

## Caledon staff report success in visitor management this year

Town added portable toilets, additional parking, and wayfinding signage in busy areas

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Town of Caledon staff say it's been a successful year of welcoming visitors to Caledon.

At Caledon Council's November 28 meeting, Town of Caledon Tourism and Culture Officer Emily Quinton gave a presentation to Council on the results of Caledon's 'Visitor Management Workplan'.

Quinton made a presentation because on November 14, Council asked to hear an update on the Town's visitor management efforts.

In April 2022, Caledon's visitor management task force was created to address some issues faced due to tourism in Town such as illegal parking, access to amenities like washrooms, littering, and a need for wayfinding signage for visitors.

By Spring 2023, the task force had created a final report, and a visitor management & community engagement plan was implemented this summer and fall.

Quinton said the Town added temporary portable toilets at key points in Town, and found the need for them was there, so now a number of them will be implemented yearly. An increase to the hours of Caledon's public washrooms was also implemented.

The Town added seasonal parking in Belfountain by renting a school parking lot, and also found success there, and will be continuing the practice in years to come.

With regards to wayfinding signage, the Town implemented signage for parking and washroom facilities which it said went well. It's also planning to add permanent wayfinding signage along the Caledon Trailway.

'It serves multiple purposes, pointing our visitors to businesses to spend some money while they're in Town; to reinforce some of the etiquette rules we have' and to direct them to visitor amenities,' said Quinton.

Quinton explained how the Town forged many tourism partnerships this year, such as with ParkBus, which brings people in to visit Caledon's conservation areas while keeping cars off the road.

The Town also again hosted its Caledon Creative Arts Festival to celebrate local artists and bring business to Caledon East.

Quinton shared how the Town implemented various communication plans, such as a 'know before you go' social media campaign. They also experimented with some multilingual radio advertising.

The Town held a resident information session in September to discuss things like police and bylaw enforcement coverage during the busy fall colours season. It plans to host this session annually.

Lastly, Quinton said the Town is planning to continue all of this work and more while considering resident feedback in years to come. She said it will have no impact on the budget as the work undertaken by staff on these initiatives is included in the Town's yearly operational budget.

Ward 1 Councillor Lynn Kiernan thanked Quinton for her presentation and said she's been very impressed with the work being done

to manage tourism in Caledon.

?You have taught me that patience and education and information, if given time, can make a difference,? said Kiernan. ?To do this all going forward with zero budget impact?I'm pretty sure that's as good as it gets for Council and for the community.?

Ward 5 Councillor Tony Rosa said he was extremely impressed with the Town's readiness for welcoming visitors this year.

?I applaud all the effort? this is really important that we continue to grow our tourism initiatives,? said Rosa.