



Keeping Track

City of St. Thomas Council Highlights

March 4, 2025 | Issue 5



DECLARATION OF OFFICE & OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Councillor Taylor has officially subscribed his Declaration of Office and Oath of Allegiance, marking a significant milestone in his commitment to serving the City of St. Thomas.

By taking the oath, Councillor Taylor reaffirms his dedication to upholding the principles of integrity, accountability, and public service. His pledge not only underscores his ongoing role in shaping the future of the community but also reflects his unwavering commitment to creating a brighter future and representing the voices of St. Thomas residents.

A LOOK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

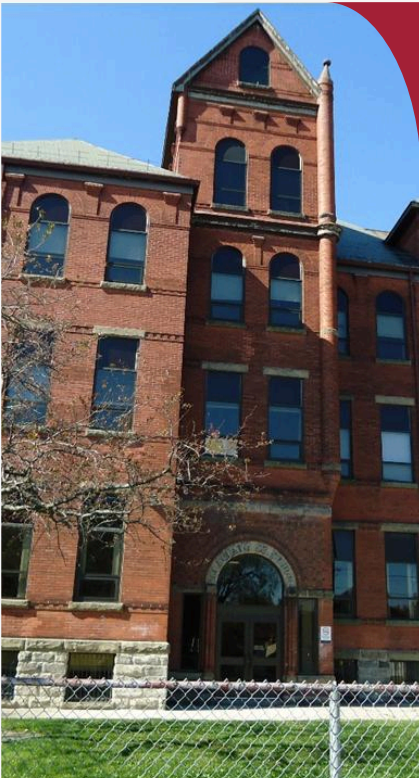
1. Balaclava Street Public School
2. Yarmouth Yards Rail Spur Line
3. Tender Awards
4. Community Events



COMMUNITY CENTRE RESERVE FUND

Council has approved the creation of a reserve fund to support the planning of a new community centre, with funding sourced from gaming revenues exceeding \$300,000. Based on 2024 revenue levels, this is expected to contribute approximately \$100,000 in 2025.

Staff also explored the possibility of implementing a vacant land tax and a municipal accommodation tax. However, under the Municipal Act, a tax could not be imposed solely on vacant land classes, as any tax-based fundraising must include all tax classes. Additionally, a municipal accommodation tax was deemed unfeasible due to the limited number of rental accommodations in the City, with administrative costs likely exceeding potential revenue.



BALACLAVA STREET PUBLIC SCHOOL

Council has approved the recommendation in Report PRF-10-25 to declare the former Balaclava Street Public School property as surplus to municipal needs.

Currently vacant, the property will now follow the City's established procedures for real property disposal under By-law 18-2012. This by-law allows City Council to determine the appropriate method for disposal, including sole-source disposition. Staff will keep Council updated on the next steps, aligned with the City's Strategic Plan. At this time, there are no financial impacts related to this decision.



YARMOUTH YARDS RAIL SPUR LINE

Council has approved the recommended rail spur connection at Yarmouth Yards Industrial Park, a key step in the ongoing site preparation for the PowerCo site and surrounding area. The project will connect to the CN Rail Right-of-Way at Mile 115.5 off the Cayuga Spur of the Dundas Subdivision.

The estimated cost of the connection is \$847,500 (including HST), which will be covered by the Industrial Development Funding. CN Rail will manage the work on their Right-of-Way, with completion expected later this year, in time to meet PowerCo's milestones.

TENDER AWARDING

Council has awarded tenders for three key reconstruction projects to improve infrastructure and accessibility:

Centre Street Phase 3

PV-EX Construction Ltd. will begin work in April 2025, updating underground infrastructure and adding a multi-use pathway from Elgin to Stanley Street. The project, costing \$2,324,807.73 (excluding HST), is expected to be completed by October 2025.

Chestnut Street

Birnam Excavating Ltd. will replace aging infrastructure on Chestnut Street for \$1,880,809 (excluding HST), beginning in June 2025. The project is set to finish by September 2025, with regular updates for residents.

Smith and Forest Avenue

ghn Group will replace infrastructure on Smith and Forest Avenue for \$3,390,756 (excluding HST), starting March 17, 2025, and completing by September 2025. The project will also improve drainage and accessibility.



MUNICIPALLY SIGNIFICANT EVENT

Council has designated the 3rd Annual St. Thomas Downtown Oktoberfest on September 20, 2025 as a Municipally Significant Event. Organized by the Economic Development Corporation and the Downtown Development Board, the event has gained recognition for fostering community engagement and boosting local economic activity. This designation will support the event's continued growth and prominence in the community.

For more details on the St. Thomas Downtown Oktoberfest, visit:
www.downtownoktoberfest.weebly.com

EXEMPTION TO ANIMAL CONTROL BY-LAW

Council has granted a temporary exemption to the Animal Control By-law, allowing three pigs at the Joe Thornton Community Centre on April 15th and 16th, 2025.

The pigs will be part of an educational event for Elgin County students, hosted by the Elgin Federation of Agriculture and AgScape, featuring Ontario Pork's "pig mobile" to teach students about agriculture.

FREE RAILWAY CITY TRANSIT

Council has approved free Railway City Transit to and from the St. Thomas Elgin Job Fair on April 23, 2025. The estimated \$100 in lost fare revenue will be covered by the 2025 Council Community Grants budget.

For more details about the St. Thomas Elgin Job Fair, visit:
www.employmentserviceselgin.ca



UPCOMING FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS

02

APR

World Autism Awareness Day

🕒 9:00 AM 📍 CITY HALL

28

APR

Beta Sigma Phi

🕒 11:00 AM 📍 CITY HALL

05

MAY

Mental Health Week

🕒 10:00 AM 📍 CITY HALL

Make your mark in the community with a proclamation, flag-raising, or by lighting up the iconic Jumbo monument! To submit your request, write a formal, signed letter addressed to the Mayor and Members of City Council, explaining your cause and desired date. Letters must be sent to the City Clerk at least one month in advance. See the [website](#) for more information.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- Monday, March 10, 2025 at 5PM
- Monday, March 17, 2025 at 5PM
- Monday, April 7, 2025 at 5PM

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

PAST MEETINGS

Watch archived council meetings:

www.stthomas.ca/archived

View past agendas and minutes:

www.stthomas.ca/pastcouncilmeetings

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