

From: [OBCM Chair Marianne Meed Ward](#)
To: info@obcm.ca
Cc: [Michelle Baker \(michelle@obcm.ca\)](mailto:Michelle.Baker@obcm.ca); solvethecrisis@obcm.ca
Subject: Support for Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) Solve the Crisis Campaign
Date: Thursday, October 10, 2024 7:47:26 AM
Attachments: [Backgrounder for SolvetheCrisis.ca Supporters .pdf](#)
[Municipal Motion in Support of SolvetheCrisis.ca Campaign .pdf](#)
[How you Can Help SolvetheCrisis.ca.pdf](#)

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CAUTION: External E-Mail

Good Morning,

On behalf of the entire Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) Caucus, I am reaching out today to ask you to share with your Council our request that your municipality joins us in our campaign to end the Humanitarian Crisis facing this province.

This past August OBCM launched our [SolvetheCrisis.ca](#) campaign to address the homelessness, mental health, and addictions crisis happening in municipalities big and small across the entire province. It is already having a significant impact with community partners, businesses, first responders, private sector, and the members of the public who have jumped on board.

We have seen hundreds of media hits, thousands of emails sent to both levels of government and Heads of Councils in every corner of Ontario. We are especially thrilled to see the growing number of municipal councils passing motions of support and hope that we can add your municipality to that list!

I am asking you to join us and help keep this issue at the forefront of discussions taking place at the province and within the federal government.

Attached you will find 3 documents.

They include a list of how you can help, a draft motion that you can use as is or you are more than welcome to make it your own, background information, regional information, funding facts, and what you can ask your residents and community partners to do to help support the SolveTheCrisis campaign.

These materials address why we are doing this, why we are doing it now, and what we are asking for in order to meet the needs of our local communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to having you

MOTION : *[insert name of your municipality or organization here]* supports the SolvethCrisis.ca Campaign and requests that the Provincial and Federal Governments take Action to Address the Growing Mental Health, Addictions and Homelessness Crisis in Ontario

Whereas there is a humanitarian crisis unfolding on the streets in our cities, large and small, urban and rural, across Ontario. The time for words is over, we need immediate action at 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 2023¹ and over 1400 homeless encampments across Ontario communities in 2023²; and

Whereas the province has provided additional funding and supports, such as the recent investment of \$378 million for HART Hubs and approximately 375 beds with wraparound supports, it does not adequately address the growing crisis and the financial and social impact on municipalities and regions across the province; and

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

Whereas this is primarily a health issue that falls under provincial jurisdiction and municipalities and regions should not be using the property tax base to fund these programs; and

Whereas there is no provincial lead focused on this crisis leading to unanswered questions that span over a dozen ministries, and a lack of support to manage the increasing needs of those who are unhoused.

Therefore, be it resolved that *[insert name of your municipality here]* supports the SolvethCrisis.ca Campaign;

And calls on provincial and federal governments to commit to immediate action to solve the Humanitarian Crisis that Ontario is facing as the numbers of unhoused individuals and those suffering with mental health & addictions grows exponentially;

AND that the province officially makes Homelessness a Health Priority;

AND appoints a responsible Minister and Ministry 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;

AND that the provincial government strike a task force with broad sector representatives including municipalities, regions, healthcare, first responders, community services, the business community and the tourism industry to develop a *Made in Ontario Action Plan*;

¹ Office of the Chief Coroner, Ontario (2024). OCC Opioid Mortality Summary Q4 2023. [PDF] .
<https://odprn.ca/occ-opioid-and-suspect-drug-related-death-data/>

² [Homeless Encampments in Ontario. A Municipal Perspective. Association of Municipalities of Ontario. July 2024 -](#)

AND that this provincial task force reviews current programs developed by municipalities, regions and community partners that have proven successful in our communities, to ensure that solutions can be implemented quickly and effectively to tackle this crisis.

AND that the federal government is included in these conversations.

AND that both levels of government provide adequate, sufficient and sustainable funding to ensure that municipalities have the tools and resources to support individuals suffering with mental health and addictions, including unhoused people and those from vulnerable populations that may be disproportionately impacted;

And that this **[Council or Board]** calls on the residents of **[insert name of your municipality, region or organization here]** to join us in appealing to the provincial and federal governments for support by visiting SolveTheCrisis.ca and showing your support;

AND further 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
- Local MPs
- Local MPPs and
- Ontario's Big City Mayors

onboard.

For any questions or to discuss this further, you can reply to me here, or please feel free to reach out to Michelle Baker, OBCM's Executive Director, at michelle@obcm.ca or 647-308-6602

Sincerely,
Marianne Meed Ward

Marianne Meed Ward, Mayor of Burlington
Chair of Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM)
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About Ontario's Big City Mayors

Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) is an organization that includes mayors of 29 single and lower-tier cities with a population of 100,000 or more, who collectively represent nearly 70 percent of Ontario's population. OBCM advocates for issues and policies important to Ontario's largest cities.



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How You Can Help SolvetheCrisis.ca A Request to Ontario Municipalities From Ontario's Big City Mayors

What is the SolvetheCrisis.ca Campaign?

Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) launched the [SolvetheCrisis.ca](https://www.solveethecrisis.ca) campaign in August 2024 to address the homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis happening across Ontario.

After years of advocacy we are at a turning point, the time to act is now. This crisis is growing in municipalities and regions of every size across Ontario, and we need help more than ever!

Ontario municipalities of all sizes have stepped up, putting in place programs and housing options along with community partners and other stakeholders, advocating for funding that might be provided from other levels of government but is never consistent and never enough. We cannot tackle this alone, the federal and provincial governments' must come to the table.

We launched the [SolvetheCrisis.ca](https://www.solveethecrisis.ca) Campaign with a press conference at Queen's Park including a video that can be shared and found here: [OBCM You Tube Channel](#), a social media campaign that is still underway, and a website www.solveethecrisis.ca where your residents/networks/councils & staff can watch our video, join our call to action by filling out a letter to the Premier, various Ministers, local MPPs and MPs.

How Can You Help?

There are so many ways!

- Follow us on our socials & like and reshare our posts:
 - X (formerly Twitter) [@SolvetheCrisis_](#) and [@ONBigCityMayors](#),
 - LinkedIn [Ontario's Big City Mayors \(OBCM\)](#) and
 - Facebook [Ontario's Big City Mayors](#)

- Pass the draft motion attached, a more personalized version of the attached motion, or create one of your own!

- Share this call to action with your Council, Board of Directors, Membership, Networks and the public

- Share your motion and support of the SolveTheCrisis.ca campaign on social media and tag our accounts:
 - X (formerly Twitter) [@SolvetheCrisis_](#) and [@ONBigCityMayors](#),
 - LinkedIn [Ontario's Big City Mayors \(OBCM\)](#) and



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- Facebook [Ontario's Big City Mayors](#)
- Use the hashtags #solvethecrisis and tag Solve the Crisis and OBCM's socials if you can to help us track and report on engagement
- Ask residents, staff, councillors, supporters, members and even your Mayor / Warden / Chair / Head of Council to visit www.solvethecrisis.ca fill out the letter to send the message to their local representatives stating that they want action now.
 - Encourage them to share it with their networks as well.
- Read through our attached backgrounders and key messages and include them in any advocacy efforts you may undertaking on this issue
- Draft an op-ed or article specific to your municipality or region to push out to your local media (see OBCM Chair Meed Ward's Op-Ed here - [Toronto Star - August 17th](#))
- Contact us at solvethecrisis@obcm.ca for more information