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WHEN	Tuesday November 21, 2017	TIME	12 p.m. — 2 p.m.
COST	\$30 (taxes & gratuities included)	R.S.V.P.	Melanie Frazer mfrazier@nhgcc.ca, 905.877.5236 X: 400
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NEWS

Town saves popular youth centres from closure

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Halton Hills council has decided to extend funding to keep a pair of popular Halton Hills youth centres open through spring 2019.

The town made the announcement in a release sent on Thursday (Oct. 19).

In March of this year, Links2Care, the nonprofit organization operating the two youth centres since 2000, announced it no longer had the resources to continue operating the Open Door (Georgetown) and the Off the Wall (Acton) youth centres, and would be forced to shut them down in the summer.

After a fair amount of public pushback from the youth who use the facilities, the town stepped up in April to fund the centres through the end of the year. Council has now decided to kick in an additional \$75,000 to keep them open until spring of 2019.

"It's true that social service delivery is a responsibility of the region," said Brent Marshall, chief administrative officer for the Town of Halton Hills. "But these are our kids, in our community, and that places an onus on us to step in and assist when there is a recognized need for help and coordination."

According to the release, council made a budget request to the Halton Hills Youth Services Network, which is co-chaired by municipal and Halton Region staff. The network brings together town and regional representatives responsible for various youth supports and programs including mental health initiatives, as well housing and food programs.

Originally, the plan was to replace the programming offered through the centres by increasing programming at municipal community centres. However, after speak-



Graeme Frisque/Metroland Media

A pair of popular Halton Hills youth centres slated for closure will remain open after council stepped up to save them.

ing with stakeholders and the youth who frequent the centres, town staff and council felt the services could better be provided under the existing model.

Council then opted to fund the centres through the end of the year in order to keep them open temporarily until a more permanent solution to replace the programs could be found.

With that original funding coming to end in the new year, council has decided it best to stick with the current model and keep the centres operating for the foreseeable future.

"Council was vocal in its support of the request for a referral to budget committee for funding that will match the request from earlier in the year to keep the youth centres open when the former provider opted out," said the town in its release.

"We had a crisis land in our laps," said Mayor Rick Bonnette. "And we took steps to address that crisis and this new model of collaboration, information sharing and service coordination benefits not only youth but clearly is a more efficient model of service integration."

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