

Ohmygod, we're back again! The last council meeting of the year starts in 10 minutes! This is what's coming up:



Mayor Guthrie has called the meeting to order.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof? Nope!

Minutes of the open Council Meetings held November 13, 19, 26 and 27, 2024, and the Committee of the Whole meeting held November 5, 2024 confirmed!

One item on the consent agenda.

Caron/Downer move and its approved!

3.1 2024 Third Quarter Budget Monitoring Report, 2024-504 Recommendation: That the funding adjustments detailed in Table 4 of Attachement-2 of the 2024 Third Quarter Budget Monitoring Report dated December 4, 2024, be approved. That a budget adjustment of \$448 thousand for PM0001 Paramedics Facility Renewal, be approved.

First item up, Impact from Closure of Guelph Consumption and Treatment Services Site. Cllr Allt asked to extract this report, which was covered at the October Joint Social Services Meeting.

Allt says it's important for council to reaffirms its commitment to the CTS like they did unanimously years ago. By all reports, it's been successful, and it's worth noting that CTS do not dampen consumption, only more money for mental health and addiction can do that.

Allt says ending the CTS is like putting someone in the boxing ring with one arm tied behind their back. We need to embrace evidence-based decision making, like with HIV and COVID.

Toronto Board of Health has moved to ignore the ONgov and continue with their CTSes. Allt backs the call for the value for money audits to prove the efficacy of CTSes. The risk of losing this is that the entire city will become an unsafe CTS and that costs and workloads will be increased for social workers, paramedics and healthcare workers.

Allt says we need to make sure we're doing our damnedest to make sure opioid crisis is being dealt with responsibly.

First delegate on this is Brad Evoy, E.D. of the Disability Justice Network of Ontario. He says its important to continue the board support for the CTS, and the people who depend on it are being threaten to appearse some in business and "nimby crowds", but it won't last.

Evoy says the clients of the CTS will be put at higher risks, and note that no one has every died at a CTS. People tend to die alone when they overdose. on forced treatment, Evoy compares that to the asylum system that routinely abused disabled peoples.

Next, Amelia Meister. She says a friend of her's died of drug poisoning on Nov 8 and that wouldn't have happened without access to CTS. People don't fall into addiction by choice, it's because life is so hard for them they get pushed that way.

She wants council to understand that people who use drugs are people, and many of them want to get sober but lack the means or the opportunities to do that. She also reminds council that there are tonnes of safe consumption sites downtown called "bars."

Sarah Bayliss is not hear because they're ill, so Mars is going to read the delegation. Bayliss (thru Mars) thanks Allt, and says they feel speechless. Closing the CTS is an act of social murder, and the "War of Drugs" is ineffective. Can't address drugs without other factors.

Bayliss says that council is discussing this problem like it's a far away notion, but it's happening just outside the building and so many are starring down the barrel of a gun. Only 1 cllr was at a memorial for 6 ppl that died, and no one helping the people in SGS pack up.

Next is Melissa Kwiatkowski, Guelph Community Health Centre. She says that the AG report makes it clear the full negative impact of these closures. Guelph's CTS reverse 3,011 overdoes and only a dozen required a trip to the hospital.

She also notes that 20% made a different choice after they had their drugs tested at the CTS, they either took less or didn't use that time at all. U.S. study found that 76% of people using a CTS would have used in public, so it actually helps drug use in public.

Kwiatkowski adds that the HART Hubs is a good addition, but it is *not* a replacement for the CTS. Need a full compliment of options.

Klassen asks if Kwiatkowski has connected with community partners about consequences of the closure. Kwiatkowski says its happened at WGDS, and some at OHT. She was on call yesterday with GGH, Paramedics and others to mitigate efforts in prep.

Kwiatkowski says they're making sure that the community is equipped to deal with the crisis when it comes because it will now be in their court.

O'Rourke asks about exception of what the HART Hubs can do, will it be open in time for closure of CTS? Kwiatkowski says timelines not in their control, the app for G/W has been

submitted in Oct, but they haven't heard back. Timelines depend on approval and funding. Not So Fun Fact: The ONgov has demanded the closure of the CTS on April 1.

Kwiatkowski says that there will be wrap around supports, plus crisis care at the G/W Hub, but what's it's taking aware is the continuum of care: No CTS, no drug testing, no safe supply. It's like taking away surgery and only offering drugs for heart surgery.

Kwiatkowski says they need the resources of the HART Hub, *and* CTS services because for some people that's the only doorway to treatment.

Richardson asks if there's any chance of moving the CTS? Kwiatkowski says this was never about proximity because they were not given the option of moving.

Mars is back for their delegation! The closure of the CTS is heavy on their heart because it will lead to more deaths, and its important to note that it doesn't address the key cause for people taking substances which is poverty and despair.

Lastly, we've got Jean Hopkins, manager of the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy. She agrees with the personal impacts already discussed, 62 people died in GW last year and there's been 41 already this year, which is a number that will grow as more data becomes available.

Hopkins notes that the substance use landscape is changing rapidly. In just the last week: ONgov pushed through legislation, AG report has proved CTSes work, and call for audit. Now they have to prepare for strain on healthcare system, incl wound care which the CTS gives.

Hopkins says that CTS is a place people can come to feel seen and accepted, which is the first step in building trust and a relationship that can get people help.

Allt moves his recommendations, Goller seconds:

The following motions have been provided by Councillor Allt:

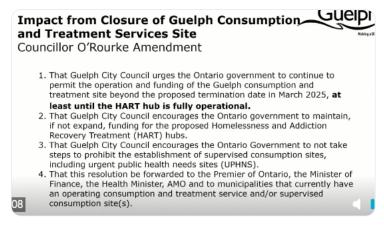
- That Guelph City Council urges the Ontario government to continue to permit the operation and funding of the Guelph consumption and treatment site beyond the proposed termination date in March 2025.
- That Guelph City Council encourages the Ontario government to maintain, if not expand, funding for the proposed Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) hubs.
- That Guelph City Council encourages the Ontario Government to not take steps to prohibit the establishment of supervised consumption sites, including urgent public health needs sites (UPHNS).
- That this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Finance, the Health Minister, AMO and to municipalities that currently have an operating consumption and treatment service and/or supervised consumption site(s).

Just a note, it looks like Councillors Gibson and Chew are not here.

Guthrie says that staff have made it known that these are political motions, statements from council. So may not be a lot of insight to be gained.

Still, Klassen asks about the \$500k put aside for Paramedic Services, have their been discussions with Hospitals about monitoring? DCAO Clack-Bush says those discussions are happening, but they put aside that money b/c of the unknown unknowns, but PSGW will always respond to call

O'Rourke asks for an amendment to clause #1 "at least unto the HART Hub is full operational..." Richardson seconds.



Allt says he must vote against this because it assumes that the HART Hub will fill the void, and what he's heard is that this is a different type of service. Busuttil agrees saying what she's heard is that there's a continuum of car, and the HART Hub doesn't fill it.

O'Rourke notes that clause #3 does ask to keep the CTS open, she's merely trying to address the gap. Downer says the gap is endless already, and the HART Hub does not replicate CTS services.

O'Rourke amendment fails 4-7 (Guthrie, Richardson, Billings, O'Rourke in favour).

Allt says that this motion is about safety. He's concerned that CTS is going to go underground. He's also worried about burnout, we're seeing it already with front line workers.

Votes separated.

#1 - 9-2 (Guthrie Richardson against)

#2 - 11-0

#3 - 7-4 (Guthrie, Richardson, Billings and O'Rourke)

#4 - 11-0

The following motions have been provided by Councillor Allt:

- That Guelph City Council urges the Ontario government to continue to permit the operation and funding of the Guelph consumption and treatment site beyond the proposed termination date in March 2025.
- That Guelph City Council encourages the Ontario government to maintain, if not expand, funding for the proposed Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) hubs.
- That Guelph City Council encourages the Ontario Government to not take steps to prohibit the establishment of supervised consumption sites, including urgent public health needs sites (UPHNS).
- That this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Finance, the Health Minister, AMO and to municipalities that currently have an operating consumption and treatment service and/or supervised consumption site(s).

Next, In Support of Charter Rights and Freedoms. Cllr Caton is moving these recommendations, a response to some OBCM looking to have use of notwithstanding clause to clear encampments.

The following motions have been provided by Councillor Caton:

- That Guelph City Council opposes the use of the Notwithstanding Clause as requested by a collection of Ontario Mayors, to circumvent the courts ability to rule on Charter Rights on the subject of encampment relocations due to municipal bylaws throughout Ontario.
- Further, Council opposes the use of force in involuntary treatment of people with substance use disorders or mental illness who are protected under disability legislation, outside of the existing process.
- That a letter be sent to AMO, OBCM, and the 12 municipalities included in the 13 mayor request letter for information regarding Guelph Council's opposition.

Caton says that this has been phrased as a tool, but it's like using a nuclear missile to dig a hole. St Thomas Mayor Joe Preston has apparently withdrawn his support for the matter.

Evoy is back as first delegate here. He says every use of the NSC is a direct threat to everyone, especially the disabled, who make up a big portion of the homeless population.

Post about Preston's renege on the notwithstanding clause:



Evoy says that it's pretty clear that any use of the NSC is to further council's efforts to govern, but is intentionally designed to undermine council and threaten the lives of all citizens. What do you value more: rights for all or comfort of NIMBYs and business owners.

Caton asks Evoy about overlap in use of MAID and involuntary treatment. Evoy says disabled people are being forced into a vice, notes the forced treatment is like the asylum system and a way that MAID is being incentivised as an option for disable ppl struggling.

Meister is back at number two, and she's concerned about the degradation of democratic rights: Strong Mayor powers and now request to use NSC. A vote against this motion is a vote against the rights of all citizens in Guelph. Who will get attacked next?

Kate Nixon from Your Downtown Guelph Friends is next. She says she will never forget the horror of finding a man dead from overdose, or another time she saw a man forcefully taken into custody by police. Too many have been lost far too early & far too young. Its cost of inaction.

Nixon: Encampments are not a choice, but a reaction to systemic failures. Using NSC does nothing to reduce causes, but criminalises survival and undermines what little security people already have. This sends a chilling message that human rights can be disregarded.

Diana Chan McNally from The Shift is next. She says this motion is necessary because Guthrie is one of 15 out of 444 to sign onto a letter demanded impacts for all of Ontario, and the request made with little thought to impacts, or through democratic processes.

She says Guthrie did not engage with council or the public, and members of council should be consulted b/c the City's logo ended up on a document endorsing action whether they agreed with the intent or not.

The homelessness crisis is happening *because* of inadequate social policy at the ONgov, and there's been minimum attention on the issue until recently, and funding is struggling to keep up with need based on historical factors.

She gets the frustration, cities have been saddled with burden while hands have been tied, and violating people's rights won't solve that. There's no where for people go to, and having a housing does not predicate one's status for human rights.

Anna McGregor from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (and Guelph resident) is next. She says that while the ONgov has been a little softer in their commitment lately, they're still prioritising criminalising homelessness and not homes.

She notes that the mayor's own motion about Solve the Crisis campaign acknowledges the provincial shortfall. Encampments are a system problem and not a person problem. She also says that there's a lot of good work in Guelph, with 76% reduction in youth homelessness.

McGregor says housing is not a reward, it's a right, and notes again that Guelph has been doing really great work and that just last year they adopting a Housing First policy. She doesn't want to see the city take a step back.

Next up is Morgan Dandie. When she heard Guthrie had signed on to using the NSC, she felt like it was one more nail in the coffin because she's been working through hardships since 2019.

Dandie notes that the NSC was put in the constitution b/c of fear that courts would interpret certain laws the wrong way. It was never intended to be used in a manner that's being proposed.

She can't stay in a shelter b/c of her support dog, asks council to understand she could be affected

Mars Russell is back! They say ditto to a lot of what's been said and thanks everyone that spoke up. Also wants to recognise that they've heard these topics discussed in chambers many times, things get repeated, but they hope it's being heard.

That seems to be the end of the list, so Caton formally moves their recommendations and Allt seconds.

The following motions have been provided by Councillor Caton:

- That Guelph City Council opposes the use of the Notwithstanding Clause as requested by a collection of Ontario Mayors, to circumvent the courts ability to rule on Charter Rights on the subject of encampment relocations due to municipal bylaws throughout Ontario.
- Further, Council opposes the use of force in involuntary treatment of people with substance use disorders or mental illness who are protected under disability legislation, outside of the existing process.
- That a letter be sent to AMO, OBCM, and the 12 municipalities included in the 13 mayor request letter for information regarding Guelph Council's opposition.

Richardson asks about "outside the existing process". Caton says there is a process right now for holds to make sure a patient is not a threat to themselves and others via medical professionals, and some are trying to expand that more generally to anyone with substance use.

Allt says he has real concerns with using the NSC at all, and they need to understand it's point was to bring Quebec into the Charter to enshrine cultural rights. No one who crafted the Charter intended its use this way.

Allt says they can't let the ONgov off the hook by approving their use of the HSC, can't just make some people illegal.

Downer joins Goller asking to split the motions. Not sure about supporting clause #2 and it seems like there are some positive outcomes through involuntary commitment in her reading but doesn't know enough. Respects Caton, but not sure anyone is an expert.

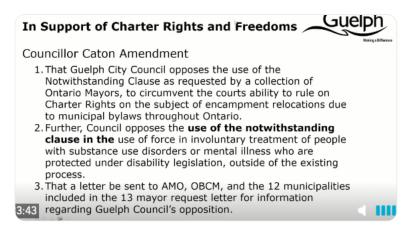
Caton says that this is about the notwithstanding clause, but Guthrie says that's not the wording in the motion. Downer adds that they didn't hear from any medical professionals on #2.

Caron says she intends to support all three, and recalls feelings of shock and disappointment when Guthrie signed on to the letter using the CoG logo. She respects that Guthrie put that forward for his own reasons, encourages Guthrie (no motion) to withdraw support.

O'Rourke says undermining the Constitution is not the answer and moving people around like a shell game is not the answer. ONgov has increased spending on homelessness 80% and lowers spending on community housing 70%.

She agrees with Downer about clause #2 and would like abstain from the motion because she's not in a position to make a conclusion about that.

Caton proposes an amendment to #2, saying their intent was to oppose the use of NSC for involuntary treatment. Allt seconds.



Downer asks if that was part of the mayors' intent in the letter, to use the NSC to force treatment? It seems like according to this article:

https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-big-city-mayors-notwithstanding-clause-encampments-1.7370210

In the letter, the mayors ask the provincial government to do the following:

- Become an intervenor in any court case that restricts the ability of municipalities to regulate
 and prohibit encampments, following the principle endorsed by the U.S. Supreme Court that
 courts should not be dictating government policy on homelessness.
- Strengthen the system of mandatory community-based and residential mental health care and to expand service to treat those who have severe addictions.
- Implement a drug and diversion court system across the province and ensure there are necessary resources to allow a focus on rehabilitation as opposed to incarceration.
- Amend the Trespass to Property Act to include a separate provision for "repetitive acts of trespass," the penalty for which should include incarceration, and to allow a police officer to arrest a person who commits repetitive acts of trespass after being told by police not to engage in such activity. These amendments should also include an option for referral to a diversion court.
- Enact legislation providing guidance on the "open and public" use of drugs being prohibited in the same way that open consumption of alcohol is banned.

Caton withdraws her amendment and clause #2.

Caton says that the call out from Premier Ford was bait because the policies from the ONgov, the underfunding social services, is the cause of the crisis worsening, and this gives the ONgov permission to not solve the crisis (foreshadowing). Council needs to stand up for rights

Guthrie says he loves this moment because freedom of speech is important. He believes that if an encampment takes over a playground, they should be able to move it, or a splash pad or the Square. That's why he supports - if necessary - the use of NSC.

Guthrie: Our public space should be free of *some* of the issues that come with encampments. But he will support the will of council and he will maintain his personal opinion and never back away from community spaces safe and maintain public order.

Guthrie: Finally, we don't know what ONgov is going to table or if its going to work. He's thankful they've walked back pre-emptive use of NSC, but if it gets to the point where we

have encampments taking over playgrounds, even with PSUB, pleased for ONgov support as intervener.

Guthrie says the letter has moved the dial, and if there's praise warranted in the legislation, then the mayors who signed that letter should be thanked.

#1 - 8-3 (Guthrie, Richardson, and Billings against)

#2 - pulled by mover.

#3 - 11-0

The following motions have been provided by Councillor Caton:

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- Further, Council opposes the use of force in involuntary treatment of people with substance use disorders or mental illness who are protected under disability legislation, outside of the existing process.
- That a letter be sent to AMO, OBCM, and the 12 municipalities included in the 13 mayor request letter for information regarding Guelph Council's opposition.

And finally, Council Motion in Support of Solve the Crisis Campaign. Guthrie says 200 municipalities have already endorsed this. Klassen and Goller will move this for Guelph council:

The following motions have been provided by Mayor Guthrie:

Whereas there is a humanitarian crisis unfolding on the streets in our municipalities, large and small, urban and rural, across Ontario. The time for words is over, we need immediate

action at all levels of government, starting with the Province of Ontario Whereas the homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis continues to grow with 3432 drug related deaths in Ontario in 2023 and over 1400 homeless encampments across Ontario communities in 2023; and

Whereas the province has provided additional funding and supports, such as the recent investment of \$378 million for HART Hubs that includes funding for approximately 375 beds with wraparound supports, it does not adequately address the growing crisis and the financial and social impact on municipalities and regions across the province; and

Whereas municipalities and regions are stepping up and working with community partners to put in place community-specific solutions to address this crisis, but municipalities and regions lack the expertise, capacity, or resources to address these increasingly complex health care and housing issues alone; and

Whereas this is primarily a health issue that falls under provincial jurisdiction and municipalities and regions should not be using the property tax base to fund these programs; and

Whereas there is no provincial lead focused on this crisis leading to unanswered questions that span over a dozen ministries, and a lack of support to manage the increasing needs of those who are unhoused.

Therefore, be it resolved that the City Guelph supports Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) SolvetheCrisis.ca Campaign;

AND calls on the provincial and federal governments to commit to immediate action to solve the humanitarian crisis that Ontario is facing as the numbers of unhoused individuals and those suffering with mental health & addictions grows exponentially:

AND that the province officially makes Homelessness a Health Priority; AND that the province appoints a responsible Minister and Ministry with the appropriate funding and powers as the single point of contact to address the full spectrum of housing needs and equally as important, the mental health, addictions and wrap around supports that must be put resourced and put in place:

AND that the provincial government strike a task force with broad sector representatives including municipalities, regions, healthcare, first responders, community services, the business community and the tourism industry to develop a Made in Ontario Action Plan;

AND that this provincial task force reviews the current programs and policies developed by municipalities, regions and community partners that have proven successful in our communities, as well as programs and policies proposed by various stakeholders, to evaluate their effectiveness, ability to be scaled up, and to ensure that a variety of solutions are available, as there is no one-size-fits-all answer, and can be implemented quickly and effectively to tackle this crisis;

AND that the federal government is included in these conversations; AND that both levels of government provide adequate, sufficient and sustainable funding to ensure that municipalities have the tools and resources to support individuals suffering with mental health and addictions, including unhoused people and those from vulnerable populations that may be disproportionately impacted;

And that this Council calls on the residents of the City of Guelph to join us in appealing to the provincial and federal governments for support by visiting SolvetheCrisis.ca and showing your support;

AND further that a copy of this motion be sent to:

- · The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
- The Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities of Canada
- The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
- The Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
- The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- The Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
- The Honourable Michael Tibollo, Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
- Local MPs
- Local MPPs and
- Ontario's Big City Mayors (solvethecrisis@obcm.ca and info@obcm.ca)

One delegate, and it's Evoy. He says these are good motions, but hope there's more to it than more powers for police and other things. Need firm commitment to increase social assistance rates, more rent control and protection, accessible housing standards, and more.

Evoy hopes that council takes what delegates have said and take up the struggle to reinvest the social safety net in this province.

Guthrie notes that Hamilton endorsed this unanimously as the most recent vote. He says no one has added or amended this, and thinks it's straightforward.

Caton has an amendment.

Caton's amendment removes business community and tourism industry from the action plan motion and replaces it with people with lived experience with homeless and addictions. Allt seconds.

Council Motion in Support of Solve the Crisis Cuelph Campaign

Councillor Caton Amendment

5. AND that the provincial government strike a task force with the broad sector representatives including municipalities, regions, healthcare, first responders, community services, the business-community and the tourism industry and people with living experience of homelessness and substance abuse disorders to develop a Made in Ontario action plan.

Guthrie asks if Caton suggests that Skyline is an inappropriate stakeholder given the fact that they've spent a lot of money to help build supportive housing. Caton says that's not relevant, they should be involved in crafting policy.

Guthrie says that he wants to maintain the integrity of the campaign so far. Downer understands the intend, but taking out businesses is taking out stakeholders. Just approved Affordable Housing Strategy that requires stakeholders. Need everybody at the table.

Downer suggests putting business back in and O'Rourke seconds. Clerk says that's contrary to the motion. The motion will stand or fail.

Busuttil says she hates #5 and #6 anyway, haven't we had enough task forces?

Guthrie notes that there's a paragraph in their demanding that municipalities have the funding and the tools. Busuttil says she agrees with that, but it's the call for another provincial task force she can't truck with.

Allt agrees, he's not a fan of task forces and it seems like another delay matter. But also why limit it to business and tourism? Why not educational institutes? Insurance companies? This is a healthcare and safety crisis not necessarily a business crisis.

Klassen says he know the evidence based solutions, and Guelph has put some of them into action. We know we can do them, and we know that we can do them well. But on the motion, doesn't want to contribute to growing adversarial divide.

O'Rourke says there are important stakeholders, and there are workers that might be vulnerable. Does support the addition of people with lived experience though. Council has supported motions with far less scrutiny than this.

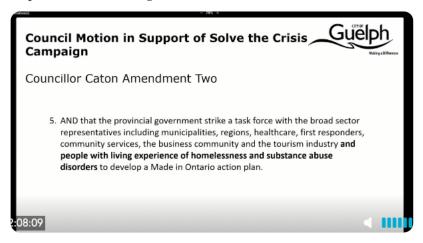
Busuttil asks if they can give these motions to number and separate these motions. They're working on local solutions and what they need is resources. ONgov needs to cough up real tools and funding, immediate action.

Guthrie says he has no problem adding level experience, but the motion does say broad.

Amendment fails 9-3 (Allt, Caton and Caron vote in favour)

Council Motion in Support of Solve the Crisis Campaign Councillor Caton Amendment 5. AND that the provincial government strike a task force with the broad sector representatives including municipalities, regions, healthcare, first responders, community services, the business community and the tourism industry and people with living experience of homelessness and substance abuse disorders to develop a Made in Ontario action plan.

This motion passes 11-1 (Busuttil against).



Vote on #5-6: 10-2 (Allt, Busuttil)

Rest of slate passes unanimously.

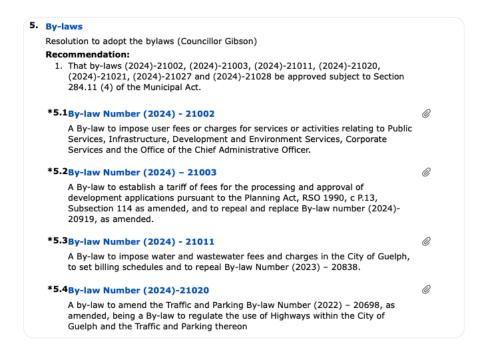
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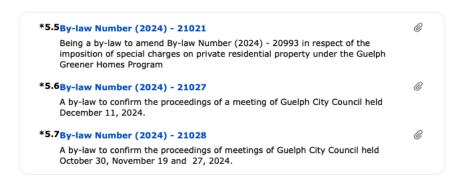
AND that the provincial government strike a task force with broad sector representatives including municipalities, regions, healthcare, first responders, community services, the business community and the tourism industry to develop a Made in Ontario Action Plan;

AND that this provincial task force reviews the current programs and policies developed by municipalities, regions and community partners that have proven successful in our communities, as well as programs and policies proposed by various stakeholders, to evaluate their effectiveness, ability to be scaled up, and to ensure that a variety of solutions are available, as there is no one-size-fits-all answer, and can be implemented quickly and effectively to tackle this crisis;

AND that the federal government is included in these conversations; AND that both levels of government provide adequate, sufficient and sustainable funding to ensure that municipalities have the tools and

Bylaws of the week pass unanimously.





Mayor's announcement: Guthrie wishes everyone a happy holidays and Merry Christmas! Thanks council for another year of "heavy lifting", thanks staff and looks forward to 2025 and whatever's next.

That's a wrap for council business in 2024!



@threadreaderapp unroll please!

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