

Reflecting on term as chair

Our Readers Write

This past Nov. 14th marked the 30th anniversary of my first election to the position of Ward Four Councillor, City of Mississauga. Not quite so coincidentally on that anniversary date, the Region of Peel honoured me with a farewell reception in recognition of the completion of my term as Chair and retirement from elected and quasi-elected office.

Since the moment earlier this year when I informed my family, friends and Council colleagues of my intention not to seek a second term as Chair, I have been asked to reflect on the more significant benchmarks of those incredible 30 years. Understandably, there are too many to inventory; however, I could not help but reference a few anecdotes when I made my final address to Council in September.

While the purpose of this message to the community is not to reflect on specific elements of my tenure, I would like to share with you the sentiment that is most ingrained. The gratification that I now enjoy from reflecting on my experiences in public life would not have been possible without the support, efforts, and participation of so many people, beginning with my family, friends, and colleagues. No one individual can attain and maintain a career in elected office without the help of many people; in that regard, among numerous others, I was and remain eternally grateful and appreciative.

Moreover, I am most grateful to the residents I had the privilege to serve these many years and who continued to honour me by returning me to City Hall. When one seeks to serve as a public servant, you do precisely that: serve the public.

At this point in my life, as I prepare to begin my next chapter, I know that while what I hope to do next will be enjoyable, it could never be as satisfying and rewarding. Consider that every day when I drive home to Mississauga's Ward Four, where my wife Terri and I continue to live, I view some tangible evidence of something in the Ward that I had a hand in delivering. For example, I will pass by a park that families continue to enjoy, or reacquaint myself with a traffic calming measure that added an enhanced element of safety to a neighbourhood. In addition, I see examples of the growth that Mississauga and Peel Region experienced over the last thirty years and think of the collaborative efforts of Mississauga Council and Peel Region Council in guiding that growth.

All of this leads up to the message I would like to leave all of you, especially the young people of our community(s). Beyond my expression of appreciation, I would want to leave a message of hope; hope that many of you will consider devoting some of your professional life to public service and serving your friends and neighbours. Granted, while the hours are long and, like any endeavour, there indeed are frustrations, the rewards are limitless.

Frank Dale

Chair, Region of Peel