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Aurora?s bid for Community Better Challenge falls short ? but earns high marks

By
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Aurora's bid to be named Canada's Most Active Community ? and win $150,000 for local recreation projects -- may have fallen short to Enderby, BC, but Aurora still has some bragging rights, according to Activate Aurora.

Last week, Enderby was crowned Canada's most active community in ParticipACTION's Community Better Program and, along with the crown, over $150K towards local physical activity initiatives.

The Community Better Challenge aimed to get people across the country up on their feet and moving together more. Over the course of May 31 to June 16, more than 265 million physical activity minutes were tracked across the country through the ParticipACTION app.

While Enderby took home top national honours, the top community in Ontario was Marathon, which received $20,000 towards recreation programming.

?Congratulations to Enderby, BC and all the regional winners,? said Elio Antunes, President & CEO of ParticipACTION in a statement. ?The Community Better Challenge was an amazing opportunity to engage all Canadians, community leaders, politicians, organizations and schools in physical activity and sport and show how everything gets better when you get active ? your sleep, your relationships and even your community. Canadians want to connect with others in their communities and the Challenge proved that.?

And it proved that in Aurora too, according to Activate Aurora.

Aurora launched its bid to be named Canada's Most Active Community at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex last May. From the outset, the bid received the endorsement of community leaders, sports teams, and companies like Goodlife Fitness and 9Round. This community support only grew as the weeks wore on, with Newmarket-Aurora MPP ? and Deputy Premier of Ontario ? Christine Elliott endorsing the local bid through a video recorded in the Aurora Community Arboretum, and with volunteers reaching tens of thousands of people at the Aurora Chamber Street Festival last month.

?We're thrilled with the participation and enthusiasm from our residents and organizations,? said Rob Weese, Chair of Activate Aurora, in a statement. ?Sport Aurora and Activate Aurora may have been driving the local campaign, but it really was a team effort. We would like to thank our schools, fitness clubs, Community Services department, local businesses and Sport Aurora members. There were many key players in this

achievement.?

?We also knew this would also take a ?hands on' approach,? added Laurie Mueller, Executive Director of Sport Aurora. ?So, we visited our schools, clubs and other organizations, and met with those who would be tracking and inputting all the activity from their classes, programs and teams, and we made sure they were comfortable with the process ? right until June 16.?

In all, Aurorans recorded an impressive 17,487,120 active minutes, but each total was adjusted for population size, ?giving much smaller communities an opportunity to win? according to Activate Aurora and Sport Aurora.

?We knew that, regardless of the outcome, all those who participated deserved congratulations,? said Mr. Weese. ?When you look at all our efforts, including the amount of community engagement and goodwill this generated with local organizations, we have a great story to tell. This is a very fitting conclusion to our Activate Aurora project. It has brought together our sport and physical activity community, demonstrated the sheer volume of activity and enthusiasm a Town of this size can generate, and showed how we can rally around a common healthy purpose.?