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Town of Aurora

## Member Motion

Councillor Gallo

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**Re:** R.A.I.L. 175 – Commemoration of the Arrival of Rail Service to Aurora

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Councillor John Gallo

**Date:** May 12, 2026

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Whereas the arrival of rail service from Toronto to Aurora in 1853 was a defining moment in the Town’s history, contributing significantly to its economic development, population growth, and long-term prosperity; and

Whereas the year 2028 will mark the 175th anniversary of this historic milestone, presenting a unique opportunity to celebrate Aurora’s heritage and educate residents and visitors about the Town’s railway history; and

Whereas the concept of a “R.A.I.L. 175” commemorative initiative was brought forward by local historian David Heard, reflecting his ongoing contributions to preserving and promoting Aurora’s history; and

Whereas the Aurora Historical Society and other community partners have a strong track record of supporting local heritage initiatives through programming, exhibitions, and community engagement; and

Whereas the Town’s Museum and Cultural Services division maintains significant archival collections, artifacts, and expertise necessary to support the interpretation and delivery of historical exhibitions and programming; and

Whereas the Town of Aurora has previously delivered successful commemorative initiatives, such as the 100th anniversary of the War Memorial, through a coordinated model led by the Museum in collaboration with community partners and stakeholders; and

Whereas staff have indicated that the Museum team is already in discussions with neighbouring municipalities and partners regarding this milestone, and that the Town’s Special Events team may also play a supporting role; and

Whereas the Town's Heritage Fund is intended to support initiatives that preserve, promote, and celebrate Aurora's cultural and historical assets;

1. Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That staff be directed to develop a coordinated plan for the R.A.I.L. 175 commemorative initiative to take place in May–June 2028, recognizing the 175th anniversary of the arrival of rail service to Aurora; and
2. Be It Further Resolved That the Town's Museum and Cultural Services division be identified as the lead facilitator for the initiative, working in collaboration with David Heard, the Aurora Historical Society, other community partners, neighbouring municipalities, and relevant stakeholders; and
3. Be It Further Resolved That the Town's Special Events team be engaged in a supporting role to assist with the planning and delivery of community events associated with the initiative; and
4. Be It Further Resolved That staff report back to Council no later than Q2 2027 with a detailed workplan, partnership framework, and budget for the R.A.I.L. 175 initiative; and
5. Be It Further Resolved That, as part of that report, staff include options for funding, including the potential allocation of up to \$50,000 from the Town of Aurora Heritage Fund to support the initiative; and
6. Be It Further Resolved That, upon completion of the initiative, staff provide a report to Council summarizing outcomes, community participation, partnerships, and financials.