



York Region Municipal Parks & Forestry Challenge East Gwillimbury – 2018

Mandy Vandenberg – Town of Richmond Hill
Grant McKeich – Town of East Gwillimbury
Aaron Karmazyn – Town of East Gwillimbury



2019 Educational Forum and Trade Show

#PROForum19

York Region Municipal Parks & Forestry Challenge East Gwillimbury – 2018

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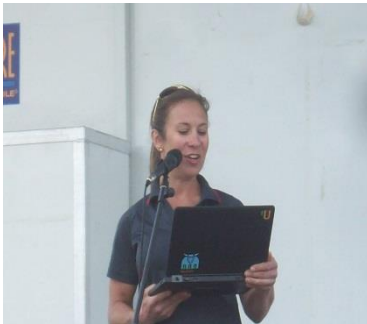
York Region Municipal Parks & Forestry Challenge East Gwillimbury – 2018

About the Presenters

Mandy Vandenberg **Urban Forestry Technician
Town of Richmond Hill**

Grant McKeich **Parks Supervisor
Town of East Gwillimbury**

Aaron Karmazyn **General Manager
Community Parks Recreation &
Culture, Town of East Gwillimbury**



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About the Challenge

A fun team building professional development event



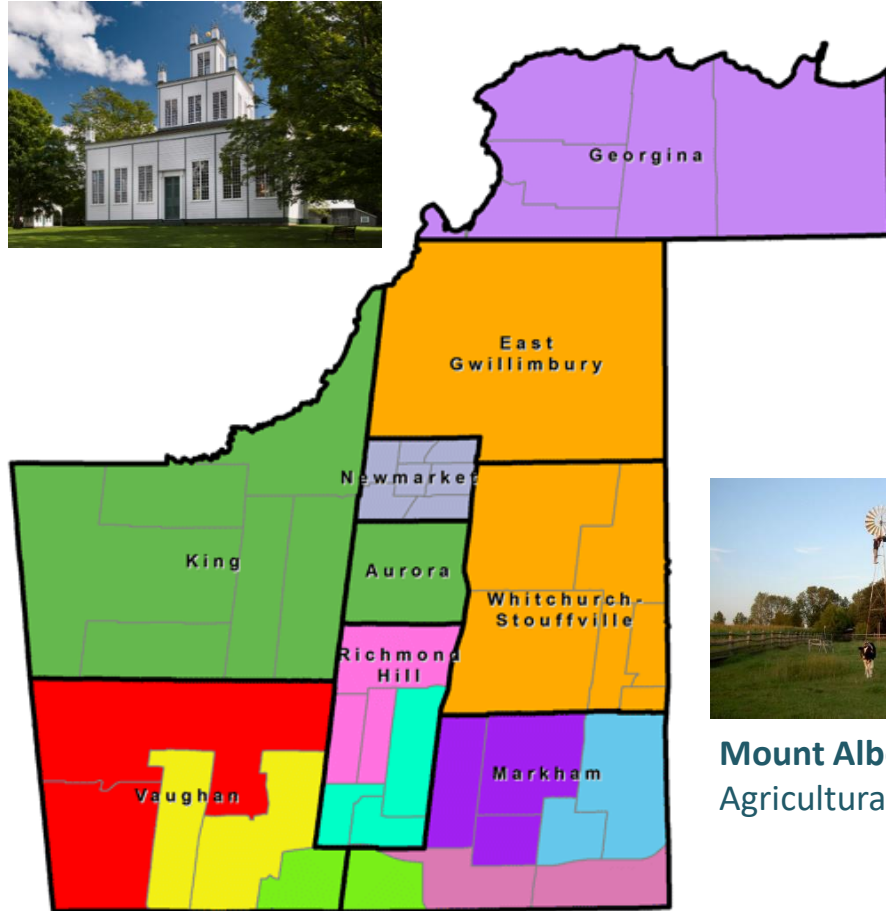
York Region, EG and Communities



Sharon
Arts Culture & History



Holland Landing
Marine Retrospective



Queensville
Modern Lifestyle
Community



Mount Albert
Agricultural History



Green Natural
Environment

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Advantage EG Video Slide



York Region Municipal Parks & Forestry Challenge

East Gwillimbury – 2018



Sharon West – 1600 Homes, 5000 Residents

Growth Projections

2019	+/- 5 to 7 Years
29,000	40-45,000

Post 2030

Capacity +/- 140,000

Surrounding Population:

Newmarket – 88 000

Georgina – 46 000

Aurora – 65 000

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East Gwillimbury – 2018

2018 Site – Anchor Park, East Gwillimbury

- **Town of East Gwillimbury
(Holland Landing, Queensville,
Sharon and Mount Albert)**
- **Rapid Growth & Development**
- **New Parks and Facilities**
- **Expanded and Enhanced Operations**





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The Importance of the Challenge

- **Unique skill set**
- **Breadth and Depth of Knowledge and Training**
- **Growth and Development through practical application of skills**
- **Exposes staff to different disciplines**



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The Benefits of the Challenge

- **Fun, Friendly Competition**
- **Education and Information Exchange**
- **Opportunity for front-line staff to connect and relationship build**
- **Networking**
- **Capacity building with resources**
- **Existing skills development and optimization**
- **New skills Development**



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2018 Site – Anchor Park, East Gwillimbury Ontario

- **22 Acre Site**
- **Soccer Field**
- **Baseball Diamond**
- **BMX Park**
- **Shade Pavilion**



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Where it all began...

- **National Public Works Week Celebration of many years (for Municipal Roads & Water Staff)**
- **Richmond Hill initiated a ‘parks & forestry’ staff component in 2016 and the idea took off**
- **Aurora hosted the 2017 Challenge**
- **East Gwillimbury hosted the 2018 Challenge**
- **King is to host the 2019 Challenge**



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The brains behind it...

- **An Organizing Committee**
- **Consists of one representative from each of the 9 Municipalities and the Region**
- **Events, tasks & judging is divided amongst the committee members**



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Event Site Criteria...

- Open space or sports field
- Ample parking for participants, delegates
- A Food Vendor...and ice-cream truck
- Washrooms, covered pavilion
- At least one challenging tree



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The Schedule of Events On September 26

- Breakfast & registration
- EG welcome (Mayor & GM)
- Horticultural Container Display
- Plant ID
- Tree Climbing Event
- Zero-turn Mower Obstacle Course (**new**)
- Charity Events
- BBQ Lunch (courtesy of MA Lions Club)
- Mayors Challenge
- Relay Race (high light of the day)
- Tug of war (**new**)
- Award Ceremony (group shot)



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The Events – Horticultural Container Display

- **Seasonal display competition**
- **Evaluated on creativity, design...**
- **Completed baskets are sold for charity**
- **Benefits include teamwork, interacting with staff from other municipalities**



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The Events – Plant/Tree/Shrub Identification

- Plant ID & scavenger hunt combo
- Test on both plants & their (common & Latin) names



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The Events – Tree Climbing

- **Speed climb competition (via a belayed system and dedicated grounds person)**
- **Equal emphasis on competency & safety**
- **Opportunity for tree climbers (arborists) to showcase / share their expertise with those staff who work on the ground**



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The Events – Charity Event

- Fundraiser for local charity event via \$2 donations
- Events included Nail Drive, Caber Toss and Dead Aim Game
- Fun activities for those in between events and an Opportunity to socialize / network with peers



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The Events – Zero-Turn Obstacle Course

- **Mower Challenge** provided an event for our grass cutting staff to excel
- **Scoring** was based on proper starting / stopping procedures, wearing PPE (safety wear), mower operation skill, staying within the painted lines
- **Event** was a crowd pleaser and had it's fans



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The Events – Mayors Challenge

- Mini ‘relay’ for Mayors (or their council designates)
- An opportunity for Mayors to experience what parks & forestry staff do
- Relay included Diamond Lining, Big Shot, Ring-the-bell and a Garbage Bag



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The Events – Relay Race

- Similar to mayors challenge, but on a bigger scale with more events and with way more action
- Relay included 6 events, diamond lining, garbage bag change, line trimming, chainsaw-cookie cutting leaf blower and big shot
- The grand finale, adrenaline-pumping event of the day



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Relay Video Slide



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The Events – Tug of War

- Actually a 4-way tug-of-war
- Definitely not in any of our job descriptions
- Fun event only, but with bragging rights



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The Events – Goodwill and Team Building

- Awards Ceremony and Prize Draw
- Proceeds to a local Park tree planting event in Town



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The Events – Information Sharing

- **Team Information Tent highlighting Town projects and initiatives**
- **Example EAB Strategy**
- **Facility and Park developments**
- **Trail Guides**
- **Recreation programs, events**



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Marketing and Public Relations

- Communications on day of event taking photos
- Media release
- Town Page and Social Media



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The Events – Goodwill and Team Building

- **Group Breakfast (peameal-on-bun) & Lunch (BBQ) hosted by a local community group - Holland Landing Lions Club**
- **Ice Cream Truck courtesy of a local supplier - Bradford Rental**
- **Event Take-Away (Water Bottle)**
- **Awards Ceremony and Prize Draw**
- **Proceeds to a local Park tree planting event in Town**



2018 PRO Award of Excellence



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Next Steps – Event Expansion and Enhancement

- Invite other jurisdictions/Regions
- Competitive Format Regional Events and Finals
- Questions?
- Connect with Us on **LinkedIn** 

Mandy Vandenberg, Grant McKeich and Aaron Karmazyn