



Keeping Track

City of St. Thomas Council Highlights

November 4, 2025 | Issue 25



BUDGET SCHEDULE AND PROCEDURES

Council received Report TR-20-25 for information related to the 2026 Budget Schedule. Recent changes to the Municipal Act, 2001, through the Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022, and O. Reg. 530/22, introduce a new budget process for the City of St. Thomas. Under this framework, the Mayor is now responsible for preparing and proposing the annual municipal budget, with set timelines and decision-making powers that replace the traditional Council-led approach. Staff has recommended that Council and the Mayor reduce the Council budget amendment, mayoral veto, and Council override periods to have an expedited budget approval process. A condensed budget timeline is recommended to finalize the City's financial plan early, allowing the procurement cycle to start sooner. Early adoption helps secure better pricing and contractor availability in competitive markets, providing operational and financial benefits. If Council feels the deliberation period is insufficient, staff can propose an alternate budget schedule that postpones budget discussions to early 2026.

A LOOK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

1. HAF Action Plan - Progress Update
2. Railway Lands Area Secondary Plan - Terms of Reference and Study Area
3. Council Report - Emslie Grandstand Structural Assessment
4. STASWSS Elevated Water Storage Facility Licence of Occupation
5. Warrior Health Funding Opportunity

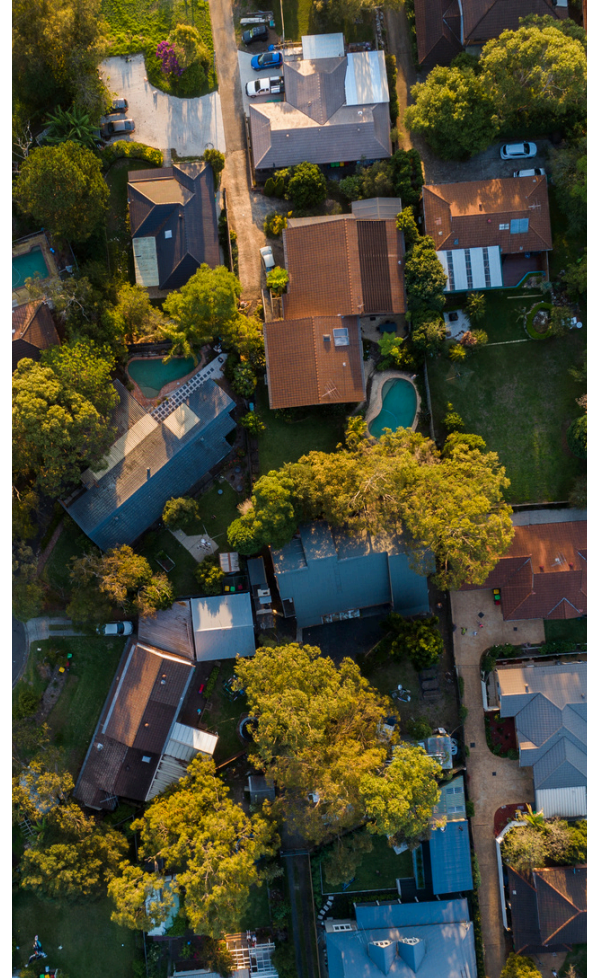
HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE

Council received Report CMO-49-25 HAF Action Plan – Progress Update outlining the City's progress on eight housing initiatives required under the Federal Housing Accelerator Fund. This update fulfills the reporting obligation to Council and confirms continued implementation of the Action Plan to advance local housing priorities.

The City's Action Plan includes key initiatives such as

- Community Affordable Housing Strategy
- Additional Residential Unit Program
- Sustainable Urban Intensification,
- City Land Acquisition and Disposal for Housing
- Development Charge Review
- Partnership Grants for Affordable Housing.

Significant progress has been made on all housing initiatives, with all HAF grant agreement obligations completed—except one, which will be finalized early next year. These efforts position St. Thomas for greater housing opportunities, partnerships, and future funding. All initiatives are fully funded through the Federal Housing Accelerator Fund, with no impact on City budgets, and the next HAF contribution is expected by March 2026.



RAILWAY LANDS AREA SECONDARY PLAN - TERMS OF REFERENCE AND STUDY AREA

Council received Report PD-56-25 recommending approval of the Terms of Reference and Study Area for the Railway Lands Area Secondary Plan. The Terms of Reference outlines the project's purpose, scope, engagement process, timeline (targeting completion in Fall 2026), and funding approach.

The study will be primarily funded by Doug Tarry Limited and other landowners, with cost recovery options to be determined as the area develops. A Memorandum of Understanding outlining the detailed funding arrangement will be presented to Council in late 2025 or early 2026. Staff will provide regular updates as the study progresses.

COUNCIL REPORT - EMSLIE GRANDSTAND STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT

Council received Report PRF-35-25 on the Emslie Grandstand Structural Assessment and approved its closure to the public until necessary repairs are completed. The assessment by POW Peterman Consulting Engineers identified serious structural issues, including a compromised steel beam and damaged roof joists, requiring rehabilitation. Staff have recommended this project to be included in the 2026 Capital Budget. Council directed staff to explore funding opportunities, such as grants. As well, Council requested staff to inquire about costs for a full removal of the grandstands. In the meantime, staff addressed immediate safety concerns by replacing 18 steps and repairing exposed rebar along the walkways.



STASWSS ELEVATED WATER STORAGE FACILITY - LICENCE OF OCCUPATION



Council received Report ES49-25 STASWSS Elevated Water Storage Facility Licence of Occupation and that a by-law be prepared to authorize the Licensing Agreement between STASWSS and the City of St. Thomas. The STASWSS provides water services to the City of St. Thomas, Township of Southwold, Municipality of Central Elgin and Municipality of Dutton/Dunwich. The existing water tower has reached the end of its useful life and requires replacement. The Licence of Agreement sets out the roles and responsibility between the two parties to allow STASWSS owned elevated water storage facility on City property. The STASWSS will provide a water connection for the D-WRF site, pay a portion of the site's annual property taxes, own servicing and repair any damage caused.

WARRIOR HEALTH GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Council received Report FD-13-25 regarding the Warrior Health Grant Program Funding Opportunity and authorized the Mayor and Clerk to sign the transfer payment agreement between the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SOLGEN) and the City to support participation in the program. Through a partnership between SOLGEN and Wounded Warriors Canada, the Warrior Health Program provides specialized mental health and wellness services for Ontario's public safety personnel, including fire, corrections, emergency health, and police services.

The St. Thomas Fire Department has successfully applied for and been approved to receive this funding. The grant, valued at up to \$25,000, will allow department employees to access a range of professional health and wellness supports through the Warrior Health Portal, as coordinated by Fire Department administration. Funding is contingent upon fulfilling the program's participation requirements as outlined in the agreement, and the program will operate from May 2025 through March 2026. This initiative reinforces the City's ongoing commitment to supporting the mental health and well-being of its first responders.



UPCOMING FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS



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 10, 2025 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, November 17, 2025 at 5 p.m.
- Monday, December 1, 2025 at 5 p.m.

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