

Date

Property/Business Owner Name

Position/Organization

Street Address

Community, Ontario

Postal Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name,

Re: Doors Open Community name

Congratulations! Your property has been identified as a potential participant in Doors Open Community name. This event will be held on Event date to showcase the history and architecture of our city and to celebrate our cultural diversity. Doors Open Community name will be hosted by Event organizer in partnership with the Ontario Heritage Trust.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Doors Open phenomenon, events in Ontario operate under the banner of Doors Open Ontario, a province wide heritage tourism initiative led by the Ontario Heritage Trust. Each year, as part of the program, communities across Ontario host single-day or two-day weekend events where they open local sites of interest for free public tours. The program was launched in 2002 to create access, awareness and excitement about the province's heritage and it provides unique opportunities to explore and enjoy some of the most interesting places in Ontario cities, towns and villages – many of which are not typically open to the public.

Community name first took part in Doors Open Ontario in <Year>. Insert brief program history ... We would be thrilled to have your property on our roster of sites this year.

If you are interested in joining us for Doors Open Community name, or are simply interested in more information, please contact Person name, Person position, at Phone number or Email by Date. If we have not heard back from you by then, we will follow up directly. All interested participants will be invited to an information session planned for Date.

Additional information about the Doors Open Ontario program can be found at the Trust's website: www.doorsopenontario.on.ca or please contact your local event organizer, [name].

We look forward to hearing from you!

Yours truly,

Chair name

Chair, Doors Open Community name

Doors Open Ontario

Frequently asked questions

1) Why should I showcase my property? What are the benefits of participating in Doors Open?

People who open their properties during Doors Open play an active role in the celebration of their community's history and culture. There are important and fascinating stories connected to properties all across Ontario, but without Doors Open events, these stories are sometimes left untold. Interestingly, it's not always the people who open their properties that are the ones telling the stories; visitors during Doors Open events have been known to share intriguing tales about their own personal connections to a site. In this way, the people who showcase their properties often learn as much as those who are visiting.

Doors Open participants may also benefit from the vast amount of marketing and promotion that is conducted as part of the program. Participating sites are not just promoted across the local community, they are also marketed province wide through the Ontario Heritage Trust's website and printed materials. As such, a relatively unknown Doors Open site may receive more public exposure in one weekend than it typically does in an entire year. Participating in Doors Open is also a great way to meet new people and to develop strategic partnerships with other local sites and organizations.

2) Why was my property selected as a potential site?

In simplest terms, your property was selected because it is interesting. Some Doors Open Ontario sites are selected for their historical, architectural, natural or cultural significance, but all selected sites share an ability to attract visitors. We believe that there is a general interest in people wanting to explore your property firsthand.

3) Who does the selection of the properties?

Representatives from the local Doors Open organizing committee have prepared a list of potential properties for inclusion in the event. An effort has been made to include properties of different types (e.g., residences, places of worship, public buildings, natural heritage sites, etc.) from various areas within **the municipality**. If a property owner is unable to participate in Doors Open, we will do our best to find an adequate replacement.

4) Do I have to open my entire property?

No. It is the responsibility of the site representative to determine which parts of a property to open during the Doors Open event. We do ask, however, that you open at least a portion of the site that isn't normally open to the public, since this

is the premise behind the Doors Open concept. We also ask that visitors be granted permission to visit any part of the property that is directly connected to its significance. For example, if a residence is considered significant for its early-19th-century living room fireplace, it would be expected that visitors be granted access to the living room to view the fireplace.

5) What are my responsibilities as a Doors Open site representative?

The duties of the site representative will be clearly laid out in a formal site agreement that must be signed by both the property owner and event representatives. In general, responsibilities include:

- *Providing photographs and historical information to event representatives.* These items will be used to advertise your property as part of the program. If these items are not available, Doors Open representatives will take new photos and conduct research regarding your property's history.
- *Attending special Doors Open meetings.* Several sessions will be held prior to the Doors Open event to ensure that information is shared between event representatives and participating sites.
- *Preparing your site prior to the event.* You may wish to limit public access to certain parts of your property by posting signs or physically sectioning off areas with rope or tape.
- *Showcasing your site on the day of the event.* It is best if you are able to locate friends or family to assist in showcasing your property. Other volunteers, however, may be available if required. Site volunteers are typically responsible for tasks such as greeting visitors, distributing event/site materials, answering questions and directing traffic throughout the site.
- *Reporting on your site's involvement.* Following the event, you will be asked to provide detailed statistics on the number of visitors as well as general feedback.

6) Who does the advertising and marketing of the program?

There are two separate levels of marketing and advertising. The Ontario Heritage Trust conducts marketing and promotional activities at the provincial and regional level. The production of Doors Open Ontario program brochures, maintenance of the Doors Open Ontario website, production of Doors Open Ontario site signs and other high-level marketing initiatives are all handled by the Ontario Heritage Trust. The local Doors Open organizing committee will be responsible for local level promotion such as event brochures, site fact sheets and the placement of advertisements in local media.

7) How will we know if the event is successful?

Each participating property will be provided with a tracking sheet for logging the number of visitors to their site. **Insert brief description of how success will be**

measured ... Event success will not only be gauged by the number of visitors to each site, but also by the quality of the experience.

8) Is there any cost to us for our participation?

There is no fee for you to participate and your participation is strictly voluntary. Most costs associated with the event – such as registration fees and advertising costs – will be covered by the local Doors Open organizing committee. Site representatives are able to use their own funds if they wish to undertake additional advertising or offer complimentary refreshments or souvenirs on the day of the event.

9) Can I charge admission?

Doors Open Ontario is based on the premise that admission to sites be free of charge. As such, visitors cannot be charged an admission fee. You may, however, provide your guests with the option of purchasing snacks, drinks, souvenirs, etc. for a nominal cost.

10) What is the next step if I wish to get involved?

If you are interested in participating, please contact **Person name**, **Person position**, at **Phone number** or **Email** by **Date**. If you require more information before making your decision, please feel free to contact any of the individuals listed below:

Doors Open Organizing Committee Chair: **Person name (email)**

Doors Open Organizing Committee Vice-Chair: **Person name (email)**