



**MAYOR VAN BYNEN'S ADDRESS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LUNCHEON
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 02, 2007**

Eternal



Peace

Town of



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Town of Newmarket Council 2006 – 2010

**Mayor Tony Van Bynen
Regional Councillor John Taylor
Councillor Tom Vegh – Ward 1
Councillor Dave Kerwin – Ward 2
Councillor Victor Woodhouse - Ward 3
Councillor Larry Blight - Ward 4
Councillor Joe Sponga - Ward 5
Councillor Dennis Ramsarran - Ward 6
Councillor Chris Emanuel - Ward 7**

Bob Shelton, C.A.O.

Madame President, Chamber Members, Guests

It is a pleasure for me, our council and staff to be here to talk about our community, our vision, our achievements and challenges.

When I brought my family to Newmarket in 1980, our population was only 28,000, Bathurst Street stopped at Mulock Drive and a new subdivision was just beginning to develop along London Road.

Under the leadership of John Cole and Al Mardon the “new” reconstituted Newmarket Chamber of Commerce was beginning to take form. In its third year I had the opportunity to address this Chamber as your President, when we held our meetings in the community centre and in the old town hall.

Over the following 25 years Newmarket experienced substantial and significant changes. York County Hospital has grown to become the Southlake Regional Health Centre, a world class medical facility that serves a population base of 1.2 million people. Newmarket has grown to be a community of over 79,000 and your chamber - our chamber is able to boast a membership of 650 businesses a significant achievement.

I'm delighted to be back before you in what I would like to call in part our Annual General Shareholders Meeting for the Town of Newmarket.

To give you a brief snap shot of our company - your company, we employ 590 people including Central York Fire Services and our Public Library. We process 27,800 accounts payable and payout approximately \$165 Million annually.

Our Property tax revenues exceed \$110 Million annually. Of that we send

- \$41 Million to York Region, and
- \$39 Million to the York Region School Boards.

We collected a almost \$7 Million in Development Charges of which we send

- Over \$4 Million to York Region as well as the York Region School Boards.

Over 15,000 people registered for our recreational programs; we maintain over 1,100 acres of parkland and open space, 34 Ball Diamonds, 76 Soccer pitches, 1 pool, 4 arenas, 386,000 square feet of community centre space, a library and four fire stations. In opening the Magna Centre, we will be adding 2 more pools, and increasing our arenas to 7 and an additional 20,000 square feet of multi-use space.

Our subsidiary Newmarket Hydro has 26,700 customers, generates revenues of over \$66 Million and after paying over \$53 Million for the energy it distributes, provides us with a dividend of \$2 Million in addition to almost \$2 Million in rent and interest payments.

All of this with 9 Members of Council elected to our board of directors, an executive staff of 4 and over 79,000 Shareholders.

It is a pleasure for me to introduce our Board of Directors, members of your council who have joined me here today:

Regional Councillor John Taylor
Councillor Tom Vegh – Ward 1 - regrets
Councillor Dave Kerwin – Ward 2 –regrets he is on vacation
Councillor Victor Woodhouse - Ward 3
Councillor Larry Blight - Ward 4
Councillor Joe Sponga - Ward 5 - regrets
Councillor Dennis Ramsarran - Ward 6
Councillor Chris Emanuel - Ward 7

We also have a number of our staff with us as well, they are:

Bob Shelton, CAO
Sue Plamondon, Commissioner of Legal & Development Services
Bob Dixon, Commissioner of Corporate Services
Rob Prentice, Commissioner of Community Services
Chris Kallio, Economic Development Officer
John Molyneaux, Fire Chief, Central York Fire Services
Paul Ferguson, President & CEO Newmarket Hydro Ltd.
Iain Clinton, Chief Financial Officer, Newmarket Hydro Ltd.
Kelly Towsley, Newmarket Public Library
Miriam Lawson and Pat Noble from my office

We have an exceptional team that is committed to making our community *“well” beyond the ordinary*, and to creating a legacy for Newmarket that we can all be proud of.

For us the word “well” is rich in the values that we want to build on, in creating this legacy. Specifically “well”, in the context of being healthy, as in feeling “well” in addition to “well” beyond the ordinary” in the context of creating an extra-ordinary community.

In building a Healthy Community we need to consider a number of dynamics. For me, a healthy community means:

- knowing, trusting and caring for our neighbors and neighborhoods,
- safe clean streets,
- caring about our environment,
- creating opportunities for people to pursue healthy and active lifestyles,
- creating an atmosphere where business can grow, and...
- delivering municipal services that respond to community needs efficiently, in a way that is affordable for our residents.

From seasonal events like the Santa Claus Parade, the Festival of Lights, Artisans' Festival, Canada Day and First Night Celebrations in our Main Street District, we come together as a community, as neighbors, in the living room of our town and to gathering places like the Farmer's Market, and Fairy Lake, as well as our fabulous trails to name but a few. Newmarket is a wonderful place to live.

It goes beyond our amenities. It's about our people, our sense of community.

In fact, keeping our sense of community through all the changes that we have seen in just the past 26 years is in my mind, our greatest achievement and will prove to be our greatest strength.

Much has been achieved that our Residents, our Council and our staff can rightfully be proud of:

The re-development of the Stickwood Walker Farmstead will be a showcase for integrating green space, into our recreational and affordable housing needs through consensus building and community involvement.

The Magna Centre will be open and operating this spring, and apart from the land acquisition this \$36.9 Million project will have less than ½ % impact on our taxes.

We have laid the ground work for an environmentally friendly subdivision that has been recognized nationally as leading edge and as the right thing to do.

Over the past 2 terms of council we have acquired 200 acres of natural forest lands to expand our parks by almost 18%.

And, although perhaps less visible but equally important, we have developed and adopted a Tree Preservation Policy, Anti-idling Bylaw, Pesticide Ban and our new Official Plan. These initiatives all contain a framework of healthy choices that will shape our community as we move forward.

The challenges which we will face are many and varied. They range from what we can and must do with our own resources with major projects like:

- the redevelopment of our community centre lands;

- consolidating our operations centres to capture operating efficiencies; and sustain and improve service levels.
- and setting out an action plan to respond to increasing flood risks brought on by climate change.

As well, we need to ensure our community services keep pace with the increasing needs of a growing community while at the same time managing our taxes (the cost of providing these services) at a level that is affordable for our residents.

This Council is committed to ensure that our legacy for Newmarket will not be a burden for the generations that follow. Over the next five years we want to build a financial foundation that is sustainable in the long term.

To achieve this we need to continue to set aside enough money to replace our buildings, roads, parks, pipes and equipment so that we are not faced with the dramatic capital needs that are now facing cities like Toronto with the substantial spike in servicing costs that inevitably follow.

Newmarket owns in excess of \$812 Million in assets much of which is not shown on our balance sheet and because most of it is underground infrastructure it is not visible until there is a breakdown.

We included more than \$10 Million in our budget last year for asset replacement funding. This represents about 92% of what is needed based on the age of our infrastructure and further annual adjustments will

be required to allow for construction cost increases which have been tracking at as much as twice the rate of inflation.

We have been making solid progress in this area, over the past 2 terms of council, we have increased the asset replacement funding from 50% to 92% and we need to see this through to the 100% level and in fact beyond the 100% level to make up for the many years of not adequately addressing this important matter. We are committed to a balanced financial plan that ensures the resources we need are in place.

To that end, I have asked Council and staff to help develop and implement a plan that will by the end of five years bring taxes in line with the rate of inflation for the various major components of the budget and ensure that our asset replacement funding is adequate *without* compromising our service levels.

In order to achieve this, we must build on our successes from the “Let’s Make It Happen Project” through our office of continuous improvement to

- review the services we currently provide,
- to ensure that what we do still adds value for our residents, and if so or if we are required to do so by legislation, we need to find ways to deliver these services more efficiently.

We will need to be clear and stay focused on our priorities to make sure we are doing the right things in addition to doing things right.

The business of this council must be the people's business. We must better understand the needs of our community sports & service groups and cultural / theatre groups to build partnerships for progress in a way that is affordable to all.

We have already met with most of these groups in January to review their needs and to better understand their challenges.

We are committed to working together to build short and long term plans, to set priorities that will balance the needs of all community interests and maximize the value of our very significant investments both in facilities as well as the thousands of volunteer hours our community organizations contribute.

During this term of Council, we are committed to developing a cultural master plan that will foster partnerships to coordinate and build on the many initiatives that already bring a number of events to our community.

To the people of Newmarket who have expressed a concern about health care, I reiterate my commitment to work closely with our hospital our MP, Our MPP and the New Local Health Integration Network or LHIN (pronounced lin), *Together* we need to build an environment that will attract more doctors to Newmarket and to make our Regional Cancer Centre at Southlake a reality.

For this Council, health care remains a priority even though it is not within our municipal mandate we will build partnerships that find solutions.

The Southlake Regional Health Centre, our hospital is a world class facility that saves lives daily but let me say also that it is critical to the life of our community.

Last year we hired Chris Kallio, our new Economic Development Officer, and we will soon be appointing an Economic Development Advisory Committee.

As we go forward with our economic development plan, it will become more apparent that we will see significant re-positioning in much of our manufacturing base as evidenced by the recent closure of the Tenatronics Plant.

As we go through our SWOT analysis, I can think of a number of organizations that provide opportunities for us to build and grow our community. Not just because they are major employers, but because they attract other businesses and jobs to the area.

Southlake Regional Health Centre (our hospital) is one of them because access to world class health care is a major consideration for business seeking to relocate.

Another good example is Pickering College which has a world class reputation for quality education that brings “Newmarket” to the rest of the world and students from around the world to Newmarket.

We are strategically positioned as a designated growth area to capture the best of what lays ahead of us. To achieve this we must work with York Region and the province within the Places to Grow legislation to ensure that our town’s infrastructure, neighbourhoods and its very character are preserved and enhanced and are *not* overrun or allowed to strain under the burden of provincial expectations.

We have already taken the important first step in our Official Plan review by laying out the ground rules for intensification. It clearly sets out that the appropriate infrastructure such as roads, transit, municipal and human services must be in place before we consider meeting the intensification requirements of the Province.

I believe that Newmarket, our town, is rich in opportunities if we reach out and embrace them with the same community values that have made us what we are today. Our new economic development plan will become our roadmap to these opportunities and a framework for progress.

As we move forward to develop this plan what is most important is not so much the decisions we must reach but how we achieve them.

I believe the best decisions are the result of working together as a team and building community partnerships that are focused on a shared

vision of what is possible for Newmarket, that includes council, staff, residents and our business community.

For example, I am proud of our most recent partnership with the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce to start up “Smart Commute Central York” to help us reduce the congestion on our streets as well as reduce the amount of Greenhouse Gas emissions.

I’m looking forward to working with our business community as well as we move forward with our new economic development plan.

Another example of partnerships that are working well for us and our neighbours and we refer to this groups as the Northern Six (being Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville) is the recent joint contract for Waste Management Services which effectively has saved the group \$11 Million over ten years and specifically Newmarket \$4 Million over ten years and this also provides improved services to our residents. Additionally, most of the Northern Six communities currently also share an internal auditor which provides invaluable expertise on internal controls and financial management. Individually this would not have been possible.

As you are aware Central York Fire Services provides its services to Aurora, Newmarket and Vandorf and is another example of shared services for value.

I believe it is necessary for everyone to contribute to be truly engaged if we are to reach our full potential.

I believe that everyone should have the opportunity to be heard and that includes council, staff, our residents and our business community.

I believe that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect even though we may not always agree.

Finally, I believe we are positioned for this term to be one of the most successful terms our community has seen and I am confident we will look back in 2010 with the same pride we rightfully have today as we embark on the next term of Council.

In conclusion, the voters of Newmarket have elected a council with experience, a council that is right for the times.

We are fortunate to have competent and caring staff and a solid foundation for the community we all want to build for the generations that will follow. I am proud of their commitment “*to make Newmarket even better*” and their support in making an aggressive agenda a reality through their innovative, pro-active approach to the many challenges we lay before them.

We will not simply respond but lead the way in opportunities to build on our rapidly changing diversity through more open government and community partnerships. Newmarket has been rich in cultural diversity based on fairness, respect and equity from the very first arrival of the Quakers hundreds of years ago and we will continue to see how this makes our community stronger.

As we go forward semi-annual town wide community meetings will be arranged to let you know about the progress we are making and to hear more about what we can do better. You can also access your Mayor in the Market Square on Friday's from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon (weather & schedule permitting) at least once a month. The dates will be posted in the Town Page in the Era Banner and the Town website.

Your Council is committed to 'hands on' teamwork that is focused on the broad interest of our community, as a whole, as we face the challenges ahead. Our residents expect nothing less.

During the twenty six years that my wife, Roxanne, and I have called Newmarket home, we have witnessed numerous changes throughout the town.

While existing neighbourhoods have expanded and new ones have developed, and the demands on the town services feel like they have increased tenfold, our town's essential character has remained as attractive to us as it did when we moved here.

Newmarket is a nurturing town of caring people, a community in the best sense of the word. The challenge for us is not to simply embrace the ongoing changes that are inevitable, but to lead change as a team, as a community while at the same time allowing the character of our town to shine through for all to see.

Knowing the people of our town as I do,

I am confident that we will meet this challenge and that we will prevail.

THANK YOU!