

Ramadan should be marked with public event, youth tells Council

Aurora should hold community-wide events to mark Ramadan and Eid, according to local youth Laila Doran.

Doran made the case for additional community events reflecting Aurora's diversity to Mayor and Council as a delegate to last week's Committee of the Whole meeting.

The acknowledgement of the two observances, she said, would bring together Muslim residents of Aurora and celebrate the ?substantial contributions of the Muslim community to our diverse Canadian society.?

Doran made her delegation as the month of Ramadan continues. It's a time ?characterized by fasting, reflection and spiritual growth? with a focus on ?self-discipline, compassion and community spirit,? she explained.

Citing data from Statistics Canada, Doran illustrated the growing population of Muslim Canadians across the country, factors that only underscore ?the necessity? of embracing and recognizing the Muslim community.

?By formally acknowledging Ramadan and the celebration of Eid, we welcome the faith and tradition of our Muslim neighbours while also enriching the community with the values these observances represent: generosity, empathy and unity,? she said. ?During Ramadan, Muslims engage in fasting and prayer, participating in charitable acts and service, which exemplify the commitment to supporting those in need. These principles resonate strongly with the ethos of our Town while community and spirit and mutual respect flourish.

?Eid, which signifies the culmination of Ramadan is a joyous occasion that unites families and friends and is a time of gratitude and togetherness, highlighting the significance of family, community and shared experiences. By celebrating Eid in Aurora, we foster an inclusive environment where everyone can engage in the festivities, gain insight of the importance of this occasion, break down barriers and strengthen connections within our diverse community.

?From entrepreneurs and educators to healthcare professionals and community leaders, the Muslim community has enriched our society in many ways. Their dedication and hard work has been pivotal in shaping our nation and it is crucial that we recognize and appreciate these contributions. As we look ahead, I encourage everyone in this community to embrace the spirit of Ramadan and Eid. Doing so we cultivate an atmosphere of understanding, respect and inclusivity: qualities vital for a harmonious community. Our strength lies in our diversity and by celebrating the rich cultural heritage of our Muslim community, we reinforce the commitment to building a unified and compassionate Aurora.?

Hosting events such as these in Aurora, she concluded, would ?not only uplift our Muslim neighbours, but enrich our community as a whole?fostering a spirit of inclusivity that embodies the best of what Canada represents.?

Following her presentation, Doran invited Mayor and Council to take part in her family's tradition of breaking fast together with a simple date, distributing the fruit to each and every lawmaker.

Aurora currently recognizes Ramadan through a proclamation through the Mayor's Office and various posts on social media.

?[The team] has done a great job over the years with a variety of multicultural events,? said Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson, addressing staff. ?I look forward to what you're going to come back to us with.?

Addressing the Muslim community, Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner wished the Muslim community a ?wonderful observance.?

?I wish them strength for their fasting and peace and light,? she said.

By Brock Weir