

## INSIDE AURORA: Promises, Promises

**By Scott Johnston**

Back when Aurora was known as the Chicken Capital of Canada, municipal election candidates could realistically promise to deliver a ?chicken in every pot?.

Today, our Town no longer has a wealth of poultry, but we do have no end of election promises and slogans. This is especially true with thirty (!) Council candidates vying for voters' attention on lawn signs, pamphlets and in the media.

To assist in deciphering all this quadrennial jargon, here are some observations on some phrases and commitments you're sure to hear over the next month.

?I will control development?

When a candidate says this, one can be confident that development will indeed slow down during their term in office, not because of any actions they will take, but because there's no green space left in Town to pave over.

?I will speak for you on Council?

This is true unless any one or more of the other 40,000 or so voters in Town decide they want something different than you, in which case either one (or more) of you will be disappointed, or the candidate will try to speak for you all, which will logically result in some fascinating contradictions.

?I will fight high taxes?

Yes, they'll argue when a budget comes forward recommending higher taxes, but when it comes time to vote it through, they will first ensure enough other members are willing to support it, so if they do vote against it, they can look good, without jeopardizing the increased tax outcome.

?I will represent you?

Not necessarily your viewpoints, but at the very least they'll physically represent you by attending every opening and special event at which there is a photo op and/or free food is being served.

?I have experience?

This may sound good on its own, but it depends a lot on the nature of the experience, so make sure you ask. Hopefully, it will include a balanced municipal, fiscal and communication-based background. However, it could potentially consist of skillsets in less practical fields, such as knowledge of Icelandic history, the ability to identify different types of igneous rock, and to achieve consistently high scores in playing pinball.

?I will spend your tax dollars wisely?

Another one that's hard to judge without better knowledge of the candidate. For a preliminary indication of how well they may achieve this goal, see how many election signs they've spent money on.

?I'll get things done?

They can guarantee this unless, of course, not everyone around the table agrees, or the issue has to be referred back to staff, or several consulting reports are required first, or it's too close to the next election to decide anything, or it's a day of the week ending in ?y?, or any number of other ?unforeseen? reasons.

?I'm a team player?

This means that they'll try not to sue their fellow Council members ? at least, not right away (but no guarantees).

?I believe in transparent government?

In this case transparent may mean a decision process so full of holes, you can see right through it like it wasn't even there.

?I will fight to revitalize the urban core along Yonge Street?

Which I'll get right to after I approve more growth on Leslie, and attend all these ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the many new businesses I've supported to open up on Bayview.

?I stand on my record?

And as we all know, records go around and around without actually getting anywhere.

There, now you have some insight into the possible interpretation of a few basic election-related phrases you'll be hearing over the next several weeks. How well these explanations reflect each candidate, and how you decide to apply this insight on October 27th is up to you.

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