

Re^{newing} Newmarket

TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITY
THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Mayor Van Bynen's Address

Chamber of Commerce Luncheon | Friday February 19, 2010



Good afternoon Mr. Chairman (Wayne), Madame President (Deborah), valued Chamber members and guests.

It is timely that I am giving this speech almost half way through the Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. On December 18 of last year, we were very fortunate to host the Olympic torch celebration, on its 45,000 kilometre journey across the nation.

It was an event that brought our community together in a way you couldn't have imagined – in a way that everyone seemed to be bursting with pride about being Canadian, about being who we are and about being a member of this extraordinary community.

I know that you all have very hectic schedules and demanding workloads, so I greatly appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedules to be here today – to hear about our vision of the bright and promising future we hold for Newmarket. A future filled with growth, prosperity and possibilities.

The role of the Chamber of Commerce and its members is vital to the success of any community. This is evident through our numerous community partnerships.

You have played and will play a crucial role in helping to shape the “New Newmarket,” a community that will be home to many future generations – the children of tomorrow.

So, it's critical that we get it right, do it right, and hold on to our convictions – to see things through, in spite of the turbulent issues of the day.

That, in no small measure, is the role of your municipal Council.
Of people like my colleagues:

- 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)

And, it is the role of people like our outstanding staff:

- Bob Shelton, our CAO
- Bob Dixon, Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services
- Rob Prentice, Commissioner of Community Services
- Paul Ferguson, President and CEO of Newmarket-Tay Power Distribution Ltd.

- Linda Peppiatt, Acting CEO of the Newmarket Public Library
 - Ian Laing, Chief of Central York Fire Services
- And our staff members – many of whom are here today.

I would also like to recognize some special guests that are joining us today:

- Jonathan Kramer, representing our Member of Parliament Lois Brown
 - Our Member of Provincial Parliament, Frank Klees
 - Paul Clarry, Vice President of Facilities and Paramedical Services, Southlake Regional Health Centre
 - Wendy Van Straten, Chair of the Newmarket Public Library
 - Mary-Frances Turner, Vice President of York Region Rapid Transit Corporation
 - Chief Armand LaBarge of the York Regional Police
- All are important partners in building our community.

I am also proud to introduce my significant partner, my wife Roxanne, who is an avid volunteer and a very active member in this community. I am very appreciative of her numerous contributions to Newmarket and thankful for her support over the past 40 years.

My objective today is to share with you briefly a little bit about where we are today; and what we are doing to prepare our community for where we need to be in the future.

Let me start off by saying, I am *very* pleased with what we have been able to accomplish during the current term of council and that this past year, 2009 has been a very important year for Newmarket.

What is easily taken for granted are the “daily business as usual tasks,” that often occur behind the scenes but are integral to making this community operate smoothly. For us, this means being a responsible corporate citizen and an environmental leader.

It means making sure that more than 15 kilometres of trails, over 400 kilometres of roads, and more than 980 acres of parks, open spaces and community facilities are safe, clean and ready to serve you.

It means delivering safe clean water, a reliable power supply and being able to respond effectively – if you should have a fire, a medical emergency or require police protection.

It also means providing free access to information through our library and delivering hundreds of community events and activities to tens of thousands of residents every year.

All in a days work – all of which we are proud to do as efficiently and effectively as any of our peers – in York Region, in the GTA and in Ontario.

We are a community on the cusp of a new era of growth. As you travel through our community, you can see we are virtually built-out and it is no surprise that the world around us is changing – often quite dramatically.

Much of our direction, as we go forward, will be guided by our new **Official Plan**, which provides the framework for managing growth, preserving nature and directing land use. This will act as our roadmap as we move towards being “**redevelopment ready**,” and our population increases to a projected 98,000 by 2026.

Not so long ago, we finished building the Magna Centre to provide the recreational facilities required to accommodate our community needs up to 2026. Now, we are now turning the corner on our new Operations Centre on Harry Walker Parkway, which is scheduled for completion this year.

This environmentally-friendly facility will consolidate a number of municipal services, substantially improve efficiencies and have the capacity we will need when we are serving a community of almost 100,000 people.

With the **2010 Budget** in place, we continue to have the lowest tax levy per capita in York Region – and our property taxes remain below the average when compared with 82 municipalities across Ontario.

And still, we have been leading the way for years in setting aside funding (to the tune of \$12 million annually) for the replacement of infrastructure like roads, pipes and buildings – something which our colleagues in the GTA continue to struggle with. This alone represents approximately 30% of our tax levy.

With the finalization of the Economic Development Strategy and the Cultural Master Plan, we have created the framework and set the stage for our “Community Social Infrastructure” over the next 10 - 15 years.

Our Economic Development Strategy provides a blueprint for the future growth of business and job opportunities in our Town. With a focus on five sectors including:

- Health;
- Knowledge;
- Newmarket as a regional centre;
- Advanced manufacturing; and,
- Arts & culture.

Our goal is to continue to create homegrown jobs and attract urban professionals to Newmarket.

Our Cultural Master Plan acknowledges that arts and culture are an integral part of creating a vibrant and sustainable community.

We have already started with the implementation of the plan, in hosting Council's first ever "Newmarket Celebrates the Arts Gala," in recognition of our many talented local artists – to provide the arts community with financial support and to honour the important role that creativity, imagination and originality plays in shaping our Town.

With the revitalization of our Old Town Hall, and a number of exciting initiatives outlined in the Cultural Master Plan, we are taking our first steps on our journey to the cultural renaissance that will take place here in the coming years. With the Official Plan, Economic Development Strategy and Cultural Master Plan now in place, we have laid the foundation for the promising future of our Town – **now** it is time to start re-building.

One of the cornerstones of our community, our hospital – the Southlake Regional Health Centre will play a vital role, not only in the quality of care provided, but in our economic future as well.

With its ongoing expansion as a major Regional Health Care Centre, Southlake is driving and will continue to drive the creation of new jobs and related private-sector health care opportunities in Newmarket. Already the Town's largest employer with a staff of approximately 3,000, Southlake is one of the most vibrant and modern healthcare facilities in Canada.

We are very fortunate to have a world-class health facility at our doorstep. This is a strategic advantage that no other community will be able to replicate for decades.

So, it is critical that we take full advantage of our leadership position and strive to strengthen that lead by adding a Medical Health Campus. The possibilities for job creation, medical breakthroughs and new opportunities are endless.

While major developments and improvements begin to take shape in our urban corridors, our objective is to create the right balance between our past and our future. We will ensure that our neighbourhoods and green spaces will continue to be protected and preserved.

Some of the most visible changes will take place along Davis Drive and Yonge Street, where a new rapid transit service will enhance the functionality of these areas and move us forward in solving decades of traffic congestion in the primary corridors.

With vertical development and intensification earmarked for these areas, the \$100 million dollar vivaNext transit system will provide Newmarket's expanding residential and business community with a fast, convenient, reliable alternative to driving.

Here is a sneak peek at what this will look like and how it will function.

{Viva video - Main Street and Davis Drive }

Our **CUSP project**, a new innovative urban park area will transform our downtown core and create a place for friends and families to come together. This multi-use, multi-seasonal recreational and cultural space will strengthen the role of our historic downtown, while incorporating contemporary urban elements.

This project can be seen as a reflection of the entire community - a delicate balance of old and new, history and heritage, past, present and future. But there is a difference between building a Town and building a community.

There will be many visible changes like vivaNext, CUSP and the Old Town Hall that we will see taking shape in the coming years.

Here are a few examples of what is possible:

Transformation images :

- *1) Davis Drive and Yonge Street, facing south*
- *2) George Street looking south towards Davis Drive*

These projects are the visible changes of our Town - the bricks and mortar. However, it is often what you can't see that is the most important part. It is what lies beneath the surface and what takes place in the spaces that we have created that really captures the essence of a community.

So, what you can expect in the coming years but may not see on the surface is:

- Culture, creativity, connection and collaboration;
- More jobs, a safer, greener community, increased healthcare; and
- Opportunities for future generations.

I have only given you a glimpse of where we are and where we are going, but perhaps what is most important, is how we are going to get there.

To put it most simply, we will rebuild using new bricks with the same strong foundation.

Over the past few years, we have made a significant amount of progress.

- Progress built on working together;
- Progress built on collaboration and seeking out community partnerships.

Partnerships that I am very proud of, for example:

Our **Smart Commute** partnership with the Chamber of Commerce which has reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 200,000 kilograms and 14,000 single occupancy car trips.

Another example is our **Shared Digital Infrastructure Project**, a partnership between the Town, our Library, our Hospital, our Chamber of Commerce and Newmarket Hydro.

As well, other partnerships with local organizations like our Health Sciences Commission will lead to a **medical teaching campus** that will provide much-needed relief for families who are without a doctor and have been for years.

Finally, I am also proud of our partnership with York Region, numerous community leaders like Belinda Stronach, and more than 30 residents and community faith groups who have committed to **building a women's shelter**. More than 500 single women in York Region have been turned away from local shelters in the past year, and once again, our community has stepped up to say we can and will make a difference.

To create the vibrant, thriving, beautiful, urban Newmarket of tomorrow, we will continue to create healthy and successful partnerships with our Chamber and other community organizations.

I believe we have an exciting and challenging future as a community, as near as tomorrow and as far away as the days of our children's children. I hope I have provided you with a better understanding of where we are, where we are going and how we are going to get there.

To become the community we strive to be, Newmarket must lead the changes we need to get there. A significant undertaking – and you cannot expect significant change unless you change something significantly.

This requires steady hands at the tiller, with a clear vision of what is possible.

I seem to remember somewhere along the way during my 30 year career as a banker, I learned there are two Chinese symbols that signify our word for change. One of them is risk and the other is opportunity. This captures the cross-roads that Newmarket faces today, the risk of resisting change and the opportunity to lead it.

Today, I have talked a lot about the changes that you can expect to see here in the coming years. As business leaders, I know that you will all embrace these

changes as I have and look forward to the bright future of Newmarket that lies ahead.

I have never been a more excited and hopeful member of this community as I am today. But, what I would like to leave you with is what will remain unchanged.

Our community was built on Quaker values like hard work, loyalty, trust and a sense of community. These qualities represent what we stand for as a community, and *that* will never change.

Thank you.