

City vying to become permanent home of Canadian Open

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Vaughan is a soccer city, but it has a shot at becoming a mecca for golf.

City councillors are taking a swing at scoring the future, permanent home of the Canadian Open. But first, the municipality and Golf Canada must complete a due diligence process.

The aim is to determine if the 200-acre North Maple Regional Park along with an adjacent 700 acres of land, including the Keele Valley dump, could be combined to create an integrated park featuring an 18-hole championship golf course plus a host of other sports and recreation facilities.

"I think it's a great opportunity," said Bill Paul, Golf Canada's chief championship officer.

He's been seeking a permanent home for the Canadian Open since 2014, when he was tournament director, as he felt the prestigious tournament should put down roots after years of rotating to courses across Canada.

That was the plan in the mid-1970s when legendary golfer Jack Nicklaus was hired to design Oakville's Glen Abbey Golf Club, which houses the Canadian Golf Museum and Hall of Fame and Golf Canada's headquarters.

Glen Abbey has served as the main venue, hosting the tournament 29 times, but it's not an option as a permanent home because owner ClubLink plans on converting it into a subdivision.

Paul's vision has evolved since 2014 into creating a facility that includes the hall of fame, a development course for youngsters and a championship course located next to baseball diamonds, soccer pitches, tennis and basketball courts.

The hope being that kids playing those sports might wander over, try swinging a club and fall in love with golf, which is struggling to attract younger players.

Paul initially scouted about 35 locations across Canada, which he's whittled down to four. He won't



Grant Fraser photo

Garrett Rank of Elmira, with his brother Kyle looking on, tees off on the 16th hole Thursday during the opening round of the RBC Canadian Open at the Glen Abbey Golf Club in Oakville.

divulge the other locations.

This week, Vaughan council voted to go through the due diligence process, expected to cost between

\$700,000 and \$1 million shared between the city and Golf Canada, in hopes of being chosen.

They will look at the ar-

ea bounded by Kirby Road, Major Mackenzie Drive, Dufferin Street and Keele Street.

"Nicklaus looked at it

and loved the property and loved the opportunity," Paul said.

The Canadian Open comes with a nice prize for the host municipality.

In 2016, the tournament reportedly attracted more than 100,000 spectators and delivered an estimated \$15 million to \$20 million boost to the local economy.

"I think the proposal from Golf Canada may hold the answer to the park's completion. . This (North Maple Regional Park) planning process goes back decades and, I think, it's time to move forward," Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua said. "I think it's wise for us, as a city, to look at it very, very closely and do the due diligence that is required. But it is an exciting project that deserves our attention."

It's unclear how it would affect Eagle's Nest Golf Club, located at the southeast corner of the site.

Paul said he's spoken with the owners and the potential impact will factor into the due diligence process. Selection of a preferred site is expected before Dec. 1.

ENTERTAINMENT

Vaughan film festival unveils award nominees

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A postapocalyptic animated film from South Korea, a Belgian drama about a man trying to rescue his wife from a lighthouse and an Italian drama about the tense relationship between a veteran playwright and his attractive, young companion scored Best Film nominations at this year's

Vaughan International Film Festival.

Green Light by Korean director Seongmin Kim, Nimmer by Belgian director Lieven Vanhove and Black Comedy by Italian filmmaker Luigi Pané, were announced as finalists in that category during the festival's spring launch at Vaughan Mills Tuesday, April 18.

They were selected from

a slate of 18 short films from nine countries - including Australia, Austria, Canada, France, United Arab Emirates and the United States - being screened at the fifth annual festival, running May 15 to 18.

Closer to home, nominees for Best Student film are: Plantboy: Rise of the Seed from Father Bressani Catholic High in Woodbridge; The Other Side from TD Christian High School

in Woodbridge; and Adventures of a Stickman from St. Edmund Campion Secondary School in Brampton.

The victor garners \$2,000 for the department that helped the students create the film.

Best Student Film finalists were selected from among 17 entries from nine high schools that kick off the first block of screenings Monday, May 15 at Colossus Vaughan Cinemas, 3555

Highway 7.

The second block of film screenings runs Wednesday, May 17 at Colossus Vaughan.

Other award nominees include: Best Actor - Oscar Isaac (Lightning Face), Fortunato Cerlino (Black Comedy), Shawn Christensen (Cul-De-Sac) Best Actress - Aurora Giovanazzo (A Girl Like You), Catherine Morvell (Where We Live), Antonia Liskova (Black Come-

dy) Best Director - Luigi Pané (Black Comedy), Henning Backhaus (Good Night), Lieven Vanhove (Nimmer) Best Documentary - Hartom, I am the Wolf and Omnia Best Cinematography - Justin Derry (Cul-De-Sac), Alfonso Chin (Haley) and Marc Van Acker (Nimmer)

Winners will be announced at the awards ceremony May 18 at Terrace Banquet Centre.

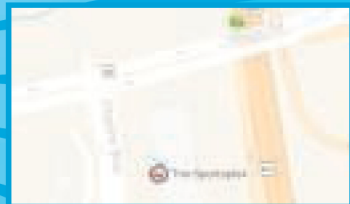
APRIL 29th & 30th

9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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