

# CITY OF HAMILTON

## MOTION

Council Date: October 23, 2024

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. WILSON.....**

**SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR .....**

### **“Solve the Crisis” Campaign**

WHEREAS, there is a humanitarian crisis unfolding in cities, large and small, urban and rural, across Ontario that needs immediate action of 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 as well as with an estimated 234,000 Ontarians experiencing homelessness and over 1400 homeless encampments known to exist across Ontario communities in 2023;

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

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton on October 9, 2024 endorsed the Region of Waterloo’s call to action around the “Solve the Crisis” Campaign led by the Ontario Big City Mayors and has declared a state of emergency for homelessness, mental health and addictions in April, 2023;

WHEREAS, residents of the City of Hamilton are investing close to \$200 per capita in housing, significantly higher than other municipalities, and more than double the investment of the provincial and federal governments combined;

WHEREAS, mental health care, addiction treatment and supportive housing are provincial responsibilities;

WHEREAS, the use of property taxes to address the acuity of need and visible suffering is not suitable nor sustainable and represents a significant burden to local taxpayers and businesses;

WHEREAS, the people of Ontario deserve and need an Ontario Action Plan with a commitment of coordinated and sustainable funding to fill the obvious gaps in the health and housing systems and relieve the pressure on emergency departments, first responders and local taxpayers, while recognizing the mobility of Ontario residents in search of care;

WHEREAS, the Region of Waterloo, the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus and Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus have joined the call to action around the "Solve the Crisis" Campaign led by the Ontario Big City Mayors;

WHEREAS, the Ontario Big City Mayors are calling on Ontario local governments and residents to join in the call for action and solve the crisis with the following requests:

- Appoint a responsible ministry and Minister with the appropriate funding and powers as a single point of contact to address the full spectrum of housing needs as well as mental health, addictions and wrap around supports.
- This single Minister must strike a task force with sector representatives including municipalities, health care leaders, first responders, community services, the business community, and the tourism industry to develop an Ontario Action Plan.
- Provide municipalities with the tools and resources to transition those living in encampments to more appropriate supports, when deemed necessary.
- Commit to funding the services our unhoused population needs, community by community, to fill in gaps in the system.
- Invest in 24/7 community hubs or crisis centres to relieve pressure on emergency departments and first responders.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That Hamilton City Council reaffirms their endorsement of the Solve the Crisis Campaign which calls on provincial and federal governments to commit to immediate action to solve the Humanitarian Crisis that Hamilton and all of Ontario is facing as the numbers of unhoused individuals and those suffering with mental health & addictions grows exponentially;
- (b) That Council calls on the residents across the City of Hamilton to join the municipality in appealing to the provincial and federal governments for support by visiting [SolveTheCrisis.ca](http://SolveTheCrisis.ca) and showing support;
- (c) That City staff be requested to profile and promote the [SolveTheCrisis.ca](http://SolveTheCrisis.ca) campaign on City communication and engagement platforms; and
- (d) 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
- The Honourable Neil Lumsden, Minister of Sport, Member of Provincial Parliament Hamilton East-Stoney Creek
- Donna Skelly, Member of Provincial Parliament, Flamborough-Glanbrook
- The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Member of Parliament, Hamilton West-Ancaster-Dundas
- Chad Collins, Member of Parliament, Hamilton East-Stoney Creek
- Other area MPPs and MPs
- The Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Ontario's Big City Mayors and
- The Federation of Canadian Municipalities