

## Former MPP Chris Ballard confirms Mayoral bid

The bid to be Aurora's next mayor will soon become a four-man race.

Chris Ballard, who served as MPP for Newmarket-Aurora until his defeat in last month's Provincial Election, confirms he will bid to become the next Mayor of Aurora.

Once Mr. Ballard files his nomination papers, he will join a race that includes incumbent Mayor Geoff Dawe, along with incumbent Councillors John Abel and Tom Mrakas vying for the Town's top job.

"After much urging by residents and business owners, I'm excited to announce I will run for Mayor of Aurora in this fall's municipal election," said Mr. Ballard in a statement. "Everywhere I go in Town, I'm being asked by uneasy Aurorans to reverse the years of political mismanagement by Aurora Town Council. I'm being told my leadership, management skills and, understanding of public policy are much needed. I'm told my thoughtful approach to planning for the future I gained as a business owner, Town Councillor, MPP for Aurora and provincial cabinet minister would be a breath of fresh air.

"It's time to get Aurora back on course. Residents want a mayor who is committed to protect and grow the investment residents and business owners have made in this community. Instead of Aurora falling behind in the GTA, Aurorans want to move forward. They want a mayor who will protect and enhance the quality of life, security and prosperity in our community. I was honoured to serve the people of the Town of Aurora as their Member of Provincial Parliament. I got into politics to help people. That has been, and will always be, my focus.

"So, I will soon file my election papers, and I look forward to a vigorous campaign in the weeks ahead."

Mr. Ballard was first elected to Aurora Council in 2010.

He served in this position until nearly the end of his term when he was elected to Queen's Park in the 2014 Provincial election.

As a member of Kathleen Wynne's cabinet, he held a number of portfolios including Minister of Housing, Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy and, lastly, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

**By Brock Weir**