

## Housing advocacy group hopes upcoming film screening will sow seeds of change

An upcoming film screening hosted by a local advocacy group pushing for affordable housing options is hoped to plant seeds that could lead to significant change.

On Tuesday, June 16, Aurora Cares' Housing for All, will present a screening of 'Thinking Beyond the Market: Rethinking Canada's Housing Crisis' at Aurora Town Square. The screening, which will take place in Brevik Hall starting at 7 p.m., will feature a panel discussion with filmmaker Dr. Brian Doucet and other experts in the field.

The film follows Doucet as he travels across Canada to explore different policies, programs and projects that are helping to ease the housing crisis and 'ensure housing is a human right.'

Aurora Cares' Housing for All, a grassroots group initially formed to be a vocal support of the now-scuttled Men's Transitional Housing facility proposed by the Region of York in Aurora's south end, did not step back from advocacy after the project was vetoed using Strong Mayor powers. In the intervening months, they have focused their energies on advocating for various housing forms in the community.

Members of the group first saw the documentary in Newmarket and felt it was important to bring it to Aurora to spark an equally important conversation.

'We wanted to switch our focus and not give up on getting housing for people, so we've moved into seeing what we can do to get affordable, attainable housing in Aurora. We're bringing in a lot of businesses to the community, which is excellent, but there's really nowhere for those employees to live, that they can afford to live in Aurora,' says Kimberly McLean of Aurora Cares' Housing for All. 'Some of us had gone to Newmarket to see this movie and came out very, very uplifted by the fact that there are some projects across Canada that are really making a difference. We thought, why don't we bring it here, offer it to the public and to business owners and to the Town, developers, whoever wants to come and see, and maybe it will plant some ideas in their heads and see what could potentially be done.'

'Right now, there are a lot of projects in Aurora that have planning authorization but are still just holes in the ground because they can't afford to build due to the market right now. There's a lot of holes with potential and there are developers sitting on these things, but they can't build because they can't make any money. They might be interested in seeing this and seeing where they could potentially work with other developers, other community groups, the municipality, to see if we can get some of these things build, where not only will they get some of their money back, but they'll provide housing.'

'We want people who work here to be able to live here.'

The examples in the documentary are 'good news' stories, she says, that might get local audiences looking at the issues differently.

'We consider this a small seed to be planted,' says McLean. 'There are elections coming up and it's a question that's being asked: 'What is our Town doing to advance housing possibilities?' It's something that should be asked of every potential Council member, of every potential Mayor, not just in Aurora, but across the Region. If you haven't heard about any of these potential possibilities, you might not think of them. There are a number of projects going on across Canada and it's really uplifting to [learn more about them and say,] 'Hey, these are people with ideas.''

For more information about next week's screening, including ticket information, visit [aurora.ca/whatson](http://aurora.ca/whatson).

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