

Mayor Keffer's Inaugural Address

December 4, 2018

- Good evening everyone, and thank you for joining us for the official inauguration of the 2018-2022 Town Council.
- Thank you to all who have been a part of this evening's program, and to all of the Town Staff who were involved in putting this event together.
- I would like to thank some of the special guests who have joined us here tonight:
 - First I'd like to thank HIS WORSHIP ROBERTO ZITO, a Bradford resident, for your important role in tonight's inauguration.
 - I'd also like to thank REVEREND DIANE KNOWLES for your thoughtful blessing, and MADDIE KOKOL for lending your voice to our national anthem.
 - Representing the office of MPP Caroline Mulroney, thank you to RAMNEEK BALA for attending tonight.
 - Representing the South Simcoe Police Services Board, we are fortunate to have in attendance ROD HICKS, LICINIO MIGUELO and SHARON VILLANI.
 - Representing the County of Simcoe, welcome to TREVOR WILCOX and ROB MCCULLOUGH.
 - And welcome to RICHARD NORCROSS, Deputy Mayor from New Tecumseth.

- I'd like to give special thanks to my wife Jean, my son Matthew and my daughter Nicole, who is here tonight.
- I'd like to thank all of my family and friends and all the people who worked on my campaign for your support not only through the recent campaign but over the last years.
- It is a great honour to have the confidence of this community to serve as Mayor of Bradford West Gwillimbury.
- As I said 4 years ago, my wife, Jean, and I both grew up in families where our parents were active in their communities and they taught us to take an interest in what was going on and to give back. Our interest in municipal politics has grown from both of our fathers being West Gwillimbury Councillors, along with my Grandfather being a Vaughan Councillor.
- I want to speak briefly about election campaigns, the democratic process, and the great opportunity campaigns give us to listen, learn, renew, and connect to our Town. All my fellow Councillors and all the Candidates went through this process, and learned from it.
- Knocking on doors and hearing from the residents is vital to being part of elected office. We know there are issues out there, But we learn from life's challenges, and are motivated to work the best we can in the time we have to make a difference and your elected council will do our very best to respond to them.

- Throughout the election campaign, we spoke to thousands of residents. We spoke about practical plans to build a better town.
- And it resonated with the residents.
- And of course I would like to thank every one of you who voted for me and expressed your confidence in the work I have done over the past four years, and my plans for the next four years as your Mayor.
- Some things have not changed over the past few years.
 - I continue in my unwavering commitment to fiscal responsibility.
 - I have and will continue to work with my fellow council members to put forth an annual budget with only the minimal increases required to keep up with rising costs.
 - We understand the financial pressures we all face and we respect every tax dollar that we are entrusted with.
 - I also continue my commitment to transparency, openness and engagement.
 - We will continue to create opportunities to gather input from residents and to be responsive to your questions and concerns.

- It is my personal hope that residents continue to find me accessible and responsive, whether you need information, support, or just to say hello.
- But there are some differences between tonight and my inauguration in 2014.
- Probably the biggest one is that my fellow council members and I have the distinct advantage of having worked together for four years.
- At this time in 2014, I had only worked with about half of these gentlemen before. All of us had met, and had a few conversations about what our priorities might be, but the only things I knew for certain was what I had heard from the public and what I personally thought was important to achieve over the next four years.
- Tonight, the nine of us stand united before you with a strategic plan already outlined to guide our work for the next four years.
- We met as a group two weeks ago, with the support of senior staff and a facilitator, to discuss how we can achieve the things that are most important to all of you.
- We identified five key priorities, and while you will hear much more about them in the coming months, I wanted to outline them for you tonight, to give you a sense of where we're headed.

- **Item number one**, and I'm certain this will come as no shock to anyone, is to **Reduce Traffic Congestion:**
 - We will continue to implore the provincial government to construct the Hwy 400 – 404 Freeway Link; and
 - We will develop a new Transportation Master Plan that updates the town's long term transportation strategy.
- **Item number two is Employment Growth:**
 - We will continue to work with local employers, major landowners, the Simcoe County Economic Development Office and other stakeholders to champion BWG as a prime location for business expansion and new employers.
- **Item number three is Community & Traffic Safety:**
 - We will further explore and implement traffic calming measures within neighbourhoods; and
 - We will expand education & awareness programs for driver safety.
- **Item number four is a Facilities Master Plan:**
 - We will refine plans for the Bradford Community Centre and other underutilized town properties/facilities.

- **And item number five is Housing Affordability:**
 - We will pursue opportunities for housing for all-- with the development community, Simcoe County and other stakeholders.
- We have a lot of work to do. But we will work together to do the best we can.
- These are our goals. These are our principles.
- I'm struck by the simple truth that what we learnt from our parents' community service, we pass on to our children, and that as we work to improve our town, we'll do it for everyone: seniors, adults, young parents, youth and children.
- There is a lot to do, but I will always strive to be available to hear your ideas and respond to your concerns.
- Together, we will build a better town for all areas of town.
- I look forward to the challenges and possibilities ahead.
- Thank you again for the honour to serve as your Mayor.