

# Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Equal Opportunity

| Integration

| Independence

| Dignity



## Newmarket

2024-2028

## Message from Mayor and Town of Newmarket Council



Council of the Town of Newmarket 2022-2026

We want Newmarket to be one of the most inclusive and welcoming communities in Canada. In keeping with this, Council has made it a priority to constantly strive to meet the accessibility needs of the community.

Our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan sets out actions to continue to improve Town services and the experience we create for our residents to make Newmarket more accessible.

We will continue to work with Newmarket's Accessibility Advisory Committee, staff, and community partners to enhance and foster an inclusive community that meets the needs of people with disabilities.

Part of being an inclusive community is creating exceptional experiences everyone can enjoy within shared and accessible spaces. An example is the new Mulock Park and the historic Mulock House. Located in the Park, the Mulock House will be adapted to provide all residents with access to experience the art and history that will be displayed there and experience the cultural and community events that will take place there.

On behalf of Council, we want to thank the Accessibility Advisory Committee for their valuable feedback on Town projects throughout the term and assistance in the

development of this Plan.

## **Message from the Town of Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee**

The Town of Newmarket's Accessibility Advisory Committee's goal is to encourage and facilitate accessibility for all persons with disabilities in the Town of Newmarket. The goal of providing a fully accessible community for all is an important undertaking.

We are pleased to be provided an opportunity to act on the community's behalf and have a role in advising Newmarket Council on various initiatives that support achieving an accessible community. A Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is essentially a road map to how and when the municipality will meet Ontario's accessibility requirements, and our committee has worked with staff and Council to review and provide feedback on how this work will occur in the years ahead. Since the creation of the Town's first Multi-year Plan in 2013, much progress has been made in reaching the goals of the AODA. With the renewal of this Plan, the Committee will continue to work with Council and staff to ensure this progress continues well into the future.

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

We invite your comments, participation and commitment to assist the Town of Newmarket in achieving a fully accessible community.

### **Statement of Commitment**

At the Town of Newmarket, we believe that diversity is one of our greatest strengths, and inclusion is essential for fostering a vibrant, innovative, and supportive community. We are committed to understanding and meeting the diverse needs of all people within our community. This includes ensuring that persons with disabilities have equitable access to all Town programs, goods, services, and facilities, allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way as others, respecting the four core principles of:

- Independence
- Dignity
- Integration
- Equal Opportunity

The Town of Newmarket's accessibility policies are grounded in our Strategic Plan vision of a community that is 'Well Beyond the Ordinary' and our employee mission of "Making

Newmarket Even Better” by:

- enriching lives; and,
- increasing accessibility; and,
- striving for service excellence; and,
- improving inter-connectivity; and,
- being well respected in achieving balanced living.

## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Overview**

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR; O. Reg. 191/11) requires the Town prepare a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (“Plan”). An organizational strategy to prevent and remove barriers and enact the requirements in the standards must be included in the Plan. The IASR also requires that the accessibility plan be reviewed and updated at least every five years. This document is the Plan for the Town of Newmarket and is designed to meet the requirements the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and will be updated annually in combination with the annual status report.

The accessibility planning process is one that is ongoing. Discussions regarding accessibility planning take place between Council, Staff and the Accessibility Advisory Committee throughout the year. The Plan provides an opportunity to establish an implementation strategy, demonstrate current achievements and identify barriers and future priorities. Routine monitoring is required to ensure that applicable initiatives are incorporated in the Plan and that progress is identified.

The first Town of Newmarket Plan focused on the implementation requirements of the IASR. With this 2025 review, all of the major milestones in the IASR implementation have passed. The current focus of the Plan is to continue the progress made by the Town, with the AODA’s goal in mind of a fully accessible Ontario by January 1, 2025.

The implementation strategy outlined in this Plan identifies both short and long-term accessibility initiatives that are related to the five core standards of: customer service, information and communication, transportation, employment, and design of public spaces. The Plan outlines the objectives, status, and if applicable strategy / action plan to achieve each objective and a timeframe to achieve compliance. The progress of the Plan will be reviewed and reported on annually, together with any additional initiatives that have been identified.

The Town of Newmarket has established a strong foundation for accessibility planning that ensures actions are responsive to community needs and ensures real and effective change for people with disabilities.

## **Guiding Legislation**

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. The purpose of the AODA is to benefit all Ontarians by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by 2025.

### **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation**

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11) has combined the standards created by several separate regulations into one regulation. The standards it contains relate to the removal of barriers in five areas.

#### **Information and Communications Standard**

The [Information and Communications Standard](#) outlines requirements for organizations to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities. This includes requirements for websites and web content, as well as the need to provide public information in accessible formats.

#### **Employment Standard**

The [Employment Standard](#) requires employers to provide for accessibility throughout the stages of employment, including recruitment, hiring and career advancement.

#### **Transportation Standard**

The requirements in the [Transportation Standard](#) are designed to ensure transportation providers make their services and vehicles accessible to people with disabilities. These standards are wide ranging and include requirements for public transit and accessible taxi cabs.

## **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

The [Design of Public Spaces Standard](#) ensures that public spaces are designed to include specific features that make it easier for to use public spaces. This standard includes features related to sidewalks, pedestrian signals, ramps, parking spaces and service counters. It also applies to recreational public spaces, such as trails, outdoor eating areas and play spaces.

## **Customer Service Standard**

The [Customer Service Standard](#) was the first standard under the AODA to become law. This regulation establishes accessibility standards for customer service and ensures people with disabilities receive goods and services in a manner that takes into account a person's disability.

## **Compliance Timelines**

Since the introduction of the AODA in 2005 and subsequent regulations, timelines for compliance have been established. As of the 2024, no compliance deadlines remain for the Integrated Accessibility Standards. The target date for compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is January 1, 2025.

This report includes the Annual Accessibility Status Report for 2023 and 2024.

This report includes the requirements of the IASR, the associated timelines for the Town's compliance, and the strategies employed by the Town to meet these requirements.

## **Foundation and Principles**

Increased accessibility is part of the Town of Newmarket's community vision and corporate mission. In addition, the Town of Newmarket's Council Priorities for the 2022 to 2026 Term include Extraordinary public spaces – creating exceptional experiences for the community in shared and accessible public spaces and diverse, welcoming, and inclusive community – building a strong, healthy and equitable community where everyone feels an unwavering sense of belonging. A strong foundation has been established through five-year Plans that continue to strengthen with the following principles:

## **Informed and Committed Leadership**

- Town of Newmarket Council is committed to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities through the implementation of the Customer Service and IASR policies and Accessibility Plans, and Council's Priorities for the 2022 to 2026 Term for Extraordinary Public Spaces and diverse, welcoming and inclusive community including this Plan.
- All Town of Newmarket departments have provided input to the Plan.
- Accountability is demonstrated by making all applicable Town of Newmarket documentation available to the public, and in alternate formats upon request.
- Mandatory accessibility training is provided to all employees including regular

full-time, regular part-time, casual, sessional, seasonal and contract staff, sub-contractors, volunteers and all persons who participate in developing Newmarket's policies. Access Forward training is mandated for volunteers on Town Advisory Committees. Training is also designed and adapted to apply to the type of work, location and staff involvement with the public.

- Staff are engaged and encouraged to incorporate accessibility practices into daily work across the organization by considering accessibility requirements when preparing procedural documents, procuring goods or services, or developing programs and services.
- The Town has an internal Inclusion, Diversity, Equity Advocacy group that consists of staff from across the organization, and work to implement various diversity and inclusivity activities that align with corporate objectives and accessibility.

## Alignment

For the Plan to be successful with its implementation strategy there is a need for the plan to be aligned with other Town of Newmarket guiding documents:

- Vision – 'Well Beyond the Ordinary' means encouraging a sense of community supported by our employee mission of "Making Newmarket Even Better" to include:
  - Serving all life-cycle stages and abilities
  - Supporting cultural harmony and ethnic diversity
  - Preserving arts, culture, entertainment and heritage
  - Providing accessible recreational, facilities, green and open spaces, parks, playgrounds and playing fields
  - Programming recreational services and events that shape identity and contribute to community spirit, particularly youth and seniors' facilities and programs
  - Ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities
- Council's Priorities for the 2022-2026 term include:
  - Community and economic vibrancy: attracting and retaining amazing people and businesses to ensure Newmarket's long-term viability through sustainable jobs, while creating a strong and unique brand that differentiates Newmarket from other communities.
  - Customer-first way of life (enhanced by technology): ensuring the community has timely access to services that enhance their quality of life.
  - Extraordinary places and spaces: Creating exceptional experiences for the community in shared and accessible public spaces.
  - Environmental sustainability: preserving our environmental assets and addressing climate change for future generations.
  - Diverse, welcoming, and inclusive community: building a strong, healthy, and equitable community where everyone feels an unwavering sense of belonging.
- Newmarket Official Plan: Requiring that both the public and private sector



commit to building structures and communities that are safe, accessible and reflect employee core values of Courage and Creativity, Accountability and Accessibility, Respect and Integrity and Excellence.

- Accessibility Policies: Establishes the Town of Newmarket's Accessibility commitment
  - [Accessible Customer Service Policy and Procedures](#)
  - [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\) Policy](#)
- Statement of Commitment: Affirms the Town of Newmarket's commitment to accessibility
  - The Town of Newmarket's 'Statement of Commitment' to accessibility is included as part of the IASR Policy. The statement affirms the commitment to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner through the implementation of policies that ensure that persons with disabilities shall have equitable access to all Town programs, goods, services and facilities allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers, respecting the four core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity.

## Coordination

The accountability for the various objectives within the Plan is a shared responsibility with the various departments and responsibilities related to employees, members of the Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee, Human Resources Department, Directors/Managers/Supervisors and the Chief Administrative Officer/Commissioners are clearly outlined in the Town of Newmarket IASR Policy.

The Newmarket Public Library is included in this Plan.

## Evaluation and Reporting

The Town of Newmarket will continue to review and consult with staff, the Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee, people with disabilities and any other individuals or groups who provide accessibility related feedback.

Additional evaluation and reporting include:

- Annual review of the Plan and preparation of a status update. This status update is prepared for Council to identify progress of the Plan's implementation, accomplishments and achievements, and is posted online and available in alternative formats.
- [Compliance reports](#) submitted to the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility, who regulates compliance for all Ontario Organizations.
- A report on the accessibility of a Municipal Election is completed following a Municipal Election as required by the Municipal Elections Act.

## Town of Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town of Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) was established in 2003 and is responsible for encouraging and facilitating accessibility for all persons with



disabilities in the Town of Newmarket by advising with the prevention, identification and removal of barriers that restrict people with disabilities from participating in Town programs or accessing services and facilities.

The Advisory Committee is made up of dedicated volunteers (who have individual lived experiences and/or disabilities), staff, and a Council representative who all are committed to working towards a barrier-free Newmarket. The Advisory Committee's term is the same as the term of Council and at a new term, a new Advisory Committee is formed from the community through an application process.

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. Since the creation of the Town's first Plan, the Accessibility Advisory Committee has formed an integral part of the Town's strategy towards its implementation. A summary of the numerous projects and initiatives which the Committee was involved in from 2019 to 2024 is provided as an attachment.

## **Accessibility Partnerships in the Region and Beyond**

Accessibility planning involves many forms of consultation and the Town of Newmarket encourages involvement from a variety of people and groups. The development of this Plan required input from many staff including the Accessibility Working Group from across the organization, the Newmarket Accessibility Advisory Committee and members of the public through ongoing feedback to staff.

The Town of Newmarket also participates in accessibility planning with York Region. Town Staff also participate in the York Region Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group. This group is committed to welcoming and inclusive communities and includes members from a wide variety of community groups situated in York Region including all local municipalities, police, school boards, health care providers, United Way of Toronto and York Region, Conservation Authorities, and the York Region Children's Aid Society.

## **Plans for the Removal of Barriers for 2025 to 2029**

- Continue Refresh of the Town's website and developer submission guidelines in 3D.
- Working towards converting the freight elevator to a passenger elevator at the Elman W. Campbell Museum
- Expansion of Adapted Summer Camps for Children and Youth
- Training two (2) staff to be CPI (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® Training) trainers to providing training to Full Time & Part Time Staff to safely recognize and respond to everyday crisis situations that may involve more challenging behaviours
- New additional accessible Fitness Centre opening at Ray Twinney.
- Reviewing all Recreation & Culture portfolios to see how accessibility and inclusion can be increased.
- Continue support of hybrid meeting for all of Council's Advisory Committees and Board Meeting.

- Fairy Lake Park Washroom reconstruction and continuation of design for new accessible washroom facilities
- Riverwalk Commons (Community Centre) outdoor washroom renovation and redesign; design phase for reconstruction of outdoor washrooms to make more inclusive and universal.
- Ray Twinney Recreation Complex way finding signage and updated signage.
- Rebuild the accessibility seating area for Pad 1 at Ray Twinney Recreation Complex.
- Magna Centre pool changeroom design; continuation Design Phase for gender-neutral changerooms to replace men's and ladies changeroom for pool area.
- Old Town Hall accessible washroom improvements (e.g. automatic door opener, barrier-free travel path, accessories, emergency call system).
- Newmarket Public Library Accessibility recommendations included in the 2024 capital request for fire signal and detection replacement.
- Newmarket Public Library to install an accessible study pod in first quarter 2025
- Two (2) new Inclusive Pickleball courts
- Implementation of signage along trails including trail difficulty ratings, length of trail, trail slope and accessible features
- Reviewing all portfolios in Parks Services to see how accessibility and inclusion can be increased.
- Continue to put AODA at the forefront of all design and site plan reviews
- Provide a range of accessible picnic tables with sufficient space for wheelchair users
- Planned renovations to the ground level washrooms and hallway in Central York Fire Services Fire Station 4-1 to increase accessibility.