

## Tim Jones awarded Lifetime Achievement Award from Town



Former Aurora mayor Tim Jones has been honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Town he has served for the better part of 50 years.

Jones, Aurora's longest-serving Mayor, was honoured Monday night at Aurora Town Square as part of the Town's annual Community Recognition Awards.

An honour bestowed to a citizen only once in any given term of Council, this is only the second Lifetime Achievement Award presented since its creation, the first recipient being long-time business and community leader Rosalyn Gonsalves, who received the honour in 2022.

"Few individuals have left a deeper or more lasting mark on the Town of Aurora than Tim Jones," said Mayor Tom Mrakas at Monday's ceremony. "As a Councillor and Mayor, Tim helped shape modern Aurora, bringing us into the 21st century with forward-thinking policies and plans that have been fundamental in allowing us to grow responsibly and sustainably. Many of the things residents value most about Aurora today were influenced, shaped, or championed by Tim's leadership and vision. As someone who now has the privilege of serving as Mayor, I can tell you personally that Tim's leadership, integrity, and deep commitment to this community have been a real inspiration to me. He showed that leadership is not about recognition or titles – it's about service, humility and leaving your community better than you found it. But what sets Tim apart is the work he did outside of Town Hall, and in the years after he left office."

Jones was saluted for his foundational work in establishing the Character Community Foundation of York Region as co-chair with former Markham mayor Don Cousens, an organization that offered students, individuals, and organizations with workshops on fostering positive character development, and his service as a founding community ambassador for Neighbourhood Network, promoting the value of local volunteerism and opportunities to get involved.

He's also been involved with the Southlake Health Foundation, spearheaded the annual charity golf classic for CHATS (Community and Home Assistance to Seniors), which bears his name, and much more.

"What's remarkable about Tim is that no matter the role – mayor, volunteer, fundraiser, mentor, or community advocate – he has always led with humility and genuine care for people," Mayor Mrakas continued. "Tim, your contributions have touched every aspect of this Town, and you can feel it throughout this community – at Town Hall, in our downtown, and even when walking the Tim Jones Trail, a lasting tribute to the environmental stewardship and vision you brought to this Town during your years on Council. Your legacy is woven into the fabric of this community and generations of residents will continue to benefit from the work that you've done."

‘Few people leave a legacy that can truly be seen, felt, and experienced across an entire community, but Tim absolutely has. Aurora is a stronger place because of the enormous contributions you have made, and we’re grateful for everything you have done.’

This gratitude was returned by Jones, who was first elected as an Aurora Councillor in 1978 and served as Mayor from 1995-2006.

‘I think just making it to 78-years-old is probably a good lifetime achievement,’ Jones joked to The Auroran, adding ‘there’s a whole lot of people in Town that are just as deserving and probably more.’

Looking back on his time on Council, he has fond memories of the work he did with then-Councillor and later mayor John West resulting in the Town’s first Parks and Recreation Master Plan, advocacy for the community, for the Character Community Foundation, Neighbourhood Network and more.

‘Respect, honesty, integrity and taking responsibility would be the first that would come to mind,’ when asked what character attributes stood him in particularly good stead throughout his career.

The Mayor’s Charity Golf Classic is another initiative established by Jones which continues to serve the community – another particular point of pride.

‘We’ve returned over a million dollars to the community through that tournament, to charities, and to worthy causes,’ he says, when asked on what keeps him engaged in the Aurora community. ‘When you spend 28 years on Council and you don’t have to go to the office the next day, I still felt I wanted to be a part of my community and do things.’

One of the first opportunities he had to do so was joining the Neighbourhood Network team shortly after his defeat in the 2006 municipal election.

‘Aurora has always been a great community of volunteers and volunteering. [For me,] I think it’s in your blood. I think any politician, anybody who serves the community, or has worked in it, it’s just there. I hope this [recognition] sets an example, if anything else, for other people to get involved, to volunteer, to see what it’s about, because you’ll feel good about it. It’s just something that is very rewarding.’

By Brock Weir  
Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter