

Newmarket Public Library Inspiring Growth



STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2016

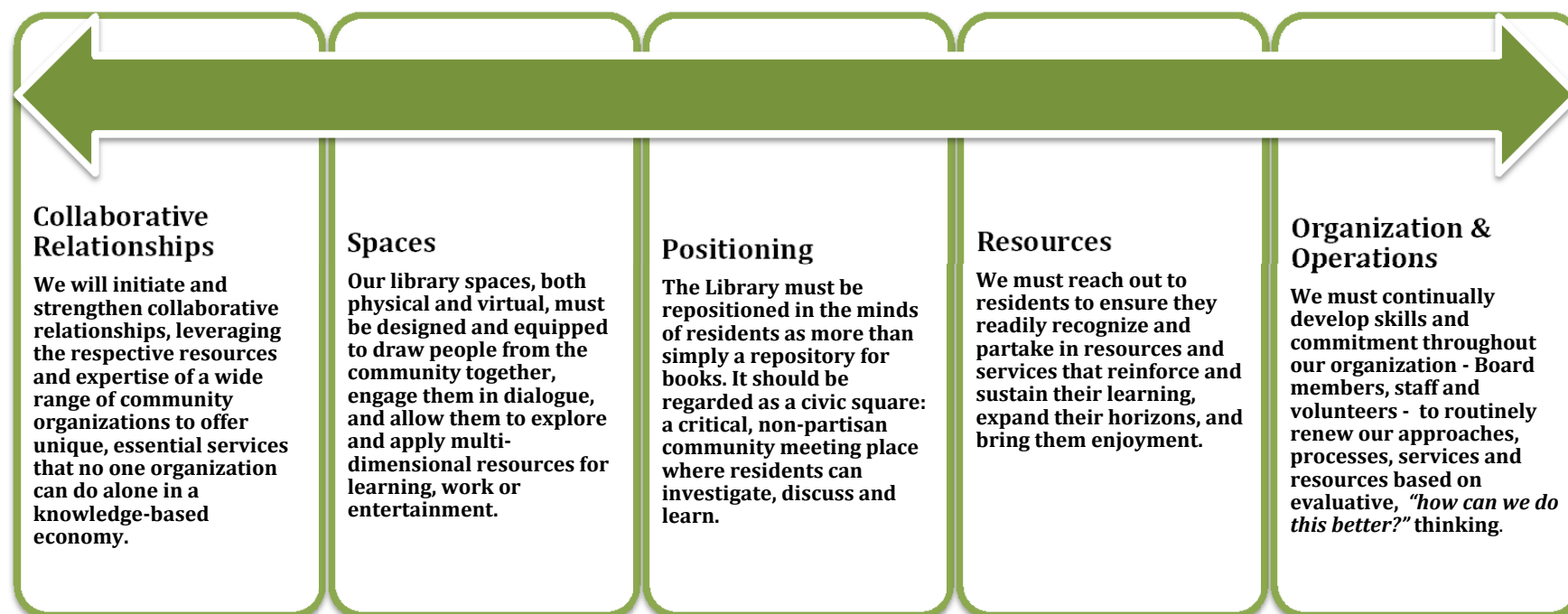
literacy debate learning discovery insight dialogue

INSPIRING

Bringing Our Vision Closer to Reality

The purpose of this plan is to bring Newmarket Public Library's Vision of Inspiring Growth closer to reality. A compelling Vision is never fully achieved but serves to galvanize an organization, representing an ideal situation that is just slightly out of reach – something an organization must continually strive to attain. Newmarket Public Library (NPL) is committed to its vision of Inspiring Growth, developing services and staff involvement to help make the Library the absolute best it can be so that it inspires both the personal growth of Newmarket residents and the collective growth of our community.

Moving forward, the Library will contribute to community growth in different ways than in the past, while maintaining our long-held values of equitable service and access to resources for all. To realize our Vision, our Strategies must re-imagine and build on five key elements:



The Library's Role:

Inspiring the growth of an engaged and informed Newmarket as the centre of community dialogue, debate and discovery, in dynamic and welcoming physical and virtual environments.

The Library's Vision: Inspiring Growth

We envision the Library in 2016 as a celebrated contributor to a conversant community, recognized by residents as a place where they can engage in enlightened discussions on topics that are meaningful to their lives and their community. We are entrusted with nurturing and contributing to Newmarket's story. Residents of all ages and interests are drawn to NPL to benefit from expertise, technologies and resources as they learn, explore, create, solve problems and make decisions. With the assistance of NPL, residents participate in an increasingly knowledge-based economy that blends know-how with know-that, entrepreneurship and innovation. Knowledge enables people to discover more than they've ever imagined about their potential, their possibilities, their community and their world. The Library Inspires their Growth.

To achieve this Vision and fulfill our Role, we will Ignite Community Dialogue, Lead a Learning Community, and Ready our Capabilities by focusing on our Key Elements: Collaborative Relationships, Spaces, Positioning, Resources, and Organization & Operations.



Igniting Community Dialogue, Discovery & Debate

Our goal is to ignite conversations that build connections between people and organizations, affiliations that strengthen and position Newmarket as *the* place to live and work. The Library is a key meeting place that facilitates discussions and builds relationships among local community organizations and individuals who share a common vision of Newmarket's future, and have the capacity to play a constructive role in building that future. Our expertise, resources, and virtual and physical spaces, provide a venue that encourages local dialogue, debate and decision-making among citizens. The Library will be a place where people can gain new insights and awareness, and explore different perspectives.

A public library exists to positively impact the community. To achieve this, the library must be seen as more than just a quiet place full of books. It must be viewed as a dynamic service organization committed to the growth of individual and collective capabilities, a place where residents can solve problems, learn something new, and enjoy themselves. No longer merely the gatekeeper and intermediary of books and journals, we will increasingly be defined by our active contribution to the community's creative capital of local information and history.

We will do everything in our power to ensure that the residents of Newmarket view the Library as a critical connector in their community and their lives, providing inviting spaces, collections, services, programs and a unique mixture of published and unpublished media and content.

Libraries have an essential but different job from attracting tourists. Like school districts, community colleges and area universities, libraries are critically important to the long-term economic health of the regions they serve. Along with these other critical education and information institutions, libraries sustain the human capital that enriches a region in the long run.

*Holt & Elliott, Placing a Value on Public Libraries:
Cost-Benefit Analysis: Tool to Measure
Public Library Benefits*

Igniting Community Dialogue, Discovery & Debate

Specific Initiatives:

- Complete a space planning study, including possibilities for satellite and outreach service delivery
- Develop an event strategy with a compelling blend of formal and informal presentations, panel discussions, and debates
- Redefine our approach to partnerships, building more collaborative working relationships that allow the Library and our partners to deliver exceptional programs and services
- Develop a strategy for extending our services and resources beyond the main location
- Leverage emerging technologies that allow individuals and groups to connect with others
- Explore social platforms and discovery tools to better connect people with Library resources and with each other

Leading a Learning Community

Our goal is to contribute to enabling all residents to fully participate in an increasingly knowledge-based, technology-driven economy, and to be recognized by residents as an essential community hub that inspires learning and personal growth. The Library values universal access and will continue to work to dismantle barriers that hinder a fully literate community, providing resources and services that contribute to all forms of literacy, particularly digital and technological literacy. We will continue to advance childhood literacy, and increasingly build programs and platforms for people to learn and develop new skills. In so doing, we will advance the community's social, economic and cultural potential.

Specific Initiatives:

- Implement a co-discovery service model emphasizing ways in which people optimize resources to learn to “do something” or to “know something”
- Collaborate with our partners to investigate under-served community segments to identify service and program gaps, particularly in technology and digital literacies
- Co-create and offer in-demand programs with our partners that address these gaps
- Identify performance measures to gauge the impact of programs and continually improve them

“Two-thirds of libraries report they provide the only free access to computers and the Internet in their communities. Libraries function as crucial technology hubs, not merely for free Web access, but for those who need computer training and assistance. Library business centers help support entrepreneurship and retraining. For thousands and thousands of American kids, libraries are the only safe place they can find to study, a haven free from the dangers of street or the numbing temptations of television. As schools cut back services, the library looms even more important to countless children. And libraries often offer young parents the only chance they can provide to inculcate their children in a culture of books, one of the most essential building blocks for success in school.”

Author Scott Turow

Readying our Capabilities

Our goal is to have everyone involved in the Library contribute to its vision, both collectively and individually. We believe that everyone should understand how their roles, and the tasks they undertake, make a difference to the Library and to the lives of people living and working in the community. The Library must be an organization based on lifelong learning, striving to develop the skills and understanding of every employee so that they can perform their job to the utmost of their ability. The Library's vision of Inspiring Growth applies not only to the community and its residents, but to the people affiliated with the Library who make key contributions to achieving that vision.

Specific Initiatives:

- Share our vision and directions of the new Strategic Plan
- Restructure our organization to align with the service model
- Review and, as required, revise roles to reflect the responsibilities and work required by the service model
- Engage Board members as ambassadors of the Library and its vision to attend and speak at community events
- Pursue every opportunity for staff, Board and volunteers to develop the skills, awareness and confidence required to implement our strategies
- Be accountable for the success of this plan by identifying and assigning responsibility for performance indicators that measure the impact and outcomes of our strategies in the community

The chief condition on which, life, health and vigor depend, is action. It is by action that an organism develops its faculties, increases its energy, and attains the fulfillment of its destiny.

Retired General Colin Powell

Our Planning Approach

A healthy, progressive organization must constantly reflect on how it can best serve its community and customers today, tomorrow, and into the future. Strategic planning is a dynamic, ongoing process and every five years an organization needs to formalize its thinking and its strategies. We began our formal strategic planning in January 2012. The Library Board and staff sought to understand the context in which the Library operates today, and the trends and issues that will impact Newmarket and the Library during the next 5 to 10 years¹. We listened to the residents of Newmarket, both users and non-users, community and business leaders, and youth. We also investigated services and programs underway in other libraries, and the reactions in their communities to these offerings.

The Library Board considered the results of these inquiries, and discussed the implications for the Library's future. As a result of public and staff consultations – and the technological, economic, and social shifts impacting Newmarket, its citizens, businesses and organizations – we recognized that our strategies must address the Library's spaces, resources, collaborative relationships, organizational infrastructure, and its image in the community.

With our goal to create a progressive, practical plan, we carefully selected strategies that are both visionary and doable, driving services that:

- Address a gap in the community
- Impact a significant number of people in the community
- Connect and engage the community
- Respond to demographic trends
- Align with Newmarket's vision as a knowledge-based economy and a regional centre where people live and work, specifically bridging the digital divide and encouraging self-directed lifelong learning

Our approach was to focus on the future and what matters most to the people of Newmarket. We invite you to join us in implementing these strategies. Engage and be engaged. Inspire and be inspired. Together we will realize the Library's Vision of Inspiring Growth of an engaged, informed Newmarket.

“Libraries are no longer hushed reading rooms but busy social hubs for the exchange of life skills and information. They have become community centers in the very best sense – places where we build community and weave together lives and dreams. The unemployed come to find job training and job opportunities; new immigrants come to learn English, students use the library for college readiness and college access, and adolescents can explore difficult social and emotional issues in the safe space of a library.”

**Caroline Kennedy's 2011
Keynote to the Carnegie
Corporation New York/New
York Times Award Ceremony**

¹ A background report to the Strategic Plan summarizes this information.

"You cannot have a functioning economy if you do not have innovation. You cannot have a functioning democracy if you cannot have the citizenry able to inform itself. We should emphasize that libraries are not frills. They are not luxuries, but a sacred component of education and democracy."

Anthony Marx, President, New York Public Library, and Dr. David Nasaw, City University of New York (Dias, 2012)

Newmarket Public Library

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digital literacy discussions collaboration innovation connections

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