

Events calendar illustrates full tapestry of culture in Aurora

Aurora is a multicultural community, and the full tapestry of the people who call this community home is now illustrated in a refreshed events calendar launched by the Town.

The Town of Aurora welcomed the New Year with the launch of a revised and updated Diversity, Equity and Inclusion calendar. Now in its third edition, it's intended to be a resource highlighting significant faith, cultural, and awareness dates that reflect the vibrant diversity of our community.

Understanding and celebrating our differences brings us closer as a community, said the Town in a statement.

And this is a sentiment shared by Cindy Shaver of the Town's Communications Department.

This is the third year we've done it and when we initially developed it, we looked at other calendars that have been developed within our community and within the GTA area, she says. Those were the initial ones that we looked to gather information and York Region has one, which is wonderful, but that reflects the community fabric of all nine municipalities, where Aurora, we think, is unique in that it may not necessarily have the same makeup as Vaughan or Richmond Hill do.

A key step in developing the made-in-Aurora calendar was analysing StatsCan data from 2021, which illustrated the top three religious denomination represented in Aurora. From there, they examined the data to look at different dimensions of diversity, including the different ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, etc., represented in the population.

We also looked at awareness days that the Town typically celebrates to help educate and celebrate diversity and inclusion, says Shaver. When we're building the calendar in December for the coming year, we're looking back to see if we've had any community engagement. Sometimes we get calls, on social media, and we get emails coming in that gives us a suggestion. This is my faith and we'd really like to have this specific faith day recognized. In general, we're happy to comply with that if it's important to our community, it's important to us.

We're just trying to really reflect the diversity of the Town of Aurora specifically. It's not exhaustive. It's not the calendar that is going to have every single faith date, but reflects our population.

Resident feedback, for instance, has led to the inclusion of the Islamic observance of Ashura making it into the calendar for the first time, as well as Disability Employment Awareness Month, a time that has historically recognized by Town Hall, but has previously missed being included in the calendar.

People are being recognized and heard, says Shaver. It's also an education tool. We've gotten great feedback that people didn't necessarily know a specific Jewish holiday and what that meant for the community, and other faiths as well. It's been eye-opening to sort of educate people and bridge understanding and with that comes inclusion. You start to understand your community better and you become closer and more tight-knit.

For more information on the Town of Aurora's 2026 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Calendar, visit aurora.ca/DEI.

If you don't see a holiday or observance reflected in the calendar, residents are invited to reach out to communications@aurora.ca with their feedback.

By Brock Weir
EditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter