

INVESTMENT MANAGER JOINS MAYORAL RACE

ROBERT GOTTARDI BELIEVES HE CAN BRING THOSE SKILLS TO THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS

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After making a career out of managing money, Robert Gottardi believes he can bring those skills to the Town of Halton Hills.

"The cost of living, the cost of driving is going up. Town property taxes keep going up, but there's no appreciable increase in services," said the 'almost retired' investment portfolio manager, who became the fourth candidate for mayor after filing Monday.

Gottardi also ran for

MUNICIPAL ELECTION

mayor in 2018, earning 15 per cent of the vote to finish second of the three candidates. This year, he will run against councillors Bryan Lewis, Ann Lawlor, and Acton businessman Norm Paulsen.

And should he be elected this time, Gottardi said he has an idea about where the town can save some money right away.

"The mayor's salary is disproportionately high (compared to council), and if I was mayor, the first thing I would do is cut the mayor's salary. And if that wasn't possible, I'd donate a portion to charity or direct it to a town fund to help subsidize seniors' taxes."



Robert Gottardi is the fourth mayoral candidate for Halton Hills.

Metroland file photo

The mayor's base pay is \$105,881, compared to

two regional councillors for sitting on the Halton Region council.

Gottardi said tax increases (council approved a 4.57 per cent increase last year) have outpaced the cost of living for too long. He said the town needs to find more efficient ways of doing business in order to keep taxes down and make life more affordable for seniors on fixed incomes.

The new mayoral candidate said he talked to members of more than 9,000 households during his campaign four years ago, giving him a good sense of what people want. He said keeping communication lines open between the community and council will benefit both parties, especially in presenting budgets in a way that

the general public can easily understand.

"If we can communicate and the community can understand what we're doing, they'll come to us more informed," he said. "We need to take the time to engage people about what's going to happen in the near future and the next 10 years."

Knowing that the town is growing, Gottardi said the town needs to catch up in providing recreational opportunities and other facilities.

He believes that an expanded transit system connecting the populated areas with the employment opportunities in the Premier Gateway will help keep young people living and working in the town rather than having to leave to find work.



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