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**Subject: Doors Open Aurora 2019 – Event Summary Report**  
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**Department: Planning and Development Services**  
**Date: November 19, 2019**

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**In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may request that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming General Committee or Council meeting agenda for discussion.**

## **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide the General Committee with a summary of the Doors Open Aurora 2019 event, which took place on Saturday, August 17, 2019.

- The Town of Aurora held its 14<sup>th</sup> annual Doors Open Aurora event on August 17, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., which featured 14 participating sites and walking tours.
- Over 2,500 site visits were recorded amongst the 14 participating Doors Open Aurora 2019 sites, representing a decrease of about 500 visitors from the 2018 event. The decrease in site visits is likely due to the poor weather that day.
- The Town distributed surveys to each participating site of Doors Open Aurora 2019 to obtain visitors' feedback for the event. The results of the survey indicate that most used methods to gain awareness of the Doors Open Aurora event were through the Doors Open Ontario brochure and local newspaper articles.
- A total of \$3,195.00 was spent to facilitate the Doors Open Aurora 2019 event. The Town is planning to participate in the event again next year. The costs for this event in 2020 are estimated to be approximately the same as 2019, totaling \$3,195.00.

## **Doors Open Aurora 2019 Participating Sites**

The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair located in Town Park served as the Doors Open Aurora headquarters from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. At this location, visitors were able to pick up printed materials such as the Doors Open Aurora 2019 Brochure.

The following 14 sites participated in Doors Open Aurora 2019:

- Hillary House and Koffler Museum of Medicine, 15372 Yonge Street
- Hillary House Barn, 15372 Yonge Street
- The Patrick House Art Studio & Gallery, 58 Temperance Street
- Aurora Borealis Orthodontics, 15185 Yonge Street
- Pine Orchard Quaker Meeting House, 15114 Yonge Street
- Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive
- Aurora Public Library, 15145 Yonge Street
- Church Street School/Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street
- Scarborough Model Railroaders, 22 Church Street
- Victoria Hall, 27 Mosley Street
- The Rising Sun Masonic Lodge, 57 Mosley Street
- The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair, Town Park, 49 Wells Street
- Harmony, Heritage and Haunts Walking Tour, 49 Wells Street (Town Park)
- Merlin's Hollow, 181 Centre Crescent

The Aurora Borealis Orthodontics and Harmony, Heritage and Haunts Walking Tour were new participating sites for Doors Open Aurora.

Returning community favourites to Doors Open Aurora included the Hillary House and Koffler Museum of Medicine, Aurora Public Library, the Church Street School, Scarborough Model Railroaders, The Patrick House Art Studio & Gallery, Victoria Hall, The Rising Sun Masonic Lodge, Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair, and Merlin's Hollow.

## **Doors Open Aurora 2019 Volunteers**

Preparation for and execution of the Doors Open Aurora 2019 event involved Site Operators, Town staff and community volunteers. These individuals dedicated their time and efforts to make Doors Open Aurora 2019 a success. Their efforts in helping to encourage the appreciation for sites of local, natural, historic and architectural significance are greatly appreciated.

## **Analysis**

### **Participating Sites and Site Visits**

This year, there were 14 participating sites, of which the Hillary House and Koffler Musuem Medicine, Aurora Public Library, Church Street School and Merlins Hollow received the most visitors.

Over 2,500 site visits were recorded amongst the 14 participating Doors Open Aurora 2019 sites, representing a decrease of about 500 visitors from the 2018 event. The decrease in site visits is likely due to the poor weather that day. A significant amount of rain occurred during the morning hours of the event, which translated to the decrease in site visits form last year. Many people decided not to visit or travel the sites, which were located outdoors.

### **Visitor's Survey**

The Town distributed surveys to each participating site of Doors Open Aurora 2019 to obtain visitors' feedback for the event. Key questions included whether the visitor was a resident of Aurora or from another community, and how they heard about the Doors Open Aurora 2019 event. Results of the surveys show that most visitors were Aurora residents, with a small number of visitors from other municipalities within the Greater Toronto Area. Most of the visitors learned about the event from the brochures.

### **Signage**

Doors Open signage is routinely posted on the day of the event. Each site displays a Doors Open Aurora sign with a corresponding number to the map guide contained in the Doors Open Aurora 2019 brochure. Additionally, for sites which are not in easily

accessible locations, directional arrow signs were provided. The signs provide greater visibility and acknowledge that the site is participating in the Doors Open Aurora event.

### **T-Shirts**

Each Doors Open Aurora volunteer received a free t-shirt displaying the Doors Open Aurora logo. These t-shirts make volunteers easily identifiable to visitors and are a way of thanking volunteers.

### **Advisory Committee Review**

At the Heritage Advisory Committee Meeting on November 4, 2019, the Committee suggested increasing the social media presence of Twitter and Facebook in 2020.

The Committee also suggested that next year's event should be held in the Fall to avoid conflict with summer vacation season. The Doors Open is typically held in the summer because the Town requires assistance from summer students to coordinate the event.

### **Legal Considerations**

None.

### **Financial Implications**

A total of \$3,195.00 was spent to facilitate the Doors Open Aurora 2019 event, which included a registration fee paid to the Ontario Heritage Trust, t-shirts with the Doors Open Aurora logo, brochures for each participating site, and brochures containing a Map Guide with brief information about each Doors Open Aurora site.

The Town is planning to participate in the Doors Open event again in 2020. A registration fee of \$1,695.00 (including applicable taxes) will be required to register for the Doors Open Aurora 2020 event with the Ontario Heritage Trust. The total costs for the Doors Open event in 2020 are estimated to be approximately the same as 2019, totaling \$3,195.00. Sufficient funding for this event has been included in the draft 2020 to 2022 operating budget.

## **Communications Considerations**

### **Advertising Materials**

Printed materials for the event included a brochure for the whole event, individual signage for each participating site, posters and display boards for each participating site. The event was also advertised through social media, the Town of Aurora website, public/community engagement at the Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair and work in co-operation with local news media.

Individual brochures and display boards were given to the hosts approximately two weeks in advance of the event so that each Doors Open site had the opportunity to promote themselves with the advertising materials provided.

### **Newspaper Articles**

Articles were published in the Auroran for several weeks leading up to the Doors Open Aurora 2019 event to raise community awareness for the event.

### **Social Media**

The Doors Open Aurora event was featured on the Town of Aurora Twitter and Facebook pages for several weeks leading up to the event.

### **Websites**

The Doors Open Aurora event was featured on the Town of Aurora website (<http://www.aurora.ca/doorsopen>), which included a Virtual Tour map to provide an interactive experience for visitors to the Town's Doors Open Aurora website. The Doors Open Aurora event was also featured on Doors Open Ontario website (<http://www.doorsopenontario.on.ca/Events/Aurora.aspx>).

### **Public/Community Engagement**

To increase the number of Doors Open Aurora site visitors, Town staff set up a booth at the Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair on the week leading up to the event, on

Saturday, August 10, 2019. The booth displayed Doors Open Aurora and Doors Open Ontario Signage as well as a Map Guide for the participating sites of Doors Open Aurora 2019. Town staff also handed out Doors Open Aurora brochures.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

The conservation of heritage resources supports the Strategic Plan goal of Supporting an Exceptional Quality of Life for All through its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in objective Celebrating and Promoting our Culture.

## **Alternative(s) to the Recommendation**

None.

## **Conclusions**

The Town of Aurora held its 14<sup>th</sup> annual Doors Open Aurora event on August 17, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., which attracted over 2,500 site visits to 14 participating sites. The majority of visitors to the Doors Open Aurora event were residents of Aurora. The most used method to gain awareness of the Doors Open Aurora event was through the Doors Open Ontario brochure and local newspaper articles.

Doors Open Aurora continues to create local awareness of local sites of natural, architectural and historical significance. Additionally, the event encourages community spirit, local tourism and economic development and stimulates the arts and culture community. The Town of Aurora is planning to participate in Doors Open Ontario 2020.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1 - Doors Open Aurora 2019 - Recorded Site Visits

Attachment 2 - Doors Open Aurora 2019 Event Photographs

## **Previous Reports**

Heritage Advisory Committee Report HAC19-005 dated November 4, 2019

## Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on October 31, 2019

### Departmental Approval



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**David Waters, MCIP, RPP, PLE**  
**Director**  
**Planning and Development Services**

### Approved for Agenda



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**Doug Nadorozny**  
**Chief Administrative Officer**

### Attachment 1 – Doors Open Aurora 2019 Recorded Site Visit

Site #	Site Name	Address	Site Visits
1	Hillary House and Koffler Museum of Medicine	15372 Yonge Street	210
2	Hillary House Barn	15372 Yonge Street	180
3	The Patrick House Art Studio and Gallery	58 Temperance Street	112
4	Aurora Borealis Orthodontics	15185 Yonge Street	150
5	Pine Orchard Quaker Meeting House	15114 Yonge Street	101
6	Theatre Aurora	150 Henderson Drive	30
7	Aurora Public Library	15145 Yonge Street	300
8	Church Street School	22 Church Street	385
9	Scarborough Model Railroaders	22 Church Street	385
10	Victoria Hall	27 Mosley Street	134
11	The Rising Sun Masonic Lodge	57 Mosley Street	198
12	Aurora's Farmers Market and Artisan Fair	49 Well Street (Town Park)	135
13	Harmony, Heritage, and Haunts Walking Tour	49 Well Street (Town Park)	50
14	Merlin's Hollow	181 Centre Crescent	310
<b>Total</b>			<b>2680</b>

**Attachment 2- Doors Open Aurora 2019 Event Photograph**

The Patrick House Art Studio and Gallery





Hillary House and Koffler Museum Medicine





Harmony, Heritage and Haunts Walking Tour





Merlins Hollow





The Rising Sun Masonic Lodge

