

Thompson, Kim seek re-election in Wards 4 and 6

The Council of 2026-2030 is guaranteed to have several new faces around the table as Councillors Wendy Gaertner and Rachel Gilliland seek new opportunities, while Councillor John Gallo is challenging Mayor Tom Mrakas for Aurora's top job ? but long-time Councillors Michael Thompson and Harold Kim are vying to represent their constituents for another four years.

Thompson, who was first elected in 2010, is seeking his fifth consecutive Council term, and his second as Ward 4 Councillor. As of press time this week, it's a two-person race in the Ward with candidate Shaheen Moledina also in the field.

Kim, first elected in 2014, is standing for a fourth term, the second representing Ward 6, and is currently being challenged by resident Jibraan Khan in what is Aurora's fastest-growing quadrant.

For the incumbents, it's a matter of continuing work that is already underway and steering Aurora into the future.

MICHAEL THOMPSON ? Ward 4

Thompson was the first incumbent member of Aurora Council to confirm their intention to seek re-election this past winter, but formalized his candidacy on June 11.

Following his registration, he said he was proud of Council's past accomplishments, but said ?there's more work ahead.?

?We need to continue investing in our infrastructure, protecting the quality of life that makes Aurora such a wonderful place to live, and ensuring residents receive value for their tax dollars going forward,? he said, noting the number of Council members not seeking re-election was just one factor he considered in deciding to run again. ?The next term will bring significant change around the Council table. While fresh perspectives are great and they're important, experience and continuity are equally valuable. The decisions Council makes over the next four years will have a lasting impact on our community, and I believe Aurora will benefit from having an experienced Councillor who understands the issues, knows the history behind key decisions, and can help our Town through this period of transition, while continuing to be a strong advocate for the residents in Ward 4.?

Among the many Council decisions over the past four years he says he's particularly proud of include the opening of Aurora Town Square and the new gymnasium at the SARC, work on the upcoming multi-use path on Yonge Street, the installation of traffic lights on Yonge Street near Delmanor, the opening of new artificial turf fields, and the acquisition of parkland.

?Those are all great things but, at the same time, while there's always large projects and long-term initiatives that attract attention? local government is ultimately about ensuring the day-to-day needs of our community are met: maintaining roads and infrastructure, delivering services, access to parks and facilities, and ensuring Aurora remains a great place to live, both today and for future generations. It's not always making headlines, it's not always grabbing attention, but just ensuring that the day-to-day fundamentals remain, first and foremost.?

HAROLD KIM ? Ward 6

When Harold Kim was first elected to Council in 2014, he says he didn't foresee such longevity in the role, but his three terms on Council so far, and its accomplishments, have been ?very rewarding.?

Among the most rewarding aspects of the position, he says, have been those related to economic development within the Aurora community.

?I'm on the board of the Aurora Economic Development Corporation and we've made some real strides in establishing up-and-coming companies and, in particular, companies in the med-tech and biotech space,? he says, noting a number of other

engagement opportunities spearheaded by the Economic Development Corporation, including Aurora CNX, that have helped showcase the phenomenal work of local companies.

"I would like to continue to move forward with the economic development area in Aurora and that's what excites me," he says, adding that representing Ward 6 is key in that excitement.

"Ward 6 is predominantly new residents to Aurora," he continues. "I've used the last four years to really connect the old with the new. Aurora is such a vibrant, volunteer-based community, and I want to keep that volunteer spirit alive. When you have a lot of new residents coming from different parts of the GTA, Ontario, or Canada, for that matter, people have different values. One of the important things that I believe that I have done is to educate and send a message to those in Ward 6 that we are a volunteer-based community. It's great to be a part of a family where we can all get involved, participate, and contribute to a greater Aurora.

"Four years won't change human behaviour [or] people's mentality, but it takes time. I would love to continue to do that for another four years, connect with those residents who I haven't been able to connect with yet, and let them know that Aurora is a thriving volunteer-based and activities-based community where everyone is welcome."

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