Jack Heath - a C.V^

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(Updated)

JACK HEATH – a C.V.

Some awards (in no order):

Ontario Municipal Affairs and Housing Long-Standing Service Award, 25 years as a councillor, 2023

The King’s Coronation Medal, for service to Markham and Rouge National Urban Park, 2024

International District Energy Association, 2022 Career In Service Award as long-time Chair of Markham District Energy Inc.

The Best of the Best Award as Chair of Markham’s Waste Diversion Committee for 15 years

The Regional Municipality of York 19 Years of Valued Service certificate, 2022

The City of Markham 25 Years of Valued Service certificate, 2022

Some positions held and employment:

JLH Law Books Ltd., 1983-1997; President, I established and operated this small business with my wife Krista Chiu in Toronto and Markham (after 1991); it sold legal books and services across Canada and around the world

Councillor, Markham Ward 5, 1997-2003

Regional Councillor, Markham and York, 2003-2022

Chair, Markham District Energy Inc., 2007-2023

Deputy Mayor, Markham, 2008-2018

Chair, Markham General Committee, 2010-2022

Chair, Housing York Inc, 2011-2018, and board member 2007-2022

Board Member, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2014-2016

Vice Chair, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority 2016-2022

Board Member, National Zero-Waste Council of Canada for several years in the 2010s

Principal, Aurora Strategy Group, 2024-date under CEO Marcel Wieder

Volunteer on the Capital Committee for Evergreen which is building Markham's first hospice, and the Government Relations Committee for Reena which provides housing for individuals with developmental disabilities

Volunteer on Markham Village Music Festival, as Chair in 2025 and Co-Chair in 2026

Some accomplishments (in no order):

Chair, Markham Waste Management Committee. I brought the "clear" bag for garbage disposal to Markham in 2013 and the Green Bin earlier. We became the largest municipality in Canada using clear bags and it drove up recycling by over 10% at no cost to the city. It has been copied by many municipalities. Four years later, we introduced textile recycling with excellent results. My motto has always been, "Can we make improvements in municipal services at little or no cost to the taxpayer?" And "Can we find savings?" I once found extra annual revenues of a quarter million in Markham's billing system.

Chair, Housing York Inc. As Chair, I challenged HYI on two matters: #1, can we strengthen our financial resiliency for better flexibility when housing opportunities arise and for stronger rainy-day reserves and, #2, can we find opportunities to intensify housing on lands York or Housing York already own thus eliminating land acquisition costs to save millions? We did both.

Markham Regional Councillor, Region of York. There are two occasions I'd like to highlight. York Region has always had a capital program to assist hospitals. I strongly support it. We were having issues with ambulance wait times being far too long at ERs, which was costing us tremendously and negatively impacting ambulance services. I proposed a formula to tie a portion of our capital grants to bringing the wait times down to no more than 30 minutes. It saved millions every year. Second, transit. On many occasions at Council and Committee I raised the negative effect of the transit zone at Steeles between YRT and TTC – it meant more cars on the road, inconvenienced many residents, and lowered the availability of Toronto-based employees for York businesses. I was overjoyed when Premier Ford announced fare integration and did away with this impediment.

Councillor, Markham and York. In my last few years as a Councillor leading up to 2022 I was the negotiator on behalf of the two municipalities with Parks Canada in the development of a draft Memorandum of Understanding. I tabled it 4 days before my retirement. Groundbreaking with national implications. I am well into writing a book on the park.

Chair, Markham District Energy Inc. CEO Bruce Ander was our leader. As Chair, I helped grow a small, very capital intensive municipal corporation into one which delivers dividends and other enterprise benefits to the city. My view? The best way to keep property taxes down is to develop other sources of income for the municipality. It took time but MDEI now reduces Markham's property taxes by about 4 or so % annually. Near the end of my watch, and in conjunction with York Region, MDEI commenced development of the largest renewable energy-from-waste system in North America.

Vice Chair, TRCA. One of the difficulties housing developers and the public have with government is red tape and the time it takes for decision making. I worked on both of these while on the board with significant success. Most importantly, we protected a great deal of land during my time at the TRCA to the benefit of future residents and the environment.

Questions for Jack:

Why did you retire in 2022? It was time for me to run for Mayor but I knew I couldn't beat Frank; he's been a good Mayor for Markham. Today, I am hoping to return for another term at Regional Councillor because there are many important programs to complete, especially in the areas of traffic, keeping taxes down, community safety, and the environment.

How well do you know Markham and York Council and staff? I know all 21 current members and had good working relations with them previously. Same for Markham's current 13. I anticipate that many of them will be returning. I want to start, if elected, at full speed. As to the staff, I have worked with many of them including the CAOs. My motto is: treat the staff with respect and you'll get the same back.

How do you think Markham and York should deal with higher levels of government? Both Markham and York are creatures of the province; having excellent relations with Ontario is the best way to access provincial resources when financial programs new and old come open. Being well prepared for provincial and federal opportunities is key. I anticipate the province moving ahead on Regional Government reform in the next term and I understand its operations well. Markham Council is elected to serve all residents, and that is what I try to do.

Since 2022, what have you been working on? I have written four discussion papers on topics of importance to Markham and York and submitted them to those responsible. They are on my website:

Urging Transport Canada's former Pickering Airport Lands be transferred to Rouge National Urban Park (Apr. 2026)

Comments to ALTO high speed rail suggesting a station in Markham (Feb. 2026)

Comments on the Provincial EA to Widen Highway 7 from east Markham to Pickering suggesting a bypass of Locust Hill (Dec. 2025)

Ten Ideas on Housing (Nov.2025). This paper was sent to the Prime Minister and local MPs; it conveyed ten practical ideas on impacting the housing crisis. I am revising this one with a new section on how municipalities with strong financial resources, and the help of the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Ottawa can self-finance more community housing.

Do you have any hobbies? Yes, I collect Canadian and Newfoundland stamps and am the national chair of the First Day Cover Study Group for the British North America Philatelic Society. I am on the executive of the Markham Stamp Club as well as an avid reader of mysteries and thrillers which I review on "Goodreads." Just added my 945th recently! Lastly, if my wife Krista Chiu and I can't be found in Markham, you should check up north in vacation country or we may be visiting relatives on our English or Chines side in British Columbia.

Thank you. Jack Heath, Markham, 416-464-5517, jackheath@rogers.com