



## September – October 2025 Strategic Operations Report

### Empowering Our Community (and Staff)

- Newmarket Library is an active participant in the Children, Youth and Families Situation Table, organized by York Region and York Regional Police. This weekly forum brings together social service agencies to collaboratively address situations where residents and families face acutely elevated risk. By contributing library resources and expertise, the Library helps empower individuals and families to access information, programs, and tools that support stability and resilience. This partnership ensures the Library plays a direct role in connecting vulnerable community members with the services they need.
- The nine public libraries in York Region have united to create and share monthly promotional materials with the York Region District School Board for distribution among teachers and students. These materials highlight inclusive library services and resources designed to foster learning and engagement for three key audiences: kindergarten, elementary, and secondary students. By taking a leadership role in coordinating this initiative, Newmarket Library is helping empower young learners and educators with access to knowledge and opportunities that strengthen lifelong learning and community connection.

### Ensuring Welcoming and Accessible Places and Spaces

- For the first time, Newmarket Library hosted the ArtWalk inside the main library space rather than limiting it to the Multi-Purpose Room. This change created a more inviting and inclusive environment, encouraging visitors to explore the Library's full range of services. As a result, over 700 additional people walked through our doors compared to October 2024, demonstrating the impact of integrating cultural events into our shared spaces.
- Aligned with York Region's inaugural Welcoming Week, Newmarket Library introduced its first-ever Newcomer Tours. Three tours were offered: one in English, one translated into Farsi, and one translated into Mandarin and Cantonese. These tours showcased in-person resources and included a presentation on multilingual digital services. The response was overwhelmingly positive—particularly the Mandarin and Cantonese tour, which attracted 35 participants. Many attendees

expressed surprise at the breadth of resources available and signed up for library cards immediately, reinforcing the Library's role as an accessible and welcoming hub for newcomers.

- The Library's main foyer underwent significant updates to create a more welcoming entrance. Improvements included fresh paint, updated flooring, and the removal of clutter. A new wall wrap will soon be installed to visually draw visitors into the Library, ensuring that the first impression reflects an open, accessible, and engaging space for all community members.
- As of September, 15.1% of the overall collection (physical and digital) meets diversity criteria, with the physical collection at 15.6%, up from 15.3% in November 2024. Although the Library is not currently on track to meet its updated goal of increasing the diversity ratio to 16% by Q4 2025, staff have intensified efforts through intentional weeding and targeted purchasing to make larger shifts toward increasing diverse content. These actions ensure collections remain relevant, representative, and accessible to all members of the community.
- On October 16, 2025, Newmarket Library hosted acclaimed author Adam Shoalts at the Old Town Hall for a sold-out event attended by more than 160 people. The evening featured live music by the Puffer Bellies and showcased artwork from members of the Newmarket Group of Artists, creating a vibrant cultural experience that brought the community together and highlighted the Library's role as a community connector to arts and culture.

## Providing Engaging and Relevant Services

- At the annual Fire Hall event on September 20, the Outreach team signed up 124 new patrons for library cards—a record for a single event. September became the busiest outreach month of the year, with 354 new cards issued, demonstrating the Library's commitment to connecting with residents beyond its walls.
- In October, Newmarket Library partnered with the Main Street BIA to celebrate Canadian Library Month and Ontario Public Library Week. Eleven local businesses participated, offering discounts and prizes to encourage library membership and usage. While the campaign did not significantly increase memberships, it strengthened community partnerships and promoted the Library as a central hub for local engagement.
- Newmarket Library launched a pilot program in five elementary schools to introduce first graders to library services. One school extended participation to Kindergarten and Grades 2 and 3, resulting in 79 first graders and 313 total patrons receiving or

renewing cards in the first month. This initiative fosters early literacy and lifelong learning by connecting families to library resources.

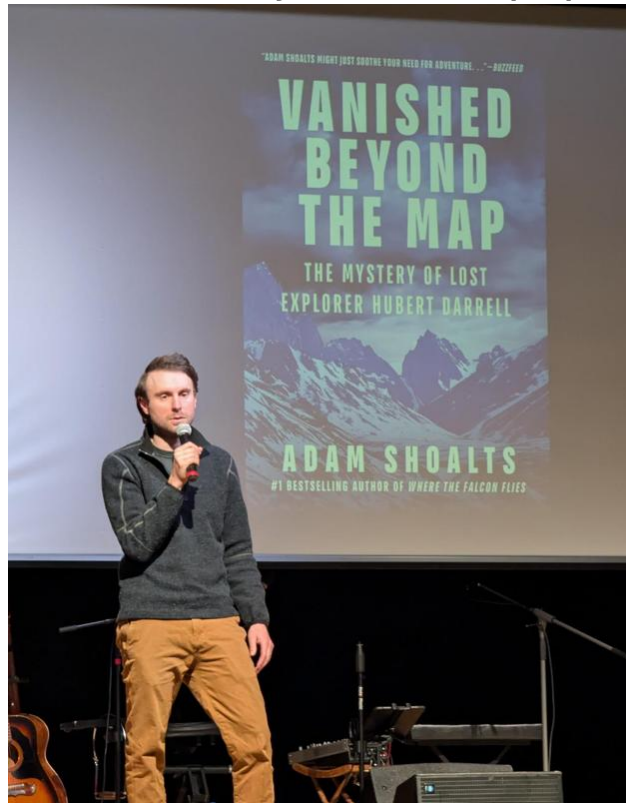
- Programming staff developed new early literacy kits for families with children from birth to age three. Each kit includes board books, puzzles, puppets, stacking cups, and parent guides to support early learning through play and shared reading. These kits provide families with engaging tools to build foundational literacy skills and strengthen connections to the Library's collection.
- Newmarket Library partnered with the Town for Culture Days, hosting five events: a musical storytime at the Farmers' Market with York Chamber Ensemble, two newcomer tours, and two ArtTalks with the Newmarket Group of Artists. These programs celebrated creativity and cultural diversity, reinforcing the Library's role as an inclusive community space.
- Library staff added new items to its Lendery collection, including a second power washer, a portable Bluetooth karaoke player, a portable DVD player, and a snow roof rake. These additions provide practical, cost-saving resources that meet community needs and encourage creative, hands-on experiences.

## Customer Feedback

"Thank you for creating a fun bonding experience with my baby and the opportunity to meet other babies and moms. Wish there was more programs for babies!" - shared with Programmer Tracy during her monthly Baby Art program.

"Vineeta was so nice, helpful and accommodating with our group and showing us how to use the Maker Hub. We had a great time and are looking forward to coming back again to learn more. We have seen many updates at the library and more resources coming. Keep up the great work. Please more inclusive programs for adults with disabilities during the day. We appreciate our day program being invited and included in library programs" - Our Happy Place

**Acclaimed author Adam Shoalts at the Old Town Hall for a sold-out event attended by more than 160 people**



**live music by the Puffer Bellies**