

Mayors push for business equality during shutdown

Mayors of many of Ontario's small urban communities are calling on the Province to be fairer on businesses during the Province-wide shutdown.

Meeting on January 20, Small Urban GTHA Mayors, a collective of lawmakers from Aurora, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Caledon, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Halton Hills, King, Newmarket, Orangeville, Scugog, Uxbridge and Whitchurch-Stouffville, said that small businesses had been disproportionately impacted by the shutdown compared to Big Box stores and it was time to address the balance.

We informed the Minister [Minister of Health and Deputy Premier Christine Elliott] that our communities remain ready to spring into action to help roll out the vaccine to our general population, said the Small Urban GTHA Mayors in a statement. With our facilities currently closed, set up should start immediately so we will be ready to get our residents vaccinated without delay once supply is available.

We also echoed the concerns of our local small businesses who have been disproportionately impacted and call on the Provincial Government to level the playing field and only allow essential items to be sold in big box stores during the lockdown. Also, that they consider implementing shopping by appointment and/or revisiting capacity in local businesses based on building square footage. We hope to see these measures considered at the earliest appropriate time to ensure equality for all businesses.

On behalf of the Small Urban GTHA Mayors, we reaffirm our commitment to our government partners, residents, and small businesses and remain committed to supporting and promoting the public health guidelines currently in place and at all times following the data and science.

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter