



Keeping Track

City of St. Thomas Council Highlights

February 4, 2025 | Issue 3



COUNCIL VACANCY

Council has officially declared the office of Councillor vacant following the resignation of Councillor Tara McCaulley, in accordance with section 262 of the Municipal Act.

To fill the vacancy, Council has decided to proceed with an appointment at a future meeting. This approach aligns with past practices and avoids the financial impact of a by-election, which would cost a minimum of \$115,000.

The appointed individual must be a qualified elector and will serve for the remainder of the current Council term.

A LOOK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

1. Corporate Customer Service Update
2. Procedural By-Law
3. Urban Design Guidelines
4. First Ave Tender



2024 CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICE UPDATE

Council has received the 2024 Corporate Customer Service Update for information, highlighting key improvements and growing demand.

In 2024, staff processed \$83,000 in transactions, issued 279 marriage licenses, 759 burial permits, and handled 2,866 emails. Customer visits nearly doubled from 44 to 80 per week, while service requests reached a nine-year high of 3,725, driven by increased use of the Access E11 system.

Notable improvements included an automated email response, updated service request categories, and a new customer survey. Looking ahead, the City plans to add a Customer Service Assistant, renovate the Clerk's area for accessibility, and explore AI or live chat for online service.

COUNCIL MEETINGS SUMMARY

A report authored by the Deputy City Clerk detailed Council's meeting activity in 2024, highlighting transparency.

Over 45 meetings, Council spent 39 hours in Open Session and 27 in Closed Session, in accordance with Municipal Act guidelines for private discussions on personnel, land deals, and legal matters. Meetings averaged 1 hour and 24 minutes, ranging from one minute (Nov. 27, Special) to over six hours (March 21).

PROCEDURAL BY-LAW

Council is reviewing its Procedural By-law 110-82, in place since 1982, to improve accountability, transparency, and efficiency. Proposed changes include updating language to reflect current technologies, addressing legislative requirements, and refining processes for deputations and communications. The review will also align key governance documents, such as the Public Notice By-law and Code of Conduct, ensuring consistency across city policies.



NEXT GENERATION 9-1-1

Council has received a report confirming that the Ontario Government will provide \$265,494 in funding to support the Fire Department's transition to the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) system. The transition must be completed by the federally mandated deadline of March 4, 2025.

This funding will cover a range of essential costs, including hardware, software, licensing, project management, training, and consultant fees necessary to meet the new system requirements. These upgrades are critical to ensuring that the city's emergency services are fully prepared for the shift to NG9-1-1, which will enhance the delivery of emergency services through modernized communications technology.

A by-law will be prepared to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign the Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry of the Solicitor General. This agreement must be finalized by March 31, 2025, to secure the funds.

FIRST AVE TENDER

Council have awarded the First Avenue Reconstruction – Phase 2 contract to Cassidy Construction London Ltd. for \$1,410,159. The project will upgrade the sewer, watermain, and road infrastructure from Steele to Wellington St, with work starting in March 2025 and completion by June 2025. First Ave will be closed during construction, with detours in place. A public information session will be held on February 11, 2025, to discuss the project.

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Council has voted to defer the adoption of the St. Thomas City-Wide Urban Design Guidelines, developed by Dillon Consulting as part of the Official Plan Review. Staff have been directed to provide additional information before a decision is made. The guidelines, shaped through consultations with the public, the Municipal Heritage Committee, and the Downtown Development Board, are intended to guide future development reviews.



UPCOMING FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS

06
FEB

Optimist Day

🕒 9:00 AM 📍 CITY HALL

07
FEB

Congenital Heart Disease Awareness

14
FEB

Kin Kindness Day

🕒 9:00 AM 📍 CITY HALL

21
FEB

Human Trafficking Awareness

🕒 9:00 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, February 10, 2025 at 5PM
- Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 5PM
- Monday, March 3, 2025 at 5PM

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

PAST MEETINGS

Watch archived council meetings:
www.stthomas.ca/archived

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www.stthomas.ca/pastcouncilmeetings

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www.stthomas.ca



info@stthomas.ca



519.631.1680 '0'



545 Talbot Street, St. Thomas



@cityofstthomasontario



@cityofstthomas



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@cityofstthomasontario

