

What Is Happening In Whitby

Whitby Council calls on province to fund mental health and addictions ER in Durham

Council has endorsed a motion that the Town of Whitby express its full support for the establishment of a Mental Health and Addictions (MHA) Urgent Care Clinic and Emergency Department in Durham Region -- and urge the province to prioritize and fund this initiative "as a matter of urgent public health need." The motion notes that this facility is needed to address a critical system gap and reduce pressure on emergency departments and first responders. Lakeridge Health has developed a comprehensive proposal endorsed by Ontario Health, to establish an MHA Urgent Care Clinic, MHA Emergency Department, after-care team, and MHA Hub at Lakeridge Health Oshawa, supported by satellite services in priority neighbourhoods. A copy of Council's resolution will be forwarded to the Premier, the Minister of Health, the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, the Minister of Finance, Lakeridge Health, all Durham Region municipalities, and all Durham Region MPPs.

New street naming policy adopted

Council has adopted a new policy to formalize the process for naming streets in Whitby. The Town's Planning and Development Department maintains a reserve list of pre-approved street names, which land developers can choose from when going through the process to plan a subdivision. Based on a 1998 resolution of Whitby Council, the reserve list mainly includes the names of war dead from World War I, World War II and the Korean War. A Town report notes land developers and members of the public frequently submit requests for street names, which are currently processed on an ad hoc basis. The new policy will formalize the process and make it more efficient. The policy continues to focus on honouring war dead and veterans, as well as winners of the annual Peter Perry Award, which recognizes Whitby residents who have made outstanding contributions to the community. It also establishes technical requirements and thematic criteria

for street names. This includes prohibiting names that are considered discriminatory or prejudicial. Going forward, proponents will be required to submit a street name request form. Requests will be reviewed by the Town's Planning and Development Department for compliance with the new policy and forwarded for input and approval from other Town departments and the Region of Durham prior to approval. Requests will then be reviewed and presented to Council for approval bi-annually.

Town has reduced annual operating budget by \$6.2 million since 2013

A new report outlines over 70 staff initiatives that improved processes, generated alternative revenues, and provided service delivery improvements over the past couple of years. Seventy-seven separate improvements have resulted in \$1.2 million being released back to Capital Reserve Funds, \$1.4 million in annual operating savings; \$489,586 in annual labour avoidance or savings, and \$60.6 million in increased revenue or grants. Examples include a savings of \$12,000 a year in credit card processing fees by introducing Interac e-transfer as an option to pay Town invoices, and modernizing tools used to issue and manage parking tickets for a savings of \$30,000 a year. Examples of revenue generation include introducing a four per cent Municipal Accommodation Tax on hotels and motels in 2024, resulting in \$600,000 in revenue in the first 12 months, and securing a record \$56 million in grants in 2024. Since 2013, \$6.2 million has been reduced from the Town's annual operating budget mainly through line-by-line reviews as part of the annual budget process. Town staff continue to work on finding cost savings and new revenue sources.

Changes will improve transparency around how Council decisions impact tax rate

Council has supported a change that will see all future motions brought forward to Council or committee include -- where applicable -- a projected property tax impact that has been reviewed by finance staff prior to debate. Town

staff will also be required to track and report on all Council-approved motions throughout the year that request the mayor to consider a net increase to the tax levy at budget time. Finance staff will then include a summary of cumulative financial impacts from such motions as part of the annual budget process, to ensure full visibility of year-round Council decisions that influence the tax rate. Council endorses Elect Respect campaign Council has voted to support the Elect Respect campaign, a movement started by Burlington Mayor Marianne Meed Ward and group of female politicians in Halton Region to restore respectful discourse in politics and call out toxic behaviour.

Whitby Council pledged to:

Uphold freedom of expression while rejecting unlawful harassment, threats, discrimination, and personal abuse; Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks; Treat others with dignity and respect in all spaces, including public, private, and online; Focus debate on policies and ideas, not personal attacks; Help build a culture of safety, inclusion, and respect where people of all backgrounds feel safe and empowered to run for and hold office; Call on relevant authorities to investigate and respond to threats or harassment targeting elected officials, consistent with the law; and, Model integrity and accountability by holding one another to the highest, clear, and

transparent standards of conduct.

Council also encouraged other elected officials, as well as organizations, and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the pledge at electrespect.ca

Town to send letter to Province on automated speed enforcement

Council has directed Town staff to send a letter to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Transportation, prior to the provincial legislature reconvening on Oct. 20, 2025, that highlights the effectiveness of Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) in Whitby. On Sept. 24, Premier Doug Ford announced the province will introduce legislation to ban ASE.

The Town of Whitby is in the process of finalizing a new Traffic Calming Policy, which identifies ASE as one of several tools used to support traffic calming.

The letter will include a copy of the Town's draft policy as well as data about the effectiveness of ASE in Whitby's community safety zones and school zones, compared with other measures such as digital speed boards.

Temporary use by-law approved to support Brawley Woods Halloween event

Council has approved an amendment to Zoning By-law 1784 to allow for a temporary use to support the annual Brawley Woods Halloween

event, which takes place in the area of Brawley Road West and Coronation Road. The temporary bylaw amendment will be in place from Oct. 1 to Nov. 3 for a three-year period. The event operates 15 days per year -- on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights -- totalling 11 hours each weekend. The Town will require the applicant to retain trained traffic personnel to manage traffic flow, and ensure there is no parking on Coronation Road or Brawley Road West. A Town report notes event organizers will have fire safety, emergency access and operational safety procedures in place and that reasonable noise limits will be observed, with the event shut down by 11 p.m. on each night of operation.

Ontario Lacrosse Festival brings in over \$9 million in visitor spending

A new Town report provides information on the economic impact of the Ontario Lacrosse Festival, which was hosted from Aug. 1 to 10, 2025 in Whitby and neighbouring locations in Durham Region. Games and festivities took place at all Town of Whitby arenas -- Iroquois Park Sports Centre, McKinney and Luther Vipond. The Ontario Lacrosse Festival features 433 teams and approximately 8,000 athletes and coaches competing for 34 provincial championships. With an estimated attendance of 50,000, it is the world's largest youth lacrosse event. The report highlights an economic impact study completed on the 2024 OLA Festival

which brought in 38,400 out-of-town visitors, 80 per cent of whom stayed overnight. Visitors stayed an average 3.1 days with 73 per cent staying in hotels. The economic impact was significant with visitors spending just under \$9.3 million over the 10 days -- including \$3.1 million on accommodations, \$2.2 million on restaurants, \$1.46 million on retail, and \$2.53 million on other expenses such as entertainment and transportation. Council voted to receive the report for information.

Sponsorship to help Town fund reconstruction of tennis courts at two parks

Council has approved a new 2025 capital project, for the reconstruction of the tennis courts at Palmerston Park and Folkstone Park. The \$300,000 cost will be funded with \$100,000 in sponsorship from the National Bank Play Your Court Program, and \$200,000 from the Town's Asset Management Reserve Fund. The anticipated serviceable life of asphalt tennis court surfaces is about 20 years under typical conditions. Both Palmerston Park (installed over 30 years ago) and Folkstone Park (installed 20 years ago) courts have reached or exceeded this expected lifespan. To mitigate the impact on the reserve fund, the Town will defer a \$175,000 asphalt surfacing capital project at Kinsmen Park until 2029. The sponsorship agreement will see the tennis courts at the two parks renamed the National Bank Tennis Courts.

MTO looking at interim solutions to Whitby-Ajax bottleneck

The Ontario Ministry of Transport (MTO) is aware of the traffic bottleneck on Highway 401 between Whitby and Ajax, and is looking for an interim solution before undertaking a major widening project.

"MTO is undertaking work along the Highway 401 corridor and its crossing bridges in Durham Region, through a series of projects that include bridge replacements to accommodate the future long-term plan to widen Highway 401," said a statement issued in response to a Durham Post query.

"MTO is also conducting a detailed traffic study in the Highway 401 and Highway 412 connection to determine if there are any potential interim solutions to improve traffic operations prior to the proposed express-collector expansion," said the statement.

Durham Post had approached the ministry following the start of its works on widening Highway 401 to 10 lanes at Oshawa.

Readers had reacted saying an increase in lanes will not solve the gridlocks that happen both east- and west-bound between Whitby and Ajax.



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