Keeping Track

City of St. Thomas Council Highlights

November 10, 2026 | Issue 56



COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS - TEMPORARY TERM EXTENSIONS

City Council approved a temporary extension of existing public appointments to municipal committees beyond November 14, 2026, until new appointments are made. This decision ensures committees, including the Committee of Adjustment and Municipal Heritage Committee, can continue their important work without interruption during the transition to the new Council. Recruitment for committee positions will begin in mid-November, with applications accepted for approximately one month. The newly elected Council will review appointments in early 2027, allowing time for orientation and consideration of applicants while maintaining continuity in municipal decision-making and community involvement.

A LOOK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

1. Brighter Future Monthly Update Pillar 2 - Priority Area #2 and Priority Area #3
2. Procurement of Goods and Services Policy Update
3. Community and Aquatic Centre - Review of Alternative Construction Methods
4. Long Term Care Expansion
5. 2026 Municipal Election Statistical Report
6. Children's Services - 2026 in review and 2027 Plans

BRIGHTER FUTURE MONTHLY UPDATE PILLAR 2 - PRIORITY AREA #2 AND PRIORITY AREA #3

City Council received the November Strategic Plan update, highlighting progress under the Brighter Future Strategic Plan.

Key initiatives include:

- developing a 2027–2031 Human Resources Strategy to strengthen employee engagement
- recruitment and professional development
- a new staff intranet to improve communication.



The City continues to prioritize fiscal accountability through updated financial planning, asset management and responsible resource allocation. Additional progress includes expanded childcare and housing initiatives, improvements in long-term care and continued investment in firefighter wellness. These efforts support efficient municipal services, financial sustainability and a strong, resilient community for the future.

BRIGHTER FUTURE PERFORMANCE SCORECARD: ANNUAL KPI REPORTING



Council received the annual Brighter Future Performance Scorecard, highlighting progress on the City's 2024–2027 Strategic Plan. The scorecard tracks 74 key performance indicators (KPIs) across 11 strategic pillars. Results identified 23 favourable trends, 11 requiring attention, 27 fluctuating, six stable and seven with insufficient data. Council expressed interest in comparing St. Thomas' performance with other municipalities to better understand results, identify best practices and opportunities for improvement. Continued monitoring and municipal comparisons will help guide future decisions, strengthen accountability and support the City's commitment to building a brighter future.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES - 2026 IN REVIEW AND 2027 PLANS

Council received the 2026 Children's Services update, highlighting progress in expanding affordable, accessible child care. St. Thomas-Elgin successfully achieved its target of 434 additional child care spaces, with new facilities at First Place and Parkview YMCA contributing to this growth. Licensed centre-based spaces increased to 2,634, while families receiving child care subsidies rose from 175 to 263. Looking ahead, the City is developing its 2027–2031 Child Care System Service Plan, focusing on affordability, accessibility, workforce development and service improvements. These initiatives will continue supporting local families and strengthening early learning opportunities throughout St. Thomas-Elgin.





PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES POLICY UPDATE

Council approved an updated Procurement of Goods and Services Policy to modernize purchasing practices, improve efficiency and strengthen accountability. Replacing the City's 2016 policy, the changes introduce updated purchasing thresholds, greater flexibility for staff to award contracts, and clearer procedures for competitive bidding. The policy also strengthens supplier performance expectations and supports provincial requirements to prioritize Ontario and Canadian goods and services. Council will continue to approve municipal spending through the budget process, while staff gain greater flexibility to manage approved purchases. These improvements aim to streamline operations, maintain transparency and ensure the City achieves the best value for taxpayers.

2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTION ACCESSIBILITY REPORT

City Council received the 2026 Municipal Election Accessibility Report, highlighting efforts to ensure an inclusive and barrier-free voting experience. Residents had 322 hours to vote online or by telephone, with accessible technology supporting individuals with disabilities. Four fully accessible Voter Assistance Centres provided in-person support, while election staff offered assistance at retirement homes, long-term care facilities and St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital. Accessible communications, community outreach and trained election staff helped residents participate confidently and independently. The City remains committed to identifying and removing barriers to ensure future municipal elections are accessible to all eligible voters.



2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTION STATISTICAL REPORT

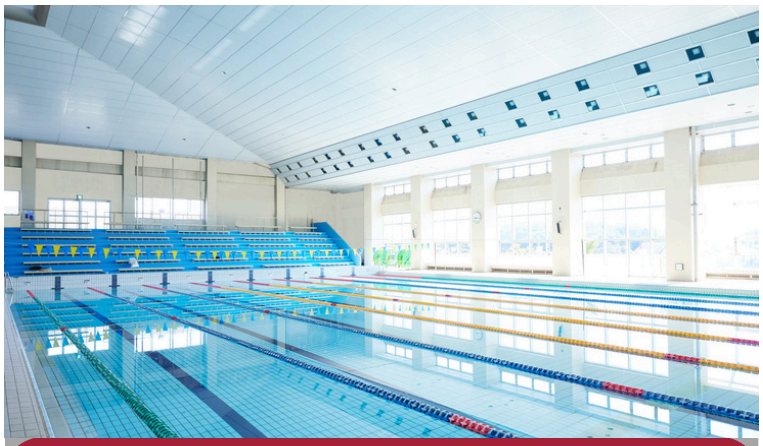


Council received the 2026 Municipal Election Statistical Report, highlighting voter participation and election services. A total of 11,433 residents cast ballots, representing a 29.9% voter turnout, compared to 30.6% in 2022. Internet voting remained the preferred method, accounting for 94.9% of ballots, while 5.1% voted by telephone. Four Voter Assistance Centres supported 1,013 voters, a 22% increase over 2022. Roving polls assisted 102 electors at retirement and long-term care facilities. Encouragingly, participation among younger voters increased, although overall turnout highlights opportunities for continued voter engagement in future municipal elections.

LONG TERM CARE EXPANSION

Council received a report exploring options to expand long-term care services at Valleyview, the City's 136-bed facility, which currently has a waiting list of 489 individuals. With the City of St. Thomas continuing to grow, the need for additional long-term care beds remains a priority. Options include expanding the existing facility or constructing a new home. A preliminary estimate for a new 128-bed facility ranges from $80 million to $95 million, with provincial funding available to offset some costs. A feasibility study, estimated at $30,000 to $40,000, could further explore options. Council deferred further consideration to upcoming budget discussions.





COMMUNITY AND AQUATIC CENTRE - REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCITON METHODS

Council received a report examining alternative construction methods for the proposed Community and Aquatic Centre. The original feasibility study estimated construction costs at $69.9 million. Following a review of the Township of Uxbridge's aquatic facility, staff explored alternative building methods that could potentially reduce costs. Preliminary estimates for a tensioned membrane structure range from $41.8 million to $49.4 million, excluding land, servicing and site development costs. While these alternatives offer potential savings, further review is needed to assess long-term durability, operational costs and future expansion opportunities. The City continues to consider options that balance community recreation needs with financial responsibility.

CIVIC AWARDS - SPORT INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL

The City of St. Thomas proudly recognized four outstanding Special Olympics athletes with 2026 Civic Awards for their achievements in sport. Bradley Veraart, Brian Knechtel, Donald Clarke-Armstrong and Gordie Michie represented Team Ontario at the national level, demonstrating dedication, perseverance and sportsmanship. Bradley competed in 10-pin bowling, Brian in athletics, Donald in soccer and Gordie in swimming. Mayor Preston presented each athlete with a certificate and pin in recognition of their accomplishments. Their achievements have made our community proud, inspiring others through their determination, commitment and athletic excellence while showcasing the incredible talent found in St. Thomas.



Brian Knechtel



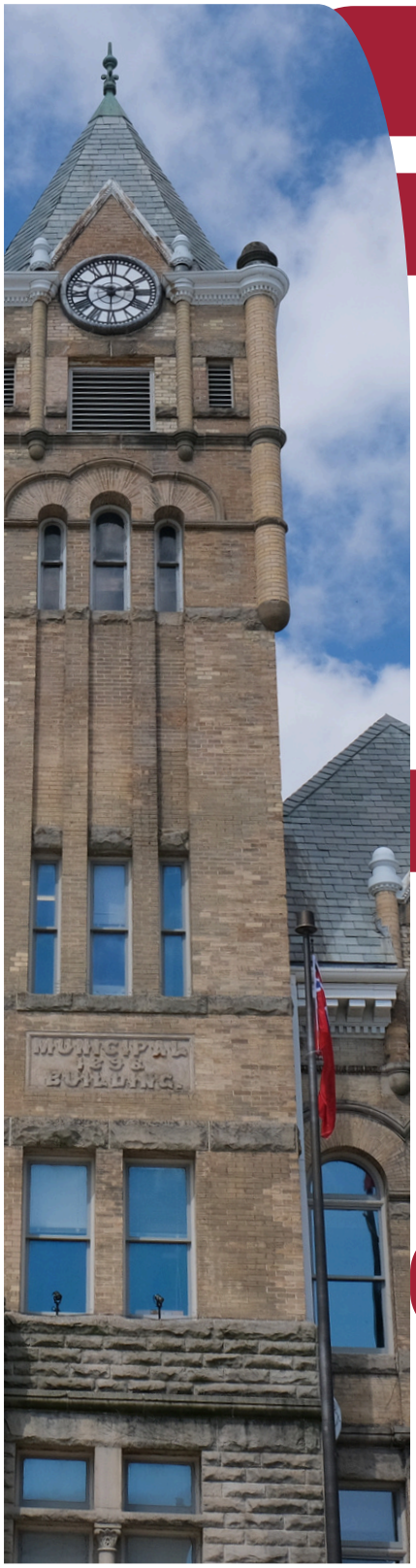
Gordie Michie



Bradley Veraart



Donald Clarke-Armstrong



UPCOMING FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS

NOVEMBER

20 Eczema Awareness

30 International Gastric Cancer Awareness Day

DECEMBER

JUMBO MONUMENT LIGHTING

November 20

Eczema Awareness

Blue

November 30

International Gastric Cancer Awareness Day

Periwinkle



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, November 16, 2026 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, December 7, 2026 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, December 14, 2026 at 5 p.m.

To view the council meetings live, visit: https://www.stthomas.ca/city-hall/council/council-meetings/

PAST MEETINGS

Watch archived council meetings and view past agendas and minutes:

https://www.stthomas.ca/city-hall/council/council-meetings/

STAY CONNECTED

www.stthomas.ca

info@stthomas.ca

519.631.1680 ‘0’

545 Talbot Street, St. Thomas

@cityofstthomasontario

@cityofstthomas

@cityofstthomasontario

