

Wards would be in the Town's best interest

(Re: Wards for Aurora could be considered this fall, Feb. 19, Page 9)

I was reading the article from February 19 and wanted to respond with my (and many of my fellow residents with whom I have talked with about this since the last election actually) opinion.

I think that it is time that we adopt a ward system in Aurora. There are more pros (for the residents) than cons (for the councillors mostly) and it would be in the better interest of our town to do so.

On the pro side, people would know who to contact if they had problems or issues. There would be more accountability by the councillors to get things done that are in the interest of the town. I do not agree that stronger councillors would get more for their ward than weaker councillors as there is a check and balance overall to decide which projects are adopted and where the budget overall gets spent.

We could divide the town into six wards easily enough - you look at the number of homes/residents in a particular node (NE, SE, Central E, Central W, NW, SW for example or just one central and then one that represents Aurora for the Region of York) and divide the boundaries from there. This is what every other town has done from what I understand (in speaking with a friend whose husband is a councillor for another York Region town).

We have 52,000 people; this is 2/3 the size of Newmarket for example and they run things with seven councillors in total ? all part time.

We could trim the fat and got to six easily enough and stay part time as well; it would save, as the article stated, \$250,000 - that money could be put to better use that would benefit the growing population of our Town.

And the workload would not increase significantly as from what I have heard from other towns with a proportional populace, it can be done part time and at whatever compensation is given currently.

If the councillors who have been around a long time thinks it's no longer worth it, then they should simply bow out and let someone else who is interested put their name into the hat, knowing what is involved and at what pay.

On the cons side, the councillors probably all live where one or two ward would be located for the most part and I think it is in their self-interest to not want to go to a ward system because they would not get re-elected.

Councillors should live in the ward they represent. It does not take a dummy to figure that one out in terms of the councillors not supporting a ward system. Half of them are probably neighbours! The way the voting goes, currently with a big long list of candidates to select eight from, the residents just pick and choose based on the name they like, the first alphabetically listed or simply don't vote because they don't care.

Look at the voter turnout in recent elections. If there was a ward system and the candidates went out and got to know the residents in their ward, you would get better turn out and better representation for the town.

I don't think a ward system promotes parochialism in the least - what it would do is promote accountability and this is what this town needs.

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Aurora