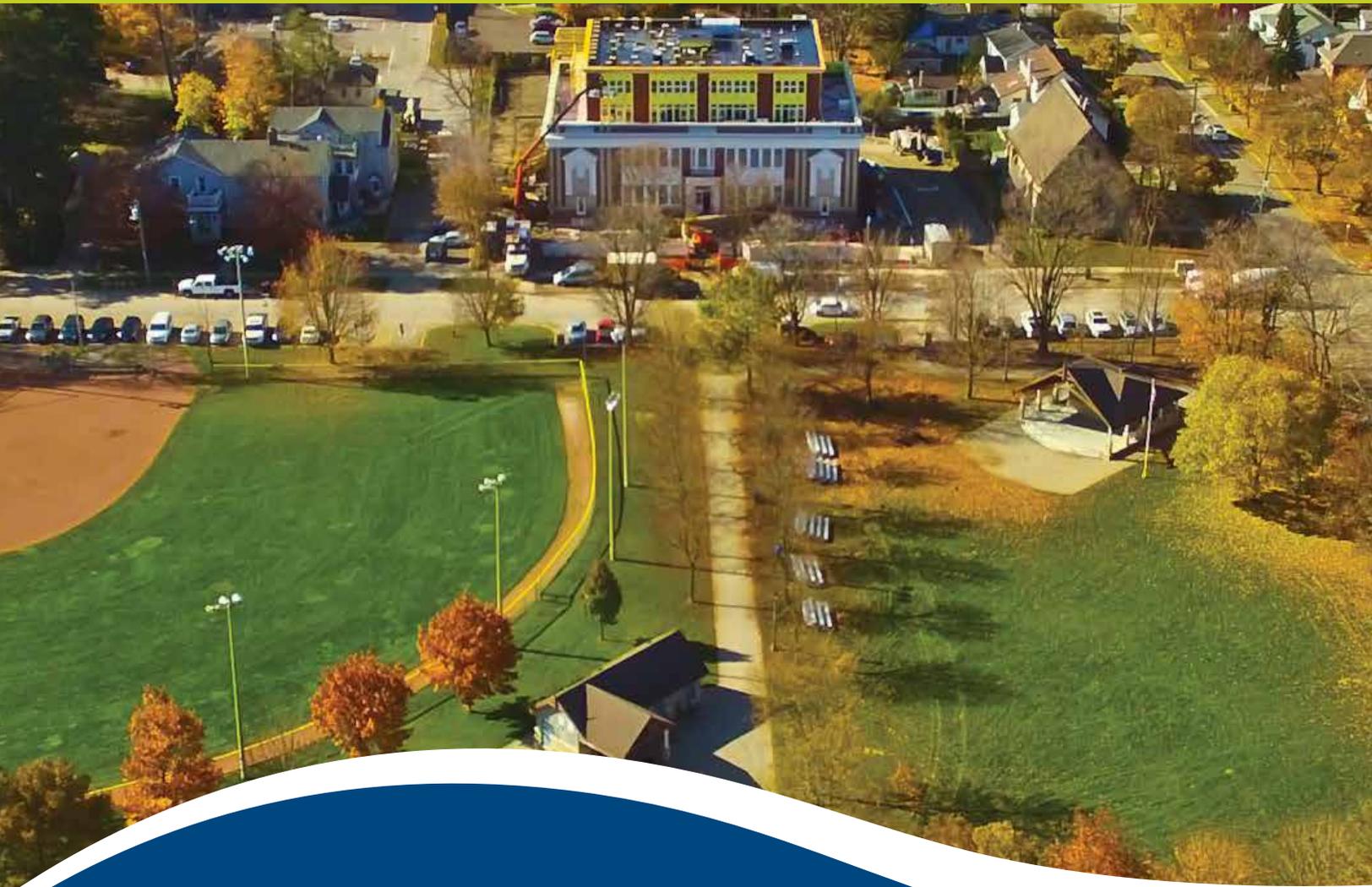




TOWN OF AURORA
Annual Report



2015



Aurora ONE OF THE BEST PLACES TO LIVE IN CANADA

According to *MoneySense Magazine's* 2015 "Best Places to Live" survey, Aurora is one of Canada's most desirable communities. Ranking in the top 30 out of 209 communities, Aurora's position is based on climate, prosperity, access to healthcare, home affordability, low crime rates and lifestyle.



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Aurora Town Council

2014 TO 2018

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Message from the Mayor

TODAY, TOMORROW, OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

On behalf of Members of Council, I am pleased to present our *2015 Annual Report*.

It has been a year of successes, new beginnings and significant achievements. I am pleased at our progression as a community and of the shared vision that we strive to achieve together as detailed in the *Town of Aurora's Strategic Plan*.

Aurora is constantly progressing and embracing new change. We recently completed an innovative restoration of the Aurora Family Leisure Complex with an updated Club Aurora, new gymnasium and indoor walking track. We are currently building the new Joint Operations Centre and undergoing a study of the downtown core to develop a *Cultural Precinct Plan*. We are also revising the Town's *Master Parks and Recreation Plan* and *Sport Plan* to better serve the community.

The budget process this year was also a success, with Council and Staff working together diligently to make a fair and reasonable budget with low taxpayer impact. With improved processes and procedures, the process ran efficiently with open channels of communication to receive community input and feedback.

Working as a collective unit, we strive to improve all levels of services and programs to our residents to meet growing needs.

Thank you to our residents, staff, community partners, businesses and my fellow Council Members for their inspiration, contributions and hard-work in making Aurora the most delightful and appealing place to live in York Region.

Sincerely,



Mayor Geoffrey Dawe



Strategic Plan

In 2011, The Town of Aurora developed a *Strategic Plan* to identify, assess and plan opportunities to ensure the future economic, social and environmental sustainability of Aurora. The plan details a collective, long-term vision for 2031 that maximizes resources and communicates priorities. It includes an implementation strategy that aligns with the goals of all departments in the municipality.

The components of the Strategic Plan are based on three areas:

- 1 Stakeholder engagement**
- 2 Three pillars of sustainability – Community, Economy and Environment**
- 3 Emerging issues and trends**

The plan also assesses our resources and annually identifies progress, successes and development of our future goals. For a copy of the *Town of Aurora's Strategic Plan*, please visit www.aurorastrategicplan.ca or pick-up a copy at Access Aurora located on the first floor at Aurora Town Hall.



2015 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SUCCESSES



A Haunted Forest



Aurora Family Leisure Complex



Pan Am Torch Relay Celebration

Strategic Plan | Pillar of Success 1: **COMMUNITY**

GOAL: SUPPORTING AN EXCEPTIONAL LIFE FOR ALL

- The Town of Aurora's **Haunted Forest** event was named one of Ontario's Top 100 Events from Festivals & Events Ontario.
- The renovation of the **Aurora Family Leisure Complex** was completed; the upgraded facility encompasses a new gymnasium and fitness area, a rock climbing facility, a permanent skateboard park as well as a dedicated space for youth.
- A school safety public education campaign was developed and a "**safe routes to school**" project for Regency Acres Public School was completed.
- A **speed cushion** pilot program was developed for high-priority areas identified by Aurora Town Council.
- The Town of Aurora was selected as a host community for the **2015 Pan Am Torch Relay**.
- The **Aurora Museum and Archives** opened to serve as a repository for the collective stories and experiences of The Town of Aurora.
- The Town's first **Sports Plan** was initiated, which will guide staff and community sport organizations in the delivery of quality sports programs, community partnerships, public engagement and investments to enhance sport delivery throughout the Town.
- A review of the **Parks and Recreation Master Plan** was initiated to provide a vision for the Town's leisure facilities to the year 2021.
- The **John West Memorial Scholarship** was created to honour the academic achievements of students in Aurora.
- **Civil marriage wedding ceremonies** were initiated at Aurora Town Hall, with 13 unions celebrated in 2015.
- The Town of Aurora's **Camp Programs** experienced record attendance in Winterfest, March Break and Summer Camp opportunities.
- A **comprehensive study to explore** shared service and collaboration opportunities among the N6 municipalities was completed.
- Audible **pedestrian signals** and **tactile warning plates** were installed at various intersections in Aurora.
- **Access Aurora** capabilities were expanded to better serve residents in event promotion, ticket sales, civil ceremonies and incident tracking.
- **Six plans of subdivision** were registered comprising approximately 1,500 residential units in the 2C Planning Area.
- The **Toys for Tickets** program was implemented for the first two weeks of overnight parking restrictions, which raised more than 250 toys for the Salvation Army's Holiday Toy Drive.
- A Town-wide **Parking Permit Program** was developed with implementation planned for 2016.
- **Building Code Accessibility requirements** were implemented and enforced in all facilities and new developments in Aurora.
- Funding was received for the **Healthy Kids Community Challenge**.

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55,000 books, magazines, audio visual materials, streaming and downloads were accessed each month from the Aurora Public Library

93 children in Aurora were given the opportunity to participate in sports as part of the Canadian Tire Jump Start program.

The Town of Aurora was selected as **one of 199** organizations across Canada to receive an **RBC Learn-to-Play** Project grant.



SmartCentres® Plaza



Aurora Town Hall

Strategic Plan | Pillar of Success 2: **ECONOMY**

GOAL: ENABLING A DIVERSE, CREATIVE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

- A new **Finance Advisory Committee** was established to assist Council in the long-range corporate financial planning process, capital planning initiatives and fiscal policy matters.
- A **paperless water billing pilot program** was successfully completed with rollout to the community expected in 2016.
- **E-commerce capabilities** commenced with the creation of back-office payment capabilities and the establishment of partnership relationships.
- **New budget procedures and processes** were created to simplify annual review and approval processes.
- A detailed **Asset Management Plan** and a **Ten-Year Capital Investment and Funding Plan** were created to evaluate individual assets and replacement needs in detail for the near term.
- The update of the **Economic Development Action Plan** was completed, which will guide economic development priorities over the term of Council.
- Additional backup capacity for the **Town’s telephony and data operations** was initiated. Once fully-implemented this will provide business continuity in the event of localized Town Hall communications failures.
- The sale of approximately **15 acres of municipal lands** on Eric T. Smith Way was negotiated and co-ordinated.
- A **Community Improvement Plan** for the **Aurora Promenade** was delivered to assist in the improvement of private properties in the Yonge Street and Wellington Street area.
- The **Town of Aurora Community Profile** was updated to assist with business attraction.
- A **Medical Marijuana By-law** was approved to regulate and locate medical marijuana production facilities.
- A **Tourism Strategy** was completed to guide future visitor activities and promote community special events.
- A **Cultural Precinct Study** was initiated to develop conceptual plans for the historic area bounded by Mosley Street, Larmont Street, Metcalfe/Church Street and Yonge Street.
- A **repurposing study** was initiated for five Town facilities; 52 Victoria Street, 56 Victoria Street, Victoria Hall, the Aurora Armoury and the Petch House.
- A **Comprehensive Sign Bylaw Review** was completed to review its criteria, methodology and consistency.
- The economic development division successfully attracted more than **75 new businesses** to Aurora and serviced more than **50 investor inquiries**.
- **16,987 building inspections** were completed in 2015.
- York Region initiated a **Broadband Advisory Task Force** to champion high-speed broadband connectivity across the region.

1,500 businesses call Aurora home, all searchable in the Town’s business directory www.businessaurora.ca

2,753 building permits were issued in 2015.

1,038 new residential units were constructed in 2015 at a combined value of approximately \$641 million.



Annual Clean-Up Day



Electric Vehicle Roadshow

Strategic Plan | Pillar of Success 3: ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

- More than **4,500** street lights were approved for conversion to **LED technology** to reduce energy consumption and operating costs.
- The future **Joint Operations Centre** currently under construction at 229 Industrial Parkway North is targeting **LEED Certification**, and will include many green design considerations to create a healthy and efficient working environment while decreasing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Over 750 enthusiastic volunteers participated in the Town's annual **Clean-Up Day** and collected more than 1.25 tonnes of litter throughout 60 locations across Aurora.
- The Town of Aurora collected more than **11,000 lbs of e-waste**, and **500 lbs of clothing** at our electronic waste recycling events.
- During **Earth Hour** in March 2015, Aurora residents reduced **power consumption by 7.8 per cent**, representing a total savings of **4.2 megawatts**, the highest amount of savings compared with other municipalities powered by PowerStream.
- The Town of Aurora successfully implemented a **backyard composting pilot** with support from York Region, to encourage local solutions to green bin use.
- The Town's first **electric vehicle roadshow event** took place at Aurora Town Hall in partnership with **Plug'n Drive** and **Windfall Ecology Centre**.
- The Town introduced **field tablet devices** for real-time data collection and asset management.
- A **Source Protection Plan** was implemented to ensure drinking water sources are protected.
- **302 trees** were planted in parks and on streets with **1,050 seedlings** planted in greenspaces in conjunction with community volunteers.
- The Town of Aurora received the **Highest Participation and Spirit Awards** from Pollution Probe for staff participation and spirit during healthy commute week.
- Aurora was selected as **one of 140 communities** across Canada to receive a grant for a **Friendship Tulip Garden**.

Tim Jones Trail is Aurora's longest trail which links multiple municipal facilities including Aurora Town Hall, the Aurora Seniors' Centre, the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, the Aurora Arboretum, Sheppard's Bush and Lambert Willson Park.

57 kilometres of pedestrian trails are maintained by the Town, which connects neighbourhood parks and facilities.

46 parks encompassing 780 acres serve residents and visitors with playgrounds, tennis courts, soccer fields, ball fields and children's playgrounds.

Smart Commute Gold Workplace awarded from Smart Commute York in 2015 for outstanding employee innovation in smart commute practices.



Skating at Aurora Town Park



Get Involved

The Town maintains several online communications channels to allow residents to interact with us. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, visit our website and explore, view our videos on YouTube, report a concern or ask a question on our PingStreet App and check out employment opportunities on LinkedIn. The Town of Aurora wants you to get involved in your community and interact with us!



Aurora Matters E-Newsletter

The Town distributes a monthly e-newsletter to keep residents informed of events and what's happening in Town. The newsletter is available by subscription. To subscribe, visit www.aurora.ca/auroramatters



In-person

Get involved in our community the good old-fashioned way! Throughout the year, the Town of Aurora offers public engagement opportunities at public meetings, public open houses, events and more. This is a great opportunity to meet Town staff and members of Aurora Town Council. The Town of Aurora also encourages residents to apply to become a member of one of our committees or boards.



Financial Highlights

The Town of Aurora's consolidated and audited 2015 financial statements will be available in spring 2016 on our website at www.aurora.ca/financialstatements

42 Council, General Committee, Public Planning and Budget meetings were recorded and published on our YouTube channel

1,200 calls answered per week by Access Aurora

4,700 users follow The Town of Aurora's Twitter feed



“Aurora is a growing modern town with that older small town feel and charm.” Aurora resident

Pan Am Torch Relay Celebration



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THIS GUIDE IS AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATE FORMAT BY REQUEST

