

MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

Notice of meeting to be held on Monday, June 23, 2025, 7:00 p.m. Markham Village Library, 6031 Highway 7 East, Markham

AGENDA

- 1.0 **Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda**
 - 1.1 Adoption of Minutes: May 26, 2025
 - 1.2 Declaration of Conflict of Interest
 - 1.3 Delegations
 - 1.4 Chair's Remarks
 - 1.5 Board-CEO Linkage BCL-2e Policy: Performance Review (Chair)
- 2.0 **Ownership Linkage**
 - 2.1 Reports from Board Members
- 3.0 **Board Education:**
 - 3.1 Digital Literacy at MPL (A.Cecchetto)
 - 3.2 Member Engagement Strategy: Community Segmentation Data (A.Cecchetto)
 - 3.3 Board Engagement in the Community (A.Cecchetto)
- 4.0 **Information Requested by the Board**
 - 4.1 CEO's Highlights
- 5.0 **Items for Decision**
 - 5.1 Resignation of Mr. Robin Choy
 - 5.2 Delegation of Board Authority over the summer
- 6.0 **Monitoring Performance**
 - 6.1 **Ends:**
 - 6.1.1 Strategic Plan Update (D. Walker)
 - 6.1.2 Strategic Plan Update-Staff Engagement (M.Garza)

6.1.3 ENDS Level 1-YTD (D.Walker)

6.2 Executive Limitations:

6.2.1 EL-2h Community Relations (W.Phung /D. Macklin)

7.0 Consent Agenda

All items under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and are recommended for approval by the Chair.

7.1 Declaration of Due Diligence by the CEO

7.2 Communication and Correspondence:

7.2.1 YorkRegion.com: Markham raises Pride flag amid shifting corporate support [Markham reaffirms support for 2SLGBTQIA+ community](#)

7.2.2 Markham Review: Celebrate Asian Heritage Month with Markham Public Library [Celebrate Asian Heritage Month with Markham Public Library – Markham Review](#)

8.0 Board Performance and Self-Evaluation

8.1 Questionnaire Results: Performance of Individual Board Members

9.0 New Business

10.0 In-Camera

10.1 To discuss a confidential personnel matter

11.0 Adjournment

**NEXT MEETING: Monday, September 22, 2025 7:00 p.m.
Markham Village Library Program Room
6031 Highway 7, East
Markham, ON L3P 3A7**

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Deborah Walker, Director, Strategy & Planning

DATE OF MEETING: June 23, 2025

SUBJECT: **Strategic Plan Update**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report “Strategic Plan Update” be received.

BACKGROUND:

Foundations of Strategic Planning – Progress:

In accordance with the project timeline, and to ensure a successful and effective strategic plan, staff continue to work on three foundational elements of the strategic planning process:

1. Environmental Scan:

Trend research and reports continue, with several reports targeted for September. These include: Social Isolation and Third Places, Digital Literacy, Artificial Intelligence, State of Youth, Reading, Trends, Screens & Social Media, and Library Design Trends. The full body of trend reports provides a sound baseline foundation for the fall workplan (development of Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, etc.).

However, given the uncertain and volatile nature of the current environment, staff will continue to monitor trends and provide brief updates as needed. These updates will address the need to understand how a trend reported in Q1 may have moved significantly by Q4. This will ensure we have a current and up-to-date foundation for planning goals and tactics when we get to that phase.

2. Community Participation Plan

The Board received the Community Participation Plan at its March 2025 meeting.

Community Conversations:

See the June CEO Highlights Report which includes the dates of scheduled community conversations.

Community Survey:

A draft community survey has been developed and is currently under review by the staff strategy team.

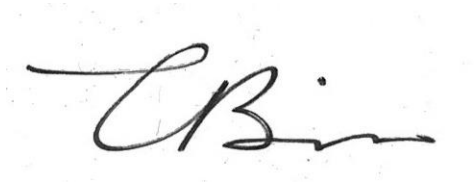
Survey objectives include:

- Gathering demographic and market data about the Library's users and non-users;
- Measuring awareness of, and attitudes toward, library services by users, infrequent users, and non-users;
- Service usage trends among Markham residents, including equity-deserving groups;
- Identifying the percentage of residents who use the Library through any channel; and
- Understanding users' and non-users' perceptions and preferences for library services and facilities in the future.

The survey will address community input on issues identified in the Board Ends (Global, Level 1 and Level 2) Policy.

3. Staff Engagement Plan

See Report 6.1.2 "Strategic Plan Update – Staff Engagement".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CBiss', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'C' and 'B'.

Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

AGENDA 6.1.2

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Megan Garza, Senior Manager, Organizational Transformation

DATE OF MEETING: June 23, 2025

SUBJECT: **Strategic Plan Update – Staff Engagement**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report “Strategic Plan Update – Staff Engagement” be received.

BACKGROUND:

With several roles integral to the success of library strategy, Markham Public Library staff are a vital component of the strategic planning process. As community members who also work in the service of other community members, they see clearly the needs firsthand that the library must meet. As library professionals and the people ultimately delivering the tactics that achieve strategic goals, their involvement is crucial to later investment toward the strategic goals and objective of the library. This report will outline the process taken to engage the staff group throughout the spring of 2025.

Strategic Plan Video

To inform staff about the purpose of the strategic plan as well as what to expect from the process, the [Welcome to Strategic Planning video](#) was created, published and distributed at the end of February 2025. This video includes messages from the Chief Executive Officer and Directors about why strategic planning is a vital part of our business, their roles in the process and what they are hoping to achieve through this process. The purpose of the video was twofold, one to introduce the concept to staff who have joined the organization in the intervening years since the previous planning process and to allow for more time for active engagement at the town hall meetings in March 2025.

Town Hall Meetings

Senior management hosted three town hall meetings in March including two in-person opportunities and one virtual session. These meetings were attended by 99 staff who contributed input on their own hopes and worries for the next 3-5 years through an

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organizational development methodology called “open space technology.” The questions used were intentionally designed to reflect the Harwood model utilized for community engagement so staff would have a similar experience to community members who would be engaged later in the process. Staff were also invited to participate in more intensive focus groups later in the spring.

Sentiments collected from the town hall meetings highlighted the following themes as areas of interest and focus:

- Economy & Personal Finances
 - Rising cost of living
 - Housing and interest rates
 - Wages & income disparity
 - Job insecurity & future outlook
 - Support for retirement
 - Systemic economic concerns
- Healthcare, Safety & Environment:
 - Access to healthcare
 - Impact of an aging population
 - Mental health support
 - Environment & climate concerns
 - Safety
- Education & Learning:
 - Quality of education
 - Teacher burnout
 - Changes to the curriculum
 - Media literacy
 - Creating opportunities for alternative educational systems and resources
- Technology:
 - Artificial intelligence
 - Cybersecurity
 - Digital literacy
 - Digital divide
 - Possibilities for technology
- Library-Specific Issues
 - Censorship
 - Misinformation and disinformation
 - Intellectual freedom
- Connection & Community
 - Creating opportunity for shared experiences
 - Cultural celebration, intergenerational bonding and social cohesion

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- Fun, low-barrier social entry points
- Creativity:
 - Appreciation for creative outlets
 - Learning for fun and purpose
 - Personal growth that stems from hobbies
- Politics & Civil Society:
 - Democracy, freedom and governance
 - Social cohesion and the threat of polarization
 - Media influence and accountability
- Social Justice
 - Defense against the erosion of social supports
 - Equity, inclusion and belonging as a key value of the library
 - Urgency to protect and support marginalized or vulnerable populations

The global trends reports that were produced as an environmental scan to inform the strategic planning development are based on these areas as part of the PESTLE methodology.

Staff Focus Groups

Throughout April and May, the Organizational Transformation department hosted four staff focus groups for 31 staff to further prioritize these areas of interest and support a Current State evaluation through a SWOT analysis exercise. Staff were provided with the summary of the notes collected from the town hall conversations and presented with a summary of these themes. Staff were asked to focus on three priority areas for the library and discuss their ideas for each area. As the final exercise in these sessions, they were asked to collaborate on the SWOT analysis to assess MPL's current ability to meet the priorities they had identified.

The following chart is a summary of the notes from the SWOT analysis exercise for all focus groups:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES/CHALLENGES
Community Integration & Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The library is physically and socially embedded in the community, with trusted relationships, visible presence, and co-located spaces. Diversity, Inclusion & Representation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff reflect the multicultural and multilingual makeup of the community.	Resource and Funding Limitations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget constraints, municipal funding structures, and staffing turnover impact the library's ability to expand or deepen services. Technology Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none">• While access to technology is offered, there are ongoing issues with Wi-Fi speed, network

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The library embraces a wide range of needs and perspectives, fostering inclusion through collections, staffing, programming, and values. <p>Barrier-Free & Accessible Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The library supports equity by removing financial barriers to lifelong learning, entertainment, and community connection. <p>Staff Strength, Innovation & Adaptability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team is described as amazing, dedicated, interdisciplinary, and solutions oriented. <p>Valued Physical Spaces & Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Libraries offer an accessible space for the community to come together; it is perhaps the only public space that is not transactional in nature. Collections—both physical and digital—are highly valued, and the library’s broad mandate allows responsiveness to evolving needs. 	<p>reliability, and the ability to keep up with tech advancements.</p> <p>Awareness and Role Clarity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the considerable number of channels utilized to communicate about Library offerings, some community members are unaware of library programs, services, or special collections. Internally and externally, the broad role of the library can lead to confusion about priorities or perceptions of service quality.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Strengthening Communication and Awareness: Increasing awareness of activities, services, and collections both to the public as well as ensuring staff awareness.</p> <p>Leveraging Growth and Demographic Shifts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Markham grows and changes, the library has the opportunity to evolve, incorporating the latest trends, diverse cultural needs, and a more prosperous, tech-savvy population. <p>Innovating with Technology and Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring innovative technologies (including AI), assessing tech gaps. 	<p>THREATS</p> <p>Public Perception and Identity Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent stereotypes limit engagement (e.g. libraries are “boring,” only for certain groups, or just for books). There is an ongoing tension between being a welcoming, inclusive space and meeting the varied, sometimes competing, expectations of the public. <p>Policy and Economic Instability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in federal and provincial policy (e.g., cuts to CELA, development charges, or newcomer programs) have ripple effects on library service delivery.

Organizational Scope and Role Creep

- The library is increasingly expected to fill gaps left by under-resourced social services, education systems, and community organizations.

The staff-led SWOT analysis reveals that the library is a deeply trusted, community-rooted institution with exceptional staff, strong partnerships, and a commitment to equity, innovation, and adaptability. Our spaces, free services, and cultural responsiveness position us as a vital community hub—especially as Markham continues to grow and diversify.

However, the library also faces rising pressures: limited resources, increasing expectations, and systemic challenges such as funding constraints, economic uncertainty, and social service gaps. Navigating competing community needs, outdated perceptions, and rapid change requires sustained investment, clear communication, and continued alignment with our values. As we move forward, the library must balance stability with transformation—remaining accessible, inclusive, and relevant to all.

Next Steps: Staff Engagement

The final phase of staff engagement will include the creation of the Library vision, mission and strategic goals. This will involve leaders at every level within the organization in creating the objectives and the tactics that will achieve the strategic goals. Lastly, in order for the plan to be successful, Management must ensure that staff are resourced and trained to deliver on these tactics.



Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

AGENDA 6.1.3

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Debbie Walker, Director, Library Strategy and Planning
Diane Macklin, Director, Community Engagement
Andrea Cecchetto, Director, Service Excellence
Michelle Sawh, Director, Administration & Operational Support

DATE OF MEETING: June 23, 2025

SUBJECT: **Ends Report Level 1 (YTD May 2025)**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board receives the “Ends Report Level 1 May 2025”.

Background

As directed by the Board, the May Ends Report Level 1 summarizes the year-to-date progress towards achievement of Board Ends Level 1.

Report – Appendix A

The Report format includes the following elements:

- End Statement as developed and approved by the Board.
- Interpretation by the CEO of the meaning of the End as approved by the Board.
- Evidence of Compliance:
 - Status in terms of compliance:
 - Compliant
 - Partially Compliant
 - Non-Compliant
- Strategic Workplan: New initiatives and innovations during the reporting year, as well as innovations and initiatives that build upon and improve existing Business as Usual (BAU) activities.
- Desired Outcomes / Targets indicating how Ends Achievement will be measured, and how the Board will know we are successful.
- Notes regarding compliance status, and impact of, for example, unplanned corporate priorities, external constraints outside our direct control, and unanticipated changes to the conditions and assumptions upon which the annual strategic workplan was based.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CBiss', enclosed within a faint, light gray rectangular border.

Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

APPENDIX A: Ends Report Level 1 (Status at End of May 2025)

APPENDIX A: Ends Report: Level 1 (Status at End of May 2025)

BOARD ENDS PROGRESS UPDATE – LEVEL 1

1.	The community is able to meet its learning, cultural, social, leisure and wellness needs.
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Interpretation:

I interpret “learning” to mean MPL supports the formal and informal learning, literacy, personal growth and career goals of the community through its spaces, collections, resources, services and programs.

I further interpret “cultural” to mean MPL contributes to Markham’s cultural landscape through collections, reading programs, exhibits, and opportunities that nurture creative expression.

I further interpret “social” to mean the community has opportunity for connection, interaction and social cohesion

I further interpret “leisure” to mean the community has opportunities for relaxation, learning hobbies, play, socialization and reading for pleasure

I further interpret “wellness” to mean the community is able to access high quality information and services that support their emotional, mental, physical, and social health.

All strategies towards the Ends are rated by their compliance status at year-end in one of three categories as follows:

Compliant
Partially Compliant
Non-Compliant

Evidence of Compliance

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
Compliant	Develop Content Strategy for the 2026-2029 period, through consultations with the community, environmental scan and usage data analytics.	A multi-year Content Strategy that ensures the Library's collection meets the needs of Markham residents.	Customer survey completed in Q1 with close to 5,000 respondents. Usage data analysis, and environmental scan also completed. Project is on track to be completed by end of Q2. Content Strategy will be folded into the Strategic Plan Update project.
Compliant	Conduct a follow up diversity audit of all physical and digital collections to measure improvement and ensure that the collection reflects the diversity of Markham's community. This updated audit is also for input into the Content Strategy.	Measure the effectiveness of inclusive collection development practices and ensure that collection is reflective of Markham's diverse community.	Completed in Q1 of 2025. Improvements are in progress.
Compliant	Develop MPL Technology Roadmap through community and stakeholder consultations, research and expert advice.	A multi-year technology roadmap to guide the Library's planning and ensure that our technology meets the needs of the community.	This work is scheduled to be completed in Q4 of 2025. Phases already completed include both staff and customer surveys on customer facing technology. Tech Roadmap will be folded into the Strategic Plan Update project.
Compliant and ongoing	Support the professional development goals of the community by providing access to information about educational and career opportunities.	2025 target: 30 career programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 career related programs YTD including several supporting newcomers and supporting youth in job finding and entrepreneurship • Introduced monthly networking program for women entrepreneurs • Supporting career guidance, offered additional workshops exploring undergraduate and graduate

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			programs and financing of post-secondary education.
Compliant and ongoing	Promote Environmental Literacy in the community through implementation of the Library Sustainability Strategy	20 sustainability-related programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 gardening programs covering composting, pollinator plants, natural pest management, vegetable gardening and seed giveaways. • Two programs featuring students sharing science projects related to environmentalism • Intergenerational planting project at all branches • Repair Café with volunteers sharing their skills and tools to fix broken items and minimize waste generation • Learn to sew program crafting reusable period products, and a sustainable alternative to disposable products. Products sewn by participants were donated to communities in need
Compliant and ongoing	Deliver Health and Wellness programs through partnerships.	2025 Target = 5,000 participants in Health & Wellness programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,114 participants in Health & Wellness programs YTD • Best received programs continue to be those supporting brain health for seniors, mental health and parenting programs. We continue to offer walk-in counselling programs in English, Mandarin and Cantonese. • 750 people attended the Winter Wellness Fair with a focus on stress

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			management, and holistic health approaches.
Compliant Completed.	Engage the community in the Provincial and Federal elections	Community has the information needed to make informed decision at the polls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offered comprehensive information via the website including voter information (voter qualifications, voter registration, and the voting process)• Provided information about identifying misinformation and disinformation in the media.• Offered Meet the Candidate sessions for the Provincial election• Community input gathered on key election issues and information about party platforms related to these issues posted on the website.

AGENDA 6.1.3**1.1****Underserved, marginalized and newcomer groups in our community are enabled to meet their specific needs.****Interpretation**

I interpret “underserved” to mean the geographic service areas where library services are not currently available or are inadequate for the population.

I further interpret “marginalized” to mean the library is accessible to everyone in the community regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, dis/ability or age.

I further interpret “newcomers” to mean community members who are new to the City of Markham, including, but not limited to, those who have immigrated to Canada, new citizens, visa students, PR card holders, refugees and working visa holders.

Evidence of Compliance

Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
Carried forward into 2025/26	Complete business case for Mobile Library to provide services to neighbourhoods without nearby library branches	Completion of Business Case	We will engage with stakeholders throughout the rest of the year and if the input is favorable we will develop a business case which will be input into the 2026 budget process for funding.
Compliant and ongoing.	Enhance literacy development services for adults struggling with functional literacy through improved relevant resources.	Improved resources for adults struggling with functional literacy.	This work is still ongoing and expected to be completed by year end.
Compliant	Develop and deploy new Accessibility Public Access Computers at all branches.	Improved resources for those with print disabilities.	This work was completed in Q1.
Compliant and Ongoing	Foster a neuro-diversity friendly culture.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporated neurodiversity and inclusion training into the camp staff onboarding plan. The training provides staff with skills in managing challenging behaviours, and parent communication to better provide all

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			<p>campers and camp staff with a positive and welcoming experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops were offered for parents and students to increase understanding of the Independent Education Plan (IEP) in the Ontario education system. One workshop was aimed at elementary students while a second focused on highschool students transitioning to post-secondary • Partnered with Autism Ontario and a local club to offer a robotics program. Lesson plans and activities were developed specifically to support youth on the autism spectrum. • Introduced the Sensory Pop Up, a sensory discovery space providing weighted, fidget, light up and tactile toys as well as a sensory cabin to support self-regulation techniques, concentration and learning for the neurodiverse. The Pop Up is rotating through MPL branches.
Partially Compliant Target at risk due to external factors	Expand ELL programs to meet increasing demand.	Language learning programs 2025 Target = 150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64 English Language Learning programs offered YTD • Changes to Canadian immigration laws and immigration levels have resulted in federal and provincial funding cuts to newcomer services. Our community partners offering ELL

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			<p>programs are experiencing funding and staffing cuts which have resulted in them discontinuing or reducing ELL programming in anticipation of further reductions. Staff are exploring opportunities with new partners to offer similar programming. Meanwhile staff have increased workshops that highlight MPL language learning resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An internal staff vacancy in the role supporting newcomers has further impacted programming levels. The vacancy will be filled in mid-June.
Compliant and ongoing.	Activate City Diversity and Inclusion and Anti-Black Racism Plans at community-facing level through the MPL Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Action Plan.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Black Owned Business Market showcasing local Black entrepreneurs During Asian Heritage Month an exhibit by Markham artists explored Asian heritage and cultural influences A live painting performance provided opportunities for the community to learn about Pakistani culture and history while a Chinese dance performance also included a dance lesson. Participants in a mandala making workshop enjoyed a sensory nature walk and learned to make a mandala using found materials

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exhibit and program told the story of Chinese Canadian soldiers in World War 2. • This year's Markham Reads selection <i>All Our Ordinary Stories</i> was a graphic novel, immigrant story exploring family, identity and connection. • Implemented all-staff anti-ageing bias awareness training in 2025.
Compliant	Increase newcomers' knowledge of library resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Hoteling" at Markham's Welcome Centre has staff delivering presentations and offering one on one support to newcomers in accessing and using the library's online resources. • Established an MPL presence on the Chinese social media platform RedBook resulting in increased interest in library programs and makerspace services • Translated outreach materials to traditional Chinese.

1.2

The community has access to information about the diverse histories and cultures of Markham

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the community can access information about the history and culture of Indigenous communities of the area.

I further interpret this to mean that the community can access information about the settler history of Markham

I further interpret this to mean the community has opportunities to create a shared contemporary history of Markham through programs and acquisition of works by local authors.

All strategies towards the Ends are rated by their compliance status at year-end in one of three categories as follows:

Compliant
Partially Compliant
Non-Compliant

Evidence of Compliance

AGENDA 6.1.3

Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
Partially Completed	Promote understanding of indigenous history through content and programs	Increased awareness of Indigenous history and culture	Indigenous History Month - Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative Storytelling Indigenous History Month – Reading Lists: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For Children• For Adults• First Nations Culture• Inuit Culture• Metis Culture• Read Indigenous – Teens• Residential Schools

Interpretation

I interpret such access to mean the community has information about the City of Markham and its services.

I further interpret such access to mean MPL provides resources for the community to broaden their understanding of the community and enhance awareness of topics important to the community.

All strategies towards the Ends are rated by their compliance status at year-end in one of three categories as follows:

Compliant

Partially Compliant

Non-Compliant

Evidence of Compliance

Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
Compliant and ongoing	Collaborate with local non-profit organizations, government agencies and local businesses to host information sessions, workshops and events. .	2025 target = 75 community partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YTD MPL has offered programs or workshops through 73 partnering organization. Additionally MPL has also worked with individuals with expertise or skills that they've shared with the community through programs as well as hosting local authors and artists. Program content incorporates information about relevant community organizations and resources. Staff continue to seek relevant partners to provide workshops and inform community members

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			about local resources. New partners this year include those in STEM and digital literacy, academic and sustainability fields. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cycling, birding, nature and gardening programs provided information specific to Markham including information about Markham's trail systems, local plants and animal species
Compliant	Promote Good Neighbourhood Guide through library channels		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Content reviewed and updated May 2025.

1.4	The community has the skills necessary to participate in a digital world.
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Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean the community has equitable access to technology and have the skills to use technology to access information and to connect with others.

I further interpret this to mean the community has the skills that allow them to critically evaluate the reliability of online information.

All strategies towards the Ends are rated by their compliance status at year-end in one of three categories as follows:

Compliant
Partially Compliant
Non-Compliant

Evidence of Compliance

Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
Compliant	Develop Artificial Intelligence Policy to guide MPL's use of AI tools	Policy completed.	Completed in Q1 of 2025.
Compliant and ongoing	Improve security of the Library's Integrated Library System (ILS) through projects coordinated with Markham ITS and vendors to deploy security enhancements	Security enhanced.	This work is ongoing. In Q1, Symphony (ILS) was upgraded to the latest version.
Compliant	Implement Year 1 priorities of the ODigital Literacy Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support ITS digital makerspace expansion and equipment replacement at Thornhill Library 		Increased digital literacy programs including STEM Community Club at Aaniin with York U Engineering students leading participants in activities related to engineering, robotics and coding.

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand public access to 3D printing through virtual 3D design program 		<p>PA Day program for teachers at YCDSB on MPL's makerspaces</p> <p>Smart Life – a program offered by CNIB with hands on demonstrations of technology available to support the visually impaired. Included tools that allow users to interact with MPL's apps</p> <p>Completed expansion of TC makerspace and life-cycle replacement of equipment at AL. 3D Printing Service expansion completed – the installation of upgraded 3D printers has increased efficiency of printing services.</p> <p>Several deliverables related to Digital Equity, including Girls in STEAM and the Digital Literacy/Device learning for seniors' program have been completed.</p>
Compliant	Train library staff in generative AI, to support 2025 launch of introductory user-empowerment education. Using Train the trainer approach.	Training completed.	Approx 15 staff members completed this training and participated in the design of the new AI Skills program for the public launched in Spring 2025. This program has been added to MPL's core programming for 2025.
Compliant	Increase offerings of AI literacy programming to support the community in navigating AI and effectively managing its opportunities and challenges.	2025 target = 6 new AI program offerings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced AI Skills, an introductory staff led program in Q2 and established it as a core program with scheduled sessions planned throughout the year. Offered 2 new business- related AI programs through partners: Boost Your Workplace Performance with AI and AI Powered Job Search: Revolutionize Your Career Hunt

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Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offered a new workshop focused on creative uses of AI. The program guided participants through AI tools for digital art and video and image creation.
Compliant	Offer digital literacy and technology programming to bridge the digital divide and cultivate information literacy.	2025 Target = 1500 participants in Digital Literacy and Makerspace programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 930 participants YTD in digital literacy and makerspace programs. A new program, Raising Kids in a Digital World provided parents with knowledge and tools to support their children's digital literacy journey. Topics included; screen time, gaming, AI, sexting, and cyberbullying. A STEM program targeting lower income children offered hands-on opportunities to work with technology. Each session incorporated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the lesson plans and a curriculum that integrated crafts, coding and the environment. Hosted the Youth Science Exhibition with Markham students showcasing their Science and Technology projects. This program generated interest in technology and the environment. The library hosted a panel discussion with university students in STEM education fields and educators providing information about opportunities and pathways for careers in STEM. The Library held a variety of workshops related to Cybersecurity, phishing and online

AGENDA 6.1.3

Status at End of May 2025	Strategic Workplan 2025	2025 Desired Outcome / Target	Notes
			scams with several focused on seniors and those with limited digital skills.
Compliant	Relocate Makerspace at Angus Glen to increase visibility. Increased awareness and engagement with the Makerspace	Target:10% increase in makerspace bookings and 20% increase in hours used compared to 2023	<p>In 2024, the AG makerspace was relocated to a prominent location on the first floor to improve visibility and customer access.</p> <p>Opportunities for increased engagement and awareness have also been achieved through new content on the MPL website and participation in community events to showcase these services.</p> <p>So far in 2025, there has been a 150% increase in the 3D printing service, with usage and programming on track to exceed 2024 results by year end</p>

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Diane Macklin, Director Community Engagement

DATE OF MEETING: June 23, 2025

SUBJECT: **INTERNAL MONITORING REPORT: Executive Limitation, EL-2h-Community Relations**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board has assessed the monitoring report entitled Executive Limitation, EL-2h Community Relations and finds that it demonstrates compliance with a reasonable interpretation of the policy.

POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

POLICY TITLE: COMMUNITY RELATIONS (EL-2h)

(Report on actions undertaken to maintain a positive public image of the Library and public awareness of Library Board activities).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CBiss', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'C' and 'B'.

Catherine Biss

CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

With respect to the Board's reputation and standing in the community, the CEO shall not endanger the organization's public image, credibility, or its ability to accomplish Ends.

Accordingly, the CEO shall not:

1. Allow the public to be without access to information that keeps them informed of the work of the organization including:
 - a) Agendas and approved Minutes of each Regular public meeting or annual meeting;
 - b) Reports including annual achievements, financial statements, statistical reports and other reports at the discretion of the CEO.

Reasonable Interpretation. The Library ensures the community has access to regular Library Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes. The community has information about library achievements.

Evidence.

- In this reporting period (June 2024 through May 2025) 100% of Agendas were posted to the Library website 5 days in advance of the Library Board meeting. Minutes were posted within two days of their approval by the Board. Agendas and Minutes remain on the website for the calendar year. Five days prior to each Library Board meeting messaging is surfaced on the homepage of the website promoting the meeting directing the community to the Agenda and Meeting information.
 - Reports and achievements were shared through the Library's website, eNewsletters and social media. The Library regularly shared information with local media about achievements, new or changing services and upcoming events.
2. Fail to develop and implement policies concerning receipt and use of donations and gifts (monetary or in-kind) that consider:
 - a. ownership and timelines;
 - b. appropriate recognition

Reasonable Interpretation: MPL has policies in place to accept donations or gifts that will enhance the services of the library. MPL has policies in place that outline conditions and responsibilities of any donations and gifts. MPL recognizes donations and gifts in a manner that is commensurate with the value of the gift.

Evidence:

- The Gifts and Donations Policy outlines terms and conditions for which a gift may be accepted. The Policy provides gift acceptance guidelines that outline terms of ownership, timelines and recognition requirements to ensure consistency in the treatment of gifts.
- The Partnership and Sponsorship Policy outlines the specific criteria for entering a partnership or sponsorship. To protect the mission and values of the Library, the Policy provides guidance in the development of relationships with partners or sponsors which includes oversight of the process, terms of agreement and approval levels.
- All monetary donations exceeding \$20 were issued a charitable receipt in accordance with CRA regulations.

3. Fail to make the Library visible in the community.

Reasonable interpretation: MPL promotes its services and value to the community.

Evidence:

- The Library website plays a vital role in connecting the community with the full breadth of library services. It is updated regularly, promoting services, programs and collections to ensure the community stays informed and engaged. The site is search-engine optimized making it easy for users to find what they need whether accessing the Library website directly or through a search. In the past year 3.8 million website sessions were logged demonstrating strong public interest and engagement.
- Staff sent 108 eNewsletters to subscribers keeping the community up to date on service changes, programs and new offerings. Newsletters were opened by 881,133 readers achieving a 49.3% open rate, well above industry averages, demonstrating messages are reaching and resonating with the community.
- Staff promoted MPL's collections through theme-based book displays and curated reading lists both in-branch and across digital platforms including the online catalogue (Bibliocommons), website, OverDrive and social media. The monthly NextReads eNewsletter, reaching 21,311 subscribers, featured curated staff recommendations, providing the community with a wide range of reading options.
- Staff actively monitored social media platforms and community-based apps and websites, responding to questions, contributing to relevant discussions, and expressing appreciation for user reviews. Platforms such as Nextdoor, Reddit, Facebook groups and Google Reviews not only help the Library track its reputation but also offer valuable insights into community interests, informing programs and services.
- MPL's outreach activities centred on raising awareness of the wide range of services the Library offers. While participating at community events and festivals, staff answer questions about the Library while also promoting non-traditional collections, digital services and makerspaces. Over the past year, outreach has focused on schools serving at-risk populations, introducing students and teachers to resources that support academic success. The Library has also prioritized engagement with Markham's seniors and newcomers visiting local seniors' centres and newcomer hubs to offer essential services such as library card sign-up and program registration. These visits also provide opportunities to introduce the Library's digital resources and guide users in how to access and navigate them effectively.
- The Library maintained an active presence on social media platforms, increasing awareness of our services and providing a direct channel for communication. Additionally, paid advertisements and influencer partnerships enabled the Library to reach new and targeted audiences. Staff regularly monitor social media trends to ensure the Library leverages the most effective platforms. As a result, the Library has transitioned away from X and in January created a presence on Redbook. The Library's presence on this Chinese language social networking platform has seen growing engagement and has been very effective in building awareness of the Library's makerspaces.

4. Fail to have policies and procedures in place that monitor the Library's reputation.

Reasonable interpretation: MPL demonstrates commitment to its mission, vision and values of the Library. MPL has in place internal policies that ensure library staff are aware of expected behaviours.

Evidence:

- Library staff assess organizational and reputational risks and take preemptive actions to protect the Library's public image. The Enterprise Risk Management Report is provided to the Board two times a year in September and March.
- The Library has Human Resource and Public Service Policies in place to provide guidance and clarity in decision making and behavior expectations. These include the following policies: Code of Conduct, Workplace Health & Safety, Respect in the Workplace, Social Media, Privacy and Media Relations.
- The Counting Opinions Customer Satisfaction Survey has questions which capture the community's confidence and trustworthiness with the library.

5. Fail to enter into partnerships or collaborations that are cost effective and of mutual benefit.

Reasonable Interpretation: MPL engages in partnerships that align with the vision, mission, values and strategic goals of the library and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and resources.

Evidence:

- The Partnerships and Sponsorship Policy (rev 2022) provides a clear framework for establishing community partnerships that align with MPL's values and strategic goals. Staff are equipped with training and toolkits to support the partnership lifecycle including their establishment, governance, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation. This year staff collaborated with more than 70 community organizations to deliver initiatives that directly support the library's strategic priorities including literacy, digital inclusion, lifelong learning and social connection. Partnerships reduced duplication of services and brought additional expertise into library programs demonstrating cost effectiveness and mutual benefit. Joint programming with local community organizations enhanced community access to information and enriched Library offerings with partner-provided subject matter expertise.

6. Fail to seek public input on library services and operations.

Reasonable Interpretation: MPL provides mechanisms through which the community can provide the library with feedback on its services.

Evidence:

- As part of this year's strategic planning process Library staff are actively engaging the community to gather input on library services and operations. Through the Content (Collections) Survey and the Technology Survey the Library sought feedback on how the community uses the Library and their experiences with Library services. Additional surveys and community consultations are planned throughout the summer to explore community priorities and emerging trends ensuring planning is informed by their voices.
- A customer satisfaction survey is offered in English, French, Traditional and Simplified Chinese through a permanent link on the website. Four times a year the survey is featured prominently on the website and promoted in the branches and on social media.

The Counting Opinions Customer Satisfaction Survey also allows MPL to benchmark itself against other library systems.

- MPL takes part in the Bridge Project, a province-wide initiative to enhance technology services offered by libraries. All participants in technology-related programs are encouraged to provide feedback about the effectiveness of the program.
- Those participating in programs related to literacy, health, employment and life-long learning are surveyed through Project Outcomes to measure short term and long-term outcomes.
- Forms on the website allow the community to provide feedback and suggestions about collections or services. The website also provides information about the process to ask for reconsideration of items in the collections, library displays, programs or exhibits.
- The website provides information about how to make a deputation before the Library Board.
- Social media posts are open for comments and dialogue.

AGENDA 7.0

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO& Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Susan Price, Board Secretary

DATE OF MEETING: June 23 ,2025

SUBJECT: **CONSENT AGENDA**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Consent Agenda comprising Agenda 7.0 to 7.2.2 and the same are hereby approved as written and the CEO of the Library is hereby authorized and directed to take such action that may be necessary to give effect to the recommendations as therein contained:

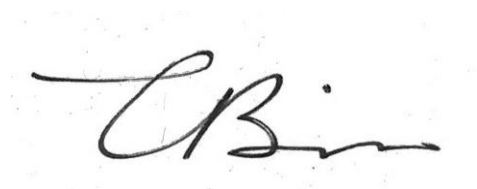
7.0 CONSENT AGENDA:

7.1 Declaration of Due Diligence by the CEO (April-May)

7.2 Communication and Correspondence:

7.2.1 YorkRegion.com: Markham raises Pride flag amid shifting corporate support [Markham reaffirms support for 2SLGBTQIA+ community](#)

7.2.2 Markham Review: Celebrate Asian Heritage Month with Markham Public Library [Celebrate Asian Heritage Month with Markham Public Library – Markham Review](#)



Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

DECLARATION OF DUE DILIGENCE BY THE CEO

I, Catherine Biss, Chief Executive Officer of the Markham Public Library Board (the "Board"), hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, Markham Public Library is in compliance with the following from May 21, 2025 to June 17, 2025.

- 1) All wages owing have been paid to all employees of the Board;
- 2) All payroll remittances, consisting of income tax, CPP, EI premiums and Employers Health Tax relating to employee remuneration have been appropriately calculated and withheld, and promptly remitted;
- 3) All the Harmonized Sales Taxes owing have been appropriately calculated based on the Board's current operating procedures and promptly remitted on a quarterly basis;
- 4) All federal and provincial regulatory filings have been made;
- 5) The Board has been informed of any complaints of harassment, including sexual harassment, involving a staff person;
- 6) The Board has been informed of any contraventions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- 7) Other than as previously disclosed to the Board, there are no actual, threatened or potential claims against the Board or its Directors.



Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

June 17, 2025
Date