



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

Report # 2025-41

To: Mayor and Council
From: Kerry Costello, Clerk
Date: April 23, 2025

Committee of the Whole Date: April 28, 2025

Title: Smiths Falls For All Committee Motion: Request to Declare Food Insecurity
an Emergency in the Town of Smiths Falls

<input type="checkbox"/>	For Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	For Information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For Adoption
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 19 Pages

Recommendation: THAT Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls endorse a motion, prepared by the Smiths Falls For All Committee, regarding the declaration of food insecurity as an emergency in the Town of Smiths Falls.

Purpose: To provide Council with a motion, drafted by the Smiths Falls For All Committee, to consider passing a resolution declaring food insecurity an emergency in the Town of Smiths Falls.

Background: On February 20, 2025 Dana Douglas, Registered Dietitian and Public Health Nutritionist, South East Health Unit provided the Smiths Falls For All Committee with a presentation (attached as Appendix A) that outlined that 15.5% of households in the Leeds Grenville and Lanark catchment area are food insecure.

Elaine Power, Professor, School of Kinesiology and Health Studies Queen's University and Brandon Tozzo, City of Kingston Councillor also discussed food insecurity at that meeting and noted that in Kingston Frontenac Lennox & Addington estimated about 1 in 3 households in their catchment area are food insecure. The City of Kingston has declared food insecurity as an emergency in their community (City of Kingston Resolution attached as Appendix B).

The Smiths Falls For All Committee lists "Food Insecurity" as one of their key priorities and prepared the attached motion for Council to consider (Draft Motion attached as Appendix C).

Analysis and Options:

Option 1: THAT Council pass the attached motion and declare food insecurity as an emergency within our community.

Option 2: THAT Council pass the attached motion, with amendments, and declare food insecurity as an emergency within our community.

Option 3: Take no action .

Attachments: South East Health Unit presentation to Smiths Falls For All
City of Kingston Resolution declaring food insecurity an emergency
Draft resolution for Council's consideration

Budget/Financial Implications: N/A

Link to Strategic Plan:

Vision: Helping marginalized people move out of poverty

Existing Policy: N/A

Consultations: Smiths Falls For All Committee Members

Notes/Action (space for Council Member's notes):

Respectfully submitted by:
Original signed by:

Kerry Costello
Clerk

Approved for agenda by CAO:
Original signed by:

Malcolm Morris, CMO
Chief Administrative Officer

Food Insecurity in Leeds, Grenville & Lanark

2024 - 2025



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

HEALTH UNIT

Your Partner in Public Health

Outline

- Food insecurity defined
- Impacts of food insecurity
- Nutritious Food Basket costing
- Cost of healthy eating
- Addressing food insecurity
- Food access



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

HEALTH UNIT

Your Partner in Public Health

Food Insecurity

- Inadequate or insecure access to food due to **financial constraints**
- **15.5%** of households in LGL are food insecure
- Food insecurity can affect anyone:

46% of single mother households	32.3% of single father households
28.4% of children	25.6% of those living alone
36.8% of Indigenous people living off-reserve	27.5% of renters
52.8% of food insecure households relied on employment income	58.6% of households relying on social assistance were food insecure



Impacts of Food Insecurity

- Not being able to afford nutritious food affects the health of individuals, families and our communities
 - Adults are more likely to experience: poor physical and mental health, worse oral health, infectious diseases and injuries, chronic diseases and shorter life expectancy
 - Children are more likely to experience: poor mental health, asthma, and poor growth and development



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

HEALTH UNIT

Your Partner in Public Health

Impacts of Food Insecurity

- Health care costs among food insecure adults are **more than double** that of food secure adults. **Why?**
 - ↑ hospitalization, ↑ length of stay, ↑ risk of being readmitted
 - Delay/skip medication due to financial constraints
 - Difficulty managing chronic health constraints (e.g., medication, therapeutic diet) due to financial constraints



Cost of Healthy Eating in LGL

Nutritious Food Basket

- Standardized food costing tool used by PHUs in Ontario to monitor the affordability of food
- Survey of 61 food items that together form a nutritious diet based on Canada's Food Guide
- Results are compared to individual and family incomes and expenses to assess food affordability for various scenarios



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

HEALTH UNIT

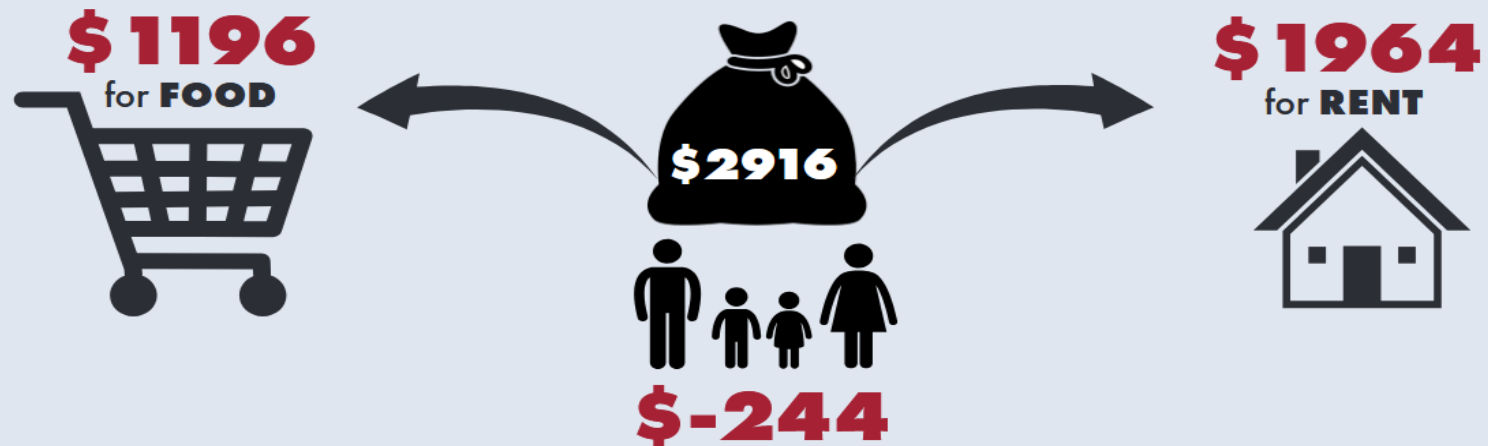
Your Partner in Public Health

Cost of Healthy Eating in LGL

The cost of feeding a family of 4 in LGL is **\$1196** per month

The reality of living with food insecurity:

Family of 4 on Ontario Works



In this scenario, the monthly income is not enough to pay for both rent **AND** food. There is **NO** money left over for anything else:



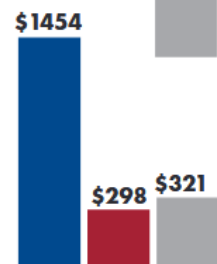
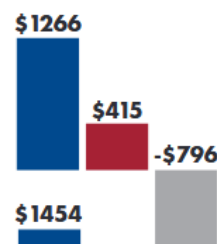
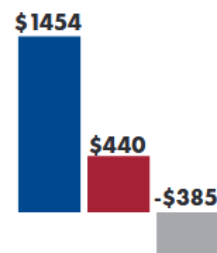
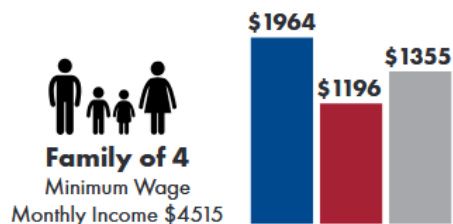
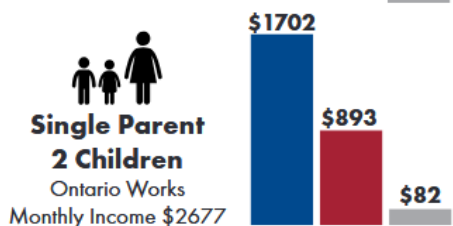
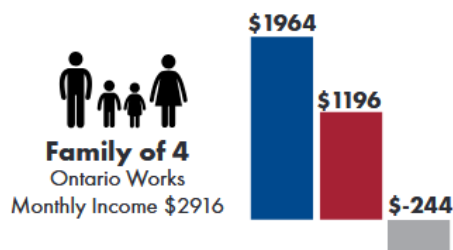
Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District **HEALTH UNIT**

Your Partner in Public Health

Household Income Scenarios in LGL



Household Income Scenarios in LGL



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

HEALTH UNIT

Your Partner in Public Health

Addressing the Root of Food Insecurity: Poverty

- Systemic, income-based solutions are needed to address the root cause of food insecurity – **poverty**
- Solutions that together can help eliminate poverty include:
 - Ensuring social assistance and minimum wage rates provide for the cost of living
 - Expanding income tax filing initiatives for low-income households to ensure access to eligible government subsidies
 - Implementing basic employment standards to reduce precarious employment
 - Encouraging local businesses to becoming living wage employers and supporting those that do



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

HEALTH UNIT

Your Partner in Public Health

What can municipalities do?

- Advocate for federal and provincial governments to implement income-based policies and programs
- Facilitate local level initiatives that increase economic resilience for individuals and families living with low income, such as:
 - Free income tax filing assistance
 - Targeted support for access to and training for jobs with livable wages, benefits
- Collaborate with community partners from various sectors



What are municipalities doing?

- Councils for the **City of Kingston**, the **City of Mississauga** and the **City of Toronto** have all passed motions to declare food insecurity an emergency
- Common recommendations in these motions included:
 - Request provincial government increase base funding for school nutrition programs and invest in expansion
 - Request provincial/federal governments:
 - Commit to addressing food insecurity
 - Increase/index social assistance rates
 - Invest in affordable housing
 - Build a stronger workforce by improving working conditions (labour laws, worker support programs)



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District

HEALTH UNIT

Your Partner in Public Health

Food Access



Free/Low Cost Meals
Almonte, Carleton Place, Lanark
September to December 2024

Community Meals

Program	Details	Address/Contact
Hungry Lunch Zion Memorial United Church	Hot, nutritious meals served every Tuesday at 12:00pm. Dine-in or take-out, all welcome.	37 Franklin St., Carleton Place (613) 257-2133
Mississippi Mills Youth Centre Community Meals Program	Serving free meals and snacks 2:30pm - 7:30pm Monday - Friday 11:00am - 5:00pm - Saturdays	134 Main St., Almonte (613) 256-5959
St. James Breakfast Table St. James Anglican Church	Breakfast every Wednesday 8:30am - 10:30am	225 Edmund St., Carleton Place (613)-257-3178



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District **HEALTH UNIT**

Your Partner in Public Health

Questions?



Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District **HEALTH UNIT**

Your Partner in Public Health

Contact Information

[Accessibility](#) [Partnerships](#) [Media](#) [Calendar](#) [Contact Us](#)

[YouTube](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)



[About](#) [Clinics & Classes](#) [Health Information](#) [For Professionals](#)

Q Let us help you find what you are looking for

Health Information



Visit our website:

www.healthunit.org

Call our Toll-Free Line at:

1-800-660-5853

or email us at:

contact@healthunit.org

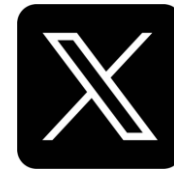
Follow us on social media:

YouTube
LGLHealthUnit

FACEBOOK
LGLHealthUnit

X
@LGLHealthUnit

INSTAGRAM
@lglhealthunit.z



References

1. Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. (2022). Household food insecurity in Canada, 2022. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved from: <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>
2. Public Health Ontario. (2023). Household Food Insecurity Snapshot. PHU (2019 to 2022). Government of Ontario. Retrieved from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Data-and-Analysis/Health-Equity/Household-Food-Insecurity>
3. Statistics Canada. (2024). Canadian Income Survey, 2022. Government of Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240426/dq240426a-eng.htm>
4. Statistics Canada (2024). Table 13-10-0835-01 Food insecurity by selected demographic characteristics. Government of Canada. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.25318/1310083501-eng>
5. PROOF. University of Toronto. <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>
6. Government of Canada. (2019). 2019 National Nutritious Food Basket Reference Guide. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-nutrition-surveillance/national-nutritious-food-basket/contents.html>
7. Ontario Living Wage Network. (2024). Calculating Ontario's Living Wages November 2024. Retrieved from: <https://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/rates>
8. Ontario Dietitians in Public Health. 2020. "Position Statement and Recommendations to Responses to Food Insecurity." Ontario Dietitians in Public Health. https://www.odph.ca/upload/membership/document/2021-04/ps-eng-corrected-07april21_2.pdf
9. Tarasuk, Valerie. 2017. "Implications of a Basic Income Guarantee for Household Food Insecurity." No. 42. Northern Policy Institute. https://www.northernpolicy.ca/upload/documents/publications/reports-new/tarasuk_big-and-food-insecurity-en.pdf



KINGSTON CITY COUNCIL DECLARES FOOD INSECURITY AN EMERGENCY IN KINGSTON

Moved by: Councillor Tozzo

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Ridge

Whereas food insecurity is defined as the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints, a marker of pervasive material deprivation (poverty), and posing a serious public health problem because of its association with higher rates of numerous diseases and chronic health conditions and a higher risk of early death; and

Whereas chronic stressors like disability, precarious work, and/or the cost-of-living crisis, and acute shocks like COVID-19, illness or eviction, make it more difficult to afford life's basic needs and live free from poverty; and

Whereas current social assistance rates are woefully inadequate, making it impossible to afford a healthy diet; and

Whereas KFL&A Public Health estimates that about 1 in 3 households are food insecure; and

Whereas the City of Kingston has committed to addressing food insecurity through initiatives such as financial support for the expansion of a new building for the St. Vincent de Paul Society, partnering with Lionhearts Inc.'s Fresh Food Market Pop-Ups, and establishing a Fines for Food pilot program; and

Whereas Ontario nonprofits, including food banks, are collectively experiencing stagnant and declining resources amidst climbing demand, and increased reserve use;

Therefore Be It Resolved That Kingston City Council declare food insecurity an emergency in Kingston; and

That Council request the Provincial Government immediately increase its base funding to existing school food programs and increase its financial commitment to enable the expansion of school food programs to additional schools to build a universal school food program; and

That Council request the Provincial Government immediately raise social assistance rates to meet life's basic needs; and

That Council request the Provincial and Federal Governments act to address the causes of food insecurity by establishing a Guaranteed Liveable Basic Income; and

That Council request that the Provincial and Federal Governments include the reduction of food insecurity as a component of all appropriate government policies; and

That Council request that all major federal and provincial political parties address food insecurity as a component of their respective party platforms; and

That a copy of this motion be shared with The Right Honorable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Canada, the Honorable M.P.P. Doug Ford Premier of Ontario, M.P. Mark Gerretsen, Kingston and the Islands, M.P. Scott Reid, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, M.P.P. Ted Hsu, Kingston & the Islands, M.P.P. John Jordan, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, M.P. Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, M.P. Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada, M.P. Yves-Francois Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois, M.P. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada, M.P.P. Marit Stiles, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario, Bonnie Crombie, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, M.P.P. Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Public School Boards Association, and the Canadian School Boards Association.

SMITHS FALLS FOR ALL

April 10, 2025 Committee Meeting

DECLARING FOOD INSECURITY AN EMERGENCY IN THE TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS

Moved by: Mitra Ghaffari

Seconded by: Janet Sinclair

THAT the Smiths Falls For All Committee recommend that the following resolution be provided to the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls for their consideration:

WHEREAS food insecurity is defined as the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints, a marker of pervasive material deprivation (poverty), and posing a serious public health problem because of its association with higher rates of numerous diseases and chronic health conditions and a higher risk of early death; and

WHEREAS chronic stressors like disability, inadequate social assistance rates, precarious work, and/or the cost-of-living crisis, and acute shocks like COVID-19, illness or eviction, make it more difficult to afford life's basic needs and live free from poverty; and

WHEREAS Public Health Ontario estimates that 1 in 7 households in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark are food insecure; and

WHEREAS the Smiths Falls For All Committee has proclaimed "Food Insecurity" as one of four pillars that the committee believes needs to be addressed to assist in creating an inclusive and equitable community; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls has committed to addressing food insecurity through financial support in the amount of approximately \$200,000 since 2019; and

WHEREAS Ontario nonprofits, including food banks, are collectively experiencing stagnant and declining resources amidst climbing demand, and increased reserve use; and

WHEREAS the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank has reported seeing over 950 clients per month; and

WHEREAS according to the 2021 census, 25.8% of all Smiths Falls households were facing affordability issues; and

WHEREAS the South East Health Unit (formerly Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit), in its "Addressing Food Insecurity in Leeds, Grenville & Lanark, 2024

Report”, indicated that living wage for the region to be \$21.65 per hour, which confirms that half of our employed population is earning a wage below the living wage; and

WHEREAS the Town of Smiths Falls contends with a significant proportion of low-income residents, marking a staggering 16.4% of our population, including a concerning 22% of children under the age of 5 (far exceeding the provincial average of 5.3%); and

WHEREAS among those considered low income are over 1400 Smiths Falls individuals/families on ODSP and over 700 on Ontario Works whose rates fall short of providing adequate financial support for fundamental needs such as housing, food, and transportation; and

WHEREAS the 2021 census noted that 45.4% of Smiths Falls households are renter households, the highest of all Lanark County municipalities, in which 43.7% faced affordability issues; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls continues to support the concept of a basic income guarantee program for working-age adults to help combat low income and economic vulnerability within our community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls declare food insecurity an emergency in the Town of Smiths Falls; and

THAT Council request the Provincial Government immediately increase its base funding to existing school food programs and increase its financial commitment to enable the expansion of school food programs to additional schools to build a universal school food program; and

THAT Council request the Provincial Government immediately raise social assistance rates to meet life’s basic needs; and

THAT Council request the Provincial and Federal Governments act to address the causes of food insecurity by establishing a Guaranteed Liveable Basic Income; and

THAT Council request that the Provincial and Federal Governments include the reduction of food insecurity as a component of all appropriate government policies; and

THAT Council request that all major federal and provincial political parties address food insecurity as a component of their respective party platforms; and

THAT a copy of this motion be shared with The Right Honorable Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada, the Honorable M.P.P. Doug Ford Premier of Ontario, M.P. Scott Reid, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, M.P.P. John Jordan, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston,

M.P. Pierre Poillievre, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, M.P. Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada, M.P. Yves-Francois Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois, M.P. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada, M.P.P. Marit Stiles, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario, Bonnie Crombie, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, M.P.P. Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Public School Boards Association, and the Canadian School Boards Association.