

Special City Council Meeting Agenda

Consolidated as of November 22, 2019



Wednesday, November 27, 2019 – 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, Guelph City Hall, 1 Carden Street

Please turn off or place on non-audible all electronic devices during the meeting.

Please note that an electronic version of this agenda is available on guelph.ca/agendas.

Guelph City Council and Committee of the Whole meetings are streamed live on guelph.ca/live.

Changes to the original agenda have been highlighted.

Open Meeting

O Canada
Silent Reflection
First Nations Acknowledgement
Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

Special Council – Public Delegations for Tax Supported Operating Budget and Local Boards and Shared Services Budgets

Delegations:

Shakiba Shayani, Guelph Chamber of Commerce
Jan Klotz, Guelph Community Health Centre
Julie Porter, Guelph Community Health Centre
Dominica McPherson, Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination
Kerry Manthenga, Stonehenge Therapeutic Community
Dawn Mewhinney, Stonehenge Therapeutic Community
Gail Hoekstra, Welcome Drop In Centre
Dale Mills, Guelph General Hospital Board of Directors
Mike Darmon, Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation
Steven Petric, Transit Action Alliance of Guelph, Inc.
Ali Versluis
Stephanie Evans-Bitten
Pat Fung
Martin Collier

Correspondence:

Rene Van Acker

Morris Twist

Phyllis Paroshy

Pat Fung

Scott Frederick

Adjournment

Guelph City Council,

I find it unconscionable that the City continually increases its spending at rates greater than both population increases and inflation increases.

The Corporate Administrative Plan stated:

The goal is to set a clear strategy for identifying sustainable funding requirements and alternative funding sources,

In my opinion your idea of identifying sustainable funding requirements is bogus. These are nice sounding words however it seems as though you consider us, the taxpayers, as your sustainable source of funding. Whenever you raise taxes, we the taxpayer, have no choice but to pay them. You are able to increase your income at will. We do not have the same ability. What is your idea of alternative funding sources? The only thing I ever see is go to the tax payers with increased tax rates or through rate increases in water, waste water and stormwater fees (all of which are euphemisms for taxes). I have seen no evidence of the city seeking alternative funding sources. Again you have great words in the Administrative plan but there is no meaning or intent behind them.

Have you considered what councillors at the City of Calgary are asking? They are asking staff to take a 5% pay cut. This would be a definite alternative source of funding that you have never tried.

In Edmonton because of cuts in provincial funding councillors are concerned about putting the whole burden of funding on the taxpayer. Edmonton is considering staff cuts. Are we? This too could be an alternative source of funding that has never been considered here.

Closer to home, the City of Brampton earlier this year cut ties with 5 of its senior management group and realigned responsibilities. You should consider this as well. In 2016 Brampton went through a massive reorganization and reduced staff.

When you compare operating costs of Barrie, a similar sized single tier city to us, Barrie has better control over its spending:

	Guelph	Barrie	Difference
2015	\$387 Mill	\$333 Mill	\$54 Mill
2016	\$395 Mill	\$365 Mill	\$30 Mill
2017	\$405 Mill	\$358 Mill	\$47 Mill
2018	\$429 Mill	\$365 Mill	\$64 mill
% increase	10.9%	9.6%	1.3%
\$ increase	\$42 Mill	\$32 Mill	\$10 Mill

On a per capita basis in 2018, Barrie spent considerably less than Guelph, \$2,581 versus \$3,257, a difference of a staggering 26%. Why won't Guelph reduce its spending to match a comparable city? The gap in total spending between the two is increasing. Why?

On another issue whatever happened to the plan to cost out the activities that the city performs that it is not required to under the Municipals Act?

Pat Fung, B. Comm., CPA, CA

Public Transit Operations

I have a few thoughts on transit operations. I will start with a few quotes from the Official Plan:

“Public transit will be the first priority for vehicular transportation infrastructure planning and transportation investments”

“...consider public transit as a high priority for transportation infrastructure planning, second only to active transportation;”

“...maintaining efficient transit service through improvements to travel time, reliability, overall routes and regularity of service, especially for those routes that link areas of population and employment concentrations;”

Grow the system

Implementation of these goals has been a bit patchy. From the Guelph transportation master plan update. “Whereas trips by public transit made up six per cent of trips inside Guelph in 2006, they made up only four per cent in 2011, while the percentage of internal trips by auto drivers and their passengers grew from 82 per cent in 2006 to 86 per cent in 2011”

Guelph has grown, but the transit system has not kept pace with that growth, in spite of policy that mandates that the system expand and improve.

There have been some service improvements to some routes, but due to limited resources, some these improvements have come at the expense of degrading service on other routes. For example increasing service to the Route 99 – Gordon/Woolwich corridor has been made by robbing resources from other routes. One example of a service downgrade is the Route 16 – Southgate which used to be a home run from Central Station but is now an extension to every third route 99 South run. This lengthened the travel time the Southgate Industrial Park considerably, as the 99 enters the University Centre and waits for several minutes. There is another scheduled wait at Clair and Gordon when the 99 changes to the 16. These waits are repeated on the return trip.

I urge council to work towards improving service on all routes.

Keep fares low

In April 2018, Toronto introduced a Fair Pass program that gives people with low incomes access to discounts on TTC fares. The first phase of the program was available to anyone receiving payments from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program.

These discounts have made a transformational difference, according to a consultant's report. Before they received the cheaper fares, just 55 per cent of people eligible for the program who were surveyed said they were able to take transit as much as they'd like. After getting and using the discounts, that number jumped to 90 per cent.

And the transit trips they're able to make now are important ones. The number of survey respondents indicating they can work or volunteer as much as they'd like leapt from 36 per cent to 72 per cent after the pass launched.

For people accessing education, training or job interviews, the number went from 35 per cent to 73 per cent, while people who said they can access their medical appointments went from 50 per cent to 84 per cent. Access to things such as grocery shopping, visits to family, and children's activities also increased.

All because transit got cheaper.

If these newly-offered cheaper fares are enabling people to get to work and school, logic suggests many past fare hikes worked to deny access to those same things.

I urge council to keep transit fares low.

Thanks for your time,

Scott Frederick