

## Gallo will 'throw Strong Mayor powers to the curb' if elected: campaign launch



John Gallo will 'throw Strong Mayor powers to the curb' if he's elected Aurora's next Mayor.

That was the message the Ward 5 Councillor delivered to supporters on Friday night as he formally launched his bid for the Town's top job.

Gallo, who has served on Aurora Council for 14 non-consecutive years and who ran for Mayor in 2014, outlined his vision at a launch event held May 1 at the Cork & Confidential event space on Industrial Parkway South.

He said this campaign was about choice: 'a choice about the kind of Aurora we want to be, a choice about how we are governed, [and] a choice about the future we will build together.'

'Aurora is a special place,' he said. 'It's a place where families build their lives, where neighbours look out for one another, where people take pride in the community and believe in something more than themselves.'

The community, he continued, is a place 'where neighbours still look out for one another, where people care, where community still means something great.'

'It's also a place where if you leave your house for five minutes, you are probably running into someone who is going to ask you about potholes, taxes, and what Council is doing ' and I wouldn't have it any other way,' he said. 'That connection, that accessibility, that is what makes this community strong.'

Noting he has lived in Aurora for 30 years, he said he has seen Aurora's strength, but he's also seen what he described as a 'growing frustration' that 'decisions are not always clear, a feeling that people have lost their connection with their government,' and residents have said they 'want to be included [and] to trust their local government again.'

'I think part of the challenge is this: on the surface, things look fine, the message sounds positive, the updates look polished, and everything appears to be moving in the right direction. But leadership is not about appearances ' it's about how decisions are made,' Gallo contended. 'It is about whether people are truly informed, or whether they are genuinely included in the process, because when you look at it a little deeper, people are asking questions. They are asking how decisions are being made. They are asking why things are happening the way they are. They are asking whether they are getting a full picture. That matters, because trust is not built on [what looks] good; it's built on what is clear, consistent, and accountable.'

?That's not too much to ask. In fact, that is the foundation of good leadership.?

Gallo said he is running to be Mayor ?because this community deserves better.? That doesn't mean ?louder leadership? or ?more complicated leadership?, but leadership that is ?steady, transparent, [and] respects both the responsibilities of the office and the people it serves.?

?Aurora is at a turning point, and moments like this demand more than words ? they demand transparency, they demand discipline, and they demand a clear sense of purpose.?

During this campaign, Gallo said he has three priorities: leading with integrity and good governance, making life more affordable and creating opportunities, and making Aurora safe and secure.

On the pillar of integrity and good governance, he said building trust was key.

?Without trust, progress slows. Without trust, communities divide. Trust is not built in a day; it is built through openness, through consistency, through leadership that is willing to explain not just what is being done, but why,? he said. ?We must respect democracy and the role of Councillors, and throw Strong Mayor powers to the curb. We must ensure that more residents are connected to how decisions are made. That means creating real opportunities for people to be a part of the conversation, including students who are learning about the community and want to understand how it works. Public service is not about control; it's about responsibility and responsibility begins with trust.?

Addressing affordability and opportunity, he said Aurora ?must remain a place of opportunity, a place where hard work is rewarded, where families can build a future and where growth is guided, not rushed,? and an essential ingredient in that is ?discipline.?

?We must be disciplined ? disciplined in spending, disciplined in planning, disciplined in the choices we make, because affordability is not just about dollars; it's about dignity. It's about giving people confidence they can build a life here. It's also about ensuring the next generation can see a future in this community, that they have opportunities to stay, to work, and to build their lives right here in Aurora.?

A safe community, he added, doesn't happen ?by chance,? but is fostered through ?planning, investment, and leadership that sees the challenges before they become problems.?

?Safety means more than enforcement; it means safe streets, safe public spaces, and a safe community where families and seniors can feel secure every single day,? he said. ?We must be proactive, because when people feel safe, they thrive, and when communities thrive, everything is possible ? and that includes ensuring that our community remains welcoming and supportive for the next generation, so that young people feel connected, included, and confident in their future here.

?These are our priorities: integrity, affordability, and safety. But more than that, they are our responsibilities because leadership is not about reacting, it's about setting a standard, setting a tone, setting a direction that others can believe in?.

?I am running to raise that standard: to bring clarity where there has been confusion, to bring discipline where there has been uncertainty, and to bring trust back to where it belongs, because Aurora deserves leadership that reflects its values: strong, respectful, forward-looking?. Aurora's future is ours to build, and tonight we take that first step.?

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter