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# THE AURORAN

CELEBRATING Seniors SEE PAGES 19-26

*Aurora's Community Newspaper*

VOL 28 | NO. 1 | 905-727-3300 | *TheAuroran.com* | FREE | WEEK OF OCTOBER 15, 2026


**Candidates make their pitch for YOUR VOTE | SEE PAGES 11-14**




**THANKSGIVING FUN** – Aurora residents had the chance to get the Thanksgiving weekend off to a sunny start on Saturday as the Town hosted its annual Fall Faves event at Aurora Town Square. Some of the activities on site featured (MAIN) a popular story time hosted by the Aurora Public Library, (INSET TOP) pumpkin carving, as enjoyed by Leon and Melo, (INSET CENTRE) face painting, as enjoyed by Vienna, and (INSET ABOVE) fun for all ages, demonstrated by MacKenzie.
**Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger**

# Victoria Hall restaurant will carry on legacy of Aqua Grill

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's Victoria Hall will soon begin a new chapter as a restaurant, peppered with the flavours many local foodies have come to know and love over the years.

On Friday, the Town announced the long-awaited details of a new lease deal for the historic building on the southwest corner of Mosley and Victoria Streets, a Council decision that has proved controversial – and it will see local restaurateur Stephen Ho take over the space, succeeding his popular Aqua Grill, a restaurant that was a staple in the Town's historic downtown core for more than a decade.

"Victoria Hall has been part of our community for more than 140 years, and so many residents have told me how important it is for them to access and enjoy the building," said Mayor Tom Mrakas in a statement. "That's why I'm thrilled that Stephen and his team have come on board to open up a new space where families and friends can come together to enjoy a meal and celebrate milestones in a special setting in our downtown."

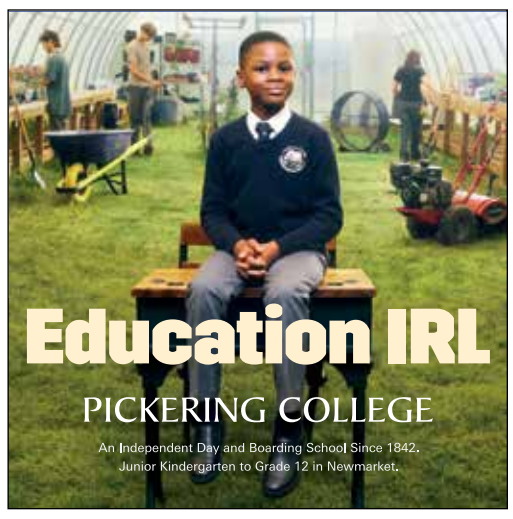
The Town says Ho's vision is to create an "intimate" 30-seat restaurant with an open kitchen and a small bar, with a "focus on honest, unpretentious food made from scratch, with an emphasis on sourcing from local producers and creating a relaxed atmosphere where people can share a meal and spend time together."

Under the lease agreement, the tenant will be responsible for its own operations, interior maintenance, utilities, cleaning, and other ongoing operating costs, as well as leasehold improvements associated with

**Continued on page 31**



**COLOURS OF FALL** – Mudmen had Town Park up on its feet on Thursday evening at the Town of Aurora's annual Colours of Fall concert. For more on this popular gathering, see Page 30.
**Auroran photo by Brock Weir**










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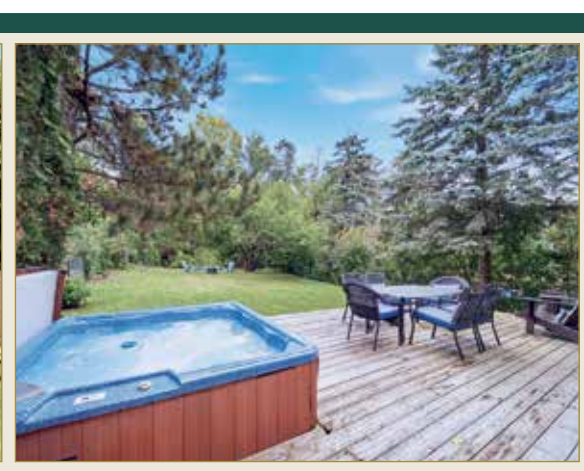
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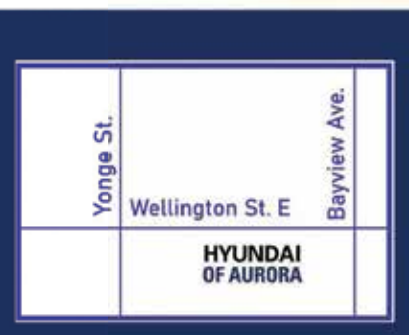
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## AURORA VOTES 2026

# Aurora's Mayoral candidates share views on public and community safety

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Community and public safety has been a recurring theme this election season from candidates and residents alike.

This week, Aurora's Mayoral candidates were asked: What is your top priority as it relates to public/community safety and what would you do to address it if elected/re-elected on October 26?

Here is how they answered:

**SHAWN DEANE** – "Aurora is a strong and caring community, and keeping it safe requires all of us working together. As we continue to see rising regional crime, speeding in our neighbourhoods, escooter violations, and incidents of property theft, my top priority—if elected on October 26—will be launching a new Community Awareness Campaign focused on shared responsibility and proactive prevention. This campaign will encourage residents to stay vigilant, look out for one another, and report concerns promptly. A simple principle will guide our efforts: if you see something, say something. By strengthening everyday awareness, we can help deter opportunistic crime and support York Regional Police and Aurora Bylaw Services in their important work. The campaign will also promote safe driving on our residential streets, reminding all of us to be mindful of our speed and respectful of our neighbours. Education on key municipal bylaws—noise, parks conduct, property standards, parking, and community code of conduct—will help residents better understand how these rules protect public order and enhance safety. Community safety is a shared commitment. By increasing awareness, encouraging responsible behaviour, and fostering stronger connections between residents and local enforcement partners, we can build a safer, more informed, and more resilient Aurora."

**JOHN GALLO** – "My top priority for community safety is ensuring Aurora remains a safe place for families, seniors, youth, and businesses. If elected Mayor, I would focus on a proactive, coordinated approach to public safety, with particular attention to neighbourhood safety, emergency services, and prevention. This means strengthening cooperation between York Regional Police, Central York Fire Services, Town bylaw enforcement, and community organizations. I would prioritize ensuring our fire services have the staffing, equipment, and resources needed to respond effectively as Aurora continues to grow. I would also work with police to address property crime, dangerous behaviour, and emerging neighbourhood concerns. Traffic safety is equally important. I would continue advocating for practical traffic-calming measures, safer school zones, and better enforcement and education regarding e-bikes and e-scooters. Finally, prevention matters. Supporting youth programs and community partnerships can help address problems before they escalate. Residents deserve to feel safe in their homes, parks, streets, and public spaces. My commitment is to listen, collaborate with the appropriate agencies, and focus on practical, measurable improvements that make Aurora safer for everyone."

**TOM MRAKAS** – "Residents often tell me that community safety is a top priority. I agree. While Aurora is one of the safest communities in Canada, protecting and building on that record takes leadership, strong partnerships, and a clear plan. That's why my Community Safety Plan focuses on practical actions that keep our neighbourhoods safe. I'll continue advocating for the frontline police resources our community needs, while strengthening crime prevention programs that help protect homes and businesses. We'll expand CCTV coverage at key locations across Aurora and work closely with York Regional Police to deter crime and help identify offenders. We'll keep investing in safer roads through traffic calming measures and targeted enforcement of dangerous driving. We'll also protect vulnerable community spaces, including schools, places of worship, and community facilities, from hate, intimidation, and violence. And we'll continue ensuring York Regional Police have the technology, tools, and resources needed to keep Aurora safe. I'm proud to have earned the endorsement of the York

Continued on page 6


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OCTOBER 16 TO 25

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OCTOBER 17 TO 21

ELECTION DAY IN-PERSON VOTING
Assigned Voting Location
OCTOBER 26

Nikki Alber



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TRAFFIC SAFETY — Action on speeding, unsafe intersections and drivers who run stop signs. I will support increased enforcement, traffic calming measures and safer crossings.

WARD 3 BUSINESSES — I will advocate for revitalization along Yonge Street in Ward 3 to retain existing businesses, attract new investment, and hold developers accountable for progress.

GREENSPACES — Maintaining and protecting our parks, trails and natural greenspaces.

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And for the past eight years as your Mayor, Tom Mrakas has done exactly that.

With 73 Council-approved motions, Tom has built a proven record of getting things done for residents.

From revitalizing our downtown and securing new parkland to investing in community infrastructure, keeping taxes among the lowest in the GTHA, and protecting Aurora's quality of life, the results speak for themselves.

**That's not a list of campaign promises. It's a proven record of delivering for Aurora.**

Residents know effective leadership takes experience, and Tom has the record to prove it.

Mayor Tom Mrakas has consistently demonstrated thoughtful, steady leadership and a genuine commitment to the community. He is visible, approachable, and responsive to residents, taking the time to listen and address questions or concerns. Under his leadership, Aurora has experienced positive growth while preserving the strong sense of community that makes it such a desirable place to live. His focus on responsible decision-making, community well-being, and long-term planning has helped Aurora continue to thrive. I endorse our mayor and look forward to another four years.

*- MICHELLE P. LEWIS, Aurora Resident*

Aurora is our home. This is our community. This is our life. At a time when stability, experience, and trusted leadership matter more than ever, I believe we need representatives who have earned our confidence through their actions – leaders who put the people of Aurora ahead of personal interests, political agendas, and division. Our community should never become anyone's social or political experiment. The decisions made at Town Hall affect our families, our neighbourhoods, our businesses, and the future of the community we love. Taking unnecessary risks with that future is simply not an option for me. I believe in proven leadership. I believe in stability. And I believe in putting Aurora first. That is the foundation of my support for Tom Mrakas.

*- KARL SARKADI, Aurora Resident*

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# *Candidate pushes back on social media post*

Recently in a post on the Facebook group, Aurora – Our Town, a person insinuated that I did not intend to stay in Aurora for the duration of my term, if elected. They referred to something I had posted in another Facebook group from 2024. I tried to respond but was blocked from posting for over three hours. I had to contact another administrator on the site to have my response posted.

Recently, The Globe and Mail wrote an article about the choices retirees make regarding where to retire. It explored whether they should stay in their home, downsize, stay urban or rural or move out of the country completely. I was interviewed for this. I outlined the fact that I grew up by a lake in the Kawarthas, moved to Toronto for university and finally settled in Aurora, with my husband, to start a family. I outlined the pros and cons of all locations. However, the takeaway is that Aurora is the obvious choice. When I considered the possibility of moving to a lake, I had not yet even retired. But if you read what I say about my parents aging up north, and the inconveniences they faced being in a rural area, it states that I have reconsidered this option. The post I made in 2024 on Facebook was long before my father became ill and I witnessed the effort it took for my parents to get to all of my father's doctor's appointments. It made me realize that rural living may not be the best place as you age.

If you look at the pros I outline about staying in Aurora, I obviously believe that Aurora, with its amenities, proximity to Toronto, great culture and family close by, is the best choice. I will definitely be in Aurora for my full term, if elected, and far beyond that. Since this happened, several people, who commented on the site, have apologized to me for what they had said.

On a final note, if the person, who levelled this accusation at me, had just emailed, messaged or tried to contact me in any way, (considering that all of my contact information is on the Candidates page at the Town of Aurora website), instead of posting this on a public forum without my ability to respond, I would have gladly posted on this forum and explained everything.

Let's all play nice in this election. Make it a clean, honest and amicable campaign. Take the high road, not the low one.

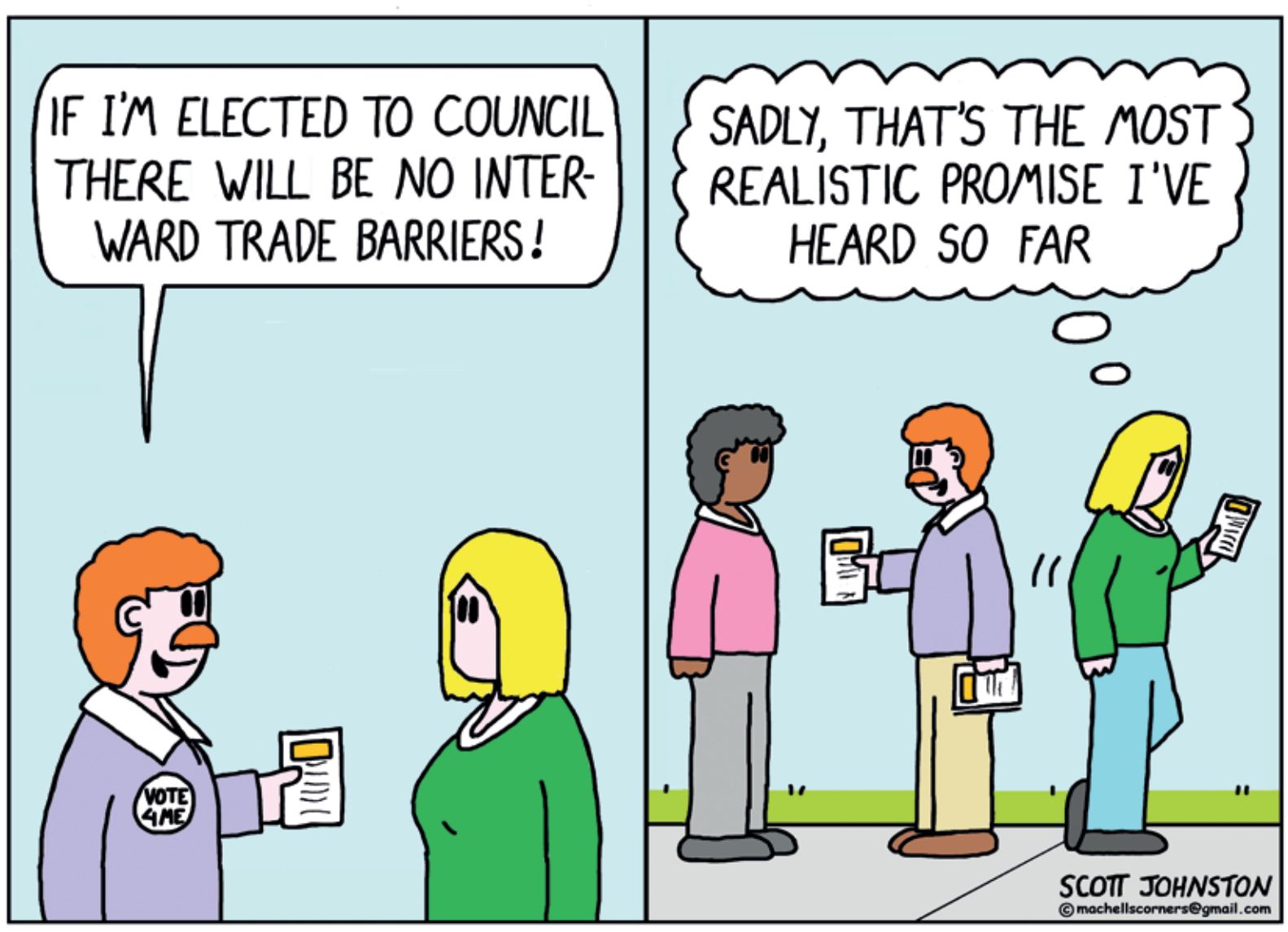
**Angela Daust**
**Candidate, Ward 2 Councillor**

### CORRECTION

*There was an error in last week's Editor's Note attached to the letter, "Council Compensation: A Missed Opportunity for Collaboration." It should have read: "The most recent municipal staff report on Council compensation that appeared on the Council agenda in May was not pulled by any elected member for further direction." We regret the error.*

***To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to brock@lpcmedia.ca Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.***

**Machell's Corners**




# Filling the community's collective "crock"



## BROCK'S BANTER

**Brock Weir**

I'm not normally a person who finds themselves at a loss at what to ask if the occasion requires questions. It's part of the job and, if you're reasonably well-prepared, it shouldn't be too hard to come up with a few conversation starters – or, at the very least, a few things to keep a conversation from petering out to nothing in a minute or two.

That said, however, I wasn't sure quite where to start when I had the opportunity to interview Ada Johnson, who was Aurora's oldest resident more than a decade ago.

Her remarkable longevity had been charted in our pages since she crossed the century threshold well before I joined the paper, but the first time I had the chance to meet her was her remarkable 109th trip around the sun.

What do you ask a person who has more than a century of experience under their belt? It seems the go-to question is always, "What's your secret for living to X?" as if they started out in life focused on outliving their peers and claiming a victory among their generation.

Taking a different approach, I thought about asking what her earliest memory of the community was, having been a resident for 106 of those 109 years, some of early community founders she might have still remembered, what inspired her to become a teacher for decades, and some of her most rewarding experiences through that lens.

After the assembled company sang Happy Birthday and she cut into her cake, it was time for questions and seated at the arm of her wheelchair… well, all those far-more-interesting questions went straight out of my head, leaving me to ask, "What would your biggest piece of advice be" for living to such a grand old age.

Not quite, "What's your secret?" but close enough to feel my eyes rolling in spite of myself.

No, it wasn't a particularly inspired question, and certainly not my finest hour in this job, but I was glad to find her answer got straight to the point.

"You have to make sure you have enough food in your crock," she said, before I had the wherewithal to ask her about some of her longest-standing memories.

It's was a simple answer and one that stuck with me – and not only for the way she phrased her answer, hinting through her word choice that while she was still an active member of the community, she truly belonged to a bygone era.

Yet, it was simple, sage advice I think we can all do to keep in mind.

I'm fortunate enough that I've never been in a situation where my crock, and those of my family, have been completely empty. Sure, there have been times where resources were more plentiful than others, but somehow over the years, no matter what configuration my family happened to be at the time, we've been lucky enough to make it work.

That's something I never hesitate to express gratitude for at this time of year, especially over the Thanksgiving weekend, which is now in our collective rear-window.

But as the affordability crisis continues apace across the country and well beyond, my heart felt just a little bit fuller that we were able to share in a meal and there was more than enough to go around. At the same time, however, I think we were all hyper-conscious that many families aren't as fortunate.

The statistics from our local food banks and pantries are staggering, and the challenges they face – and, by extension, the challenges our communities face – are always highlighted post-summer as our focus turns to fall, winter, Thanksgiving, and the weeks leading up to the holiday season.

As conscious as we are of the acute needs of these vital community organizations in the lead-up to Thanksgiving, it's important to also be cognizant of the fact that once the holiday in question is behind us, many are in a "rebuilding" phase to ensure shelves are well-stocked (ideally) in the window between Thanksgiving and when community generosity abounds closer to Christmas.

Demand never takes a holiday.

Last week, Ipsos released a survey entitled The State of Food Charity in Canada. They found that nine in ten responding organizations that address food insecurity reported growing demand over the past 12 months and with some seeing growing wait lists, 35 per cent reported having had to turn away residents because of a lack of food or resources.

"Waitlist and service restrictions highlight the growing gap between need and available support," said the pollsters. "Among the organizations that have turned people away, 41 per cent estimate that they have been unable to serve more than 50 individuals in the past year, with organizations reporting an average of 269 individuals turned away.

"Responding organizations reported that, on average, 36 per cent of food available through their programs come from Second Harvest. Most respondents agree that Second Harvest helps their organization offer more food to program participants (91 per cent), while 85 per cent agreed that Second Harvest helps their organization save money.

"Nearly half (49 per cent) of responding organizations report that they do not access food or other supports through federal, provincial, or regional food bank networks. Organizations participating in the survey included food banks and pantries, shelters, community development organizations, faith-based organizations, public institutions, and food recovery and redistribution organizations, among other organization types."

These statistics, of course, represent a wide-range of organizations and are not necessarily reflective of the myriad organizations in our community who so passionately come together to help address these issues as volunteers, not to mention the countless residents at large who are generous in sharing their resources with the wider community.

We're very fortunate to have groups like the Aurora Food Pantry, York Region Food Network, York Region Food Bank, Caledon Community Services' The Exchange, The Good Shepherd Food Bank, and numerous organizations spearheaded independently by faith groups and other volunteer collectives, regularly step up, regardless of a holiday being on the horizon, simply helping residents make ends meet in their day-to-day.

One such community organization, Welcoming Arms, is celebrating 20 years of service this week.

An ecumenical organization formed by volunteers from six churches in Aurora, the organization has worked tirelessly in the community since its inception to help improve the lives of residents in need, not only connecting visitors coming through their doors to vital community services and resources, but providing weekly lunches and dinners to their clients which not only help keep that aforementioned crock from going empty but provide an opportunity for the type of fellowship that only breaking bread can provide.

When organizations like these celebrate milestone anniversaries, its often bittersweet in that while they have shown some staying power, the demand in the community remains high enough that they haven't been able to put themselves out of business.

Bittersweet as it might be, we can give post-Thanksgiving gratitude that they remain undiminished in passion and enthusiasm despite resources being more challenged than ever before – and let's show that gratitude, where we can, by looking into what they need, making a donation, and help the community's collective crock stay reasonably full.

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Aurora's Community Newspaper

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AURORA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

HISTORY THRIVES ON PAGE 5 WITH THE AURORA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

FOUND IN OUR FILES

## There Will be Leftovers




We've discussed the early (first!) origins of Canadian Thanksgiving, as well as the many years that the celebration took place on a different day each year, often coinciding with an Armistice observance. It's very convenient for one to know well in advance when to purchase, defrost, and brine a bird, if one is so inclined. The graphical trappings of the celebration were already well established, as demonstrated by this postcard (81.79.30) dated October 28, 1911, in which the sender "Ella" sends her regrets to Eva Osborne for a Thanksgiving dinner invite. That year, Thanksgiving was held on October 30, showing the celerity expected of the postal system, and possibly the celery expected in the turkey stuffing!



# COSTAS' CORNER

**MP Costas Menegakis**
**Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill**

## A Canadian Family Worth Holding Together

There is something special about autumn in Canada. The crisp air, changing leaves, and chance to gather around the table remind us to slow down and appreciate what we have. This Thanksgiving, I was reminded that just as we value the bonds that hold a family together, we should never take for granted the bonds that unite us as Canadians.

Families do not always agree. We debate, see things differently, and face challenges. But we work through them because our relationships matter. I believe the same principle should guide us as Canadians, and that belief feels especially important today.

Montreal holds a special place in my family's story. It was where my parents established a home when they arrived from Greece in search of a better life, where my brothers and I were born and where they created opportunities for the future of our family. Quebec's history with separatism reminds us that division carries real consequences for families, businesses, and our economy. My family's story is a reminder of all that Canada makes possible when we build our future together.

Alberta has a vital role to play in Canada's future, and a strong Alberta and a united Canada should never be seen as competing goals. Its energy sector, agricultural producers, entrepreneurs, and skilled workers make important contributions to our national prosperity. Albertans deserve to have their concerns heard, their industries treated fairly, and their province's economic potential fully recognized. When Alberta succeeds, Canada benefits. The answer to regional frustration is not greater division, but a renewed commitment to fairness, opportunity, and partnership.

We should be building a country where Alberta, Quebec and every province and territory can thrive, where our people and our resources are valued, and where Canadians can pursue their ambitions with confidence while remaining part of a strong, sovereign, and united Canada. Our federation is strongest when every province has a meaningful stake in our shared success.

Our strength has always come from our ability to bring different perspectives, cultures, and experiences together under one flag. Generations of newcomers have arrived in this country with hopes for their children and a determination to contribute. They have built businesses, worked in our communities, raised families, and helped shape the Canada we know today. Families in every region of Canada are part of that story. It is a story repeated in communities across the country, demonstrating that our shared identity does not require us to abandon our regional roots or individual traditions. Instead, it gives us a common foundation on which to build something greater.

From the Atlantic provinces to British Columbia and to our northern territories, every region contributes to our shared success. We are not competing households under one roof. We are essential parts of one Canadian home, and that home is worth protecting.

Canada faces real challenges. Families are struggling with the cost of living, businesses are navigating uncertainty, and communities are demanding greater opportunity and security. National unity cannot rest on nostalgia alone. It must be earned by a country that works for its people, respects its regions, and gives every Canadian reason to believe in our common future.

That means listening when regions feel overlooked, addressing economic inequalities, and ensuring that opportunity is not limited by geography. It means recognizing that prosperity in one part of Canada benefits us all, just as difficulties in one region can affect the entire country. A stronger Canada requires practical solutions, responsible leadership, and a renewed commitment to working together. Unity is not about pretending our differences do not exist; it is about having the confidence and determination to overcome them.

We owe it to the next generation to leave them a country that is united, prosperous, and full of possibility. That future is worth working for, together. Canada is not perfect, but it is our home. Let's remember that we have far more to gain by building a better Canada together than by breaking it apart. Our differences need not divide us, and our best days can still lie ahead.



# INSIDE AURORA

**Scott Johnston**

## Signs of the Times

Nothing says it's election time like the good old election sign.

As soon as the day that they could legally be set up has arrived, signs appeared like dandelions all over Town.

While it may look like the Wild West out there, especially at major intersections, there are actually a number of rules surrounding election signs.

First off, before you even loudly hammer in your first stake on September 28 at 12:01 am, you have to pay the Town $203 for an election sign registration fee. Perhaps $200 was too round a number.

Then, the signs you install may be no larger than 4 ft wide or tall, a rule that obviously predates the use of the metric system in Canada. Signs can also not be either digital or illuminated. Perhaps candidates could get around this by making them luminescent, which would be appropriately spooky this month with Halloween approaching.

There are also rules around where they can be placed and how many. Only one per candidate may go up per private property, for example. Under the old "at large" system where people could vote for several Councillors, one would often see a few different signs per lawn.

Strangely, now that people can vote for only one Ward candidate I've still seen a few houses with signs for multiple candidates. Are spouses divided on who to vote for? Can't the homeowners decide? Or perhaps they just can't say "no" no matter who rings their doorbell and asks if they can put a sign on their lawn.

Another rule is that candidates can have no more than two signs at most major intersections.

One exception to this is Yonge and Wellington, which is a blissfully election-free zone where no signs are permitted.

Otherwise, candidates can put up as many signs as their budgets allow. Things are a little less expensive for Councillor candidates now with the Ward system, as they only have to cover about a sixth of the Town with signs.

Of course, having lots of signs doesn't guarantee a win. With 25 candidates vying for seven positions, some folks are bound to be disappointed.

Conversely, there's the example of Auroran founder and councillor Ron Wallace.

For his first campaign that covered all of Aurora, he had just 12 signs. In his next campaign he didn't create any more, but just used the surviving ones from last time, and the following election, he put up the few that were still left. He was elected each time. But then, he was a pretty popular guy.

As for where the signs go, you wouldn't think this would be an issue, but they have to stay within the lines, so to speak. It is prohibited for Ward candidates to place signs in other Wards, something I've seen a few examples of so far. These candidates must either not be concerned about how they spend their campaign dollars, be a bit geographically challenged, or don't really care, none of which are likely the first qualities one looks for in a municipal representative.

On a related note, I've already received one flier in the mail from a candidate running in another ward. Maybe they're hoping for word of mouth, or perhaps Canada Post misread the ward number and delivered them all to everyone in the wrong ward.

As for how signs look, they should stand out, so generally you'll see large fonts, and contrasting colours. One candidate near me has small signs with writing so tiny, you'd have to have the eyesight of a bird of prey to read their name more than a couple of metres away.

Placement is always an issue. You want to be the first person to set up on a prime intersection, but by doing so you risk your sign being "inadvertently" hidden by opponents' signs subsequently set up immediately in front of it.

Eventually, election day will come and go and the signs will have done their job (or not). 72 hours later they'll all be gone, possibly to reappear in the 2030 election, or perhaps in the spring from our parks and ravines during the next Town Cleanup Day.

**Feel free to e-mail Scott at:**
**machellscorners@gmail.com**



# Time Travellers Diary

**By Jeremy Hood**
**Museum Collections Technician**
**Aurora Museum & Archives**

## The Last Print as a Village: A Special Edition Addition

The stinging cold of the previous night was still clinging to the weak morning sun, and my breath preceded me with billowing clouds. I was taking the path behind Medical Hall when I heard an exclamation ring out into the alleyway. An open window, similarly spilling steam, seemed to be the source.

"That scoundrel! Thinking to sneak a last word in."

I saw through the window that it was Sylvester Lundy, editor of the Aurora Banner. He was holding aloft an issue of the competing newspaper at the time, the Aurora Borealis. He was speaking to another man, who was clutching a derby hat in his work-weathered hands.

"We both publish on Friday – that has been the established tradition! But do you see, Teddy delayed a full day, thinking to promote his candidates over mine – over you, Henry! But I'm still nimble enough to do a Saturday special edition."

It was indeed Saturday morning, New Year's Eve, 1887. The Village of Aurora was to become a Town the next day, and the resultant elections for its first ever Mayor, as well as for host of new Council positions, were on everyone's mind. Not the least of whom seemed to be the newspaper editors, whose opinions on candidates had become very well known.

Henry spoke up.

"Syl, I appreciate your support – I always have! But maybe this time it's not worth the waste of ink."

Lundy was nearly done setting type blocks.

"Maybe my time in politics is over. How can the old standard compete with the young money? And… if Deputy Reeve is some kind of springboard, I'm far too old for that sport."

Lundy wasn't entirely listening to his friend. "Just one page is all we need. A one-page special edition, right now!"

He began to operate the press: a whirl of iron gears and levers, fluttering paper and the acrid reek of the ink. I saw the headline as the pages began to stack: "A COWARDLY DODGE!" which preceded a page of dense text outlining the financial mismanagement of a prior Reeve and Council member, the seizure of the Town Bell for an unpaid debt and some shocking words about one mayoral candidate: "a weak failure – a pitiable failure – because his abilities apparently cannot keep pace with his senile ambition" – I sure am glad this is not the kind of discourse we engage in today, I thought to myself.

Lundy held one page up as it dried. "Look, here's you, Henry: ''as a talker, Mr. Danbrook does not equal Mr. Robinson, but the position to which he has risen from small beginnings is a proof that he is a worker…for works will live when speeches are forgotten.' I think that should help them see you're the man for Deputy Reeve! Age bedamned!"

Henry smiled gently, but I could see the doubt in his kind eyes. I slinked back to my time machine.

Henry did lose. By 29 votes. The cold first days of 1888 were a fascinating fresh start to our little Town's next chapter. Now, time to look into that thing about the bell…

# *Break the Silence walk to mark 10th anniversary with expanded outreach*

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

For the last decade, hundreds of community members have laced up to take part in the Break the Silence Step in My Shoes walk, a key fundraiser for the Aurora-based Yellow Brick House, which provides shelter services for women and children escaping domestic violence.

As Yellow Brick House prepares to mark the 10th anniversary of the walk on Sunday, November 1, beginning at St. Andrew's College, they are expanding their event beyond the campus to shine an even brighter light on the issue of domestic violence, a dark trend that is not slowing down.

For the first time in its decade-long history, the Break the Silence, Step In My Shoes Walk will expand to Yonge Street, raising awareness and funds for programs and initiatives designed to prevent future instances of domestic violence through school-based violence prevention workshops, online learning modules on abuse and healthy relationships, community workshops for newcomers and immigrants, elder abuse prevention education, and training programs for organizations and community partners.

"The 10th anniversary really speaks to the significance of persistency and the fact that we understand that the horrible statistics surrounding intimate partner violence or gender-based violence are not going to change overnight, but it's an investment in the future of our youth and our younger generation who are looking forward to living a future free of violence," says Lorris Herenda, Executive Director of Yellow Brick House. "Intimate partner violence has not, unfortunately, decreased in Canada. It's still a huge societal problem with one in three women living in violent, dangerous homes with their children. During the pandemic and recent years, we've also seen an incredible increase in femicides; over 60 women and children being killed a year. We are grateful to see a decrease in that number last year and, furthermore, decreased this year. Up to the end of August, we lost 30 women and children in Ontario, so we're averaging about three a month, unfortunately. It's still very tragic, but definitely the numbers are improving.

"We are actually thrilled to be having our 10th anniversary and expanding our walk, which will be now St Andrew's campus and also Yonge Street, increasing our number of participants, increasing our visibility, because it is all about Breaking the Silence, which means that we need to be able to speak up about intimate partner violence. We need to be able to assist women and children who are suffering in those situations. As a community, we can change the future."

By going beyond the SAC campus, Herenda says she hopes community members will be able to take in the signs and placards held by participants to underscore the fact "we all play a part in preventing domestic violence and assisting survivors of domestic violence."

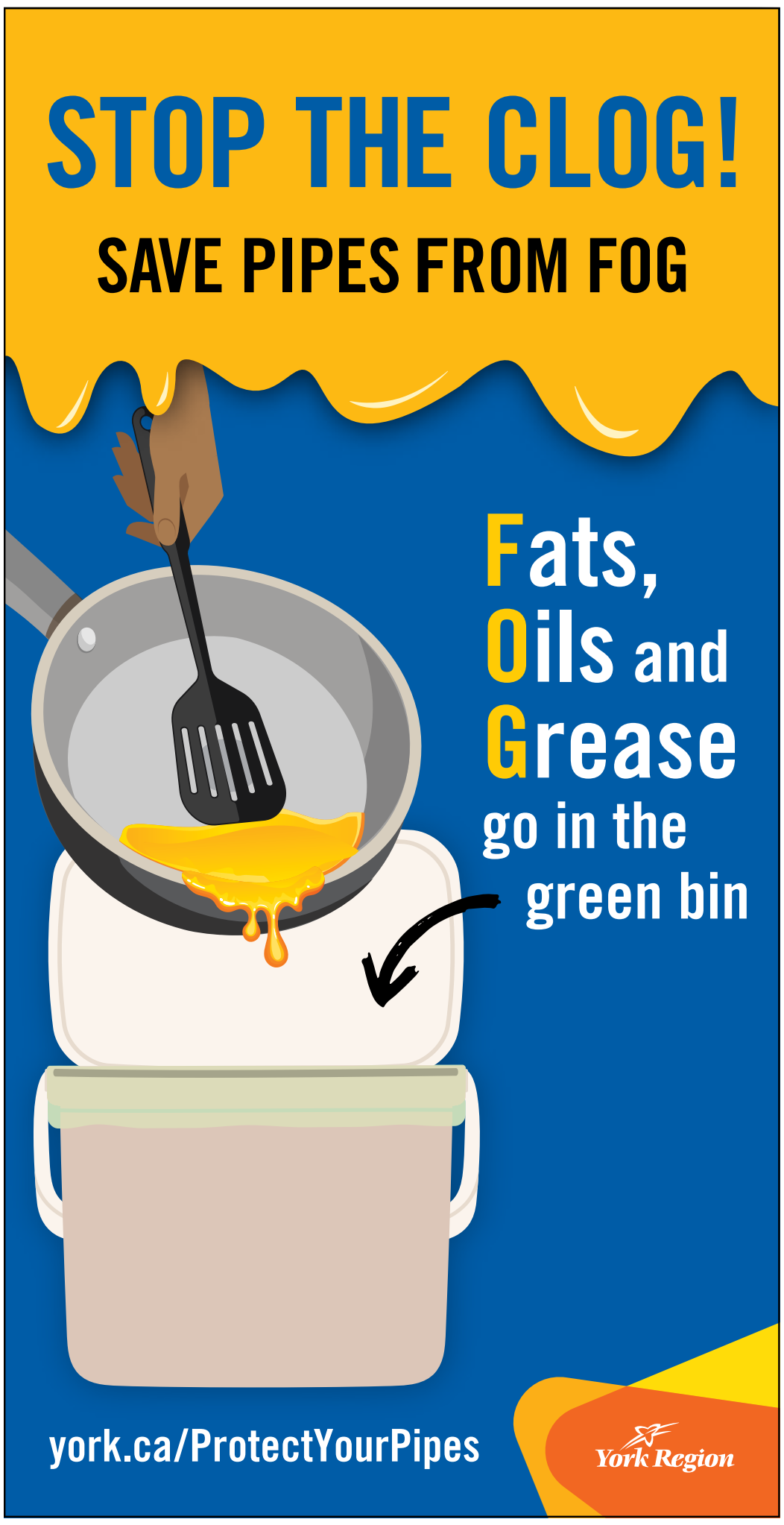
"We all know somebody who's living in a violent home. It might be our neighbor, it might be our colleague, it could be our family member, a friend. Just because it may not be happening to you doesn't mean that it doesn't pertain to you," she says. "It's not a private issue. It is one that we need to talk about. We need to understand why it's happening. We need to be able to intervene and assist those that need our help and not just walk away. Walking is about taking a stand. It is about taking a position that domestic violence impacts all of us and we need to break the silence around it because that's the only way we're going to be able to reverse the statistics that are currently happening."

It's important for participants to understand that this show of support literally helps save lives, she says. Education, she adds, is the "only way we can turn the tides" on both domestic violence and gender-based violence.

"Every participant that joins us, even though it's been 10 years, they know this is a long ride and this is a fight worth fighting for because we're all walking to protect our community members; we're walking to protect our children, our family members, our colleagues," she says. "We're all playing a part in ensuring there's actual societal change down the road."

"Every year we celebrate the thousands of women and children that are able to get services at Yellow Brick House. They're able to break free from violence and rebuild their lives. That's our essence, that's our core, that we are helping women and children break free, rebuild their lives and become positive contributing members of our community," she adds. "A lot of our participants are actually survivors and they are paying it forward. They're giving back to the community that supported them, and they recognize that there's other women and children who may be impacted by that, and they want to be able to help us support them. For us, that is a success story that we see every single day at Yellow Brick House."

*For more information on this year's Walk, visit break-the-silence-step-in-my-shoes-walk-2026.raiselysite.com.*




## AURORA VOTES 2026

## Aurora's Mayoral candidates share views on public and community safety

From page 3

Regional Police Association, and I'll continue working with our officers, police leadership, and residents to make public safety a top priority. A safe community takes leadership, investment, and action. As your Mayor, I'll continue delivering all three."

**YAFANG SHI** – "Addressing issues related to public and community safety goes beyond policing. It requires building community well-being. The Regional Municipality of York's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (2022–2026) aims to 'enhance safety by focusing on well-being' and builds on 'a strong foundation of collaborative relationships with community partners across York Region.' The plan seeks to 'help achieve the region's vision of strong, caring, safe communities.' As part of York Region, Aurora is covered by this plan. However, a recent study, Provincial Funding for Social Services in York Region, finds that "York Region has received less provincial funding for community services than other large Ontario municipalities for many years.' If elected, I will serve on York Regional Council and advocate for equitable provincial funding for municipalities and non-profit organizations to better meet the needs of residents throughout York Region, including Aurora. I will support initiatives and projects that expand access to mental health supports and address housing needs. Working collaboratively with the new Council, I will strive to build a strong, caring, and safe Aurora."



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*$1,000 Forester Bonus applies to new and previously unregistered 2026 Forester models purchased or leased/financed (on approved credit) from a participating Ontario Subaru dealer through Subaru Financial Services by TCCI and delivered by November 2, 2026. Forester Bonus: (i) will be deducted from the negotiated vehicle price before taxes; (ii) can be combined with advertised lease and finance rates; and (iii) cannot be applied to past transactions. No cash surrender or other value. See your local Subaru dealer or visit www.ontario.subarudealer.ca for complete program details. Limited-time lease offer provided through Subaru Financial Services by TCCI on approved credit. Representative lease example based on a new and previously unregistered 2026 Forester Convenience model (TJACP). Lease Vehicle Price is $36,057, which includes: MSRP $34,195; $1,000 Forester Bonus; freight and PDI $2,295; dealer administration fee $395, Air Conditioning Surcharge $100, OMVIC Fee $22, Tire Resource Recovery Environmental Fee $30, PPSA Fee $16, PPSA Service Fee $4; as well as all other applicable fees, levies and duties. Applicable sales taxes, license, registration and insurance are extra. Lease APR of 0.99% for 24 months. Lease payments of $80 weekly with $1,612 down payment. Total of 104 weekly lease payments required. Lease end value $26,730 with $1,692 due on delivery. $9,932 total lease obligation. Lease based on a maximum of 16,000 km per year for 24 months, with excess charged at $0.10/km.
Service offer available October 1–31, 2026. Limited to ten appointments per day. 6 cylinder vehicles $20 extra. 12km radius on the pick up/drop off. If booking online you must request Tire Storage service to retrieve tires from storage.
*No-charge alignment inspection: if the alignment inspection report recommends that adjustments need to be made to correct the vehicles alignment to factory specifications a charge of $189.95 will be added to the final invoice. In order to perform the "no-charge alignment inspection" the customer has authorized the additional charge of $189.95 for the reasons mentioned upon service order write up. No rain checks. Offer may not be combined with other promos or offers. Tire installation: tires must be mounted on rims. Packages available by appointment only. Call NewRoads Subaru Newmarket for full details.




# BUSINESS & FINANCE




## Paramedic Services receives Provincial funding boost

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Fabian Walsh was playing golf last year when he suddenly took ill.

After a friend called 9-1-1 from the course, Walsh was fortunate members of York Paramedic Services were already nearby and responded to his emergency in under four minutes.

It could have been the worst day of his life, he says, but the "skills, training, calmness, and quick decisions" made by the team in this life-or-death situation made all the difference.

"They came to me on what could have been the worst day of my life, and they have me something I can never repay: the gift of life, the gift of breath, and the gift of a future."

Walsh shared his story with the public on October 5 when community leaders came together at York Region Headquarters to celebrate a significant boost of Provincial funds to York Paramedic Services.

This year, York Paramedic Services will receive $68.93 million in Provincial dollars, representing a 10 per cent funding increase from the previous year.

The funding was announced by Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, who said the increase will "help manage increased costs and continue to provide high-quality emergency care while supporting the paramedics, the ambulances, and the services that residents rely on every single day."

An additional $2.78 million, she said, is dedicated to the Offload Nurses Program, which helps transfer patients from ambulances into hospital emergency departments.

"When paramedics are waiting at a hospital to offload a patient, they're not available to respond to a 9-1-1 call. So, by helping patients transition into hospital care more efficiently, this program helps get our paramedics back into the community faster," she continued. "Across Ontario, ambulance offload times have been reduced by over 65% since their peak in October 2022. So, here we are, four years later, 65% reduction. Thanks to these investments and the dedication of the healthcare professionals across the province, this is what we get.

"As York Region continues to grow, it is important that our emergency services have the resources that they need to keep pace with this growth, increasing the annual land and ambulance funding by 10%. It's about supporting people. It's about supporting the services, and it's about the resources that residents depend upon."

York Regional Chair Eric Jolliffe welcomed the funding announcement, and said this money, including the dedicated dollars to the Offload Nursing Program, are "vital to the health and safety of our residents."




Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy was joined at Regional Headquarters for the funding announcement by Markham-Unionville MPP Billy Pang, and Regional Chair Eric Jolliffe.

**Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

"In 2025 alone, York Region Paramedic Services responded to more than 99,000 incidents and [an] almost 4% increase over the previous year. Investments like this support our entire health care system. More importantly, this funding allows our paramedics to quickly transfer patients to hospital practitioners and get them back, as has been indicated, into our community to respond to their 9-1-1 calls," he said. "While that work is happening every day, our paramedics also are finding new ways to help residents get to the right care at the right time. This includes innovative programs like IMPACT (Improving Patient Access and Care in the Community). Paramedics are able to treat and release patients, connect them with other health care providers, or take them to alternative destinations rather than the emergency department. These are practical community-based solutions that improve the experience of residents while helping preserve emergency departments and paramedic capacity for those who need it the most."

In her role as General Manager of Paramedic and Senior Services, Dr. Julia Roitenberg said she has witnessed "firsthand the impact that targeted funding and investments" can have on their branch of emergency services, particularly as York Region grows.

"As our communities continue to grow, so does the demand for these services. This funding helps us continue meeting the needs of our growing community while supporting innovative models of care that connect residents with the right care at the right time and in the right place," she said. "This funding also supports our hospital partners, helping streamline the transition of patients from paramedic care to hospital care. That means paramedics can get back into the community faster, ready to respond to the next call for help. This investment is about more than funding. It is about supporting patients, strengthening our health care system, and supporting our residents to continue receiving timely, high-quality care."

Addressing the poignant story shared by Walsh, York Region's Commissioner of Community and Health Services Lisa Gonsalves said it underscores the fact "that behind every call for help is a person, a family, and a life that can be changed in an instance."

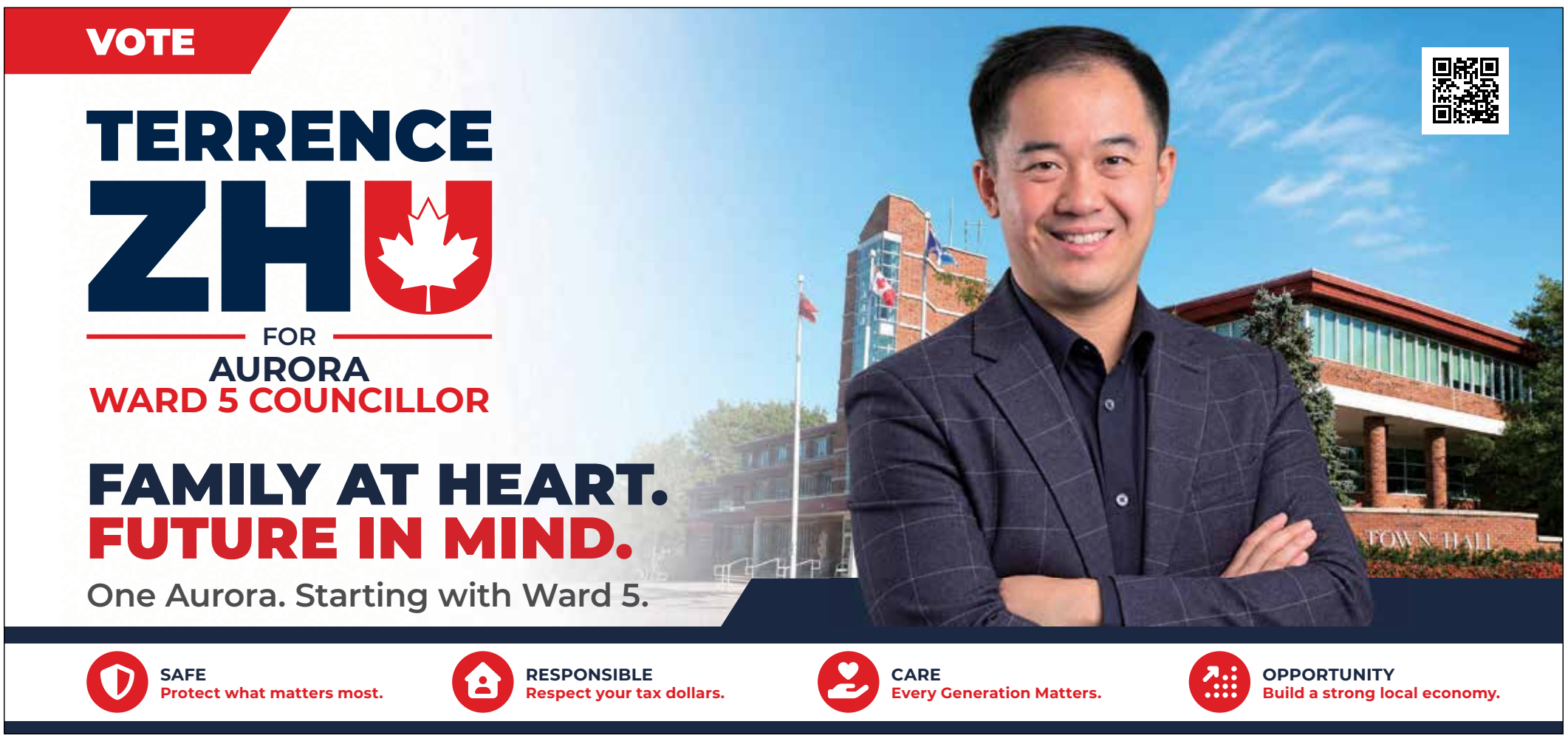
"Your experience is a powerful example of the difference our paramedics make every day, and why continued investments in emergency care is so important to the people and communities we serve," she said. "On behalf of York Region, we would like to express our deep gratitude and appreciation to the Province of Ontario for this important investment and for its continued support of our community."




## Briefly

### Suspect Sought Following Commercial Break-ins in Aurora

Investigators with the York Regional Police #1 District Criminal Investigations Bureau are seeking public assistance to identify a suspect following three commercial break and enters in Aurora. On Thursday, September 24, 2026, between approximately 2:30 a.m. and 3 a.m., the suspect broke into three restaurants in the area of Yonge Street and Brookland Avenue. In each incident, the suspect smashed the front door and entered the business through the damaged door. Cash boxes were targeted in all three occurrences. The suspect is described as male, approximately 5'10" tall, with a medium build. He was seen wearing black shoes, dark pants, a dark face covering and a dark camouflage-style coat with reflective material on the shoulders. Shortly after 3 a.m., the suspect was observed walking westbound behind a plaza in the area. Investigators believe he arrived on foot from the Brookland Avenue area. Anyone who was in the area at the time, or who has dashcam, residential or business surveillance video is asked to contact police. Anyone with information is asked to contact the York Regional Police #1 District Criminal Investigations Bureau at 1-866-876-5423, ext. 7141, or contact Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS or online at www.1800222tips.com.



# Mayoral candidates find common ground on AI data centres

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's Mayoral race has been an opportunity for candidates to present different and sometimes competing visions for the community's future.

One area in which the four candidates have found common ground, however, is the future of data centres within the community.

Candidates were asked to share their views on AI data centres at an all-candidates meeting hosted last weekend by the Aurora Public Library, the only all-candidates meeting at which all four mayoral contenders participated.

Mary Jo, a library patron who submitted her question to candidates ahead of the meeting, asked, "Do you commit to implement an interim control bylaw before AI data centre proposals are received for the Aurora area, and to consequently employ the assistance of experts to help Council set binding regulations around them before the bylaws expire?"

First to answer the question was Tom Mrakas, who said the Town has been looking at the possibility of these applications coming forward with the Director of Planning and Development.

"We've determined that the majority of Aurora is not suitable so we probably won't see any in the near future, but it's definitely something we can look at so we can put in some temporary measures to hold it in place, while we have longer discussions," he said. "I'd be open to having an interim control bylaw while we have those discussions and at look how we move forward properly and what's in the best interest of our community."

Gallo, next to answer, said he shared that viewpoint.

"I have no issues with an interim control bylaw on AI data centres and I think we should analyse different parts of Aurora where they could even potentially go in and understand where it would fit and do everything possible to manage that," he said.

In stating his opposition, Shawn Deane cited the impact these data centres have on both energy and water consumption, noting, "they're not environmentally friendly, but they generate a lot of revenue for the Provincial government."

"If we take a pause and think about another option, having these data centres find their own electric grid, build their own, the technology exists and be relocated somewhere else and not put a drain and a strain on York Region's water and electricity," he said. "Both of those are already threatened and the cost is high enough and to fund all of this the taxpayers' redevelopment charges are the ones paying, unfortunately."

Energy and water consumption was also cited by Yafang Shi, who added: "I think a data centre will consume enormous amounts of water and energy, electricity, so it's not environmentally friendly and in terms of the scale of our Town, I think that maybe it will raise some economic potentials but if we think about the problems and the costs, I think a data centre is not a very good idea for Aurora."

The second half of the October 4 discussion led with a question posed by Elizabeth C., who asked each candidate to identify the "one wedge issue you believe is currently distracting this Town and how will you redirect the Council's focus back to the core deliverables Aurora needs?"

For Shi, the top wedge issue was the use of Strong Mayor Powers.

"Those issues are very important to me – transparency and accountability," she said. "I think in terms of freedom of information practices at the Town level and at our institutions should be more open and less closed-off."

For Mrakas, it was a matter of "political decisions" versus "practical decisions."

"At the end of the day, we need to listen to our residents and look at everything that we're doing. We're here to provide the best possible services at the best possible price. That's our job. Invest in our community. Make it the greatest place to live, work and play. That's what we're going to continue to do so we can bring it back to less political decisions and more practical decisions," he said.

Gallo, however, like Shi, identified Strong Mayor powers as the top wedge issue.

"There is no doubt that three of us standing here will agree that it's strong mayor powers. There's no doubt about that. [I've knocked on 11,000 doors] in this town and that's one issue that I've been hearing consistently: Stop Strong Mayor Powers, anti-democratic, it's not for Council, it's not for staff, it's not good for the Town of Aurora."

Added Deane: "How you get consensus is as the incumbent mayor just spoke, you listen. That means you don't veto their voice. You don't block them from social media. This is where accountability is missing. Misinformation is being put out. So, to get listening and expanding the reach of the voice, enhancing the Engage Aurora website and in fact there's many ways we can enhance – I can envision quarterly voting throughout the year on major issues throughout the wards using our online voting data or the companies that capture that."

The final question at the event went to Bonnie M., who asked, "Candidates often make promises that fall under Provincial or Federal jurisdiction. What is your understanding of the municipal reach? What are some of the focuses under municipal control [and] how will you avoid scope creep?"

Candidates found further common ground in their response to this question, each stressing the importance of collaboration and communication with other levels of government.

"We should all understand what our responsibilities are as a municipal government," said Gallo. "But that doesn't stop us from advocating to the upper levels of government when we need their help. It's something that is a big part of what I will do as the next mayor of Aurora."

Mrakas was next to answer, stating advocacy to the Province has to be a constant.

"I sit down regularly with the Premier, as well as Ministers from all levels of government, the federal and provincial level, and we have those discussions about how we can move projects that… funding is required from their levels, and how we can bring it into Aurora and make sure that we complete those projects and get the things done that we need at our upper level," he said. "I tell the Premier every time, 'we don't want you to get involved in our things here in the Town of Aurora, and we won't get involved in your things in the Province,' but as far as promises, you're right. I make commitments, not promises, and I deliver results for the community."

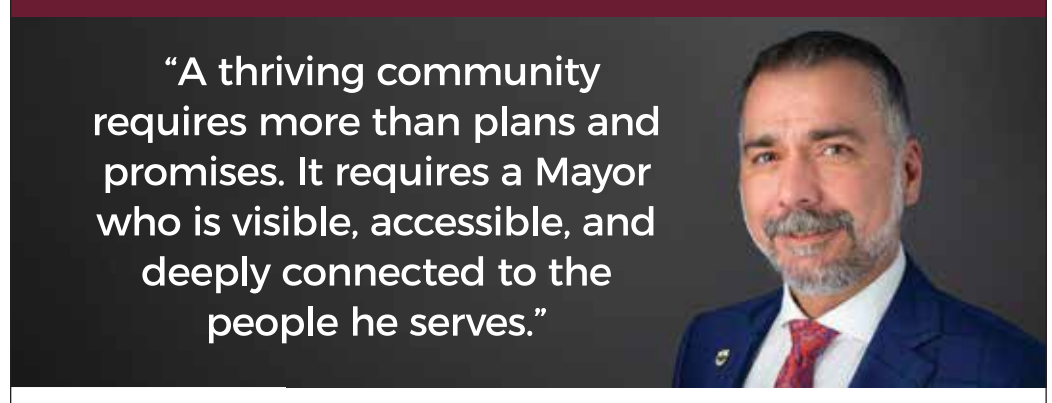
In her response, Shi focused largely on advocacy at the Regional level, at which the Mayor is Aurora's sole voice at the table.

"If I'm elected, I will advocate tirelessly for Aurora at York Region Council, and at the Provincial level, and even Federal level, for functions, for grants, for services," she said. "For example, we can advocate for daycare spaces at [the] York Regional level. We haven't done this, so we're not on that priority list. If I'm elected, I will do that."

Last word went to Deane, who noted that municipalities, under the Canadian constitution, are the "creatures of the Province."

"Our voice is already less; however, we need to start negotiating differently with the province," he said. "Right now, we have an incumbent Mayor who claims to have our voice and writes letters…. As Mayor, I will put an end to this lip service and start writing different letters that produce different results. I don't make promises. I'm a realist. I'll make commitments about what needs to be done, and I will produce different results."

Tom Mrakas
Leadership that puts Aurora First




For the past eight years as your Mayor, Tom has been at the heart of community life in Aurora.

From community events, neighbourhood gatherings, and cultural celebrations to sports tournaments, charity fundraisers, and local business openings, Tom has made it a priority to be where residents are.

By staying active and engaged in the community every day, he has built strong connections, supported local organizations and businesses, and remained closely connected to the people he serves. Because for Tom, putting Aurora first isn't a slogan, it's how he leads, how he serves, and how he gets things done.

Residents know Tom has the experience to lead, the record to deliver, and a proven commitment to Aurora.

As a family, we value leaders who are approachable, accessible, and genuinely invested in their community. We have consistently found Tom to be open to conversation, willing to listen, and deeply focused on putting the town of Aurora first in every decision. His engagement, participation, and visible involvement in town events are truly first-class. We support Tom Mrakas for Re Election.

*- THE LOUNDS FAMILY, Aurora Residents*

I am pleased to endorse Mayor Tom Mrakas.

I have known Tom for well over a decade and, throughout that time, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand his unwavering commitment to public safety and to building a community where everyone feels welcome, valued, and included.

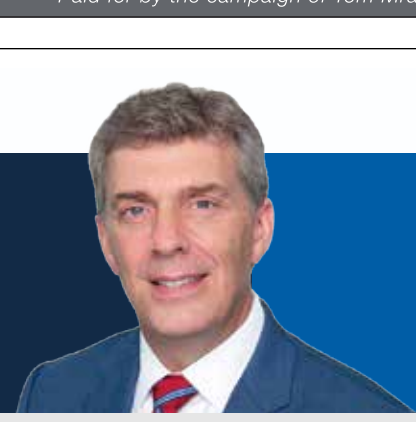
Tom genuinely cares about Aurora and the people who call it home. He has invested the time to build meaningful relationships across our community, allowing him to understand directly what Aurorans expect from their municipal leaders. His leadership is grounded in transparency, accessibility, and authenticity. He leads by example, listens with intention, and consistently puts the interests of our community first.

Aurora is stronger because of leaders who are committed to service, and Mayor Mrakas has demonstrated that commitment throughout his time in office.

*- ALVARO ALMEIDA, Aurora Resident, Retired Deputy Chief of Police*

RE-ELECT
Tom Mrakas
MAYOR
Leadership That Gets Things Done
WWW.MRAKAS.CA
*Paid for by the campaign of Tom Mrakas*

RE-ELECT
Michael THOMPSON WARD 4



*Effective*
*Experienced*
*Accountable*

I am asking for your support to re-elect me as your Ward 4 Town Councillor. I believe our community is best served by an experienced Councillor who understands the issues, listens to residents and works to address your priorities in a practical, balanced and fiscally responsible way. For the past 16 years, I have been proud to serve our community, advocate for residents and be a strong, effective voice on Aurora Town Council.

**DELIVERING FOR WARD 4 AND AURORA**

I am proud to have worked to deliver important improvements in our community, including:

- **Safer streets -** worked with the Mayor and York Region to secure traffic signals at Kaleia Avenue and Butternut Ridge Trail
- **28 acres of new parkland -** addressing the need for more green and recreational space
- **A new gymnasium** at the Aurora Recreational Complex
- **A multi-use path** along Yonge Street for pedestrians and cyclists
- **A new artificial turf multi-sport field** at Sheppard's Bush
- **Finance Advisory Committee -** re-established the committee, helping keep taxes lower, rebuilding reserves and strengthening Aurora's long-term financial stability

**MY COMMITMENT TO YOU**

If re-elected, I will continue to:

- Protect your tax dollars and deliver value for residents
- Provide experienced, practical leadership
- Manage growth in a sensible and sustainable manner
- Work to improve traffic and community safety
- Enhance our parks, environment and quality of life
- Listen, be accessible and respond to your concerns
- Ensure infrastructure, facilities and services keep pace with our needs

RE-ELECT MICHAEL THOMPSON - WARD 4 COUNCILLOR - WWW.VOTETHOMPSON.CA




# Arts & Culture




# *Historical Society launches new "intimate" concert series, bringing Hillary House back to roots*

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

More than 150 years ago, the family that called Hillary House home built a second-floor ballroom to serve as a salon for music, dance, and the arts. Now, the Aurora Historical Society is set to bring the National Historic Site's space back to its roots with the launch of a new "intimate" music series this month.

The Hillary House Intimate Concert Series: Up Close. Unplugged. Unforgettable will begin Saturday, October 24 when author Paul Weston and pianist Joanna Grace present a program of classical works by Lutosławski, Mozart, Baermann, and Arnold, showcasing the expressive blend of clarinet and piano in a closeup setting.

"Together, they bring a warm, collaborative energy to the Ballroom, pairing rich musical selections with brief readings from Paul's books to create an evening that moves seamlessly between performance and storytelling," say organizers.

The new concert series is the brainchild of Aurora Historical Society (AHS) board member Angela Trevivian, who pitched the idea to fellow Board members and AHS curator Kathleen Vahey as a way to bring new audiences into Aurora's only National Historic Site while, at the same time, staying true to the building's heritage.

"I'm new on the Board and we're looking for fundraising ideas and something I really want to get across with all this is that Hillary House is a charity, we don't get a lot of money, and everything we do is a fundraiser," says Trevivian, noting the idea for a house concert came from a friend who has held similar salons in Toronto. "There have been musical performances here from the 1800s, so why not continue that beautiful tradition? Hillary House is a home and I just love the idea of people being able to speak to the musicians in an intimate, curated event."

Vahey said she loved the idea when it was first presented to her, adding that any idea that gets more people through their Yonge Street doors gets her vote.

"It's these new ideas that bring people into the house who might never have seen themselves in that space before, and then come new admirers of the museum and its history and hopefully they come back," says Vahey. "Pre-COVID, they did Christmas concerts in the ballroom and other musical performances, but in our research we know that Dr. Hillary Sr. was part of the Aurora Orchestra in the 1870s and 1880s and they would hold orchestra performances in the ballroom. It's continuing the legacy of Hillary House being a meeting spot, a community hub for enjoying music. We have so many musical instruments in the house and collection it really feels like a homage to the family's intentions for the space and how they used it."

The intimate concert experience will be capped at 25 attendees, with each ticket sold contributing vital funds for the long-term survival of Hillary House.

A top priority for the Aurora Historical Society is remediation work on the house's foundations, some of which haven't been touched since the 1860s.

Vahey says foundation work is estimated to cost in the neighbourhood of $750,000, with the Town of Aurora pledging $150,000 towards the total, with additional provincial and federal funding hoped for down the line.

"Foundation work isn't always the flashiest of restoration work but it's so essential. It's literally the base [that] everything is on top of and grows from," says Vahey.

And it is hoped that support for the new concert series contributing to this goal will only grow as well.

Following the inaugural concert this weekend, the series will return Saturday, November 7, with violin-piano duo Gemmell & Smith; on Saturday, April 10, with soprano Nicole Whitney Dubinsky and conductor-pianist Suzanne Yeo; and on Saturday, May 1, with cellist Dr. Dobrochna Zubek and pianist Dr. Lisa Tahara with their Zuhara Duo performance.

Individual tickets for each concert is $75, with additional packages available at the box office for multiple shows.

*For more information, visit aurorahs.com/intimate-concert-series.*




## CULTURALLY speaking

*Article By:*
**Bonnie Kraft**
GAMS Co-Artistic Director



Seventeen years ago, when we began the Great Artist Music Series, we had a simple goal: to bring exceptional musicians to our community and to create concerts that would be memorable not simply because of the music being performed, but because of the extraordinary people performing it.

For us, as Artistic Directors, the greatest pleasure of these seventeen years has been discovering artists we believe our audiences simply have to hear. Often they are internationally established musicians, and some are young artists on the threshold of major careers. And occasionally we discover an ensemble so unusual that our first thought is: our audience is going to love this.

That is exactly how we feel about the Mela Guitar Quartet, who open our 2026–27 Great Artist Music Series on October 30.

Four classical guitars may sound like an intimate combination. In the hands of Mela, however, they become something approaching an orchestra in miniature.

The U.K.-based quartet takes its name from the Sanskrit word for "festival," and the name seems wonderfully appropriate. Winners of the 2023 Guitar Foundation International Competition, Mela have earned an international reputation for brilliant ensemble playing, imaginative programming and ingenious arrangements. The prestigious Gramophone Magazine has praised their "collective technical brilliance and preternatural ensemble making."

When we first heard Mela, what caught our attention immediately was the electricity in their playing — and the uncanny way the four musicians seem to breathe together, creating the impression of a single instrument rather than four individual guitars. Music originally conceived for piano or full orchestra is re-imagined for twenty-four strings, revealing colours, textures and rhythmic possibilities that can be astonishing. Their repertoire ranges from the traditional classics to new music commissioned specifically for guitar quartet.

That sense of musical adventure runs through our entire GAMS season. On January 30, Beverley Johnston brings us Percussion Plus, revealing the astonishing expressive world of percussion. On March 13, Canadian pianist Jaeden Izik-Dzurko — recently having won several major international competitions and acclaim — joins us, followed on June 5 by the Toronto Bach Festival Orchestra.

Our popular Tea and Classics concerts in the intimate setting of Brevik Hall offer two further musical treats: flutist Suzanne Shulman and harpist Erica Goodman on November 22, and the legendary Canadian clarinetist James Campbell with friends on Mothers' Day, May 9.

After seventeen years, we are still excited by the same thing that inspired us at the beginning: the possibility of hearing something extraordinary, together, in a concert hall.

We hope you will begin this season with us on October 30, when the Mela Guitar Quartet takes the stage in the Performance Hall.

We think you may never hear four guitars quite the same way again.

***— Bonnie and Norbert Kraft Artistic Directors, Great Artist Music Series***




# AURORA VOTES 2026

Welcome to **Aurora Votes 2026**. Over the next four pages, you'll hear directly from the people asking for your trust. Page one introduces our four mayoral candidates, each sharing their plans for our community. Pages two through four feature 23 council candidates across our Wards, with each speaking to key community topics. We hope this section helps you weigh your choices thoughtfully before heading to the polls on **October 26, 2026**.

You can check your voter registration status Town of Aurora Vote 2026 www.aurora.ca/your-government/elections-2026/

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **School board election:** Monday, October 26, 2026 | **Internet Voting**: Friday, October 16 to Sunday, October 25, 2026 *Internet voting is not available on Election Day* | **Advanced In-Person Voting:** Saturday, October 17 to Wednesday, October 21, 2026 | **Election Day In-Person Voting**: Monday, October 26, 2026 |

## CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR

MAYORAL CANDIDATE

### SHAWN DEANE



Here is what reelecting a mayor who supports Strong Mayor Powers (SMP) in Aurora and at York Region Council will mean for our community. You will be voting to end democratic decision making at Council for the first time in Aurora's history. SMP gives the mayor unilateral veto authority — overriding your voice and the voice of your Ward Councillor whenever they choose. The York Region Chair would also gain the ability to veto Aurora's mayor on any matter that does not align with provincial priorities. The current division between residents and Council will deepen, and financial oversight of chronic Staff overspending will weaken further, in Aurora and the Region. Taxpayer hardship will continue to grow as reserve fund balances inflate beyond justification. Ask yourself whether this is truly the direction you want for Aurora. To prevent the erosion of accountability and local democracy, vote for CHANGE.

MAYORAL CANDIDATE

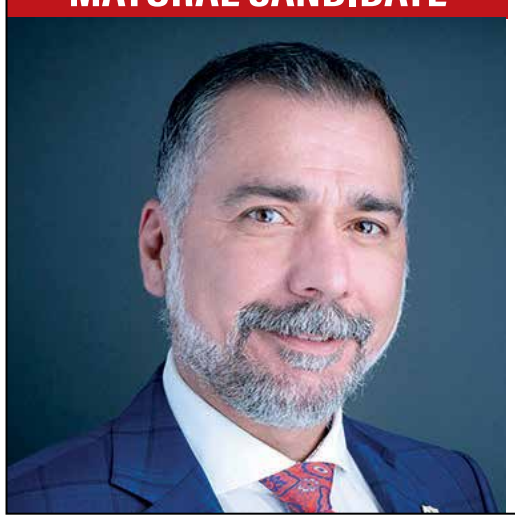
### JOHN GALLO



Aurora deserves respectful and principled leadership. After 14 years on Council and over 30 years calling Aurora home, I bring experience, judgment and a commitment to protecting taxpayers. I believe Strong Mayor powers are an affront to local democracy. Every Councillor represents voters. Overriding Council undermines their voice and yours. I will lead through collaboration, open debate and respect. My four pillars are respect for residents and good governance; protecting affordability and strengthening opportunity; engaging youth and building future leaders; and safe, welcoming neighbourhoods. That means transparent budgets, careful spending, support for local businesses and housing choices that help seniors, young people and families stay in Aurora. It means more opportunities for seniors to remain active and connected, and for youth to contribute and lead. I admit, I probably read budgets more than anyone should. Vote John Gallo for Mayor. Let's build a stronger Aurora together.

MAYORAL CANDIDATE

### TOM MRAKAS



Over the past eight years, I've been honoured to serve as your Mayor and work every day to deliver results for Aurora. Together, we've kept taxes among the lowest in the GTHA, maintained strong reserves, revitalized our downtown with Aurora Town Square, protected green space and heritage, expanded parks, trails and recreation, and managed growth responsibly while investing in the infrastructure our community needs. But there is more work to do. My priorities remain clear: Managing rising costs through responsible fiscal management, getting Aurora moving by advancing critical transportation infrastructure, planning growth on Aurora's terms, and keeping our community safe while protecting the quality of life we value. This election is about proven leadership, experience and results—and who you trust to keep delivering for our community. I'm proud of what we've accomplished together, and I respectfully ask for your support to continue moving Aurora forward. Leadership That Gets Things Done.

MAYORAL CANDIDATE

### YAFANG SHI



I am an artist, community advocate, and former journalist with thirty years of experience spanning journalism, art, advocacy, corporate, and non-profit organizations. I am passionate, principled, and deeply committed to the wellbeing of our community. My vision for Aurora is to build an inclusive, sustainable, vibrant, and thriving community. My priorities include championing a human rights action plan to ensure compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code across the Town and Town-funded institutions, better serving our increasingly diverse population; ending the use of strong mayor powers and improving transparency and accountability by reforming Freedom of Information practices, eliminating unnecessary closed door meetings, and changing old boys' club culture; planning thoughtfully for diverse housing needs, community concerns, infrastructure readiness, environmental protection, and heritage preservation; managing finances responsibly while ensuring quality, accessible services and programs; and strengthening the local economy by supporting the creation of Business Improvement Areas.



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# CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #1

## WARD #1



### LAUREN HANNA

I grew up in Aurora, and now my husband and I are raising our two daughters here. My career has been spent in public service, including policy and strategy in the Ontario government, and economic risk and audits at the Auditor General's Office. Here at home, I chair the Aurora Public Library Board and helped create community initiatives including Porchlight Arts and No Tricks, Just Treats. I'm running because I believe politics should be about listening to residents and making people feel heard. I've spent four years listening and five months knocking on doors across Ward 1. I'll bring that same care, experience and commitment to Council — working collaboratively and respectfully with everyone around the table. On October 26, vote Lauren Hanna for Ward 1 Councillor.



### ROCCO MORSILLO

For more than 20 years, my family and I have built our lives in Aurora. I've owned and operated a local business, volunteered, served on boards and committees, built lasting relationships, and listened to the people who make this community special. If elected, I'll focus on three priorities: responsible spending, responsible growth, and safer communities. Your tax dollars matter and I'll help manage the Town's budget responsibly, control costs, and protect essential services. As Aurora grows, we must respect neighbourhoods, protect our environment, and preserve what makes Aurora unique. I'll continue working with residents, community groups, and York Regional Police to support crime prevention and safer communities. I'm looking for the opportunity to give back to my community. Please vote Rocco Morsillo for Ward 1 Councillor.

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #2

## WARD #2



### ANGELA DAUST

I have lived in Ward 2 since 1996. I hold a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Toronto. My career was with the City of Toronto for 30 years. My roles allowed me to gain experience in policy development, research, contract management, risk mitigation, continuous improvement, and public engagement. I have delegated to Council numerous times on behalf of Ward 2 residents. I have served on the Yonge Street Revitalization Committee and currently serve on the Environmental Advisory Committee for the Town of Aurora. Now retired, I can devote my full attention to representing Ward 2. I will be accountable, champion considerate growth, and work to ensure safety, green space and responsible spending are priorities. I will be your strong voice on Council.



### MARCO DI GIROLAMO

My name is Marco Di Girolamo, and my family and I have called Aurora home for 17 years. I'm a business owner who has built teams, led people, managed resources and made decisions where accountability and results matter. My experience as captain of the Canadian National Rugby Team, which has resulted in me being named to the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame, and Ontario Rugby Hall of Fame, taught me that strong leadership means bringing people together, earning trust and working toward a common goal. I am proud to have been able to take those learned leadership skills and mentor young people in the trades, helping them build skills, confidence and opportunities for their future. My priorities are community safety, fiscal responsibility, responsible growth, proactive by-law enforcement and protecting neighbourhood character. I'm running to listen, bring people together, and turn Ward 2 residents' concerns into action.



### PHIONA DURRANT

I am running to be your next Ward 2 Councillor because it is time for practical, action-oriented leadership. After 20 years of hearing your concerns, I know the issues and am ready to deliver results. I believe in nothing for the people without the people. I am here to work with you. Here is how I will take immediate action for our community: 30% Salary Give-Back - I am pledging 30% of my first-year salary directly to local youth, seniors, and businesses through active grassroots groups. This includes providing immediate relief for the snow windrow situation so our vulnerable residents don't face convoluted websites or $200 fees; Six Ward 2 Ambassadors – I am establishing a network of six local leaders to act as eyes and ears on the ground, ensuring your voice always reaches me directly; In-Person Office: office for residents so you can meet and speak with me face-to-face; 365-Day Commitment: This may be a part-time job on paper, but I will be accessible to you 365 days a year. Make me your first choice on election day. Vote Phiona Durrant.



### BRYNN LANSDOWN

As this campaign comes to an end, I want to say thank you. Thank you to every person who opened their door, stopped to talk, shared a concern, asked a question, or simply took the time to engage. I have learned so much from these conversations, and I want you to know that your concerns have not fallen on deaf ears. Whether I am elected or not, I will champion what I have heard. Most importantly I want to encourage everyone to vote, I encourage you to take some time to research the candidates, ask final questions you have, and look back through past editions of the newspaper, beyond the paid ad space, to the candidates' responses. Think about the experience, priorities and approach each candidate brings, and who you trust to question decisions and help shape Aurora over the next four years and beyond. Thank you for being part of this process.

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #3

## WARD #3



### NIKKI ALBER

Over the past five months, I've knocked on thousands of doors and listened to what matters most to Ward 3 residents. The message has been clear: safer streets, responsible spending, well-maintained neighbourhoods, better recreational opportunities, and a Council that listens and takes action. I'm a mom, educator, business owner, and community advocate. I understand the importance of protecting what makes Aurora special while planning responsibly for its future. I'm not afraid to ask tough questions, challenge decisions, or hold people accountable. I believe residents deserve transparency, practical solutions, and a councillor who will work tirelessly on their behalf. I'm running because I believe effective representation starts with listening, but it doesn't end there. It takes determination, accountability, and a willingness to stand up for residents, even when it's difficult. On October 26, vote Nikki Alber for Ward 3 Councillor.

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# CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #3

## WARD #3



### ALEXANDRA BONHAM

I am a lifelong Auroran who has called this town home since 1991. I believe the many hats I have worn throughout my life make me a perfect candidate to serve our community, but most importantly I believe public service starts with listening, connecting, and leading by example. My platform is focused on thoughtful development, improved recreational facilities (both indoor and out) for Ward 3, to push public transit companies to offer a wider range of routes for residents, improved tree care, and most importantly to work with fellow elected officials and residents respectfully. It is important that we remember who we work for, the residents of Aurora. It would be an honour to serve the residents of Aurora. Vote Alexandra Bonham, Ward 3 Councillor.



### ROBERT JAMES FRASER

I am asking for your vote because I believe Ward 3 deserves transparent, accountable, and fiscally responsible representation at Town Hall. As a long-time Aurora resident, I understand the challenges our community faces, from rising household costs and infrastructure needs to protecting the green spaces that make Aurora such a desirable place to live. Through countless conversations with residents, I have listened to your concerns and am committed to bringing practical, common-sense solutions to Council. My priorities include spending tax dollars wisely, supporting local businesses, encouraging responsible growth, and ensuring Ward 3 has a stronger voice in municipal decision-making. I will lead with honesty, integrity, and a commitment to keeping residents informed. Together, we can protect Aurora's quality of life and build a stronger future for Ward 3.



### HAROLD MACDONALD

What will I bring to Council and how can I earn your vote?
* Life and work Experience. I have successfully run local businesses over the years and understand budgets, management, and the importance of being a team player. * Availability. I am semi-retired, and now have the flexibility to devote the time that is necessary to truly hear and advocate for Ward 3. * Passion. I grew up in Aurora, Shelley and I raised our family here, and we currently live in Ward 3. I am very proud of this Town and to be an Auroran. I will work hard, listen to you, and be a strong voice for Ward 3 and the Town of Aurora. Please vote-online or in person. Online: 16-25. Advanced: 17-21. Election Day Oct 26

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #4

## WARD #4



### SHAHEEN MOLEDINA

Your Councillor, Your Voice – As an Aurora resident since 2010 raising two children in Ward 4 - Aurora, I truly understand the daily lived experience of Ward 4 families. I don't just campaign here—I live, work, and operate my business right here in our community. Whether navigating local traffic or chatting with parents at childcare pickup, I experience the exact same neighbourhood challenges you do every day. As a multilingual leader and past member of the Town's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and Mayors' Golf Fund, I bring ready-to-serve experience to Council. To bridge the communication gap, I will encourage an active Ward 4 Ratepayers Group that meets frequently, and advocate for a strong Business Improvement Area (BIA) to revitalize our core and support entrepreneurs. I will do this while respecting our Official Plan and Environment. Explore my vision at shaheenmoledina.ca. Vote Shaheen Moledina.



### MICHAEL THOMPSON

For the past 16 years, I've had the privilege of serving the residents of Aurora as a member of Town Council. Throughout my time on Council, I've focused on responsible financial management, sensible growth, improving our parks and recreational facilities, and ensuring residents receive value for their tax dollars. I'm proud of what we've accomplished, but there is more work to be done. With over 25 years of business and leadership experience, I bring a practical, common-sense approach to decision-making. I believe in listening to residents, asking the right questions, considering different perspectives and following through. I'm seeking your support for re-election to continue providing experienced, accountable and effective representation for the residents of Ward 4 and helping keep Aurora a great place to live, work and raise a family.

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #5

## WARD #5



### CHARITY DELA CRUZ-TOUPIN

I'm Charity Dela Cruz-Toupin, an Aurora resident, wife, mom, business owner, karate instructor, Licensed Paralegal and community volunteer. For 16 years, I've taught karate in Aurora and, for 15 years, helped run our family business here. I've built relationships with thousands of families and seen firsthand what makes our community strong. I'm running for Ward 5 Councillor because I believe local government should listen before it decides. I want to be a voice for families, youth, seniors, newcomers and local businesses, while supporting responsible growth and a strong sense of community. Aurora is growing and becoming more diverse. We need councillors who listen, ask questions, and aren't afraid to speak up.... even when it's not the popular position. I'm ready to listen, represent, and serve Ward 5.



### JESSIE FRASER

I've lived and worked in Ward 5 for 16 years and proven my dedication through decades of volunteering. I love Aurora, but see areas for improvement, which is why I'm running. Councillor responsibilities are significant; a candidate should have relevant education and experience. I have a PhD in educational leadership and 20+ years' experience in community education. I currently work as a university professor and director of a leadership organization. My experience in organizational change management, policy analysis and strategic problem solving directly relate to Council duties. My platform has three pillars: accountable and transparent leadership through balanced priorities that consider fiscal responsibility and quality of life; community engagement through two-way communication; advocacy for access and inclusion through collaboration with diverse interest-holders. These aren't just promises; I'm already doing the work and have the education, engagement and experience to best serve Ward 5.






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a difference with town councillors."
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Pickering College students aren't just
preparing for the real world—they're in it.

PICKERING COLLEGE

**Open House**
Saturday, October 24 at 10 a.m.
JK–Grade 12
Register at pickeringcollege.on.ca

# CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL

## WARD 5

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #5



### MILTON HART

Friends and neighbors, Aurora is our home, and its future deserves leadership built on integrity, accountability, and service before self. As a Canadian Armed Forces veteran, educator, coach, and proud Aurora resident of 22 years, I understand what it means to lead, listen, and deliver. I will fight for lower taxes, responsible development that protects our community's character, better infrastructure that keeps pace with growth, safer neighbourhoods, and fiscal accountability that respects every taxpayer dollar. I am not running to make promises I cannot keep. I am running to work hard, ask tough questions, and put residents first. Together, we can build an Aurora that is affordable, safe, and prosperous. On October 26, I sincerely ask for your trust and your vote.



### HARBINDER (BINDA) THANDI

My vision for Ward 5 is a community where children can walk safely to school, seniors can stay connected, and families can afford to build their future. I will push for safer streets, well maintained parks, roads, and growth supported by the infrastructure we need. I will scrutinize spending, support local businesses, and explain where your tax dollars go and what they deliver. You deserve a councillor who answers your calls, listens before deciding, and follows through after election day. As a father, neighbour, and local insurance broker, I understand that trust is earned through action. I will bring practical judgment and a willingness to work with every member of council to move Ward 5 forward. My commitment every day is putting Aurora before politics



### GEORGE TREMTSIDIS

Aurora is a wonderful community and a great place to live, work, and raise a family. However, I believe it is time for stronger leadership, greater accountability, and more transparency in how decisions are made on behalf of residents. If you give me the privilege of representing Ward 5, I will work tirelessly to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly and that projects are delivered on time and within budget. I will advocate for comprehensive cost-benefit analyses on all major projects so residents can clearly understand the value, risks, and long-term impact of every significant investment. With more than 30 years of experience in finance, negotiations, and business leadership, I bring practical, real-world knowledge to the role. Most importantly, I will listen to residents, be accessible, and ensure your voice is heard at Town Hall.



### TERRENCE ZHU

I'm Terrence Zhu, a father, Aurora resident, small business owner and digital marketing professional. I'm new to politics, but I'm not new to responsibility. I'm running for Ward 5 with four priorities: keeping our community safe, managing growth and taxpayer dollars responsibly, caring for every generation, and creating more opportunities for local businesses and good jobs. Ward 5 is growing, and growth needs a plan. Infrastructure and services must keep pace while we protect the quality of life that makes Aurora special. I believe a Councillor should listen, be accessible, explain decisions and follow through. I may not agree with every resident on every issue, but every resident deserves to be heard and represented. Family at heart. Future in mind. One Aurora. Starting with Ward 5.

## WARD 6

COUNCIL CANDIDATES: WARD #6



### NICHOLAS KASHEF

Aurora is growing. If our new residents drive everywhere, for everything, our already overburdened roads will not be able to keep up with demand. Growth doesn't have to mean giving up streets that are safe, and quiet enough for kids to play. Aurora is blessed with abundant nature trails. By paving and connecting our existing trails, we can create a network of bike paths giving residents a safer way to get around town, getting e-bikes and e-scooters off our roads and sidewalks. Safer streets, stronger communities and a town that cares about every resident whether they are eight or eighty, these are what drive me forward. Check out kashef.ca for more. I care about this town and know we could be doing so much more.



### ZIVKA KICIC

Aurora has been home to my family since 2009. As a Ward 6 resident, homeowner, landlord and Realtor for more than 20 years, I understand the pressures families face with housing costs, property taxes and affordability. Ward 6 deserves an independent voice focused on residents, responsible spending and accountability. Not a career politician, and not running for the compensation, I am fortunate to have a successful business and financial independence. This campaign is about caring for Aurora and giving back. Ward 6 has grown tremendously, but growth must come with the services, recreation, community spaces and infrastructure residents need. My commitment is to listen, ask tough questions, speak up for Ward 6 and hold leadership accountable when necessary, bringing a practical, independent perspective to Council.



### HAROLD KIM

I first ran for Council to bring people together. When two sides disagree, my job is to find the common ground and get things done for both. Ward 6 has grown quickly. Whether you arrived last year or decades ago, Aurora works best when neighbours get to know each other and pitch in together. That is how a volunteer town stays strong. Aurorans are proud of where they live, and for good reason. Our trails, parks, sports and cultural life are second to none, and I have supported that growth at every step. Council may have four new faces after this election. Three terms of experience and 25 years in financial services will help keep us steady. Please vote Harold Kim for Ward 6 Councillor.



# CDS Students Set to Shine on the International Public Speaking Stage



Three CDS students, Sasha, Adhya and Charlize, are prepped and ready for the International Independent Schools' Public Speaking Competition (IISPSC) October 15 – 18. **Photo courtesy of CDS**

**BY KIM SILLCOX**

The Country Day School in King is sending three students to compete in the International Independent Schools' Public Speaking Competition (IISPSC) this week.

Students from China, South Korea, India, Bermuda, Canada and the U.S. will be convening on the campus of Maclachlan College in Oakville for three days of camaraderie and stiff competition.

The most senior member, Adhya Chandradat, competed at IISPSC last year in Portland, Maine, and qualified and competed in the World Championships in Bristol, UK, last April.

She is excited to compete in three categories: Persuasive, Interpretive and Impromptu (her favourite).

For her persuasive speech, she has chosen the topic of overparenting, which is when parents are super involved in their kids' day-to-day lives in the desire to shield them from difficult situations or to help them succeed. Even though parents mean well, it often does more harm than good because kids don't get the chance to learn from their mistakes. For her interpretive piece, she is reading an excerpt from Sophie Kinsella's book Finding Audrey where a young girl suffering from Social Anxiety Disorder has a massive panic attack in a Starbucks and is helped by her friend.

This will be the first IISPSC for both Sasha Nigul and Charlize Bianchi. Both girls are competing in Persuasive, Interpretive and Impromptu categories. Sasha got involved with the Public Speaking and Debate team last year, and did very well at the Nora McRae tournament last May. She and Charlize tied for 3rd in Persuasive and Sasha tied for 3rd in Impromptu.

"I've always loved to talk and enjoy drama, so it was a natural fit."

Sasha's persuasive speech is on the potential dangers of elderly driving.

"We need to improve the testing for elderly drivers, not as a means to decrease their independence, but to keep them safe. At the same time, we should be improving public transit so they can still get to where they need to go."

Her interpretive piece is based on the novel This Is Where It Ends by Marieke Nijkamp, which explores the devastating impact of a school shooting. As a competitive dancer herself, Sasha connects deeply with the main character, Autumn, a dancer who loses her mother in a car accident on the way to one of her recitals.

In the aftermath, Autumn's father and brother blame her and her passion for dance for her mother's death. As the family continues to unravel over the next two years, Autumn's brother ultimately channels his anger into a school shooting.

"I want to be able to touch people in the audience, both judges and my fellow competitors, and have them understand the story."

Charlize shared that she was always more of a quiet kid, but now her favourite category is interpretive reading and she is excited to read an excerpt about when Dobby comes to visit from the second Harry Potter book, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.

"I enjoy getting into character and the accompanying voices," she explained with a smile.

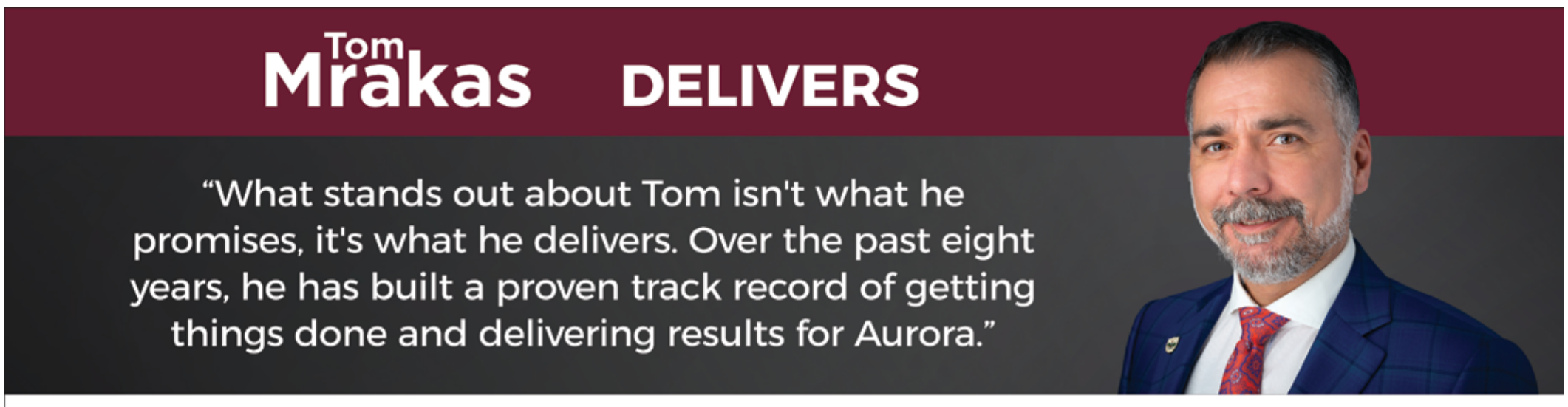
The topic of her persuasive speech is the dangers of e-scooters. "Kids think it's okay to drive an e-scooter like a car, but there are no seatbelts or windshields. The increase in injuries has risen sharply and many are due to high speeds and minimal protections."

"It is always so inspiring to see students using their voices to address issues that are so relevant in today's world," said veteran coach Kerstin Wyndham-West. "From the challenges of overparenting and improving testing for elderly drivers to the growing safety concerns surrounding e-scooters, these three students are tackling timely community issues with passion, insight, and a commitment to educating their audiences."

We wish all three public speakers the very best as they head out to compete in this annual speaking event alongside their three incredible coaches Ms. Wyndham-West, Mr. Robinson and Mme. Davidson. This tournament qualifies students to attend the World Individual Debate and Public Speaking Tournament held next spring in Shanghai. CDS has qualified at least one individual (and sometimes three) for the past 19 years!








**PROVEN LEADERSHIP. REAL RESULTS. A BETTER AURORA.**

For eight years, Tom has focused on results, not rhetoric. He has brought people together, built consensus, and advanced practical solutions that make Aurora stronger. His leadership is rooted in action, accountability, and a commitment to getting things done.

**On the issues that matter most, Tom delivers:**

**☑ Protecting Taxpayers**

Aurora has maintained the 8th-lowest tax rate in the GTHA for eight consecutive years and the lowest four-year tax rate among York Region's N6 municipalities, while building healthy reserves that keep taxes responsible, predictable, and sustainable.

**☑ Building Our Community**

Secured more than 28 acres of new parkland, opened Aurora Town Square, a vibrant community hub that has welcomed tens of thousands of visitors and hosted more than 50 events, and expanded recreation opportunities through new sports fields, pickleball courts, turf fields, and the SARC gym expansion.

**☑ Managing Growth Responsibly**

Approved more than 3,400 new housing units over the past two years, including 1,100+ purpose-built rentals, while keeping growth aligned with Aurora's Official Plan. Tom advanced the Community Planning Permit System, modernized zoning, removed barriers to housing, and supported the Addison Hall and Wellington East business parks, helping attract 400+ new businesses and create more than 3,000 new jobs.

**☑ Keeping Aurora Moving**

Secured Regional support for major infrastructure projects, including the Wellington Street rail grade separation, the future Highway 404 interchange at St. John's Sideroad, and the widening of St. John's Sideroad. Tom also championed long-awaited improvements at Yonge and Wellington to improve traffic flow through one of Aurora's busiest intersections.

**☑ Advocating for Aurora**

Ensured Aurora has a strong voice at regional and provincial decision-making tables while securing funding and support for the infrastructure needed to serve a growing community.

**Residents know Tom has the experience to lead, the judgment to make tough decisions, and the proven record to deliver.**

**THE EXPERIENCE AURORA NEEDS. THE RESULTS AURORA DESERVES.**

I proudly support Tom Mrakas for his strong and principled leadership as Mayor of Aurora.

Tom has consistently demonstrated the kind of leadership our community needs, decisive, transparent, and grounded in what's best for all residents. He doesn't shy away from making tough decisions, even when they're not the easiest path, because he understands that real leadership requires accountability and long-term vision.

His commitment to transparency ensures that residents are informed and engaged, building trust between the community and local government. Time and again, he has shown that his priority is the betterment of Aurora as a whole, not short-term gain, but sustainable progress.

Aurora is fortunate to have a mayor who leads with integrity, makes difficult decisions with confidence, and always keeps the best interests of its citizens at the forefront

*- GINO SGOVIO, Aurora Resident*

I am proud to offer my strong personal endorsement of Tom Mrakas.

Having known Tom for many years, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand his unwavering commitment to the Town of Aurora and the people he serves. His leadership is grounded in integrity, accessibility, and a genuine desire to deliver meaningful results for his community.

Throughout his tenure, Tom has consistently demonstrated an ability to balance thoughtful long-term planning with decisive action. He understands the importance of responsible growth, fiscal discipline, and community engagement—ensuring that Aurora continues to thrive while preserving the qualities that make it such a desirable place to live and raise a family.

What sets Tom apart is not just his track record of achievement, but his approachability and dedication to listening. He represents his constituents with authenticity and works tirelessly to ensure their voices are reflected in the decisions that shape the region.

I have full confidence in Tom's continued leadership and strongly support his ongoing efforts to serve Aurora with distinction.

*- DAN KAGAN, Aurora Resident*

RE-ELECT

Tom Mrakas MAYOR

Leadership That Gets Things Done

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RE-ELECT

# Tom Mrakas

# MAYOR

Leadership That Gets Things Done



# PROVEN TRACK RECORD

## EASING YOUR TAX BURDEN

- **8th lowest tax rate** in the entire GTHA 8 straight years
- **Lowest tax rate** in York Region N6 past 4-year term
- **Healthy reserves** to protect long term financial stability and keep taxes responsible & predictable

## BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

- **28+ Acres of parkland** secured – largest acquisition in a generation
- **Aurora Town Square** – a vibrant community hub that welcomed tens of thousands of visitors, hosted over 50 community events
- **New recreation infrastructure:** gym expansion at the ARC, sports fields, pickle ball courts, turf fields and community programming spaces

## MANAGING RESPONSIBLE GROWTH

- **Balanced Growth** that aligns with our Official Plan
- **1100+ purpose built rentals approved** – largest expansion in decades
- **New business parks** (Addison Hall & Wellington East) creating space for future employment growth
- **400 new businesses** and over **3000 new jobs** in 8 years

**WWW.MRAKAS.CA**

*Paid for by the campaign of Tom Mrakas*

AURORA VOTES 2026

# Candidates outline visions for fostering Aurora's stable neighbourhoods

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As Aurora's population grows, infill developments and re-developments will be in the offing, bringing some new builds into established communities.

This week, Council candidates were asked if the Town has done enough to protect Aurora's stable neighbourhoods and, if so, to identify measures that have helped. On the flipside, if they did not believe the Town had done enough, what they would advocate for to improve the situation.

Here's how they answered:

## WARD 1

**LAUREN HANNA** – "After speaking with thousands of residents over the past five months, I do not believe Aurora's Stable Neighbourhoods are sufficiently protected. The Town has taken steps in the right direction, including Stable Neighbourhood guidelines and stronger policies in the 2024 Official Plan. Provincial changes to the Planning Act, beginning with Bill 23 in 2022, have significantly reduced the Town's ability to use site-plan control and regulate exterior design for smaller residential developments. I support responsible, balanced growth and appropriate infill. New development should respect our Official Plan and surrounding context, with appropriate scale, built form and transitions, while minimizing environmental and neighbourhood impacts. The current Zoning By-law Review is an important opportunity. I would advocate for the strongest legally defensible standards available around height, setbacks, lot coverage and landscaping, translating our Official Plan policies into clear rules that provide residents, applicants and the Committee of Adjustment with greater certainty."

**ROCCO MORSILLO** – "Aurora's Stable Neighbourhood Policy is an important tool the Town can use to minimize disruption and ensure new construction respects the established character of our communities. The policy can help guide the massing, scale, and appearance of new homes so that future development reflects the vision of the neighbourhood. However, there are measures and guidelines within the policy that could be strengthened to provide greater consistency and stronger protection for established neighbourhoods. New development should complement the surrounding homes, not create abrupt changes in scale, massing, or character. The Town should strengthen the Stable Neighbourhood Policy and its design guidelines to ensure that new construction fits appropriately within its surroundings. Protecting neighbourhood character while allowing thoughtful development will help preserve the stability, identity, and quality of Aurora's established communities."

## WARD 2

**ANGELA DAUST** – "I believe that Aurora has done a fairly good job in creating stable neighbourhoods. Measures such as restricted building heights, set backs, impact of sunlight and lot coverage help to maintain the character of the neighbourhood. However, I think it shouldn't just be certain neighbourhoods that are afforded this protection. Areas that do not have this protection have structures being built that are not considerate of the neighbourhood and have a negative impact on current residents. Many older neighbourhoods have single story bungalows whose residents are appalled when a gigantic 'Monster Home' is constructed beside them. On my street, approval has been given for a five-storey apartment building to be built beside 1.5 storey Victorian homes. This building is to the west of these homes so sunlight will be completely blocked in their yards. Growth in Aurora is inevitable. We are on a major regional corridor. However, growth that is considerate of the existing neighbourhood, regardless of whether it is a stable neighbourhood, should be afforded to all residents of Aurora."

**MARCO DI GIROLAMO** – "I believe the Town has taken some positive steps to protect Aurora's stable neighbourhoods, but I also believe we can do more. In Ward 2, we have established neighbourhoods with mature trees, established streetscapes and a character that residents have invested in and care about. We need to protect that character while still allowing Aurora to grow responsibly. Aurora's Official Plan recognizes the importance of protecting Stable Neighbourhoods from incompatible development while allowing appropriate, gentle intensification. I support that approach, but I believe we need to be very careful about how it is applied. If elected, I will advocate for development that is appropriate to the neighbourhood where it is occurring — with greater attention to building height, setbacks, lot coverage, parking, traffic, trees and the overall impact on neighbouring properties. I will also push for stronger and clearer design standards for infill development, better communication with residents before projects are approved, and making sure residents' concerns are genuinely considered during the planning process. Growth is going to happen, and I am not opposed to growth. But growth should not mean losing the character of the neighbourhoods that make Aurora a great place to live. My goal is simple: responsible growth, appropriate development, and protecting the Ward 2 character for the people who live here today and for future generations."

**BRYNN LANSDOWN** – "Aurora has taken steps toward its housing goals, including opportunities for thoughtful intensification such as fourplexes, but I believe there is more work to do to ensure growth fits within existing neighbourhoods. To me, stable neighbourhoods are about maintaining the character and overall look of an area while allowing homeowners reasonable opportunities to adapt their properties. I have seen thoughtful second-storey additions that fit beautifully within their neighbourhood, alongside developments that do not. We also need to think beyond simply adding units. Parking, safe and legal living conditions, accessibility and impacts on surrounding streets all need to be considered. Aurora also needs a greater variety of housing solutions, rather than relying heavily on one type of development. As a Councillor, I would advocate for listening to residents, learning from past developments, and asking what we can do proactively to make future housing safer, more accessible and better integrated into our existing neighbourhoods."

## WARD 3

**NIKKI ALBER** – "Provincial legislation has changed what municipalities can control, but that does not mean Aurora should simply accept every negative impact on established neighbourhoods. I would advocate for the Town to use every tool still available to us, ensure our zoning and design standards provide the strongest protections permitted under provincial legislation. Growth needs to be accommodated, but it should be done thoughtfully and with respect for the people who already call these neighbourhoods home."

**ALEXANDRA BONHAM** – "This is why prioritizing growth on our main corridors is important. I believe the Town has taken a proactive approach thus far but there is always more work to be done to ensure we maintain protections that are in place and define future guidelines going forward. Aurora has taken a balanced approach in recent years that aims to protect the low-rise neighbourhoods while still allowing for minor intensification and extra dwellings where appropriate, as enacted by the province. Recently we have seen the case for protections needed outside the Stable Neighbourhood zones near Aurora Heights with the proposed expansion of one lot on Heathwood Heights drive into five smaller lots, which goes very much against the character of that neighbourhood. So, it's clear there is further work to be done, more places that need protections and always more cases to evaluate so we can continue developing Aurora with thoughtfulness and care."

**ROBERT JAMES FRASER** – "A stable neighbourhood is defined as one that maintains its character and appearance over time despite changes in the surrounding environment or the number of residents. It is characterized by a consistent mix of housing types, a stable population and a sense of community that encourages residents to stay and contribute to the neighbourhood. Looking through a Ward 3 lens, I think the Town has done reasonably good on this front. Where there is need for improvement is on the infill or redevelopment side of things. When you tear down a 1,400 square foot bungalow and build a 6,000

Continued on page 34


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for Ward 1 Councillor
✓Control the budget & cut unnecessary spending
✓Focus on crime prevention in our community
✓Controlled development, environmental protection & heritage preservation
✓Downtown revitalization
✓Improve traffic & increase collaboration with Metrolinx (Go Train)

roccomorsillo.ca
roccoforaurora@gmail.com
Authorized by Rocco Morsillo

Check your Voter Notification Card
(contact the Town if you did not receive one)
Online: Oct 16-25
Go to aurora.ca/vote2026 and follow the steps
Advanced in-person: Oct 17-21
Aurora Seniors' Centre, 90 John West Way
(check the hours before heading over)
Election Day: Oct 26
From 10am till 8pm
(check your Voter Notification Card for your polling station)
YOUR VOTE MATTERS



Join us for an October Open House!

**Junior School (JK–6)**
October 17
9:30 am – 12:30 pm

**Middle/Senior School (7–12)**
October 15 and 21
6:30 – 8:30 pm

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**Adhya '27**

"Class of 2026, continue to work hard, pursue your goals, and dream big. But don't forget to be good people too."

**Brianna '26,** Class Valedictorian, is studying Nursing at Boston College






"CDS would not have been possible for our family without Mr. Eberts' generosity and vision."

**Current Parent**



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# 3 questions for making the most of your retirement years

(NC) As your retirement journey continues and you cross off long-time list items, like travel, it clears more room for you to see the bigger picture. What's next for you? Now that you have the freedom to choose how to spend your time, as a more experienced retiree, here are three important questions to start thinking about:

What costs are you prepared for? One trap some people fall into is thinking of aging in place at home as the "budget" option and moving to a retirement community as the "expensive" option. The truth is that staying in your home as you age also has costs that are important to consider:

• Property taxes and home maintenance, including snow removal, yard work, replacing fixtures such as water heaters or HVAC systems, as well as periodic repair to outdoor elements. Estimated range: one to four per cent of your home's value per year.

• Safety improvements to the home, such as a chair lift, walk-in bathtub, accessible height toilet, grab bars, lighting improvements and railing updates. Estimated range: $6,000 to $40,000 in one-time costs.

• In-home care ranging from minimal housekeeping assistance to a personal support worker, health care aide or live-in nurse. Estimated range: $4,000 to $30,000 per year, possibly over $70,000 if you need significant daily care.

Are you ready to downsize? The idea of moving to a smaller space with fewer possessions can feel daunting. But many other seniors have done it and are living even more happily than before. Here are some things to keep in mind:

• Letting go of your things doesn't have to mean throwing them out. You can gift items to family and friends as a way to keep treasured memories alive and cared for; objects can find new life and make a difference to someone in need through donation.

• You can take things at your own pace. By leaning on people you trust for support, you can break down the logistics and details of a downsize and move, making them much more manageable. If you have friends who've downsized, you can speak with them to get a sense of what to expect.

How do you make the most of the freedom and opportunity that comes with being retired? Structure, purpose and socialization will always be helpful to have in your life. Without them, it can be easy to become isolated or lonely. One way to be part of a community is to join one. There are retirement residences across Canada focused on helping seniors live connected, social lives with old friends and new.

"One of the things I hear often from residents is they feel empowered to continue living life on their own terms because there's a built-in support system of friends and people who can provide for a worry-free lifestyle," says Tamara Ross, vice president of clinical services at Sienna Senior Living.

The key is to stay open to new experiences and connections. By calling a friend, joining a group class, learning a new skill or pursuing a long-forgotten hobby, you can find purpose in the everyday moments that bring joy, connection and a sense of accomplishment. Learn more about living your retirement life at any age at aspiralife.ca.

www.newscanada.com

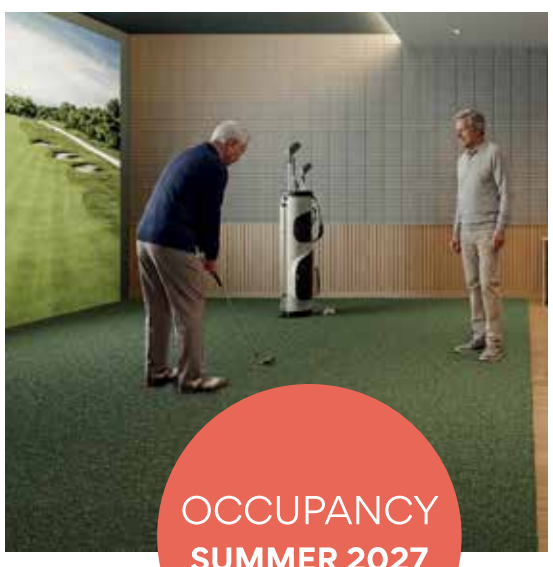





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# LIVING *with* INTENTION

## WHY GOAL SETTING IS KEY IN YOUR SENIOR YEARS

### THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND GOAL SETTING FOR SENIORS

While goal setting is often associated with youth and career-building, research tells us that setting personal goals helps create greater life satisfaction and a sense of control, especially for older adults. The self-determination theory, which focuses on autonomy, competence, and relatedness, suggests goals rooted in one's values and interests lead to better cognitive function, emotional health, and physical well-being.

### TYPES OF GOALS FOR SENIORS TO LIVE WITH INTENTION

Goals are opportunities for personal growth and empowerment, not obligations; setting them in later life doesn't need to be complex. Focus on areas that resonate deeply with you and reflect your values, whether physical, social, intellectual, or personal. Here are some categories that can help guide you:

**1. HEALTH AND PHYSICAL FITNESS**

Setting achievable health goals — such as walking more, trying yoga, or adding more vegetables to your diet — can improve energy and boost overall wellness. Even small steps like taking the stairs more often or joining a fitness class can make a big difference.

**2. SOCIAL CONNECTION**

Whether by joining a social group, volunteering, or simply reaching out to family and friends more often, strengthening your relationships combats loneliness and fosters a sense of belonging. Even if you can't meet in person, technology has provided us simple ways to stay connected.

**3. COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT**

Intellectual stimulation is essential for healthy aging. Setting goals to learn new things, pick up a hobby or expand your horizons with something you already love can provide a sense of accomplishment and keep your mind sharp. Knitting, painting, reading, photography, taking an online class... the possibilities are endless!

**4. REVISITING CHILDHOOD PASSIONS**

A powerful way to live with intention is by revisiting activities you enjoyed as a child — before life's responsibilities and societal expectations shaped your interests.

As kids, many of us gravitated toward passions simply because they made us happy. Setting a goal to return to a beloved childhood activity can help us rekindle feelings of joy and fulfillment.

**5. LEGACY AND CONTRIBUTION**

Many seniors find fulfillment in the idea of leaving a legacy. This can involve documenting life experiences, mentoring younger generations, or contributing to community projects. These goals help us zero in on what matters most and give our experiences lasting meaning.

### TIPS FOR SETTING AND ACHIEVING GOALS

In addition to goals aligning with your values and interests, it's important that they're realistic given your current circumstances. Start with small, manageable steps, and celebrate each accomplishment along the way. For example, if you want to get back into art, set a goal to sketch for 10 minutes a day or attend a class once a week.

In the same vein, avoid the temptation to set too many goals at once. Focusing on one or two key goals will give you a better chance of success and allow you to enjoy the process. And life is full of unexpected changes, so be flexible and adjust your goals as needed, remembering that the journey is just as valuable as the outcome. In our residences, we empower seniors to reignite old passions and discover new hobbies. Residents often learn from subject matter experts we bring in, or each other! To learn more about our life enrichment programs, visit amica.ca.

*Disclaimer: The information provided in this guide is for general informational purposes only and should not be considered professional advice. Always consult with a qualified professional for any specific concerns.*


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# 4 Ways Amica Aurora Promenade Is *Elevating* Senior Living In Aurora

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**1. Premium amenities, design and location**

Amica Aurora Promenade has it all, with refined amenities such as a solarium, private dining room, fitness centre, home theatre, hair salon and spa, gardens and multiple terraces, so you don't need to leave the residence to host a family celebration, exercise, or meet a friend for dessert—the possibilities are endless. With tasteful décor in colours inspired by the natural stone and lush greenery of the region, the residence features elegant-yet-accessible design. "*You can't beat the location, because you have access to all the downtown shops and restaurants, and it's steps from the Aurora Town Centre,*" says General Manager Meghan Solimine.



**2. Staying connected and empowered**

Each day, you'll have the opportunity to live on your own terms. You can spend time with like-minded peers during enriching activities such as walks, wine tastings, fitness classes, holiday celebrations, cultural events, wellness seminars, excursions with scheduled transportation and more. The building is also designed with many social spaces that encourage you to sit and chat with friends. Whatever your perfect balance is between doing things independently and being social, you can find it at Amica Aurora Promenade.

**3. Exceptional dining**

Choose from a menu of delicious, balanced meals prepared daily by our culinary team using fresh local ingredients. Our talented Chef creates seasonal rotating menus, for every day and special events, to suit every palate. Dietitian-approved and customized to residents' diets, each dish accommodates seniors' special nutritional needs, including puréed options for a smoother dining experience. Our flexible dining options also allow you to eat wherever you'd like, whether it's in the dining room, sun-filled atrium, our bistro, or from the comfort of your own suite.

**4. Best-in-class care**

We offer lifestyle options of Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care at Amica Aurora Promenade. *"That continuum and level of care is unique, and it means you don't have to move if your needs change,"* says Solimine. Even with different care needs, couples can continue to live together.

As part of our Memory Care program, residents live on a secure floor with a dedicated Memory Care Coordinator. Our certified team delivers specialized programming to improve cognitive function and foster a sense of purpose.

No matter which lifestyle residents live in, they receive professional, personalized care delivered through a Personalized Wellness Plan. As their needs change, so too does our care. This, along with 24/7 on-site nurses, offer peace of mind for residents and loved ones.

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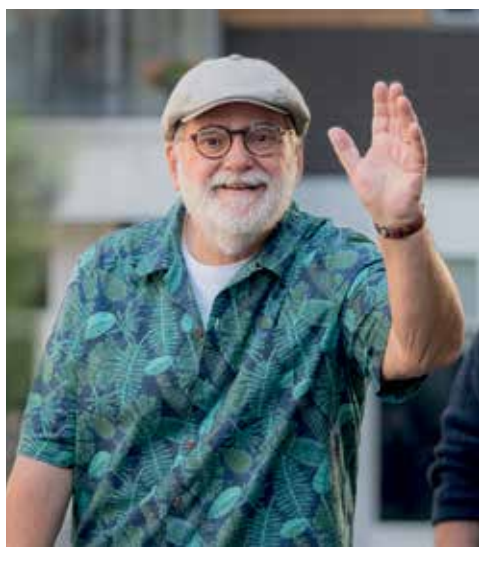
# Bloom Aurora

## Retirement Community

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Residents can enjoy delicious meals, housekeeping services, daily assistance and a wide range of activities, all in a comfortable and secure setting. With convenient access to nearby shops, golf courses and local amenities, Bloom Aurora offers the perfect balance of comfort, convenience and community.

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For many, the sounds of life are deeply tied to cherished memories—the laughter of loved ones, the rhythm of a favorite song, or the gentle rustle of leaves on a crisp fall day. Amplifon, a global leader in hearing care, is on a heartfelt mission to help people rediscover these precious moments.

The heart of Amplifon's mission lies in its dedication to restoring not just hearing, but the emotions and memories tied to sound. Whether it's the sound of a grandchild's laughter or the melodies of a favorite song, these moments matter. With services like free hearing tests, risk-free hearing aid trials, and flexible payment options, Amplifon ensures that no one is left behind on their journey to rediscover the joys of life.

"Our professionals understand that hearing is about so much more than sound," shared Alberto Gorini, General Manager of Amplifon Canada. "It's about reconnecting with life, rebuilding confidence, and creating new memories with loved ones. Every person who walks into one of our clinics has a story, and we're here to help them write their next chapter. Our goal is to break down barriers for those who have lived in silence for too long—helping them feel seen, heard, and understood. Historically, hearing loss has carried a stigma that has made many hesitant to seek help. But we believe that no one should feel ashamed of their challenges. Our goal is to replace that stigma with hope, empathy, and a renewed sense of connection."

### ABOUT AMPLIFON CANADA

Headquartered in Mississauga, Ontario, Amplifon Canada is a trusted provider of hearing care solutions, powered by more than 350 dedicated employees across its clinics. With a focus on improving lives and strengthening communities, Amplifon Canada combines advanced technology with compassionate, personalized care. From offering free hearing tests to ensuring access to state-of-the-art hearing aids, Amplifon strives to make hearing health accessible for all Canadians.

Start your journey to better hearing with Amplifon Hearing Care Experts.

*To learn more about Amplifon Canada, and find a clinic near you, visit our website at www.amplifon.ca*

# Turn Up the Sounds of Fall



As we welcome the crisp air and rich colours of autumn, it's the perfect time to reconnect — whether it's sharing cozy moments with loved ones or enjoying the quiet beauty of nature. This season invites us to slow down, reflect, and embrace the sounds that make life meaningful.

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Aurora has become one of the most desirable places for seniors seeking retirement living in the Greater Toronto Area. Known for its welcoming atmosphere, abundant green space, and strong community connections, Aurora offers retirees the opportunity to enjoy an active and comfortable lifestyle while remaining close to family, healthcare services, and local amenities.

One of the key reasons families choose Aurora is the balance it provides between suburban tranquility and accessibility. Seniors benefit from proximity to healthcare resources such as Southlake Regional Health Centre, as well as a variety of recreational and cultural attractions. The town features scenic parks, walking trails, conservation areas, the Aurora Arboretum, and the Aurora Cultural Centre, creating opportunities for residents to stay active and engaged. Seniors can also participate in programs through the Aurora Seniors' Centre, fostering social connections and continued personal growth.

Among the retirement living options available in Aurora, **Delmanor Aurora** stands out as a full-service retirement community designed to support seniors at every stage of their retirement journey. Operated by **Delmanor** Communities, the residence offers multiple living arrangements, including apartment living, independent living, assisted living, and short-term respite stays. This flexible approach allows residents to maintain independence while accessing additional support when needed.

Residents at **Delmanor Aurora** enjoy a wide range of amenities and services intended to enhance daily life. These include chef-prepared meals served in a restaurant-style setting, wellness and fitness programming, social events, cultural activities, housekeeping services, and personalized care plans. Additional features such as an on-site saltwater pool, concierge services, spacious suite options, and 24-hour nursing support provide comfort and peace of mind for both residents and their families.

When evaluating retirement communities, families should consider factors such as care services, lifestyle programming, dining options, and overall community culture. Visiting a residence, speaking with staff, and meeting current residents can help determine the best fit.

For seniors seeking a retirement lifestyle that combines independence, community engagement, and personalized care, Aurora offers exceptional choices. Communities such as **Delmanor Aurora** demonstrate how retirement living can provide comfort, connection, and opportunities to continue living life to the fullest.

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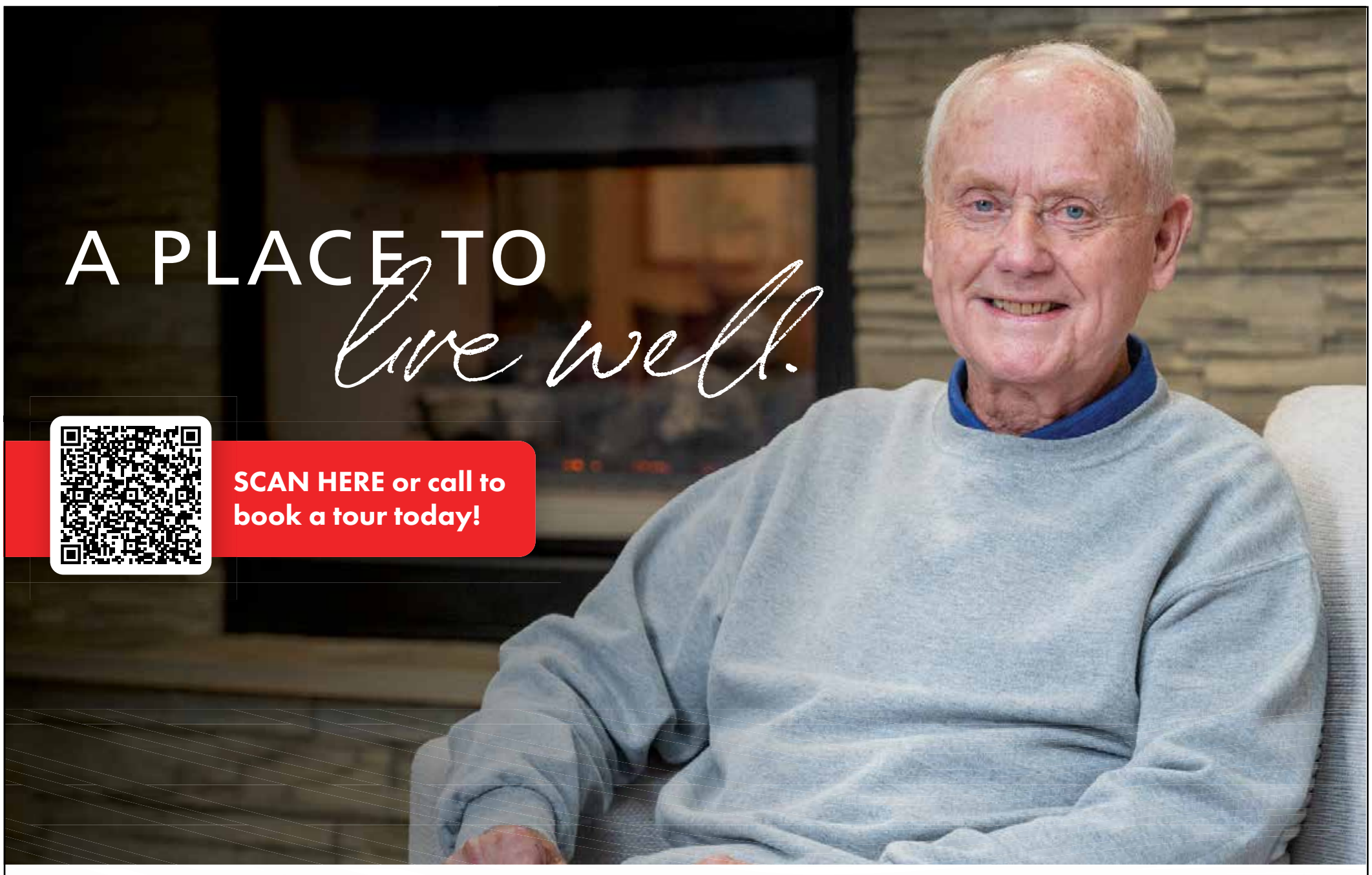
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# Something New is Happening at *Venvi Alexander Muir*

Renovations are bringing a fresh new look to Venvi Alexander Muir Retirement Residence, and there's never been a better time to see what's new.

Nestled on Prospect Street in Newmarket, Alexander Muir is an intimate, welcoming community where traditional charm meets a refreshed living experience. Surrounded by beautiful gardens and historic homes, this close-knit residence offers a warm, family-friendly atmosphere where every day and every choice is yours.

Come see the renovations for yourself at our Open House on October 25th from 1 to 4 pm. Take a tour, explore the residence, view available suites and meet the team who make Alexander Muir such a welcoming place to live.

Designed for independent retirees who value freedom with a little extra support, Alexander Muir offers personalized à la carte services tailored to your lifestyle. With support for the everyday details, you can spend less time on household tasks and more time doing what you love, whether that means enjoying a meal with friends, joining an activity, pursuing a favourite hobby or simply taking time to relax.

With an array of programs, welcoming common spaces and a naturally social atmosphere, there are plenty of ways to make each day your own. Spend time in the garden, pick up a good book or join in a community activity. At Alexander Muir, you decide how you want to spend your time.

Above all, it's the sense of community that makes Alexander Muir special. With residents and staff building genuine, close-knit relationships, it's a place where familiar faces quickly become friends and where you can feel welcomed, supported and cared for.

**Join us for our Open House on October 25th from 1 to 4 pm or book a private tour to experience Alexander Muir for yourself.**




**Limited Suite Availability.**
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905-836-8399 | 197 Prospect St, Newmarket | **VenviAlexanderMuir.ca**

VENVI by cogir

# UPCOMING FREE COMMUNITY EVENT NOV 4, 2026: THRIVE26



**Harvey Dix**
Founder / Managing Director,
Memories+ Home Healthcare

Thrive
a Memories+ Group Event

**On November 4th, Memories+ Home Healthcare is bringing the community together for THRIVE 2026, a FREE healthy aging event at the**

## NEWMARKET COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LIONS HALL

**THRIVE 2026** is designed for older adults, families, and caregivers who want to feel more informed, prepared, and confident about the future. Throughout the day, guests will take part in interactive sessions on physical, mental and emotional health, hear from expert panelists, and connect directly with trusted local professionals who support seniors and their families.

Guests will enjoy a healthy lunch, have opportunities to ask questions, gather practical information, and even have a chance to take home a door prize.

At **Memories+**, we believe healthy aging is about much more than healthcare. It is about staying active, informed, independent, and involved in the decisions that shape your future.

We created **THRIVE 2026** because every day we meet older adults and families who are trying to navigate important decisions about health, housing, finances, care, and planning for the future. Too often, people begin looking for answers after a crisis has already happened.

We wanted to create something different—an opportunity to bring people together before they need help, giving them access to trusted experts, practical information, and valuable community resources all in one place.

**THRIVE 2026** is also about changing the conversation around aging. Rather than focusing on limitations, we want to celebrate the possibilities that come with living longer and encourage people to take an active role in how they want to age.

For **Memories+**, hosting **THRIVE** is a natural extension of the role we want to play in the community. We are more than just a home healthcare provider. We are a trusted resource and partner to older adults and their families throughout every stage of their aging journey.

Our hope is that everyone who attends **THRIVE 2026** leaves feeling more informed, more connected, and most importantly, inspired to take the next step toward living well and planning ahead.

**Join us on November 4th at the Newmarket Community Centre and Lions Hall.**

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# A Fresh Chapter For Park Place In Aurora

As Aurora and King celebrate their seniors this season, one long-standing residence on Yonge Street is marking a milestone of its own.

**Prima Living Park Place Retirement Residence** is in the midst of a renovation of its suites and common spaces, bringing modern finishes and a brighter, more comfortable feel to a home that many local families already know well. Several refreshed suites are already complete, with more work continuing through the season.

For the team at **Park Place**, the timing feels right. Fall is often when families start talking about what the coming years might look like, whether that conversation happens around a parent's kitchen table or between siblings over the phone.

"Most people don't come to us with a decision already made," says Ellie Morris, Retirement Living Consultant at **Park Place**. "They come with questions. Will Mom still have her independence? Will Dad actually enjoy the meals? Will they make friends? Our job is to help families find honest answers, and the best way to do that is to come and see the residence for themselves."

The renovations were planned with those questions in mind. Suites are being refreshed with updated fixtures and finishes, and shared spaces are being redesigned to make it easier for residents to gather, whether for a meal, an activity or a quiet conversation.

The changes are visible, but staff say what matters most at **Park Place** has stayed the same. Residents enjoy chef-prepared meals, housekeeping and linen service, and a full calendar of leisure and fitness programs. The team is on site 24 hours a day, and support is tailored to each person and adjusted as their needs change.

That flexibility matters to families. Moving a parent into a residence is rarely a single decision; it is a series of smaller ones, and needs can shift over time. Knowing that care can adapt without requiring another move gives many adult children real peace of mind.

It also matters to residents, many of whom are focused less on care and more on how they want to spend their days. For some, that means joining every outing on the calendar. For others, it means finally having time for reading, visiting with grandchildren or simply enjoying a meal they didn't have to plan or cook.

**Park Place** is part of **Prima Living**, a Canadian-owned senior living provider with residences across Ontario and British Columbia. The company's slogan, "Where care sparks connection," reflects the idea that good care involves both professional support and genuine relationships between residents, families and staff.

"Care is where it starts," Morris says. "But what people remember is the connection: the staff member who knows how you take your coffee, or the friend you sit with at dinner every night."

As the renovations continue, **Park Place** is offering preferred rates, move-in incentives and lifestyle perks for a limited time this fall. Families and older adults who are beginning to explore their options are welcome to visit, see the newly refreshed suites and meet the team.

PRIMA LIVING PARK PLACE IS LOCATED AT 15055 YONGE STREET IN AURORA. TO BOOK A TOUR, CALL 905-727-2952 OR VISIT PRIMALIVING.CA.

# WHEN THE PHONE RINGS: PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SCAMMERS



I used to think scams happened to other people. Then a dear friend lost her savings to a caller who sounded just like her bank. He was calm, kind, and urgent all at once.

Older adults are prime targets. We often have savings, good credit, and a lifelong habit of politeness that scammers twist into a weakness. The FBI reports that people over 60 lose billions of dollars to fraud every year.

The tricks become familiar once you see them. Someone pretends to be your bank, the IRS, or a grandchild in trouble. They stir up panic. They ask for gift cards or wire transfers. They insist you act right now.

Here's what I've learned: hang up. Don't answer their questions or confirm your name. Never share account numbers or passwords. Every detail you give is a thread they can pull.

Then call your bank yourself, using the number on the back of your card. A real bank will wait. A scammer won't.

Hanging up isn't rude. It's how you protect yourself.

SCAM ALERT

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AI SCAMS ARE GETTING SMARTER

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- pressures you to act fast
- tells you to keep it secret
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- wants passwords, PINs, or verification codes

Not sure? Call back using a trusted number.

Report scams: Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

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# Thank you!

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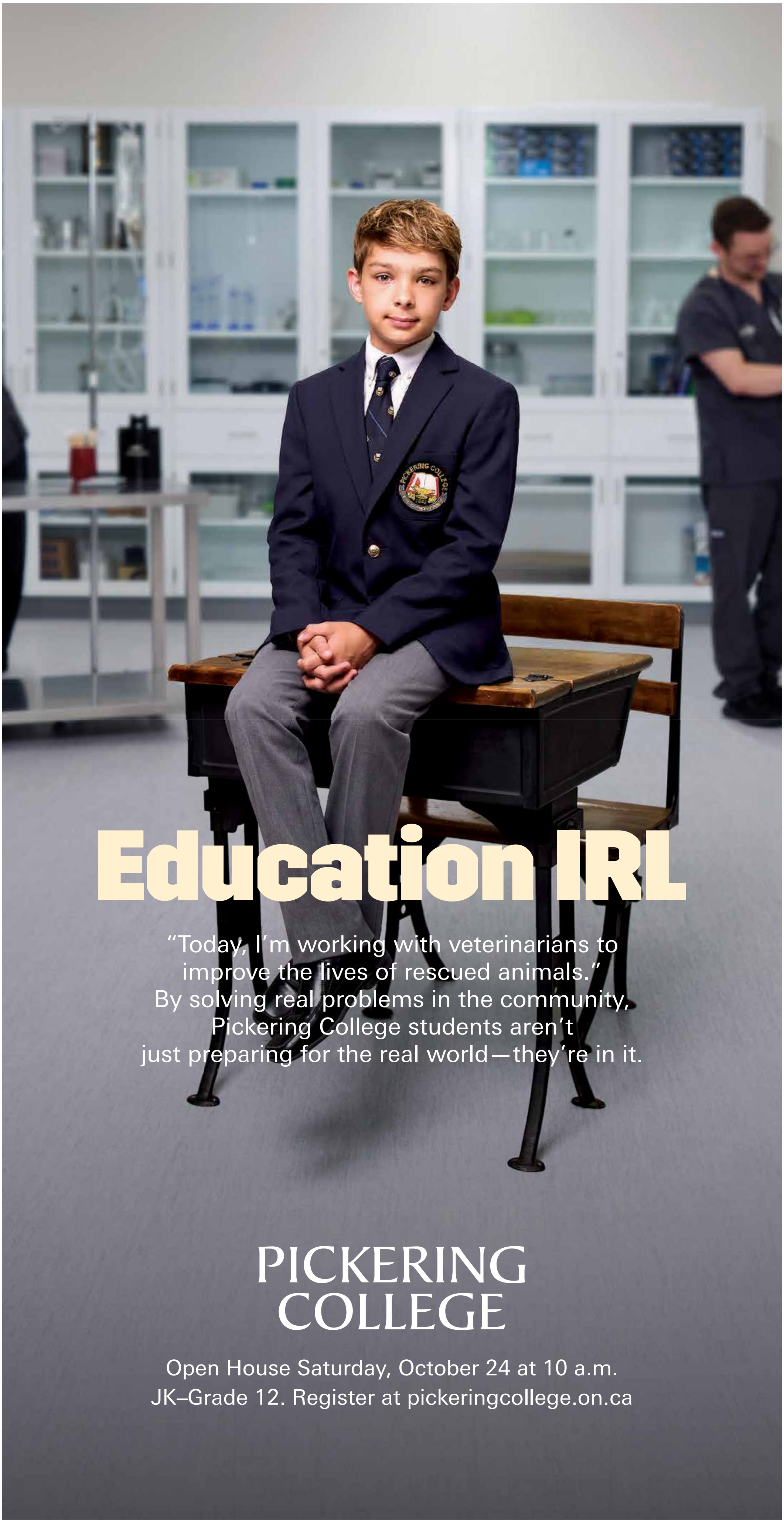
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# Biondic's inspirational life as a marathoner, ultramarathoner, and community builder stamps his ticket into the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame

BY JIM STEWART
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

After 25 years as an ultramarathoner and 20 years of experience as a marathoner, George Biondic knows a thing or two about ultrarunning.

The dynamic 74-year-old, who is being inducted into the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame in November, offered sage and itemized advice to aspiring ultrarunners: "First, run with controlled passion; Second, forget speed—focus on endurance by avoiding overuse injuries; Third, during the race, runners can be so serious. My advice is to smile, relax, and breathe. Fourth, in pursuit of running records, remember this: you're not the centre of the universe. Narcissism makes nobody happy—when you're so self-centred, you're not any happier. Fifth, and this is really important—seek balance in life by expressing humanity to others; Sixth, run for a cause—like food insecurity. Make the world a better place to live in. Any good I've ever done I've not regretted."

The only regret in the forefront of George Biondic's mind is hunkering down to do a Holiday Weekend interview. He noted humorously, "It's easier for me to walk 100 kilometers than do an interview"—yet Biondic described his exhilarating, multisensory morning walk with ease.

"During my regular Saturday walk for physical and mental health, I experienced a sunrise that was beautiful. Who needs coffee if you're feeling the cool Fall air against your skin? All the senses come alive when I'm enjoying the parks, trails, and neighbourhoods during early morning. The song 'What a Wonderful World' by Louis Armstrong comes to mind in terms of describing my walk this morning."

The allusion to Satchmo's enduring classic illustrates the joy and satisfaction that Biondic derives from being an ultramarathoner.

"It's really changed over the years. Back in my fifties, it was a feeling of being young and alive and executing the unbelievable. Now, it's quite different—it's really about the awareness and Erlinda and I working as a team. That's paramount to me."

The Biondics are, indeed, an indomitable team on the ultramarathon circuit and Erlinda was enshrined in the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame in 2025. She is George's primary focus in the upcoming 2027 racing season.

"Next May, Erlinda is eager to do this race in New Jersey. I'm supportive of her getting her 1500-mile lifetime award on that course. She needs only 36 more miles at the 'Three Days at the Fair' event. While you're completing your 1500th mile, the organizers present you with the award. It's a heavy concrete brick with your name and 1500 inscribed on it."

In addition to supporting Erlinda to reach a career milestone in New Jersey, George has some travel plans of his own in 2027: "I enjoy adventure. I plan on hiking the Grand Canyon. Erlinda's not joining me because she's done it 30 times. Anyone who's interested in joining me, please email me at erlinda_george@hotmail.com. We'll be going in either April or May. I love the Grand Canyon—it's my favourite hike. The temperatures vary—at 7,000 feet of altitude, it can be 30 degrees cooler at the top. The sweet spot for hiking there is early May."

As much as Biondic will derive much joy from hiking the Grand Canyon next Spring, his individual competitive fires were stoked in 2026.

The record-setting ultramarathoner discussed his low point of the past season which ended triumphantly: "My body can tolerate two races a year. In May, in New Jersey, at a six-day race called Three Days at the Fair, I was fine until the halfway point. It got ugly—nausea, chest pain, sweating, and dizziness. This was totally new for me and I was asking myself, 'What the hell is going on?' I had to hang on to Erlinda to get back to my table. She was very concerned, especially since she was a nurse and was alarmed by my chest pain. So many showed kindness to help me get going again. We're a community. With prudent rest and Erlinda's care, I limped through the last half. I covered 430 kilometers in the race and came in 9th out of 42."

Biondic recovered from the health scare and rallied in a race in London.

"My forte is the 6-day race. Last month, I raced in an event in London called 'That Damn Hill.' With Erlinda's help, I managed pain by resting. I competed in the entire 24-hour event, I never stopped, and kept going at a continuous rate. I covered 116 kilometers and finished 18th out of 51. I was happy with our effort. A couple of guys who were in their 30s stopped running and couldn't finish the race. Even though they lapped me during the race, many had to quit after 20 hours. It's all about experience in ultramarathons—knowing your body. I was walking the whole 24 hours. It's a 24-hour race—you have to take advantage of every hour and keep going."

It is this range of performances as a 74-year-old and his illustrious history as an ultrarunner that earned Biondic his upcoming induction into the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame.



GEORGE BIONDIC
**Photo courtesy of the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame**

AURORA SPORTS HALL of FAME
EST. 2013
*Their Legacy. Our Future.*

The Aurora resident described the best part about his upcoming enshrinement: "It makes me feel good, but I've had lots of support along the way. The recognition goes to me, but it's been about the collaboration between the runner and the crew. I have the best crew the sport has ever seen. Ultrarunning is not a major sport, but we train just as hard. Hopefully, this induction will showcase the passion and drama of the sport."

After setting numerous marathon and ultramarathon records and encapsulating his endeavours in The Search: Adventures of a Restless Soul, Biondic's legacy is on solid ground. He's donating all future royalties from his 2022 book to the Aurora Food Pantry and called on residents to support local food banks.

"We live in a condominium and just yesterday our community donated two lots of food. I want to encourage people to donate not only at Thanksgiving and Christmas, but year-round. We need to look after people that are less fortunate."

In addition to his legacy of fighting food insecurity, Biondic also acknowledged the records he's set and invited the next generation to break them: "I have age records. The Canadian records are the carrots for future runners to do their best. I'm confident that the next group of runners will break those records. That was the key for me. I looked at the record for 100 miles and that's what pushed us. Breaking a record comes down to the final moments of a race and that's where to drama is in this sport."

It's evident that Biondic has had his share of dramatic moments and achievements in a life filled with adventure—all of which will be celebrated during the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame's induction ceremony on November 5 at the Royal Venetian Mansion.

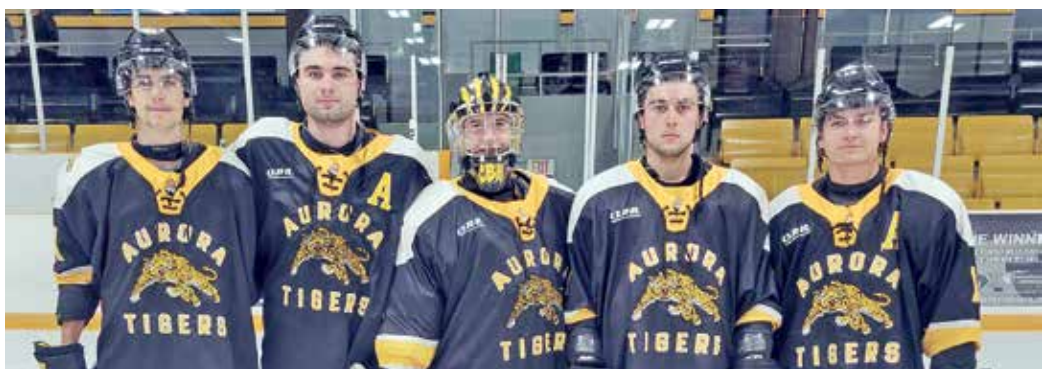
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# Tiger veterans Frasca and Ferrante fire two goals each to nuke North York 6-0 in OJHL action



Michael Murphy scored his first OJHL goal, Nick Frasca tallied two, Colby Booth-Housego delivered a 31-save shutout, Max Skinner scored his team-leadning ninth goal, and Nic Ferrante had a three-point night in the Tigers' 6 – 0 win over the North York Rangers on Friday. Aurora's Jr. A club kept on rolling on Saturday in a 3 – 2 win over the second-place Wellington Dukes for their fifth win in seven games.

**Auroran photo by Jim Stewart**

**BY JIM STEWART**
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Nick Frasca and Nic Ferrante fired two goals each and Colby Booth-Housego delivered a perfect 31-save performance to pace the Aurora Junior Tigers to a 6-0 win over the North York Rangers on Friday night at the ACC.

Head Coach Ilir Mehmeti defined succinctly the difference between his team's winning effort versus North York and his squad's pair of losses to Mississauga and King at the OJHL Showcase in Niagara Falls earlier in the week: "We played well for all 60 minutes tonight. [Against the Chargers and Rebellion], we played poorly for 20 minutes during the two losses and it cost us—we didn't capitalize on our chances. Our special teams failed and we failed in the end. Tonight, we created turnovers on the forecheck. Their D panicked and it led to three of our goals. All four lines rolled, we've been mixing combinations, and they worked well tonight, too."

One of those combinations that worked very well for the Tigers versus the Rangers was the trio of Anris Bundzenieks, Nic Ferrante, and Thomas Leone. The newly-established line scored a pair of goals three minutes apart—both of which were created by aggressive forechecking.

Thirteen minutes into the second period, the trio built upon a 2-0 Tigers' lead when Bundzenieks picked off an egregious giveaway between the circles and slid a perfect pass to Ferrante who made no mistake.

The Aurora resident's one-timer bulged the twine behind Isaac Gravelle to give the home side a three-goal cushion.

Three minutes later on an identical play, Bundzenieks, Ferrante, and Leone clicked again when the big Tigers Captain stole an errant pass off the left wing, feathered a feed between defenders on to Ferrante's tape, and the cagy veteran snapped the puck past Gravelle to stake Aurora to a 4-0 lead.

Linemate Leone earned assists on both goals due to his diligent dislodging of pucks from the North York defenders.

Coach Mehmeti was pleased with the line's productive eight-point evening versus North York: "They've been skating together for a few games. We have an abundance of centres on this team – so Ferrante was ready to make the transition from centre to wing. I've been juggling lines—trying to find combinations that work for the team—and they had three goals together versus King, too."

Bundzenieks and Ferrante earned assists on the Tigers' knockout punch five minutes into the third period. The Dynamic Duo earned their third points of the game on a set play that created so much puck movement that Frasca was able to sneak in from the blue line and fire the puck past Gravelle to make it 5-0 for the spirited home side.

Coach Mehmeti praised Frasca's two-goal effort versus the Rangers: "Nick's experience of playing at the next level has created his ability to read and react to plays. It's this skill that makes him a special player. The second goal showed his skills at reading the opportunity and reacting to the play in front of him."

Frasca's first goal of the game also demonstrated the skills to which Coach Mehmeti referred.

Cradling Seamus Gund's rebound off the end boards, the veteran defender moved in from the left point and one-timed the puck past Gravelle – staking the Tigers to a 1-0 lead 13:22 into the opening frame.

The Tigers got their second goal from another defender when Michael Murphy took a pass from newly-acquired Connor Hollebek and fired the puck from the left point. Murphy's shot struck a combination of teammates and defenders in a slot scrum, deflected and bounced between Gravelle's pads, and trickled over the goal line at 7:50 of the second period. It was the rookie defenseman's first OJHL goal.

Immediately after four of the six Aurora goals on Friday night, Booth-Housego repelled two-on-one breaks, breakaways, and myriad incursions by the Rangers to keep momentum on the Tigers' side. Booth-Housego's timely saves were praised by Coach Mehmeti: "Colby had an outstanding season last year with St. Mary's in Junior B. He's played great in his last five games. He's getting better as the season progresses. You can't win hockey games without saves like those. He's giving us crucial saves to give our team life."

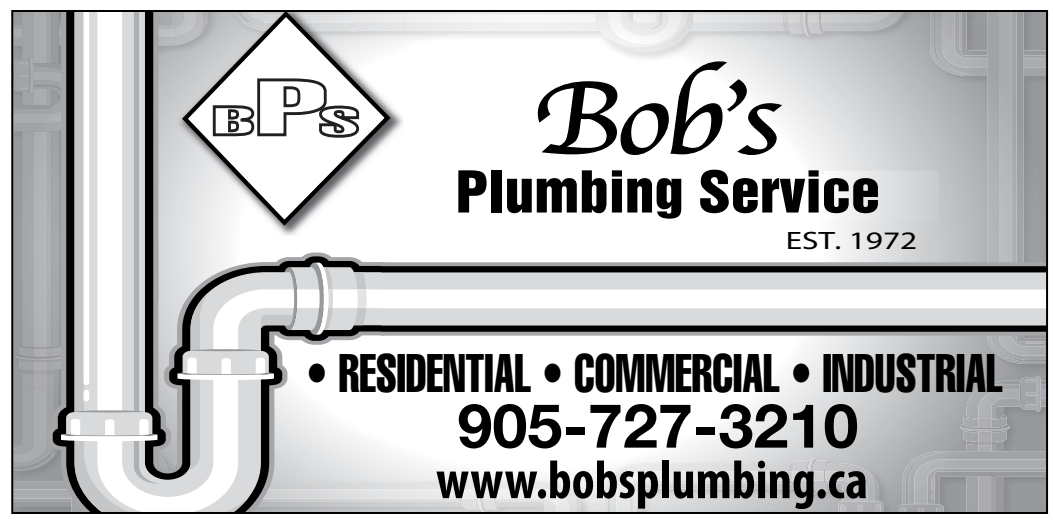
Another player that's been giving the Tigers much life of late is leading goal scorer Max Skinner. The productive forward closed the scoring on Friday night. From the right circle, Skinner blasted Brayden Hinzel's pass towards the net, it pinged off iron, and past Gravelle. Skinner's power play marker, initiated by smooth-skating, Tigers points-leader Javian Nei, was his ninth of the season and turned out the lights on the visitors.

An unfortunate incident later in the final frame led to a serious injury suffered by newly-acquired Xavier Rowe who was appearing in his first game with the Tigers after starting his season with Stouffville. The feisty forward—who turned in perfect PK performances alongside tireless skater Gianfranco Rosella versus North York—was involved in an endboards collision and broke his radius. Rowe—who played last season with the Caledon Admirals alongside Hollebek-- will be lost to the Tigers for over eight weeks.

Tempers flared after the Rowe injury. With 1:47 left in the one-sided romp, the home side mucked it up with their frustrated sparring partners from North York in a series of on-ice brawls.

The majority of the punches were thrown by the quintet of spirited Tiger pugilists, especially Davis Castle and Sebastian Catalano, and the wee melee put an exclamation point on an emphatic home ice victory.

The entertaining Tigers have won four of their last five games, the crowds are growing at the ACC, and Yan's $5.00 popcorn tasted even better during the home side's emphatic win.


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# Colours of Fall signals start of Thanksgiving fun

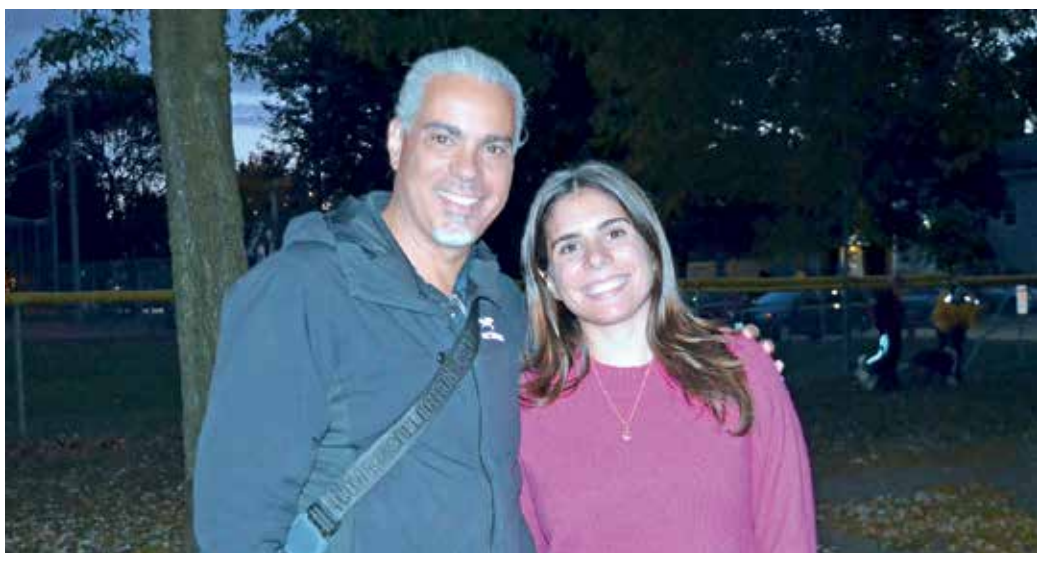












The Town's annual Colours of Fall concert brought hundreds to Town Park on Thursday evening as Mudmen brought their unique blend of Celtic rock to the event, while families enjoyed pumpkin carving, a corn roast, and more. (TOP ROW) Meredith, Nancy, Jen, Geneva, Kaia, Ashten, and Aaxl. Andrea, Maria, and Diego. (SECOND ROW) Carson, Sawyer, and Avery. Yvonne and pup Ash. (THIRD ROW) Enjoying the corn roast was Mayor Tom Mrakas, pictured with Shelley Ware, Special Events Supervisor for the Town of Aurora. Mayoral candidate John Gallo enjoyed the concert with daughter Tosca.

**Auroran photos by Brock Weir**


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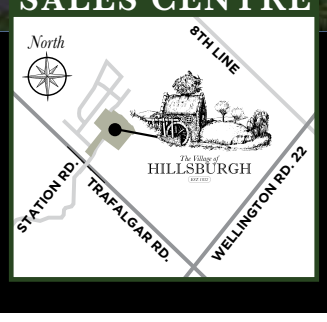


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# 100-year history of St. Andrew's College in Aurora celebrated




Jeremy Hood of the Aurora Museum & Archives, and Gabby Jackowski of St. Andrew's College have curated an array of artefacts at Aurora Town Square to mark the centennial of SAC's move from Toronto to its Aurora campus.
**Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

St. Andrew's College has been dedicated to boys' education for more than 125 years. Now, as the school marks 100 years since it moved from its first campus in Toronto's Rosedale neighbourhood to its long-time home on Yonge Street, just south of St. John's Sideroad, a century of local history is now in focus at Aurora Town Square.

This journey is now in the spotlight thanks to a collaboration between the Aurora Museum and Archives and archivists at St. Andrew's College, who have curated an expansive variety of artefacts, photos, and more to tell the story in St. Andrew's College: A Century of Tradition in Aurora.

For the archivists at both organizations, it is a chance to not only celebrate a milestone anniversary of an important community institution, but also shed a light on what goes on "behind the gates."

"I grew up in Whitchurch-Stouffville my whole life and I wanted to show bits of St. Andrew's to people outside the school who don't see it very often," says Gabby Jackowski, Archivist at St. Andrew's College. "People see cadets all the time on parade in different places in Aurora and I wanted to show other aspects of the school that people would not always see."

This was an area Jeremy Hood, Museum Collections Technician for the Aurora Museum and Archives, also wanted to explore.

"There really is a huge cross-section of boys, different ages, different interests and abilities – it's not just a football school, it's not just a hockey school, there's the art side, the drama side, the STEM side, and I think that is something that people don't really recognize," he says. "It really is a whole learning environment, and I think that really comes out in seeing the cross-section of items that were selected.

"I have to say the curation was overwhelmingly definitely Gabby's curation. It was important for us not to try and take over and do too much of an Aurora Museum Archives treatment and make sure that it's also really a St. Andrew's exhibit."

Amongst the more than 100 artefacts now on display in showcases throughout Aurora Town Square and into the Aurora Public Library, both Jackowski and Hood have a few favourite pieces they feel really help underscore the story.

For Hood, a particularly evocative piece of archival material is a 1946 aerial photo taken by the National Air Photo Library capturing in high resolution what the expansive campus looked like at the time. For Jackowski, it comes back to items like cadet swords, surviving student uniforms that show how they have evolved over the last century, a "plushie" of a SAC football player dating back at least to the 1920s, and a student's photo album from the 1940s that not only captures the school and student life in a single moment in time but – in music to the ears of archivists everywhere – identifies each and every student photographed by name.

Members of the public have until mid-December to take in the story and, as they do, Hood says he believes the exhibition as it has come together really unifies past, present, and future.

"There was a 27-year history in Rosedale, but it speaks to the eternal link between Toronto and Aurora. There has always been [this idea] that Aurora's just the right distance from Toronto…and it is such a fascinating way they interact. It gives Aurora an outsized impact on Ontario, I feel, and I think St. Andrew's is an excellent example of that," he says. "The past, present, and future, bringing us 1926 and how it integrated with Aurora at the time as it was growing and how it maintained that growth through the war period, being significant in the war period, and then the cadets being so significant in the post-war period, and then in the present and in the future, we have St. Anne's as well. This expansion is… so woven into the fabric of Aurora, but also Ontario, and it's just only growing right now.

"Some of the traditions are old, but seeing all these young boys in bright red serge walking down Victoria Street is just like a fascinating thing to me. There's this glorious maintenance of tradition, but still pushing forward, and not a lot of things are able to ride that line so well."

# Victoria Hall restaurant will carry on legacy of Aqua Grill

Continued on page 1

the restaurant.

"Preserving the heritage building isn't just about keeping it standing – it's about reimagining how that space can play a new role for our community," Mayor Mrakas continued. "Victoria Hall has served many purposes throughout its history, and this is an opportunity to give it a new chapter while continuing the work we've been doing to create an active and vibrant downtown."

The history of Victoria Hall began in 1883 when it started off life as a church.

In subsequent years, it has served as the Town's first public library building, a space for public health, and, in most recent years, it has been used by the Town as a community space, both for municipal-led programs and in a space booked by other community groups and individuals.

Over the last year, however, it has been at the centre of controversy as community members pushed back against the building's future as a restaurant, pointing to potential traffic issues a restaurant can bring to an area already challenged by parking issues, and a desire to keep Victoria Hall as a community space.

Details on when the building – and its new use – might open to the public are not yet determined.

"I've been part of this community for the last 20 years and I love what I do, so I am excited to continue that here," said Ho in a statement. "I fell in love with the location and what's happening in the neighbourhood. For me, food is about connection and relationships. I want this to be a comfortable, relaxed place where you can come in for a plate of pasta, share some food with friends, and stay for a couple of hours. Nothing pretentious – just really good food, good value, and a place people enjoy being."

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AURORA VOTES 2026

# Council candidates weigh in on community and public safety

**BY BROCK WEIR**
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Community and public safety has been a recurring theme this election season from candidates and residents alike.

This week, Aurora's Council candidates were asked to expand on this topic, with the question: As you go door-to-door, what are you hearing as a top safety issue or concern in your respective Ward and what would you do to address it if elected/re-elected?

Here is how they answered:

## WARD 1

**LAUREN HANNA** – "Aurora is one of York Region's safest communities, but residents' concerns deserve attention. It's essential that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods. Across Ward 1, the concern I hear most is road safety: speeding, traffic volumes, busy intersections and unsafe pedestrian crossings. I would support targeted traffic calming, advocate for improvements at Yonge and Wellington, and strengthen Aurora's existing traffic safety advisory committee to turn residents' concerns into practical solutions. I would also push for greater transparency and independent scrutiny of traffic studies for major developments. In northwest Ward 1, residents also raise concerns about home and vehicle break-ins. YRP data shows that property crime (including theft, fraud and trafficking) increased 28% in Aurora in 2025, although break-and-enters declined 13%. I would bring police, by-law, Neighbourhood Watch groups and residents together to support prevention and information-sharing, and explore additional police cameras in strategic locations, considering effectiveness, costs and privacy."

**ROCCO MORSILLO** – "Community safety is one of my top priorities for Aurora, and I believe a proactive approach is essential to keeping our neighbourhoods safe. That's why I've worked with residents to establish a neighbourhood watch group, with guidance and support from York Regional Police community liaisons. I've also collaborated with other neighbourhood watch groups across Ward 1 to share information, identify concerns, and report issues affecting our community. My monthly Community Safety Roundup is another important tool, helping residents stay informed and identify potential spikes in specific types of crime so we can respond proactively. Looking ahead, I believe we need stronger enforcement and better education for parents regarding the safe and responsible use of e-bikes and e-scooters. By working together with residents, police, and community partners, we can take meaningful steps to address emerging concerns, prevent issues before they escalate, and build a safer Aurora for everyone."

## WARD 2

**MARCO DI GIROLAMO** – "As I go door-to-door in Ward 2, I'm hearing concerns about crime and residents feeling less safe in their own neighbourhoods. Some residents have even taken the step of paying for private security. While this reflects the seriousness of their concerns, it has also brought neighbours together, with residents looking out for one another and taking a more active role in their community. If elected, I would work with York Regional Police to advocate for increased, targeted patrols in areas experiencing recurring concerns. I would also push to bring back and expand Neighbourhood Watch by working with police and residents to establish neighbourhood groups, appoint local volunteer coordinators, and create clear channels for sharing safety information and reporting suspicious activity. I would encourage regular community safety meetings so residents and police can discuss concerns, identify patterns, and work together on solutions. Neighbourhood Watch should complement police services, not replace them. Residents should never feel they have to pay for private security to feel safe in their own neighbourhood. My approach is to build on the community spirit already developing in Ward 2, strengthen the partnership between residents and police, and ensure concerns are heard, acted on, and followed up. Community safety is a shared responsibility, and I would work to make sure residents are part of the solution."

**PHIONA DURRANT** – "As I connect with residents door-to-door in Ward 2 the community where I live and witness these things myself, the safety concerns are getting real and raw. We are talking about reckless speeding, homes being broken into right here in Ward 2, and vehicles stolen straight off our driveways. These dark, unpruned streets are actively enabling these invaders, making them feel secure enough to come onto our properties. Cho! Enough is enough. (Letting a little of my Jamaican dialogue, Patois, out!) This is pure foolishness. Because overgrown trees block our streetlights, residents face pitch darkness during early morning or late evening dog walks, and our youth don't feel safe just walking to connect with each other. Residents are so frustrated by the lack of leadership that they've had to step up, get organized, and defend themselves. Shout out to the residents who initiated their own neighborhood watch program in parts of Ward 2 and over by Ward 1. But why must the burden always fall on the people? This watch program hasn't even reached all of Ward 2 yet, and residents shouldn't have to do the Town's job just to feel safe when we pay so many taxes. My guiding message is "Dignity First." Whether on Council or off Council, fixing this is a must. A true leader gives credit where it's due: thanks to my friend Linden, who heard my heart about seeking solutions and told me about CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design), a proven model that fixes dark streets to deter crime. I've already launched a petition on my website to force action on speeding, tree pruning, and lighting. More importantly, I have already set up meetings with the York Regional Police to figure out how to implement CPTED here, support our existing neighborhood watch groups, and take the burden off our residents. Let's do better!"

**BRYNN LANSDOWN** – "Traffic safety is a concern I hear at the doors and see firsthand as I move around Ward 2. Whether walking through neighbourhoods, navigating pedestrian crossings, or spending time around schools and parks, I see how traffic safety affects residents' everyday lives. Families want their children to be able to walk and play safely, and residents of all ages should feel comfortable getting around their neighbourhoods. If elected, I would work with residents and Town staff to identify specific areas of concern, understand contributing factors, and determine appropriate measures. This could include reviewing traffic-calming options, crossing safety, signage, speed enforcement, and the effectiveness of existing measures. Safety requires more than reacting to complaints. It means identifying patterns, addressing root causes, and following up to ensure measures are making a difference. Council has a role in setting priorities, supporting effective policies, and holding the Town accountable for results. My goal is to help create neighbourhoods where people of all ages can move around safely and confidently."

## WARD 3

**NIKKI ALBER** – "Over the past five months of knocking on doors in Ward 3, road safety has been one of the most common concerns raised by residents. Speeding, drivers failing to stop at stop signs, and the unsafe use of e-scooters/e-bikes are issues I hear about regularly. Residents on busier streets such as Henderson Drive, Tamarac Trail, and Murray Drive have expressed particular frustration with speeding and dangerous driving. Many are concerned about the safety of children walking to school, families using neighbourhood sidewalks, and seniors trying to cross the street. These are residential neighbourhoods where people should feel safe walking, cycling, and enjoying their community. To address these concerns, firstly, I believe e-scooters should require a driver's licence, licence plate, and insurance, just as other motorized vehicles do. Licensing and registration would help establish accountability and make enforcement more effective. I would advocate for these changes at the provincial level. Secondly, I would advocate for a more proactive approach to road safety. This includes working with York Regional Police to increase targeted enforcement in problem areas, particularly for speeding and stop sign violations, and ensuring our by-law officers are actively addressing illegal motorized device use in parks and on trails. I would also push for traffic studies and appropriate traffic-calming measures on streets where residents have repeatedly raised concerns. Education is equally important, particularly when it comes to younger riders and their parents. I would support working with schools, police, and community organizations to improve awareness of the rules and the consequences of unsafe riding. Residents should not have to wait until someone is seriously injured before action is taken. We need to listen to the people who experience these issues every day, identify problem areas, and take meaningful steps to make our neighbourhoods safer."

**ALEXANDRA BONHAM** – "The safety concern I have heard the most about remains traffic safety, especially with the increased use of e-scooters and e-bikes in Aurora. Residents deserve to feel safe when using our public streets, sidewalks and trails; not only as drivers, but as pedestrians and cyclists too. As Aurora continues to grow, we must take a proactive approach to managing congestion, addressing speeding, educating residents on safe e-bike use and improving safety in neighbourhoods and school zones. It is important to listen to residents who raise traffic safety concerns that put public safety at risk. We can work with York Regional Police, Town staff and other partners to identify problem areas and implement practical, effective solutions that will mitigate risk where possible. I believe the best approach is a balanced one, consisting of traffic calming measures, increased law enforcement visibility in problem areas like Regency Acres and bike lanes in neighbourhoods where the roads are wide enough."

**ROBERT JAMES FRASER** – "As I have walked Ward 3 over the past five months, residents have brought up a number of community/public safety issues. E-bikes and e-scooters are high on that list, with a number of people saying it is only a matter of time until there is a fatality. Aside from not obeying the rules-of-the-road when travelling on our roadways is their use on sidewalks and trails/pathways with pedestrians walking. A few residents have brought forward the chaos that happens when parents are dropping off and picking up kids from school with vehicles, e-scooters, e-bikes, pedestrians and folks trying to get to work all converging. Enforcement needs to be stepped up, parents need to be accountable, and I'd look at bringing in a certification like a Pleasure Craft Operator Card (boat license) for e-bikes and e-scooters. Speeding by vehicle drivers is also an issue, along with motorists not stopping at stop signs. Targeted enforcement and traffic calming would help. While in the minority, some residents have complained about loitering and doorbells being rung in the middle of the night and home invasions. Patrols by YRP in areas of concern would help here."

**HAROLD MacDONALD** – "Shelley had her vehicle stolen from our driveway, and I had my pickup truck stolen the next year. We both felt violated, inconvenienced, and disappointed. As we have knocked on thousands of doors – cameras and smart door bells are much more prevalent than they were four years ago – as residents want to feel safe in their homes, and try to protect their personal property. Also, the unsafe use of e-scooters has come up numerous times. A danger to residents both walking and driving. I would advocate to closely connect and promote cooperation between the Town and both local and York Regional Police- to create a true partnership and support for residents to address safety concerns. Aurora is currently one of the safest places in the GTA, and we would like to do what we can in keeping everyone safe."

## WARD 4

**SHAHEEN MOLEDINA** – "As we canvas Ward 4, the top public safety concern is high-speed driving on neighbourhood streets. Many families and seniors feel unsafe. If elected, I will work towards: Traffic Calming: Installing speed cushions, radar signs, and establishing safe school bus zones—issues specifically raised by residents on Yonge and Calla, and Glensteeple; Pedestrian Visibility: Upgrading street lighting near housing, and working with York Region to install much-needed sidewalks on regional roads like Bayview after the Yonge Street corridor is completed; YRP Info Sessions: Partnering with York Regional Police to host dedicated safety sessions for residents and ratepayer groups, creating a continuous feedback loop; Public safety cannot be managed from a distance. It requires an active partnership between neighbours, law enforcement, and local government. Active engagement and communication is the key to ensuring safety."

**MICHAEL THOMPSON** – "As I go door-to-door in Ward 4, the concern I hear most often is traffic safety, particularly speeding, increased traffic, and drivers using residential streets as shortcuts. It's a concern I'm hearing more frequently from residents across the ward as traffic volumes continue to grow. That's why I've consistently supported measures to make our neighbourhood streets safer. The Town established the Active Transportation and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee to review traffic and pedestrian safety issues and provide recommendations to Council. We've also introduced traffic-calming measures such as speed cushions, flexible bollards, and lower speed limits where appropriate. But every neighbourhood is different, and residents know their streets better than anyone. As I continue knocking on doors across Ward 4, I keep hearing about particular roads, intersections, and areas where speeding, traffic volumes, and cut-through traffic are affecting residents' sense of safety. If re-elected, I will continue to make road and pedestrian safety a priority by listening to those concerns, working with Town staff, and supporting practical solutions that make our streets safer while recognizing the needs of the wider transportation network."

## WARD 5

**CHARITY DELA CRUZ-TOUPIN** – "For Ward 5, one safety concern I want to focus on is pedestrian safety, especially for children walking to school, seniors, and residents using our sidewalks and trails. Concerns around crossings, traffic, sidewalks, and winter conditions deserve attention because they affect people's everyday lives. Ward 5 has six schools – four elementary schools and two high schools – so pedestrian safety, especially for children walking to and from school, should be a priority. One example is the pathway near St. Jerome Catholic School that ends at Hollidge Boulevard. There is no designated pedestrian crossing, traffic light, crossing signage, crossing guard, or even a sidewalk to safely connect pedestrians to their destination. This raises concerns for children and families who use the area. As I go door-to-door, I hear from residents about other concerns involving crossings, traffic, sidewalks, trails, lighting, and winter conditions, particularly for seniors and people with mobility challenges. If elected, I would work with Town staff to assess these locations, identify safety gaps, and advocate for practical solutions, including safer crossings, sidewalks, appropriate signage, and traffic-calming measures where warranted. Public safety starts with listening to residents, addressing risks proactively, and following through on solutions. We should not have to wait for an accident before taking action to make our neighbourhoods safer."

**JESSIE FRASER** – "The top safety concern for Ward 5 residents is pedestrian safety. We are a walking community in Ward 5 and traffic safety measures are important for our children's safety, especially during the school year. I walked my kids to and from schools in this neighbourhood for two decades; I've seen these issues. As Councillor I will advocate for traffic calming measures & marked crossings on school routes and connected sidewalk/path/trail options that keep sections of the community separated by busy streets connected to prioritize pedestrian safety. I'd also like to add a note about domestic violence as another safety concern, which I spoke about in a public panel discussion last week; 2025 data showed an increase of 13% in intimate partner violence from pre-pandemic levels. As Councillor I will propose adding a gender and equity committee to our portfolio of community advisory committees, collaborating with advocacy groups and agencies, and launching a community education campaign about resources and supports available."

**MILTON HART** – "As I go door-to-door in Ward 5, I believe residents want to feel safe in their neighbourhoods, on their streets, and in their public spaces. Concerns about speeding, traffic safety, pedestrian crossings, and the impact of continued development on neighbourhood safety deserve serious attention. If elected, I would take a proactive, community-focused approach. First, I would listen to residents, identify problem areas, and work with York Regional Police and the appropriate municipal and regional authorities to address speeding, unsafe driving, and other neighbourhood safety concerns. Second, I would advocate for safer roads, better lighting where needed, and infrastructure that protects pedestrians, cyclists, and families. Third, I would ensure that new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and thoughtful safety planning. Public safety must be a priority, but so must fiscal responsibility. We need to direct taxpayer dollars toward practical, measurable solutions and hold ourselves accountable for results. My position is simple: every resident of Ward 5 deserves to feel safe in the community they call home."

**HARBINDER (BINDA) THANDI** – "As I go door-to-door in Ward 5, one of the biggest safety concerns I hear is traffic safety, particularly speeding, aggressive driving, and vehicles creating dangerous conditions on residential streets. Parents are concerned about children walking to school, while seniors worry about safely navigating their neighbourhoods. If elected, I will advocate for stronger traffic enforcement, improved signage, better visibility at intersections, and practical traffic-calming measures where needed. I also believe we need to work more closely with York Regional Police to address residents' concerns and identify problem areas before accidents happen. Community safety isn't just about responding to incidents, it's about preventing them. Residents deserve to feel safe walking their streets, enjoying local parks, and raising their families. My commitment is to listen, take concerns seriously, and push for practical solutions that make Ward 5 safer for everyone."

**TERRENCE ZHU** – "One of the most frequently raised concerns during my door-to-door conversations in Ward 5 has been winter snow removal, particularly the snow windrows left at the ends of residential driveways after snowplows pass. For many residents, especially seniors and those with mobility challenges, these snowbanks are more than an inconvenience. They can create accessibility and safety concerns during our harsh winters. If elected, I would advocate for a detailed review of Aurora's winter maintenance services, including snow-clearing schedules, windrow removal options, support for vulnerable residents, and the costs of potential improvements. I believe we should explore practical solutions, learn from other municipalities, and consider targeted assistance where it is most needed. Keeping our community safe also means making sure residents can move around their neighbourhoods safely throughout the winter, while ensuring responsible use of taxpayer dollars."

## WARD 6

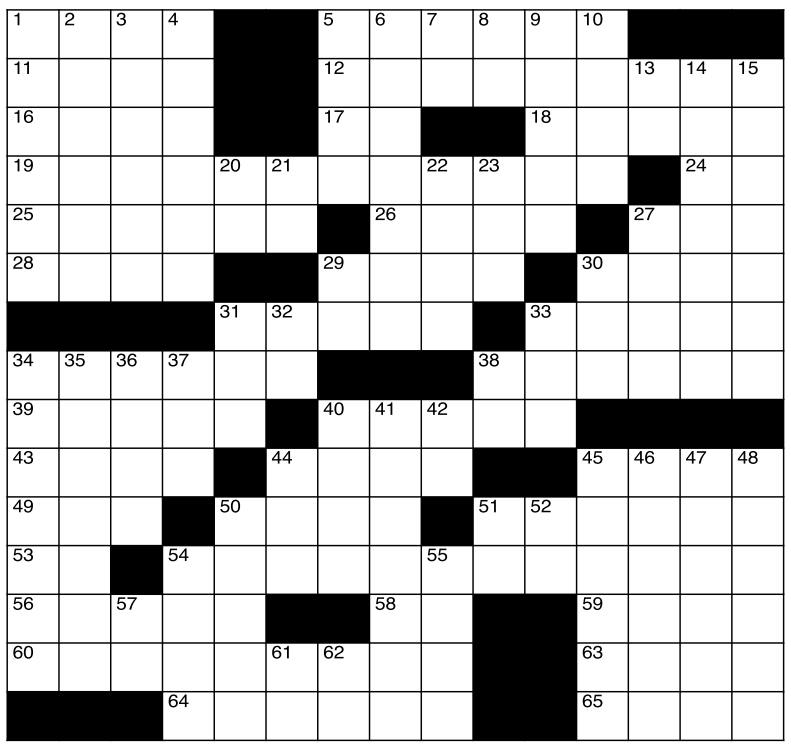
**NICHOLAS KASHEF** – "The most common safety concern I'm hearing at the door is dangerously fast vehicles on residential streets. This is especially salient for residents with young children. The main thing that determines a driver's speed on a given road is the design of the road itself, wide lanes, large turning radii and straight paths all communicate to drivers that this road is for high speeds, regardless of any posted speed limit or municipal designation. That's why I am so in favour of traffic calming measures being built into residential development from day one. It's much more expensive to go back and add speed bumps to a road later than it is to design the roads from the outset for low speeds. Narrow lanes, chicanes, continuous sidewalks, all these measures can be required of any new residential developments, and the measures we find most successful can be rolled out to the rest of the Town as roads are resurfaced over time."

**ZIVKA KICIC** – "As I go door-to-door in Ward 6, one safety concern that has been raised is traffic safety, particularly speeding on residential streets and around schools and parks. For example, a resident on Mavrinac Boulevard, near Rick Hansen Public School, shared his concerns about drivers speeding and failing to stop at the stop sign right beside the school. As a parent, I understand why this is frightening, especially when you have young children who need to walk in the area. With the amount of growth and construction we are seeing in Ward 6, traffic safety needs to be taken seriously. Residents should not have to worry about their children's safety when they are walking to school or playing in their neighbourhood. If elected, I would work with York Regional Police and Town staff to identify problem areas, advocate for increased enforcement, and explore practical traffic-calming measures where needed. We need to listen to residents, address their concerns, and take action before someone gets hurt. Keeping our children and neighbourhoods safe must be a priority."

*(Responses from the following candidates had not been received by deadline: Angela Daust (Ward 2), Reza Vaez Ghamsary (Ward 3), George Tremtsidis (Ward 5), Jibraan Khan (Ward 6), and Harold Kim (Ward 6))*

# CROSSWORD

**Puzzle No.TAOCT1526** • *Solution in Classifieds*



## CLUES ACROSS

1. Nocturnal rodent
5. Requesting
11. Give temporarily
12. Frivolousness
16. Military arm
17. "Westworld" actor Harris
18. Persian Gulf port city
19. Air hostesses
24. Partner to "Pa"
25. Percussion instrument
26. Raincoats
27. Lower the light
28. Asian mountain range
29. Every one of two or more
30. Lack of difficulty
31. A public announcement of a proposed marriage
33. Reduces in size
34. Make an impact
38. Serviceman
39. A French river
40. Prehistoric people
43. Messenger ribonucleic acid
44. "Layla" singer Clapton
45. Ancient Greek sophist
49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
50. "Top Gun: Maverick" actor Powell
51. A way to disentangle
53. Atomic #93
54. Manifesting approval
56. Indigo bush
58. Larry and Curly's pal
59. Off-Broadway theater award
60. Fencers
63. Masses of fish eggs
64. Passerine birds
65. Arrange systematically

## CLUES DOWN

1. Colorless part of blood
2. Of a main artery
3. Photog's tool
4. Blues Traveler hit "But __"
5. Grew older
6. Not the leader
7. __ Lang: country singer
8. A driver's license is one
9. Nests of pheasants
10. Antelopes
13. One quintillion bytes
14. Japanese lute
15. A type of cat
20. It cools your home
21. Dorm official
22. Pouches
23. German trigraph
27. Form of Persian
29. __ route
30. Upper body part
31. Bridge building degree
32. Indicates position
33. Political action committee
34. Edible nuts
35. Front part of a quadruped
36. Locate
37. Geological time
38. Of I
40. Northern Utah city
41. They work in the trenches
42. Hammer is one
44. Tall deciduous tree
45. Performers
46. Slang for mistake
47. More open
48. Most slick
50. Provokes
51. Home of the NCAA's Flyers
52. Sodium
54. Large fish of the mackerel family
55. Not one
57. __ and behold
61. Atomic #21
62. "The Great Lakes State"

# THiNGS... *you ought to know*

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17**

An Introduction to Book Re-Binding Workshop at Hillary House – 1 p.m. at Hillary House National Historic Site. A beginnerfriendly, handson workshop in book rebinding. Learn the basics of giving new life to a favourite book or notebook. All materials are provided, and you may bring a book you'd prefer to rebind. Tickets are $30 pp. For more, visit aurorahs.com.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18**

The Aurora Farmers' Market continues at Aurora Town Park today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

****

York Symphony Orchestra Presents: Tchaikovsky and Friends this afternoon at 3 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria St, Aurora. YSO's first concert of the new season features the rousing music of Russian composers, including Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky, Borodin and Khachaturian. Featured pieces are the Violin Concerto of Tchaikovsky with rising Canadian star Christie Cheung, and the tuneful Symphony No. 2 by Alexander Borodin. Tickets at Eventbrite.ca or at the door

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24**

Aurora's Haunted Forest returns to Sheppard's Bush this evening from 6 - 9 p.m., with additional activities set for the Aurora Family Leisure Complex. Wristbands for the event, which has been acclaimed as one of the Top 100 Festivals and Events in Ontario, are on sale at: the Aurora Family Leisure Complex (135 Industrial Parkway North); Aurora Recreation Complex (1400 Wellington Street East); Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way); Aurora Town Square (50 Victoria Street); and Joint Operations Centre (229 Industrial Parkway North). For more information, visit aurora.ca/hauntedforest.

****

Aurora Historical Society launches its Intimate Concert Series today, starting at 6.30 p.m. at Hillary House. The Intimate Concert Series brings exceptional live music into the historic Hillary House Ballroom, where audiences can experience classical performance in a uniquely close-up and welcoming setting. International Clarinetist and #1 Best-Selling Author, Paul Weston and celebrated pianist Joanna Grace open the series in October with an intimate program of classical works by Lutosławski, Mozart, Baermann, and Arnold, showcasing the expressive blend of clarinet and piano in a close-up setting. Tickets are $75 per person and available at aurorahs.com.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31**

The Aurora Farmers' Market concludes today at Aurora Town Park today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a variety of Halloween activities, including crafts and costume parades.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7**

Trinity Anglican Church, Aurora, will host its annual Trinity Christmas Market today from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 79 Victoria Street, Aurora. Featuring artisan vendors, specialty coffee in their cafe, a silent auction, children's face painting, premium fashions from the Clothes Closet, a bake table and more. A hot and cold luncheon will be available from 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Come join us and get warmed by the Magic of Christmas.

****

Aurora Historical Society's Intimate Concert Series continues this evening, starting at 6.30 p.m. at Hillary House. The Intimate Concert Series brings exceptional live music into the historic Hillary House Ballroom, where audiences can experience classical performance in a uniquely close-up and welcoming setting. The violin-piano duo Gemmell & Smith bring their dynamic, emotionally rich chamber music to Hillary House in November. Violinist Corey Gemmell and pianist Benjamin Smith are known for their virtuosic technique, interpretive depth, and engaging rapport with audiences. Tickets are $75 per person and available at aurorahs.com.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28**

FIRESIDE HOLIDAY MARKET, second-annual event in support of mental health programs – today from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Northridge Community Church, 15338 Leslie St, Aurora, ON. Shop local for gifts, crafts, jewelry & baked goods. Free admission, FREE parking & festive family fun. FREE photos with Santa! @sisterz__co__

**ONGOING**

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****

Support AbuseHurts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. A greater number of people are wanting to donate or get rid of unwanted items, increasing the need for more outlets being available to receive the items. This program will provide a convenient way for people to donate or get rid of used/unwanted clothing, blankets, linens and furniture and will help lessen the amount of items ending up in landfills. Materials that were previously perceived as waste will now be seen as a valuable resource further encouraging redistribution. The items will be recycled in the following ways: To be given to individuals who are survivors of violence and are transitioning from shelters into new homes; To be sold at occasional pop-up sales; To be sold to a textile recycler, which makes for an ongoing source of funding for Abuse Hurts enabling them to provide their services to the thousands of people that require them each year. When and Where: Monday, every week, 10:30 a.m. – 1.30 p.m., with 15-minute time slots, and Wednesdays from 10.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. with 15 minute timeslots. If you do not have an appointment, we cannot accept your donation. Visit AbuseHurts.ca to select your drop off time slot. Located at 120 Harry Walker Parkway North, Newmarket.


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AURORA VOTES 2026

# Candidates outline visions for fostering Aurora's stable neighbourhoods

From page 17

square foot home in its place, that does not maintain the character and appearance of a neighbourhood. Infill and redevelopment needs to be aligned with existing homes."

**HAROLD MacDONALD** – "Growth is inevitable but must be responsibly managed. The Stable Neighbourhood Urban Design Guidelines for the Town's four stable neighbourhoods have helped. In addition, I would advocate for urban design guardrails that ensure new developments respect established community character. I think more can be done to protect existing neighbourhoods, as redevelopment is taking place with some very mixed results. I would propose that all infill development go through architectural control. This would involve an outside firm to approve developers plans before permits are issued. The fee would be paid by the builder. We can and must do a better job."

## WARD 4

**SHAHEEN MOLEDINA** – "The Town needs to do more to protect our Stable Neighbourhoods, especially as we face ambitious provincially-mandated housing targets. While the Town has established Stable Neighbourhood Urban Design Guidelines, our local identity is increasingly at risk from dense, incompatible infill projects. As a resident in Ward 4 and someone who respects and studied the Official Plan, I know firsthand that residents feel left out of the loop. To improve this, I will advocate for: Enforcing the Official Plan: Pushing for growth to be directed strictly to appropriate transit corridors rather than eroding the character of established residential areas; Land density records must be adhered to as well, if the density was transferred then we need to make sure this information is readily accessible; Improve communication of applications to residents: By expanding the mailing radius and launching a Notice Cafe style digital portal. The Town of Aurora already has a basic planning applications webpage but it can be modernized into a proactive hub; Meaningful Resident Engagement: Bringing a transparent leadership style where Ward 4 residents have a real voice on architectural controls, traffic impacts, and neighbourhood fit before council votes; [and] encouraging the establishment of ratepayers groups in Aurora."

**MICHAEL THOMPSON** – "I believe Aurora has taken important steps to protect our stable neighbourhoods, although there is always more work to be done. One of the most significant measures has been the adoption of our updated Official Plan, which reinforces policies intended to protect established neighbourhoods from incompatible development while directing much of our future growth and intensification toward appropriate areas. These policies recognize that while Aurora must accommodate growth, new development should respect the character, scale and built form of surrounding neighbourhoods. I have consistently supported responsible growth and maintaining the integrity of our Official Plan. In Ward 4, I brought forward a motion calling for a planning study of the Yonge Street regional corridor to help ensure future development is appropriate and compatible with surrounding communities. Protecting stable neighbourhoods also means listening to residents, carefully considering their concerns and ensuring development proposals are evaluated against our planning policies. Moving forward, I will continue to advocate for thoughtful, balanced growth that respects established neighbourhoods while recognizing the need to accommodate new housing. Our challenge is not simply managing how much Aurora grows, but ensuring we grow in the right places and in the right way."

## WARD 5

**CHARITY DELA CRUZ-TOUPIN** – "Aurora has taken steps to manage growth and protect established neighbourhoods, but as development pressures continue, we need to remain vigilant. Stable neighbourhoods are more than just houses; they are streets, trees, parks, schools, sidewalks and the character of the community people have built over many years. I would advocate for meaningful resident consultation before major changes are made, careful consideration of traffic, parking, infrastructure and neighbourhood impacts, and development that fits appropriately within its surroundings. Growth should happen, but it should be responsible growth—not growth at any cost."

**JESSIE FRASER** – "Aurora's 'Stable Neighbourhoods' – Aurora Heights, Regency Acres, Temperance Street and Town Park – are designated in the Town Official Plan with set guidelines that dictate building, development, and infill to maintain the neighbourhoods' character. Development is necessary – to accommodate population growth and mobility, to ensure the Town's economic health, and to manage sustainable infrastructure. However, intensification needs to respect and preserve the character of existing neighbourhoods; we need to balance the need for growth with responsible development that recognizes what makes Aurora unique. As Councillor, I would advocate against variations to height restrictions and mature tree removal. I agree with the Town policy to push major development to transportation corridors to protect established residential neighbourhoods, but that needs to be done without compromising our green space, and I think it's important that we maintain a balance of amenities in planning; high-density residents need access to parks, trails, and walkable neighbourhoods, too."

**TERRENCE ZHU** – "Aurora has taken important steps to protect Stable Neighbourhoods through its Official Plan, zoning standards and infill design guidelines, but protection requires ongoing attention as the Town grows. I support adding housing choices in appropriate locations, while ensuring new development respects established neighbourhoods and the infrastructure that supports them. Height, massing, setbacks, parking, traffic, trees and compatibility with surrounding homes should all be considered carefully. I would advocate for clear and predictable planning rules, meaningful resident consultation and decisions based on the characteristics of each neighbourhood. Responsible growth does not mean stopping change; it means directing growth to the right places and ensuring new development strengthens rather than overwhelms existing communities."

## WARD 6

**ZIVKA KICIC** – "I think the Town has done a good job protecting Aurora's stable neighbourhoods, including here in Ward 6. I appreciate the work that has been done, but I also believe we can always do better. As a Ward 6 resident, I want to see growth managed responsibly while protecting the character, livability and sense of community in our existing neighbourhoods. It is about finding the right balance between welcoming new residents and making sure the communities we already have remain strong. For me, that also means listening to residents, respecting their concerns and ensuring that new developments fit within the character of the surrounding area. Growth should never come at the expense of the quality of life of those who already call these neighbourhoods home."

*(Responses from the following candidates had not been received by press deadline: Reza Ghamsary Vaez (Ward 3), Milton Hart (Ward 5), Harbinder Thandi (Ward 5), George Tremtsidis (Ward 5), Nicholas Kashef (Ward 6), Jibraan Khan (Ward 6), and Harold Kim (Ward 6))*


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## Since 1992, Rosehaven's portfolio has grown to include *over 9,000 homes and condos* across southern Ontario and the GTA.

The combination of exquisite exterior and interior design, superior construction, and unparalleled customer service is what differentiates us as a builder.

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DREAMFIELDS
IN BRADFORD

### Rear-Lane & Traditional Towns

BRADFORD

**Now selling Freehold Townhomes at Rosheaven's award-winning community set in an established neighbourhood. Located at Professor Day and Line 8 in Bradford. Freehold Townhomes start from the $700s.**




PRESENTATION CENTRE
971 Langford Blvd, Bradford ON, ON L3Z 4K9

CONTACT
**905.551.0183** | dreamfields@rosehavenhomes.com

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SIMCOE WOODS
INNISFIL

### Singles & Towns

INNISFIL

**Tour our newly opened models and move-in ready inventory homes at Simcoe Woods, Rosehaven's premier collection of 20' towns and 33' & 39' singles. These homes are located at Webster Blvd. and Benson St., minutes from Highway 400 and the shores of Lake Simcoe.**

**Singles starting from the $900s****
**Towns starting from the $700s****

MODEL HOME & PRESENTATION CENTRE
2153 Donnelly Crescent, Innisfil ON, L9S 0T9

CONTACT
249.388.8561 | simcoewoods@rosehavenhomes.com

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SPRINGSIDE
TRAILS

### Single-Detached Homes

MIDHURST

**Tour Rosehaven's stunning models at Springside Trails, a limited collection of 36' and 44' single homes in Midhurst. Minutes from Barrie and Highway 400, homes start from the $800s.**



MODEL HOMES & PRESENTATION CENTRE
48 Sweet Cicely Street, Midhurst ON, L9X 2C7

CONTACT
249.388.9177 | springsidetrails@rosehavenhomes.com

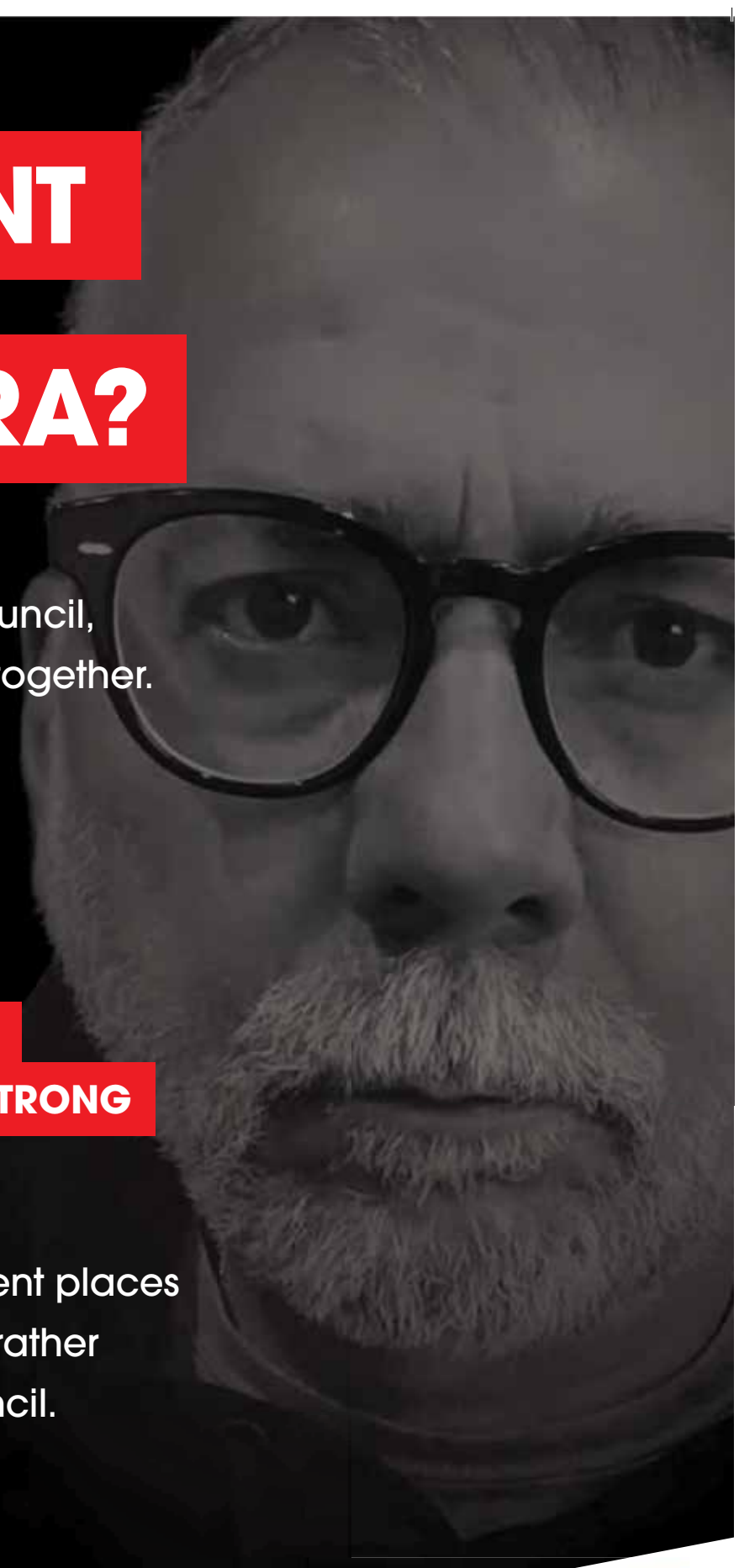
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## Learn more at Rosehaven.com

Call our hotline to be directly connected to any of our sales offices (416) 410-0175

Information and specifications correct at time of print and subject to change without notice. Maps not to scale. Renderings are artist's concept. E & O.E.

# DO WE REALLY WANT AMERICAN-STYLE POLITICS IN AURORA?



Strong Mayor Powers concentrate authority in the hands of the Mayor instead of the duly elected Council, which was chosen by residents to make decisions together.

In 2023, Mayor Mrakas said:
"I don't think Strong Mayor Powers are a tool we necessarily need."

**YET, OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, MAYOR MRAKAS HAS ISSUED 73 MAYOR'S DECISIONS UNDER THE STRONG MAYOR FRAMEWORK.**

This increasingly executive-driven style of government places more authority in the hands of one elected official rather than relying on the full democratic process of Council.

Aurora does not need this type of authority concentrated in the hands of a single individual.

JOHN GALLO



# I WILL KICK STRONG MAYOR POWERS TO THE CURB!

I am committed to restoring local democracy, collaborative decision-making, and respecting the role of the entire elected Council.

Council was elected
for a reason.
Let Council do its job.

For more information on John Gallo's promise to kick Strong Mayor Powers to the curb, visit **johngallo.ca.**

**VOTE FOR JOHN GALLO FOR MAYOR OF AURORA**

@johngalloaurora

JohnGallo.ca

AUTHORIZED BY JOHN GALLO