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INSIDE AURORA: A Timely Perspective

By Scott Johnston

It's been said that Rome wasn't built in a day. In fact it was constructed over hundreds of years.
Well, when you consider the delays in making any sort of decision on the future of Library Square here in Aurora, we may eventually be giving Rome a run for its money.
It's been extensively reported, and equally widely lamented, that discussions on what to do with the buildings and land that make up this area of Town have been ongoing for over 15 years.
To put this into perspective, this year's Teen Idol, Melissa Suma, wasn't even born when all the debate started, literally a lifetime ago.
Yes, we all agree that the right decision should be made, and we want to ensure that everyone's had a chance to have their say, but how long does that process have to take?
Consider the following activities that required some thought and follow-up that have been completed in Aurora since around the year 2000.
Magna's headquarters on Wellington was built. Ironically, with a move to King scheduled for next year, it will likely be vacated, as well, before anything happens on Library Square.
So, that's two major Magna decisions, while the Town is still pondering its first one on the downtown property.
That's not the only large construction project that's been completed in Town. While whatever becomes of Library Square will likely involve a significant build, it can't be much more than that of the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, Joint Operations Centre, State Farm Headquarters, GO parking garage, Fire Hall, Library or Seniors' Centre, all of which were completed in the past decade and a half.
These buildings are just a fraction of the total amount of infrastructure that has been planned, approved, designed and set up in Aurora, including untold kilometres of roads, trails, sewers and hydro lines, plus playgrounds, traffic circles, storm water ponds, and all those much maligned cell towers, amongst other things.
Even Petch House, which had been a rotting pile of logs for years, was actually moved and reassembled after much debate.
The fact that there was no planned use for the structure did slow down the process somewhat, but in the end, didn't stop it.
As for transportation, GO train frequency has septupled, and many major roads such as Yonge, St John's, Bathurst, Bayview, and Bloomington have all been widened to some extent within our borders.
Whether through immigration or procreation, over the past 15 years thousands of decisions were made that have increased Aurora's population by almost 50%.
On the subject of matters that required some thought, at least 15 municipal, provincial and federal elections were held. For the local ones, reaching a decision on the future of Library Square was, and will likely continue to be, a recurring campaign promise.
The Canadian achievements mural at Yonge and Wellington, which seems like it's been up for ages, has been created. In fact, with discussions on the subject having already been ongoing for a few years by the time the artists started work, the original painting could have even included ?Decision made on Library Square? as an achievement.
If only one had been made.
But, in the end, we live in hope. Some day a consensus will be reached, and we will finally move forward. It's an exciting prospect. But whether the existing mural survives long enough to allow this achievement to be recorded on it remains to be seen.

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