

Cycle Aurora gets residents pedalling for the community



Explore the scenic and historic neighbourhoods and businesses around Aurora next Saturday, May 21 ? and throughout the month of June ? as the Town launches the second-annual Cycle Aurora event.

Cycle Aurora, an initiative developed during the global pandemic to get people outdoors, moving, exploring their communities and visiting local businesses in a safe and healthy way, proved to be fun for the whole family.

Now that public health restrictions have eased and there's the feeling of normalcy in the air, organizers have brought Cycle Aurora back for another spin, adapted to the changing times.

Featuring dozens of challenges, points to collect, and prizes to be won, Cycle Aurora 2022 launches Saturday, May 21, at Town Park in conjunction with the Aurora Farmers' Market.

Participants who have registered by Thursday, May 19, will have the chance to pick up their free Cycle Kit at the market and take part in a group ride around Aurora's historic downtown core, departing Town Park at 1.30 p.m.

Come June 1, the race will be on to complete challenges, amass points, earn prizes and, of course, bragging rights.

?Explore Aurora while enhancing your cultural connection with interesting cycle destinations,? say organizers. ?There are a variety of cultural points of interest predetermined throughout Aurora. We've put together more than 45 challenges that will get you out exploring our beautiful Town by bike.?

Cycle Aurora is the brainchild of Jen Sault-Turla, a citizen member of the Town's Environmental Advisory Committee.

Looking for ways for the community to stay active with a sense of togetherness when such opportunities were rare, she said the level of feedback last year was such there was no question of not bringing the event back for 2022.

?Everyone really enjoyed completing our missions using the GooseChase app,? she says. ?We took their feedback on what kinds of missions they enjoyed the best and we're creating some new, exciting missions this year, building on the ones people really enjoyed completing last year. Some of the favourites were supporting local businesses or to do something different by bike, like going to pick up a coffee, or going to get takeout and going for a picnic.

‘We’re going to do more missions that include an element of geocaching and we’re going to build some new ones this year that are like mystery missions where we’ll give people a riddle to solve in order to figure out what the destination is. That adds another bit of fun as well.’

Another facet that is being built upon is the number of kid-friendly challenges within Cycle Aurora.

‘The feedback was great with ideas for other missions,’ she says. ‘That’s the nice thing about this event, too, because it is month-long, we can build out so many different missions there is really something for everyone and we can take that input and constantly add new missions that people are looking for. We’re also building on the prizes we did last year, which included some goodies for the kids, fun things to decorate their bikes, and things like that’ and then, of course, there’s the bragging rights of doing the most missions and getting the most points.’

‘Why not give it a try?’ she adds, considering a pitch for potential new participants. ‘It is free to sign up and there’s no obligation whatsoever. You can just sign up to check out what the missions are all about and see if any of them sound fun to you. It is just something that is a free activity that you can do on your own time at your own pace. If you are just looking for a fun activity on a Saturday afternoon, it is a great way to scroll through the missions that are there and give you an idea of something new to try out.’

Cycle Aurora 2022 will kick off with a group ride on Saturday, May 21, leaving Town Park at 1.30. In addition to the ride, prizes will be awarded to young participants for the best decorated two- and three-wheelers. Pre-registration is required and must be completed by May 19 in order to get a Cycle Aurora kit. For more information, including registration, visit aurora.ca/cycleaurora.

Cycle Aurora is sponsored by, among others, the Region of York, Trek Bikes, Geranium Homes, and Desjardins Insurance.

By Brock Weir
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