



Town of Newmarket
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Community Open House Post-Event Information Report

Report Number: 2018-04

Department(s): Office of the CAO, Corporate Services Commission, Development and Infrastructure Commission, Community Services Commission

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Executive Summary

This information report summarizes the outcome of the Town's Community Open House Event. This event focused on informing, educating and collecting feedback on current and future Town of Newmarket project and initiatives. This event attracted close to 300 attendees.

This report compiles quantitative and qualitative data and highlights the partnership and collaboration between various business groups within the Town of Newmarket and other local government stakeholders.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to capture the success of the Town of Newmarket's Community Open House Event that was held on February 27, 2018 from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Municipal Offices.

Background

On February 27, 2018 the Town of Newmarket held a Community Open House Event at the Municipal Offices from 4 to 8 p.m. The Community Open House Event served as an opportunity for the Town to inform and educate residents, and community stakeholders on the Town's current initiatives and projects. It also allowed staff to gather feedback and engage with the community.

Discussion

Internal Working Group

An internal working group consisting of the Director of Recreation and Culture, Director of Legislative Services and the Director of Corporate Communications was established to lead this event. Staff chosen from each area contributed to the planning, implementation and measurement of the event.

Premises of the event

All departments across the organization were represented at the Community Open House. Each department showcased upcoming projects and initiatives that would be of interest to the community. All questions and feedback were recorded and used to gauge the success of the event.

Other stakeholder groups such as the Newmarket Public Library, Central York Fire Services, Newmarket Hydro, vivaNext, Metrolinx and York Region Rapid Transit were invited to participate in the Community Open House event as well.

Determining Factor: success of the event

The success of the Community Open House would be determined by analyzing quantitative and qualitative data.

1. Number of attendees (quantitative)
2. Number of participants in the surveys (quantitative)
3. Positive or Negative Feedback received at the departmental booths (qualitative)
4. Positive or Negative feedback received in the surveys (qualitative)

Communications and Marketing

A Communications and Marketing plan was developed to encourage community members to attend. The campaign focused on the staff that work to make Newmarket *even* better everyday. This was represented with photos of staff in their day-to-day jobs and how they contribute to a *well* beyond the ordinary community.

Communications Tactics

Some communication/marketing tactics included:

- Social Media Campaign
 - Instagram
 - Twitter
 - Facebook – Event Page/Individual Posts
- Ad in the local Newmarket Era
- Ads in the Town of Newmarket's Town Page in the Newmarket Era

- Designated webpage at newmarket.ca/communityopenhouse
- Radio Ads – 10 second traffic tags and 30 second commercials
- Ad in Newmarket’s monthly e-newsletter Newmarket Now featuring Council Highlights
- Email invitation to community groups and Town of Newmarket Committees
- Email invitation to Newmarket’s Recreation and Culture email group

Details on the analytics and success of each communication tactic can be viewed in the attached Community Open House Post-Event Report.

Post-Event Results

Happy or Not survey stands

Survey stands were placed at the exit of the Community Open House with the question: Did you find this Community Open House event informative?

The results were:

- Very Positive: 74%
- Positive: 18%
- Negative: 3%
- Very Negative: 5%

114 people participated in the survey.

Post-Survey sent via Email

A post-survey was sent out to residents who had signed-in at the event and left an email address. The purpose was to gauge any additional feedback on the event and to provide the Town with information on the most effective communication tactics.

Through these emails collected, the Town was able to increase its email distribution list by 163 emails.

Question: How did you hear about the Community Open House?

- Newmarket Town Page in the Newmarket Era – 30.00%
- Email Invitation to Recreation and Culture subscribers – 22.50%
- Facebook – 18.75%
- Word of Mouth – 13.92%
- Letter – 12.50%
- Ad in the Newmarket Era – 12.50%
- Councillor Advertisement – 11.25%
- Website – 5.00%
- Other – 5%:
 - Cycle Newmarket

- NTAG
 - Google Central Park coming to Newmarket and read about this event
 - Star Newspaper – digital article about the Mulock Property
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- Newmarket Now – e-newsletter – 3.75%
 - Twitter – 3.75%
 - Council Meeting – 1.25%
 - Radio – 0%
 - Instagram – 0%

Please note that users were able to vote for more than one communication tactic in the survey.

Question: Did you find this Community Open House Informative?

- Yes: 98.73%
- No: 1.27%

80 people participated in the post-event email survey.

Feedback from the Community

In addition to the post-event survey, staff at the event were asked to record questions, suggestions and feedback they received at their booth. All recorded items helped departments determine the types of information the public are interested in and served as an opportunity to engage the public for improved outcomes on Town projects and initiatives.

Feedback was also gathered through a post-event survey sent out to all community members that signed-in at the event.

Feedback and questions received from the community was generally positive. Many residents found the event very informative and wanted to know when the next Community Open House would take place.

Feedback collected:

- Thank you for doing this open house. Please continue to do them if possible.
- I didn't know that the Town did so much – what a great team.
- I was very impressed with the enthusiasm, pride, and professionalism of the staff I spoke to.
- I really liked the open house and chance to ask questions and see plans of improvements planned for the town. Thank you for holding this open house and hope to see more in the future.

- I was very disappointed on the information/board(s) on the recent purchase of the Mulock Estate. With this \$24 million purchase, I expected to see more than what I had already read about in the local paper. It seemed like The Mulock Estate was not showcased very well but tucked away in the corner. I felt the info boards on the park playground setups got more attention/visibility in the council chambers.
- Great to know that we have an award-winning municipality.
- I am very happy that the Town of Newmarket includes other organizations to be a part of the Community Open House (Central York Fire Services, Newmarket Hydro, vivaNext, Metrolinx, York Region Rapid Transit).
- Expected to be here for 20 minutes but there is so much more to see and take in- it is wonderful.
- Great event, lots of useful information and friendly staff to answer questions! The coffee and cookies were appreciated, too. The Town is doing a terrific job! Keep up the great work. I am happy to be living in Newmarket.
- I learned a lot about upcoming events/plans. I was really happy to attend. I feel like I am a better-informed tax paying resident of Newmarket. Thank you!

A full list of the comments, questions and feedback received during the event can be viewed in the attached Community Open House Post-Event Summary Report.

Conclusion

Overall, the Community Open House was a successful event that focused on informing, educating and engaging the public and for receiving feedback on current and future projects and initiatives. This event attracted close to 300 attendees.

This event represented a successful collaboration between all areas of the Town of Newmarket including its external government stakeholders and demonstrated the importance of community engagement.

This event also served as another opportunity for the Town to continue to align itself with communication best practices while engaging our changing resident demographics as noted in the [Town of Newmarket's Council Strategic Priority](#) of Community Engagement.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

The Community Open House and all the components of the event aligns with the [Town of Newmarket's mission/core values](#) of:

Living Well

- Focusing on traffic and growth management strategy and plans
- Creating meaningful, engaging accessible recreation experiences

Well-Balanced

- Meeting the needs of all Newmarket Residents
- Providing green and open spaces, parks, trails, and sport fields

Well-equipped & managed

- Leading the way by creating an environment for extraordinary public service, focusing on fiscal responsibility and sustainability
- Providing municipal services that meet existing and future needs of residents
- Providing service excellence

Well-Planned & Connected

- Planning for a vibrant and sustainable community by connecting people through ideas, technology and neighbourhoods

Well-Respected

- Creating strategic partnerships with community organizations, neighbouring municipalities, private sector partners and other levels of government to support an environment of collaboration and co-operation
- Encouraging community engagement in local government
- Being valued for our judgement and insight

The Community Open House event also aligns with the [Town of Newmarket's Council Strategic Priority](#) of Community Engagement.

Consultation

N/A

Human Resource Considerations

N/A

Budget Impact

The Community Open House event was completed under the proposed budget of \$2,000.

Attachments

Community Open House Post-Event Summary Report – Prepared by Corporate Communications

Contact

For more information on the Community Open House, please contact Wanda Bennett, Director, Corporate Communications at 905-953-5300 ext. 2040 or email corporatecommunications@newmarket.ca

Approval



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