

Weese will not seek re-election as Ward 1 Councillor



Ron Weese, who has served as Ward 1 Councillor since 2022, will not seek re-election this fall.

Weese announced his decision this week, stating his decision to step back came after "careful consideration and reflection" on his service on Council, to the community, and in consultation with his family, residents and friends.

"I have delayed this announcement to ensure that my performance in Council is not distracted because of my intentions and also to learn the qualities of candidates who have stepped forward to ensure the Ward and Town are well represented," he said in a statement.

"Serving the residents of Aurora has been one of the greatest privileges of my life. I am deeply grateful for the trust, support, and encouragement that residents have shown me throughout my time on Council. I believe our collective goal is to strengthen our community, improve opportunities for residents, and make Aurora a welcoming, safe, and respectful place to live for everyone."

Speaking to The Auroran after making his decision, Weese said he was particularly proud of his work to establish Ratepayer Associations in the communities he represents, advocacy for community engagement and citizen participation, promotion of amateur sport and recreation, and more.

"I'm proud of laying a foundation for advocacy in the community through the Ratepayer Associations," he says. "I'm proud of the neighbourhood watches that have popped up as a result of that because community safety is top of mind for every resident. In certain circumstances, related to the developments that are, I think, in violation of our Official Plan (OP) and have received a lot of opposition from local ratepayers, I have always voted with the ratepayers in mind."

Some changes made to the operation of government since he was first elected, however, have presented certain challenges and were among the factors he considered before deciding to step back.

He characterizes Strong Mayor powers as a "frustration" since they were accepted by Mayor Tom Mrakas "upon the intent to build 8,000 new homes in the community."

"The Strong Mayor powers have not been used to do that," says Weese. "[Housing is] traditionally, year after year, well below targets, so that's been a social experiment that's failed. That's been frustrating.

"Decisions around Heritage have been disappointing with a lot of infill projects moving forward, a lack of respect for our Official Plan in order to get more units built that the market doesn't seem to support, the overarching problems that we have had with the budget in the previous years " I'm aware that the budget was scrutinized heavily by Council and approved by Council, and now the Budget is the Mayor's Budget and we don't get the same kind of opportunity to ask a lot of questions about it?.

"I have always voted with the Ratepayers in mind so I don't think Strong Mayor powers changed much the way I have operated within Ward 1. I still wanted to represent them, I still wanted to create advocacy opportunities for them, and I wanted to represent their interests " and I think I've done that adequately over the last three-and-a-half years."

Looking ahead to the 2026-2030 Council term, Weese says development with the Town Park area is going to be a "significant stress," particularly with significant developments slated for the Berczy and Metcalfe areas, which could bring an estimated 1,500 new residents into the Ward.

"I think the Town Park area, as well as the whole Cultural district needs to have a strategy in place to be able to create a quality community here, so that's going to require some resident advocacy," says Weese, adding Metrolinx' work to facilitate the new rail tracks will be another topic to watch.

"It's going to be a significant change to everybody because of the two-track and the proposed 15-minute service. We desperately need a grade separation of Wellington Street and I hope that is completed correctly in favour of everybody that travels east to west in this Town because it splits the Town in half. The train itself and the number of travels up and down the line is going to change and I remain interested " and I hope the next Council [makes sure] the train whistles are stopped because they're a stress for hundreds of homes along the train tracks, and other communities being up to the highest standards of safety because no one wants to sacrifice safety for the sake of the train whistles."

Councillor Weese's decision leaves Wards 1, 2, 3, and 5 up for grabs in this fall's municipal election, with the incumbents in Wards 1, 2, and 3 not seeking re-election, while incumbent Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo vies for the Mayor's position.

Unlike Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner, Weese says he's not yet ready to make an election endorsement in Ward 1.

At press time, both Lauren Hanna and Rocco Morsillo have filed to run for the Ward 1 Councillor position.

"I'm going to remain vigilant and listen to the campaigns of the other candidates in my ward, just like every other resident should do," he says. "We need to learn what their interests are and what their values will be, and I will identify somebody. Of the two people, I know I have a preference at this point, and it's always going to be based on whether they do or don't support Strong Mayor powers and whether they do want to advocate for resident advocacy and want to be a representative of the community."

By Brock Weir
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