

**Remarks from Mayor Scott Christian
regarding the conclusion of the labour dispute.**

January 16, 2025


I am very pleased to say that we have reached a deal and ratified the Collective Agreement with our IBEW union-member employees.

I am filled with a sense of gratitude:

- That our valuable employees will be returning to work
- That their loved ones will sleep more soundly with the conclusion of this process
- That we can reinstate important infrastructure projects and call our temporary workers back to work
- That our administrative staff worked tirelessly to prepare the materials our Council needed to make a well-informed decision to direct the labour negotiations
- That my team members on this Council stood together and worked through this challenging process – we are a new team, we are learning together, we are committed to our community and the well-being of our employees.

To be frank, I am also unsettled:

- By the public allegations, unsubstantiated claims, and personal attacks toward some of the Region's employees. Specifically, our CAO Pam Lovelace and our Director of Engineering and Public Works Adam Grant. Everyone deserves to be respected, as your mayor it is my responsibility to ensure all employees, including non-union staff and management receive are respected.
- If you as an employee of this organization, or member of the broader community have a complaint against a staff member at the Region, I encourage you to bring those complaints forward through the appropriate channels so that appropriate action can be taken. So that we can learn, so we can improve with your help. And I do appreciate that those channels have not always worked well – I have brought



legitimate concerns to this organization in the past and had them fall on deaf ears. But we, as a Council are committed to ensuring that this organization is responsive to our community, that all of our staff feel safe and well supported in their work environment now, and in the future.

- I have absolutely no interest in silencing anyone – public participation in the democratic process is a human right, a civil liberty that I hold sacred - but I will not stand in silence as any employee of this organisation, including my fellow Councillors are harassed, attacked or bullied.
- Our Council has directed our CAO to identify and secure suitable resources and expertise to help facilitate this transition back to work after the conclusion of this contentious dispute, and to begin to heal that wound.

More than the end of something, this morning feels to me like a beginning, it feels like the start of an era where we begin to take strides toward a future in which the Region can be an employer of choice, a future in which the region is responsive to, and aligned with, the broader community that we serve.

In the weeks to come our team on Council will go through a process to establish a strategic vision, priorities and guiding principles of this organization. I have complete faith that we will realize a bright future for Queens, with your support, by working together. But it will take time, there is much work to be done. The relationship between the Region, our employees, and the community is not one of trust, respect and collaboration. However, this Council that you, the people, elected is committed to providing strong leadership, to making the next wise decision, to facilitate the healing process, and to lay the foundation of a positive, constructive path forward.

I would like to thank all of our employees for their ongoing efforts and commitment to this organization. I'd also like to thank you, the residents of Queens, for your advocacy and I invite you to stay engaged as we move forward together.