



Keeping Track

City of St. Thomas Council Highlights

April 8, 2025 | Issue 8



KEEPING OF BACKYARD HENS

Council has decided against allowing backyard hens. A report presented by the Manager of Planning Services highlighted the risks posed by avian influenza, which is spreading in the region and affecting local poultry operations.

Additionally, the City's Animal Services Centre is not equipped to handle chickens in case of issues like illness or abuse, and there are only two local veterinarians specializing in small flocks. Given these challenges, Council opted to reject the proposal, prioritizing public safety and well-being.

A LOOK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

1. Indigenous First Nations Gathering Place
2. Yarmouth Yard Phase 3 Tender Award
3. MTO Highway 3 Project Update
4. City Flag Review



GATHERING PLACE

Council has received a report on the potential development of an Indigenous First Nations Gathering Place and has directed staff to begin consultation with local First Nations and Indigenous representatives to explore opportunities for a future gathering space that supports cultural expression, community connection, and reconciliation. An archaeological site near the City's new Water Reclamation Facility was initially considered, but due to its proximity to infrastructure, hydro lines, and its location outside the municipal boundary, it has been deemed unsuitable.

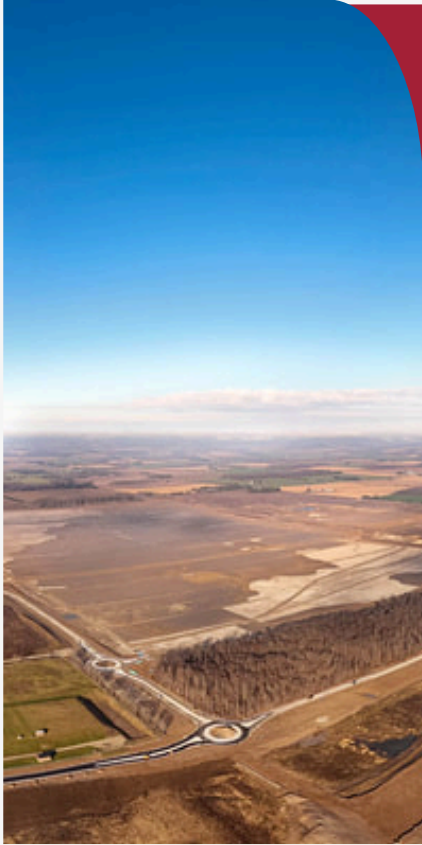
At this early stage, no specific site has been selected and no funding has been allocated in the 2025 municipal budget. However, Council has supported initiating dialogue with Indigenous communities to guide the process. The report emphasizes that any future space must be developed collaboratively and intentionally, with open communication around budget limitations.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Council has approved the 2025 Municipal Accessibility Plan, outlining achievements, ongoing priorities, and future goals such as public awareness, universal design, and barrier-free access. Developed with input from the Accessibility Advisory Committee and Leadership Team, the updated plan aligns with accessibility standards and lays the groundwork for a 2026–2030 multi-year strategy.

TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT

Council has approved a plan to secure funding from the Ministry of the Solicitor General for the 2025 Court Security and Prisoner Transport (CSPT) Program. The city will receive \$686,953, an increase from last year's allocation of \$669,315, but still \$58,000 short of the 2025 budget estimate of \$744,446. The total cost to provide CSPT services in 2024 was \$1,215,000. The funding shortfall will add pressure to the Police Services budget for 2025.



YARMOUTH YARDS PHASE 3 - TENDER AWARD

Council has awarded the Yarmouth Yards Earthworks and Servicing Phase 3 contract to J-AAR Civil Infrastructures Limited for \$24,612,957.71, excluding HST. This large-scale project, designed to support future industries including PowerCo suppliers, will provide vital infrastructure such as watermains, sewers, roadways, and a stormwater management pond.

The project will be broken into two parts, each with separate completion dates: Part one, focusing on South Edgeware Road, is expected to be completed by November 2025, while part two, which includes Battery Boulevard and a new roundabout at Ron McNeil Line, will be finished by November 2026. The project is funded through Industrial Development Funding, with Arcadis overseeing contract administration and inspection services.

MTO PROJECT UPDATE

Council received an update on the MTO's Highway 3 project, which includes twinning the highway and building a Talbotville Bypass. The project, driven by regional growth, is set to begin construction in summer 2025. City staff are collaborating with MTO to address potential impacts on municipal utilities. There are no direct financial impacts to the City, but costs for infrastructure upgrades within the MTO right-of-way will be included in future Capital Budgets.

CITY FLAG REVIEW

Council received a letter from the Downtown Development Board requesting a review and potential redesign of the city flag. The request stems from an initiative by a local business, which conducted a public survey inviting community feedback on the St. Thomas flag. Of those surveyed, 60% expressed a preference for replacing the current design. In response, Council has directed staff to prepare a report on the matter.



UPCOMING FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS

28

APR

Beta Sigma Phi

🕒 11:00 AM 📍 CITY HALL

03

MAY

World Press Freedom Day

🕒 TBD 📍 TBD

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, April 14, 2025 at 5PM
- Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at 5PM
- Monday, May 5, 2025 at 5PM

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www.stthomas.ca/watch

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