

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Equal Opportunity | Integration | Independence | Dignity



Newmarket

2021 Annual Status Update

A Message from Newmarket Council

Council is pleased to present the 2021 Accessibility Status Report, as an update to 2019 to 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The Town of Newmarket continues its efforts to improve its services, facilities and programs in order to encourage accessibility for everyone that lives in and visits Newmarket.

We remain committed to working with Newmarket's Accessibility Advisory Committee, staff, and other community partners to enhance and foster an inclusive community that meets the needs of people with disabilities in the Town of Newmarket and supports the vision of the Town of being a community 'Well Beyond the Ordinary'. This was re-established with the 2018-2022 Strategic Pillar: Extraordinary Places and Spaces which seeks to create the environment for an engaged, accessible, inclusive community.

A Message from the Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town of Newmarket's Accessibility Advisory Committee's mandate is to encourage and facilitate accessibility for all persons with disabilities in the Town of Newmarket by providing advice, recommendations and assistance to Council and staff to develop and facilitate strategies for the identification and elimination of barriers for citizens with disabilities. We are pleased to be provided with the opportunity to act on the community's behalf by advising Council on a number of key initiatives that support achieving an accessible Newmarket. The 2021 Accessibility Status Report demonstrates the work that has been completed to identify and remove barriers in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

The Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee is honoured to continue to support the Town of Newmarket in implementing and achieving the goals of the Multi-Year Plan and the vision of a community that we all can be proud of, and that is 'Well Beyond the Ordinary.'

We invite residents to review this Status Report to learn more about how the Town of Newmarket is working to create an accessible community, and value their comments, participation and commitment to assist in achieving a fully accessible community.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Steve Foglia, Chair

Jeffrey Fabian, Vice Chair

Martha Jez

Linda Jones

Allen Matrosov

Patricia Monteath

Sara Pecchia
Councillor Grace Simon
Huma Tahir

Accessibility Advisory Committee Staff Support

Jaclyn Grossi, Acting Deputy Clerk
Pat McIntosh, Recreation Programmer, Seniors & Special Needs
Kiran Saini, Deputy Clerk

Accessibility Advisory Committee Update

The Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee continues to provide valuable advice and feedback to Council and staff, in addition to participating in various accessibility related activities. In 2021, the Accessibility Advisory Committee has:

- Consulted, reviewed plans and provided recommendations for the initiatives and projects which include the following:
 - Mulock Property Design Concept
 - Newmarket Outdoor Skatepark
 - North-West Quadrant PH5 Parking Lot
- Worked with Economic Development staff to amend the Newmarket Financial Incentive Program (FIP) to include accessibility funding specifics
- Provided the Main Street District Business Improvement Area Board of Management with a presentation regarding the Making Main Street Accessible initiative.
- Collaborated with the York Region District School Board (YRDSB) and their Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program to increase accessibility on Main Street.
- Created a brochure, notified and delivered it to 50 businesses, and conducted individual accessibility audits of 12 businesses so far on Main Street as part of the Making Main Street Accessible initiative.
- Reviewed Site Plan applications for the following properties and provided recommendations on accessibility related conditions to staff:
 - 1240 Twinney & 1250 Davis Dr Phase 2
 - 17600 Yonge Street (Upper Canada Mall)
- Reviewed and developed signage for accessible van parking signage surrounding Riverwalk Commons and Fairy Lake.
- Continually reviewed Federal and Provincial grant opportunities related to accessible projects, including the Fairy Lake Washroom project.
- Provided recommendations and feedback to staff regarding the Site Plan Application Accessibility Checklist.
- Consulted with external partners and provided assistance with the Federal Election polling locations in Newmarket and Aurora.

- Provided Council with a presentation outlining their various accomplishments throughout the term thus far at a Council Workshop in June 2021.
- Attended virtual events held by York Region regarding National AccessAbility Awareness Week and the Accessibility Advisory Committee Professional Development Forum, and a workshop regarding the Canadian Accessibility Standards.
- Promoted accessibility through short videos from community members on the importance of accessibility during National AccessAbility Awareness Week.
- Provided advice on the Town of Newmarket's annual Accessibility Plan update.
- Provided ongoing public awareness of accessibility.

Barrier Identification Update

Initiatives have taken place in the Town of Newmarket to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities. These actions are identified in past Accessibility Plans which are available on the Town of Newmarket website, newmarket.ca/accessibility.

Actions Completed in 2021

Central York Fire Services

- Station 4-1
 - Renovations planned to provide barrier free access to the lobby and fire prevention areas.
- Station 4-5
 - Accessibility has been a main driver in the design considerations for the new station during construction.
 - Ensured furniture layout and design to met AODA standards to create an accessible space.
- Continue to ensure that the website and all newly produced materials including information cards and door hangers were AODA compliant.

Corporate Communications

- Continued to advise portfolio departments to ensure all communication materials meet AODA standards from the size of the font, colours used in designs and accessible formats for PDFs posted on the website. For documents that have multiple pages (50+) and are required to be posted on the website, the Communications department recommends outsourcing the file to be made accessible to ensure compliance with AODA legislation. A prime example is the Asset Management Report which was sent to an external company to convert into an accessible PDF prior to distribution.
- Through the use of an online program (Site Improve), webpages that are lacking on AODA compliance are identified and fixed.
- Continue to participate in AODA related training to better understand what other Municipalities are implementing and what new technologies exist to better service the community from an accessible standpoint.

Engineering Services

- Included accessible parking in the Fairy Lake redevelopment project.
- Designed, began construction and completed some play spaces including:
 - Stronach Spray Pad
 - Arkinstall Spray Pad
 - Magna Skate Park (Currently under construction)
 - George Richardson Park soccer field reconfiguration
 - New Park in Glenway at Birkdale/Mitchell Place
 - Somerville Drive Park

Financial Services

- Updated electronic forms regarding pre-authorized payments to increase accessibility and availability.

Information Technology

- Updated and repaired the website to maintain AODA compliance.
 - Monitored all fonts, alt-text for hyperlinks and images.
- Ensured that there was high contrast between the text and background (i.e. light text on dark backgrounds, or dark text on light backgrounds) on media that is presented on our dashboards and websites.
- Built accessible features of vaccination verification into the Staff COVID-19 screening tool.
- Included accessibility considerations and input in procurement Request For Proposal (RFP) processes.
- Installed multi-function printers with accessibility features.
- Implemented a new and more secure VPN technology to allow for remote staff better access and a more accessible working environment.
- Maintained a voice controlled automated attended front-end for the phone system.
- Developed an IT support access portal to facilitate incident templates for service requests.
- Supported Human Resources with the implementation of a Speech Recognition software to facilitate the work of some employees.
- Implemented Contactless payment processing (TAP) and pending changes incorporated with Merchant services (e.g. CHASE to GlobalPayments).
- New Citywide POS platform complies with AODA requirements

Innovation and Strategic Initiatives

- Performance Reporting
 - Implemented Council's 2018-2022 Strategic Priorities online digital dashboard to improve communications with all community members and to enhance performance reporting.

- Ensured dashboard compatibility with AODA requirements (high contrast, font type and size, hyperlink and image alt-texts, screen-reader compatible).
- Continued application of an innovative lens to service delivery through any new digital dashboards and mobile applications under consideration for accessibility by all community members and employees to access Town information and services from all mobile devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops, smart watches, e-readers, etc.).
- Grants
 - Continued corporate support for grant funding applications which serve to improve accessibility of Town facilities and playgrounds through both the physical environment and program experiences of participants. The intent of the applications is to accelerate planned capital projects that remove barriers to accessibility. In 2021, a grant application to the federal Enabling Accessibility Fund was submitted to support accessibility enhancements to the Fairy Lake Park Washrooms (application pending). Funding was acquired to continue and enhance virtual senior's fitness classes ("COVID – Lets Stay Connected" Campaign), subsidizing classes and the purchase of new audio-visual and technical equipment.
- Policy
 - Provided continued corporate support to municipal departments to ensure accessible document formats are used for developing new policies and procedures and that a plain language approach is applied for improved clarity, simplicity, transparency, and readability by all. In 2021, a review of the document properties of all corporate policies and procedures posted on the employee intranet and Town website was completed. Information deficiencies will be communicated to policy owners to take action for improving electronic document accessibility by employees and community members. Provided continued support to Human Resources to convert existing employment related policies to the accessible policy and procedure templates in compliance with AODA legislation requirements.

Legislative Services

- Continued to offer virtual Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) Hearings for increased accessibility through remote participation, and public attendance, and continually improved related to processes.
- Meeting Management Solution
 - Continued implementation of a meeting management solution which produces accessible HTML-based agendas and minutes.

- Live-streamed Council and Committee of the Whole meetings are equipped with closed captioning.
- Electronic Meetings
 - Continued to improve the electronic Committee of the Whole, Council and local Committee and Board meetings and related policies to allow for remote participation, and public attendance.
 - Upgraded the Town's audiovisual hardware and software to improve accessibility for all meetings of Council and their Committees.

Newmarket Public Library

- Completed staff training regarding accessible documents and forms.
- Completed an audit of all public forms to ensure accessibility.
- Purchased material for dyslexic customers, and continued to expand digital materials which provide greater access to the community.
- Provided programs virtually while giving broader access to the community to participate in Library programming.

Planning Services

- Continued to participate in accessibility training as part of the professional certifications.
- Site Plan Review
 - Continued to provide the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) with the plans for their review.
 - Endeavoured to ensure that all sites comply with the Design of Public Spaces Standard (DOPS) and municipal standards for accessibility throughout the Site Plan process.
- Continued to review the Town's zoning by-laws to ensure that AODA standards are integrated and that less-accessible standards are replaced.

Procurement Services

- Offered an online bids and tenders bidding solution that is AODA compliant, advertised in all competitive procurement templates that all deliverables are to be provided in format(s) that comply with AODA requirements, standard terms and conditions provide for direction as to the AODA requirements and legislation. Pre-bid form collected responses from departments relating to whether or not they have considered AODA requirements in the development of their deliverables for a competitively acquired procurement.

Public Works Services

- Implemented an ongoing program for upgrading park washrooms to current Ontario Building Code barrier-free requirements and AODA standards.
- Continued to review of current accessibility features in buildings.
- Identified, through conducting regular building walk-throughs of the various building in our portfolio, areas for improvement to increase accessibility such

as providing barrier free paths of travel and accessibility in washrooms (fixtures, push buttons, accessories) where possible.

- Conducted monthly checks of working condition of automatic door operators and other motorized accessibility features.
- Presented upcoming projects and getting feedback from AAC in the early stages of projects as an opportunity to improve accessibility and incorporate best practices.
- Received, evaluated and implemented where possible, suggestions from the general public relative to accessibility in the buildings.
- Considerations for life saving equipment to be installed in accessible barrier-free location in Town buildings and on Town properties (i.e. AED's installed at accessible height with standardized case, in locations with adequate clearance).
- Began accessibility upgrades at the Rene Bray Washroom.
- Completed washroom accessibility improvements at the Elman W. Campbell Museum and College Manor Park.
- Installed new service/bar counters to incorporate AODA and barrier-free design at the Ray Twinney Complex in Lounge 1 and Lounge 2.

Recreation & Culture

- Fitness
 - Changed equipment layout in the Fitness Centre to make it more spatially accessible.
 - Improved sanitization stations in the Fitness Centre and ensured that they were set to an accessible height.
 - Monitored equipment with every walkthrough of the Centre to ensure that all cable machines are returned to an accessible height.
- Gorman Pool
 - Installed a new pedestrian gate to the west side of building to create easier, outdoor access from parking lot.
- Ray Twinney Recreation Complex
 - Refreshed pool change rooms with new benches and clearer signage.
- Summer Camps
 - Offered free 1:1 support for campers attending with special needs. This removed the difficult financial burden for many families attending from years previous.
- The Recreation Youth Centre & Skate Park
 - Available to the public free of charge this summer upon re-opening.
- Seniors
 - Senior Activity Kits - Each month, up to 100 seniors had the opportunity to receive a free activity kit, filled with crafts, games, and activities to help challenge their mind and body, and encourage a positive way to spend time during the challenges posed by the pandemic.

- Online / Virtual Senior Programming- A variety of fitness & wellness programs were offered virtually during the pandemic in order to help seniors stay active and healthy, and also provide an opportunity to connect with other seniors in the community. Online classes have provide the opportunity for isolated or disabled seniors to participate in programs they otherwise would not have been able to enjoy.
- Seniors Calls – Let’s Stay Connected - Through the pandemic, staff & volunteers called isolated members of the Seniors Meeting Place on a regular basis in order to provide them with important community resource information and help them feel connected within the community.

Plans for the Removal of Barriers from 2021 Onward

Information and Communication Standard

- The digital transformation study will be coming into fruition in 2022, and the Communications department will work with IT, other departments and the external vendor to ensure new technologies introduced (mobile app, new website etc.) will continue to meet AODA standards.
- Training will be provided to new staff members regarding the website, which includes AODA and the importance of this requirement.
- Improved accessibility planned with the upcoming online payment feature installations such as Tax portals, POS web portal, and Planning services web portal.

Design of Public Spaces Standard

- Central York Fire Services: Station 4-1
 - Complete renovations to provide barrier free access to the lobby and fire prevention areas.
- Newmarket Public Library
 - Update lighting in throughout the library to improve visibility.
 - Continue to identify new barriers through the current strategic planning process and develop a plan to address them.
- Senior’s Meeting Place
 - Washroom upgrades to incorporate AODA and barrier-free design to be completed in 2022-2023.
- Ray Twinney Complex
 - Outdoor washroom upgrades in partnership with Stingray softball to incorporate AODA and barrier-free design to be completed pending grant funding.
- Fairy Lake Accessible Washrooms
 - Design to be completed in 2022, and construction to follow pending budget approval.
- Magna Centre
 - Washrooms and general common area accessibility improvements to be completed pending budget approval.

- Gorman Pool
 - Change room renovations to incorporate AODA and barrier-free design to be completed pending budget approval.

As outlined in this Status Report, many initiatives are underway with more anticipated to be completed in the future. The Town of Newmarket will continue to identify and remove barriers in order to create accessible spaces and services that everyone can use. Newmarket is committed to moving forward and ensuring that the town continues with its commitment to being a community '**Well Beyond the Ordinary**'.