

Town of Markham Growth Management Strategy

Summary of Public Engagement Activities



May 25, 2009
Prepared by DPRA Inc.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents and summarizes public engagement activities associated with the development of the Town of Markham's Growth Management Strategy (GMS) between August 2008 and April 2009.

Purpose of the Growth Management Strategy

The Town is developing a Growth Management Strategy to identify the amount, location and pace of population and employment growth to 2031. The GMS will also identify the infrastructure and financial requirements to support the anticipated growth. The GMS work is being undertaken in response to Provincial (Growth Plan) and Regional (Planning for Tomorrow) planning policies. Markham is required to undertake a growth management exercise to ensure conformity with these policies. The GMS will form the basis of the new Town of Markham Official Plan.

In addition, Council priorities have guided the engagement process. Growth management was identified by residents as being a top priority through the 'Click with Markham' and Environics surveys. The development of a GMS is part of the Action Plan to address this priority.

Objectives of the Engagement Strategy for the GMS

The main objectives of the Public Engagement Program established in the Terms of Reference for the assignment are as follows:

- To continue the dialogue with the Markham community with respect to the growth management strategic priority;
- To engage the public in the GMS and OP Review processes in a meaningful way;
- To educate the public regarding senior government growth policy and planning, options for growth within the Town and their implications;
- To obtain public input/consensus regarding options for growth, and implementation/ phasing of growth within the Town;
- To establish an effective user-friendly means of communicating information regarding the GMS and new OP with the public;
- To assist Council and Town staff at organized meetings with the public;
- To ensure coordination with various ongoing communication/consultation efforts related to the Town's six strategic initiatives (Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT)); and
- To keep Town Council and Staff informed about the program.

Timing

The timeframe for public engagement included a planning phase from August 2008 to January 2009. Activities associated with the engagement program occurred between February 2009 and April 2009.

Engagement Activities

Preparation for the engagement program for the Growth Management Strategy included:

- The development and execution of a communications strategy (Section 2.2.1), including:
 - Advertisements
 - Notification letters
 - Email notification
 - A webpage
 - A dedicated email address
- The development of an informative workbook (Section 2.2.2; Appendix A)

The engagement activities for the Growth Management Strategy included:

- **Launch Event** (Sections 3.1 & 4.1)
 - A public launch event was held to formally initiate the public engagement program for the Town's Growth Management Strategy and the Transportation Strategic Plan, by focusing on the global, regional and local issues underlying the Growth Management Strategy and Transportation plans.
 - The event included key note speakers on growth and transportation, growth management in the Markham context and details regarding the work plans for the GMS and the Transportation Strategic Plan. The presentations were followed by a panel discussion, audience polling and a question and answer period.
 - The event was held in the Council Chambers at the Markham Civic Centre on Monday, February 9, 2009.
 - The event attracted approximately 75 participants in addition to Town of Markham staff and a number of consultants.

- **Community Meetings** (Sections 3.2 & 4.2)
 - *Content:* Community meetings were organized to present and discuss the details for the growth alternatives being considered for the Town, as well as the progress of the Transportation Strategic Plan and Master Servicing Study.
 - *Format:* The community meetings consisted of an open house where participants were invited to view information panels and ask questions to available staff, followed by presentations, audience polling and a question and answer period. The meetings were facilitated by DPRA Inc.
 - Five meetings were held in March and April as follows: Milliken (Wards 7 and 8), Thornhill (Wards 1 and 2), Markham (Wards 4 and 5), Unionville (Wards 3 and 6) and Armadale (Ward 7). Over 160 people attended the meetings in total. A sample agenda for the meetings is provided in Appendix D.

- **Stakeholder Meetings** (Sections 3.3 & 4.3)
 - Town staff held meetings with stakeholder and interest groups. Each meeting included a presentation, workbook discussion and a question and answer period.
 - Meetings were held with:
 - Mayor's Youth Task Force (16 participants)
 - Developers' Roundtable
 - Markham Centre Advisory Group (14 participants)
 - Cornell Advisory Group (11 participants)
 - Milliken Main Street Advisory Group (6 participants)

Fourteen additional workbooks were collected and a number of comment sheets and emails were received. Overall, the engagement process involved over 325 respondents.

What We Heard

Detailed results from the public launch, community meetings, workbooks and comment forms are captured in Section 4.0 (What We Heard) and Appendices C, and E through L.

Results from the engagement program were summarized primarily based on the results of questions asked at the Community Meetings and in the workbooks. Comments from the question and answer periods at the meetings along with written comments have helped to provide anecdotal comments. What we heard has been summarized under four major categories:

- Guiding Principles for Growth Management
- Accommodating Growth in Markham
- Residential Intensification
- Employment Growth

Guiding Principles for Growth Management

Generally, participants were supportive of the Town's growth management work, the environment first approach to planning and the guiding principles. A common sentiment was that once changed, there is no "going back" with Markham's environmental lands.

Respondents were supportive of the guiding principles; overall, the three most important guiding principles for workbook respondents and community meeting attendees were:

- Preserve established neighbourhoods and employment areas
- Identify phasing and funding requirements to deliver the infrastructure required to support growth
- Direct intensification to locations served by rapid transit

Additional guiding principles that were suggested included:

- Preserving, creating and continuing to integrate recreational services into the GMS
- Maintaining community/social infrastructure (i.e. schools, religious institutions, etc.)
- Identifying and working against world-class benchmarks for all of the identified principles
- Monitoring traffic (since it is an important issue for residents)
- Interactions between various cultural groups and impact on their daily life with the growth and changes in the town

Accommodating Growth in Markham

There was a division of interest from participants with respect to expanding into the Whitebelt to accommodate residential and employment growth. Almost two-thirds of the participants (workbook respondents and community meeting attendees) agreed with accommodating the majority of new residential growth within the current urban area. Anecdotal responses on this topic were mixed, with some favouring 100% accommodation within the current urban areas and others suggesting a lower percentage so that Markham can continue to offer single family homes to those that prefer them. Some respondents were concerned about the potential for intensification to change the character of existing neighbourhoods.

With respect to accommodating growth, almost three-quarters of respondents agreed that the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density housing to ensure a diverse housing mix. Many respondents commented on the need for Markham to provide a mix of housing types and to consider affordability.

Respondents were fairly evenly split on the question: "Do you agree with expanding the Town's urban area into the Whitebelt to accommodate lower density residential growth?" Just under half of the respondents agreed with this question.

Residential Intensification

Participants in the public engagement program were supportive of the Town's proposed approach to distribute residential intensification to key locations with proposed rapid transit services. The general sense was that making transit a viable option will allow residents to get out of their cars, thus reducing pollution and congestion.

Residents supported most of the intensification areas but felt strongly about ensuring adequate infrastructure and services to meet the needs of the future residents. A small percentage of participants were concerned with some of the areas identified as intensification areas, due to congestion that already existed or concern for heritage of the area.

Participants were not supportive of high-rise buildings (more than 20 storeys) throughout Markham, but did feel that a combination of mixed height buildings (between 3 and 20 storeys) could accommodate future residential growth.

Employment Growth

In addition to building form and intensification, participants were asked a series of questions about employment growth in Markham. A large number of the participants (almost 90%) agreed with reserving land to accommodate employment growth over the long-term. Respondents noted that it would be important for new employment areas to be accessible by transit.

The general sentiment was that jobs could also be added within the current urban area through intensification in existing business parks and the appropriate mixing of employment in new residential development (i.e. ground floor retail in apartment buildings). Reasons for supporting ground floor commercial uses included: convenience, accessibility, keeping jobs within the local economy and the fact that the buildings are already in existence (nothing new to build). Those not in favour cited issues such as safety, noise and the need to separate residential areas from commercial lands.

Anecdotally, participants were in favour of the ability to work near or at home, thus reducing commuting time and increasing family or recreation time.

Overall, participants felt that the growth in Markham should to be planned in a way that protects the environment, culture and heritage of the Town. Viable and safe transit options and ensuring adequate infrastructure emerged as concerns for residents. Participants would like to see communities built that optimize live, work and play environments, while allowing for residential, employment and recreational opportunities within walking distance.

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1.0 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This document presents and summarizes public engagement activities associated with the development of the Town of Markham's Growth Management Strategy (GMS). The timeframe for public engagement includes a planning phase from August 2008 to January 2009. Activities associated with the engagement program occurred between February 2009 and April 2009.

1.1 PURPOSE

DPRA was retained by the Town of Markham to develop and implement a public engagement program for the Town's Growth Management Strategy.

The Town is developing a Growth Management Strategy to identify the amount, location and pace of population and employment growth to 2031. The GMS will also identify the infrastructure and financial requirements to support the anticipated growth. The GMS is being undertaken in response to Provincial (Growth Plan) and Regional (Planning for Tomorrow) planning policies. Markham is required to undertake a growth management exercise to ensure conformity with these policies. The GMS will form the basis of the new Town of Markham Official Plan.

In addition, Council priorities have guided the engagement process. Growth management was identified by residents as being a top priority through the 'Click with Markham' and Environics surveys. The development of a GMS is part of the Action Plan to address this priority.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the Public Engagement Program established in the Terms of Reference for the assignment are as follows:

- To continue the dialogue with the Markham community with respect to the growth management strategic priority;
- To engage the public in the GMS and OP Review processes in a meaningful way;
- To educate the public regarding senior government growth policy and planning, options for growth within the Town and their implications;
- To obtain public input/consensus regarding options for growth, and implementation/ phasing of growth within the Town;
- To establish an effective user-friendly means of communicating information regarding the GMS and new OP with the public;
- To assist Council and Town staff at organized meetings with the public;
- To ensure coordination with various ongoing communication/consultation efforts related to the Town's six strategic initiatives (BMFT); and
- To keep Town Council and Staff informed about the program.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

A draft public engagement program was developed by DPRA in collaboration with the Town of Markham's project team. The public engagement program included activities to frame the development of the program and implementation of the proposed public engagement activities.

2.1 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

DPRA worked with the Town of Markham project team to develop a public engagement program based on the requirements of the Town and residents of Markham. Prior to developing the engagement program DPRA undertook a number of activities between August 2008 and January 2009 including:

- Meetings with Planning Staff
- Document Review
- Coordination with other Departments and BMFT initiatives
- Council Involvement

2.1.1 MEETINGS WITH PLANNING STAFF

An initial project orientation meeting (August 1, 2008) was held with the Town of Markham project team as an opportunity for the DPRA team and the Town to reach a mutual understanding about roles and responsibilities, reporting, relations and timing.

A public engagement planning workshop (August 7, 2008) was held with municipal staff. The purpose of this workshop was to develop a collective understanding of the consultation-related aspects and timing of the various studies currently underway that address Council's six strategic priorities as outlined in BMFT. Town of Markham project leads presented information on:

- Building Markham's Future Together (M. West/J. Carnegie)
- Community Sustainability Plan (Green Print) – (V. McGrath)
- Growth Management Strategy (M. Wouters/T. Lambe)
- Environmental Policy Review (L. Duoba)
- Agricultural Analysis (L. Duoba)
- Employment Lands Strategy (E. Silva-Stewart)
- Sustainable Development Guidelines & Standards (R. Borooh)
- Built Form Guidelines for Intensification (R. Borooh)
- Markham Transportation Strategic Plan (P. Roy)
- Servicing Study (A. Wu)
- Parks, Recreation & Library Master Plan (S. Tam)
- Economic Competitiveness Strategy (M. Wouters)

The second part of the public engagement planning workshop involved bringing together the DPRA team and key Town of Markham staff to discuss and confirm a series of design criteria and assumptions for the Growth Management Strategy public engagement work program; and to discuss the elements of an ideal work program based on the agreed-upon design criteria, including the timing and intent for implementation of the engagement activities.

Subsequent meetings were held throughout the project as required.

2.1.2 DOCUMENT REVIEW

DPRA reviewed relevant documents that highlighted the historical context for the GMS and the engagement process, growth management issues and links related to projects and initiatives.

Documents included:

- Town of Markham growth studies (e.g. growth forecasts, Development Services Committee (DSC) presentations);
- Regional documents (e.g. York Region Planning For Tomorrow); and
- Provincial documents (e.g. Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Greenbelt Plan).

2.1.3 COORDINATION WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND BMFT INITIATIVES

The project team recognized the importance of coordinating the public engagement work program with other Town of Markham Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT) initiatives.

Planning meetings were held with relevant staff to identify potential linkages and ensure coordination with other studies underway.

The GMS public engagement process incorporated information from both the Transportation Strategic Plan and the Master Servicing Study. All events and communications include topics specific to the three studies and combined efforts of the consultants and Town of Markham staff.

This report presents the results of the **GMS engagement activities** and does not include comments specific to the other BMFT initiatives (i.e. Transportation Strategic Plan or Master Servicing Study) heard throughout the process.

2.1.4 COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

Key interviews with Town of Markham Council members were held to discuss the process and to frame the development of the public engagement strategy. Input from Council was integrated into the public engagement program.

All members of Council were invited to provide their input. Interviews were conducted with:

- Mayor Frank Scarpitti
- Deputy Mayor Jack Heath
- Regional Councillor Gordon Landon
- Councillor Valerie Burke
- Councillor Carolina Moretti
- Councillor John Webster
- Councillor Dan Horchik

The draft public engagement program was presented for comment to the Development Services Committee (DSC) on September 23, 2008.

Markham staff presented updates on the GMS public engagement program at subsequent DSC meetings.

2.2 DRAFT PROGRAM

At the outset of the process, the project team anticipated that the Public Engagement Program would include a Town-wide kick-off event followed by three phases of engagement:

- Phase 1: Growth Options
 - This phase was proposed to include a launch event, interactive workbooks, community dialogues to discuss growth options, youth engagement, a web dialogue and tea and talk sessions. This stage also included public communication and reporting to staff and DSC.
- Phase 2: Preferred Growth Option
 - This phase was proposed to include a second round of community dialogues to discuss the community's preferred growth option, youth engagement, a web dialogue and tea and talk sessions. This stage also included public communication and reporting to staff and DSC.
- Phase 3: Draft GMS
 - The final stage was proposed as a community forum and presentation to DSC.

As the GMS population and employment projection work progressed, it was determined that Phase 1 and Phase 2 could be combined.

2.2.1 COMMUNICATIONS

A number of communication tools were used to spread the word about the Town's Growth Management Strategy.

A **webpage** on the Town website was developed that allowed interested residents to obtain more information about the GMS and the engagement process. The webpage advertised the community meetings and provided information on the process and a number of background studies. It also provides links to all staff reports and presentations to Council.

(http://www.markham.ca/Markham/Departments/Planning/Studies/Studies_Growth.htm)

An **email address** (growth@markham.ca) was also established for use by residents for submissions and comments on the Growth Management Strategy and public engagement program.

The Town of Markham provided communications to stakeholders and residents of Markham to **advertise** the public engagement events, availability of the workbook and update information on the process. Notices were placed in the *Economist & Sun* and the *Thornhill Liberal* almost weekly from January 29, 2009 to April 2, 2009. **Email notices** were sent to residents who had previously expressed interest in the planning issues. An **information letter** was also sent to a number of First Nations and Aboriginal groups to inform them of the process and invite them to provide their comments and participate in the community meetings.

2.2.2 DEVELOPING THE WORKBOOK

An informative workbook was developed and distributed to residents and made available on the Town of Markham website for download (www.markham.ca) (**Appendix A**).

The workbook contained information about the Town of Markham's emerging Growth Management Strategy. It also provided an opportunity for residents to provide thoughts about the work completed so far in planning for the residential and employment growth anticipated in Markham over the next 25 years.

Residents were encouraged to use the workbook as a tool for discussing growth management with community groups or organization and conveying the group's opinions to Town staff.

The questions in the workbook were the same questions used during the polling exercise at the community meetings, including questions on:

- Guiding Principles (i.e. environment first approach to planning and other guiding principles);
- Accommodating Growth in Markham (accommodating growth in current urban area, residential density, mix of housing types);
- Residential Intensification (distribution of housing, intensification areas); and
- Employment Growth (accommodating employment growth, employment options in current urban area).

Completed workbooks were faxed, emailed or dropped off at the Development Services counter at the Town Civic Centre.

Workbooks were also distributed at the community meetings for interested residents or for distribution to community members that were not able to participate at the community meetings. Workbooks were also available at Markham Public Library branches and at Town offices.

3.0 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Activities associated with the public engagement program occurred between February 2009 and April 2009. Activities included:

- Launch Event
- Community Meetings
- Stakeholder Meetings

3.1 LAUNCH EVENT

A public launch event was held to formally initiate the public engagement program for the Town's Growth Management Strategy and the Transportation Strategic Plan by focusing on the global, regional and local issues underlying the Growth Management and Transportation plans.

The event included introduction to the GMS and the Transportation Strategic Plan, key note speakers on growth, transportation and Markham's context and the Growth Management Strategy, followed by a panel discussion, and a question and answer period. The agenda for the event is included in **Appendix B**.

Speakers at the event included:

- Mayor Frank Scarpitti - opening remarks and polling facilitation
- John Van Nostrand of planningAlliance - why it's important to plan differently
- Neal Irwin, of IBI Group - current transit and transportation issues facing the Town of Markham
- Jim Baird, the Town's Commissioner of Development Services - moving towards more sustainable communities
- Valerie Shuttleworth, the Town's Director of Planning & Urban Design - next steps in the process.

The panelists included the speakers as well as:

- Mary Frances Turner, Vice-President of the York Region Rapid Transit
- John Waller, Director, Long Range & Strategic Planning, York Region

The event also included a polling exercise where participants were asked to answer a number of questions related to growth and transportation using a handheld polling device. The polling results are presented in **Appendix C** and are discussed in more detail in Section 4.

Notice

Advertisements were placed in the *Economist & Sun* and the *Thornhill Liberal* two weeks prior to the event.

Notices were also sent by email to approximately 210 individuals who had come out to previous Planning open houses/ workshops (e.g., Yonge/ Steeles Study, Agricultural Assessment study, etc), the Developers' Round Table, all Advisory Committees of Council (e.g., Heritage Markham, Environmental Advisory Group, Advisory Groups, Mayor's Youth Task Force, etc), Ratepayers' Association presidents and First Nations.

Venue and Attendance

The event was held in the Council Chambers at the Markham Civic Centre on Monday, February 9, 2009.

The event attracted approximately 75 participants in addition to Town of Markham staff and a number of consultants.

Presentations from the launch are available on-line at:

http://www.markham.ca/Markham/Departments/Planning/Studies/Studies_Growth.htm.

3.2 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Community meetings were organized to present and discuss the details for the growth alternatives being considered for the Town, as well as the progress of the Transportation Strategic Plan and Master Servicing Study.

An agenda for the community meetings is presented in **Appendix D**.

For each of the community meetings, there was an open house from 6 to 7pm where participants were invited to walk around, view informative panels and ask questions to available staff. The open house was followed by three presentations and discussions from 7 pm to approximately 9 pm. The meetings were facilitated by DPRA Inc.

The meetings included a presentation by Valerie Shuttleworth, Director of Planning and Urban Design. A copy of the presentation is available on-line at: http://www.markham.ca/NR/rdonlyres/40639712-ADB1-4304-AB6C-F78A9D4747D7/0/GMS_communitypres_090311.pdf.

In addition, there were presentations on the progress of the Transportation and Master Servicing Plan and the Master Servicing Study by Brian Hollingworth of the IBI Group and Allen Wu, Senior Development Engineer, respectively.

The meeting participants also engaged in a polling activity where they provided feedback on growth and transportation questions. The polling exercise asked residents the same questions presented in the workbook, including specific questions under the headings of:

- Guiding Principles (i.e. 'environment first' approach to planning and other guiding principles);
- Accommodating Growth in Markham (accommodating growth in current urban area, residential density, mix of housing types);
- Residential Intensification (distribution of housing, intensification areas); and
- Employment Growth (accommodating employment growth, employment options in current urban area).

The polling results are presented in Section 4 for each community meeting. Anecdotal comments received through workbooks, email submissions and general comments received at the engagement activities are also presented.

At the end of each community meeting, time was provided for participants to ask presenters questions and provide additional comments.

Notice

Advertisements were placed in the *Economist & Sun* and the *Thornhill Liberal* two weeks prior to the event.

Notices were also sent by email to approximately 210 individuals who had come out to previous Planning open houses/ workshops (e.g. Yonge/ Steeles Study, Agricultural Assessment study, etc), the Developers' Round Table, all Advisory Committees of Council (e.g. Heritage Markham, Environmental Advisory Group, Advisory Groups, Mayor's Youth Task Force, etc), Ratepayers' Association presidents and First Nations.

Venue and Attendance

Stakeholders and residents were invited to attend one of five community meetings:

Community Meeting #1 (Milliken) was held at the Civic Centre (101 Town Centre Blvd Markham) on Wednesday, March 11, 2009 for the benefit of Wards 7 and 8. Councillor Alex Chiu welcomed the audience. There were 18 participants at the community meeting. One additional comment sheet was received providing feedback on the community meeting and GMS.

Community Meeting #2 (Thornhill) was held at the Heintzman House (135 Bay Thorn Drive, Thornhill) on Thursday, March 12, 2009 for the benefit of Wards 1 and 2. Councillor Valerie Burke and Councillor Erin Shapero welcomed the audience. There were 58 participants at the community meeting. We received 12 comment sheets and an additional 6 email submissions providing comments on the Thornhill community meeting and the GMS.

Community Meeting #3 (Markham) was held at Brother André Catholic High School (6160 16th Ave. E. Markham) on Wednesday, March 25, 2009 for the benefit of Wards 4 and 5. Councillor Carolina Moretti (Ward 4) and Councillor John Webster (Ward 5) welcomed the audience. There were 45 participants at the Community Meeting. We also received two comment sheets providing feedback on the community meeting and GMS.

Community Meeting #4 (Unionville) was held at the Markham Centre (101 Town Centre Blvd Markham) on Thursday, April 2, 2009 for the benefit of Wards 3 and 6. Councillor Joseph Virgilio (Ward 3) and Councillor Dan Horchik (Ward 6) were present at the meeting. There were 22 participants at the meeting. We received two comment sheets providing feedback on the community meeting and GMS.

Community Meeting #5 (Armada) was scheduled at the request of the ward councillor. It was held at Denison Room C, in the Armadale Community Centre (2401 Denison Avenue, Markham) on Monday, April 20, 2009. Councillor Logan Kanapathi (Ward 7) welcomed the audience. There were 21 participants at the meeting.

3.3 STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Stakeholder and interest groups were invited to discuss the GMS growth alternative work with Town staff. Each meeting included a presentation, workbook discussion and a question and answer period.

The purpose of the meetings was to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to learn more about the Growth Management Strategy and gather different perspectives on growth management options, key considerations and issues.

Meetings were held with:

- Mayor's Youth Task Force
- Developers' Roundtable
- Markham Centre Advisory Group
- Cornell Advisory Group
- Milliken Main Street Advisory Group

Notice

Town of Markham staff contacted the interest groups and invited them to participate in a meeting.

Venue and Attendance

Mayor's Youth Task Force: The Mayor's Youth Task Force is a group of elementary and high school students from the Town of Markham who meet twice a month to plan events and discuss issues faced by youth. Town of Markham staff facilitated a discussion on the Growth Management Strategy at the Mayor's Youth Task Force Meeting on March 24, 2009. There were sixteen participants at the meeting.

Developers' Roundtable: The Developers' Roundtable is a group of major developers in Markham who meet on a regular basis to discuss development issues. Town of Markham staff facilitated a discussion on the Growth Management Strategy with this group on March 11, 2009.

Markham Centre Advisory Group: Town of Markham staff facilitated a discussion on the Growth Management Strategy with the Markham Centre Advisory Group on March 26, 2009 at the Civic Centre in the Canada Room. There were fourteen Advisory Members, plus one future member observing the meeting and five Town staff present.

Cornell Advisory Group: Town of Markham staff facilitated a discussion on the Growth Management Strategy with the Cornell Advisory Group on April 6, 2009 at the Civic Centre in the Canada Room. At the meeting there were eleven members, plus three Council members, and three Town staff.

Milliken Main Street Advisory Group: Town of Markham staff facilitated a discussion on the Growth Management Strategy with the Milliken Main Street Advisory Group on April 16, 2009 at the Civic Centre in the Canada Room. There were six participants at the meeting plus one Council member and three Town staff.

4.0 WHAT WE HEARD

This section presents a summary of what we heard throughout the public engagement program. It includes a summary of:

- Launch event responses
- Community meeting polling responses
- Workbook responses
- General comments and questions

4.1 LAUNCH EVENT RESPONSES

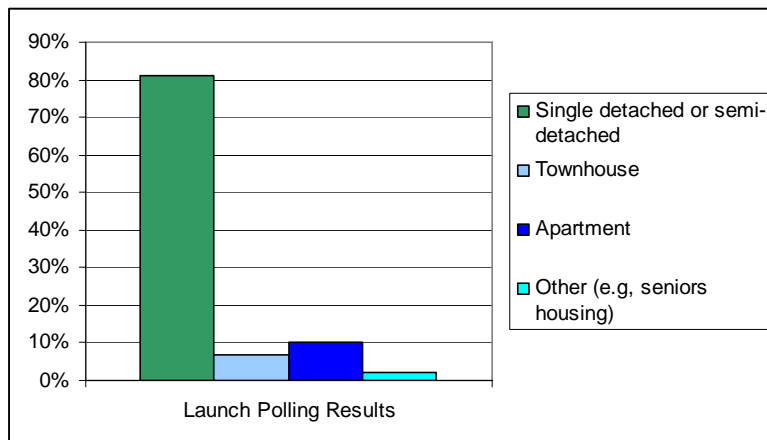
This section presents what we heard at the public launch event held to formally initiate the public engagement program for the Town's Growth Management Strategy and the Transportation Strategic Plan. The event included key note speakers on growth and transportation, growth management in the Markham context and details regarding the work plans for the GMS and the Transportation Strategic Plan. The presentations were followed by a panel discussion, audience polling and a question and answer period.

Note: An interactive and innovative polling technology was used at the launch and community meetings to elicit feedback from the participants. The polling tool allowed participants to answer multiple-choice question immediately followed by a presentation of the results. This polling exercise was one method used to gather feedback from participants attending the public events. The results of the polling exercise are *not statistically significant* and are complemented by anecdotal comments whenever possible.

A polling exercise was held with general questions around demographics, living accommodations, type of house and transportation related questions. Participants were asked a total of fifteen questions; all questions and responses are included in Appendix C. The purpose of the questions was to generate discussion about the current and future living and commuting patterns of Markham residents. Four questions that are related to growth management issues are highlighted below:

The results indicated that the majority of respondents at the public launch (81%) lived in a single detached or semi-detached home (Figure 1).

Figure 1: What type of home do you live in now?



As shown in Figure 2 and 3, over half of the respondents (56%) thought that in 10 years they would be living in the same type of home. When the same question was asked with a 20 year horizon, the responses shifted: 27% of respondents felt that they would be living in another type of home (seniors' residence) and 28% anticipated apartment living (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: Type of Home 10 Years from now?

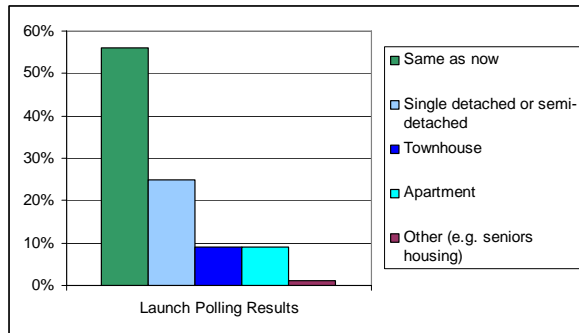
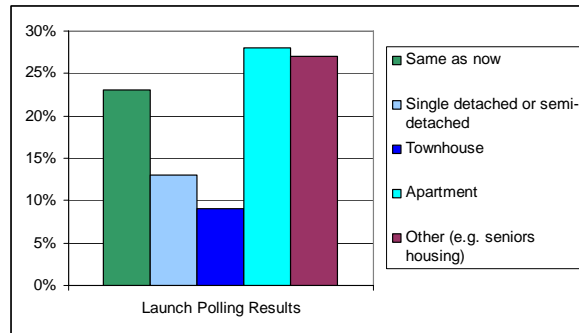
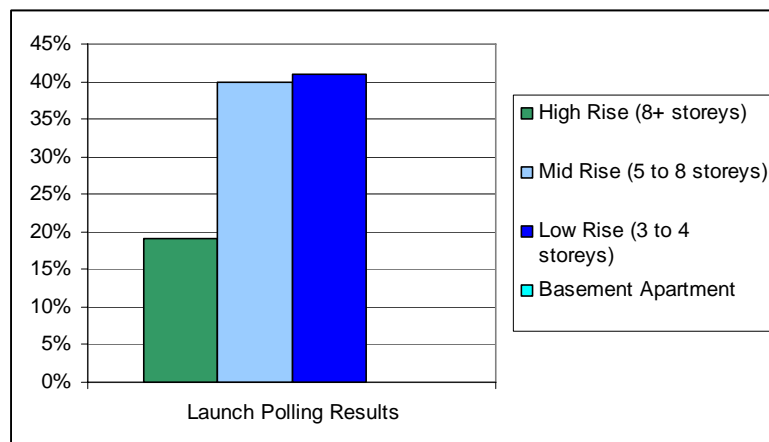


Figure 3: Type of Home 20 Years from now?



Many of the respondents indicated that if they decided to live in an apartment they would prefer a mid rise (40%) or a low rise (41%). See Figure 3.

Figure 4: If you decided to live in an apartment, what type of building would you prefer?



At the end of the evening, a number of questions were asked of the presenters and panelists; these included questions about:

- A potential contradiction between the work of the Region of York and the Town of Markham on growth management issues. John Waller explained that the Region has set targets for growth and that this means a minimum of 52% intensification for the Town. Growth will be monitored over time and both the Region and the Town will conduct formal reviews every five years.
- The need for adequate infrastructure (for example, sewer and water constraints) from the Region to remove any barriers to future intensification in Markham.
- The potential for a Provincial government transportation authority to stimulate public/private cooperation to create transit systems. Mary Frances Turner of York Region Rapid Transit explained that while there has been a lot of planning there is a regional transit authority and money has been set aside for major construction projects, specifically, some in Markham.
- The Yonge Street subway extension environmental assessment has been filed with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.
- Food sustainability and a desire not to go into the Whitebelt; and
- The future of Buttonville airport.

4.2 COMMUNITY MEETING POLLING RESPONSES

This section presents what we heard throughout the community meetings about attendees' impressions of growth management in the Town of Markham. Responses are grouped into four themes:

- Guiding Principles (i.e. environment first approach to planning and other guiding principles);
- Accommodating Growth in Markham (accommodating growth in current urban area, residential density, mix of housing types);
- Residential Intensification (distribution of housing, intensification areas); and
- Employment Growth (accommodating employment growth, employment options in current urban area).

Note: An interactive and innovative polling technology was used at the community meetings to elicit feedback from the participants. The polling tool allowed participants to answer multiple-choice question immediately followed by a presentation of the results. This polling exercise was one method used to gather feedback from participants attending the public events. Due to the number of responses, results of the polling exercise are *not statistically significant* and are presented for discussion purposes only.

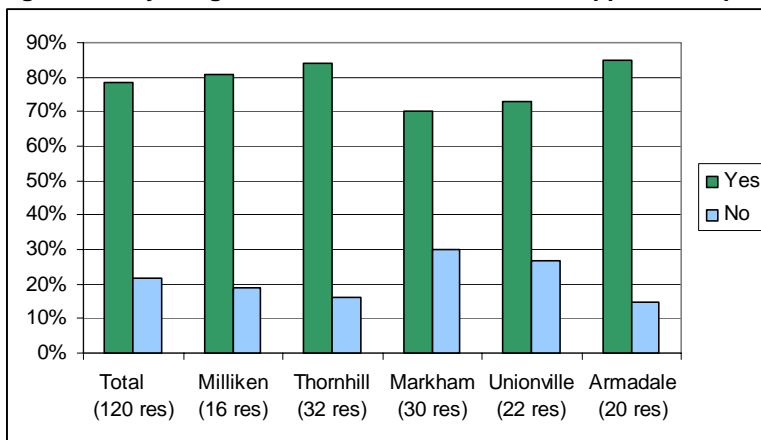
The figures in this section present a summary of the percentage of polling responses at the five community meetings. The number of respondents varies per question and is indicated along the horizontal axis as "res".

Detailed community meeting summaries are presented in **Appendix E to Appendix I**.

4.2.1 PRINCIPLES FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Overall, the majority of the participants (78%) indicated that they agreed with the "environment first" approach to planning for new development (Figure 5). This percentage was fairly consistent across the five community meetings, with the highest level of disagreement in the Markham community (30%).

Figure 5: Do you agree with the 'environment first' approach to planning for new development?



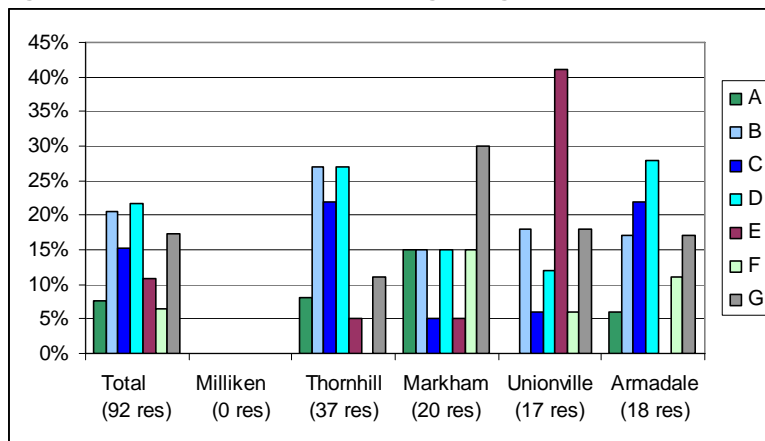
A series of seven guiding principles for growth were presented to attendees and they were asked to choose the most important guiding principle. The cumulative results are shown below, in order of preference:

- (D) Direct intensification to locations served by rapid transit (22% of respondents chose this as their most important guiding principle)
- (B) Preserve established neighbourhoods & employment areas (21%)
- (G) Identify phasing and funding requirements to deliver the infrastructure required to support growth (17%)
- (C) Focus on intensification within the urban area; minimize expansion of the urban area (15%)
- (E) Build compact and transit-supportive communities (11%)
- (A) Define natural heritage network; no development within it (8%)
- (F) Maintain Markham's economic competitiveness (7%)

Figure 6 shows preferences for guiding principle by community. There was a difference between community's preferences for E: Build compact and transit-supportive communities. Preference was strongest for this in Unionville, where over 40% of respondents desired compact and transit-supportive communities. This is in direct contrast to Armadale, where no respondents highlighted that principle as their first choice.

Note that this question was not asked in Milliken due to technical reasons.

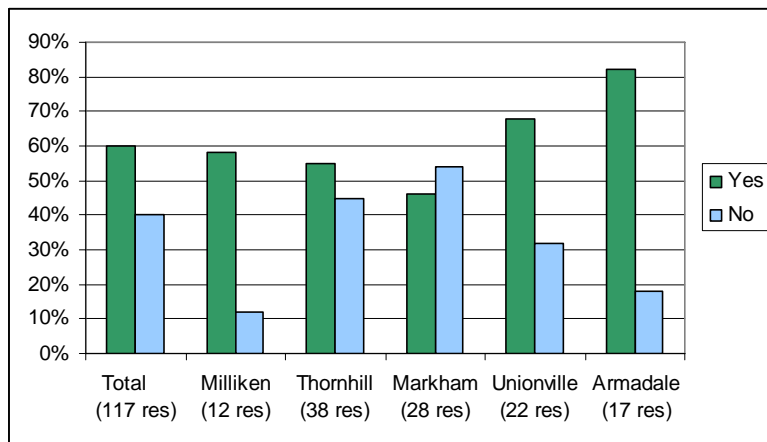
Figure 6: What is the most important guiding principle?



4.2.2 ACCOMMODATING GROWTH IN MARKHAM

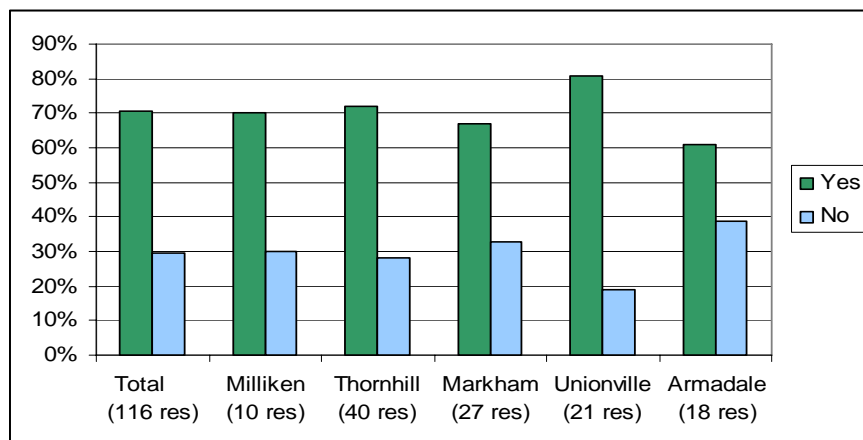
Overall, more than half of the community meeting attendees (60%) agreed with accommodating new residential growth in the current urban area (Figure 7). Many felt (71%) that the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density housing to ensure a diverse housing mix (Figure 8). Respondents at the Markham community meeting were the only group where more favoured not accommodating growth within the current urban area (54% vs. 46%). Support for containment of the current urban area was strongest in Armadale.

Figure 7: Do you agree with accommodating the majority of new residential growth in the current urban area?



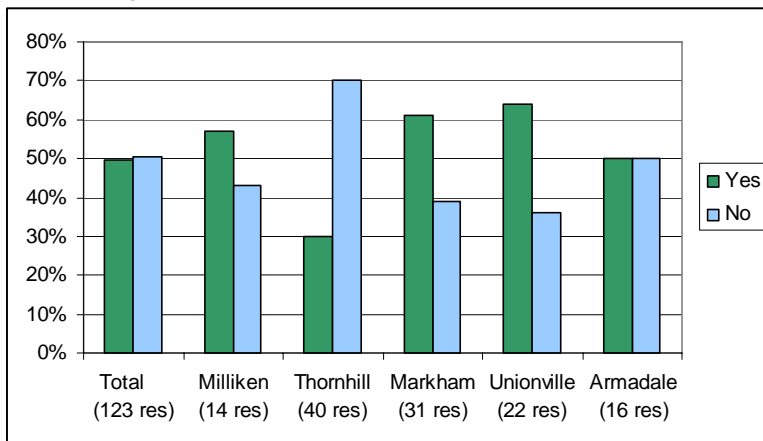
When asked if the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density housing to ensure a diverse housing mix, participants across the community meetings were fairly consistent with their support. Overall, 71% of respondents agreed with ensuring a diverse housing mix (Figure 8). Support for this idea was highest in Unionville, with a response rate of 81%.

Figure 8: Do you agree that the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density housing to ensure a diverse housing mix?



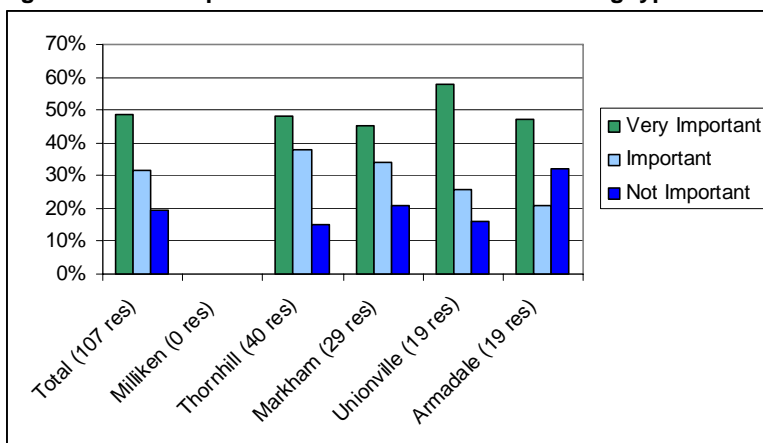
As presented in Figure 9, half of the participants (50%) agreed with expanding the Town's urban area into the Whitebelt to accommodate lower density residential growth. The other half (50%) of the participants did not agree with expanding into the Whitebelt. Thornhill was the only community where there were more participants that did not agree with expanding into the Whitebelt to accommodate growth (70%) than supporters. Residents in Armadale were equally split (50/50) in support of expanding into the Whitebelt whereas participants in the other communities (Milliken, Markham, and Unionville) showed more support for expanding into the Whitebelt to accommodate growth.

Figure 9: Do you agree with expanding the Town's urban area into the Whitebelt to accommodate lower density residential growth?



Participants were asked about their sense of the importance of a mix of housing types in Markham over the next 25 years. Almost half (49%) felt that it was very important to have a mix of housing types; others felt it was important (32%) and some (20%) did not think it was important at all. Unionville was the community where the largest majority of people (58%) thought it was very important to have a mix of housing types (Figure 10).

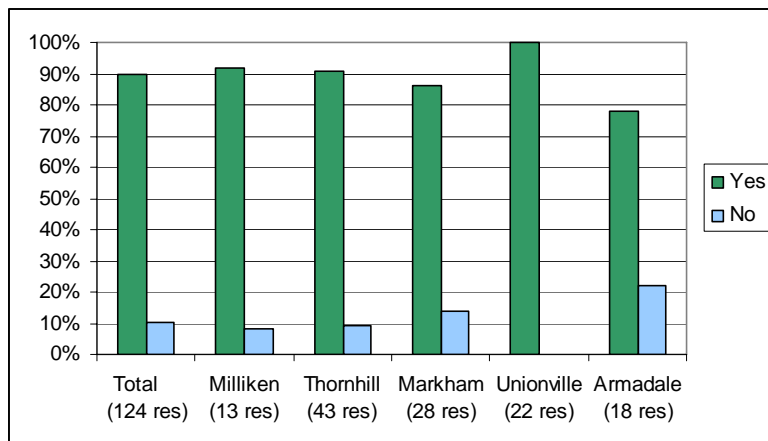
Figure 10: How important is it to have a mix of housing types?



4.2.3 RESIDENTIAL INTENSIFICATION

During the presentation at the community meetings, a number of maps were presented that showed the Town's approach to distributing residential intensification to key locations with proposed rapid transit services. The majority (90%) of participants agreed with this approach (Figure 11). Support for this notion was strongest in Unionville where 100% of the respondents agreed with residential intensification near proposed rapid transit services.

Figure 11: Do you agree with the approach of distributing residential intensification to key locations with proposed rapid transit services?

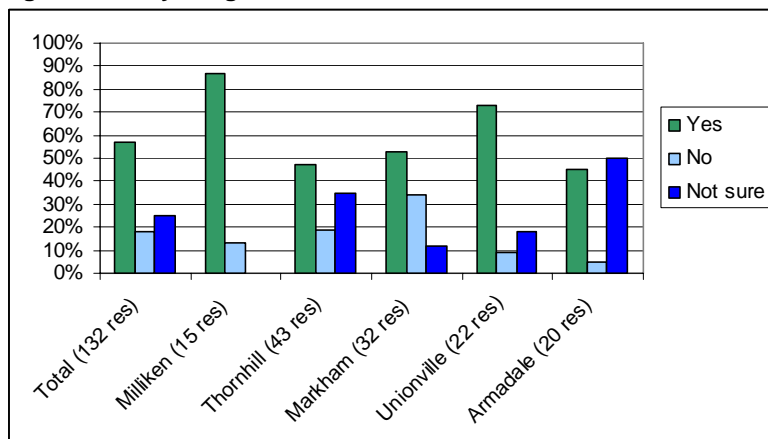


As indicated in Figure 12, some participants (18%) disagreed with the intensification areas identified. At the Markham community meeting, approximately one-third (34%) of the participants disagreed with the proposed intensification areas.

Written comment sheets were received that suggested additional areas of intensification including:

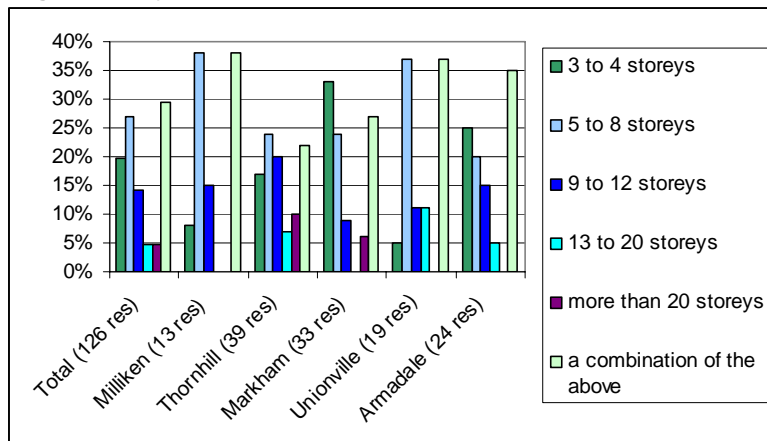
- Markham Road and Steeles Avenue
- Kennedy Road and Steeles Avenue
- Highway 7 and Markham Road
- Highway 7 and Kennedy Road
- Yonge Street
- Pacific Mall Area
- Major Mackenzie and Woodbine to Victoria Square
- Warden and Elgin Mills

Figure 12: Do you agree with the intensification areas identified?



Participants at the community meetings were asked about their preferred height of apartments. As indicated in Figure 13, participants were divided with respect to the form of apartment buildings preferred. Overall, preferences were divided between 3 to 4 storeys (20%), 5 to 8 storeys (27%) and 9 to 12 storeys (14%). There were very few participants that preferred more than 20 storeys (5%) or 13 to 20 storeys (5%). The response with the largest number of supporters (overall and in every community with the exception of Markham) was a combination of apartment building heights.

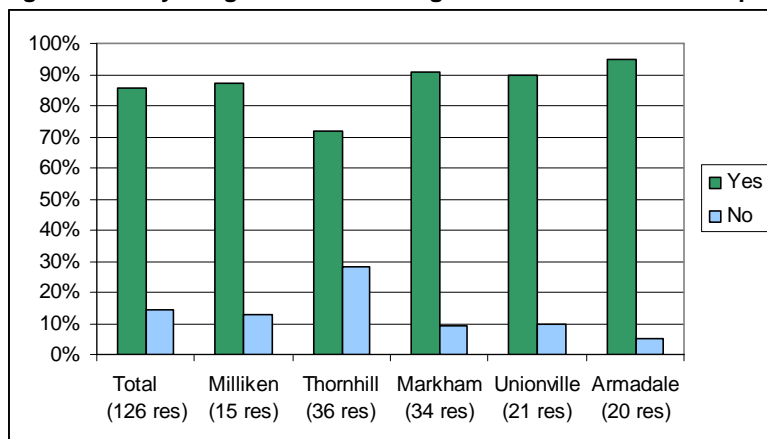
Figure 13: If a significant amount of intensification were to be in the form of apartment buildings, what building height would you prefer?



4.2.4 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

In addition to building form and intensification, participants were asked a series of questions about employment growth in Markham. A large number of the participants (86%) agreed with reserving land to accommodate employment growth over the long-term (Figure 14). Disagreement on this principle was highest in Thornhill, where 28% of respondents did not agree with reserving land to accommodate employment growth.

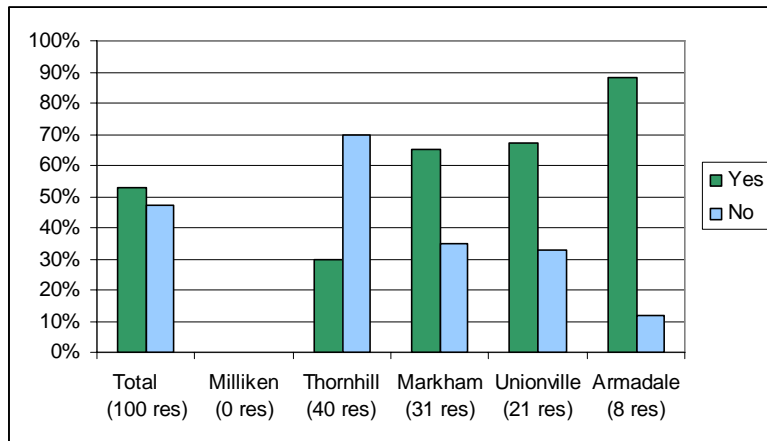
Figure 14: Do you agree with reserving land to accommodate employment growth?



Participants were also asked if they agreed that employment should be accommodated in the Whitebelt to ensure an adequate supply of land. Overall, just over half of the participants (53%) agreed. A closer look at the results reveals that Thornhill was only community where more respondent disagreed than agreed (Figure 15). This is consistent with responses to the previous question (Figure 14).

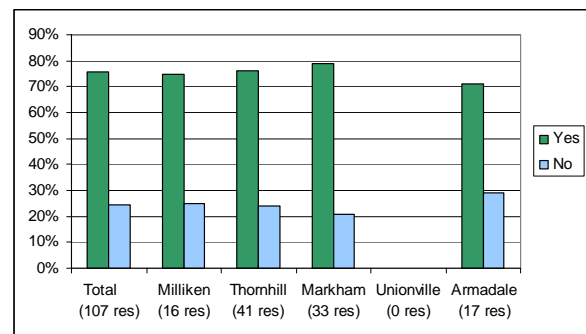
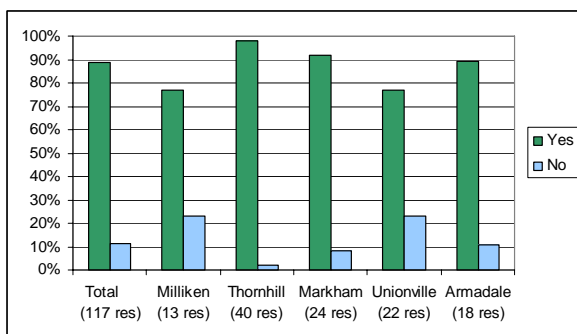
Note that this question was not asked in Milliken due to technical reasons.

Figure 15: Do you agree that employment should be accommodated in the Whitebelt to ensure an adequate supply of land?



Respondents were asked about their support for adding more jobs within the current urban area through intensification in existing business parks (Figure 16.1) and by having some type of employment in new residential development (i.e. ground floor commercial uses in apartment buildings) (Figure 16.2). A large majority of the participants (89%) supported adding more jobs through intensification in existing business parks; support was also high for employment in new residential development (76%). The results were fairly consistent across community meetings.

Figure 16.1: Do you support adding more jobs within the current urban area through intensification in existing business parks? 16.2 By having some type of employment in new residential development?



4.3 WORKBOOK RESPONSES

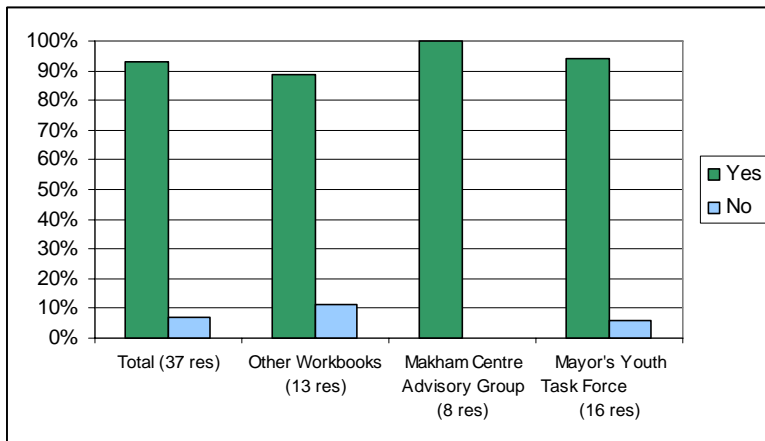
For consistency reasons, the questions asked at the community meetings were identical to the questions asked of respondents that used the interactive workbooks. This section presents the responses from the workbooks submitted throughout the public engagement program. Detailed workbook responses are presented in **Appendices J** (Markham Centre), **K** (Mayor’s Youth Task Force) and **L** (other workbooks). Note that the submission received from the Cornell Advisory Group has been included in summary of “Other Workbooks.”

Note: Results for workbook responses are presented in a similar graphical format to the launch and community meeting responses. The results of the workbook responses represent low sample sizes are *not statistically significant*. They are complemented by anecdotal comments whenever possible.

4.3.1 PRINCIPLES FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The majority of workbook respondents (87%) agreed with the ‘Environment First’ approach to planning. The Mayor’s Youth Task Force provided many anecdotal comments including “Because you can rebuild buildings quicker than you can re-grow the environment, and much of the soil in southern Ontario becomes useless after you build upon it” and “It is vital that we preserve the environment while taking into consideration Markham’s growth.” Others responses from workbooks included a forward-looking approach and cited multi-generational concerns. A general theme was the idea that anything we do to our environment has short and long term effects and “by placing the environment first, we ensure viability and sustainability into the future.”

Figure 17: Do you agree with the environment first approach to planning?

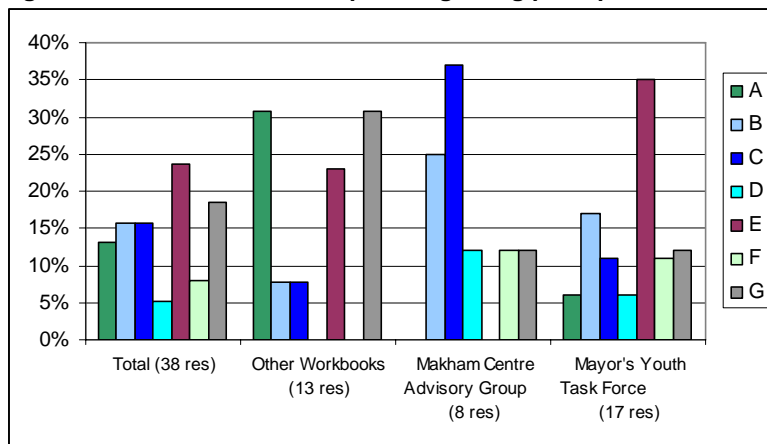


The workbooks listed seven draft guiding principles for growth. Respondents were asked to rank them in order from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important). The list below shows the preferences of respondents by ranking their number one ranked guiding principle

- (E) Build compact and transit-supportive communities (24% of respondents chose this as this most important guiding principle)
- (G) Identify phasing and funding requirements to deliver the infrastructure required to support growth (18%)
- (B) Preserve established neighbourhoods & employment areas (16%)
- (C) Focus on intensification within the urban area; minimize expansion of the urban area (16%)
- (A) Define natural heritage network; no development within it (13%)
- (F) Maintain Markham's economic competitiveness (8%)
- (D) Direct intensification to locations served by rapid transit (5%)

Variance among workbook respondents in their choices for the most important guiding principle is illustrated in Figure 18.

Figure 18: What is the most important guiding principle?



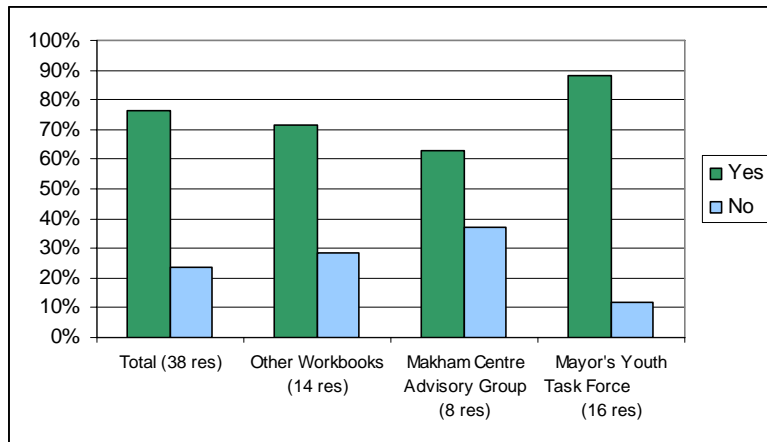
In workbook submissions, additional principles were suggested such as:

- The preservation/creation/continued integration of recreational services into the growth plan
- The maintenance of community/social infrastructure (i.e. schools, religious institutions, etc.)
- Identifying and working against world-class benchmarks for all principles above
- Traffic
- Interactions between various cultural groups and impact on their daily life with the growth and changes in the town

4.3.2 ACCOMMODATING GROWTH IN MARKHAM

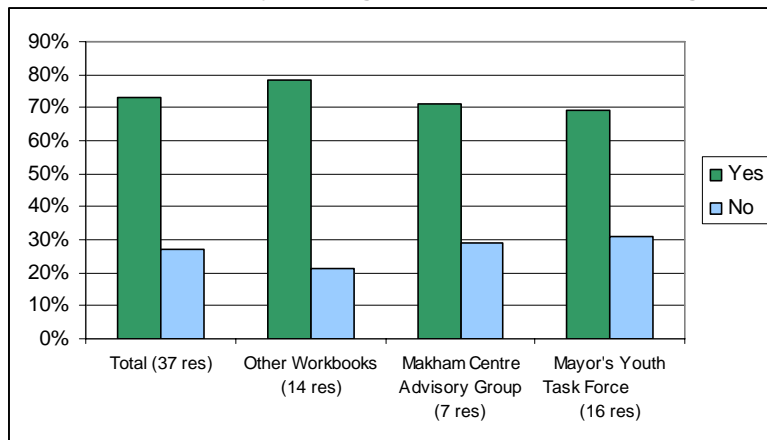
The majority of workbook respondents (76%) agreed with accommodating the majority of new residential growth in the current urban area. The Markham Centre Advisory Group had the lowest percentage of respondents (63%) that agreed with accommodating growth in the current urban area (Figure 19). The Mayor's Youth Task Force was most strongly in favour of accommodating the majority of new residential growth in the current urban area. Anecdotal responses were mixed, with some favouring 100% accommodation within the current urban areas and others suggesting a lower percentage so that Markham can continue to offer single family homes to those that prefer them. Some respondents were concerned about the potential for intensification to change the character of existing neighbourhoods.

Figure 19: Do you agree with accommodating the majority of new residential growth in the current urban area?



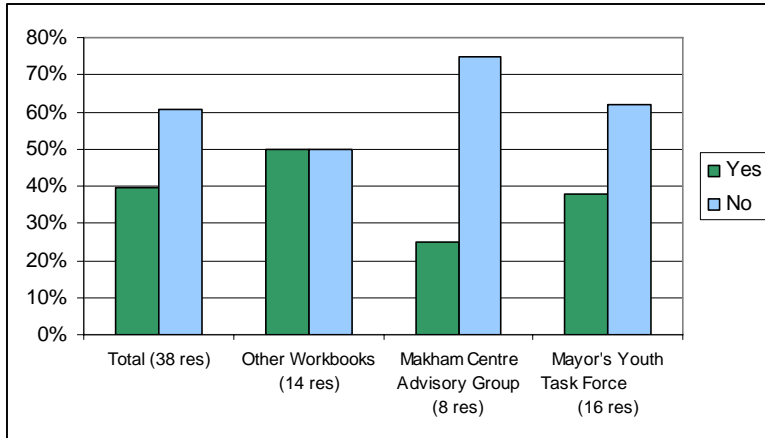
Many respondents (73%) agreed that the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density (e.g. single-detached, semi-detached, townhouse) housing to ensure a diverse housing mix (Figure 20). The support for balanced residential intensification was fairly consistent across respondent groups. Some anecdotal comments in favour of a diverse housing mix included: "Need a variety to attract buyers to live in Markham so that they will have more options. Most people move away from Toronto because they want bigger detached housing"; "Different housing mix allows for people to choose the amount of freedom they want in their living space" others felt that there was "no need for any more singles." Respondents mentioned the need for adequate infrastructure to support residential intensification. Affordability was another key consideration for respondents.

Figure 20: Do you agree that the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density housing to ensure a diverse housing mix?



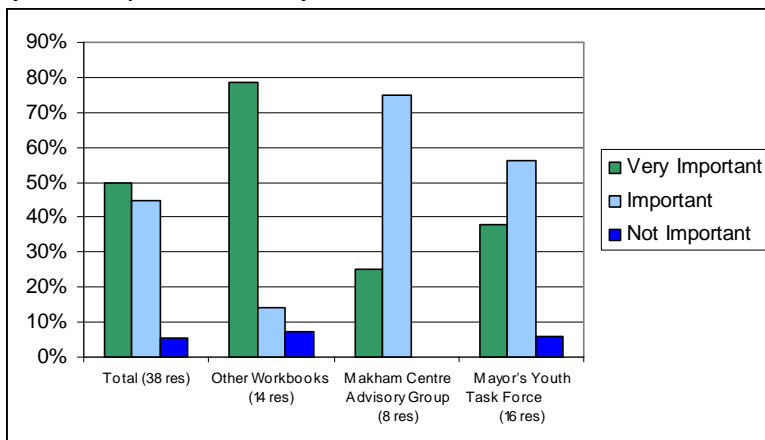
Over half (61%) of workbook respondents disagreed with expanding the Town's urban area into the Whitebelt lands to accommodate additional lower density (e.g. single-detached, semi-detached, townhouse) residential growth. Markham Centre Advisory Group had the lowest level of support; 75% of respondents disagreed with expanding the Town's urban area (Figure 21). One respondent noted that they are in support of expanding the Town's urban area as long as adequate infrastructure is in place.

Figure 21: Do you agree with expanding the Town's urban area into the Whitebelt to accommodate lower density residential growth?



Most of the workbook respondents felt that it was very important (50%) or important (45%) to have a mix of housing types (e.g. single-detached, semi-detached, townhouse) residential growth. Only 5% felt this was not important. Anecdotal comments from some of the workbooks suggested a growing demand for bungalow-style homes.

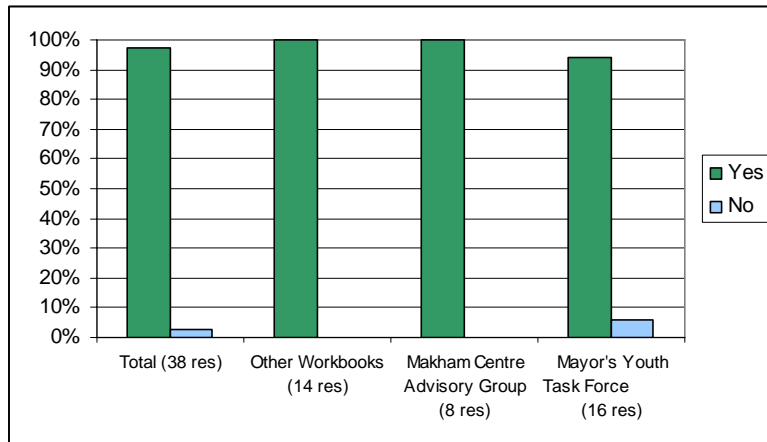
Figure 22: How important is it to have a mix of housing types (e.g., single-detached, semi-detached, townhouses, apartments) in new development?



4.3.3 RESIDENTIAL INTENSIFICATION

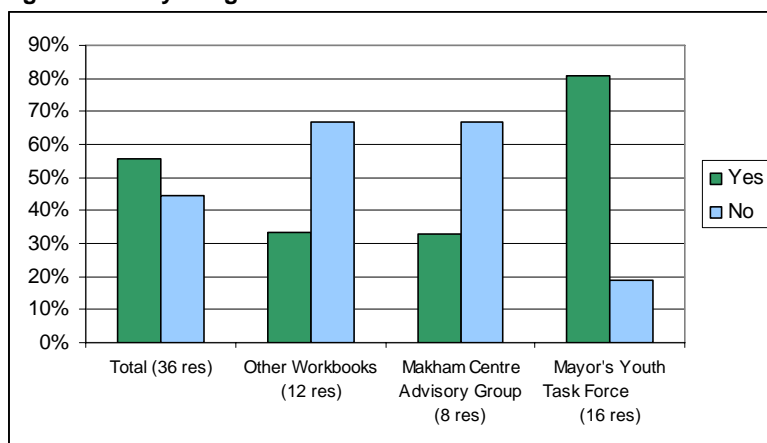
The majority of respondents (97%) agreed with the approach of distributing residential intensification to key locations with proposed rapid transit services. There was one respondent in the Mayor's Youth Task Force that did not agree (Figure 23). Respondents saw many benefits to residential intensification near transit, including that it would "discourage the use of the car" and it would make transit more of a viable option for residents.

Figure 23: Do you agree generally with the approach of distributing residential intensification to key locations with proposed rapid transit services?



The workbooks identified a number of areas for potential intensification. Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the locations identified. Overall, 56% of respondents agreed with the intensification areas identified (Figure 24). Some respondents felt that the Markville area and the Warden corridor were already congested, so residential intensification did not make sense there. Another area that was of concern was the Highway 7 corridor adjacent to Markham Centre.

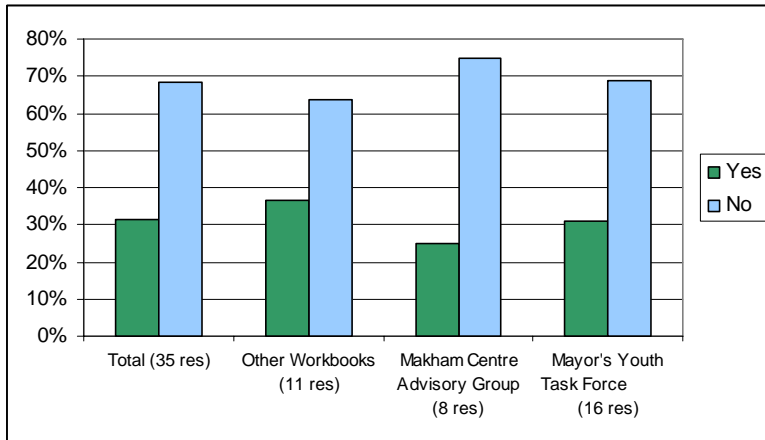
Figure 24: Do you agree with the intensification areas identified?



Some of the respondents (31%) indicated that the Town could consider other areas for intensification. Suggestions in the workbooks included:

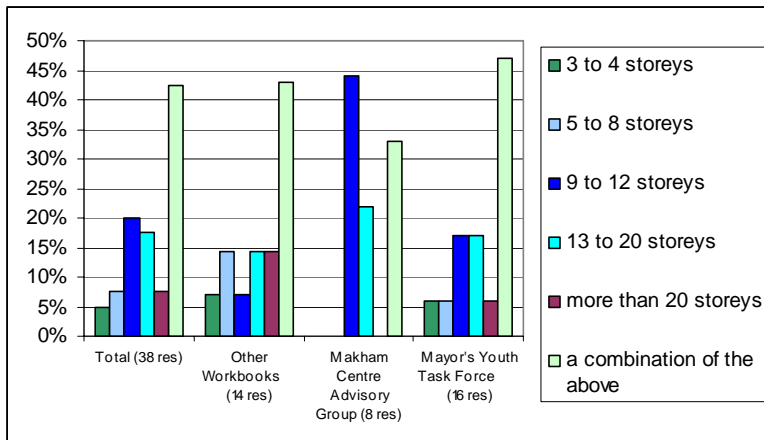
- Warden and 16th Avenue
- Markham Centre
- Woodbine/Warden Ave and 16th Avenue
- McCowan and 16th Avenue
- Angus Glen Golf Club Area
- Highway 7 and McCowan Road
- Steeles Avenue Corridor

Figure 25: Are there any additional intensification areas that should be considered?



Respondents were asked about their preferences for apartment style building types. The overall preference was for a combination of heights ranging from 3 to over 20 storeys (Figure 26). One respondent mentioned the need for “less extreme forms of density” – something between 20+ storey buildings and single family homes.

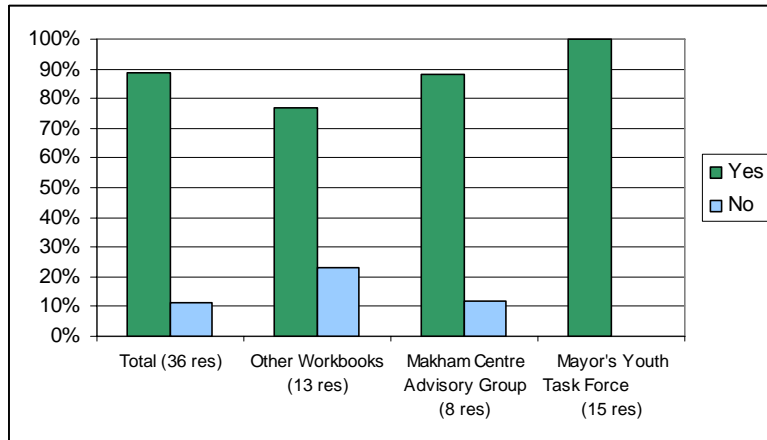
Figure 26: If a significant amount of intensification were to be in the form of apartment buildings, what building height would you prefer?



4.3.4 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

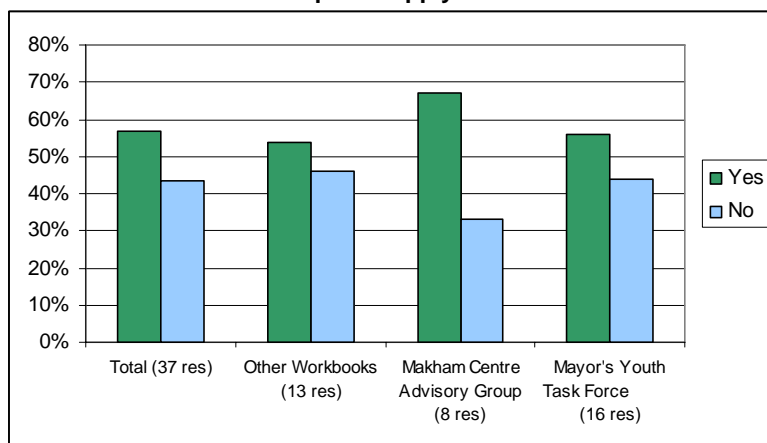
The majority of respondents (89%) agreed with reserving land to accommodate employment growth over the long term. All youth respondents favoured this approach (Figure 27). Some of the reasons for supporting land for employment growth included the ability to have work places that are close to home so that residents can spend more time with their families, a local, stable economy and ensuring that there are places to live and work beyond 2031. Respondents noted that it would be important for new employment areas to be accessible by transit

Figure 27: Do you agree with reserving land to accommodate employment growth over the long term?



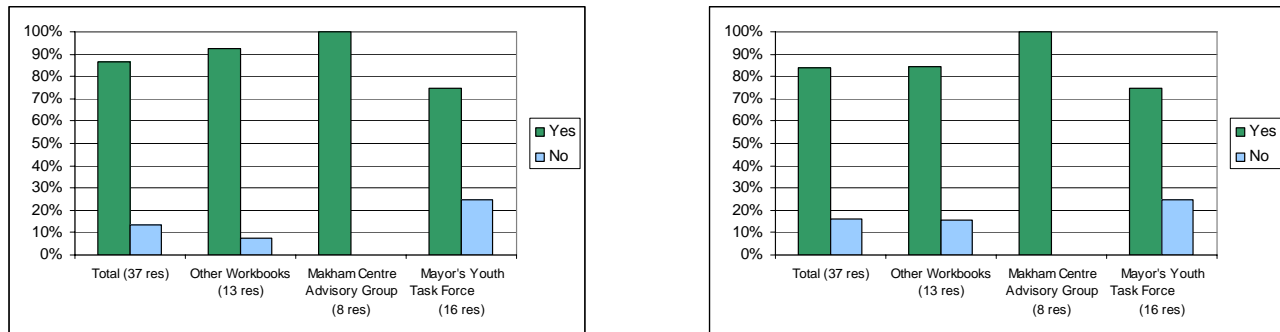
Just over half of the respondents (57%) agreed that, in addition to intensification, employment should be accommodated in an extension of the current urban area (i.e. in the Whitebelt), to ensure an adequate supply of land. Support for employment in the Whitebelt was strongest among respondents from the Markham Centre Advisory Group (Figure 28). Some of the comments in support of expansion of employment land into the Whitebelt included: creating space for residents to work and live in the same community and matching employment lands to residential growth. Those not in favour of employment in the Whitebelt cited the potential for more employment lands in Markham Centre and preservation of farmland and open space.

Figure 28: Do you agree, that in addition to intensification, employment should be accommodated in the Whitebelt to ensure an adequate supply of land?



Most of the workbook respondents supported adding more jobs within the current urban area through intensification in existing business parks (86%, Figure 29.1) and the appropriate mixing of employment in new residential development for example ground floor retail in an apartment building (84%, Figure 29.2). The group with the lowest level of support for adding jobs within the current urban area was youth. Reasons for supporting ground floor commercial uses included: convenience, accessibility, keeping jobs within the local economy and the fact that the buildings are already in existence (nothing new to build). Those not in favour cited issues such as safety, noise and the need to separate residential areas from commercial lands. Another suggestion was to go beyond retail/ residential and consider mixed office/ residential buildings.

Figure 29.1: Do you support adding more jobs within the current urban area (Settlement Area) through intensification in existing business parks? 29.2 Through ground floor commercial uses in apartment buildings?



4.4 COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM COMMUNITY MEETINGS

At each of the five community meetings, residents were invited to ask questions and provide comments on the presentations and process to develop the GMS. This section presents a summary of the questions asked and comments received at each of the community meetings.

4.4.1 Milliken

Questions related to the need to ensure the availability of rental homes and affordable living options. Participants were concerned with the availability of safe and clean options for residents in Markham. There was also a question on what the 52% intensification target meant as well as suggestions for new intensification areas identified and possible re-development locations.

Detailed comments and questions are included in the summary of the Milliken community meeting (**Appendix E**).

4.4.2 Thornhill

In Thornhill, participants provided comments and asked specific questions with respect to density and height bonusing provisions. Some participants were concerned with developers building large structures in areas across Markham. Some participants felt that the density and height should be restricted to only certain areas in Markham.

Participants expressed the importance of protecting heritage lands (specifically along Yonge and Arnold Streets). There was discussion about certain areas in Markham that should be protected from re-development, including areas that are already congested, have stormwater management issues, or that should have heritage protection.

Participants also discussed the regional growth requirements mandated to the Town of Markham, status of the Whitebelt lands ownership, current and future planning initiatives and current and future infrastructure challenges and requirements.

The discussion in Thornhill was animated and the session was extended to allow for additional questions and discussion.

Detailed comments and questions are included in the summary of the Thornhill community meeting (**Appendix F**).

4.4.3 Markham

In Markham, participants asked for clarification of the polling exercise and the use of the results. Some felt that the exercise was not reaching out to all residents of Markham and the results would not depict a true representation of the residents across Markham. Participants were advised that the results would not be considered to be statistically significant.

Participants also discussed the current challenges associated with growth in Markham, including congestion, traffic problems and safe walking routes and cycling trails. Some suggestion included improving the use of transit and the need for more routes across the Town.

Participants also expressed concerns on the fiscal impacts due to growth and the responsibilities of the Town to cover the costs of infrastructure and service requirements.

Detailed comments and questions are included in the summary of the Markham community meeting (**Appendix G**).

4.4.4 Unionville

In Unionville, participants asked questions about traffic congestion and suggested traffic measures to improve the flow of vehicles around town. This included questions specific to improvements to roads and the transit systems.

Participants also asked questions on the regional and provincial requirements regarding growth and the impacts these regulations have on the Town of Markham.

Some participants also commented on the current infrastructure challenges including stormwater management systems and the need for improved services to meet the growing population.

Detailed comments and questions are included in the summary of the Unionville community meeting (**Appendix H**).

4.4.5 Armadale

In Armadale, participants asked questions specific to growth targets, housing stock and the number of people per hectare suggested in the GMS.

Participants also commented on the current infrastructure and the need for additional social infrastructure such as community supports and schools required to meet current and future needs.

Detailed comments and questions are included in the summary of the Armadale community meeting (**Appendix I**).

4.5 OTHER COMMENTS RECEIVED

Residents and stakeholders in Markham were invited throughout the public engagement process to provide comments by email and fax. A growth management webpage and email address was advertised as a means of asking questions and providing comments on the process and the GMS. Councillors also forwarded applicable comments that they received.

In addition to complete workbooks, the additional comments received included four e-mails and a hand-written submission. Specifically, residents expressed concerns with:

- Preserving and expanding the functions of small shopping centres
- Preserving and increasing employment options at small shopping centres
- Preserving the amount, availability and convenience of parking for shoppers
- Developing better standards for parking structures
- Preserving the indoor mall
- Designating more space for urban parklands
- Height and density, specific to Section 37 of the *Planning Act*. The submission indicated that the Town should not be applying the same 'top-tier Toronto policies' to planning initiatives across the Town of Markham.

4.6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Principles for Growth Management

Generally, participants were supportive of the Town's growth management work, the environment first approach to planning and the guiding principles. A common sentiment was that once changed, there is no "going back" with Markham's environmental lands. Respondents were supportive of the guiding principles; overall, the three most important guiding principles for workbook respondents and community meeting attendees were:

- Preserve established neighbourhoods & employment areas
- Identify phasing and funding requirements to deliver the infrastructure required to support growth
- Direct intensification to locations served by rapid transit

Additional guiding principles that were suggested included:

- Preserving, creating and continuing to integrate recreational services into the GMS
- Maintaining community/social infrastructure (i.e. schools, religious institutions, etc.)
- Identifying and working against world-class benchmarks for all of the identified principles
- Monitoring traffic (since it is an important issue for residents)
- Interactions between various cultural groups and impact on their daily life with the growth and changes in the town

Accommodating Growth in Markham

There was a division of interest from participants with respect to expanding the Whitebelt to accommodate residential and employment growth. More than half (64%) of the participants (workbook respondents and community meeting attendees) agreed with accommodating the majority of new residential growth within the current urban area. Anecdotal responses on this topic were mixed, with some favouring 100% accommodation within the current urban areas and others suggesting a lower percentage so that Markham can continue to offer single family homes to those that prefer them. Some respondents were concerned about the potential for intensification to change the character of existing neighbourhoods.

With respect to accommodating growth, 71% of respondents agreed that the Town should balance residential intensification with the development of additional lower density housing to ensure a diverse housing mix. Many respondents commented on the need for Markham to provide a mix of housing types and to consider affordability.

Respondents were fairly evenly split on the question: “Do you agree with expanding the Town’s urban area into the Whitebelt to accommodate lower density residential growth?” 47% of workbook and community meeting respondents agreed with this question.

Residential Intensification

Participants in the public engagement program were supportive of the Town’s proposed approach to distribute residential intensification to key locations with proposed rapid transit services. The general sense was that making transit a viable option will allow residents to get out of their cars (thus reducing pollution and congestion).

Residents supported most of the intensification areas but felt strongly about ensuring adequate infrastructure and services to meet the needs of the future residents. A small percentage of participants were concerned with some of the areas identified as intensification areas due to congestion that already existed or concern for heritage of the area.

Participants were not supportive of high-rise buildings (more than 20 storeys) throughout Markham, but did feel that a combination of mixed height buildings (between 3 and 20 storeys) could accommodate future residential growth.

Employment Growth

In addition to building form and intensification, participants were asked a series of questions about employment growth in Markham. A large number of the participants (86%) agreed with reserving land to accommodate employment growth over the long-term. Respondents noted that it would be important for new employment areas to be accessible by transit.

The general sentiment was that jobs could also be added within the current urban area through intensification in existing business parks and the appropriate mixing of employment in new residential development (i.e. ground floor retail in apartment buildings). Reasons for supporting ground floor commercial uses included: convenience, accessibility, keeping jobs within the local economy and the fact that the buildings are already in existence (nothing new to build). Those not in favour cited issues such as safety, noise and the need to separate residential areas from commercial lands.

Anecdotally, participants were in favour of the ability to work near or at home, thus reducing commuting time and increasing family or recreation time.

Youth Perspective

Overall, percentage responses from the Mayor’s Youth Task Force workbooks were consistent with the overall results from other workbooks and the engagement program in general. The Mayor’s Youth Task Force was the group of respondents that was most strongly in favour of accommodating the majority of new residential growth within the current urban area.

Three areas that youth were concerned about that did receive as many anecdotal comments from other segments of the engagement program were: (1) a desire to preserve, create and continue to integrate recreational services into the growth plan; (2) using new technology to protect our environment and develop new business; and (3) the need to “revisit” the needs of the population, the environment and the economy as time evolves.

Overall, participants in the public engagement program for the Growth Management Strategy felt that the growth in Markham should to be planned in a way that protects the environment, culture and heritage of the Town. Viable and safe transit options and ensuring adequate infrastructure emerged as concerns for residents. Participants would like to see communities built that optimize live, work and play environments, while allowing for residential, employment and recreational opportunities within walking distances.

Appendix A
Sample Workbook

Appendix B

Public Launch Agenda

Appendix C

Public Launch Polling Results

Appendix D

Community Meeting Agenda

Appendix E

Milliken Community Meeting Summary Notes and Polling Results

Appendix F

Thornhill Community Meeting Summary Notes and Polling Results

Appendix G

Markham Community Meeting Summary Notes and Polling Results

Appendix H

Unionville Community Meeting
Summary Notes and Polling Results

Appendix I

Armada Community Meeting Summary Notes and Polling Results

Appendix J

Mayor's Youth Task Force
Meeting Summary

Appendix K

Markham Centre Advisory Group
Meeting Summary

Appendix L

Summary of Other Workbook Submissions

