

Aurora Votes 2018: Mobbs wants to continue service to community



By Brock Weir

As an officer in the Canadian Armed Forces, 'integrity' has been a way of life for Adam Mobbs for nearly two decades. Now, as his military service draws to a close, he's looking to continue his service to the community, with that same level of integrity drummed into him as a member of the Forces - this time as a member of Aurora Council.

Mr. Mobbs is one of several candidates vying for one of six seats to represent the interests of local citizens at large in this fall's Municipal Election.

For him, putting his name forward is a matter of giving back.

'Local politics is the level of government that has the most impact on the community,' says Mr. Mobbs. 'Land use planning is the strongest tool the municipal government has to influence how a community is built and how it grows, and that is the single most powerful tool to build the community. [Compared to the Federal and Provincial levels of government] I would say there is something nice about solving local grassroots issues and being a part of it, and in a non-partisan manner.'

While this is Mr. Mobbs' first time seeking public office, he is not new to community involvement.

Having grown up in Aurora, one of his first jobs was serving as a life guard and swimming instructor at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex. On top of that, his father, Ferguson, was a founder of the local Air Cadet squadron, where Adam rose through the ranks to serve as Commanding Officer.

He has been a Commanding Officer of different Air Cadet squadrons throughout York Region ever since.

'As an officer in the Canadian Armed Forces, I think integrity is essential to working in local government,' he says. 'I think the ability to build capacity within the community is certainly important. Loyalty is certainly important and I think, more than anything, it is the duty to serve the community and I am certainly rooted in that and I certainly passionately believe in that.'

His military service has also given him a unique perspective on two big ticket issues recently passed by Council - the redevelopment of Library Square and the renovations at the historic Aurora Armoury. As a member of the Air Cadets, he worked out of the basement of the Church Street School and later out of the basement of the now demolished Old Library. As a serving member, he attended many parades out of the old Armoury and says he is looking forward to seeing how those landmarks evolve to serve the community.

'I have a symbolic attachment to that area,' he says. 'I can appreciate the need to develop that area and be progressive. The decisions Council has made I certainly support and I believe there is more work to be done. I believe the [Library Square] concept is beautiful and I would like to work with Council and residents to develop that further,' says Mr. Mobbs. 'The Armoury is a beautiful place, certainly rooted in history. I would like to see the history [of the building] maintained. I sincerely believe that economic growth in that area is driven by innovation. It sounds like Council has found a cluster of innovation that resides in the culinary business and that is something that should be supported. Aurora residents love Concerts in the Park, so what a great anchor to be able to build on that asset that currently exists and just link to the Armoury.'

As he sees land use planning as a powerful instrument in the municipal toolbox, Mr. Mobbs comes into the Council race with a

Masters Degree in Public Administration with a focus on local government. He says he is "looking to apply that lens rooted in the community to solve local community problems."

Among these issues, he says, is the review of Aurora's Official Plan and how it relates to growth. Developing the Downtown Core "in an innovative manner" is important, he said. Should Aurora move towards a ward system in the future, while this is an issue he says needs to be decided by the voters, a ward system should be in a pie shape to include a segment of Aurora's historic Downtown Core so it is of equal importance to each elected member.

Also important is doing further work on the thorny issue of preserving the integrity of Aurora's "stable neighbourhoods."

"I find a lot of residents as I have been knocking on doors don't necessarily understand the nuances of the stable neighbourhoods zoning bylaw," he says. "I would like to see some progressive tools and I don't know how to do it exactly right now, but to use 3D modelling to understand exactly what is put on the table and just to communicating with more clarity what the zoning bylaw looks like."

"I believe in good governance and I believe that includes good planning. That includes balanced planning, but good planning over and above a balance. It includes fiscal responsibility, understanding the Town's audited financial statements and can dissect them and understand where we stand. I believe in economic growth and the drivers to good economic growth and leveraging those to the benefit of the community."