

List of MCCRГ Projects and Accomplishments

Intro: MCCRГ was extremely busy in 2013 working in opposition to the Markham Arena and in 2014 focusing on the upcoming municipal election. These two issues took up most of our time, however we did manage to work on several other issues. Below is a summary of some of the issues we have pursued since our inception in 2013.

Ref#	Category	Project	Project Description	Status
1	Major City Project - Accountability.	Arena - Defeat Financial Framework.	(1)Opposed Financial Framework by doing extensive research and giving numerous deputations at Committee and Council meetings.	Completed
			(2)Participated in City-wide arena survey to promote better and wider understanding of arena proposal.	
			(3)Eliminated financial risks to the taxpayer by helping to defeat the City's plan to borrow \$325 million for private entrepreneur.	
2	City Issue - Transparency.	Release of Arena Consultants Reports	Demanded the release of the Arena Consultants' reports costing taxpayers over \$700,000.	Completed
3	Markham Council Election.	To support and participate in the 2014 municipal election process.	(1)Participated extensively in the election process. Helped Rogers get the message out to RAs about the debates.	Completed
			(2)Participated in the debates by providing questions, both written and on camera.	
			(3)Attended many other all candidate meetings in multiple forums and asked questions based on our research and perspective.	
4	Markham Council Election	Promoting 'All Candidates Meetings'.	Assisted local residents associations with planning their 2014 All Candidates Meetings and worked with the online publication, Markhamtoday.ca, to provide online notice and video coverage of those meetings.	Completed.

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5	Markham Council Election.	To endorse candidates for Markham Council	Assisted voters of Markham by providing information and endorsements of candidates in the 2014 Municipal Election. Endorsed candidates we thought met our criteria of promoting transparent government and opposing the Arena's Financial Framework.	Completed. One endorsed new candidate and several endorsed incumbents elected to Council.
6	Local Issue - City Responsiveness	To help residents with long-standing deficiencies in the development of Cathedraltown.	(1)Supported and assisted Cathedraltown residents in their long-standing dispute with the City and a local developer.	Continued assistance available on request
			(2)Provided assistance in preparation for OMB hearing.	
7	Local Issue - City Responsibility, Accountability and Transparency	To protect wildlife and preserve natural habitat on the German Mills Meadow and protect and preserve Settlers' Park residents' properties from subsidence.	Assisted Settler's Park residents at Committee and Council and with the press, to expose the need to mitigate subsidence affecting their properties as a result of major subsidence on adjacent lands belonging to the City and to protect wildlife and preserve natural habitat on the City lands adjacent to their properties. Worked with residents to increase transparency and accountability at the City on these and other issues.	Continued assistance available on request
8	Local Issue	To assist local businesses with the problems surrounding repeated flooding in the Woodbine-Steelcase Business District in Ward 8.	MCCRG Directors providing information, advice and assistance as required.	Jan 15, 2015 - Completed until we receive a further request for assistance.

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9	City Issues - Responsibility, Transparency, and Accountability.	To establish the principle of city responsibility for city-wide upgrades to stormwater sewer and flood control infrastructure and for associated costs, and to ensure that Council chooses the least expensive billing system possible.	(1)Worked with other residents' associations to establish the principle that stormwater and flood control infrastructure costs should be shared by all Markham residents, and not just the local residents affected.	Completed
			(2)Petitioned Council to abandon the proposal to use Powerstream as a billing vehicle for the new stormwater fee, which was otherwise going to be a major additional cost to residents.	Completed
10	City Issue - Responsibility and Accountability	Obtaining reliable and sustainable funding for stormsewer remediation and flood control work.	Worked with other residents groups to get a commitment from the City that \$2M of Gas Tax revenue would be devoted to funding storm water remediation for each of the next five years.	Major success
11	City Issue - Transparency and Accountability	To open up the operations of Markham District Energy to public scrutiny.	(1) Advocate the discontinuation of unqualified non-expert councillors as members of the MDEI Board of Directors, and substitute an appropriate and professional selection process of qualified and experienced energy experts by advertising and then interviewing by a panel of councillors, City and MDEI staff and citizens.	Completed
			(2)Requested the City to provide information regarding a) the financial position and operations of Markham District Energy by publishing an annual report for 2014, in view of the fact that it is owned by Markham citizens and has received over \$ 40 million of public money.	Ongoing

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			<p>(3) Assess MDE's business viability.</p> <p>(4) Since MDEI is a private unregulated company wholly owned by the City of Markham and thus by the citizens of Markham, we advocate that MDEI self regulates following the same provincial guidelines already set out for energy companies such as Powerstream.</p> <p>(5) Ensure consumers' rights are protected as with electricity and natural gas consumers and secure consumers' rights to opt-out without major contractual penalties.</p> <p>(6) Ensure that Markham citizens know that district energy is not "green" energy but uses non-renewable fossil fuels, natural gas and diesel oil, which contribute Greenhouse Gases increasingly to local air pollution, Global Warming and Climate Change. District cooling which takes much more energy than district heating is particularly damaging to the environment.</p>	Ongoing
12	City Issue - Transparency and Accountability.	To review the Reporting System for Councillor Expenses after noticing anomalies.	Instrumental in getting the City to re-examine the reporting system for Councillors' expenses in order to ensure greater transparency, accountability and compliance with Canada Revenue Agency requirements.	Ongoing
13	City Issue - Accountability	To Review the Employee Service Award Program	Instrumental in getting the City to re-examine the Employee Service Award program (\$120,000 annually for 5 years) to confirm desirability, need and appreciation for employees and ensure greater fiscal accountability and prudence.	Completed - the program is now replaced by one costing under \$10,000 per year.

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14	City Issue - Accountability.	Reinstatement of the position of Auditor General	Advocated the re-hiring of Auditor General for the City to ensure its citizens get value for their tax dollars. The Auditor General will examine all the City's programs, identify deficiencies and recommend "Opportunities for Improvement".	Completed - Auditor General is now hired. We will continue to monitor effectiveness of the AG.
15	Provincial Legislation - Citizens' Rights	To support Anti-SLAPP legislation at Queen's Park. (SLAPP = Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation)	Working with other groups to obtain passage of Anti-SLAPP legislation in the Ontario legislature. This initiative is to prevent councillors, local residents, resident associations and community activists from being sued by developers and others in order to intimidate and discourage them from participating and/or opposing developments. Wrote letter detailing experiences here in Markham.	Completed - Legislation is passed.
16	City Issue - Transparency.	Review of Arena Consultants Reports upon their release	Review and highlight information revealed by the consultants reports. Produce a summary report and make it available to Council and the public.	Summary is complete and available on this website.
17	Provincial Legislation - Citizens' Rights	Support reforms to the jurisdiction of the Ontario Municipal Board to reduce its powers over municipal planning decisions,	Lobby Markham Council to pass motion for reform of the Ontario Municipal Board.	Motion to reform OMB now passed by Markham Council
18	York Region Issue - Accountability	Support Bill 42 to require a public election of the Chair of York Region	Provide submissions to the Ontario Legislative Committee holding debates on the election of the Chair of York Region prior to third reading of the bill.	Monitor progress of Bill#42 through completion. It has now gone through second reading.
19	City Issue - Responsibility and Accountability	Worked against Markham buying into the PowerStream merger	Attend Council meetings to make deputations opposing this unproductive merger	Merger passed by the slimmest of margins