



INCORPORATED 1855

TOWN OF WHITBY REPORT

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

REPORT TO: Planning and Development Committee	REPORT NO: PL 8-08
DATE OF MEETING: January 21, 2008	FILE NO(S): N/A
PREPARED BY: Planning Department	LOCATION: Whitby
REPORT TITLE/SUBJECT: Application to participate in Doors Open Ontario 2008	

1.0 **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That Planning Report, Item PL 8-08, regarding the Doors Open Ontario 2008 Program be received as information;
2. That Council authorize the Planning Department in conjunction with the Whitby Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) to submit an application to the Ontario Heritage Trust to participate in Doors Open Ontario 2008.

2.0 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Planning Department in conjunction with LACAC recommends that the Town of Whitby participate in Doors Open Ontario 2008. Doors Open is a province-wide celebration of community heritage, designed to create access, awareness and excitement about heritage. The Doors Open Program provides residents and visitors with a unique opportunity to explore some of Whitby's rich history - and all free of charge. The Planning Department is satisfied that the Town, LACAC and community volunteers will be able to support Whitby's participation in the Door Open Ontario 2008 Program.

3.0 **ORIGIN:**

At the November, 2007 regular meeting of the Town of Whitby LACAC, the following motion was passed by the Committee; "That LACAC support the participation of the Town of Whitby in the 2008 Doors Open Ontario Program".

4.0 BACKGROUND:

In the winter of 2007, the Planning Department and LACAC were approached by members of the Communities in Bloom Committee to see if the Town would participate in the 2007 Doors Open Program to supplement the Communities in Bloom event. The Planning Department investigated the application process and noted that they missed the 2007 application deadline, however, they would investigate the possibility of applying for the 2008 program in conjunction with LACAC.

It should also be noted that 2008 is LACAC's 30th anniversary, and the Doors Open Program is seen by the Committee as an excellent project to celebrate their anniversary.

5.0 DISCUSSION/OPTIONS:

What is Doors Open?

Doors Open is a program that allows local residents and visitors the opportunity to visit and tour identified heritage structures and/or landscapes within a municipality. The Doors Open event is typically held over one or two days within a municipality on a Saturday or Sunday between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. The venues are typically staffed by volunteers or staff depending on the nature of the destination.

In accordance with the Doors Open program, the event must take place between April 12, 2008 and October 26th, 2008. Communities must have a minimum of 12 sites of historic, architectural, natural and/or cultural significance for public access during a specified time period.

Doors Open History

Doors Open events began in France in 1984. The idea soon spread to neighbouring European countries and in 2000, the City of Toronto launched its first Doors Open program. The success of Doors Open Toronto motivated the Ontario Heritage Trust to launch a province-wide initiative in 2002.

In 2007, approximately 180,000 visitors logged onto the Doors Open Ontario website.

Over the past six years, Doors Open Ontario has garnered extensive media coverage (print, internet and broadcast) throughout the province. In a typical year, over 500 new articles will be published and numerous broadcast pieces will appear on high profile outlets.

Whitby's Proposed Doors Open Ontario Program (Preliminary)

If approved by Council, Whitby's 2008 Doors Open program would include approximately 15 historic destinations. The program would be administered through the Planning Department and through Whitby LACAC.

The proposed date for the event is on Saturday September 13th, 2008, between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. This date corresponds with the proposed Harvest Festival in Brooklin and is within walking distance of a proposed site as well as a number of historic homes.

A preliminary Organizing Committee has been established to administer the program (see Attachment #1). Additional volunteers may be added to the Committee at any time. In addition to the Organizing Committee, all LACAC members have expressed their desire to assist throughout the process.

As part of the application process, the Ontario Heritage Trust requires that the participating municipalities forward them a list of 10 potential sites with historical information and pictures by January 18th, 2008. The purpose of the request at this early stage is to provide the Ontario Heritage Trust with information it can include in a media guide that they produce. Typically, the Ontario Heritage Trust will choose a few sites to include in the guide. The preliminary Organizing Committee has forwarded the following sites to the Ontario Heritage Trust;

1. Centennial Building (with a display from Camp X)
2. The Station Gallery
3. Iroquois Park Recreation Centre (Highlighting the Whitby Sports Hall of Fame)
4. James Rowe House
5. Lynde House and Cullen Central Park
6. Brooklin Community Centre
7. Whitby Public Library (meet the Archivist)
8. Ashburn Community Centre
9. Spencer Community Centre
10. Rotary Park and Bandshell (Performances by the Whitby Brass Band)

To maintain interest in the Doors Open program, the list of sites to be visited in any given year should be adjusted to add some new properties.

The Organizing Committee has also produced an extensive list of many other desirable historic destinations, including, but not limited to Trafalgar Castle School, Inverlynn, Burr Lodge, Brooklin Mill, Carnegie Library, and many of the Town's historic churches. If Council approves the application, the Organizing Committee will contact the owners of the above noted sites to determine if they would like to participate. The Organizing Committee has contacted other municipalities that have hosted the Doors Open Program and have been advised that while churches are of interest, many of

them have conflicts with weddings and/or other events. Some previous Doors Open Programs have limited the time that the doors are open to the public so as not to interfere with other events being held. In addition, destinations such as the Whitby Marina, Whitby Mental Health, Fire Hall #3, the Lynde House, heritage cemeteries and heritage commercial structures could be new sites to add periodically in the program.

6.0 COMMUNICATION ISSUES/PLAN:

The public will be notified by media release by the Ontario Heritage Trust as well as supplementary advertising by the Organizing Committee.

7.0 CONSIDERATIONS:

A. PUBLIC

Doors Open is free to the public that provides local residents and visitors an opportunity to view some of Whitby's rich heritage.

B. FINANCIAL

The application fee to apply to the Doors Open Ontario 2008 program is \$1,500.00. The fee includes the following items provided by the Ontario Heritage Trust:

- being included in the Doors Open Ontario Guide (over 500,00 are produced)
- province wide distribution of the Guide
- being included in the events listing on the Doors Open website
- provided with Doors Open site banners for each destination
- the promotion of the Doors Open Ontario events in advertisements; and,
- Doors Open Ontario media releases (which result in more than 500 news articles each year).

Other requirements would include staff and volunteer time associated with management of the project.

C. IMPACT ON & INPUT FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS/SOURCES

The Doors Open Program would require participation from the Community and Marketing Services Department to participate on the Organizing Committee, assist with promoting the event and to coordinate municipal buildings for the day.

D. CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Doors Open Program is consistent with a strategic objective of the Town's Community Strategic Plan, namely to;

Preserve and advance Whitby's heritage, culture and natural environment.

8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Planning Department, LACAC and the Organizing Committee are committed to administering a successful Doors Open Program for 2008. Whitby is rich with heritage resources that should be made available to the public to enjoy. Planning staff recommend that Council approve the Recommendations of Planning Report, Item PL 8-08.

9.0 ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1: Preliminary Organizing Committee

For further information contact:
John Taylor, Ext. 2275

Robert Short, Director of Planning, Ext. 4309

Kenneth Nix, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, Ext. 4314

ATTACHMENT #1

DOORS OPEN WHITBY

2008 PRELIMINARY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION
Margaret Clayton	Chair	LACAC Heritage Whitby
John Taylor	Principal Planner	Town of Whitby
Donna Raetsen-Kemp	Executive Director	The Station Gallery
Helen Read	Planning Department	Town of Whitby
Sue Cullen-Green	Chair	Communities in Bloom
Jennifer Morrison	Manager, Economic Development	Town of Whitby
Greg Scott	Manager of Facilities	Town of Whitby
Brian Winter	Archivist	Town of Whitby
Joyce Marshall	Communities in Bloom	Resident
Councillor	LACAC	Town of Whitby