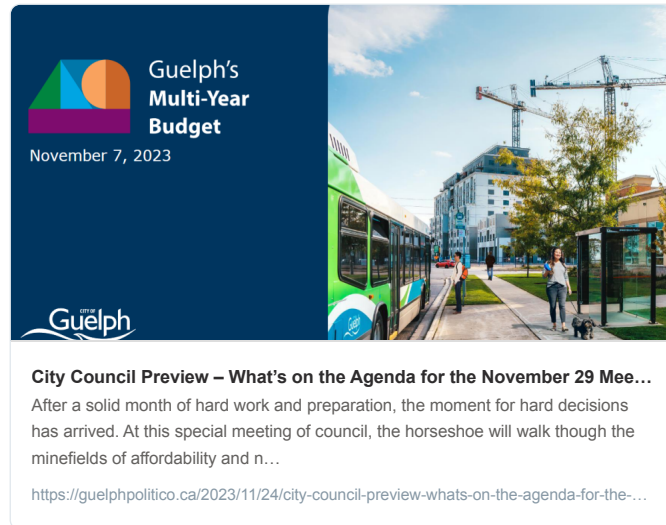




**Adam A. Donaldson** @adamadonaldson

Nov 29, 2023 · 76 tweets · [adamadonaldson/status/1729862483878555941](https://twitter.com/adamadonaldson/status/1729862483878555941)

You know what day it is!



Mayor Guthrie has called the meeting to order.

First, council will move in-camera:

### 2.3 10C/Farmers Market Contractual Obligations

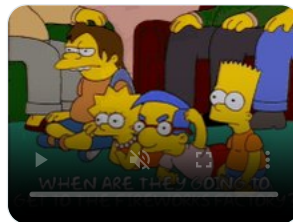
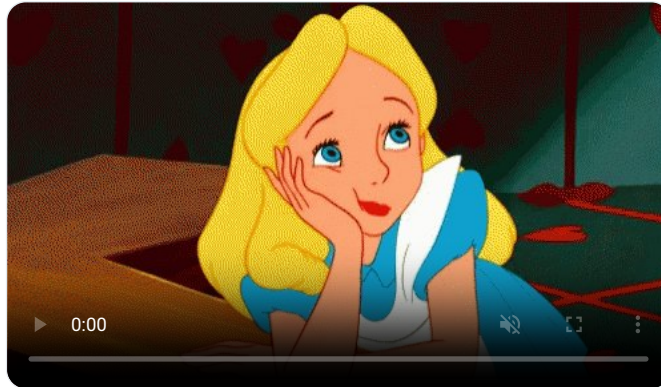
Section 239(2) (f) and (k) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose and a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board.

[Closed Meeting Summary](#)

The motion to go into closed is approved!



Quick update: Council is still in closed session. The open session was supposed to start at 9:30 but we seem to be in extra innings in-camera.



Budget Day, end of hour one:

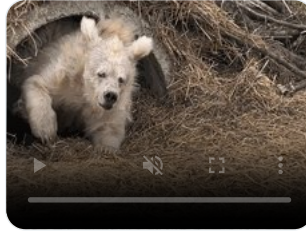
Still waiting for end of closed session.



Update:



Looks like council is emerging...



Mayor Guthrie thanks everyone, and offers a summery. They received information and gave direction to staff.

Now on with the show and all the other opening ceremony things. National anthem, silent reflection, territorial acknowledgement...

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof? Nope.

Administrative motions!

First: That Section 4.9 (a) of the City of Guelph Procedure Bylaw be suspended to permit correspondence submitted by November 24, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. to be received and added to the public record in relation to item 6 Guelph's 2024-2027 Mutli-Year Budget.

Guthrie says that we should honour the fact that the public sent letters after delegation night about budget matters. And the motion is approved unanimously.

Next, some impacts on the original motion for the 2024, reduction in social services ask from Wellington County and change in assessment growth to get 10.32 pr cent down to 9.9 per cent starting point.

Both motions passed unanimously:

#### **Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**



1. That Council amend Guelph's 2024 – 2027 operating budget by reducing 2024 by \$1,005,300 for the County of Wellington's revised budget submission relating to the housing and homelessness plan.

#### **Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**



1. That Council amend Guelph's 2024-2027 operating budget by reducing 2024 by \$236,706 to reflect the impact of additional assessment growth revenue.

Moving on now to councillors' amendments. We start with Goller: Addition to budget for 2024 and 2025 for physician recruitment strategy. Gibson seconds:

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
Councillor Goller



1. That Council amend Guelph's 2024-2027 operating budget by increasing 2024, one-time, by \$43,335 and increasing 2025, one-time by \$43,335, to provide a grant to the Guelph-Wellington Ontario Health Team for physician recruitment, subject to the receipt of the corresponding contributions for this initiative from the County of Wellington, and Guelph Chamber of Commerce, funded through the tax levy.

Gibson confirms that this is a two year impact to the base budget. GM Finance Baker concurs.

O'Rourke proposes an amendment to fund from Tax Operating Contingency Reserve, which Goller seconds. The amendment is approved, so is the main motion.

Next Goller motion to increase payment to increase allocation to affordable housing reserve. Klassen seconds.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
Councillor Goller



1. That Council amend Guelph's 2024-2027 operating budget by increasing 2024 by \$1,000,000 for the Affordable Housing Reserve (increase from 500k to \$1.5M) funded by the Tax Base.

Goller says that with police budget and paramedics budgets increasing it requires more investment in affordable housing. Motion fails 3-10 with Caton, Goller and Klassen voting in favour.

It seems we have a phantom motion. Guthrie trying to figure out who has the next one his pile.

Nevermind. Moving on to O'Rourke motion for two value-for-money reviews every year through the efficiency and innovation reserve. Allt seconds.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
Councillor O'Rourke



1. That Council amend the 2024 - 2027 operating budget by increasing each of 2024 to 2027 by \$50,000 for the completion of at least two value-for-money reviews each year funded by the efficiency, innovation and opportunity reserve fund (#351); AND that staff be directed to bring a proposed terms of reference to the audit committee no later than Q1 2024.




Guthrie asks staff about accountability grants from the Province. Baker says the audit and accountability fund is for smaller municipalities though Guelph has gotten some funds in the past. This is a good motion in case ONgov comes up short.

Motion approved unanimously.

Guthrie says that we're now entering the realm of reductions and has a last call for further additions. Clerk O'Brien says they've organised it all be calendar year, council can still make motions as they see fit. This is additions and subtractions by year.

Gibson proposal to reduce by phasing in new positions. O'Rourke seconds.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
**Councillor Gibson**



1. That Council amend Guelph's 2024-2027 operating budget by amending the following net amounts (compensation reduction offset by reduction in revenues and reserve transfers) to reflect a phased-in approach of budgeting 50 per cent of permanent staffing resources in year one and the remaining 50 per cent in the second year:


- 2024 decrease of \$2,413,217
- 2025 increase of \$60,493
- 2026 decrease of \$2,083,350
- 2027 increase of \$1,806,113
- 2028 increase of \$2,972,050

Gibson says this is his big contribution of the day, a way to cushion things for homeowners and businesses. CAO Stewart says that staff is comfortable with this, it keeps moving programs forward. O'Rourke says this sends message to community that they're watching bottom line.

Motion passes unanimously.

Next Gibson motion, phasing in of the Library staff increases. Billings seconds. Gibson says this is not personal, it's never personal, just want to phase in growth in a manageable way.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
**Councillor Gibson**



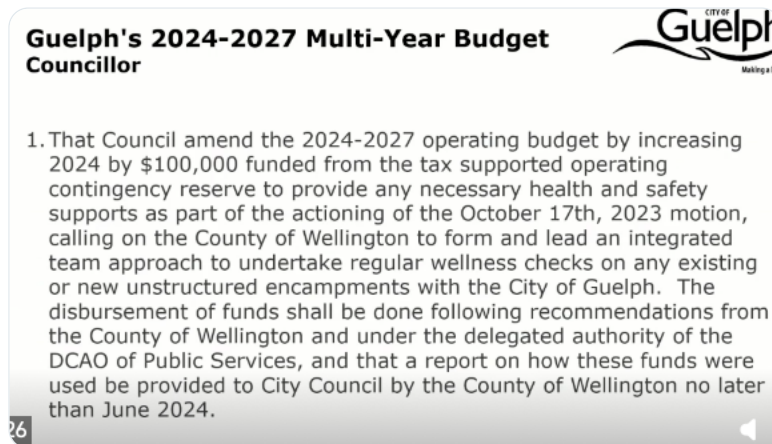
1. That Council amend Guelph's 2024-2027 operating budget by reducing the 2024 Library budget by \$257,111 and increasing the 2025 Library budget by \$257,111. Furthermore, the 2026 Library budget be reduced by \$331,200 and 2027 increased by \$331,200 as a result of the City phase in of corporate building maintenance positions for the new Library.

Downer asks about how this affects the City's budget in regards to the first motion. Staff says it will reduce the overall City's budget. Downer says that they were told on the budget board that it was a wash with the City's other phase in though...

Baker says that the phase in on the City side is staying the same as proposed, it's a reduction one year. Gibson says he would like to give the library the board the direction to phase in the costs over two years. Maybe be here next year doing some thing. One year request 2 phase

Caron, Allt, Downer, Klassen vote against the motion, but it passes 9-4.

Back to additions for a minute. Guthrie presents this motion because it concerns social services. Downer and Goller move it.



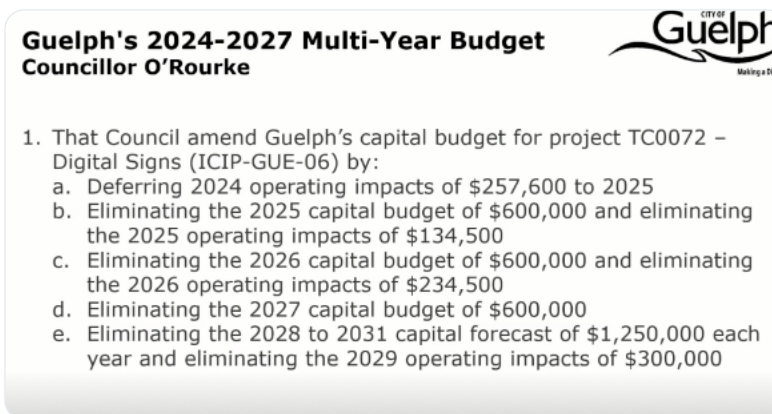
This ties to direction from the housing meeting on Oct 17. There may be unexpected costs as the County begins their review of encampments and their needs.

Allt asks if this is work that Sanguen and other groups are doing. DCAO Clack-Bush says that there's not a co-ordinated approach right now, which is what the City is asking the County and Public Health to do. This funding will give an infusion for someplace to start.

First meeting of the group through the County is on Tuesday. Clack-Bush says she's talked to Dr. Tenenbaum at Public Health and they have been invited to meeting on Tuesday.

Motion is approved unanimously.

O'Rourke motion, seconded by Gibson. This motion will let 2023 digital signs project move forward for major hubs, but it will stop the 100 additional stops.



O'Rourke says that once the signs are installed then the City's on the hook for replacing them and there are significant operating costs. ICIP funding can go to other places for transit.

Allt asks for comment from Transit staff. Courtney McDonald says there are risks. Digital signs based on use of stop \*and\* the type of customers using stops (affordable pass holders, "Welcome to Guelph", and seniors). Also risk to strategic goals.

Allt asks if council can get a report about the trends and impact. McDonald says they can do that, especially with RFP going out in the new year.

Gibson thanks staff for giving council an eyes wide open look at the implications. Reinforce that this is not the cutting of a service but delaying an enhancement. Best to good is acceptable.


O'Rourke notes that this is not proceed with any digital signs beyond the original 50. We're putting \$500 million into transit over 10 years (when you include electrification) this is one small part that they're cancelling.

Caton proposes an amendment to move forward with the top 50 stops for volume and accessibility needs. Guthrie says the signs are a "nice to have", but those are expensive will support the Top 50.

Original motion passes with Klassen, Downer, Allt, Caton and Caron voting against.

Billings amendment to reduce council training by about \$50k. Gibson seconds. Allt says he thinks the motion is incomplete w/o specifics.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
**Councillor Billings**



1. That Council amend the 2024-2027 operating budget by reducing 2024 by \$49,500 for budget request 1351 Mayor and Council training.

Gibson says he doesn't think council has ever come close to exceeding the training budget, asks for clarification. Baker says the current level will stay the same per 2023, council asked for an increase.

Guthrie says he won't support. The amount for conferences and training is going up, and the intent here is to make sure that they don't have to keep coming back for changes. It is imperative that council has training, makes better leaders especially with rapid pace of change.

O'Rourke asks about an amendment to cut by half acknowledging that there is a place for education. Billings says that this was meant to cover the cost for council to do courses, which is not something that council had ever done before, but has not issue with amendment.

O'Rourke/Gibson move to amend to \$25k for the first year. Guthrie says he's fine meeting in the middle. Allt says he will reluctantly support but asks why the \$49.5k? Baker says it was an increase in allotment to each Cllr. About \$2k/cllr.

O'Rourke amendment approved 9-4.

Main motion approved 9-4 (Allt, Klassen, Goller, and Caron on both).

Billings motion: Fund \$750k for the levy for the hospital from reserves.



**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget  
Councillor Billings**



1. That Council amend the 2024-2027 operating budget by transferring \$750,000 of funding from the tax rate contingency reserve to fund the 2024 installment to the Guelph General Hospital.

Goller says he has a motion to delay the levy for 2024. He had convos with the hospital that they're okay with that. Gibson seconds. Pushes levy out to 2027.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget  
Councillor Goller**



1. That Council amend the 2024-2027 operating budget by reducing 2024 by \$750,000 for the removal of plan request 001185 Guelph General Hospital Transfer, and increasing the 2025 operating budget by \$750,000 for the addition of plan request 001185 Guelph General Hospital Transfer, resulting in the final three payments to the hospital in 2025 to 2027.

Caron says this is new info, and recognises that we're trying to get the budget down this year, but are we piling onto 2025? CAO Stewart says they checked in with Hospital CEO Walton and that they're comfortable taking the year off.

Caron says that "live with" is not necessarily an endorsement. Allt asks if this means it's \$1.5 million in 2025? Allt says that he believes that this is still bound to be complete by 2027. Allt says this means we're not taking it out of the multiyear budget.

Gibson asks if the hospital has plans to build in 2027. Stewart says that he doesn't know their intentions, just that the can live with the deferral this year. Gibson says he needs some more info about the timeline, if we defer this year we should expand to '28.

Guthrie says he would rather do this Billings' way, which is what council has done for the last three years. O'Rourke notes that the levy increase goes down in '27 because eat levy ends. Motion defer fails 2-11 (Goller and Chew in favour).

Back to Billings motion, seconded by Gibson.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget  
Councillor Billings**



1. That Council amend the 2024-2027 operating budget by transferring \$750,000 of funding from the tax rate contingency reserve to fund the 2024 installment to the Guelph General Hospital.

Allt asks about use of reserves. Baker says her advice about caution hasn't changed, but the money is there to cover the levy, not sure about total impact. Allt says that caution tells him

we're not in a healthy place with reserves. Can't support.

Guthrie notes that they're technically taking money of the reserve today, but what of surplus?

Baker says they're expect \$3-\$4.5 mn surplus and they already took into account about \$2 million in developing budget.

Billings motion passes 10-3 with Goller, Caron and Allt against.

Caton motion: \$10k from reserve to look at financial needs application for low income people. Caton says with big increase, a lot of people are at risk and it's tough to pay a fine when you're already struggling to pay. Goal is to keep people housed too.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
**Councillor Caton**



1. That an amount up to \$10,000 be allocated from the Tax Operating Contingency Reserve to fund further investigation of resources required, and costs associated with the creation of a financial needs-based application program for waived penalties and the suspension of interest on unpaid amounts of property taxes to reduce burdens on low-income homeowners during 2024-2027 multiyear budget cycle and to report back to council prior to the end of Q2 of 2024.

Allt says that they could be creating more of a problem people with this economic climate and this is a good direction. Why \$10k? Baker says they will need a little consulting help. She's not sure where else is doing this.

Billings asks if the City didn't already do something similar than this during COVID, and wasn't the pick up low? Baker say both of things are true and Guelph, as a city, has a low rate of arrears.

Guthrie says even if Guelph is a leader in this then so be it. The motion passes unanimously.

25 minutes to break time, Guthrie says he's going to bring forward some "bank shots".

Another O'Rourke motion: To amend the budget by reducing \$400k to the affordable housing reserve. She notes staff recommended eliminating that reserve b/c of what the City had to do for exemptions. They still have flexibility.

**Guelph's 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget**  
**Councillor O'Rourke**



1. That Council amend Guelph's 2024-2027 operating budget by reducing 2024 by \$400,000 for the transfer to the Affordable Housing Reserve #119.

Billings asks if there's any projects coming? Stewart says that he's not aware of any.

Goller says this is a small budget live already, it's hard to get money from other sources without have something to leverage. There will be no ask for the remaining \$100k.

Downer agrees with that, but relying on one-time funding from contingency is not something council can rely on. Housing is the number one issue in the community and should keep it in there. Allt says this is bad optics, though he hesitates to cover something ONgov should pay for.

Allt says he doesn't want council to be seen as being a Grinch with Christmas coming, and O'Rourke takes exception to that. This is a relatively new reserve and been used the last two years for Home for Good. Can we get along without undermining intentions? Allt says sorry.

Gibson says again it's never personal. Says this is a logical reaction to Bill 23, which flattens the floor and doesn't put impact on local gov to use the reserve to pick winners and losers. He'd rather reduce calls across the board. This is a logical reduction.

Guthrie says he will support the motion, adding that he will give someone a million dollars when ever a plan comes forward. They will figure how to do it, but it's not wise to put money in account without a plan.

Klassen, Goller, Downer, Allt, Caron, and Caton vote against, but it passes 7-6.

That brings us to lunch break, and Guthrie notes that they've moved faster than he thought. He wishes everyone a good lunch. Back at 12:30 pm!



@threadreaderapp unroll please!

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