

It is a privilege to serve your community in any capacity but it is truly an honour to have been chosen your Mayor.

My roots run deep here in Richmond Hill, I was born here. I know what it takes to run a business and get involved in the community you call home. I would like to acknowledge and thank those from the community that helped in this campaign. We will continue building our community together.

Our Town is in transition, the pattern of growth that has become familiar and routine has nearly reached its end and different issues will dominate the growth discussions. The Town is reaching a mature stage of growth. A comprehensive review of the Official Plan is compelling at this time.

For most of us, the discussion of planning matters, social policy, visions and the like quickly shift to concrete issues such as housing, green space and traffic congestion. Our new Official Plan will not be drawn on maps of green fields as in the past; it will be the realization of the wishes and aspirations of the people who already live and work here. It will not be a plan about land; it will be a plan about people and it will start in June.

We will continue with our Gridlock Task Force and will concentrate on moving our new transportation master plan from paper to implementation. Our Downtown Task Force made great strides last term in seeing some significant and subtle changes. The ongoing projects require our attention to complete our work of seeing it return to the vibrant center of our Town. The theatre, the off street parking and rear lane project to name but a few. Part of that work will be to review a move of the Town Hall back to Yonge Street.

We will join with the Strong Communities Coalition and the GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance and will ask you, the residents, to speak to your Members of Provincial Parliament to make this an issue to be discussed with the Province.

I want our Town to be one where families are strong, homes and streets are safe and neighbours know and respect on another. One that celebrates the cultures of all people.

I look forward to seeing many of you in a public forum in the near future and over the next four years to discuss the goals, aspirations and values we have and want for our Town.