



As Christmas Approaches, Metalex Showcases Rockglass to Combat Retail Crime

By Tom Reimer

As Christmas approaches, concerns about crime and property security continue to grow. The festive season brings increased shopping, valuable stock, and extended trading hours, creating additional security challenges for retailers and homeowners alike. Residential and commercial property owners are increasingly looking for effective ways to protect their premises, assets, and livelihoods.

For the retail industry, the stakes are particularly high. Businesses displaying valuable merchandise can attract opportunistic criminals, making display cases and shopfronts potential targets for smash-and-grab attacks. Traditional security measures remain essential, but businesses are increasingly recognising the need for stronger physical protection to deter criminals and reduce potential losses.

Metalex will be showcasing Rockglass to the Canadian Jewellers Association (CJA), highlighting an innovative approach to strengthening retail security during this critical period.

Rockglass is designed to make jewellery display cases highly resistant to smash attacks, helping protect valuable merchandise from criminals attempting to gain quick access to stock. By incorporating protective glazing into display cases, retailers can introduce an additional barrier between thieves and the products they are targeting.

However, the benefits of Rockglass extend beyond display cabinets. When installed in suitable windows and doors, Rockglass can also help retailers strengthen vulnerable entry points and reduce the risk of nighttime break-ins. With businesses often closed and unoccupied overnight, reinforced glazing can provide an important additional layer of physical security, making unauthorised entry more difficult.

For retailers, this means the opportunity to protect merchandise both inside display cases and throughout their premises. Combined with alarms, surveillance cameras, access controls, and appropriate security procedures, Rockglass can contribute to a more comprehensive approach to crime prevention.

The need for stronger protection is not limited to jewellery stores. Residential properties face their own challenges as families travel, attend festive celebrations, and leave homes unattended. Securing windows and doors is an important consideration for homeowners seeking to reduce opportunities for intruders.

As criminal methods evolve, security solutions must evolve too. Investing in more resilient glazing can help businesses and homeowners address vulnerabilities before an incident occurs. While no security product can guarantee complete protection against every attempted break-in, strengthening vulnerable areas can make a meaningful difference.

Metalex's presentation to the Canadian Jewellers Association comes at an important time for the industry, offering retailers an opportunity to explore how Rockglass can support their security strategies as the busiest shopping season of the year approaches.

This Christmas, security should be a priority, not an afterthought.

By introducing Rockglass to the CJA, Metalex aims to highlight the importance of stronger display cases, reinforced windows, and more secure doors in protecting valuable assets.

Metalex and Rockglass: helping retailers strengthen security against smash-and-grab attacks and nighttime break-ins this Christmas and beyond.



THE Mr. X Files

By John Mutton

CENTRAL EXCLUSIVE

Karmageddon

THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

Clarington's Rising Taxes and Council Salaries: A Question of Fiscal Accountability

By Mr. 'X' ~ John Mutton, Former Mayor of Clarington

There is a fundamental principle in municipal government: elected officials are entrusted with spending taxpayers' money responsibly, transparently and with a clear understanding of the financial pressures facing the people they represent.

In Clarington, Mayor Adrian Foster's record raises important questions about how municipal taxation and elected-official compensation have evolved during his time in office. The numbers deserve public examination.

Sixteen Budgets and a 70.49% Compounded Increase

According to a compilation of Clarington's published municipal budget increases, the annual increases compounded to approximately 70.49% between 2011 and 2026, covering 16 municipal budgets during Foster's mayoralty.

The municipality's published increases cited in the compilation include 4.06% in 2023, 4.52% in 2024, 5.32% in 2025 and 3.00% in 2026.

These figures describe increases to Clarington's municipal tax levy, not the percentage increase to an individual household's total property tax bill. Regional and education taxes are separate components. Nevertheless, the compounded municipal figure raises a legitimate question: have residents received sufficient value, service improvements and long-term financial benefits from the additional revenue collected?

What Happened to the Mayor's Compensation?

Public compensation records summarized in an earlier remuneration briefing show that Foster's combined disclosed salary increased from \$157,691.53 in 2022 to \$207,232.98 in 2025. That represents an increase of \$49,541.45, or approximately 31.4%, over three years.

It is important to recognize that this figure reflects combined disclosed compensation, rather than a single salary increase approved by Clarington Council.

In June 2023, Clarington Council approved a compensation adjustment designed to offset the federal government's earlier elimination of the one-third tax exemption for municipal elected officials. Municipal staff estimated the financial impact of that adjustment at \$129,136, based on 2023 salaries. The policy was subsequently implemented through By-law 2023-056.

Council's decision had a stated rationale. Other comparable Durham municipalities had already addressed the elimination of the exemption, and Clarington's compensation had fallen behind those municipalities.

But an equally legitimate question remains: should elected officials approve adjustments to their own compensation, or should such decisions be subject to independent review?

Taxpayer Affordability and Municipal Priorities

Clarington has pointed to infrastructure requirements, inflation, growth-related pressures and comparatively low property taxes in explaining its budget decisions. Those considerations deserve recognition. Roads, emergency services, recreation facilities and municipal infrastructure all require sustainable funding.

Yet budget pressures also demand scrutiny of spending priorities, operational efficiencies and the financial consequences of decisions made by Council.

Residents should be able to determine how much additional revenue has been collected, where that money has been spent, and what measurable improvements have resulted. The same standard of transparency should apply to the compensation of elected officials.

Fiscal Responsibility Requires More Than a Balanced Budget

A municipality can adopt a balanced budget while continuing to increase the amount collected from taxpayers.

A balanced budget is a legal and financial requirement. It is not, by itself, evidence that every spending decision represents the best use of public money.

The appropriate questions are whether expenditure growth is sustainable, whether alternatives were properly considered, and whether residents are receiving value for the taxes they pay.

The record of tax increases and compensation decisions provides a factual basis for asking those questions of Mayor Foster and Clarington Council. It does not, on its own, establish that every increase was unnecessary or that every compensation decision was unjustified. Those conclusions require examination of the underlying budgets, services, inflation, infrastructure needs and Council's recorded votes.

Accountability Begins With the Public Record

Residents deserve clear answers about the financial decisions made in their name.

Why were particular tax increases necessary? What spending reductions or efficiencies were considered? What measurable benefits have residents received? And should decisions affecting elected officials' own compensation be made through a more independent process? These are not personal questions. They are questions of public accountability.

After 16 budgets under Mayor Foster, Clarington residents have every reason to examine the cumulative financial record and expect detailed explanations of the decisions behind it.

Fiscal accountability is not simply about how much a municipality collects. It is about demonstrating why the money was needed, how responsibly it was spent, and what taxpayers received in return.

John Mutton is a former Mayor of Clarington and former Chair of Finance for the Regional Municipality of Durham.



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I respect the efforts made by those serving. **BUT IT IS TIME FOR CHANGE.**

- ✓ **A NEW VOICE THAT CARES ABOUT YOU.**
- ✓ **WITH YOUR HELP WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR EVERYONE.**
- ✓ **NO MORE ECONOMIC SUFFERING. NO MORE EXCUSES FOR FAILURE.**



Please get involved by volunteering, ordering a sign, or donating to our community through my campaign. Please call me any time.



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