

## March & April Strategic Operations Report

### Empowering Our Community (and Staff)

- As part of the Library's strategy to provide leading-edge service, the team launched new customer service standards through a series of "Together for All" workshops. These interactive sessions engaged staff across all departments to foster a shared understanding of service values and expectations. The workshops focused on consistency, accessibility, and a people-first approach, laying the foundation for an exceptional experience for every visitor to Newmarket Library.
- Newmarket Library is hosting a Library Technician student from Mohawk College on a job shadowing placement. The student will gain hands-on experience in each department of the Library, helping to empower and shape the next generation of library technicians.
- To continue offering engaging and relevant services while promoting interdepartmental collaboration, the Maker Hub coordinator has successfully trained staff from the Circulation, Programming, and Community Engagement teams on various Maker Hub equipment and resources. This initiative has built capacity for the upcoming Maker Hub programs and increased staff confidence in supporting their own department's needs, fostering greater cross-departmental engagement.
- Newmarket Library is partnering with five other York Region libraries—Vaughan, Richmond Hill, Markham, Aurora, and East Gwillimbury—to march in the York Pride Parade on Saturday, June 21st, at 6:00 p.m. The theme will be "The Library is OPEN," inspired by a phrase popularized in the New York Ballroom scene and on RuPaul's Drag Race. The key message is that libraries are for everyone.

### Ensuring Welcoming and Accessible Places and Spaces

- A total of 951 items were borrowed from the Magna Centre through the Library on the Go Kiosk, and 516 items were checked out from the Ray Twinney Recreation Centre location during March and April. Over 70% of the items borrowed from the machines were children's books.
- Maker Hub staff launched a new community partnership with Community Living to deliver hands-on workshops featuring a different piece of equipment or technology each month. Each session is designed with three skill level options to ensure accessibility. The first session was highly successful, with participants enthusiastic about learning to create their own buttons. Additionally, staff reported feeling more confident in delivering programming to the community.

## Providing Engaging and Relevant Services

- The Library partnered with the Senior Iranian Multicultural Association to present an art exhibit showcasing paintings by local Iranian-Canadian seniors, in recognition of Norooz and Persian Heritage Month. The initiative also featured a haftseen table on display at the Library. The event received very positive community feedback, with over 60 attendees at the exhibit's launch.
- As part of the Norooz partnership, the Library piloted a Farsi-language storytime led by a local Iranian senior and former teacher. This program supports the growing Farsi-speaking community in Newmarket by fostering welcoming and culturally relevant spaces.
- On April 5 and 6, Library staff participated in the annual Newmarket Home Show to promote Library services. To enhance community engagement, the team engaged a staging company to create a "community living room," moving beyond the traditional booth setup to reduce barriers and encourage interaction with the community. While library card registrations were lower than the previous year, staff launched a SmartPass pilot, allowing patrons to upload their library cards directly to their phones.
- Thus far in 2025, the outreach services team registered over 530 new library members, marking a 180% increase compared to the first quarter of 2024. This growth is attributed to a slight increase in outreach events, a strategic focus on participation at community and school events, and the implementation of a digital sign-up option at those locations.
- Library staff expanded programming in the Maker Hub, delivering 12 programs attended by 47 participants—a 92% increase over 2024 figures. Equipment bookings and patron inquiries also doubled compared to previous months, with 44 bookings recorded and 634 questions answered.

## Customer Feedback

- **"Thank you for offering this opportunity to connect with other cultures through storytelling" Jenna K, mother of two girls attending Chocolate Seder Passover event on Sunday, April 6.**
- **"This is such a great service. Thank you for doing the program. I couldn't access the equipment at the Oak Ridges branch because they relocated to Richmond Hill, where there is no one available to assist with the equipment." -Maria, customer using the equipment in the Maker Hub**
- **"Thanks again for helping us a few weekends ago with the cricut maker and introducing the 3D printer to my partner, he was so excited! And I am so excited to continue with wedding DIYs after the intro you gave me!" - Anthea**



**The participant shows off a button proudly made with the Maker Hub button maker.**



**Library staff showing Community Living participants how to use the button maker.**