

Soknacki to pull out of Toronto mayoral race

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Candidate David Soknacki is pulling out of the Toronto mayoral race, according to a statement issued Tuesday night.

"While my support is growing, it simply is not growing quickly enough to make any positive difference to the outcome on election day," the statement reads.

"Tomorrow afternoon, I have arranged for a staffer to withdraw my name from the ballot for the 2014 mayoral race."

A recent poll conducted by Nanos Research had Soknacki in a distant fourth place with three per cent support.

The telephone poll of 1,000 Torontonians, conducted between Aug. 27 and Aug. 31, found that 42 per cent of decided voters favoured John Tory, compared to 28 per cent for Rob Ford and 26 per cent for Olivia Chow.

Approximately 17 per cent of respondents were undecided.

In the statement, he thanked his supporters for their "loyal and strong support" over the last eight months.

"Ours has been one of the most positive, the most idea-driven and the most idealistic Toronto mayoral campaigns in recent memory," Soknacki said.

"We have more volunteers, better morale and more donors than ever – but I also feel that asking my supporters to sacrifice more time, more energy and more commitment under these circumstances just isn't right, especially when we have succeeded in making such a strong statement on so many fronts already."

Rival candidates react to announcement

Fellow mayoral candidates addressed Soknacki's decision following a debate held Tuesday night.

"Obviously it's a very difficult personal decision for him to have made, and a difficult political decision," John Tory said.

"But I want you to know I respect this man – and I've told him that personally. I'm regretful that he's pulled out, because he's a very thoughtful person, and made a thoughtful contribution to the debates."

Olivia Chow said she would miss Soknacki on the campaign.

"He added civility, he added intelligence to the debate," she said.

Describing the campaign trail as a "tough grind," Mayor Rob Ford wished Soknacki well.

"I want to thank (him)," he said. "I've known him for a long time, and I just wish him the best."

Earlier Tuesday, fellow mayoral candidate Sarah Thomson also announced that she was dropping out of the race to run for a council seat in the city's Trinity-Spadina ward.

Soknacki will be speaking with the media at city hall at 1 p.m. Wednesday about his decision, the statement concludes.

PHOTOS



Mayoral candidate David Soknacki speaks to reporters after registering for the 2014 municipal election at city hall on Monday, Jan. 6, 2014.

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