

Aurora Councillors vie for Federal Conservative nomination

Aurora Councillors are among the individuals vying to be Newmarket-Aurora's next Member of Parliament.

Councillors Harold Kim and Rachel Gilliland have both confirmed they intend to seek the Conservative Party of Canada's nomination in Aurora's north riding for the next Federal Election. Also vying for consideration by local party faithful include former broadcaster Teresa Kruze, a resident of Newmarket, and former Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown.

Councillor Kim, who was first elected to Council in 2014 and has served as Deputy Mayor since 2018, launched his campaign website over the holidays, stressing his mantra of 'servant leadership' which helped lead him to the top of the Council stakes in the last municipal election.

'A government leader is able to translate the needs of local constituents into a strong voice in the House of Commons, and forceful, strategic action at the legislative table,' he said. 'As Newmarket-Aurora continues to grow, so too will the complexity of issues we will face as a community. From the growing number of seniors who want the opportunity to age in place, to the continued pressure on our environment posed by the need for more and more housing, we need a representative in Parliament who can think critically, who is principled and transparent in their dealings, who is trusted by the diverse local constituents, and who has experience in a variety of business and governmental contexts.'

'I believe we need a representative who will epitomize what it means to be a true 'public servant.''

Councillor Gilliland, a rookie council member first elected in 2018, has also stated she is the right person for the job.

'I have been a Councillor for a couple of years and I have been working really hard for the people in Aurora,' she said. 'Through [this] experience with COVID, you really start to see and understand the supports that the people really rely on ' on a Provincial and Federal level. There is so much more work that needs to be done. When they opened up the [Federal] nominations for Newmarket-Aurora, I just chomped at the bit and thought, 'This is my time.'

'I really want to continue working hard for the people and I want to contribute and advocate for the people and I think one of the great things is that I have had the opportunity to be a municipal Councillor and be on the ground with the people, hear their struggles, hear what they're going through. I can take that emotion and that real-life experience and I can take that to the Federal level because sometimes I feel their voices really aren't being heard from the top down.'

Councillor Gilliland says 'the timing is right for me to step in and do the work that needs to be done,' but, as far as timing is concerned, no one knows just when that might be. As Canada currently has a minority government, it is anyone's guess when the next Federal Election might be called.

Ms. Kruze, who became one of Canada's first female sportscasters with TSN, before turning back to hard news with 680 News and CP24, is not new to Federal politics. A resident of Newmarket for nearly 20 years, she stood as the Conservative party's candidate in Vaughan-Woodbridge in the 2019 Federal Election.

'I am a long-time Conservative,' she says. 'I was born in Calgary, so we joke out there that we bleed blue and you're a Conservative when you're born. I have always had an eye on Federal politics and always felt that when my broadcasting career evolved that eventually I would like to step into Federal politics.'

'I have done a lot of soul searching and I still believe my political fires burn deeply in me. If I was going to run anywhere, it was going to be where I have lived and have made my life for 19 years.'

Another long-time resident of Newmarket looking to carry the Blue banner is Lois Brown, who served as the riding's MP from 2008

to 2015. Having lost the last two Federal elections, Ms. Brown says she needs a waiver from the Conservatives to seek the nomination, as per the party's constitution.

That is something she says she has sought and is waiting for word.

“Serving the constituents of Newmarket-Aurora was a great honour and with my considerable experience, both as the Member of Parliament for Newmarket-Aurora and as Parliamentary Secretary for International Development, I believe that I would be a caring and effective representative for our communities,” she said. “My deep roots in Newmarket-Aurora give me a love for our communities and the people who have chosen to live here. It is my hope to serve them once again.”

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