



Keeping Track

City of St. Thomas Council Highlights

April 8, 2026 | Issue 38



CITY COUNCIL REMUNERATION REVIEW

Council received Report HR-08-26 regarding the City Council Remuneration Review and directed Administration to update By-Law 66-2019 to align Council remuneration with the average of comparable municipalities. The updated rates will take effect January 1, 2027, following the 2026 municipal election. The review was initiated after Council requested a broader examination of compensation practices, including mileage for out-of-town board and committee duties and remuneration for members serving as Chair or Vice-Chair on external boards. Conducting the review ahead of the next term ensures transparency, fairness, and alignment with current municipal practices while applying changes only to future councils.

A LOOK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

1. Small Business Recycling
2. Recreational Backyard Axe Throwing
3. By-law to Exempt the Provisions of the Line Fence Act in the City of St. Thomas
4. City Council Remuneration Review



2026 TRANSIT VEHICLE PROCUREMENT

Council received Report ES-14-26 and authorized the 2026 replacement of one transit bus through the Metrolinx Joint Transit Procurement Initiative. This purchase aligns with the City's approved five-year capital plan under the Canada Public Transit Fund, which provides St. Thomas with \$2.39 million over 10 years to support transit improvements. The replacement bus will help maintain reliable transit service while benefiting from joint municipal purchasing that offers cost savings, price stability, and faster procurement timelines. The current timeline for delivery is 12 to 14 months from date of order. The \$380,540 bus purchase will be funded through the 2026 Public Transit Fund allocation, Canada Community-Building Fund contributions, and the Provincial Gas Tax program.



SMALL BUSINESS RECYCLING

Council reviewed the report submitted by the Environmental Services Department for information purposes. Since January 1st, 2026, any commercial, industrial or institutional property that was on a residential route is no longer able to have their recyclable materials picked up at curbside. These properties have been instructed to use either the Community Recycling Centre or to arrange private collection. A local small business owner submitted a request for the City to review this process and provide assistance. Environmental Services staff provided council with three options: Community Recycling Centre (current process), Downtown Development Board Recycling Run and a City-wide Recycling Route. Option 2 and 3 would be an added cost and would be carried as a deficit. Currently, there are 717 properties in the City that have been declared as Non-Eligible Source properties.



RECREATIONAL BACKYARD AXE THROWING

Council requested the Planning and Building Services Department to report back with information related to recreational backyard axe throwing. Staff connected with other municipalities and communities to discuss any concerns that have been documented related to legality and/or the safety of axe throwing.

Recreational axe throwing is not illegal however, if concerns are raised regarding disorderly conduct or public safety, enforcement responsibilities would be coordinated through the Police Services and municipal bylaw enforcement officers. A few key points to remember when axe throwing in your backyard: place the target away from neighbouring properties and ensure plenty of space away from anyone and anything.



BY-LAW TO EXEMPT THE PROVISIONS OF THE LINE FENCE ACT IN THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS

Council received Report PD-22-26 for information and directed Administration to prepare a by-law exempting the City of St. Thomas from the provisions of Ontario's Line Fences Act, with the legislated exception for former rail line properties adjacent to active farming operations. The Act currently provides an arbitration process for neighbouring property owners unable to agree on boundary fence construction or repairs, including formal fence-viewer hearings, cost-sharing decisions, and appeals. As many municipalities have already opted out, this change would streamline fence-related matters under the City's own by-laws, reduce administrative complexity, and encourage property owners to resolve disputes directly whenever possible.





SHORT TERM RENTALS

Report ES-12-26 was received by Council regarding Short Term Rentals. Some municipalities have put controls in place to address real and perceived impacts. Currently, the City has not received a significant amount of complaints for these rentals. Staff conducted a comparison of communities that have STR's controlled by special zoning, licensing, fees, taxes and length of stays. With limited active STRs, staff suggest that Council could table this matter for now and revisit in the next few years when the impacts from the growth of PowerCo and Vianode begin to materialize.



UPCOMING FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS

27
APR

Beta Sigma Phi Week
⌚ 11:00AM 📍 CITY HALL

4
MAY

Mental Health Week
⌚ 10:00AM 📍 CITY HALL

JUMBO MONUMENT LIGHTING

April 24
Human Values Day



Red

May 4-8
GBS/CIDP Awareness



Blue

May 10
Lupus Awareness Day



Purple

May 11-16
Victims and Survivors of Crime Week



Teal



Make your mark in the community with a proclamation, flag-raising, or by lighting up the iconic Jumbo monument! The Proclamation, Flag-Raising, and Jumbo Lighting Request Form can be found on the City's website or is available at the City Clerk's office in City Hall. Requests should be submitted as far in advance as possible to ensure they can be placed on a Council agenda. Request forms can be submitted in electronic or hard copy format.



FUTURE MEETINGS

- Monday, April 13, 2026 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, April 20, 2026 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, May 4, 2026 at 5 p.m.

To view the council meetings live, visit:
www.stthomas.ca/watch

PAST MEETINGS

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