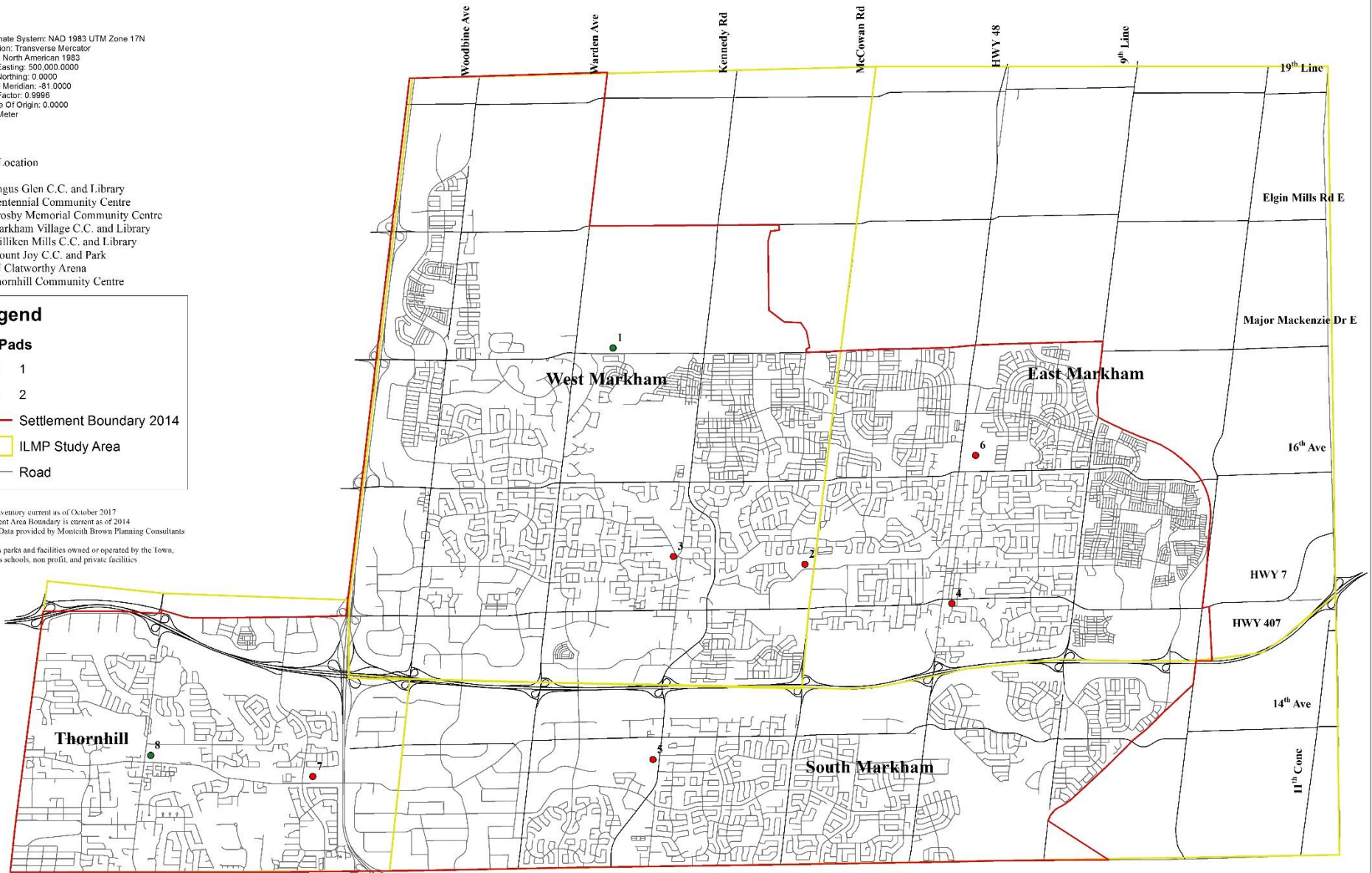
— Settlement Boundary 2014

▭ ILMP Study Area

— Road

Note: Inventory current as of October 2017
 Settlement Area Boundary is current as of 2014
 Source Data provided by Monicith Brown Planning Consultants

Includes parks and facilities owned or operated by the Town,
 excludes schools, non profit, and private facilities



Arts & Culture Facilities

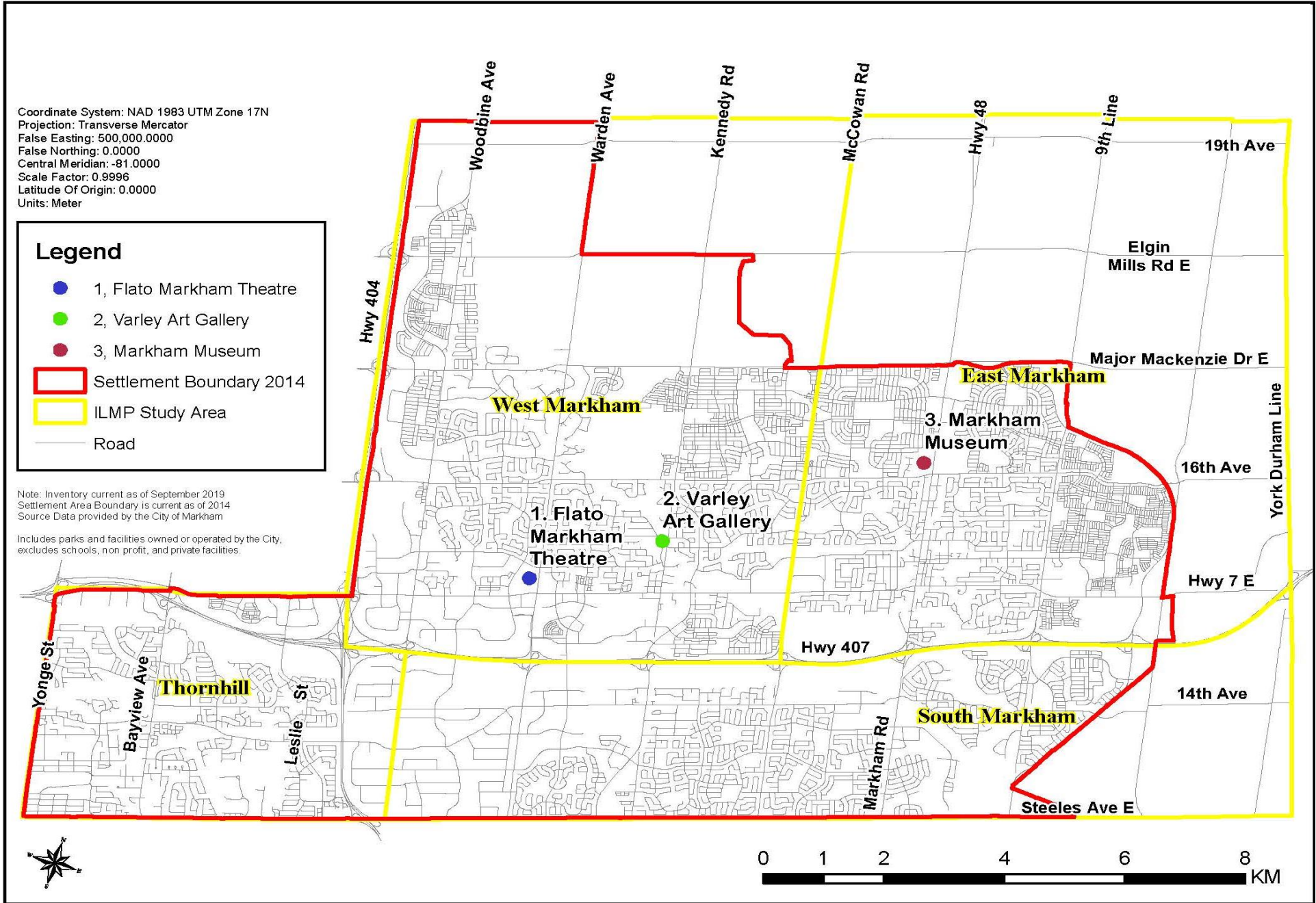
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 Projection: Transverse Mercator
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Legend

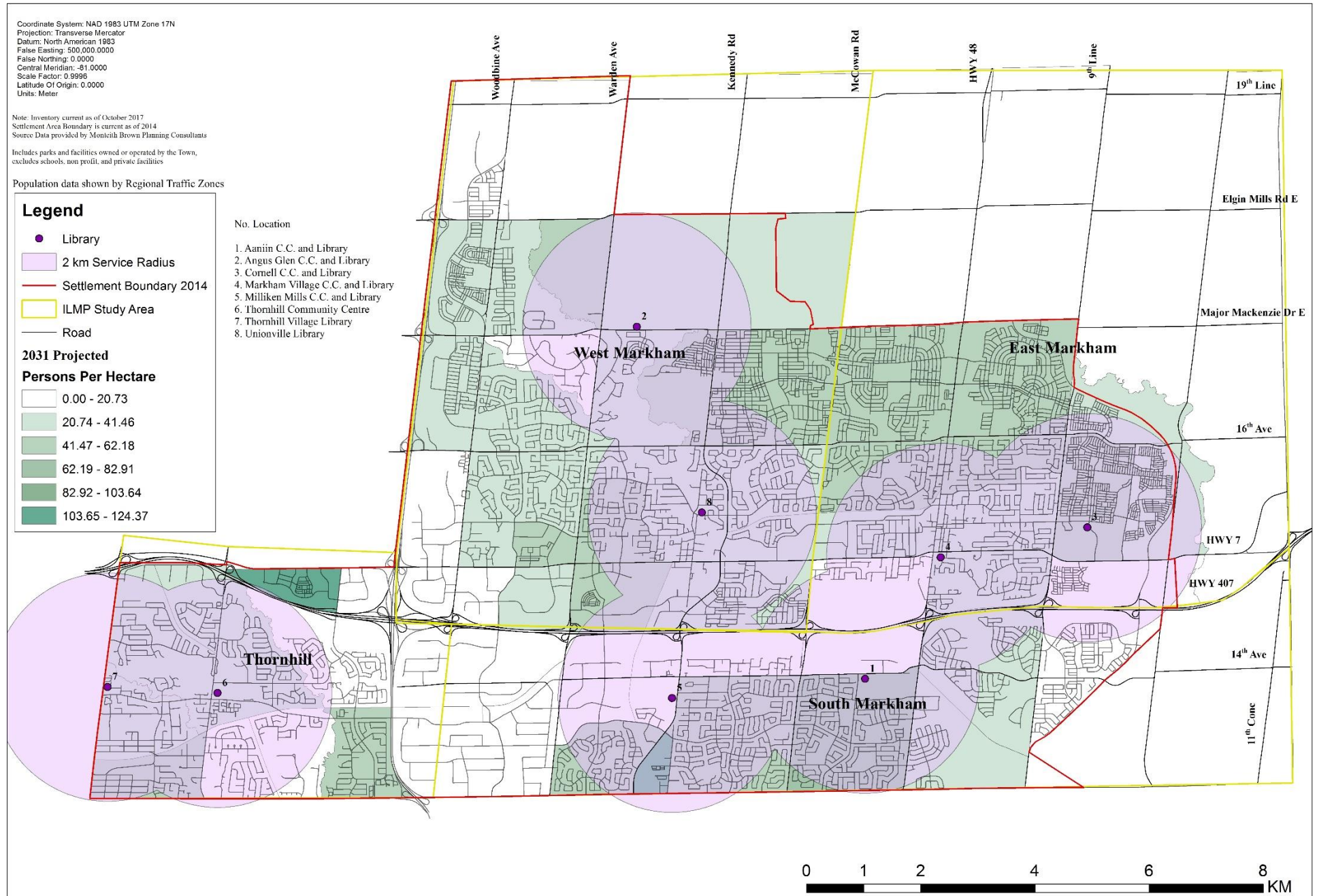
- 1, Flato Markham Theatre
- 2, Varley Art Gallery
- 3, Markham Museum
- Settlement Boundary 2014
- ILMP Study Area
- Road

Note: Inventory current as of September 2019
 Settlement Area Boundary is current as of 2014
 Source Data provided by the City of Markham

Includes parks and facilities owned or operated by the City,
 excludes schools, non profit, and private facilities.



Public Libraries



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