



Keeping Track

City of St. Thomas Council Highlights

October 7, 2025 | Issue 22



CITY-INITIATED OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT – COMMUNITY PLANNING PERMIT SYSTEM

Council received Report PD-45-25 regarding the implementation of a new Community Planning Permit System (CPPS), a key commitment as part of the City's Housing Accelerator Fund agreement. A CPPS is a streamlined planning tool that combines zoning amendments, minor variances, and site plan approvals into one application process to help accelerate new housing development. The first step is to update the City's Official Plan to include policies that enable a CPPS, with future steps potentially including a Community Planning Permit By-law for specific areas of the city such as downtown, new development areas, or intensification sites. Staff are recommending approval of the updated Official Plan Amendment to support this framework.

A LOOK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 1.** City-Initiated Official Plan, Zoning, Community Improvement Plan Amendments – Additional Residential Units and Financial Incentives
- 2.** Water Meter Replacement and Advanced Metering Infrastructure
- 3.** Police Services Board 2025 Mid-Year Overtime Budget Analysis
- 4.** Canada Public Transit Fund Contribution Agreement and 2025 Transit Vehicle Procurement

CITY-INITIATED OFFICIAL PLAN, ZONING, COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN AMENDMENTS – ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Council received Report PD-46-25 regarding City-initiated amendments that support several obligations under the federal Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan. These amendments update the City's Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to help encourage new housing development and expand options for Additional Residential Units (ARUs). The Official Plan and Zoning By-law updates increase the number of permitted ARUs from two to three, introduce new definitions and terminology, and add requirements such as a minimum 1.0-metre lighted access pathway to ARU entrances, enhanced landscaping and fencing around parking areas, and compliance with new provincial standards. The Community Improvement Plan updates expand existing financial incentives for residential development, including higher grant and loan amounts and broader eligibility for ARUs city-wide. Staff are recommending approval of the updated Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and Community Improvement Plan amendments to support additional housing opportunities across St. Thomas.

CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT FOR INDWELL BALACLAVA AFFORDABLE AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Council received Report SESS-24-25 regarding a Contribution Agreement with Indwell for the BalACLava Affordable and Supportive Housing project. The agreement outlines the City's \$1.95 million contribution through the federal Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to support the creation of 78 new affordable and supportive housing units at the former BalACLava School site. The project will renovate the heritage building for 36 units and add a new 42-unit building, providing much-needed housing with on-site support services. This initiative builds on the City's partnership with Indwell, which has already delivered projects such as Railway City Lofts and The Station, and supports the community's goal of reaching Functional Zero homelessness. Construction is expected to begin following site plan and building permit approvals this fall, with occupancy anticipated within 18 to 24 months. There is no direct financial impact to the City beyond the HAF contribution.

INCLUSION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND RIGHT TO REFUSE USE CLAUSE IN FACILITY RENTAL PERMITS AND POLICIES

Council received Report PRF-32-25 regarding the inclusion of a Non-Discrimination and Right to Refuse Use Clause in facility rental permits and policies. The new clause, developed in consultation with legal counsel, allows the City to deny, cancel, or terminate facility bookings that promote or incite hatred, discrimination, or harassment based on protected grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code. This ensures City facilities remain safe, inclusive, and respectful public spaces. Legal review confirmed the clause is consistent with the Human Rights Code and federal legislation. Council endorsed the clause and related policy updates, authorizing staff to implement them in all facility rental permits and booking processes.

CANADA PUBLIC TRANSIT FUND CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT AND 2025 TRANSIT VEHICLE PROCUREMENT

Council authorized the replacement of two transit buses in 2025 through the Metrolinx joint Transit Procurement Initiative, which provides cost savings and stable pricing for municipalities. The project will be funded through the City's 2025 Canada Public Transit Fund (CPTF) allocation of \$239,145, with the remaining cost covered by Provincial Gas Tax funding.



WATER METER REPLACEMENT AND ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE

Council directed staff to proceed with the procurement of water meter replacements with a standalone Automated Meter Infrastructure (AMI) system, subject to 2026 budget approval. Advanced metering technology integrates water meters, communication networks, and data management systems to automatically collect water usage data, replacing the current manual process. Once implemented, the system will allow residents and businesses to view hourly water usage, billing information, and leak alerts through an online customer portal. Key benefits include empowering customers to better manage consumption, improving billing accuracy, reducing water loss, and enhancing system management. The project is also expected to generate annual savings of approximately \$185,000 by eliminating manual meter reading and reducing greenhouse gas emissions through more efficient operations.



POLICE SERVICES BOARD 2025 MID-YEAR OVERTIME BUDGET ANALYSIS

Council received Report CHIEF-2025-29, the 2025 Mid-Year Overtime Budget Analysis, from the Police Services Board for information. The report noted that in 2024, the operational overtime budget was exceeded due to critical staffing shortages and high investigative demands. In response, 2025 saw significant staffing and deployment changes, including Board-approved additions of new personnel. As a result, overtime performance improved substantially, with a 60% reduction in overall overtime costs, a 58% reduction in callback costs, a 59% reduction in court security costs, and a 94% reduction in staffing supplements for critical roles.

MUNICIPAL ACCESS AGREEMENT - POWERCO

Council received Report ID-23-25 regarding a Municipal Access Agreement with PowerCo. The agreement allows PowerCo to run private hydro lines and fibre optics across municipal rights-of-way within Yarmouth Yards, including South Edgeware Road. This arrangement ensures clear terms for current and future crossings and enables PowerCo to move products or materials between properties, similar to practices in industrial areas like Sarnia. There are no costs to the City, and the agreement provides PowerCo with flexibility to support its operations and future growth.

UPCOMING FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS

9
OCT : **Community Health and Wellbeing Month**
🕒 10:30 a.m. 📍 CITY HALL

16
OCT : **Light It Up! for NDEAM**
💡 BLUE AND PURPLE

20
OCT : **Foster Family Appreciation Week**
🕒 9 a.m. 📍 CITY HALL

21
OCT : **Ontario Public Library Week**
🕒 TBD 📍 CITY HALL

27
OCT : **Toastmasters Week**
🕒 9 a.m. 📍 CITY HALL
💡 AQUA BLUE

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

- Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, October 20, 2025 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, November 3, 2025 at 5 p.m.

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

PAST MEETINGS

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