

Pool users keep on swimming thanks to a hand from Trillium Foundation



Young swimmers at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex on Wednesday afternoon were all smiles as they participated in municipal camp programs but, just beyond the pool area, municipal and provincial representatives came together to salute one key element which made the scene possible.

At the start of the Global Pandemic, the Town's recreation department drained the pools in the downtime. The lack of water, however, caused a deterioration in the pool linings and before swimmers were able to use the pools again as the community began to re-open, the Town needed a bit of a hand with the repairs.

Enter the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

A grant program funded by the Government of Ontario, the Foundation (OTF) gave the Town of Aurora \$236,400 to help with the cost of repairs, funds that came through OTF's Community Building Fund Grant.

"The repairs were completed in October of 2022 and we're pleased to have received this funding from the OTF to help keep our leisure and lane swimming pools in healthy condition for public use," said John Firman, Manager of Business Support for the Town of Aurora, in remarks on behalf of Mayor and Council. "As part of our facility management plan during the pandemic shut-down, all of the pools in Aurora were drained and left empty until facilities were planned to be reopened. As part of this time spent empty and open to airflow, several of the pools required major repairs to stop the problems of higher-than-acceptable water loss.

"The grant helped repair the two pools here within the SARC and those repairs to the pool liners will help the Town provide residents with improved water-based physical activity and therapy on an ongoing basis. Our sports and recreation facilities are important to the community; hundreds of residents and visitors use these facilities every day and it is our priority to ensure that all the components within these facilities are operating efficiently and running smoothly."

Firman said the Town was "thankful" for the OTF's support.

Representing the OTF at Wednesday's recognition ceremony was Shelley Wister Smith, who said she was "honoured" to celebrate the Town's "accomplishments as a valued organization."

"[OTF's] mission has been to help build healthy and vibrant communities across the Province," she said. "With an initial budget of \$15 million, OTF has grown significantly over the last 40 years and now invests more than \$100 million into communities and non-profit organizations. Last year, OTF invested into over 1,000 non-profit-led projects and partnerships. We are pleased to support

the Town of Aurora and know that the \$236,400 capital grant to repair the pools at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex will go a long way towards helping this municipality now and into the future.?

Area MPPs Dawn Gallagher-Murphy and Michael Parsa were represented by staff but sent greetings celebrating the results of the grant.

?With this Community Building Fund grant, the Town of Aurora has allocated funds to an improved recreational experience for residents, contributing to the strength of community ties,? said MPP Parsa. ?Repairing the facilities?has demonstrated the Town's commitment to putting the well-being of the community first and to encouraging the safety of residents as they enjoy water-based activities.?

Added MPP Gallagher-Murphy, ?Municipal pools continue to play an important role for the quality of life, a reprieve from the summer heat, and as a healthy physical leisure activity for local residents. Our government's funding for new vinyl pool liners in Aurora recognizes the importance of these facilities to families and our constituents.?

Repairs to the SARC pools were completed in October of 2022.

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