

## Investing in Festivals and Events in the Township of Scugog

SCUGOG – Ontario is investing over \$70,000 through the 2026 Experience Ontario program to support two amazing festivals and events in Scugog. This is part of a more than \$20 million government investment to help municipalities and event organizers deliver high-quality programming and experiences for people of all ages.

"From Ontario's charming small towns to its dazzling urban centres, festivals and events bring people together, create lasting memories and showcase the best of our communities," said Stan Cho, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. "As we work to protect Ontario, these homegrown experiences play a vital role in celebrating our shared identity, bolstering main street businesses and ensuring our province remains a place people are inspired to explore — and proud to call home."

The Hon. Todd McCarthy, MPP for Durham announced today that the following local events are receiving funding support:

- \$55,000 for Theatre 3x60 for their "Summer Festival 2026"
- \$15,965 for the Scugog Council for the Arts, for "Culture Days in Scugog"

In total, Experience Ontario 2026 is supporting nearly festivals and events of all sizes across the province, strengthening tourism and supporting local economies while celebrating the people, places and traditions that make Ontario unique.

"Investments in programs like Experience Ontario 2026 are about more than funding, they are about strengthening the heart of our communities," said Todd

McCarthy, MPP for Durham. "Organizations like Theatre 3x60 and the Scugog Council for the Arts bring people together, spark creativity, and drive local economic growth, helping make North Durham an exceptional place to live, work, and play".

Through our \$20 million commitment, the Experience Ontario Program is empowering municipalities like Scugog and event organizers to create vibrant, memorable experiences that showcase the very best our province has to offer.

"Once again, we are extremely appreciative of the support of the Province of Ontario through its Experience Ontario program. It is with the funding provided by Experience Ontario that we can engage the high-quality professional Ontario theatre artists and creators that draws locals and visitors to our extraordinary annual summer festival." -

Carey Nicholson, General Manager, Theatre on the Ridge

• Since 2018, the Experience Ontario program (formerly known as Reconnect Ontario and Celebrate Ontario) has supported more than 2,700 Ontario festivals and events.

• The government also supports festivals and events through the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, which provides eligible organizations with funding for marketing and promotional costs.

• Tourism plays a critical role in the Ontario economy: in 2024, visitors to Ontario spent \$33 billion and supported more than 300,000 jobs.

## Oshawa Integrity Report Warns Council About Leaks, Social Media Conduct and Stronger Mayor Powers

This is INFO 26 110, the 2026 Integrity Commissioner's Periodic Report for the City of Oshawa, prepared by Principles Integrity and dated April 15, 2026. It covers the period from February 1, 2024 to March 31, 2026.

The main points:

Oshawa had a moderate level of Integrity Commissioner activity. The report says the Integrity Commissioner handled three main areas:

- Policy development and education
- Advice to council and local boards
- Complaint investigation and resolution

Five advice requests were handled

During the reporting period, the Integrity Commissioner responded to five requests for advice from members of council or local boards. These are confidential unless released through proper reporting.

Four complaints were received

The report says four complaints came in during this period.

Two were resolved without a report to council.

One resulted in a report to council in September 2024.

One was still under review when this report was written.

The cost was about \$5,000 per year

The report says Oshawa paid about \$5,000 per year, including annual retainers and disbursements, for Integrity Commissioner services during this period.

The report warns about councillors leaking confidential information

One serious issue discussed is elected officials sharing information from closed meetings. The Integrity Commissioner calls this a major breach because it damages trust and can hurt the city's legal or public interests.

The report warns councillors about disrespect and name calling. The report says councillors are allowed to disagree, and they should ask hard questions when needed. But it draws a line between asking good questions and trying to embarrass, attack, or harass someone.

Social media is a risk area

The report says councillors need to be careful online because comments can be spread, twisted, or used in ways that hurt public trust in municipal government.

Councillors should not act like city staff

The report warns that councillors should not interfere in bylaw enforcement, insurance claims, or staff level decisions. They can help residents find the right process, but they should not take over individual files.

Stronger mayor powers are causing tension in Ontario

The report says stronger mayor powers have created friction in some municipalities, especially when decisions appear to be made without council input, staff advice, or proper public documentation.

Bill 9 could change how bad conduct is handled

The report discusses Bill 9, the proposed Municipal Accountability Act, 2025. It says the bill could create a process to remove an elected official from office for serious code of conduct breaches, but the Integrity Commissioner criticizes the process as lengthy, uncertain, and expensive.

Best simple news angle:

Oshawa's Integrity Commissioner says council conduct has stayed at a moderate complaint level, but warns that closed meeting leaks, social media attacks, councillors overstepping their role, and stronger mayor powers remain major risks for public trust.



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