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2024 Council Priorities Update Information Report

Report Number: INFO 2024-25

Department(s): Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Council Priorities for the 2022 to 2026 Term.

Background

At the beginning of each Term of Council, Council and staff engage in a strategic planning exercise to identify priorities and goals that Council wishes to achieve during its term. At the February 27, 2023, Special Committee of the Whole meeting facilitated by Erik Lockhart, Senior Facilitator, President Lockhart Facilitation Inc., Members of Council established five Council Priorities for the next four years: Community and Economic Vibrancy, Customer-first Way of Life (enhanced by technology), Extraordinary Places and Spaces, Environmental Sustainability, and Diverse, Welcoming and Inclusive Community.

In April 2023, Council endorsed and approved in principle the 2022-2026 Council Priorities document.

Discussion

Following Council's feedback and the endorsement and approval in principal of the 2022 to 2026 Council Priorities document (2023-26 Council Priorities Update Report) the Council Priorities Working Group has been diligently working to bring Council's vision of a publicly accessible interface. With the support and guidance of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), the working group has collaborated with departments across the organization, gathering information on various projects that contribute to the achievement of Council's priorities.

This collaborative effort has allowed the working group to consolidate information on numerous projects, making it easy for everyone to see how each initiative is progressing. Staff across the organization have been working hard on these projects, and the tracker brings all their efforts together in one central, accessible location.

Thanks to strong support from our Information Technology and Corporate Communications Departments, Council's vision has been realized. The tracker website now serves as a hub for all of Council's 2022-2026 priorities and the projects underway to achieve them. Featuring engaging visuals, key statistics, milestone trackers, and detailed information on Newmarket's projects and accomplishments, the site effectively tells the story of Newmarket's achievements. The Council Priorities Project Tracker was also cost effective, leveraging internal Town resources and staff.

Notable Achievements:

Open and enthusiastically program the Mulock Park and House, a community landmark for current and future generations

- The Mulock Park is currently under construction and Mulock House is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and will be preserved, updated, and re-imagined with a café, restored library and art gallery partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario. The 16-acre park is expected to open in 2026.
- As part of the Town's commitment to protecting and enhancing green space, 490 new trees will be planted at the Mulock Park, forming an important part of Newmarket's tree canopy.

Advance Smart City Initiatives to address street safety

The Community Safety Camera Program is now underway with live cameras in all seven (7) wards. Automated speed enforcement is a proven tool to increase speed compliance, resulting in fewer collisions and less severity in the collisions that do occur. It is expected that before the end of the year, data illustrating the change in speed at each camera location will be publicly available on the Town's website.

Implement the Action Plan to dismantle Anti-Black Racism

- The Town of Newmarket is committed to dismantling Anti-Black Racism in our community. 60% of the actions from the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Implementation Plan are complete or in progress and the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee was established in 2024.

The Pedestrianization of Downtown

- In February 2024, the Town took the first steps to piloting a pedestrian experience on Main Street South with the launch of Ice Lounge on Main. The Ice Lounge event took place over four days and saw visitors from Newmarket, across York Region and even from as far away as Buffalo, NY. Based on the success of this event, the Town will continue to explore opportunities for pedestrian experiences on Main Street South.

Communicating with Residents

The Council Priorities Project tracker is a public facing website that is available for the public to view at any time. The launch of the website at the November 18, 2024, Town Council meeting will coincide with a press release. The Council Priorities Progress Tracker is a consolidation of work achieved in various departments through their respective workplans. Each individual project will have its own various communications strategies and tactics, as appropriate and when necessary.

Updates to the Council Priorities

The Council Priorities Progress Tracker will be updated twice a year, or sooner, if there are substantial developments to a Council Priorities project. An update will be provided to Council in the fourth quarter annually.

Conclusion

In conclusion, creating the Council Priorities Progress Tracker has been a valuable step forward for our community, making it easier for the public to access information about Council's initiatives and their progress. This tool not only highlights the dedication and hard work of Town staff in making Council Priorities a reality, but also showcases projects that enhance our community and benefit residents, underscoring the many achievements that make Newmarket an even better place to live and work.

Moving forward, the Council Priorities Working Group will collaborate with departments across the organization to monitor the progress of each strategic priority for the remaining term of Council and update the Tracker accordingly with the continued support of IT and Corporate Communications. Annual Information Reports will also be provided to Council.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

Describe the Strategic Plan Linkages, such as the Community vision, Corporate mission and/or Core Values.

Consultation

SLT, OLT, and specific department project leads were consulted to consolidate the Council Priorities.

Human Resource Considerations

There are no Human Resource Considerations for the Council Priorities project. For further information on Human Resource considerations for an individual Council Priorities project, please contact the respective department.

Budget Impact

None for the Council Priorities project and reporting. Each individual work described may have its own respective approved budget.

Attachments

Appendix A: Detailed List of Council Priorities and Updates

Approval

Esther Armchuk, Commissioner of Corporate Services

Jeff Payne, Commissioner of Community Services

Peter Noehammer, Commissioner of Development and Infrastructure Services

Ian McDougall, Chief Administrative Officer

Contact

For questions about the Council Priorities reporting or the Progress Tracker: Amanda Romano (aromano@newmarket.ca), Amber Chard (achard@newmarket.ca), Elizabeth Hawkins (ehawkins@newmarket.ca), Hayley Fryer (hfryer@newmarket.ca), and Simon Granat (sgranat@newmarket.ca).

For project specific questions please contact the relevant department.

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact the Town of Newmarket at 905-895-5193

Community and Economic Vibrancy	
<p>Key Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over half of commuters travel less than thirty (30) minutes - 1.02 jobs per two people - 18% business growth in the past decade - 98% of residents are satisfied with Newmarket as a place to live 	
Objective	Update
<p>1. Create a differentiating brand strategy and implementation plan for the enhancement of the arts in Newmarket, strengthening Newmarket's reputation as a vibrant place to live for entrepreneurs, artists, and knowledge workers, building a strong local and innovative economy.</p>	<p>Newmarket is embarking on a Community Branding Strategy exercise to celebrate what makes Newmarket unique and to continue to drive economic and community vibrancy.</p> <p>Starting in 2024 the Town will connect with local residents, businesses and interested parties to truly capture the essence of Newmarket today and where we are heading in the future.</p>
<p>2. Explore the re-development and re-purposing of the former Operations Centre (Timothy Street) into a thriving community hub for innovation, arts, and entrepreneurialism.</p>	<p>The Town's former operations centre is envisioned to become a hub of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Most recently, the building at 623 Timothy Street was used for Central York Fire Services' (CYFS) Training Centre and administrative hub.</p> <p>The opportunity to redevelop the space arose after the successful completion of the award winning CYFS Station 4-5. The Town is currently exploring the possibilities for the site.</p>
<p>3. Implement a pilot project that explores pedestrianizing downtown Newmarket.</p>	<p>Over the past two decades, the Town, local businesses and building owners have invested over \$30 million in the revitalization of Main Street South, leading to the continued growth of Newmarket's downtown as a top dining, shopping and entertainment destination in York Region. As a result of the continued investment in the vibrancy of Main Street, the historic district attracts over a quarter of a million visitors to the core each year and has voted best Main Street in the country.</p>

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	<p>The pedestrianization of Main Street is a key Council Priority. In February 2024, the Town took the first steps to piloting a pedestrian experience on Main Street South with the launch of Ice Lounge on Main. The Ice Lounge event took place over four days and saw visitors from Newmarket, across York Region and even from as far away as Buffalo. The event featured a licensed Main Street, installations by event sponsor Mercedes Benz and more. Based on the success of this event, the Town will continue to explore opportunities for pedestrian experiences on Main Street South.</p>
<p>4. Promote Newmarket as a prime location to start new businesses and boost economic activity by strengthening existing partnerships, while also seeking new ones.</p>	<p>The Town of Newmarket is focused on creating an environment that allows businesses to succeed in order to boost economic activity. This includes an active Corporate Visiting program, strong partnerships in the community and ongoing and evolving marketing programs to attract new businesses and talent. Check out one the innovative partnerships below.</p> <p>Since 2022, the Town of Newmarket has supported the Treefrog Accelerator's International programming which provides international entrepreneurs interested in landing in Newmarket with tools and knowledge required to successfully launch their business in Canada. In 2023, Treefrog Inc and York University joined together to combine aspects of the York women's entrepreneurship programming and the Treefrog Accelerator program. The combined program called Project JumpSTART was the successful recipient of funding through the Region of York's Innovation Investment Fund which will expand the reach and impact of the international program.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150 entrepreneurs supported through Treefrog Partnership • 210 Jobs created by international entrepreneurs participating in JumpStart
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Customer-first Way of Life	
<p>Key Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80% of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their service interaction - There were over half a million visits to the Newmarket website in 2023 - Top five (5) most sought-after services are available online - 70% of phone calls to the Town are answered within thirty (30) seconds or less 	
Objective	Update
<p>1. Create a corporate app for residents to continue to improve communication and access to services.</p>	<p>Currently in the evaluation and vendor selection stage.</p> <p>Newmarket is investigating the development of a mobile app that brings services and information to our user's fingertips. This technology has the potential to open a realm of possibilities while enhancing user experience and accessibility. Our primary goal is to ensure that users can access a wide range of digital services conveniently and efficiently. We are gathering requirements to create technology that can be a one-stop solution for user's everyday needs. By accessing services in a centralized mobile platform, users can save time and effort while enjoying the convenience of everything they need from their smartphone or tablet.</p> <p>To provide the best user experience possible, we're investigating a native mobile app for various platforms such as iOS and Android. By leveraging the native capabilities of each platform, we can optimize performance and ensure seamless integration with device features. This approach also allows us to take advantage of platform-specific features and design patterns, resulting in an</p>

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	<p>intuitive user experience. Our goal is to harness the full potential of mobile devices by integrating features such as cameras and multimedia functionality, including audio and video. Other mobile features, like Bluetooth, can allow for functionality such as proximity-based notifications or location-based services for personalized experiences. By combining convenience, performance, and innovation, we're aiming to create a mobile app that redefines how users interact with municipal government.</p>
<p>2. Advance Smart City initiatives to address street safety, track service delivery, and to promote public engagement using mobile first and real time technology applications.</p>	<p>Through projects including Community Safety Cameras, the Water Meter Replacement Program, and the Downtown Parking Pilot Program, we are advancing Smart City Initiatives to enhance the quality of life in Newmarket.</p>
<p>3. Ensure technology investments provide elevated, easy-to-use customer experiences.</p>	<p>The Town of Newmarket is working with industry leading experts and leveraging user experiences and feedback to ensure that technology investments meet the needs of our customers</p>
<p>4. Redesign the Town of Newmarket website for an improved user experience while also offering additional online services.</p>	<p>This project is currently in the evaluation and vendor selection stage.</p> <p>The Town of Newmarket is working to improve our digital presence. Part of this initiative includes replacing our current website with a new and improved online offering to take advantage of new technologies and approaches to website design. Through the new website, we will seek to improve service through easier access to Town information and communication channels, as well as streamlined access to online services.</p> <p>This website refresh was identified as a need through the Town's Digital Transformation Strategy which acts as a blueprint for how the Town will build a digital future through critical opportunities,</p>

	<p>and organize its people, process, and technology to do so.</p> <p>For more information on the Digital Transformation Strategy visit, heynewmarket.ca/digitalstrategy.</p> <p>Adjacent to the website refresh, The Town of Newmarket is also creating an online Town Portal to easily access municipal information, services, and make payments. The Portal will allow users access to a variety of services and applications using a secure, single log-in system and will be available on both computer and mobile devices.</p>
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Extraordinary Places and Spaces	
<p>Key Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 98% of residents live within walking distance of a park / trail - Winner of Festival and Events Ontario Municipality of the Year two years in a row - Almost 5% of people who commute to work are using “active transportation” to get there 	
Objective	Update
<p>1. Open and enthusiastically program the Mulock park and house, a community landmark for current and future generations.</p>	<p>This project is currently under construction.</p> <p>The landmark Mulock Park has a storied past and bright future ahead as a central gathering space for the community. Over two years, thousands of community members came together to help shape the vision for the property.</p> <p>The future park offers a four-season experience, including a winter skate trail through the woods which converts to a summer water play feature for cooling and splashing for all ages. Other highlights include a conservatory greenhouse, rotating artist residency, various public art installations and much more.</p>

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	<p>The Mulock House is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and will be preserved, updated, and re-imagined with a café, restored library and art gallery in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO).</p> <p>Newmarket looks forward to bringing the community's vision to life. To create a place where community, life, recreation, culture, heritage and conservation collide in innovative and engaging ways. The construction of Mulock Park is currently underway with an anticipated opening date in 2026.</p> <p>For more information, visit HeyNewmarket.ca/MulockPark</p>
<p>2. Continue to add vibrancy to Mulock Drive with the completion of the Mulock Multi-use path.</p>	<p>This project is in the Project Initiation Phase</p> <p>A new Multi-Use Path (MUP) on Mulock Drive will continue to add vibrancy to Mulock Drive and increase connections in the area of the landmark Mulock Park, anticipated to open in 2026. The MUP is helping Newmarket take significant steps forward towards achieving the community's active transportation goals, while helping to connect residents to key destinations throughout town.</p> <p>Once completed the 6 kilometre east-west path along Mulock Drive will run from Bathurst Street to Harry Walker Parkway. The MUP will allow for a wide-range of recreational uses such as cycling, walking, jogging and access for all abilities. The MUP will provide an even better connection to over 44km of existing trails and paths, schools and the future Mulock Park. This is one of the most significant trail and pathway expansions in the Town's history.</p>

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	<p>Construction will take place in two phases. The first phase was completed in fall 2023 from Bathurst Street to Yonge Street and comprises 1.8 km.</p> <p>Construction for the second phase from Yonge Street to Harry Walker Parkway will start in 2024 with completion in 2025 and will span an additional 4.5 km.</p> <p>Visit heynewmarket.ca/mulockmup for more information.</p>
<p>3. Create Town events and initiatives that lead the way in terms of variety and building strong partnerships.</p>	<p>Two years in a row (2023 and 2024), the Town of Newmarket has been recognized as mid-size Municipality of the year for the extraordinary lineup of special events offered.</p> <p>Every year, thousands of Newmarket and GTA residents experience unforgettable events, including Tim Hortons Canada Day, TD Newmarket Music Series, and the Town’s newest addition in 2024, Ice Lounge on Main presented by Mercedes-Benz Newmarket.</p> <p>Our events and initiatives are often the result of collaborations with a variety of community partners, together we are making Newmarket even better than it already is.</p>
<p>4. Deliver exciting parks, trails, and facilities projects throughout the Town.</p>	<p>Almost 50 kilometres of walking and biking trails wind throughout Newmarket, including the Nokiidaa Trail that connects Newmarket to our neighbouring communities of Aurora and East Gwillimbury. There are over 45 active parks and open spaces and over 800 acres of parkland in Newmarket!</p> <p>Newmarket's vast trail system promotes a healthy lifestyle, reduces vehicle emissions by encouraging walking and cycling and brings the community together to enjoy the great outdoors.</p>

	<p>The Town has created a 10-year capital plan for Parks and Recreation that creates the roadmap for the next decade and beyond. A few highlights of the plan include Mulock Park, the Mulock Multi-Use Path, Stackhouse Trail, Hydro Corridor Trails, Quaker Trail Connection and more. This also includes parks and trails that are within planning developments (Shining Hill, Redwood Development and more!). This plan helps to more fully align the Town’s capital program with Council’s priorities and enhance the recreational landscape of the community.</p>
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<p>Environmental Sustainability</p>	
<p>Key Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five (5) Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations with ten (10) charging ports - 181 Trees per hectare - 58 Low Impact Development (LID) elements installed - Canada’s 14th Bee City 	
<p>Objective</p>	<p>Update</p>
<p>1. Update the Community Energy Plan to ensure the Town leads in climate action.</p>	<p>The Community Energy Plan (CEP) is a key initiative developed by the Town of Newmarket to reduce the community's environmental impact and address climate change.</p> <p>As one of the first municipalities in Ontario to adopt a CEP, Newmarket has set clear targets for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and identified specific actions to achieve these goals. By introducing sustainable practices across sectors such as transportation, residential and non-residential buildings, and energy systems, the CEP helps lower the Town's carbon footprint and decrease reliance on fossil fuels, which are major contributors to climate change.</p> <p>In addition to combating climate change, the CEP supports the local economy by creating jobs in the energy sector, enhancing competitiveness, and</p>

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	<p>improving energy efficiency and security. The plan also examines how population growth, employment, and land use impact energy needs, with a focus on fostering a sustainable community.</p> <p>The vision for Newmarket's CEP is to create an energy future that is efficient, secure, reliable, and environmentally progressive, positioning the community as a leader in climate action that is well beyond the ordinary.</p> <p>For more information, visit newmarket.ca/communityenergyplan</p>
<p>2. Continue to create more cycling and walking options throughout the community.</p>	<p>Newmarket is home to an extensive network of trails that are a great way to enjoy nature and the outdoors. Newmarket is also home to bike-friendly routes which create a more comfortable and safer environment for residents and visitors to cycle around Town.</p> <p>The Town of Newmarket aims to expand its network of trails and multi-use pathways, enhancing alternative transportation options and increasing cycling and walking opportunities across the community.</p> <p>Initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulock Multi-use Path • Trail Enhancement: North-West Quadrant • Active Transportation Implementation Plan
<p>3. Be proactive by preparing and planning for changing climate conditions.</p>	<p>This project is in the Pre-project phase</p> <p>The Town of Newmarket is working on a Green Fleet Strategy that will review the Town's equipment and vehicles to limit the impact on the environment. Once complete, this Strategy will provide recommendations on how the Town can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions</p>

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	by transitioning the Town's fleet of vehicles and motorized equipment to battery-powered electric by 2050.
4. Protect and enhance green space in the Town for future generations.	<p>Timeline of Tree Protection Policies:</p> <p>2005: Tree Preservation, Protection, Replacement and Enhancement Policy 2007: Woodlot Tree By-Law 2017: Public Tree Protection By-Law 2022: Private Tree Protection By-Law</p> <p>Initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulock Park Tree Stewardship Program • Shining Hill Secondary Plan • 600 Stonehaven Avenue • Tree Hazard Abatement Strategy • Growing Newmarket's Canopy

Diverse, Welcoming and Inclusive Community	
Key Indicators:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 60% of the actions from the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Implementation Plan are completed or in progress. - Six (6) equity, diversity and inclusion related learning opportunities provided for staff so far in 2024 - 300 Town Staff have received facilitated Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training 	
Objective	Update
1. Continue our strong commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion through engagement, education and action resulting in meaningful change.	The Town of Newmarket has continued our strong commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion through a series of policy reviews and providing educational opportunities for Town staff. In 2024, the Town hired an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Specialist, and the Town is engaging in a recruitment review and plans to review all Human Resources programs and policies with an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion lens. Additionally, in 2024 the Town has and will offer a number of learning and development sessions to promote continued education for staff on a range of diversity, equity, and inclusion matters including

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	<p>International Women’s Day, Dismantling Anti-Black Racism, Dismantling Anti-Asian Racism, Building Better 2SLGBTQQ+ allyship and workplace support, fostering psychological safety toward an inclusive workplace, Truth and Reconciliation, and others.</p> <p>The Town is proud to work collaboratively with a number of organizations to ensure that meaningful programming and educational opportunities exist for residents of our community to expand their understanding or diversity, equity and inclusion. This includes close working relationships with Newmarket African Caribbean Canadian Association (NACCA) for Black History Month observances, York Region Pride for recognition of June as Pride Month and ongoing partnerships with our Indigenous communities for recognition of National Indigenous Peoples Day and Truth and Reconciliation Day.</p>
<p>2. Support and facilitate diverse groups to ensure all voices are heard in order to promote inclusion and equity.</p>	<p>The Town of Newmarket continues our strong commitment to facilitate and support diverse groups to ensure all voices are heard to promote inclusion and equity. The Town continues this strong commitment by participating and supporting the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee, the Town’s Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Advocacy (IDEA) group and as a participant with the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group (MDIG).</p> <p>In the Community, Central York Fire Services (CYFS) has partnered with NACCA on an annual CYFS career day. The Town of Newmarket has also worked with NACCA on Black History Month events and participates in York Pride annually.</p>

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<p>3. Implement the Action Plan to dismantle anti-Black racism.</p>	<p>The Town of Newmarket is committed to dismantling Anti-Black racism in our community. Council, staff and community partners are together, taking action to work through an implementation plan with key deliverables to be met over the next two years. The deliverables outlined in the plan will help dismantle Anti-Black racism and remove barriers that Black individuals face in Newmarket.</p> <p>As part of the implementation plan, a Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee was established in 2024 which is an external body composed of community members who provide input and support the Town in delivering items from the Implementation Plan.</p>
<p>4. Identify ways to measure engagement and success, aligned with being an inclusive community.</p>	<p>The Town of Newmarket is committed to making Newmarket even better. With a focus on continuous improvement, Newmarket's staff team seek to improve, and make Newmarket even better every day.</p> <p>The Town will be identifying ways to measure engagement and success, aligned with being an inclusive community.</p>