



**Elgin County Council
Regular Council Meeting
Orders of the Day**

Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

Council Chambers

450 Sunset Drive

St. Thomas ON

Note for Members of the Public:

Please click the link below to watch the meeting livestream:

<https://video.isilive.ca/elgincounty/live.html>

Accessible formats available upon request.

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**Elgin County Council
Regular Council Meeting
Minutes**

**March 24, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Council Chambers
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas ON**

Members Present: Warden Dominique Giguère
Deputy Warden Grant Jones
Councillor Ed Ketchabaw
Councillor Mark Widner
Councillor Jack Couckuyt
Councillor Andrew Sloan
Councillor Todd Noble
Councillor Mike Hentz
Councillor Richard Leatham

Staff Present: Blaine Parkin, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
Nicholas Loeb, Director of Legal Services
Brian Masschaele, Director of Community & Cultural Services
Jennifer Ford, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer
Peter Dutchak, Director of Engineering Services
Mat Vaughan, Director of Planning and Development
Holly Hurley, Director of People & Culture
Joe Anne Holloway, Director of Homes and Seniors Services
Carolyn Krahn, Manager of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Initiatives
Katherine Thompson, Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk
Jenna Fentie, Legislative Services Coordinator
Stefanie Heide, Legislative Services Coordinator

1. Meeting Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. with Warden Giguère in the chair.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Councillor Hentz
Seconded by: Councillor Noble

RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the March 24, 2026 County Council Meeting be approved as presented.

Motion Carried.

3. Introductions, Recognitions, Memorials

None.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by: Deputy Warden Jones
Seconded by: Councillor Leatham

RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the meeting held on March 10, 2026 be adopted.

Motion Carried.

5. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None.

6. Presenting Petitions, Presentations and Delegations

6.1 Mary Lou Tanner, Senior Partner, NPG Planning Solutions - Update on Hospital Lands Development

Mary Lou Tanner, Senior Partner, NPG Planning Solutions, presented the update on the Central Elgin Hospital Lands Development.

Moved by: Councillor Noble

Seconded by: Deputy Warden Jones

RESOLVED THAT the presentation from Mary Lou Tanner, Senior Partner of NPG Planning Solutions, be received and filed.

Motion Carried.

6.2 Danielle Nielsen, Acting Director of St. Thomas - Elgin Social Services, and Brandon Sloan, Housing Accelerator Fund Coordinator - Draft St. Thomas - Elgin 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2026-2036

Danielle Nielsen, Acting Director of St. Thomas - Elgin Social Services, and Brandon Sloan, Housing Accelerator Fund Coordinator, presented the Draft St. Thomas - Elgin 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2026-2036.

Moved by: Councillor Widner

Seconded by: Councillor Sloan

RESOLVED THAT the presentation from St. Thomas - Elgin Social Services be received and filed.

Motion Carried.

6.3 Gary De Bock, Member of the Public - Bill 21, Protect Our Food Act

Gary De Bock, a member of the public, presented his concerns on Bill 21, Protect Our Food Act.

Moved by: Councillor Noble

Seconded by: Councillor Sloan

RESOLVED THAT the delegation from Gary De Bock, member of the public, regarding Bill 21, Protect Our Food Act, be received and filed.

Motion Carried.

7. Motion to Adopt Recommendations from the Committee of the Whole

7.1 Warden Giguère - ADM 26-11 - Recommendations from Committee of the Whole – March 10, 2026

Councillor Couckuyt left the Council Chambers at 9:44 a.m. and returned to the Chambers at 9:46 a.m. Councillor Couckuyt did not participate in the vote for item 7.1 Recommendations from Committee of the Whole.

Moved by: Deputy Warden Jones

Seconded by: Councillor Hentz

RESOLVED THAT items CW26-25-CW26-28 from the Committee of the Whole meeting dated March 10, 2026, and the recommendations therein be adopted.

Motion Carried.

8. Committee Recommendations

None.

9. Reports for Information and Immediate Consideration

None.

10. Council Correspondence

Moved by: Deputy Warden Jones

Seconded by: Councillor Hentz

RESOLVED THAT Correspondence Item 10.1 be received and filed.

Motion Carried.

10.1 Resolution from the Regional Municipality of York re: Circular Materials Ontario

10.2 Flag Raising Request from the YWCA St. Thomas Elgin Local Immigration Partnership (STELIP) for Welcoming Week 2026

Moved by: Councillor Widner

Seconded by: Councillor Ketchabaw

RESOLVED THAT the flag raising, proclamation, and building lighting request from the YWCA St. Thomas Elgin Local Immigration Partnership (STELIP) for Welcoming Week 2026 be approved for September 22, 2026.

Motion Carried.

10.3 Flag Raising Request from Childcan for Childhood Cancer Awareness Month 2026

Moved by: Deputy Warden Jones

Seconded by: Councillor Leatham

RESOLVED THAT the flag raising, proclamation, and building lighting request from Childcan for Childhood Cancer Awareness Month 2026 be approved for September 8, 2026.

Motion Carried.

10.4 Proclamation and Building Lighting Request from Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario

Moved by: Councillor Noble

Seconded by: Councillor Leatham

RESOLVED THAT March 26, 2026 be proclaimed Epilepsy Awareness Day in the County of Elgin and that the Elgin County Administration Building be lit in recognition of this day.

Motion Carried.

11. Statements/Inquiries by Members

11.1 Councillor Ketchabaw - North Shore Resilience Project Open Houses

Councillor Ketchabaw welcomed all to attend the upcoming North Shore Resilience Open Houses on March 24, 2026, at the Birds Canada Event Room in Port Rowan, at the Port Stanley Arena on March 25, 2026, from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. and from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., and at the Rodney Community Centre on March 26, 2026, from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

12. Closed Meeting Items

Moved by: Councillor Hentz
Seconded by: Councillor Noble

RESOLVED THAT we do now proceed into closed meeting session in accordance with the Municipal Act to discuss the following matters under Municipal Act Section 239 (2):

Closed Meeting Item #1 - Closed Meeting Minutes - March 10, 2026

Closed Meeting Item #2 - Human Resources Matter (verbal)

(b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees

Motion Carried.

12.1 Closed Meeting Minutes - March 10, 2026

12.2 Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk - Human Resources Matter (verbal)

13. Motion to Rise and Report

Moved by: Deputy Warden Jones
Seconded by: Councillor Leatham

RESOLVED THAT we do now rise and report.

Motion Carried.

Closed Meeting Item #1 - Closed Meeting Minutes - March 10, 2026

Moved by: Councillor Widner
Seconded by: Councillor Sloan

RESOLVED THAT the March 10, 2026 closed meeting minutes be adopted.

Motion Carried.

Closed Meeting Item #2 - Human Resources Matter (verbal)

Moved by: Councillor Noble
Seconded by: Councillor Hentz

RESOLVED THAT the confidential report from the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk be received and filed; and

THAT staff proceed as directed.

Motion Carried.

14. Consideration of By-Laws

14.1 By-Law No. 26-13 County Road System

BEING a By-Law Adopting a Plan of County Road Improvement and Establishing a County Road System in the County of Elgin and to Repeal By-Laws 10-10, 17-27, 17-28, 17-29 and 17-30.

Moved by: Deputy Warden Jones
Seconded by: Councillor Sloan

RESOLVED THAT By-Law No. 26-13 be now read a first, second, and third time and finally passed.

Motion Carried.

14.2 By-Law No. 26-14 Reduced Load Limits

BEING a By-Law to Authorize Reduced Load Limits on County of Elgin Roads, and to Repeal By-Law 98-10.

Moved by: Councillor Hentz
Seconded by: Councillor Leatham

RESOLVED THAT By-Law No. 26-14 be now read a first, second, and third time and finally passed.

Motion Carried.

14.3 By-Law No. 26-15 Confirmation

BEING a By-Law to Confirm Proceedings of the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the County of Elgin at the March 24, 2026 Meeting.

Moved by: Councillor Couckuyt
Seconded by: Councillor Sloan

RESOLVED THAT By-Law No. 26-15 be now read a first, second, and third time and finally passed.

Motion Carried.

15. Adjournment

Moved by: Councillor Widner
Seconded by: Councillor Sloan

RESOLVED THAT we do now adjourn at 10:55 a.m. to meet again on April 14, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

Motion Carried.

Blaine Parkin,
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk.

Dominique Giguère,
Warden.

Dear Elgin County Council,

I'm a life long farmer from Norfolk County.

There have been recent reports in the media that Ontario is losing 319 acres of farmland per day mainly to urban sprawl and development.

The statistics used to claim of the loss of **319 acres of farm land each day** are taken from the *2021 Statistics Canada (StatsCan) Census of Agriculture* and compared to the 2016 StatsCan Census

One only need go to the StatsCan Census for 2021 and read the notice on "*changes in reporting methods*" to see that a comparison directly to the 2016 StatsCan report cannot be made in some sections of the census. A change in reporting for 2021 was that only farms registering an income from the sale of agricultural farming to CRA are reported in the survey.

Also, there is a significant difference in reported farm land area between StatsCan and Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) data which shows "**an increase**" in total "**taxable**" farm land.

Note: The StatsCan defines **Total Farm Area** as all farm land owned, used and/or controlled by **active** farmers.

MPAC defines **Total Farm land as all land assessed for tax purposes** even if that land is not actively farmed.

The suggestion by some that all loss of farm land can be attributed primarily to *Urban development is a false narrative.*

In Norfolk County, during the downsizing of the Tobacco industry many farms were, and continue to be, purchased by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) with land that has been conserved and restored that total more than 8000 acres.

Farmers engaging in estate planning have also donated farmland area parcels for ecological tax credits to the Long Point Basin Land Trust (LPBLT) in recent years. The LPBLT now owns 1200 acres of land in Norfolk County. There are 36 Land Trust affiliated groups active across Ontario.

Over 9000 acres of land in Norfolk has been dedicated to these *conservation* groups over the last 30 years. This is significantly higher than the approximate 1,500 to 2000 acres that may have been used for housing development by the county over the same period. Nature based organizations along with numerous Land Trusts actively seek to acquire farmland areas with woodlots wetlands and other natural areas across Ontario with grant funding from the Federal and Provincial government.

All these lands are now no longer included in the StatsCan data collection.

Where investors (domestic and offshore) buy farm land and lease fields to farmers, only the acreage rented for crop production is reported to StatsCan.

It is extremely important to note that ***acres for the production of crops have increased*** in Ontario and across Canada. This is attributed to farm improvements such as tile drainage, clearing of additional crop land to enlarge fields to better accommodate larger and more automated farm equipment, and greenhouse operations. Farmers are a very resourceful group and will always find ways to improve farm productivity. Increases in cropland acres, annual yield increases resulting from improved variety development and new production methods will ensure our agricultural output continues to increase every year. This article from the *Fraser Institute* supports this point. <https://troymedia.com/business/loss-of-ontario-cropland-exaggerated/>

Other farm land losses are attributed to farm consolidation resulting in surplus dwellings and related land being severed, also the introduction of new recreation areas, wind and solar farms, etc.

The sheer size of today's modern farm equipment and economies of scale in agriculture make ownership of marginal farm land areas that have small irregular shaped fields, a high percentage of Woodlots, wetlands, rocky and rolling terrain less attractive for farm operators to purchase. Non farm residents are more likely to purchase the marginal farm properties and rent back a small portion of land to farm operators or plant the remaining open farm land back into trees. These parcels **remain classified as total farm area** in the MPAC data and are not lost to development.

An in-depth look at StatsCan numbers show minimal losses of total farm land in the Counties of Wellington, Perth, Oxford, Chatham- Kent and Middlesex, due to lower acreages of woodlots, wetlands and other non-tillable areas.

On the other side of the equation, there is huge potential for vast acreages of new land to be cleared and made available for crop production in the great northern clay belt area surrounding Temiskaming. Land clearing and tile drainage grants are available for agricultural development in Northern Ontario. New Agricultural enterprises include Livestock and crop production including small grains, hay, soybeans and even vegetable production are being established in the region.

The following links are very helpful in understanding the actual amount of farm land loss due to "development" (Official Plan Amendments and Urban Boundary expansions) versus the conversion to "conservation".

I encourage everyone review the study “*Measuring Farmland Loss*” by Dr. Wayne Caldwell and Dr. Sara Epp and others, dated January 2021, University of Guelph

(<https://www.waynecaldwell.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/volume-1-FINAL.pdf>)

where it concludes that due to Official Plan Amendments (OPA), for the period 2000 – 2017 (17 years compared to the StatsCan 5 years) there was approximately 30,000 ha of farmland lost.

This equates to a 12 acres per day loss of farmland in the most populated regions of Ontario.

From the same study showing farm land loss in Norfolk County -

<https://www.waynecaldwell.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Norfolk-County.pdf>

The following information/studies are also useful:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3210015301>

Municipal Property Assessment Corporation data - https://data.ontario.ca/dataset/4864e831-c859-4c00-b1b0-7da3fc1ab805/resource/459b3eb3-d109-4df4-aeb1-812b62fd028e/download/ceag_and_mpac.xlsx

Land Trusts active in Ontario- <https://olta.ca/find-a-land-trust/>

Ontario Increases Investments including in the Greenlands Conservation Partnership -

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-funding/ecological-gifts-program.html>

<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1003202/ontario-increasing-investment-in-the-greenlands-conservation-partnership>

<https://natureconservancy.ca/norfolk-county-corridor/>

I encourage Elgin County Council to thoroughly and critically review the numbers and question the data being presented by anyone proclaiming that we are losing 319 acres per day of farmland in Ontario to development.

Best Regards,

Frank Schonberger

There have been numerous reports in the media that suggest Ontario is losing 319 acres of farmland per day to being paved over for development.

The basis of the claim of the loss of farmland in Ontario is the comparison between 2016 Statistics Canada (StatsCan) Census of Agriculture and the 2021 census. Based on this comparison many reports state urban development is the major contributing factor to the loss of farmland in Ontario. What's being presented is misleading.

There is a significant difference in reported farmland area between the Statistics Canada Census on Agriculture Data and Municipal Property Assessment Corporation data (2021 - 2016) which shows an increase in taxable farmland in Ontario.

It is important to recognize that for the period 2016 to 2021 the total area of a "farm" was reported in the Statistics Canada census of agriculture. This zoning would include non-tillable acres such as woodlots, wetlands, ravines, farm residence, etc.

Some basic research highlights that the loss of lands owned and controlled by farm operators for Agriculture (farm land) is far greater through "conservation and "changes in land tenure" than it is to "development".

See "Conclusion" below for more detail as to why Statistics Canada (StatsCan) data was not an ideal source for demonstrating the loss of farmland to urban development.

The competing factors for total Farmland acres come from the following areas.

1. **Farmers** - expanding their operations in a more mechanized and automated agriculture era are purchasing land to maintain viability as they compete in a global market. It is common practice for a farmer, when amalgamating farm properties, to sever off surplus dwellings. In doing so they contribute to the reported change of farmland figures with the loss of the farm dwelling and the related acreage (house, barn, outbuildings)
2. **Financial investment companies** - Investment firms with portfolios of over \$400 million dollars are actively purchasing land then leasing it back to the farm operator (excluding woodland wetland and non farm areas and in some cases buildings on the farm). Statistics Canada would report a reduction in total farm area in the Census of Agriculture data since only the farm operator would report actual farmed acres. It's has been recently stated that Bonnefield owns 20000 acres of farm land area in Norfolk County. There are 5 or more large investment companies purchasing farm land area to lease back to farmers through out Ontario.

3. **Ontario Farmland Trust (OFT)** - a non profit group with chapters across Ontario Land Trust receives significant funding from the Ontario *Greenlands Conservation Partnership* Fund and private donors. OFT uses Farmland Easement Agreements (CEAs) to legally protect farms permanently, without taking ownership. Ontario Farmland Trust also accepts donations of farm land and takes full ownership of significant lands across Ontario. There are another 36 Land Trust affiliated groups actively searching for and acquiring land in Ontario. Since 2020, the Ontario government's *Greenlands Conservation Partnership* program has helped protect over 430,000 acres of *private natural land* across the province. ***In 2025 alone, Ontario and its partners added nearly 700,000 acres of protected and conserved land, the largest increase in decades*** (Google search)
4. **Nature Conservancy of Canada** - a non profit group that receives funding from the *Greenlands Conservation Protection Fund* along with Federal funding partners and private donors, purchases significant natural and ecologically important properties which may include farmland located in areas zoned Agricultural. The NCC and its partners have contributed to the conservation of over **20 million hectares (about 49.4 million acres)** of land and water across Canada since its founding in 1962. In Norfolk County alone NCC owns 8000 acres of land much of it farmland purchased over the past 30 years. The Nature Conservancy groups actively purchase and acquire total farm area across the province of Ontario in regions with significant forest cover, wetlands and other significant natural areas.
5. **Conservation Authorities (CA)** – CAs own **150,000 hectares (370,658 acres)** of land in Ontario, making the CAs the second largest landowners in Ontario, after the province. Within their holdings, the CAs also manage woodlots for profit, as well as, campgrounds and tourist sites.
6. **Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)** - a non profit organization is a Canada wide group interested in conserving wetlands found on farms and property across Ontario. They will work with other nature groups such as NCC and OFLT and private landowners. Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 1,000,000 acres across Ontario. (Google search)
7. **Ontario Parks and Protected areas including Municipal areas:** consist of land area that may contain old growth forests, lakes rivers and wetlands, archeological sites and with cultural values, habitat for rare or endangered species. These areas make up approximately 10% of the total Province land area
8. **Ontario residents purchasing Ontario farm land.** The sheer size of today's modern farm equipment and economies of scale in agriculture make ownership of marginal farm land

areas that have small irregular shaped fields, a high percentage of Woodlots, wetlands, rocky and rolling terrain less feasible for farm operators to purchase. Non farm residents are more likely to purchase the marginal farm properties and rent back a small portion of land to farm operators or plant the remaining open farm land back into trees. These parcels remain classified as total farm area or managed forest area in MPAC data and are not lost to development. Residents may enjoy the woodlot, wetland and natural area while renting a small portion back to the farm operator.

9. **Retired farmers :**The average age of farmers has increased since the last Census. Many farmers retire on the farm property they own. The farmer may choose to rent out their crop land to farm operators. In these cases only the rented crop land portion would be declared in the Census of Agriculture survey by the farm operator. Woodlots, wetlands, hazard lands and other farm areas would remain unreported. Occasionally retired farmers may decide to plant their farm land areas into trees and apply for the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program.
10. **Urban development:** Roads and aggregate mining, green energy (solar and wind), telecommunication towers, parks and recreation would also take a portion of the land being reported as lost farmland in Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture.

There is a huge potential for additional farmland acres to be created in the great northern clay belt area near Temiskaming Ontario. With up 16 million acres of land that have potential to establish more agricultural enterprises with products such as dairy, beef, pork and chicken along with crops such as small grains, hay, soybeans, and now even vegetables.

NOTE

Only category 1 will report data on agriculture to Statistics Canada. This may contribute, in a minor way, to the loss of farmland total numbers by severing off surplus farm dwellings and the related farmyard, barn(s) and outbuildings.

Categories 2 - 10 all go unreported in Stats Can data and is a significant loss of acres of woodlots, wetlands, unworkable and other farm areas.

Categories 1-10 are all included in MPAC data.

Category 8 Due to the size of today's farms, the loss of marginal farmland and small farm ownership by farm operators is a significant factor towards the loss of total farmland area in the Stats Can data. MPAC data still reports the farmland since it is still classed as farmland or managed forest area for tax purposes and is not lost to development.

Crop land area has shown an increase in acres over the 2016 - 2021 census period while woodlands, wetlands and other farm areas have shown a decrease or loss in total farmland area.

The 2021 vs 2016 Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture data from the Western Canadian Provinces with a combined lower population than Ontario show a 600% higher loss of farmland rate than Ontario census numbers show.

Statistics Canada changed the definition of a farm in the 2021 census.

Change in the farm definition:

An **important and significant conceptual change** to the main statistical unit used by *Statistics Canada's Agriculture Statistics Program* was introduced for the 2021 Census of Agriculture:

a "farm" or an "agricultural holding" (i.e. the census farm) now refers to a unit that *produces agricultural products and reports revenues or expenses for tax purposes* to the Canada Revenue Agency.

Before 2021, a "farm" was defined as an agricultural operation that produced at least one agricultural product intended for sale.

The change in the new definition may result in farms being classified differently across farm types than in previous censuses. As a result, comparisons with earlier census results should be interpreted with caution.

Note:

The Agricultural Census defines Total Farm Area reported here as all farmland reported by farmers completing the Census. Ag Census Total Farm Area can consider the total land owned, used and/or controlled by active farmers.

The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) defines Total Farmland as reported here as all landed assessed for agricultural purposes even if that land is not actively farmed. MPAC total farmland should include most or all Ag Census land plus land that is not actively farmed.

MPAC v.s. Census of Agriculture data:

Total Farm Area including woodlots, wetlands and other farm area not owned by farm operators would be reported by MPAC as total farm area.

Any open farm area, Woodlots, Lakes Rivers and Wetlands, archaeological sites and habitat for rare endangered species being donated to or purchased by Ontario Parks, Municipalities, Nature Conservancy's and Land Trusts groups would no longer be included in Total farm area in StatsCan Census of Agriculture data.

MPAC Farm tax class

If your property is eligible for the Farm Property Tax Rate program MPAC will place the farmland and associated outbuildings in the farm property tax class. The landowner would be taxed at no more than 25 % of the municipalities residential tax rate.

Property owners must apply for the Farm Property Tax Class Rate Program with Agri-Corp.

Crop land area that is owned by non- farmers would be rented by farm operators however only the crop land acres being rented by the farmer operator would be reported to the Census of Agriculture while woodlots, wetlands and other farm areas not owned by the farm operator would go unreported in the Census of Agriculture data.

Only farm operators who own farmland would report "total farm area" on the portion of land they own to the Census of Agriculture.

Conclusions

A claim that the loss of agricultural farm area is directly related to "development" and has doubled since the last StatsCan census of Agriculture in 2016 warrants further and thorough investigation/clarification. The Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture may accurately reflect changes in agriculture along with changes in land tenure in Ontario. The data does accurately reflect the number of acres of farmland lost to urban development.

MPAC and other sites represent data in a more factual overview of farmland acres, and their conversion (loss) in Ontario. MPAC would include farmland acres lost to nature conservancy groups, land trusts and lands acquired by Ontario Parks, Conservation areas, Municipalities, etc.

References;

Statistics Canada website

MPAC website

Region	County	All data is in acres			Percent Change 2016 to 2021			Percent Change 2006 to 2021			2006 Statistics Canada					2006 MPAC		2011 Statistics Canada					2011 MPAC		2016 Statistics Canada					2016 MPAC											
		Land in Crops	Total Farm Area	Total MPAC Farmland	Land in Crops	Total Farm Area	Total MPAC Farmland	Land in Crops	Total Farm Area	Total MPAC Farmland	Total Pastureland	Woodland, wetland and other land	Area less Woodland, wetland and other land	Percent Non-farm	Total Farm Area	Farmland	Total Farm Land excl managed forest	Land in Crops	Pastureland	Woodland, wetland and other land	Area less Woodland, wetland and other land	Percent Non-farm	Total Farm Area	Farmland	Total Farm Land excl managed forest	Land in Crops	Pastureland	Woodland, wetland and other land	Area less Woodland, wetland and other land	Percent Non-farm	Total Farm Area	Farmland	Total Farm Land excl managed forest	Land in Crops	Pastureland	Woodland, wetland and other land	Area less Woodland, wetland and other land	Percent Non-farm	Total Farm Area	Farmland	Total Farm Land excl managed forest
1	BRANT	-8.11	-10.09	-0.64	-7.41	-11.21	-1.46	138,379	8,008	20,969	146,387	0.13	167,356	174,124	172,484	137,543	5,271	17,925	142,814	0.11	160,739	173,589	171,838	139,429	6,359	19,482	145,788	0.12	165,270	172,688	170,804										
1	CHATHAM-KENT	8.14	7.51	-0.16	15.80	14.61	-0.23	517,600	8,492	27,677	526,092	0.05	553,769	538,540	538,112	513,961	6,848	25,806	520,809	0.05	546,615	537,710	537,326	554,249	6,233	29,864	560,482	0.05	590,346	538,194	537,474										
1	ELGIN	6.72	3.18	0.07	4.38	-1.10	0.04	322,466	16,301	54,828	338,767	0.14	393,595	403,072	399,513	299,585	12,592	49,019	312,177	0.14	361,196	402,771	399,629	315,387	9,233	52,649	324,620	0.14	377,269	402,957	399,367										
1	ESSEX	-6.13	-6.16	-1.11	0.39	-0.35	-1.92	306,880	4,309	18,587	311,189	0.06	329,776	345,947	341,393	307,574	3,212	17,794	310,786	0.05	328,580	344,757	343,499	328,174	3,563	18,481	331,737	0.05	350,218	343,117	341,668										
1	HALDIMAND - NORFOLK	-4.93	-7.70	-0.11	-9.88	-15.11	0.15	400,599	22,725	79,374	423,324	0.16	502,698	580,532	573,662	385,896	18,526	75,733	404,422	0.16	480,155	581,896	566,572	379,755	13,882	68,721	393,637	0.15	462,358	582,028	564,534										
1	HAMILTON	-3.89	-8.14	-0.73	-2.51	-11.36	-3.18	1,027,671	8,710	21,824	1,111,381	0.16	1,133,205	1,697,724	1,654,416	1,046,222	7,127	18,840	1,117,499	0.14	1,305,589	1,666,469	1,633,346	1,044,136	5,973	18,423	1,100,109	0.14	1,288,532	1,652,332	1,628,818										
1	LAMBTON	-5.30	-7.00	-0.05	-2.43	-6.66	-0.66	503,446	21,706	64,255	525,152	0.11	589,407	609,215	608,138	513,043	18,088	60,731	531,131	0.10	591,862	607,413	605,984	518,698	12,615	60,278	531,313	0.10	591,591	605,441	603,821										
1	MIDDLESEX	2.72	2.06	-0.22	4.90	1.84	-0.85	516,840	35,744	64,674	552,584	0.10	617,258	661,009	659,599	519,046	27,754	62,544	546,800	0.10	609,344	658,903	655,919	527,841	24,463	63,602	552,304	0.10	615,906	656,825	653,002										
1	NIAGARA	-1.16	-4.51	-0.63	-0.44	-10.06	-0.59	180,200	11,617	39,911	191,817	0.17	231,728	273,848	272,576	182,081	7,041	33,789	189,122	0.15	222,911	273,429	271,190	181,507	6,245	30,499	187,752	0.14	218,251	273,956	269,770										
1	OXFORD	-1.52	-2.56	17.73	6.85	4.03	-1.03	355,826	16,352	43,796	372,178	0.11	415,974	432,166	420,635	341,114	13,724	41,112	354,838	0.10	395,950	363,098	350,857	386,041	11,465	46,636	397,506	0.11	444,142	363,304	350,739										
	Southern Ontario	-0.26	-1.98	1.31	2.43	-1.75	-0.73	3,344,907	153,964	435,895	3,498,871	0.11	3,934,766	4,188,176	4,151,528	3,304,465	120,183	403,293	3,424,648	0.11	3,827,941	4,110,036	4,066,159	3,435,217	100,031	408,635	3,535,248	0.10	3,943,883	4,104,042	4,053,997										
2	BRUCE	-3.69	-8.57	0.18	-3.33	-16.75	-0.60	380,942	129,703	102,511	510,645	0.17	613,156	687,566	662,161	382,155	114,687	86,397	496,842	0.15	583,239	500,809	472,699	382,356	95,930	468,286	0.16	558,256	682,212	657,118											
2	DUFFERIN	4.30	0.51	0.24	-7.43	-17.43	0.88	132,138	30,474	27,995	162,612	0.15	190,607	262,596	252,778	120,956	24,974	26,414	145,930	0.15	172,344	266,577	245,450	117,272	18,034	21,287	135,306	0.14	156,593	264,281	239,697										
2	GREY	-1.64	-9.54	1.52	-4.42	-20.98	4.34	308,671	125,391	133,148	434,064	0.23	567,212	785,989	730,007	280,499	102,937	107,271	383,436	0.22	490,707	793,135	723,444	299,952	80,902	114,629	380,854	0.23	495,483	807,786	724,944										
2	HALTON	8.58	6.18	-1.83	-15.37	-17.97	-8.60	67,486	7,575	13,838	75,061	0.16	88,899	117,153	111,474	61,673	6,232	11,662	67,705	0.15	79,567	113,891	107,201	52,602	5,264	10,810	57,866	0.16	68,676	109,076	103,790										
2	HURON	-7.33	-7.37	-1.00	-3.56	-5.81	-0.66	593,175	43,446	86,912	636,621	0.12	723,533	752,233	745,079	605,875	35,903	83,768	641,798	0.12	725,546	755,465	744,408	617,278	29,539	88,879	646,817	0.12	735,696	754,907	743,351										
2	PEEL	19.29	14.69	-1.75	9.43	0.31	-6.31	73,481	9,388	12,420	82,869	0.13	95,289	122,620	111,888	74,193	8,288	11,362	82,481	0.12	93,843	119,239	108,464	67,408	6,961	8,970	74,369	0.11	83,339	116,925	104,604										
2	PERTH	3.20	2.94	-0.32	9.52	7.04	-0.49	427,832	24,966	45,363	452,798	0.09	498,161	500,032	498,688	442,972	18,309	45,010	461,281	0.09	506,291	500,059	498,281	453,605	17,296	47,122	470,901	0.09	518,023	497,449	497,449										
2	SIMCOE	0.20	-2.56	24.54	2.41	-9.44	0.08	364,861	81,297	87,595	446,158	0.16	533,753	632,908	595,064	363,436	72,345	74,803	435,781	0.13	510,584	493,295	449,844	372,901	49,894	73,248	422,795	0.15	496,043	508,595	455,044										
2	WATERLOO	-3.04	-2.29	-1.48	-4.18	-7.21	-3.91	1,177,072	16,245	33,067	1,193,317	0.15	1,226,384	234,248	232,566	179,312	13,211	193,317	1,033,065	0.15	1,221,087	232,461	229,333	175,001	10,618	29,356	182,619	0.14	214,975	228,466	226,736										
2	WELLINGTON	14.62	12.33	-0.24	12.93	7.83	-3.56	386,414	36,162	63,286	422,576	0.13	485,862	532,542	500,552	402,894	29,982	66,300	432,876	0.13	499,176	528,037	516,677	380,733	22,460	40,193	413,193	0.14	466,400	514,835	505,419										
	Western Ontario	0.83	-2.03	2.70	1.08	-7.61	-0.44	2,912,072	504,649	606,135	3,416,721	0.13	4,022,856	4,627,978	4,448,258	2,913,965	426,868	541,551	3,340,833	0.14	3,827,941	4,302,968	4,095,800	2,919,108	326,898	547,578	3,246,006	0.14	3,793,584	4,486,269	4,258,153										
3	DURHAM	-2.25	-9.66	-1.70	-7.75	-19.03	-4.54	228,459	46,779	51,464	275,238	0.16	326,702	402,435	375,773	209,570	42,626	32,138	252,196	0.11	284,334	178,832	150,163	215,608	34,990	42,217	250,598	0.14	292,815	390,807	360,541										
3	HALIBURTON	-62.87	-39.90	2.42	-44.03	-53.21	7.12	1,626	5,308	1,626	6,934	0.55	15,309	186,394	25,665	1,896	4,376	6,479	6,270	0.51	4,433	20,457	24,476	2,451	4,935	5,035	6,884	0.42	11,919	194,945	22,805										
3	HASTINGS	3.43	-12.40	-10.21	-8.86	-26.13	-4.23	141,009	74,651	85,527	215,660	0.28	301,187	545,710	394,614	136,308	67,785	75,170	204,093	0.27	279,265	560,113	389,368	124,247	56,342	73,372	180,589	0.29	253,961	582,042	380,403										
3	KAWARTHA LAKES	-3.33	-10.22	-2.10	-5.14	-22.18	-2.20	171,467	115,004	70,475	286,471	0.20	356,946	455,605	443,216	162,574	105,138	58,380	267,712	0.18	326,092	460,880	442,428	168,272	81,870	59,263	250,142	0.19	309,405	455,115	433,426										
3	MUSKOKA	-37.37	-42.43	4.63	-49.66	-64.98	26.68	9,680	7,657	21,422	17,337	0.55	38,759	120,891	35,538	8,359	5,764	11,420	14,123	0.45	25,543	133,451	33,233	7,780	4,229	11,566	12,009	0.49	23,575	146,366	31,132										
3	NORTHUMBERLAND	-3.36	-12.16	-0.17	-1.53	-15.64	0.59	151,617	41,853	47,689	193,470	0.20	241,159	316,937	310,894	154,349	38,832	47,700	193,181	0.20	240,881	316,001	307,881	154,488	29,395	47,723	183,883	0.21	231,606	319,346	305,885										
3	PARRY SOUND	-4.86	-18.27	4.62	-15.07	-34.40	16.61	22,625	13,798	46,194	36,423	0.56	82,617	184,156	124,721	23,076	17,148	36,763	40,224	0.48	76,987	198,835	120,163	20,197	14,865	31,253	35,062	0.47	66,315												

Remarque : Le Recensement de l'agriculture définit la superficie agricole totale déclarée ic utilisées ou contrôlées par les agriculteurs actifs. La Société d'évaluation foncière des mun Les terres agricoles totales de la SEFM devraient inclure toutes les terres du Recensement

Toutes les données sont en acres		Variation en pourcentage de 2016 à 2021			Variation en po
Région	Comtés	Superficie agricole totale	Superficie agricole totale	Terres agricoles totales MPAC	Superficie agricole totale
1	BRANT	-8.11	-10.09	-0.64	-7.41
1	CHATHAM-KENT	8.14	7.51	-0.16	15.80
1	ELGIN	6.72	3.18	0.07	4.38
1	ESSEX	-6.13	-6.16	-1.11	0.39
1	HALDIMAND - NORFOLK	-4.93	-7.70	-0.11	-9.88
1	HAMILTON	-3.89	-8.14	-0.73	-2.51
1	LAMBTON	-5.30	-7.00	-0.05	-2.43
1	MIDDLESEX	2.72	2.06	-0.22	4.90
1	NIAGARA	-1.16	-4.51	-0.63	-0.44
1	OXFORD	-1.52	-2.56	17.73	6.85
	Sud de l'Ontario	-0.26	-1.98	1.31	2.43
2	BRUCE	-3.69	-8.57	0.18	-3.33
2	DUFFERIN	4.30	0.51	0.24	-7.43
2	GREY	-1.64	-9.54	1.52	-4.42
2	HALTON	8.58	6.18	-1.83	-15.37
2	HURON	-7.33	-7.37	-1.00	-3.56
2	PEEL	19.29	14.69	-1.75	9.43
2	PERTH	3.30	2.94	-0.32	9.52
2	SIMCOE	0.20	-2.56	24.54	2.41
2	WATERLOO	-3.04	-2.29	-1.48	-4.18
2	WELLINGTON	14.62	12.33	-0.24	12.93
	Ouest de l'Ontario	0.83	-2.03	2.70	1.08
3	DURHAM	-2.25	-9.66	-1.70	-7.75
3	HALIBURTON	-62.87	-39.90	2.42	-44.03
3	HASTINGS	3.43	-12.40	-10.21	-8.86
3	KAWARTHA LAKES	-3.33	-10.22	-2.10	-5.14
3	MUSKOKA	-37.37	-42.43	4.63	-49.66
3	NORTHUMBERLAND	-3.36	-12.16	-0.17	-1.53
3	PARRY SOUND	-4.86	-18.27	4.62	-15.07
3	PETERBOROUGH	-3.14	-10.81	-0.62	-11.60
3	PRINCE EDWARD	-7.92	-11.94	-2.34	-14.32
3	TORONTO	-1.31	21.93	-15.26	0.00

3	YORK	1.00	-5.73	-2.40	-8.48
	Centre de l'Ontario	-2.60	-11.43	-2.19	-8.00
4	FRONTENAC	-12.87	-20.05	1.96	-24.43
4	LANARK	-6.30	-17.47	0.12	-17.83
4	LEEDS AND GRENVILLE	6.88	-7.55	-0.59	-1.80
4	LENNOX ADDINGTON	2.30	-8.56	0.27	-9.11
4	OTTAWA	-2.53	-6.99	-0.33	-3.99
4	PRESCOTT AND RUSSELL	7.15	3.43	0.62	16.02
4	RENFREW	2.57	-9.26	-0.28	-5.45
	STORMONT DUNDAS				
4	GLENGARRY	6.26	0.72	0.00	11.22
	Est de l'Ontario	2.83	-6.16	0.13	1.02
5	ALGOMA	-6.06	-13.97	12.21	-27.82
5	COCHRANE	1.94	-24.46	-0.13	-29.24
5	GREATER SUDBURY	2.92	-15.11	-52.71	-8.03
5	KENORA	-24.03	-32.31	-2.86	-50.95
5	MANITOULIN	-2.01	-20.52	1.30	-22.37
5	NIPISSING	6.77	-9.51	11.01	1.14
5	RAINY RIVER	10.78	-6.60	0.16	-0.53
5	SUDBURY	9.75	-6.58	-2.53	10.29
5	THUNDER BAY	-10.09	-18.92	4.55	-22.81
5	TIMISKAMING	-0.55	-7.10	2.44	1.73
	Nord de l'Ontario	0.82	-12.97	-0.08	-9.76
	Ontario	0.33	-4.72	0.67	0.05

ici comme toutes les terres agricoles déclarées par les agriculteurs qui remplissent le recensement. La municipalité (SEFM) définit les terres agricoles totales déclarées ici comme toutes les terres évaluées à usage agricole, auxquelles on ajoute les terres qui ne sont pas activement exploitées, mais qui demeurent

pourcentage de à 2021		2006 Statistique Canada			
Superficie agricole totale	Terres agricoles totales MPAC	Terres en culture	Pâturages totaux	Boisés, milieux humides et autres terres	Superficie agricole totale à laquelle on soustrait les boisés, les milieux humides et les autres terres
-11.21	-1.46	138,379	8,008	20,969	146,387
14.61	-0.23	517,600	8,492	27,677	526,092
-1.10	0.04	322,466	16,301	54,828	338,767
-0.35	-1.92	306,880	4,309	18,587	311,189
-15.11	0.15	400,599	22,725	79,374	423,324
-11.36	-3.18	102,671	8,710	21,824	111,381
-6.66	-0.66	503,446	21,706	64,255	525,152
1.84	-0.85	516,840	35,744	64,674	552,584
-10.06	-0.59	180,200	11,617	39,911	191,817
4.03	-1.03	355,826	16,352	43,796	372,178
-1.75	-0.73	3,344,907	153,964	435,895	3,498,871
-16.75	-0.60	380,942	129,703	102,511	510,645
-17.43	0.88	132,138	30,474	27,995	162,612
-20.98	4.34	308,671	125,393	133,148	434,064
-17.97	-8.60	67,486	7,575	13,838	75,061
-5.81	-0.66	593,175	43,446	86,912	636,621
0.31	-6.31	73,481	9,388	12,420	82,869
7.04	-0.49	427,832	24,966	45,363	452,798
-9.44	0.08	364,861	81,297	87,595	446,158
-7.21	-3.91	177,072	16,245	33,067	193,317
7.83	-3.56	386,414	36,162	63,286	422,576
-7.61	-0.44	2,912,072	504,649	606,135	3,416,721
-19.03	-4.54	228,459	46,779	51,464	275,238
-53.21	7.12	1,626	5,308	8,375	6,934
-26.13	-4.23	141,009	74,651	85,527	215,660
-22.18	-2.20	171,467	115,004	70,475	286,471
-64.98	26.68	9,680	7,657	21,422	17,337
-15.64	0.59	151,617	41,853	47,689	193,470
-34.40	16.61	22,625	13,798	46,194	36,423
-27.69	0.40	120,578	65,713	63,138	186,291
-23.83	-3.88	92,451	22,010	31,149	114,461
0.00	-62.50	0	0	0	0

-19.55	-6.95	119,294	18,430	29,352	137,724
-23.36	0.15	1,058,806	419,633	446,355	1,478,439
-37.97	0.42	81,645	62,556	52,927	144,201
-33.71	1.91	86,510	58,780	87,285	145,290
-22.18	-1.45	152,714	70,385	104,941	223,099
-25.54	-1.82	91,669	50,383	43,783	142,052
-17.15	-3.58	194,360	40,863	48,143	235,223
6.75	0.49	232,228	26,072	38,176	258,300
-23.48	-0.31	159,755	104,701	123,275	264,456
-3.15	-2.58	351,531	52,135	90,923	403,666
-16.99	-0.96	1,350,412	465,875	589,453	1,816,287
-33.28	99.42	38,292	22,157	35,365	60,449
-45.25	161.52	28,437	21,152	25,647	49,589
-35.62	-52.71	8,667	3,337	10,888	12,004
-50.93	-15.02	13,777	8,105	14,271	21,882
-36.95	10.71	34,279	99,835	44,030	134,114
-25.85	17.94	35,411	16,303	32,033	51,714
-29.02	-3.22	59,374	79,270	72,981	138,644
-11.60	0.06	18,411	10,782	21,606	29,193
-35.48	1.64	29,420	11,836	20,594	41,256
-20.20	0.89	114,118	45,489	46,193	159,607
-30.41	22.94	380,186	318,266	323,608	698,452
-11.60	1.59	9,046,383	1,862,387	2,401,446	10,908,770

superficie agricole totale du Recensement de l'agriculture peut tenir compte du total des terres pc des fins agricoles même si elles ne sont pas activement exploitées.
évaluées à des fins agricoles.

2006 MPAC					
Pourcentage non agricole	Superficie agricole totale	Terres agricoles totales	Terres agricoles totales excluant la forêt aménagée	Terres en culture	Pâturages totaux
0.13	167,356	174,124	172,484	137,543	5,271
0.05	553,769	538,540	538,112	513,961	6,848
0.14	393,595	403,072	399,513	299,585	12,592
0.06	329,776	345,947	341,393	307,574	3,212
0.16	502,698	580,532	573,662	385,896	18,526
0.16	133,205	169,724	165,416	104,622	7,127
0.11	589,407	609,215	608,138	513,043	18,088
0.10	617,258	661,009	659,599	519,046	27,754
0.17	231,728	273,848	272,576	182,081	7,041
0.11	415,974	432,166	420,635	341,114	13,724
0.11	3,934,766	4,188,176	4,151,528	3,304,465	120,183
0.17	613,156	687,566	662,161	382,155	114,687
0.15	190,607	262,596	252,778	120,956	24,974
0.23	567,212	785,989	730,007	280,499	102,937
0.16	88,899	117,153	111,474	61,673	6,232
0.12	723,533	752,323	745,079	605,875	35,903
0.13	95,289	122,620	111,888	74,193	8,288
0.09	498,161	500,032	498,688	442,972	18,309
0.16	533,753	632,908	595,064	363,436	72,345
0.15	226,384	234,248	232,566	179,312	13,211
0.13	485,862	532,542	509,552	402,894	29,982
0.15	4,022,856	4,627,978	4,449,258	2,913,965	426,868
0.16	326,702	402,435	375,773	209,570	42,626
0.55	15,309	186,394	25,665	1,896	4,374
0.28	301,187	545,710	394,614	136,308	67,785
0.20	356,946	455,605	443,216	162,574	105,138
0.55	38,759	120,891	35,538	8,359	5,764
0.20	241,159	316,937	310,894	154,349	38,832
0.56	82,617	184,156	124,721	23,076	17,148
0.25	249,429	372,828	329,646	117,392	56,990
0.21	145,610	180,291	178,786	86,317	19,414
0	0	3,765	3,752	0	0

0.18	167,076	204,802	197,587	116,571	13,592
0.23	1,924,794	2,973,814	2,420,190	1,016,412	371,663
0.27	197,128	319,149	288,004	72,952	58,610
0.38	232,575	353,921	314,317	81,489	54,050
0.32	328,040	443,234	430,238	143,035	62,236
0.24	185,835	255,592	241,792	86,421	43,882
0.17	283,366	344,856	331,347	194,365	31,533
0.13	296,476	348,774	339,951	244,185	19,542
0.32	387,731	552,000	488,569	154,088	106,563
0.18	494,589	601,336	583,623	357,758	38,615
0.25	2,405,740	3,218,861	3,017,841	1,334,293	415,031
0.37	95,814	136,732	120,899	32,390	18,031
0.34	75,236	135,281	115,963	24,317	21,010
0.48	22,892	105,791	38,466	8,024	2,684
0.39	36,153	53,275	51,670	10,032	8,306
0.25	178,144	267,968	248,600	33,289	94,440
0.38	83,747	132,841	123,860	34,518	16,647
0.34	211,625	225,473	224,855	57,426	83,435
0.43	50,799	99,181	84,968	16,363	9,531
0.33	61,850	70,990	64,222	29,663	9,638
0.22	205,800	252,166	245,488	114,791	36,099
0.32	1,022,060	1,479,697	1,318,990	360,813	299,821
0.18	13,310,216	16,488,526	15,357,807	8,929,948	1,633,566

ossédées,

2011 Statistique Canada				2011 MPAC	
Boisés, milieux humides et autres terres	Superficie agricole totale à laquelle on soustrait les boisés, les milieux humides et les autres terres	Pourcentage non agricole	Superficie agricole totale	Terres agricoles totales	Terres agricoles totales excluant la forêt aménagée
17,925	142,814	0.11	160,739	173,589	171,838
25,806	520,809	0.05	546,615	537,710	537,326
49,019	312,177	0.14	361,196	402,771	399,629
17,794	310,786	0.05	328,580	344,757	343,499
75,733	404,422	0.16	480,155	581,896	566,572
18,840	111,749	0.14	130,589	166,469	163,346
60,731	531,131	0.10	591,862	607,413	605,984
62,544	546,800	0.10	609,344	658,903	655,919
33,789	189,122	0.15	222,911	273,429	271,190
41,112	354,838	0.10	395,950	363,098	350,857
403,293	3,424,648	0.11	3,827,941	4,110,036	4,066,159
86,397	496,842	0.15	583,239	500,809	472,699
26,414	145,930	0.15	172,344	266,577	245,450
107,271	383,436	0.22	490,707	793,135	723,444
11,662	67,905	0.15	79,567	113,891	107,201
83,768	641,778	0.12	725,546	755,465	744,408
11,362	82,481	0.12	93,843	119,239	108,464
45,010	461,281	0.09	506,291	500,059	498,281
74,803	435,781	0.15	510,584	493,295	449,844
28,564	192,523	0.13	221,087	232,461	229,333
66,300	432,876	0.13	499,176	528,037	516,677
541,551	3,340,833	0.14	3,882,384	4,302,968	4,095,800
32,138	252,196	0.11	284,334	178,832	150,163
6,479	6,270	0.51	12,749	200,457	24,476
75,170	204,093	0.27	279,263	560,113	389,368
58,380	267,712	0.18	326,092	460,880	442,428
11,420	14,123	0.45	25,543	133,451	33,233
47,700	193,181	0.20	240,881	316,001	307,881
36,763	40,224	0.48	76,987	198,835	120,163
54,554	174,382	0.24	228,936	380,254	325,899
25,040	105,731	0.19	130,771	179,347	177,940
0	0		0	1,571	1,558

23,396	130,163	0.15	153,559	200,444	191,247
385,550	1,388,075	0.22	1,773,625	2,810,186	2,164,356
43,912	131,562	0.25	175,474	312,522	278,385
71,959	135,539	0.35	207,498	353,717	307,538
92,046	205,271	0.31	297,317	439,191	420,818
36,388	130,303	0.22	166,691	249,971	234,444
42,427	225,898	0.16	268,325	338,628	327,723
34,939	263,727	0.12	298,666	345,123	336,626
105,899	260,651	0.29	366,550	553,268	480,618
81,234	396,373	0.17	477,607	591,694	581,696
508,804	1,749,324	0.23	2,258,128	3,184,115	2,967,848
30,584	50,421	0.38	81,005	265,302	121,545
23,420	45,327	0.34	68,747	360,016	114,330
9,360	10,708	0.47	20,068	105,791	38,466
10,369	18,338	0.36	28,707	49,991	49,400
30,359	127,729	0.19	158,088	266,685	245,117
27,953	51,165	0.35	79,118	136,826	123,213
49,799	140,861	0.26	190,660	228,830	228,368
20,088	25,894	0.44	45,982	101,830	85,489
19,771	39,301	0.33	59,072	73,962	65,619
34,511	150,890	0.19	185,401	248,810	245,298
265,524	660,634	0.29	926,158	1,838,043	1,316,845
2,104,722	10,563,514	0.17	12,668,236	16,245,347	14,611,008

2016 Statistique Canada

Terres en culture	Pâturages totaux	Boisés, milieux humides et autres terres	Superficie agricole totale à laquelle on soustrait les boisés, les milieux humides et les autres terres	Pourcentage non agricole	Superficie agricole totale
139,429	6,359	19,482	145,788	0.12	165,270
554,249	6,233	29,864	560,482	0.05	590,346
315,387	9,233	52,649	324,620	0.14	377,269
328,174	3,563	18,481	331,737	0.05	350,218
379,755	13,882	68,721	393,637	0.15	462,358
104,136	5,973	18,423	110,109	0.14	128,532
518,698	12,615	60,278	531,313	0.10	591,591
527,841	24,463	63,602	552,304	0.10	615,906
181,507	6,245	30,499	187,752	0.14	218,251
386,041	11,465	46,636	397,506	0.11	444,142
3,435,217	100,031	408,635	3,535,248	0.10	3,943,883
382,356	85,930	90,070	468,286	0.16	558,356
117,272	18,034	21,287	135,306	0.14	156,593
299,952	80,902	114,629	380,854	0.23	495,483
52,602	5,264	10,810	57,866	0.16	68,676
617,278	29,539	88,879	646,817	0.12	735,696
67,408	6,961	8,970	74,369	0.11	83,339
453,605	17,296	47,122	470,901	0.09	518,023
372,901	49,894	73,248	422,795	0.15	496,043
175,001	10,618	29,356	185,619	0.14	214,975
380,733	22,460	63,207	403,193	0.14	466,400
2,919,108	326,898	547,578	3,246,006	0.14	3,793,584
215,608	34,990	42,217	250,598	0.14	292,815
2,451	4,433	5,035	6,884	0.42	11,919
124,247	56,342	73,372	180,589	0.29	253,961
168,272	81,870	59,263	250,142	0.19	309,405
7,780	4,229	11,566	12,009	0.49	23,575
154,488	29,395	47,723	183,883	0.21	231,606
20,197	14,865	31,253	35,062	0.47	66,315
110,042	43,559	48,639	153,601	0.24	202,240
86,027	15,171	24,750	101,198	0.20	125,948
2,906	876	1,458	3,782	0.28	5,240

108,102	11,748	22,735	119,850	0.16	142,585
1,000,120	297,478	368,011	1,297,598	0.22	1,665,609
70,814	44,971	37,164	115,785	0.24	152,949
75,864	45,866	65,076	121,730	0.35	186,806
140,315	48,249	87,559	188,564	0.32	276,123
81,447	33,965	35,915	115,412	0.24	151,327
191,447	23,924	37,052	215,371	0.15	252,423
251,453	17,245	37,311	268,698	0.12	306,009
147,277	83,676	95,982	230,953	0.29	326,935
367,943	27,638	79,990	395,581	0.17	475,571
1,326,560	325,534	476,049	1,652,094	0.22	2,128,143
29,423	14,904	29,980	44,327	0.40	74,307
19,739	13,436	21,358	33,175	0.39	54,533
7,745	1,849	7,767	9,594	0.45	17,361
8,896	6,389	10,924	15,285	0.42	26,209
27,156	88,846	25,314	116,002	0.18	141,316
33,541	13,029	22,062	46,570	0.32	68,632
53,311	65,068	42,445	118,379	0.26	160,824
18,502	9,492	20,076	27,994	0.42	48,070
25,255	8,495	15,469	33,750	0.31	49,219
116,725	26,285	33,763	143,010	0.19	176,773
340,293	247,793	229,158	588,086	0.28	817,244
9,021,298	1,297,734	2,029,431	10,319,032	0.16	12,348,463

2016 MPAC					
Terres agricoles totales	Terres agricoles totales excluant la forêt aménagée	Terres en culture	Pâturages totaux	Boisés, milieux humides et autres terres	Superficie agricole totale à laquelle on soustrait les boisés, les milieux humides et les autres terres
172,688	170,804	128,124	3,672	16,794	131,796
538,194	537,474	599,381	4,869	30,431	604,250
402,957	399,367	336,577	3,603	49,080	340,180
343,117	341,668	308,072	2,258	18,304	310,330
582,028	564,534	361,034	10,639	55,080	371,673
165,532	162,818	100,089	5,715	12,266	105,804
605,441	603,821	491,190	5,477	53,501	496,667
656,825	653,002	542,188	21,965	64,439	564,153
273,956	269,770	179,404	2,622	26,388	182,026
363,304	350,739	380,190	10,351	42,215	390,541
4,104,042	4,053,997	3,426,249	80,275	359,394	3,506,524
682,212	657,118	368,261	64,916	77,300	433,177
264,281	239,697	122,320	16,187	18,882	138,507
807,786	724,944	295,038	64,746	88,413	359,784
109,076	103,790	57,116	4,937	10,867	62,053
754,907	743,351	572,037	25,525	83,914	597,562
116,925	104,604	80,409	5,581	9,593	85,990
499,187	497,449	468,573	13,800	50,871	482,373
508,595	455,044	373,658	46,599	63,093	420,257
228,466	226,736	169,677	12,139	28,239	181,816
514,835	505,419	436,390	25,163	62,350	461,553
4,486,269	4,258,153	2,943,479	279,593	493,522	3,223,072
390,807	360,541	210,758	20,352	33,408	231,110
194,945	22,805	910	3,455	2,798	4,365
582,042	380,403	128,509	43,720	50,252	172,229
455,115	433,426	162,662	65,678	49,453	228,340
146,366	31,132	4,873	918	7,782	5,791
319,346	305,885	149,301	21,147	32,998	170,448
205,262	115,111	19,215	11,094	23,888	30,309
376,671	318,571	106,590	36,977	36,805	143,567
177,449	172,848	79,212	11,139	20,553	90,351
1,666	1,654	2,868	309	3,212	3,177

195,261	184,338	109,180	7,271	17,963	116,451
3,044,929	2,326,713	974,078	223,657	277,515	1,197,735
314,327	270,069	61,698	29,454	31,124	91,152
360,248	302,407	71,083	33,348	49,739	104,431
439,400	417,662	149,970	34,726	70,584	184,696
250,283	231,350	83,319	25,119	29,934	108,438
333,611	321,717	186,608	17,074	31,092	203,682
348,332	335,691	269,433	13,171	33,897	282,604
551,874	478,281	151,055	68,093	77,526	219,148
585,849	574,421	390,962	23,211	64,826	414,173
3,183,924	2,931,598	1,364,128	244,196	388,722	1,608,324
242,993	120,600	27,641	6,478	29,809	34,119
354,239	111,729	20,122	7,773	13,299	27,895
105,791	38,466	7,971	1,526	5,240	9,497
46,605	46,187	6,758	5,678	5,305	12,436
292,849	238,821	26,611	67,775	17,929	94,386
141,135	122,352	35,813	9,118	17,171	44,931
217,859	217,263	59,060	58,413	32,736	117,473
101,820	86,132	20,306	10,059	14,543	30,365
69,008	60,660	22,708	5,858	11,342	28,566
248,364	245,191	116,087	21,456	26,678	137,543
1,820,662	1,287,400	343,077	199,125	169,061	542,202
16,639,826	14,857,860	9,051,011	1,026,846	1,688,214	10,077,857

2021 Statistique Canada		2021 MPAC		Différence entre le total des terres agricoles évalué par la SEFM et la superficie agricole totale activement exploitée selon le Recensement de l'agriculture.
Pourcentage non agricole	Superficie agricole totale	Terres agricoles totales	Terres agricoles totales excluant la forêt aménagée	
0.11	148,590	171,589	169,600	22,999
0.05	634,681	537,326	536,190	-97,355
0.13	389,260	403,232	398,732	13,972
0.06	328,634	339,317	337,561	10,683
0.13	426,753	581,377	562,442	154,624
0.10	118,070	164,319	161,187	46,249
0.10	550,168	605,164	603,045	54,996
0.10	628,592	655,387	651,619	26,795
0.13	208,414	272,223	267,926	63,809
0.10	432,756	427,724	426,154	-5,032
0.09	3,865,918	4,157,658	4,114,455	291,740
0.15	510,477	683,470	655,086	172,993
0.12	157,389	264,906	238,282	107,517
0.20	448,197	820,064	727,687	371,867
0.15	72,920	107,077	101,506	34,157
0.12	681,476	747,337	740,018	65,861
0.10	95,583	114,880	102,357	19,297
0.10	533,244	497,574	495,937	-35,670
0.13	483,350	633,384	575,510	150,034
0.13	210,055	225,088	223,494	15,033
0.12	523,903	513,604	503,244	-10,299
0.13	3,716,594	4,607,385	4,363,121	890,791
0.13	264,518	384,149	352,199	119,631
0.39	7,163	199,663	22,095	192,500
0.23	222,481	522,632	367,681	300,151
0.18	277,793	445,572	417,975	167,779
0.57	13,573	153,148	30,064	139,575
0.16	203,446	318,793	302,401	115,347
0.44	54,197	214,739	103,988	160,542
0.20	180,372	374,320	313,150	193,948
0.19	110,904	173,297	168,294	62,393
0.50	6,389	1,412	1,399	-4,977

0.13	134,414	190,568	181,491	56,154
0.19	1,475,250	2,978,293	2,260,737	1,503,043
0.25	122,276	320,481	261,136	198,205
0.32	154,170	360,689	296,041	206,519
0.28	255,280	436,813	411,947	181,533
0.22	138,372	250,953	228,473	112,581
0.13	234,774	332,525	318,757	97,751
0.11	316,501	350,487	334,438	33,986
0.26	296,674	550,307	468,679	253,633
0.14	478,999	585,835	569,787	106,836
0.19	1,997,046	3,188,091	2,889,257	1,191,045
0.47	63,928	272,668	150,372	208,740
0.32	41,194	353,792	235,757	312,598
0.36	14,737	50,031	12,156	35,294
0.30	17,741	45,272	497	27,531
0.16	112,315	296,663	64,368	184,348
0.28	62,102	156,672	34,378	94,570
0.22	150,209	218,204	596	67,995
0.32	44,908	99,243	16,058	54,335
0.28	39,908	72,151	11,632	32,243
0.16	164,221	254,423	1,598	90,202
0.24	711,263	1,819,120	527,411	1,107,857
0.14	11,766,071	16,750,547	14,154,981	4,984,476



Report to County Council

From: Dominique Giguère, Warden

Date: April 14, 2026

Subject: ADM 26-12 - Recommendations from Committee of the Whole – March 24, 2026

Recommendation(s):

THAT item CW26-32 from the Committee of the Whole meeting dated March 24, 2026, and the recommendations therein be adopted.

Introduction:

Recommendations of the Committee of the Whole are considered formally for adoption at the next regular meeting of County Council.

Background and Discussion:

At the meeting held on March 24, 2026, Committee of the Whole recommended the following to County Council:

CW26-32	THAT the Unscheduled Closing of County Facilities Policy as attached as Appendix A to the report titled "CCS-26-02 Unscheduled Closing of County Facilities Policy Approval" from the Director of Community and Cultural Services dated March 24, 2026, be hereby approved.	Moved: Councillor Ketchabaw Seconded: Councillor Widner Motion Carried.
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Additional Notes:

None.

Financial Implications:

None.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

The initiatives outlined in this report are integral to the County's day-to-day operations, supporting effective governance and the efficient delivery of services to Council and the public. Together, they enhance organizational efficiency and reflect the County's ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability, and good governance.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

None.

Communication Requirements:

None.

Conclusion:

Recommendations from the Committee of the Whole meeting held on March 24, 2026, are included in this report for Council's consideration.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Dominique Giguère
Warden

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk



Report to County Council

From: Brian Masschaele, Director of Community and Cultural Services

Date: April 14, 2026

Subject: CCS 26-03 West Lorne Library Expansion Update

Recommendation(s):

THAT the report titled “CCS 26-03 West Lorne Library Expansion Update” from the Director of Community and Cultural Services dated April 14, 2026 be received and filed

Introduction:

The Municipality of West Elgin recently approved a tender to proceed with renovations to expand the West Lorne Library. This report provides County Council with an overview of the project, associated timelines and matters for future consideration.

Background and Discussion:

At the September 10, 2024 meeting, County Council approved the following recommendations:

“THAT Elgin County Council affirms support in principle for an expansion to the West Lorne Library in the West Lorne Community Complex of up to one thousand square feet and in the space adjacent to the Library’s current location, subject to the terms and conditions of the County of Elgin’s *Library Branch Construction Policy*; and,

THAT staff be directed to work with the Municipality of West Elgin to supply further information to County Council as part of a “Letter of Intent” from the Municipality of West Elgin as outlined in the County’s *Library Branch Construction Policy* for formal adoption at a later date.”

West Elgin Council approved a tender to proceed with these renovations at their March 12, 2026 meeting. The following is an overview of the project:

- Renovations will be proceeding at the West Lorne Community Complex where the West Lorne branch of the Elgin County Library is located. The branch currently comprises 1,793 square feet of assignable library space. This project

will result in an expansion of approximately 1,000 square feet, resulting in approximately 2,800 square feet of assignable library space. A plan of the area to be renovated is attached to this report.

- Renovations include demolition of a partition wall, flooring replacement and general building upgrades. Renovations may take up to six months, with occupancy anticipated to be no later than the end of October 2026.
- Renovations are also proceeding to create accessible washroom facilities and upgrades to West Elgin's Council Chamber also located in the building. However, these projects are not encompassed in the assignable lease space for the library.

The full scope of this project means that there will not be any space available to facilitate temporary library service on site. Therefore, the branch will need to close at its current location for a period of up to six months in 2026. Staff are currently exploring alternate service options which may involve a temporary increase to service at the Rodney Library and/or a temporary location in West Lorne.

Financial Implications:

Funds have been approved in Elgin County Library's 2026 budget allocation to encompass costs associated with this project as follows:

- An increase of approximately \$18,500 annually for leasing costs upon project completion. Discussions are underway with the Municipality of West Elgin regarding the suspension of lease payments while the branch is closed to the public and in light of costs being experienced by the County such as storage of equipment and collections. An update on this matter will form part of a future report to County Council.
- An increase of 8 hours per week towards staffing in anticipation of increased hours of operation once the project is completed. Full implementation is expected in the 3rd quarter of 2026. Recommendations on revised hours of operation will be the subject of a future report to County Council.
- Up to \$85,000 in capital funds for temporary storage, shelving, furniture, technology and collections throughout the space. Expenditures will begin in the 2nd quarter of 2026.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

Strategy #1 – Collaborative Engagement and Communication

Goal 1: Strengthen Relationships with Local Municipal Partners. This project strengthens the partnership between the County of Elgin and Municipality of West Elgin.

Strategy #5 – Community Well-being and Inclusivity

Tactic 5.3: Increased access to all health and wellness services, through increased utilization of our library system. This project will increase library service to County residents.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

West Elgin Council’s commitment to proceed with these renovations through a tender award satisfies the major criterion in the County’s “Library Branch Construction Policy” to be eligible for an interest-free loan of up to \$100,000 of project costs repayable over a ten-year period. West Elgin’s construction costs associated with library renovations will be approximately \$200,000 plus architectural fees. It is anticipated that the Municipality of West Elgin will be making a formal request for such a loan to County Council. This matter, along with the need for a revised lease to encompass the expanded premises, will be the subject of future reports to County Council.

Communication Requirements:

The County’s communications team and library staff will be providing the public with regular updates on the project’s progress and impacts to library service on a continual basis and through all available channels. Regular communications with the Municipality of West Elgin will also form part of this plan.

Conclusion:

This is an exciting project that will result in expanded space and enhancement of library services at the West Lorne branch. The increase in space is justified according to the library’s planning guidelines and relative to recent growth in the catchment area being served by the branch. This project marks the first increase in library service in West Elgin since the West Lorne branch was re-constructed after a fire that occurred in 2006.

County Council can also expect further reports related to this project on matters such as required lease revisions, the possibility of an interest-free loan to West Elgin to support associated costs, revised hours of operation and general project updates. Staff will also be engaging in a user survey to assess the types of services, collections and hours residents would like to see once the new space opens to the public.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

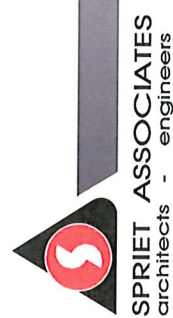
Approved for Submission

Brian Masschaele
Director of Community and
Cultural Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk



AREAS OF RENOVATION
WEST LORNE LIBRARY
 WEST LORNE, ONTARIO



Bidder Name	Office Location	base bid (excluding HST)	separate price (excluding HST)	project total (excluding HST)
SAVV/Developments Ltd	Milton	\$189,800.00	\$75,500.00	\$265,300.00
Accuratius Design & Build Inc.	London	\$199,500.00	\$73,500.00	\$273,000.00
London, London ON	London	\$238,146.00	\$93,820.00	\$331,966.00
Frontier Group	Richmon Hill	\$252,782.86	\$82,415.62	\$315,198.48
Complete Building Systems Inc.	Kitchener	\$257,900.00	\$98,430.00	\$356,330.00
Clear Contracting	Kitchener	\$259,800.00	\$94,177.40	\$353,977.40
AlJBI Design Build	Dresden	\$290,600.00	\$101,500.00	\$392,100.00
Eglin	St. Thomas	\$392,000.00	\$98,000.00	\$490,000.00
Se7en Hills inc	North York	\$560,000.00	\$43,250.00	\$603,250.00
MP Construction Enterprise		bid disqualified		
Opulence Construction		bid disqualified		



Report to County Council

From: Peter Dutchak, Director of Engineering Services

Date: April 14, 2026

Subject: ENG 26-08 Highbury Avenue – Upload Request

Recommendation(s):

THAT Highbury Avenue is an important economic corridor connecting the City of St. Thomas and its Power Co. development to the City of London and Highway 401 corridor, and;

THAT the Province's Southwestern Ontario Transportation Planning Study has identified Highbury Avenue as part of the regional Strategic Goods Movement Network, that supports the needs of businesses and employees, that moves goods and services reliably and safely and that facilitates economic drivers, and;

THAT the transportation master plans of the County of Elgin and City of London have identified that Highbury Avenue will exceed its 2-lane capacity, necessitating widening from two to four lanes in the next 10 years at an estimated cost of \$150 million requiring multi-jurisdictional coordination and complex planning, and therefore;

THAT the County of Elgin requests that the Province of Ontario accept the transfer of jurisdictional authority over Highbury Avenue at no cost, with the respectful request to collaborate with the County to ensure this important asset accommodates the region's needs.

Introduction:

Highbury Avenue (CR 30) has been acknowledged as an important strategic corridor by the County of Elgin, City of St. Thomas, City of London and Province of Ontario in their respective master transportation plans and studies. This 2-lane roadway is expected to reach operational capacity within the next 10 years and will require expansion to a 4-lane highway design. The cost of this future project exceeds local government's ability to fund and therefore this important regional transportation asset is best suited under the Province's jurisdiction.

This report presents a recommendation, with Council's support, to request that the Province of Ontario assume jurisdiction over the County of Elgin's portion of Highbury

Avenue, and between Ron McNeil Line and Webber Bourne, being a total distance of 5.7km.

Background and Discussion:

The County's Transportation Master Plan has identified Highbury Avenue (CR 30) will exceed its 2-lane capacity, necessitating widening from two to four lanes in the 2035-2045 timeframe. This outcome aligns with the City of London's Mobility Master Plan which recommends the same improvements along this corridor. The Province's "Southwestern Ontario Transportation Planning Study, 2025" has also identified Highbury Avenue as part of the region's strategic goods movement network.

Delivering these upgrades will require significant multi-jurisdictional coordination between the County of Elgin, City of London, City of St. Thomas and Province and cost an estimated \$150 million to create a four-lane roadway between the City of St. Thomas to Highway 401.

Recognizing the scale, cost, and regional importance of upgrading Highbury Avenue in support of PowerCo, its supply chain, and the broader Yarmouth Yards development exceeds what local governments can reasonably deliver on their own.

Uploading Highbury to the Province would:

- Support Ontario's significant investment in PowerCo and the growing manufacturing ecosystem
- Improve goods movement efficiency across the region
- Relieve unsustainable financial pressure on municipal taxpayers
- Strengthen both regional and provincial economic resilience
- Enable and support population growth for commuters, residents and visitors

The City of London requested a delegation at the Good Roads conference in Toronto at the end of March to advance this file. Representatives from the City of London, County of Elgin and City of St. Thomas met with Parliamentary Assistant Hardeep Singh Grewal (MPP-Brampton East) to request that the Province assume jurisdiction over Highbury Avenue. The meeting was successful in delivering the message of need and the delegation was subsequently requested to provide formal resolutions from each respective municipality stating the ask of the Province formally as next steps. Once all three municipalities obtain resolutions from their respective Councils, they will be sent to the Province.

Financial Implications:

Staff recommends to offer the transfer Highbury Avenue (CR 30) at no cost to the Province, and respectfully requests the Province for ongoing collaboration to ensure upgrades meet the needs outlined in our TMPs.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

This initiative supports the responsible maintenance and management of County assets as laid out in the Asset Management Plan. This work reflects the County's ongoing commitment to maintaining safe, functional, and efficient facilities and infrastructure.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

None.

Communication Requirements:

A copy of the resolution endorsed by Council will be sent to the Province, seeking their response.

Conclusion:

The County's Transportation Master Plan has identified Highbury Avenue (CR 30) will exceed its 2-lane capacity, necessitating widening from two to four lanes in the 2035-2045 timeframe.

Recognizing the scale, cost, and regional importance of upgrading Highbury Avenue in support of PowerCo, its supply chain, and the broader Yarmouth Yards development exceeds what local governments can reasonably deliver on their own and a request to upload the asset to the Province.

Following a delegation with the P.A. Grewal, this report provides a resolution for Council's approval and to be sent to the Province to advance this request.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Peter Dutchak
Director of Engineering Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk



HIGHBURY AVE. SECTIONS

TOTAL LENGTH OF HWY - 21.1KM

- CITY OF LONDON - 12.9KM
- COUNTY OF ELGIN - 5.7KM
- CITY OF ST. THOMAS - 2.5KM

HIGHBURY AVE. 2 LANES - 16.1KM
 Highbury Ave. 4 Lanes - 5KM



London
CANADA





Report to County Council

From: Lindsay King, Policy Planner

Date: April 14, 2026

Subject: PLN 26-04 Proposed Provincial Planning Reforms under Bill 98 and the Build Communities Strong Fund

Recommendation(s):

RESOLVED THAT staff be directed to prepare comments on the proposed reforms under Bill 98 and the Build Communities Strong Fund, in accordance with Council direction; and

THAT staff be directed to submit these comments to the Province during the consultation period for open Environmental Registry of Ontario postings, as detailed in the report titled “PLN 26-04 Proposed Provincial Planning Reforms under Bill 98 and the Build Communities Strong Fund.”

Introduction:

This report provides an overview of recent Provincial and Federal initiatives related to housing supply and infrastructure delivery, including proposed legislative changes under Bill 98: *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026* and associated postings on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO), as well as the announcement of the Build Communities Strong Fund.

Bill 98 proposes a series of legislative amendments intended to accelerate housing development and streamline infrastructure approvals in Ontario. The proposed changes are supported by multiple ERO postings, which outline potential regulatory tools such as standardized development permissions and reduced approval barriers.

Separately, the Federal and Provincial governments have announced the Build Communities Strong Fund, a joint infrastructure funding program intended to support the delivery of housing-enabling infrastructure, including water, wastewater, transportation, and transit systems.

While both initiatives are aligned in their objective of increasing housing supply, they operate through distinct mechanisms. The proposed legislative changes under Bill 98 would establish new planning and development frameworks, whereas the *Build*

Communities Strong Fund represents a discretionary funding opportunity to support infrastructure investment. This report outlines the key components of these initiatives and identifies potential implications for Elgin County, including impacts to planning policy, infrastructure planning, and coordination with its Local Municipal Partners.

Background and Discussion:

Bill 98 – Provincial Legislative Context

The province of Ontario has introduced *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026* as part of its broader strategy to increase housing supply and support economic growth. The proposed legislation includes a range of amendments intended to streamline planning approvals, reduce regulatory barriers, and improve coordination between land use planning and infrastructure delivery. These changes are consistent with recent Provincial efforts to accelerate housing development and standardize planning processes across municipalities. If enacted, Bill 98 would enable the Province to introduce new or amended regulations under the *Planning Act*, the *Municipal Act*, and related legislation. These proposed regulatory changes have been released for public consultation through postings on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) and will be open for comment until April 29, 2026 – May 14, 2026, depending on the specific ERO.

Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) Postings

In support of Bill 98, the Province has released multiple ERO postings outlining proposed regulatory changes intended to facilitate housing development and infrastructure delivery. Key themes emerging from these postings include:

- Establishing standardized development permissions (e.g. minimum lot size, non-municipal servicing criteria);
- Streamlining planning approvals and reducing administrative barriers;
- Enhancing coordination between land use planning and infrastructure systems; and,
- Supporting digital modernization and data-driven planning processes.

Since these postings are currently subject to public consultation, they may be revised prior to implementation.

Federal-Provincial Funding Announcement

In addition to the proposed legislative changes, the Federal and Provincial governments have jointly announced the Build Communities Strong Fund. The funding program, announced by Prime Minister Carney and Premier Ford, represents an \$8.8 billion investment over 10 years, with contributions shared between the Federal and Provincial

governments. The Build Communities Strong Fund is intended to support the delivery of infrastructure required to enable housing development including:

- Water and wastewater servicing,
- Transportation infrastructure; and
- Transit and related systems.

To access the Build Communities Strong Fund, municipalities must reduce their Development Charges by up to 50%. While further details regarding program eligibility, intake processes, and funding criteria have not yet been released, the program is expected to be application-based and focused on projects that facilitate housing growth. The Build Communities Strong Fund is not part of the ERO process and is not contingent on the passage of Bill 98. It does, however, align with the Province's broader objectives of accelerating housing supply by supporting the infrastructure necessary to enable development.

Financial Implications:

From a financial perspective, the impact of the proposed Development Charges (DC) reductions and proposed planning policy changes may introduce both opportunities and risks to Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners.

Opportunities:

- Potential funding to support infrastructure and reduce upfront development costs
- May help accelerate growth and expand the tax base

Uncertainties:

- Funding details, timing, and eligibility are still unclear
- Uncertain if funding will fully replace lost Development Charge revenue
- Legislative and regulatory changes will require updates to policies and procedures, with unknown staff resource implications
- DC reductions could create short-term revenue gaps
- Non-municipal servicing could lead to long-term financial liabilities

Collectively, these changes may alter how growth-related infrastructure is financed, requiring careful coordination between Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners to balance development with long term financial sustainability.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

This review and analysis of the proposed legislative changes and federal-provincial funding initiative align with Elgin County's Strategic Plan by supporting informed, coordinated, and forward-looking decision making in the face of evolving provincial policy. This work advances Strategy 1 (Collaborative Engagement and Communication) through ongoing coordination with Local Municipal Partners and monitoring of provincial initiatives, while also supporting Strategy 3 (Service Excellence and Efficiency) by identifying opportunities to improve infrastructure planning and service delivery through new funding mechanisms. The assessment of financial implications, infrastructure needs, and growth management impacts further align with Strategy 4 (Sustainable Community

Growth), ensuring that development is planned in a way that balances housing supply objectives with long-term financial and infrastructure sustainability.

Policy Analysis:

The following sections outline the proposed legislative changes as per Bill 98: *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026*, followed by an analysis of the implications for Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners.

1.1 Proposed Standardized Official Plans

The Province is proposing significant structural reforms to Ontario’s land use planning system through ERO postings 026-0300 and 026-0315, both released on March 30, 2026, with a commenting deadline of April 29, 2026. These proposals represent a shift toward a more centralized and standardized Official Plan framework, with implications for both local and upper-tier municipalities.

Under ERO 026-0300, the Province is proposing to require municipalities to adopt a prescribed Official Plan structure and standardized land use designations. This would fundamentally change how municipalities prepare and organize their Official Plans, moving away from locally tailored policy frameworks, and towards a uniform, province-directed format. ERO 026-0315 proposes to redefine the role of upper-tier Official Plans by limiting their scope to broad, regional-scale policy matters, and reducing or eliminating site-specific and detailed land use policies. Specifically, the Province proposes simplifying land use designations, such as consolidating multiple designations (e.g. Neighbourhoods, Commercial, Mixed Use) into broader categories like “Community Areas”. This ERO would also clarify and expand the use of secondary plans, which would no longer require Ministerial approval and would not constitute Official Plan Amendments. Lastly, this ERO proposes to restrict the ability of municipalities to impose requirements for green building standards, sustainable design elements, or enhanced development standards through Official Plan and Zoning By-laws, including requirements for electric vehicle charging stations. These changes are intended to streamline planning processes and reduce duplication between upper-tier and local planning documents.

1.2 Implications of Proposed Standardized Official Plans for Elgin County

The proposed changes have several key implications for Elgin County in its role as an upper-tier municipality;

- Reduced Upper-Tier Planning Authority
 - Greater focus on regional-level policy
 - May limit the County’s ability to influence site-specific land use decisions
 - Existing detailed or prescriptive policies may need to be reviewed, removed, or restructured
- Standardized Official Plans:
 - Will require updates to the Elgin County Official Plan
 - May involve restricting the Plan and renaming or consolidating land use designations
 - Will require additional staff time and resources once details are finalized

- Changes to Secondary Plans:
 - Removal of Ministerial approval may allow for more flexible and timely local planning
 - May reduce the role of secondary plans as integrated policy tools
 - Increases reliance on Local Municipal Partners' Official Plans
 - May limit County oversight of secondary planning frameworks
- Expand Ministerial Powers:
 - Increased use of Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs) and exemption authority
 - May reduce municipal certainty and increase provincial intervention in planning decisions

Overall, these changes reinforce the need for strong, clear regional policies, close coordination with Local Municipal Partners, and ongoing monitoring of provincial decisions that may impact local planning authority.

2.1 Proposed Parkland Policy Changes

The Province is proposing changes to Parkland Requirements through ERO 026-0312 (posted on March 30, 2026, with a comment period ending May 14, 2026) introducing a more standardized and provincially guided approach to parkland dedication under the *Planning Act*. The proposal would allow developers to identify and propose parkland as part of a development application, rather than municipalities selecting the lands, with municipalities required to evaluate these proposals based on provincially prescribed criteria. It would also expand the types of eligible parkland to include certain encumbered lands (excluding financially encumbered lands) and privately owned publicly accessible spaces (POPs).

The regulation would establish clear criteria for ineligible lands, including contaminated lands, hazardous lands such as floodplains, lands that cannot function as parks, financially encumbered lands, and lands that are not publicly accessible. It would also identify conditionally acceptable lands, such as those adjacent to natural heritage features where no negative impacts would occur, as well as lands within the Greenbelt Plan Area, Oak Ridges Moraine, and Niagara Escarpment Plan areas, subject to applicable constraints. The proposed process would require municipalities to accept or refuse proposed parkland within 20 days, with any refusal requiring written reasons and notice of appeal rights. Where a decision is appealed, municipalities would be required to forward the complete record to the Ontario Land Tribunal within 15 days, including all submission materials, the staff report, and the notice of refusal.

2.2 Implications of Proposed Parkland Policy Changes for Elgin County

The proposed changes may have several implications for Elgin County and Local Municipal Partners responsible for parkland dedication:

- New Parkland Dedication Options:
 - Introduction of privately owned publicly accessible spaces and other non-traditional parkland forms
 - May require more complex legal agreements
- Increased Administrative Demands:

- Greater staff resources needed to review, negotiate, and administer new dedication arrangements
- Potential Increase in Parkland Supply:
 - Broader dedication options may result in more parkland secured in urban areas
- Impacts on Funding Models
 - Reduced reliance on cash-in-lieu contributions
 - May affect how municipalities fund and plan for parkland dedication in the long term

Overall, these changes may increase flexibility in parkland provision but will require additional administrative capacity and adjustments to existing funding and planning approaches.

3.1 Proposed Reforms to Site Plan Control

ERO 026-0310, posted on March 30, 2026, with a comment period ending May 14, 2026, proposes significant reforms to Site Plan Control under the *Planning Act*. The Province is seeking feedback on a range of potential changes intended to streamline the development approval process and reduce timelines. The proposal outlines both a more extreme option and several moderate reform options. The most significant option under consideration would be the elimination of Site Plan Control entirely, representing a fundamental shift in how site-level development is regulated in Ontario.

Alternatively, the Province is considering a series of more targeted changes to streamline the process while retaining Site Plan Control in a modified form. These include limiting applications to a maximum of three circulation rounds, after which a mandatory meeting would be required to resolve all outstanding issues. The Province is also proposing to define and standardize the scope of Site Plan Control by prescribing what matters municipalities may review.

Additional proposed changes include the introduction of mandatory timelines, with applications potentially proceeding to arbitration if those timelines are not met. The Province is also considering a tiered approach to Site Plan Control, whereby full review would be limited to more complex developments, while simpler applications would be streamlined or potentially exempt from the process altogether.

3.2 Implications of Proposed Reforms to Site Plan Control for Elgin County

The proposed reforms have significant implications for Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners:

- Reduced Municipal Control:
 - Elimination of Site Plan Control would limit oversight of site-level design
 - Impacts ability to address building placement, landscaping, grading, servicing, and urban design
- Standardized Submission Requirements:
 - Provincially prescribed requirements may limit scope of municipal review
 - Reduces ability to respond to site-specific conditions and local priorities

- Administrative and Process Changes:
 - Local Municipal Partners may need to update Site Plan Control By-laws
 - Revisions may include application requirements, circulation processes, and internal review procedures
- Potential Efficiency Gains:
 - Intended to streamline approvals and accelerate development timelines
 - May reduce staff time per application and increase predictability for applicants
- Trade-Offs:
 - Efficiencies may come at the cost of flexibility
 - Reduced ability to address complex or site-specific issues.

While the changes may improve approval timelines, they could significantly limit municipal oversight and the ability to ensure site-specific planning outcomes.

4.1 Proposed Changes to Complete Application Requirements

The Province is proposing a series of reforms to complete application requirements through ERO postings 026-0305, 026-0313, and 026-0314, all released on March 30, 2026, with comment periods ending May 14, 2026. Collectively these proposals are intended to standardize and streamline how planning applications are submitted, reviewed, and deemed complete across Ontario.

ERO 026-0305 proposes to fully enable electronic submission of planning applications and notices. Under this proposal, original or certified hard copies would no longer be required, and notices related to public meetings, open houses, and complete applications could be provided electronically to the Province.

ERO 026-0313 proposes standardizing the information and materials that municipalities may require as part of a complete application. This would be achieved through a provincially prescribed “master list” of submission requirements consisting of:

- Core Studies which would generally be permitted to all applications; and
- Contingent studies which could only be required where specific criteria or triggers are met (e.g., archaeology or environmental studies).

ERO 026-0314 proposes to expand the list of “prescribed professionals” whose technical studies must be accepted as part of a complete application. In addition to engineers (currently the only “prescribed professionals”), this list would include professions such as landscape architects, environmental professionals, hydrogeologists, and transportation planners. Municipalities would effectively be prohibited from deeming an application incomplete based on concerns with studies prepared by these prescribed professionals.

4.2 Implications Proposed Changes to Complete Application Requirements for Elgin County

The proposed changes represent a significant shift towards greater provincial standardization and reduced municipal discretion at the application staged:

- Reduced Municipal Discretion

- Provincially prescribed list of permitted studies may limit ability to request additional or site-specific information
- May constrain ability to address rural, agricultural, or environmentally sensitive contexts
- Risk to Application Quality:
 - Requirement to accept studies upfront may limit early resolution of technical issues
 - Technical issues may be deferred to later stages, including appeals
- Digital Submission Requirements:
 - Full transition to electronic submission may improve efficiency
 - Minimal impact for Elgin County, which already accepts digital applications
- Policy and Process Updates:
 - May require updates to County and local Official Plans (application requirement sections)
 - Coordination with Local Municipal Partners will be needed to ensure consistency

Overall, these changes may streamline application intake but could shift complexity and risk further into the review process, reducing opportunities for early issue resolution.

5.1 Proposed Projection Methodology Guidelines

The Province has proposed a Projection Methodology Guidelines (PMG) document through ERO 026-0304 that introduces a more structured and standardized approach to growth forecasting and land needs assessments across Ontario. Municipalities would be required to base their forecasts on Ontario Population Projections prepared by the Ministry of Finance, with the potential ability to modify these projections were deemed appropriate.

The proposed guidance is organized around four key components: establishing municipal population projections, developing housing needs forecasts, developing employment forecasts, and undertaking land needs assessments. Together, these steps are intended to support planning for a 20- to 30-year horizon, ensuring sufficient land is available to accommodate anticipated growth. The PMG is intended to improve consistency across municipalities and the province, to incorporate current data, and to better plan for growth.

5.2 Implications of Projection Methodology Guidelines for Elgin County

The proposed updates to growth forecasting methodologies introduce a more standardized and data-driven approach for Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners.

- Alignment with Provincial Methodology:
 - Existing forecasts remain valid until future Official Plan updates
 - Future updates must align with Ministry of Finance projections and provincial guidance
 - Increased focus on tenure, type, affordability, and suppressed demand
- Reduced Local Flexibility
 - Limits ability to apply locally derived assumptions or alternative growth scenarios
 - Shifts toward a more provincially driven approach to growth modeling

- May necessitate future updates to County and local Official Plans
- Enhanced Housing Needs Assessment:
 - Requires more detailed, data-driven analysis
 - Greater emphasis on intensification assumptions
 - May require additional staff capacity, data collection and consultant support

Overall, these changes strengthen consistency and analytical rigor but will require additional resources and may limit flexibility in local growth planning.

6.1 Proposed Minimum Lot Sizes

ERO 026-0311 proposes a regulatory approach to establish a minimum residential lot size of 175 square metres (approximately 1,900 square feet) for fully serviced lands within settlement areas and outside of the Greenbelt. The proposed regulation would apply specifically to zoning by-laws. While zoning provisions would be overridden where they conflict with minimum lot size requirements, the subdivision approval process would continue to apply. Applicants would retain the ability to propose larger lots, as well as smaller lots.

6.2 Implications of Proposed Minimum Lot Sizes for Elgin County

The proposed minimum lot size regulation introduces several implications for Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners:

- Reduced Zoning Authority:
 - Limits ability to establish minimum lot sizes above the provincial standard (175 m²)
 - Conflicting zoning provisions (i.e. for minimum lot frontage and lot depth) would become unenforceable
 - Will require updates to local Zoning By-laws
 - Potential impacts on other zoning standards (i.e. parking and setbacks) remain unclear and require further review
- Increased Development Intensity:
 - Enables smaller lots, supporting infill and intensification in serviced areas
 - May improve land use efficiency and infrastructure utilization
 - Could introduce development pressure in areas not historically planned for higher density
- Community and Policy Alignment:
 - Smaller lot sizes may not align with existing community expectations or Council direction
 - May represent a shift from traditional development patterns

Overall, the regulation may support housing supply and efficiency objectives but will require zoning updates, infrastructure planning, and careful consideration of local context and community expectations.

7.1 Proposed Reforms to Water and Wastewater Servicing

The province is proposing significant changes to the governance and delivery of water and wastewater services through ERO postings 026-0301 and 026-0302, both released

March 30, 2026, with a comment period ending April 29, 2026. ERO 026-0301 proposes amendments to the *Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2002* to enable municipalities to deliver water and wastewater services through publicly owned corporate entities. These corporations would be separate legal entities, fully publicly owned, and responsible for the provision of water and wastewater services.

The proposed framework includes several measures to ensure continuity and public control. New corporations would be required to remain 100% publicly owned, with no private equity participation permitted. Where a municipality transfers services to such a corporation, existing employment contracts, collective agreements, and insurance arrangements would remain in place, and employee rights, including successor rights and pay equity protections, would be preserved. Municipal debt related to water and wastewater services would not be transferred to the new entity. Despite the governance shift, these systems would continue to be regulated as municipal drinking water systems and remain subject to existing legislative and compliance requirements. This proposal would effectively formalize a public utility model, whereby water and wastewater services are delivered by a municipally owned corporation operating at arm's length from Council and governed by a board of directors.

ERO 026-0302 proposes changes to facilitate the use of private or communal water and wastewater systems, particularly in situations where municipal servicing is unavailable. The Province has identified a key barrier to development is the lack of municipal servicing and municipal reluctance to approve alternative systems.

Under this proposal, municipalities would be required to grant consent for private or communal systems where prescribed provincial criteria are met. The Province would establish standardized requirements related to technical design, financial capacity, and submission materials, while municipalities would retain a role in verifying compliance and issuing decisions. Applicants would be required to demonstrate financial capacity, including reserve funds for long-term system maintenance. Municipalities would be able to impose conditions; however, these would be limited to prescribed areas related to safety and sustainability. In addition, amendments to the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* are proposed to ensure that municipal consent provided under the *Municipal Act* would automatically satisfy approval requirements under drinking water legislation.

7.2 Implications of Proposed Reforms to Water and Wastewater Servicing on Elgin County

The proposed changes represent a significant shift in the governance and delivery water and wastewater services for Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners:

- New Service Delivery Models:
 - Introduction of municipally owned service corporations
 - May improve flexibility and efficiency
 - May reduce direct municipal oversight and alignment with land use planning
- Reduced Municipal Control Over Servicing:
 - Requirement to permit private or communal systems where criteria met
 - Limits ability to use servicing as a tool to manage growth
 - May increase development pressure in un-serviced or rural areas

- Financial Risks:
 - Risk of system failure or insufficient long-term maintenance funding
 - Potential for municipalities to assume responsibility, creating financial liabilities
 - May require more complex agreements for ownership, operation, monitoring, and contingency planning
 - Increased administrative burden for review and oversight

Overall, while the changes may introduce more flexible servicing options, they also present significant risks related to growth management, financial liability, and long-term infrastructure oversight.

Federal-Provincial Partnership to Build Homes, Transit and Communities:

On March 30, 2026, the federal and provincial governments announced a joint funding initiative titled the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build Homes, Transit and Communities. The partnership commits approximately \$8.8 billion in cost-sharing federal and provincial funding over 10 years to support housing-enabling infrastructure, with a primary focus on increasing housing supply and improving affordability across Ontario.

8.1 Details of Joint Funding Initiative

The central component of the initiative is the provision of funding to offset reductions in municipal development charges (DCs) with participating municipalities expected to reduce DCs by up to 50% for a period of three years. This measure is intended to lower upfront development costs and accelerate housing construction. Municipal participation is required to access funding and expected to contribute to reducing barriers to development.

In addition to infrastructure funding, the initiative includes significant tax relief measures aimed at homebuyers, including the temporary removal of the provincial portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) on new homes within specified price thresholds. This is anticipated to reduce purchase costs and stimulate housing demand and supply.

8.2 Analysis of Joint Funding Initiative

While the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build Homes, Transit and Communities represent a significant investment in housing-enabling infrastructure and development charge relief, key program details remain undefined. As identified by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, uncertainties include the extent and implementation of DC reductions, the timing of funding relative to revenue impacts, eligibility criteria, and the treatment of municipalities without development charges. From a land use planning perspective, the initiative signals a shift toward accelerated housing delivery through reduced upfront costs and targeted infrastructure investment.

For Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners, this may reduce reliance on development charges as a growth management tool, increase pressure to advance development approvals and require more strategic coordination of infrastructure planning. At the same time, potential financial risks and uneven impacts across municipalities

highlight the need for continued monitoring and intergovernmental coordination as program details are finalized.

Potential financial risks include the possibility that the development charge reductions may be implemented in advance of funding being received, creating short-term revenue gaps, as well as the risk that provincial and federal funding may not fully offset lost revenues or may be conditional on project eligibility or timing. Uneven impacts may also arise across municipalities, as those with higher growth and development charge revenues may experience greater financial exposure but be better positioned to access funding, while smaller or rural municipalities may have limited ability to benefit from the program.

Proposed Legislative Changes:

The proposed changes under Bill 98 would amend the *Development Charges Act, 1997*, *Municipal Act, 2001*, and *Planning Act, 1990*, the *Building Code Act, 1992*, the *Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025*, and the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*. Collectively these changes intend to reduce the development costs, streamline approvals, and increase provincial control over planning and infrastructure.

Key changes include:

- Development Charges Act, 1997:
 - Exempts non-profit retirement home developments from development charges
- Municipal Act, 2001:
 - Establishes a framework for non-municipal communal water and wastewater systems
 - Requires municipalities to approve applications where prescribed criteria are met, limiting discretion
- Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025:
 - Introduces municipally owned service corporations
 - Allows transfer of services, staff, and agreements without disruption
 - Preserves existing rights and restricts transfer of long-term municipal debt
- Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002:
 - Ensures these corporations are regulated as municipal systems
 - Streamlines approvals by aligning consent requirements with the Municipal Act
- Planning Act, 1990:
 - Introduces standardized Official Plan structures and land use designations
 - Removes requirement for climate change policies
 - Expands Ministerial authority, including exemption from upper-tier conformity
 - Reduces notice requirements for Minister's Zoning Orders
 - Limits municipal authority on enhanced development standards
- Building Code Act, 1992:
 - Clarifies municipal authority to regulate environmental protection and conservation through by-laws

Overall, Bill 98 represents a broad restructuring of Ontario's planning and infrastructure framework, with increased provincial direction and reduced municipal discretion.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

The proposed legislative changes and funding initiatives are expected to have a direct and operational impact on Elgin County's Local Municipal Partners, as they retain primary responsibility for site plan approvals, zoning approvals, servicing, and development charge implementation. Collectively, these changes may reduce local discretion in key areas such as application submission requirements, site plan control, parkland dedication, and servicing decisions, while increasing pressure to accelerate development approvals and align with provincially prescribed processes. Local Municipal Partners may also need to update their Official Plans, Zoning By-laws and internal procedures to reflect standardized provincial requirements. Financially, potential reductions in development charges and reliance on conditional funding may introduce infrastructure financing challenges, while servicing reforms could increase exposure to long-term operational and financial risks.

Communication Requirements:

As these proposed legislative and regulatory changes are currently in the consultation phase through the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO), Elgin County's formal opportunity to provide input is limited to the prescribed comment period, which is currently slated for the next two to four weeks, depending on the ERO, prior to the second reading of the legislation. Currently, staff are seeking Council direction on the County's position to inform the preparation and submission of formal comments to the Province on the proposed changes.

Conclusion:

The proposed reforms under Bill 98, associated Environmental Registry postings, and the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build Homes, Transit and Communities collectively represent a significant shift in Ontario's land use planning and infrastructure framework. These changes are intended to accelerate housing delivery, streamline approval processes, and align infrastructure investment with growth objectives; however, they also introduce new considerations related to municipal autonomy, financial sustainability, and the coordination of planning and servicing. For Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners, the proposal highlights the need for continued collaboration, proactive policy alignment, and collaboration. As many elements of these initiatives remain under development, it is important for the County to actively participate in the consultation process and advocate for approaches that reflect local priorities and support long-term community outcomes.

All of which is Respectfully

Prepared by

Lindsay King
Policy Planner

Reviewed and submitted by

Mat Vaughan
Director of Planning and Development

Approved for Submission

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk



making waves **newsletter**

Making Waves is the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative's monthly newsletter. Read on to learn about our events and activities, along with important announcements and updates from our policy and program teams!

CEO Message

Dear Members and Partners,

In early March, a delegation of 20 Cities Initiative members gathered in Washington, DC, to advocate for our [2026 U.S. Federal Priorities](#) as part of Great Lakes Day. In meetings with 22 Members of Congress and their staff, along with senior officials at the U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Ontario and Quebec offices in Washington, we



called for the reauthorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. We also put forward measures to build a strong and thriving *Fresh Coast Economic Corridor*.

This annual event has become an inspiring testament to our collective impact on matters of economic development and trade, infrastructure renewal, and freshwater protection. Thank you to all our Members who joined us in Washington this year!



With Great Lakes Day behind us, we're advancing our work with **AquaAction** and the **Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers** on this year's binational [AquaHacking Challenge](#) – details are in this newsletter.

We're also in the final stretch of planning for our [Annual Conference](#), taking place **May 6–8 in Hamilton**. Centered on our *Fresh Coast Economic Corridor* vision, the conference will focus on practical strategies to implement our [Economic Transformation Action Plan](#) and advance responsible, water-centered regional growth.

Hamilton offers a firsthand look at a model Fresh Coast city, balancing ambitious economic development with land and water stewardship. [Register by April 15 to save 20% with our Early Advantage Rate.](#)

We hope to see you in Hamilton this May as we celebrate our region's economic dynamism and as we chart its future for the next ten years and beyond.

Warm regards,

Jonathan Altenberg
President and CEO

Upcoming Events

The Seaway's Inland Advantage – March 25, 2026, Montréal, QC – We are partnering with the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation for a day of dialogue and touring marine operations in the Montréal region. Join us and learn more and engage around the Seaway's priorities around expanding container shipping in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence, developing an Eastern energy corridor, and expanding the Seaway's shipping season. Please contact Gabriel Alves at galves@glslcities.org to express your interest in participating.

Annual Conference – May 6-8, 2026, Hamilton, ON – We're excited to bring our network to Ontario next spring, where we'll gather to discuss building the Fresh Coast Economic Corridor of freshwater-based industries and implementing our Economic Transformation Action Plan. Register by April 15 to get 20% off with our Early Advantage rate. [Learn more](#) and [Register](#) today.

U.S. Water Leaders Summit - November 12, Cleveland, OH - Save the Date



Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Binational AquaHacking - The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is proud to co-host this year's [AquaHacking Challenge](#) led by AquaAction, and we're inviting municipalities across the region to help spread the word.

AquaHacking is a 7-month entrepreneurship development program offered completely free to students and aspiring innovators.

We're asking our Member communities to support AquaHacking by sharing the opportunity through your own communication channels—including city websites, newsletters, social media, and direct outreach—and by helping to connect AquaAction with local universities, colleges, and innovation hubs, so students don't miss out.

The community with the highest number of registrations wins a **standalone water-tech engagement and showcase event for their community**—at no cost. **Please act fast. Registration closes April 6.**

To confirm your willingness to support, please email [Oliver Anderson at AquaAction](#). To make participation easy, AquaAction has also prepared a ready-to-use promotional toolkit you can share directly across your channels: <https://aquaaction.org/promotionaltoolkit-aquahackingbinational2026-eng>

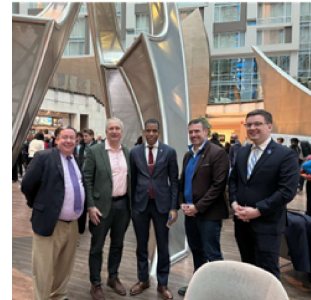
Basin Bulletin

Programs

- We are pleased to welcome three new staff members to the Cities Initiative to support our growing program offerings to members.
 - **Calantha Elsby** joins us from Norfolk County, Ontario as the Ontario Program Manager leading the development and rollout of new programs in Ontario.
 - **Emily Kuzmick** joins us from Sandusky, Ohio as the U.S. Coastal Programs Manager leading our expansive coastal resilience efforts across the eight Great Lakes States.
 - **Farzana Rahman** joins us from Mississauga, Ontario as the Operations and Programs Coordinator supporting water quality and economic transformation programs with our Canadian members.
- The **Resilient Coastal Projects Initiative** will kick off final engineering and design in three member communities this spring, bringing projects in **Two Harbors, MN**; **Cheboygan, MI**; and **Macomb County, MI** to shovel-ready status.

Policy

- **U.S. Conference of Mayors** – The Cities Initiative team attended U.S. Conference of Mayors’ 94th Winter Meeting in late January in Washington, DC, along with Mayor Ryan Sorenson of Sheboygan, WI, and Mayor Mat Siscoe of St. Catharines, ON. We met with Mayor Sean Ryan of Buffalo, NY, who agreed to join the Cities Initiative and our Great Lakes Lead Pipes Partnership.
- **Lake Erie West Outreach** – In late January, the Cities Initiative team also attended Lake Erie West Regional Council’s Annual Meeting in Perrysville, OH, just outside of Toledo. President and CEO Jon Altenberg and Executive Chris Ronayne of Cuyahoga County, OH, spoke at the event, touting the Cities Initiative’s [**Economic Transformation Action Plan**](#) and our vision for the Fresh Coast Economic Corridor.



New Members

Buffalo, NY

Mayor Sean Ryan

“The City of Buffalo is proud to join the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and stand alongside more than 425 mayors committed to protecting our shared waters. Lake Erie has always been at the heart of our community — driving our economy, sustaining our residents, and providing opportunities for recreation and natural beauty. Today, however, our communities face growing challenges from environmental pressures and aging infrastructure – and meeting these challenges will require purposeful collaboration with cities across our region.”

[Read press release.](#)



Elgin County, ON

Mayor Dominique Giguère

“The County of Elgin is thrilled to join the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and work with other like-minded partners to protect our freshwater resources, while also supporting local economic growth. As a community situated directly on Lake Erie, safeguarding our lakeshore and waterways is vital to the health, prosperity, and well-being of our residents. Being part of this network helps us explore forward-thinking solutions that ensure communities along the Great Lakes waterways continue to flourish.” [Read press release.](#)



Member Spotlight



Mayor Patrick Pélouquin of Sorel-Tracy: committed to preserving 400 years of our maritime heritage! Sorel-Tracy is located at the confluence of the St. Lawrence River and the Richelieu River. A city of 36,000 residents, our economy has developed around the maritime industry. The area is home to major industries, four private ports, a shipyard that built the reputation of our city, as well as large marinas that attract tourists from Quebec and the United States.

It's safe to say that water is part of our identity!

It gives us access to major global trade routes that sustain our industries, while also connecting us to the exceptional natural environment that surrounds us. Indeed, Sorel-Tracy is the gateway to the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve of Lake Saint-Pierre, which is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its designation this year. With its archipelago of 103 islands, it is the largest heronry in North America and an area of extraordinary biodiversity.

We have a duty to protect this heritage!

Thanks to the expertise of the Centre for Industrial Ecology Technology Transfer, an applied research centre at the Cégep de Sorel-Tracy, our economic development is now guided by the principles of the circular economy.

In other words, the waste outputs of one company become the raw materials of another. Several local businesses are already applying this principle, generating economic activity while optimizing our resources.

At a time when we must both combat and adapt to climate change, the City of Sorel-Tracy is also committed to creating a resilient territory. To this end, we established an Environment Office, a team of three specialists who guide our decision-making, collect scientific data, and implement environmental protection initiatives. In parallel, the city has also appointed a Chief Scientific Advisor who volunteers to conduct research and propose strategic directions.

As you can see, Sorel-Tracy is already well engaged in preserving its industrial and environmental heritage. Yes, the challenge is significant. But science can help us bring industry and ecology together.

Other Updates

To support our member communities in their efforts to remove and replace lead service lines while preserving residents' access to safe and affordable water, the Cities Initiative is pleased to highlight "[Filtered Not Bottled: Safe Drinking Water Without Plastic Pollution](#)", a resource developed by the [Plastic Pollution Coalition](#) (PPC). This brief equips policymakers with best practices, funding tools, community testimonials, and case studies for administering effective filter programs to address public water contamination within their districts and states. It outlines key strategies to protect public health, reduce plastic pollution, and rebuild trust in public water.

You can find ways to get involved with PPC's efforts [here](#).

Capital Updates



Washington D.C.

- **SCOTUS Decision** – On February 20, the **U.S. Supreme Court** ruled against the use of the **International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA)** to impose sweeping tariffs on several countries, including Canada. While this ruling invalidated the 35% tariffs on select Canadian goods, the United States subsequently instituted a 10% global tariff under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 that applies to these goods for the next 150 days. However, like the IEEPA tariffs, the Section 122 tariffs will have a limited impact on cross-border trade since approximately 90% of Canadian exports to the United States are exempt from tariffs under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement. The sectoral tariffs that have been imposed under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 – including 50% on steel and aluminum and 25% on cars/auto parts – remain in effect and continue to impact our regional economy.
- United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) – The Canadian American Business Council, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and nearly 70 industry groups [sent](#) a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer encouraging the United States to extend the USMCA. This letter broadly aligns with the [resolution](#) recently approved by the Cities Initiative’s Board of Directors, which also called on Canada and the United States to preserve and strengthen the USMCA.

Please get in touch with Travis Wheeler at twheeler@glslcities.org if you have any questions.

Ottawa

- In March 2026, the Government of Canada launched a **new call for proposals under the [Trade Diversification Corridors Fund](#), a \$5-billion federal program aimed at strengthening Canada’s supply-chain infrastructure and improving access to global markets.** The program supports projects that enhance the efficiency and resilience of ports, transportation corridors, and intermodal logistics networks across the country. These investments are intended to reduce transportation bottlenecks and

improve the movement of goods between Canada and international markets. This federal funding opportunity could be particularly relevant for municipalities and port authorities across the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway, where investments in port modernization, marine infrastructure, and multimodal connections could support regional economic development and cross-border trade. Please get in touch with Gabriel Alves at galves@glslcities.org if you have any questions.

Together, we're protecting the Great Lakes for generations to come. Stay connected and be a voice for our waters. Follow us on social media to stay engaged and take action!



Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative | P.O. Box 1332 | New Lenox, IL 60451 US

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Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus March 2026 Newsletter

From Western Ontario Wardens Caucus <info@wowc.ca>

Date Fri 3/27/2026 11:13 AM

To Jenna Fentie <jfentie@ELGIN.ca>

[View as Webpage](#)

MARCH 2026



YOUR MONTHLY NEWS & UPDATES

WOWC Statement on the 2026 Ontario Budget

FROM THE CHAIR

A Statement on the 2026 Ontario Budget

“ The 2026 Ontario Budget reflects a continued commitment to strengthening the economic foundation of our communities while recognizing the growing pressures facing municipalities. Investments in small business tax relief, health care, and strategic economic development are important steps in supporting growth across Western Ontario.

The historic reduction of the small business tax rate by 30% will directly support entrepreneurs and local employers across our region, helping drive investment and job creation. At the same time, the new \$4 billion Protect Ontario Investment Fund will help drive investment, support local employers, and position Western Ontario for continued growth. The increases to the Ontario Transit Investment Fund of \$15 million, along with additional investments in community infrastructure of \$300 million for the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund, are meaningful steps toward strengthening the livability and connectivity of our communities.

For our region, these measures must be paired with targeted investments in infrastructure, including a dedicated rural component of the Building Faster Fund, expanded supports through the Homelessness Prevention Program, and meaningful progress on regional rural transit.

As Western Ontario continues to power the province’s economic engine, aligning provincial investments with municipal capacity on the ground will be critical to ensuring sustainable growth and strong, resilient communities. ”

-WOWC Chair, Marcus Ryan



SAVE THE DATE
Western Ontario Municipal Conference
Friday, October 16, 2026

SAVE THE DATE

WESTERN ONTARIO
WOWC
WARDENS CAUCUS

**WESTERN ONTARIO
MUNICIPAL
CONFERENCE**

October 16, 2026, Guelph, ON



The Hon. Bob Rae as the Keynote Speaker

Registration opening soon | WOWC.ca

Sponsored by  **ENBRIDGE**

The Western Ontario Municipal Conference returns on Friday, October 16th, 2026 at the Delta Conference Centre in Guelph, ON.

We are pleased to announce our keynote speaker, sponsored by Enbridge, the Hon. Bob Rae

Watch for updates [here](#).

Find us on Instagram @wowcinc



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Instagram

Follow us here

Community Surveys Going out Soon

Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus is pleased to partner with the University of Guelph and Dr. Leith Deacon on the The HEAR Initiative (Health, Economy, Adaptation in Rural Communities).

HEAR is a large-scale, longitudinal, community-engaged research initiative designed to generate the evidence rural communities need to plan, adapt, and thrive. By collecting and integrating data on rural health, economic well-being, and environmental adaptation, HEAR provides an unprecedented, place-based understanding of how rural communities experience and respond to change.

At the core of HEAR is one of the largest rural household survey efforts ever undertaken in Ontario. Every two years, the initiative will reach 300,000 rural residents across Ontario—approximately 20% of the province's rural population. Surveys are co-designed with rural stakeholders and administered in accessible formats to ensure participation from communities often excluded by digital or geographic barriers. Survey data are then securely linked with administrative, geospatial, and environmental datasets to create a powerful, integrated evidence base.

Learn more about the HEAR Initiative at [this ROMA Information Session](#) on April 2nd 12 - 1 pm.

2026 Rural Research Symposium



The Rural Symposium is an annual opportunity for University of Guelph graduate students to showcase their rural research.

The event facilitates knowledge mobilization and network building between graduate students at the University of Guelph, researchers, practitioners, and the Government of Ontario.

The event is co-hosted by the Government of Ontario, the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance, and the School for Environmental Design and Rural Development.



The event will take place in the conference room at 1 Stone Road West in Guelph and online. The event is

open to everyone and is free to attend. A lunch will be provided to those attending in-person.

If you are interested in attending, please register by March 30 using this [link](#).

OSUM Conference: April 29 - May 1, 2026

Charles W. Stockey Centre for the Performing Arts/ Bobby Orr Hall of Fame

2 Bay Street, Parry Sound, Ontario, P2A 1S3
April 29 to May 1, 2026

Join your Parry Sound hosts to experience the beautiful surrounds of their town and the OSUM Executive as they offer curated programming and networking events to support Ontario's small urban municipal leaders and colleagues in the emerging political, economic and social environment of today.



More details [here](#).

Welcome Sarah Fencott: Municipal Climate Internship Program



Sarah Fencott (she/her) is from Waterloo, Ontario, located on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. This area is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the treaty territory belonging to the Six Nations of the Grand River, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River and is within the lands protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum.

Sarah holds a degree in Environment and Business with a minor in Environment, Resources and Sustainability, as well as a diploma in Environmental Assessment. Her professional background includes field-based conservation and species at risk management, including work with Ontario Parks and collaboration on applied recovery initiatives such as the reintroduction of the Mottled Duskywing butterfly to Ontario. Through this work, she has supported habitat restoration, monitoring, and on-the-ground implementation of conservation actions informed by regulatory and assessment processes.

Through the Municipal Climate Internship Program, Sarah is working with Bruce County to better understand how municipalities translate climate and sustainability goals into practical action. She is particularly interested in using the

business case for sustainability to support meaningful engagement with rights holders, community members, and local decision-makers, advancing plans that are grounded in community priorities and create lasting, place-based impact.

Learn more about the [Municipal Climate Internship Program](#)



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada

[Ontario Supporting \\$250 Million Investment to Expand Life-Saving Medical Isotope Production at Bruce Power](#)

[Ontario Expands Long-Term Care Capacity in Amherstburg, Supporting More Than 370 Good-Paying Jobs](#)

[Ontario Celebrates Grand Opening of NextStar Energy's Battery Facility in Windsor](#)

[Ontario and Canada Investing More Than \\$228 Million to Protect Workers and Key Industries](#)

[Ontario Investing \\$7.3 Million in Windsor to Protect Tariff-Impacted Workers](#)

[Ontario Welcomes \\$15.8 Million Manufacturing Investment in Southwestern Ontario](#)

[Ontario Investing Nearly \\$29 Million to Expand and Improve Infrastructure in Perth and Wellington Counties](#)

advanced technologies and enhance competitiveness

Canada has one of the most productive and innovative automotive sectors in the world, supported by a highly skilled workforce, a strong industrial base, and decades of leadership in advanced manufacturing. To sustain that leadership, the Government of Canada is focused on supporting the suppliers and manufacturers who form the backbone of this sector—helping them navigate tariff pressures, strengthen their operations, and enhance competitiveness in a rapidly evolving global market.

This includes an over \$886,000 investment in Canadian manufacturer [MVA Stratford](#), to modernize its core production lines through the adoption of new specialized equipment that will strengthen competitiveness and position the company to explore opportunities beyond the U.S. market.

London-based manufacturer, [Armo Tool](#), is receiving an investment of \$750,000 to enhance its tooling and manufacturing capabilities, which will bring diversification opportunities in new markets.

[Full Press Release](#)

Employment Opportunity: General Manager

Community Futures Middlesex



Community Futures Middlesex (CF Middlesex) is passionate about helping entrepreneurs grow and succeed, thereby strengthening our community. Offering loans, planning and advisory services, workshops, and much more, we exist to support entrepreneurs in Middlesex County. We understand our communities, our rural culture and values. These insights help us see our clients differently and make loan decisions right here at home. Funded and backed by FedDev Ontario, you can trust CF Middlesex for support through the full life cycle of your business.

The Board of Directors is looking to recruit a passionate, innovative and creative individual to provide leadership to our team of local business support and lending professionals. The General Manager is responsible for the supervision of staff, monitors all programs administered by the Corporation so that client needs and program goals are met; oversees accounting procedures and governmental reporting; implements investment policies for loans, monitors all matters about the management of internal investment funds; promotes and builds awareness for the Corporation within the communities served and oversees the general administration of the Corporation.

More information [**here**](#)

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March 26, 2026

Warden Dominique Giguère
Elgin County
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas, ON N5R 5V1

Dear Warden Giguère:

Re: Strengthening Volunteerism in Elgin County – Volunteer Elgin Update

With 2026 recognized as the International Year of Volunteers, and with **National Volunteer Week taking place April 20–26**, I am writing to ensure that you and members of council are aware of Volunteer Elgin and its growing impact in supporting volunteerism across Elgin County.

Volunteer Elgin is a volunteer-run, county-wide non-profit that exists to strengthen volunteerism by connecting residents with meaningful opportunities to contribute in their communities, while supporting local organizations in recruiting the volunteers they need to deliver programs, services, and events.

Our website, **VolunteerElgin.org**, provides a centralized online hub where organizations can post volunteer opportunities and residents can easily discover ways to get involved. The goal is straightforward: to make it easier for those who wish to contribute their time and skills to connect with organizations that rely on volunteers to support community life across the county.

Volunteer Elgin has emerged in response to a growing challenge shared by many communities: organizations are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers, while many residents are seeking meaningful ways to engage. By providing shared volunteer infrastructure, Volunteer Elgin is helping to strengthen the capacity of community organizations across Elgin County.

We have recently become aware that the Volunteer Elgin portal is attracting interest beyond the county, with other communities informally exploring it as a potential model for connecting residents with local volunteer opportunities. Volunteer Elgin has also become a member of **Volunteer Canada**, connecting the initiative to a national network of volunteer centres and organizations that support volunteerism across the country.

During National Volunteer Week, Volunteer Elgin will be raising awareness across the county, including hosting a **Volunteer Fair at the St. Thomas Public Library on April 25**, along with information displays in Aylmer and Dutton throughout the week.

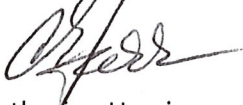
As community leaders, you and members of council are often in conversation with residents, organizations, and community groups. Where it feels natural, we would welcome your help in simply pointing people toward Volunteer Elgin as a place to explore opportunities to get involved.

Even small moments of awareness can make a meaningful difference in connecting people to their communities.

Enclosed is a brief overview of Volunteer Elgin, along with information about our upcoming activities.

Thank you for the leadership you provide across Elgin County. I would be pleased to connect if you would like any additional information.

Warm regards,



Catherine Harrison
Communications Chair
Volunteer Elgin

VolunteerElgin.org



About Volunteer Elgin

Volunteer Elgin is a community-based initiative dedicated to strengthening volunteerism across Elgin County, Ontario.

The organization connects residents with meaningful volunteer opportunities while supporting local non-profit and community organizations in recruiting volunteers and promoting volunteerism across the county.

Volunteer Elgin was re-established in 2024 by a volunteer leadership group representing several local organizations committed to strengthening the county's volunteer infrastructure. The initiative is entirely volunteer led, with work supported by membership dues and an initial grant from the Elgin-St. Thomas Community Foundation, which funded the development of the website.

Volunteer Elgin currently includes 15 member organizations and continues to grow across Elgin County.

Leadership and operations are supported by a working committee with representatives from:

- Alzheimer Society Southwest Partners
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Thomas
- Family & Children's Services St. Thomas Elgin
- Southwestern Public Health
- St. Thomas Public Library
- Town of Aylmer
- VON Middlesex Elgin

Volunteer Canada Membership

Volunteer Elgin is a member of Volunteer Canada, the national organization dedicated to promoting volunteerism and strengthening volunteer centres across the country.

Key Initiatives

Volunteer Opportunity Portal: VolunteerElgin.Org

Launched in late 2024, the Volunteer Elgin website provides a centralized portal where residents can browse and apply for volunteer opportunities with organizations across the county. Member organizations manage their own profiles and can post unlimited volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Fair

The Volunteer Elgin Volunteer Fair brings together community organizations and residents interested in volunteering. The event provides a welcoming environment where people can learn about local organizations, meet volunteer coordinators, and explore ways to get involved.

Launched in 2025, the Volunteer Fair has expanded in 2026 to include displays in Aylmer and Dutton during National Volunteer Week.

Volunteer Week Outreach

During National Volunteer Week, Volunteer Elgin promotes volunteerism through community outreach activities, displays, and events designed to highlight the impact of volunteers and encourage participation.

2026 Priorities

Volunteer Elgin's focus for 2026 includes:

- **Expanding public awareness** of volunteer opportunities through increased advertising, social media and traditional media outreach
- **Increasing membership** among community organizations
- Enhancing our community network **by forging stronger relationships with key stakeholders** across Elgin County

Volunteer Elgin believes that strong volunteer networks help build healthier, more connected, and more resilient communities.

More information is available at:

www.volunteerelgin.org



As a member of Volunteer Canada, Volunteer Elgin is helping to put Elgin County on the map

VOLUNTEER CENTRE DIRECTORY

Use the mapping tool below to find a Volunteer Center in your community.

Map Satellite

Volunteer Elgin

info@volunteeregin.org
https://volunteeregin.org

Select Province

Search...

SEARCH



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A gallery wall featuring a variety of framed artworks. The frames are ornate and golden, with some featuring intricate carvings. The artworks include portraits, landscapes, and abstract pieces. The wall is white, and the lighting is soft, highlighting the details of the frames and the art.

ANNUAL REPORT

ST. THOMAS-ELGIN PUBLIC ART CENTRE

2025

ST. THOMAS-ELGIN PUBLIC ART CENTRE

Our Vision

The St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre is a highly valued and respected art centre that is a focal point for the St. Thomas and Elgin community. The Art Centre is dedicated to fostering a welcoming, enriching and engaging environment of art and creativity that inspires, challenges and educates our audiences.

Our Mandate

The St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre is mandated to exhibit, preserve and promote visual arts and to provide exhibition related programming.

Our Mission

The mission of the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre is to encourage and promote an appreciation for and support the practice of the visual arts in St. Thomas and Elgin County through a variety of exhibitions and educational programs and through the preservation of a permanent collection.

Our Address

301 Talbot Street, St. Thomas, Ontario. N5P 1B5
519.634.4040 info@stepac.ca

www.stepac.ca

We gratefully acknowledge the continued support of the City of St. Thomas, the County of Elgin, and our valued donors, members, and supporters. Your ongoing generosity enables the Art Centre to continue offering creative, responsive, and enriching experiences for the community.





The St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre is pleased to present its 2025 Annual Report, a reflection of a year shaped by creativity, community engagement, and its commitment to the visual arts. Throughout 2025, the Public Art Centre continued to provide meaningful cultural experiences, fostered partnerships across St. Thomas and Elgin County, and strengthened its role as a dynamic space for learning, connection, and artistic expression.

St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre – 2025 Annual Report Summary

In 2025, the **St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre** continued to strengthen its role as a vibrant cultural hub and critical arts institution for St. Thomas and Elgin County. As a **charitable, non-profit public art centre**, we remained deeply committed to its mission of encouraging appreciation for and supporting the practice of the visual arts, fostering creative engagement across all ages and abilities, presenting high-quality exhibitions and programs that reflect both local artistic voices and the preservation of the permanent collection.

Exhibitions & Curatorial Highlights

Throughout the year, the Public Art Centre hosted a series of dynamic exhibitions showcasing a wide range of artistic perspectives. Highlights included *A Covenant of Reciprocity* by Jeff Suchak, a compelling photographic exploration of humanity's relationship to the natural world, which invited thoughtful community dialogue and engagement. Additional exhibitions, such as the Annual Juried Exhibition "*In View of the Artist*," and "*Between the Boards*", continued to spotlight emerging and established artists and reinforce the Public Art Centre's role as a platform for creative expression. The Public Art Centre also continued outreach with projects like Art, Trees & Trails, extending the reach of visual art beyond the Art centre walls and into local public spaces.

Education & Community Engagement

2025 saw robust participation in Public Art Centre's **classes and workshops** for children, youth, adults and seniors, offering a creative environment where individuals could explore artistic potential and develop new skills. In 2025, we were excited to launch *In Studio*, a welcoming daytime program designed specifically for adults who want to explore their creativity, build new skills, and connect with others in an inspiring environment. These programs strengthened community connections and supported creative exploration at all levels.

Special Events & Fundraising

A key event such as the **Annual Fall Art Auction** provided an opportunity for patrons and supporters to engage with the arts, celebrate creativity, and support the Public Art Centre's ongoing programming. This and other events not only generated critical funds but also reinforced our role as a cultural gathering place and community anchor.

Collections & Cultural Value

The Public Art Centre continued stewardship of its expanding permanent collection, which comprises significant works by local, regional, and national artists, preserving art heritage and making it accessible to the public. The Public Art Centre's activities helped sustain St. Thomas' cultural vibrancy and contributed to the broader tourism, education, and economic landscape of the region.

Board of Directors

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Jenny Couse Vice President
Meaghan Vreman Treasurer
Neil Hubert Secretary
Steven McLarty Payson
Ciabh McEvenue
Sue Fortin Smith
John Allen
Andrew Snetsinger
Lynn Coates
Tara McCaulley
Keith Mayer
Kevin Morrell
Dominique Giguère (County of Elgin Rep.)

Team

Laura Woermke Executive Director / Curator
Sherri Howard Program Director
Kait Ouellette/ Tiffany Cairns Education Assistant
Arantxa Arreaza Instructor Preschool Picasso
Amie Steven Administration Assistant
Kendal Goodhue Summer Student Gallery Attendant
Kiera Batzold Summer Art Program Instructor
Wilma Pineau Summer Art Program Instructor Assistant
Julianne Bryans Instructor Summer Programs / Workshops

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Bethany Green
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Laura Woermke

Fundraising Committee

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Chair Dang Ho
Megan Vreman
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Laura Woermke
Dang Ho

Governance Committee

The governance committee is committed to modernizing policies and investing in compliance initiatives to ensure alignment with current regulations and best practices. This strategic approach aims to enhance our organizational integrity, promote transparency, and support a culture of accountability, ultimately safeguarding our stakeholders' interests and fostering trust within the community.

Chair Dominique Giguère
Meaghan Vreman
Dang Oho
Steven McLarty Payson
Neil Hubert
Laura Woermke

JackPot Time Volunteers

Chair Kevin Morrell
Suzanne Baehr
Jenny Couse
Dang Ho
Neil Hubert
Andrew Snetsinger

Volunteers

Trent Hoff, Olivia Hoff, Chloe Crosby, Bethany Green, Andrew Snetsinger, Suzanne Baehr, John Allen, Steven McLarty Payson, Jenny Couse, Danni Dowson, Delilah Robinson, Riley Doan, Arielle Radcliff, Sydney Kingstone, Aubrey Kingstone, Presley Tychynski, Ayanna Ganda, Yasmine Amir, Sarah Taylor, Eric Bargenda Ciabh McEvenue, Michelle Woermke, Mike Pineau, Tara McCaulley, Kevin Morrell, Avery Payne, Josee Coutu, Matthew Coburn, Neil Hubert, Meaghan Vreman, Ardythe Anderson, Katherine Fournier, Jim Coburn, Sharon Little, Joan Dennis,

Total Volunteer Hours: 476.5



2025 COMMUNITY IMPACT

In 2025, the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre continued to affirm the essential role that arts and culture play in community life. National research highlighted in the *Artworks* report shows that Canadians are drawn to arts participation because it fosters connection, offers new perspectives, strengthens belonging, and supports well-being. Notably, 75% of Canadians believe that attending arts and culture events positively impacts their sense of belonging in Canada.



4319 Exhibition Visitors



**520 participants
Tours & Community Outreach**



**251
Adult Program Participants**



**852
Children & Youth Participants**



**418
Facility Rental Users**



**1,124
Special Event Attendees**



**146
Active Members**

Message from the Executive Director

As we reflect on 2025, I am proud to share a year defined by creativity, resilience, and meaningful connection at the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre. This past year, we strengthened our role as a vibrant cultural hub for our community, welcoming visitors of all ages to explore, learn, and experience the transformative power of the visual arts.

Our exhibitions showcased a dynamic range of artistic local and regional artists, each contributing to conversations that resonate across our community. We deepened our commitment to education through expanded art programs, hands-on workshops for youth, adults and seniors, and partnerships that allowed us to reach new audiences. These initiatives reaffirm our belief that access to the visual arts is essential for a healthy and thriving community.

Preserving and caring for our permanent collection remained a cornerstone of our work. In 2025, we continued important conservation efforts and improved access to the collection through exhibitions and our digital database. These efforts honour our responsibility as stewards of cultural heritage and ensure that future generations can learn from and appreciate these works.

None of this would be possible without the dedication and enthusiasm of the Public Art Centre's team. We extend special thanks to Sherri Howard for her unwavering commitment to the Public Art Centre, her passion for delivering meaningful, high-quality educational experiences, and the care she shows in making every participant feel welcomed and valued.

To our members, donors, volunteers, community partners, and the Board of Directors, thank you. Your belief in the value of St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre sustains our momentum and inspires our ongoing work.

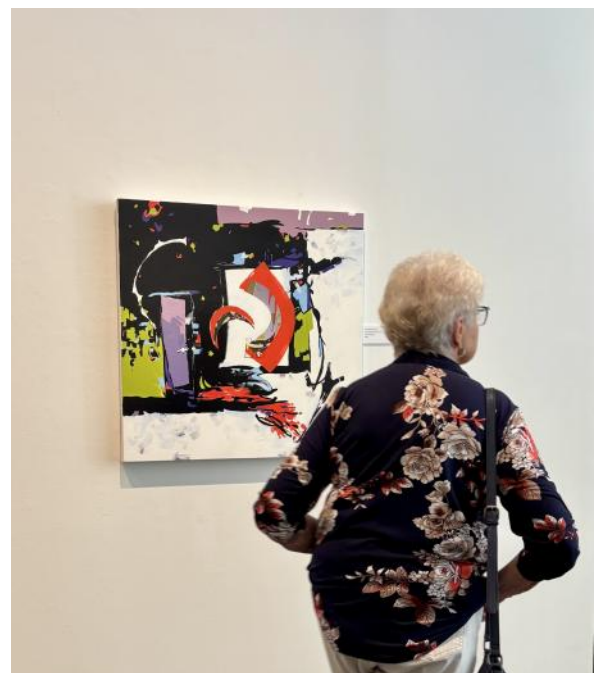
As we look ahead, we remain committed to fostering creativity, inclusivity, and connection. The year to come promises new collaborations, expanded programming, and continued opportunities to celebrate the role of the visual arts in our community. Together, we will build on the successes of 2025 and continue shaping a bright future for the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre.

With gratitude,

Laura Woermke

Executive Director

St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre



2025 EXHIBITIONS

The St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre presented a rich and varied exhibition schedule that celebrated artistic excellence, regional history, and community connection. The year's program included *A Picture is Worth... The Importance of Preserving Artwork*, which highlighted the value of stewardship and care in preserving cultural heritage, alongside group exhibitions such as *Ontario Society of Artists (Western Hub)* and smaller exhibitions such as *Beyond Horizons: William St. Thomas Smith*, salon styled in our gallery three,

The exhibition schedule also featured *Between the Boards* as a special exhibition, highlighting the artwork of a group of artists that participated in the "Between the Boards En plein air event that took place in 2024.

Community engagement remained central to the year's programming through exhibitions such as *In View of the Artist*, the Art Centre's Annual Juried Exhibition, which showcased the talent of participating artists, and the *St. Thomas and District Horticultural Society Floral Interpretation*, which encouraged creative dialogue between visual art and floral design. *Under the Same Sky – Selections from the Permanent Collection* further emphasized the strength of the Art Centre's collection and its role in preserving and sharing works of lasting cultural significance.

The year concluded with the always-anticipated *Miniature Show and Sale*, which brought together artists, supporters, and collectors in a celebration of creativity and accessibility. Together, these exhibitions reinforced the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre's role as a vital cultural hub, offering meaningful experiences that connected art, heritage, and community throughout 2025.

"A Picture is Worth... The Importance of Preserving Artwork"

Selections from the Permanent Collection

November 15 to February 16, 2025

Galleries One and Two

In a world inundated with fleeting images and ephemeral content, the preservation of artwork stands as a testament to the enduring power of creativity and expression. "A Picture is Worth" explores the significance of safeguarding artistic creations for their intrinsic value, narrative richness, and cultural legacy.

A Quiet Conversation

Selections from the Permanent Collection

January 11 to February 15, 2025

Gallery Three

The artists featured in this exhibition, utilize a variety of techniques and styles, from traditional realism to bold abstraction, to highlight the interplay of light, color, and texture. Through their work, they challenge us to see beyond the surface, to explore the emotions and memories that objects hold, and to reflect on our personal relationships with the world around us.





Ontario Society of Artists

Ontario Society of Artists (Western Hub) Group Exhibition

February 22 to April 5, 2025
Galleries One and Two



Ontario Society of Artists Group Exhibition (Western Hub) February 22 to April 5, 2025 Gallery One and Two Closing Reception Saturday April 5, 2025 1-3pm

Ontario Society of Artists (Western Hub) brought together a dynamic selection of work by artists affiliated with one of Canada's oldest professional art organizations. Representing a range of approaches, materials, and visual languages, this group exhibition reflected the breadth of contemporary artistic practice across Southwestern Ontario. Collectively, the works spoke to the ongoing relevance of observation, experimentation, and individual expression, while underscoring the value of artistic dialogue within a shared professional community.



Beyond the Horizon: A Salon of William St. Thomas Smith

Selections from the Permanent Collection
February 22 to April 5, 2025
Gallery Three

Beyond Horizons: William St. Thomas Smith featured evocative seascapes that captured the beauty, power, and changing moods of maritime life. Blending realism and impressionism, Smith's work invited viewers to reflect on the vastness of the ocean and the intimate character of coastal environments.



Between the Boards

Group Exhibition
April 12 to June 7, 2025
April 12, 2025, Awards presentation
Galleries One and Two

Between the Boards highlighted the creative outcomes of a collaborative project inspired by landscape, place, and the legacy of Clark McDougall's interior barn paintings. Emerging from the *Between the Boards* project held in August 2024, the exhibition showcased innovative approaches and unique artistic perspectives shaped by shared experience, observation, and creative exchange. The exhibition also reflected the importance of community partnership, with thanks to Ian Begg for the inspiring location and award support, and to the project judges Catherine Elliot Shaw, Ciabh McEvenue and Kevin Morrell, for their contributions.

Echoes of the Past: Clark McDougall's Barns

Selections from the Permanent Collection
April 12 to June 7, 2025
Gallery Three

Echoes of the Past: Clark McDougall's Barns invited visitors to explore rural Elgin County through a selection of works from the Public Art Centre's permanent collection. The exhibition highlighted McDougall's distinctive ability to document family barns not only as physical structures, but also as symbols of heritage, memory, and community. Through these works, the exhibition reflected on the changing rural landscape and the enduring stories of the families who shaped Elgin County.

Jeff Suchak

A Covenant of Reciprocity

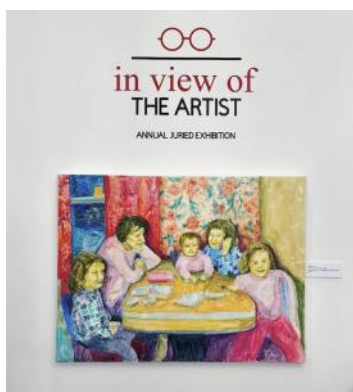
Galleries One & Two
June 14 to August 9, 2025

A Covenant of Reciprocity, featuring photographs by Jeff Suchak, invited visitors to reflect on humanity's relationship with the natural world at a time of increasing environmental change and climate disruption. Through contemplative images in both film and digital formats, the exhibition encouraged a sense of wonder, attention, and reflection, asking audiences to consider renewal, stewardship, and a deeper sense of reciprocity with the land.

Floral Interpretation
Selections from the Permanent Collection
Arrangements by the St. Thomas and District Horticultural Society

June 25 to 28, 2025
Gallery Three

Floral Interpretation celebrated a creative partnership between the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre and the St. Thomas and District Horticultural Society. Inspired by selected works from the permanent collection, the exhibition paired floral arrangements with visual art, highlighting the shared creativity, craftsmanship, and community spirit of local horticulturalists and artists. The exhibition also demonstrated the importance of community partnerships in expanding audiences, fostering collaboration, and enriching the cultural life of St. Thomas and Elgin County.



In View of the Artist
Annual Juried Exhibition

August 16 to October 3, 2025
Galleries One and Two

In View of the Artist, the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre's annual juried exhibition, showcased the creativity, skill, and diverse perspectives of artists working across a range of mediums and styles. Through a juried selection process, the exhibition highlighted both emerging and established artists, reflecting the breadth of contemporary artistic practice in the region and beyond. The exhibition reaffirmed the Art Centre's commitment to supporting artists, encouraging excellence, and strengthening connections between art and community.



Under the Same Sky
Selections from the Permanent Collection

Guest Curator Kendal Goodhue
November 15 to February 21
Galleries One and Two

Under the Same Sky, curated by guest curator Kendal Goodhue, brought together selections from the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre's permanent collection in an exhibition that invited reflection on shared experience, place, and connection. Drawing from works across the collection, the exhibition offered audiences an opportunity to consider how artists, across time and perspective, responded to the world around them while remaining linked by common human experience. Through Goodhue's thoughtful curatorial approach, *Under the Same Sky* highlighted the strength of the permanent collection and revealed new relationships between artworks, themes, and viewers.

Annual Miniature Show and Sale
November 15 to December 21, 2026
Gallery Three

The St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre's Annual Miniature Show and Sale celebrated creativity on a small scale, bringing together a diverse collection of original artworks in an intimate and accessible format. Though modest in size, the works demonstrated remarkable imagination, skill, and variety, inviting visitors to experience how powerful artistic expression can be within a smaller frame.

The purpose of the Annual Miniature Show and Sale was to support artists while encouraging art collecting within the community. By offering original works at a more accessible size and price point, the exhibition created opportunities for both new and experienced collectors to purchase art and engage more closely with local and regional artists. It also reinforced the Art Centre's commitment to fostering appreciation for original art, promoting artists' work, and making the experience of collecting art welcoming and attainable.

SPECIAL EXHIBITS

The St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre remains committed to creating opportunities for connection, belonging, and participation through the visual arts. This commitment helps shape why the Public Art Centre presents special exhibitions both in-house and off-site. By offering exhibitions within the art centre as well as in community-based locations, the Art Centre is able to reach broader audiences, reduce barriers to participation, and bring art into spaces where people already gather, learn, and connect. These efforts help extend the Centre's impact beyond its walls, making the arts more visible, approachable, and relevant to people of varied ages, backgrounds, and lived experiences.



In partnership with **CMHA Thames Valley Addiction & Mental Health Services** and **Community Homes for Opportunity**, the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre hosted an exhibition on **March 28 and 29, 2025**, showcasing artworks created by participants through their involvement in the program. Exhibiting these works in the studio was an important act of recognition and inclusion, offering the opportunity to share their perspectives and creativity with the wider community. The exhibition demonstrated how access to the arts can foster confidence, connection, and a sense of belonging, while affirming the value of making space for voices and experiences that are not always visible in traditional cultural settings.

The art installation at **Barrie Family Hospice** in the **Reflection Space and Art Gallery** brought the presence of art into a setting centred on compassion, healing, and remembrance. In sharing artwork within this space, the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre helped foster an environment of comfort and quiet reflection for patients, families, and caregivers. The installation speaks to the power of art to offer solace, dignity, and connection, while reinforcing the Centre's

commitment to making meaningful cultural experiences accessible throughout the community.

The **Art Trees and Trails** initiative continued to extend the reach of the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre by bringing images from the **permanent collection** into community walking paths and parks. Through these outdoor installations, artworks became part of everyday public life, inviting residents and visitors to encounter local art in accessible and unexpected ways. This ongoing work strengthened connections between art, place, and community, while encouraging reflection, exploration, and engagement beyond the Public Art Centre walls. Looking forward the Public Art Centre, in partnership with the Free and Young Press will be expanding the initiative into Elgin County with additional works added to Port Stanley. **Generously funded by the Estate of Donna Vera Evans Bushell.**



EDUCATION

In 2025, the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre continued to grow as a welcoming community space where people of all ages could learn, create, and connect through art. Through school visits, early years programming, student programs, intergenerational experiences, partnerships, and wellness-focused initiatives, the Centre offered inclusive and engaging opportunities that nurtured creativity, encouraged connection, and enriched community well-being.

School Programs

School programs remained a strong and valued part of the Centre's educational outreach in 2025, attracting classes from across St. Thomas and Elgin County. Through guided exhibition tours and hands-on studio workshops, students engaged with visual art in ways that complemented the **Ontario curriculum** and enriched classroom learning. These experiences supported creativity, critical thinking, and visual literacy while providing young learners with meaningful opportunities to connect with original works of art in an inspiring and inclusive environment.

The Public Art Centre also welcomed teachers from across the **Thames Valley area** for a special **PA Day learning** opportunity. By opening its doors to educators, the Public Art Centre created space for inspiration, shared learning, and creative exchange. Teachers had the opportunity to participate in art-based experiences. This initiative reinforced the Centre's role not only as a destination for students, but also as a valuable partner for educators working to foster creativity and cultural learning in schools throughout the region.



Students from Parkside Collegiate Institute also had the opportunity to visit the Art Centre through the Specialist **High Skills Major (SHSM) program**, creating meaningful connections between arts education and future career pathways. Their visit introduced them to the gallery as both a creative and professional space, offering insight into the many roles, skills, and opportunities connected to the arts and culture sector. Experiences like this help young people see the arts not only as a form of expression, but also as a meaningful part of their future education, employment, and community life.

The Public Art Centre deepened collaborations with secondary and post-secondary students in 2025. Volunteer and summer employment opportunities allowed students to engage directly in exhibition preparation, public programming, administrative support, and community outreach. These partnerships help cultivate the next generation of arts professionals and advocates.

Just a few of the participating Schools for 2025: New Sarum Public School, Lockes Public School, Éva Circé-Côté French Immersion Public School, Mitchell Hepburn Public School, Elgin Court Public School, and Parkside Colligate

CLASSES / WORKSHOPS



The Public Art Centre offered classes and workshops for children, adults, and seniors throughout the year, providing welcoming spaces for people of all ages to learn, create, and connect. From beginner-friendly art experiences to more focused skill-building opportunities, these programs encouraged creativity, confidence, and self-expression while making the arts an accessible part of everyday community life.

In addition to its regular programs, the Centre also presented new special classes and events that brought new energy and unique creative opportunities to participants. Programs such as **Valentine's Eat, Drink & Create** offered a fun and social way to engage with art, while **In Studio with Sherri Howard** and **Laura Woermke** gave participants the chance to learn and explore creative processes in a more intimate, social and inspiring setting.

Children's programs continued to be especially popular, with classes regularly reaching full capacity at 12 or more participants, per session, and often generating waiting lists. This strong response reflects the growing demand for creative experiences for young people and highlights the Public Art Centre's important role in providing accessible, high-quality arts programming for children and families.

Preschool Picasso (18 Months–3 Years)

A sensory-rich introduction to art designed for toddlers and caregivers. This program emphasizes exploration, texture, colour, and creative play, supporting early developmental skills while introducing young children to a gallery environment through gentle, hands-on activities.

February 5 to 26 10:30-11:30

March 19 to April 9 10:30-11:30

November 10 to December 10 10:30-11:30

Elementary Expression (Grades JK–4)

An engaging program introducing foundational art concepts through playful experimentation and guided creativity. Students explored colour, texture, and basic design principles.

February 1 to 22 (am and pm sessions)

April 26 to May 17

October 18 to November 8 (am and pm sessions)

Drawing (Grades 5–8)

A structured, skill-based program focused on developing observational drawing techniques, composition, and creative problem-solving. Activities included sketching, thematic drawing challenges, and guided technique-building exercises.

February 1 to 22 1-3pm

October 4 to 11 12:30-3:00pm

Pet Portraits November 15 to 29 10:00-12:00

PA Day Workshops (Grades JK-4)

PA Day workshops for children offered creative, hands-on opportunities for young participants to explore art, experiment with new materials, and express themselves in a fun and supportive environment. These popular programs provided engaging art experiences during school breaks while giving children a chance to learn, create, and connect at the Art Centre.

January 17 9:00am-3:30pm

April 11 9:00am-3:30pm

May 30 9:00am-3:30pm

October 10 9:00am-3:30pm

November 14 9:00am-3:30pm

Summer Classes and Workshops for Children

Summer programs at the Art Centre provided children and youth with engaging opportunities to explore creativity, build new skills, and enjoy meaningful artistic experiences during the summer months. Led by instructors Kiera Batzold and Wilma Pineau, these programs offered a welcoming and inspiring environment where participants could experiment with a variety of materials and techniques while developing confidence and self-expression through art.

July 7-11, 2025 9 am to 3:30 pm Ages 4-9 years

July 14-18, 2025 9 am to 3:30 pm Ages 4-9 years

August 11-15, 2025 9 am to 3:30 pm Ages 4-9 years

July 21-25, 2025 9 am to 3:30 pm Ages 4-9 years

August 18-22, 2025 9 am to 3:30 pm Ages 4-9 years

The new classroom area in Gallery Three created a dedicated space for older students to engage more deeply with art through focused learning and hands-on creative activity. Designed to support more advanced projects and discussion, this new area strengthened the Centre's ability to offer age-appropriate programming for youth while expanding opportunities for skill development, creative exploration, and meaningful engagement within the gallery setting.

Let's Face It: Portraiture

July 8-10, 2025 12:00 to 3:00pm Ages: 9-14 years Instructor Julianne Bryans

Fairy Gardens July 15-17, 2025 10:00 to 1:00pm Ages: 9-14 years Amie Steven

Comics July 29-31, 2025 12:30 to 3:30pm Ages: 9-14 years Wilma Pineau

Back by popular demand, the **Cursive Writing program** returned in 2025 and was moved to the Centre's main gallery space to accommodate increased enrollment and growing interest. Led by Sherri Howard, this well-received program provided students with the opportunity to build handwriting skills in a creative and supportive environment, reflecting the strong community response to specialized learning opportunities at the Art Centre.

Cursive Writing August 5-7, 2025 12:30 to 2:30pm Ages: 9-14 years





Adult and Senior Programs / Workshops

“Research continues to show that participation in arts and cultural activity supports mental health, well-being, and community belonging.”

Source: Canada Council for the Arts / Hill Strategies, *Canadians' Arts Participation, Health and Well-Being*, 2021.

In Studio

Launched as part of the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre's commitment to community well-being, **In Studio** brings together people, art, and social connection in a supportive and creative environment. Led by instructors **Sherri Howard** and **Laura Woermke**, the program offers guided art-making sessions that encourage relaxation, personal reflection, and meaningful interaction among participants. Designed to promote wellness through artistic expression, **In Studio** has become an important space for fostering community care, reducing isolation, and supporting mental well-being through the arts.

February 5 to 19, 2025 1-3pm

April 16 to 30, 2025 1-3pm

October 8-22, 2025 1-3pm

Eat, Drink & Create offered participants a relaxed and social opportunity to engage with art in a welcoming gallery setting. Through multiple hands-on creative activities, along with casual refreshments and snacks, the program encouraged participants to unwind, connect with others, and enjoy the Art Centre in a fun and accessible way.

February 7, 2026 7:00-9:30pm

October 3, 2026 7:00-9:30pm

November 28, 2026 7:00-9:30pm

Watercolour, Ultimate Beginner's, led by **Pat Duwyn**, offered an accessible and encouraging introduction to watercolour painting for new learners. This course was designed for either the ultimate beginner, someone interested but unsure if they wanted to pursue watercolour, or a seasoned artists who wished to readdress the basics of watercolour. **October 14 to 28, 2025**

Tuesdays 5:00-8:00pm

Mastering The Brush, Instructor Maksym Nechytilo
Painting workshops led by Maksym Nechytailo invited participants to explore a range of painting materials, methods, and creative approaches. Through hands-on experimentation with different paints and techniques, participants expanded their skills, developed confidence, and discovered new ways of expressing their ideas through art.

Friday, January 31 to February 21, 2025 5:30 – 7:30pm



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS/OUTREACH

CMHA Thames Valley Addiction & Mental Health Services

Community Homes for Opportunity

We believe in the transformative power of art as a means of fostering mental well-being. Our free art programs are designed to support the Canadian Mental Health Association by providing individuals with a creative outlet to express themselves, build connections, and promote healing. Through these programs, we aim to enhance the overall well-being of the participants and our community. Together, we are committed to nurturing mental health and inspiring resilience through art.

Community Living (Community Access Program) These sessions offered free art programs is dedicated to promoting mental health and well-being by providing a creative outlet for self-expression and healing. Through sessional art activities, participants explored the materials while building connections with others. We believe that art has the power to inspire, uplift, and transform lives, making it an essential tool in supporting mental health in our community.

Winter, Fall, Spring (four weeks each session)

St. Joseph's High School **2nd Annual Girls Night Out art-based wellness session** (off-site)

2nd Annual Girls Night Out offered students an art-based wellness session led by **Sherri Howard**, creating a welcoming space for creativity, connection, and relaxation. Through a guided activity and shared experience, the program encouraged self-expression while supporting well-being through the arts.

The St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre continued to serve as a welcoming gathering place for community groups and creative individuals, offering space for connection, learning, and cultural exchange. In 2025, the Centre was pleased to host the **Downtown Development Board Annual General Meeting**, welcome local poet **Peri Hayes** for a book signing (February 28), and provided a tour and presentation (February 25) for the **Golden K Kiwanis**. These activities reflect the Art Centre's important role as a shared community space where creativity, conversation, and civic life come together.

Autism Ontario June 11, 2025 6-9pm **McDougall Landscapes with Watercolour** invited participants ages 12 and up to explore landscape painting through a watercolour workshop inspired by the work of Clark McDougall led by Sherri Howard. Beginning with a brief tour, the program offered an engaging introduction to McDougall's artistic approach before participants created their own landscape studies in a guided studio session. The program provided an accessible and inspiring opportunity for the group to connect with the Centre's collection through hands-on learning.

The Public Art Centre also provided a valuable gathering space for **Elgin County Studio Tour artists** to meet, connect, and strengthen relationships within the local creative community.

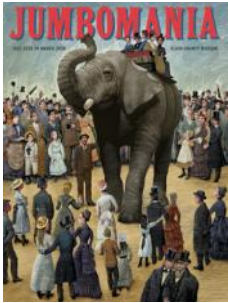




On **April 25**, the gallery space welcomed the **Elgin Writers Guild Poetry Night**, offering an inviting setting for literary expression, community connection, and shared creative experience. By hosting this event, the Art Centre continued to support a broad range of artistic practices and provide space where writers, readers, and the wider community could gather to celebrate creativity in its many forms.



Participation in **Downtown Development Board** events such as **Pumpkin Prowl**, which welcomed more than **800 guests**, and **Light Up Talbot** played an important role in extending the Art Centre's community presence beyond its walls. These popular public events offered valuable opportunities to engage with families, residents, and visitors in festive and accessible settings, helping raise awareness of the Centre's programs and inviting new connections with the arts. Involvement in these downtown initiatives also reflects the Art Centre's commitment to community partnership, civic pride, and contributing to a vibrant and connected cultural life in St. Thomas.



On **November 27**, in partnership with the **Elgin County Museum**, the Art Centre welcomed students from **Éva Circé-Côté French Immersion Public School** for the **Jumbo School Tour** that connected young learners with art, history, and community culture. These collaborative visits provided students with engaging, hands-on educational experiences that encouraged curiosity, creativity, and a deeper connection to local heritage through meaningful cross-institutional learning.



The St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre continued to serve as an important partner in the **City of St. Thomas's Public Art Committee**, helping guide the selection of public art that enhances shared civic spaces and reflects the community's identity. By bringing arts knowledge and curatorial perspective to the process, the Centre supported the thoughtful inclusion of artworks that contribute to civic pride, cultural visibility, and a stronger sense of place. This work highlights the Art Centre's role not only as a gallery, but also as a trusted cultural resource in shaping the visual and creative life of the city. In June, the city included a new work by blacksmith Kyle Thornley.



Kin Canada
St. Thomas
Kinsmen Club

Throughout 2025, the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre continued to welcome community organizations into its spaces for meetings, events, and special gatherings. This included **Wraparound** on **May 28**, **London St. Thomas Association of Realtors** on **September 17**, **St. Thomas Elgin Medical Association** on **November 1**, and the **Kinsmen Club of St. Thomas** on **November 13, 2025**. By opening its doors in this way, the Art Centre strengthened its role as a shared commu-



nity space that supports collaboration, connection, and the many ways people come together in St. Thomas.

CLARK MCDOUGALL SCHOLARSHIP



McDougall Scholarship

Each year, the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre awarded the **McDougall Scholarship** to a graduating high school student from St. Thomas–Elgin pursuing post-secondary studies in the arts. In 2025, the recipient was **Gabriella Omari**, a graduate of **St. Joseph's High School**, who began attending **OCAD University** in the fall. The Art Centre extended its congratulations to Gabriella on this important achievement.

In 2025, one of the two available **\$1,000 scholarships** was applied for and awarded. To help protect and sustain this important educational opportunity for students in St. Thomas–Elgin, the Public Art Centre also established a new in-trust account dedicated to securing funds for the scholarship's future.

EVENTS / FUNDRAISING



Drop-in Acoustic Jam FREE Community Event

Last Saturday of the month

The monthly **Drop-In Acoustic Jam**, held on the last Saturday of each month from **1:00 to 3:00 p.m.**, offered a welcoming opportunity for musicians and community members to gather, share music, and connect in an informal setting. This popular program added to the Art Centre's role as a vibrant community hub and will continue into **2026**.

The **White Elephant Bazaar** was a pop-up fundraiser held in **Gallery Three**, bringing together a playful mix of vintage finds, curiosities, handmade items, and creative treasures. Designed as a market for the curious and creative, the event invited visitors to browse, discover unexpected gems, and support the Art Centre in a fun and engaging way. The fundraiser added energy to the gallery space while encouraging community participation and creative exchange.

WHITE ELEPHANT BAZAAR

SEPT 6 - 27, 2025

A new pop-up market for the curious and creative.



In 2025, the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre was pleased to begin a new fundraising opportunity through **Jackpot Time**, creating an additional source of support for the Centre's exhibitions, education, and community programming. This new partnership represents a valuable way to strengthen fundraising efforts and build ongoing support for the Art Centre's work. We extend our sincere thanks to the organization for this opportunity and look forward to working together in the future.





Annual Fall Art Auction Friday November 7, 2025 7:00pm

Our Annual Art Auction, a vibrant celebration of creativity supported by talented local and regional artists, dedicated collectors, and generous donors was held on Friday, November 7. This event showcased a diverse array of artwork, highlighting the incredible talent within our community and beyond. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our sponsors and participants and our auctioneer, Steve Peters, whose contributions made this event possible. Your support not only enriches our artistic landscape but also helps us promote and sustain the visual arts in our community.



Gift Shop

The Art Centre's **Gift Shop** continued to serve as both a valuable fundraiser and an important way to support local and regional artists. By offering handcrafted items, artwork, and unique gifts, the shop created opportunities for visitors to purchase meaningful, locally made work while directly contributing to the Centre's sustainability. This dual role strengthens the Art Centre's connection to the creative community and helps celebrate the talent of artists across the region.

PERMANENT COLLECTION



Permanent Collection

In 2025, the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre's permanent collection remained an important cornerstone of its work, preserving and sharing the artistic legacy of the region for current and future generations. The collection, which consists of **2,173 works of art**, reflects the creative history, identity, and cultural memory of St. Thomas and Elgin County. Local permanent collections play a vital role in ensuring that the stories, artists, and artistic achievements of a community are cared for, studied, and made accessible over time, helping to strengthen a shared sense of place and belonging.

While no new works were accessioned into the collection in 2025, the Centre continued important collections management work with **Kath Goodhue**, including ongoing database development and the completion of condition reports for selected artworks. This behind-the-scenes work is essential to the long-term stewardship, documentation, and preservation of the collection. The Art Centre also looks forward to a planned donation by artist **Rosemary Slood** in 2026, which will further enrich the collection and support its ongoing growth as a community resource.

MEMBERSHIP 2025

INDIVIDUAL

John Allen
Jane Armstrong
Jane Atkinson-White
Robin Baratta
Ella Balkwill
Olivia Bill
Peter Bloch-Hansan
Elizabeth Bourque
Mike Brouse
Christine Buechler
Lynn Coates
Sarah Cowling
Chris Dancey
Kim Douglas Harrison
JoAnn Dunn
Patricia Duwyn
Mark Elms
Donald Ferguson
Bill Foster
Lois Fuchs
Susan Garrington
Lisa Gerrard
Blythe George
Pat Gibson
Bethany Green
Cathy Groulx
Dang Ho
Shirley Hokke
Marion Hummel
Brenda Hunniford
Mary Intven Wallace
Debra Jackson Jones
Barbara Landstreet
Michaela Lucio
Brian Lynch
Helen Lynch
Johnnene Maddison
Robert Martin
Brian Masschaele
Keith Mayer
Sandi McCabe
Tara McCaully
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Guided by direction provided in their estate, this fund has a focus on specific charities under a general Education theme.



With heartfelt thanks, we close 2025 with deep appreciation for the many people who continue to support the St. Thomas–Elgin Public Art Centre. To our members, donors, funders, sponsors, volunteers, artists, instructors, partners, board members, and all who visited and participated in our programs, thank you for helping make the Art Centre a vibrant and welcoming place for creativity and community.

Your support makes it possible for the Art Centre to continue inspiring learning, connection, and cultural engagement across St. Thomas and Elgin County. We are grateful for all that was achieved together in 2025 and look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.





THANK YOU!



March 31, 2026

Hon. Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5
Minister.edu@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Calandra,

The London District Catholic School Board has reviewed the attached report regarding trustee distribution for the upcoming 2026 municipal and school board election. The results of that review are:

1. That the London District Catholic School Board's electoral population for the 2026 Election is 108,828;
2. That there are no low population areas for the 2026 Election;
3. That the lead municipalities for the 2026 Election are the City of St. Thomas (Elgin); the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc (Middlesex); the City of Woodstock (Oxford); and the City of London;
4. That the number of trustee members to be elected in the 2026 Election, in accordance with the Education Act, is eight (8);
5. That the eight trustee members shall represent each of the areas of distribution as follows: Elgin County; Middlesex County; Oxford County; and City of London Wards 1 and 14; Wards 2, 3 and 4; Wards 5, 6 and 7; Wards 8, 9 and 10; and Wards 11, 12 and 13.

Sincerely,



Vince Romeo
Director of Education

/mh

Encl.

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

County/Mun: 3202 - NORWICH TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	401	0	0	0
02	0	0	96	0	0	0
03	0	0	131	0	0	0
04	0	0	146	0	0	0
3202 - Total:	0	0	774	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3204 - TILLSONBURG TOWN

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
00	0	0	2,423	0	0	0
3204 - Total:	0	0	2,423	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3211 - SOUTH-WEST OXFORD TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	100	0	0	0
02	0	0	98	0	0	0
03	0	0	89	0	0	0
04	0	0	102	0	0	0
05	0	0	155	0	0	0
06	0	0	165	0	0	0
3211 - Total:	0	0	709	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3218 - INGERSOLL TOWN

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	580	0	0	0
02	0	0	399	0	0	0
03	0	0	637	0	0	0
3218 - Total:	0	0	1,616	0	0	0

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

County/Mun: 3227 - ZORRA TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	200	0	0	0
02	0	0	290	0	0	0
03	0	0	254	0	0	0
04	0	0	87	0	0	0
3227 - Total:	0	0	831	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3238 - EAST ZORRA-TAVISTOCK TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	51	0	0	0
02	0	0	59	0	0	0
03	0	0	174	0	0	0
3238 - Total:	0	0	284	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3242 - WOODSTOCK CITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	885	0	0	0
02	0	0	2,888	0	0	0
03	0	0	712	0	0	0
04	0	0	787	0	0	0
05	0	0	469	0	0	0
06	0	0	388	0	0	0
3242 - Total:	0	0	6,129	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3245 - BLANDFORD BLENHEIM TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
00	0	0	519	0	0	0
3245 - Total:	0	0	519	0	0	0

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

County/Mun: 3401 - BAYHAM MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	96	0	0	0
02	0	0	118	0	0	0
03	0	0	151	0	0	0
3401 - Total:	0	0	365	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3408 - MALAHIDE TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	114	0	0	0
02	0	0	121	0	0	0
03	0	0	71	0	0	0
04	0	0	84	0	0	0
05	0	0	153	0	0	0
3408 - Total:	0	0	543	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3411 - AYLMER TOWN

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	144	0	0	0
02	0	0	249	0	0	0
03	0	0	99	0	0	0
3411 - Total:	0	0	492	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3418 - CENTRAL ELGIN MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	181	0	0	0
02	0	0	361	0	0	0
03	0	0	279	0	0	0
04	0	0	332	0	0	0
05	0	0	155	0	0	0
3418 - Total:	0	0	1,308	0	0	0

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

County/Mun: 3421 - ST THOMAS CITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
00	0	0	4,956	0	0	0
3421 - Total:	0	0	4,956	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3424 - SOUTHWOLD TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
00	0	0	491	0	0	0
3424 - Total:	0	0	491	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3429 - DUTTON/DUNWICH MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	136	0	0	0
02	0	0	254	0	0	0
3429 - Total:	0	0	390	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3434 - WEST ELGIN MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
00	0	0	965	0	0	0
3434 - Total:	0	0	965	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3902 - NEWBURY VILLAGE

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
00	0	0	22	0	0	0
3902 - Total:	0	0	22	0	0	0

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

County/Mun: 3906 - SOUTHWEST MIDDLESEX MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	216	0	0	0
02	0	0	196	0	0	0
03	0	0	161	0	0	0
3906 - Total:	0	0	573	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3916 - STRATHROY-CARADOC MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	2,782	0	0	0
02	0	0	1,418	0	0	0
3916 - Total:	0	0	4,200	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3926 - THAMES CENTRE MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	392	0	0	0
02	0	0	601	0	0	0
03	0	0	693	0	0	0
3926 - Total:	0	0	1,686	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3936 - LONDON CITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	5,321	0	0	0
02	0	0	5,621	0	0	0
03	0	0	5,294	0	0	0
04	0	0	6,624	0	0	0
05	0	0	5,472	0	0	0
06	0	0	2,181	0	0	0
07	0	0	6,612	0	0	0
08	0	0	4,327	0	0	0
09	0	0	6,522	0	0	0
10	0	0	6,200	0	0	0
11	0	0	4,315	0	0	0

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

12	0	0	6,587	0	0	0
13	0	0	3,190	0	0	0
14	0	0	5,875	0	0	0
3936 - Total:	0	0	74,141	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3939 - MIDDLESEX CENTRE MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	727	0	0	0
02	0	0	315	0	0	0
03	0	0	225	0	0	0
04	0	0	1,077	0	0	0
05	0	0	691	0	0	0
3939 - Total:	0	0	3,035	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3946 - ADELAIDE METCALFE TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
00	0	0	555	0	0	0
3946 - Total:	0	0	555	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3954 - NORTH MIDDLESEX MUNICIPALITY

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	187	0	0	0
02	0	0	64	0	0	0
03	0	0	281	0	0	0
04	0	0	213	0	0	0
05	0	0	247	0	0	0
3954 - Total:	0	0	992	0	0	0

County/Mun: 3958 - LUCAN BIDDULPH TOWNSHIP

Ward	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other
01	0	0	232	0	0	0

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

02	0	0	304	0	0	0
03	0	0	293	0	0	0
3958 - Total:	0	0	829	0	0	0

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

Summary Total

County/Mun	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other	Total
3202	0	0	774	0	0	0	774
3204	0	0	2,423	0	0	0	2,423
3211	0	0	709	0	0	0	709
3218	0	0	1,616	0	0	0	1,616
3227	0	0	831	0	0	0	831
3238	0	0	284	0	0	0	284
3242	0	0	6,129	0	0	0	6,129
3245	0	0	519	0	0	0	519
3401	0	0	365	0	0	0	365
3408	0	0	543	0	0	0	543
3411	0	0	492	0	0	0	492
3418	0	0	1,308	0	0	0	1,308
3421	0	0	4,956	0	0	0	4,956
3424	0	0	491	0	0	0	491
3429	0	0	390	0	0	0	390
3434	0	0	965	0	0	0	965
3902	0	0	22	0	0	0	22
3906	0	0	573	0	0	0	573
3916	0	0	4,200	0	0	0	4,200
3926	0	0	1,686	0	0	0	1,686
3936	0	0	74,141	0	0	0	74,141
3939	0	0	3,035	0	0	0	3,035
3946	0	0	555	0	0	0	555
3954	0	0	992	0	0	0	992
3958	0	0	829	0	0	0	829
Total	0	0	108,828	0	0	0	108,828

Population of Electoral Groups Report

School Board ID: 38 - LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

Summary Total

School Board - Grand Totals

School Board ID	English Public	French Public	English Separate	French Separate	Prot-Sep	Other	Total
38	0	0	108,828	0	0	0	108,828
Total	0	0	108,828	0	0	0	108,828

March 20, 2026

The Right Honourable Mark Carney
Prime Minister of Canada
Via email: Pm@pm.gc.ca

The Honourable Marjorie Michel
Minister of Health
Via email: Marjorie.michel@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Via email: Premier@ontario.ca

The Honourable Sylvia Jones
Minister of Health
Via email: Sylvia.Jones@ontario.ca

Dear Prime Minister Carney, Minister Michel, Premier Ford and Minister Jones:

Re: Food Insecurity Emergency Declaration

The following motion was passed by Council declaring food insecurity an emergency in our community. This declaration reflects our growing concern about the impact of food insecurity on the health and well-being of residents across Chatham-Kent.

In passing this motion, we have joined other cities in Ontario who have declared food insecurity an emergency and hope it will initiate collaborative action and policy development at the provincial and federal levels of government.

“Whereas food insecurity is defined as, the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints, a marker of material deprivation (poverty), and a serious public health problem because it increases the risk of non-communicable and infectious diseases, and premature death.

Whereas chronic stressors like disability, precarious work, and acute shocks like COVID-19, illness or eviction, make it more difficult to afford life’s basic needs and live free from poverty. Whereas income-based policies are necessary to effectively reduce household food insecurity, which Chatham-Kent Public Health reports is experienced by at least 1 in 5 households in Chatham-Kent. Whereas the income provided through provincial and federal programs has not kept up with rising costs of food, housing and other basic needs.

Cont’d...

Whereas Ontario Works rates have been frozen since 2018: the maximum single person monthly benefit for basic needs is \$343 and \$390 for shelter, totalling \$733 per month.

Whereas Chatham-Kent Public Health reports a single person on Ontario Works spends ~134% of their income on food and rent. Whereas the Municipality of Chatham-Kent provides programs and services that decrease the impacts of poverty and income inequality and provides participants with a better quality of life which can positively improve health and well-being.

Whereas the number of individuals using Chatham-Kent Outreach for Hunger has increased by ~38% from 2022 to 2024, from 2781 unique individuals in 2022, to 3752 unique individuals in 2024, with a ~51% increase in families with children.

Whereas the number of households using the food assistance program within the Village Pantry has increased by ~124%, from 76 unique households in 2022, to 170 unique households in 2024.

Whereas the number of meals served to under-housed people by Reach Out Chatham-Kent has increased by ~17% from 2022 to 2024, from 43,594 meals in 2022, to 51,313 meals 2024.

Whereas Hope Haven has already had 4000 more visits in 2025 compared to 2024.

Whereas poverty costs Ontario around \$27.1 – 33 billion dollars per year: justice system \$1.1 billion; health care \$3.9 billion; lost income \$19.4 – 25 billion; lost tax revenue \$2.7 – 3 billion.

Whereas the provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy's (Building a Strong Foundation for Success: Reducing Poverty in Ontario (2020-2025)) primary measure of success is that more social assistance recipients move into employment, despite people with employment income being one of the fastest growing groups at food banks.

Whereas the Chatham-Kent Food Policy Council's mission is to lead in the development of relevant policies and to advocate for our local food system, and values that all people should have physical and economic access to healthy, culturally diverse, local food.

Whereas the Chatham-Kent Food Policy Council's Strategic Plan for 2025-2027 highlights the need to advocate for government-level policies that impact food systems, and specifically, to advocate for income-based solutions to food insecurity to provide families with more agency in food choices.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Mayor and Council support the advocacy of the Chatham-Kent Food Policy Council by declaring food insecurity an emergency in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

Cont'd...

And that Mayor and Council request the Provincial Government focus its upcoming 2026-2030 Poverty Reduction Strategy around reducing measures of material deprivation, such as food insecurity.

And that Mayor and Council request the Provincial Government immediately raise social assistance rates to meet life's basic needs.

And that Mayor and Council request the Provincial and Federal Governments to address the causes of food insecurity by establishing a Guaranteed Livable Basic Income for those living in poverty.

And that Mayor and Council request the Provincial and Federal Governments to increase the rates of income support programs to ensure they are adequate to address the basic needs of individuals and families.

And that Mayor and Council request that the Provincial and Federal Governments include the reduction of food insecurity as a component of all appropriate government policies. And that a copy of this motion be forwarded to the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA), Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Federation of Municipalities of Canada (FCM), Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA), all Ontario Municipalities, all Members of Provincial Parliament and Parliament, The Right Honourable Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada, all federal party leaders, the Honourable M.P.P. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Ontario Minister of Health Sylvia Jones, and the Federal Minister of Health Marjorie Michel.”

Sincerely,



Darrin Canniff, Mayor/CEO
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

C: All Members of Provincial Parliament and Parliament
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA)
Federation of Municipalities of Canada (FCM) Association of
Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA)
Ontario Municipalities



Damella Group Limited

April 8, 2026

Warden Giguère and Members of Elgin County Council Elgin County
450 Sunset Drive,
St. Thomas, Ontario
N5R 5V1

Dear Warden Giguère and Members of Elgin County Council:

Re: Aylmer Library — Property Option at 154 Talbot Street West

I have been following the discussion around the future of the Aylmer Library and understand that no formal commitment has been made, with the decision ultimately resting with the incoming council. With that in mind, I am writing regarding my downtown property at 154 Talbot Street West, Aylmer that addresses many of the concerns raised in the discussions.

This property has been explored for library use before. In 2019, the Town of Aylmer and Damella Group Limited executed a formal Letter of Intent signed by the sitting mayor for a 20-year lease of the property, including building renovations to prepare for library occupancy (see attached rendering). The deal did not proceed due to a tenancy matter at the time. That situation has since been resolved, and the property can be made available for library use.

The building offers:

- **Approximately 13,000 sq ft** of usable space (9,000 main level + 4,000 basement) with room for expansion
- **A downtown location**, a short walk from the current library, with ample parking
- **A substantially lower cost to taxpayers** than the downtown expansion currently under consideration, with significant private investment in the renovation
- **A purpose-built renovation** that would significantly improve the building's street presence
- **A long-term lease arrangement** — the 2019 LOI was a 20-year lease with extension options
- **No displacement** of existing recreation programming

I respectfully request that Council consider this property. Given the upcoming elections, we wanted to surface this so that decision makers are aware of all options. I would welcome the opportunity to provide any additional information, or work with the County as it explores this further.

Respectfully,
Damella Group Limited

Kevin Ribeiro
General Manager,



AAA AGAR
ARCHITECT
philip_agar_architect_inc



101-750 Talbot Street
St. Thomas ON, N5P 1E2
519.631.1981

Friday, March 27, 2026

Due to the timing of the funding approval for the ElevateHER event occurring after the event had already taken place, we were unable to fully recognize Elgin County's support through event promotion and partnership visibility.

As a result, we are respectfully requesting approval to redirect these funds toward our upcoming *Social Issues Are Business Issues* event on June 16, 2026.

This event aligns closely with the County's priorities, focusing on key social challenges such as housing, mental health, and workforce development, while engaging a broad cross-section of the community. It also provides enhanced visibility opportunities through both in-person attendance and a livestreamed and recorded format.

We would be proud to recognize Elgin County as a valued partner in this initiative.

The details of this initiative are as follows:

Outline where this project, program/service, or event will take place. If you are applying for event funding, please indicate the anticipated event attendance. If you are applying for program/service funding, please indicate how many people from the County of Elgin use this service.

The *Social Issues Are Business Issues* event will take place at CASO Station in St. Thomas on Tuesday, June 16, 2026. This centrally located venue provides accessible space for attendees from across Elgin County.

We anticipate approximately 120–150 in-person attendees, including business leaders, community organizations, municipal representatives, and residents, many of whom live or work within Elgin County.

In addition to the in-person event, the session will be livestreamed free of charge, allowing for broader participation from across the County and beyond. A recording will also be made publicly available following the event on Rogers TV and YouTube, extending its reach and long-term value.

This hybrid format ensures meaningful local engagement while also amplifying Elgin County's leadership in addressing social and economic challenges to a wider audience.

Please provide a clear description of the project, event, or program/service and detail how the funds will be used. Please include key dates of scheduled activities and the target audience.

This hybrid event will bring together business leaders, non-profits, government representatives, and community members to explore how social challenges such as housing instability, mental health, and workforce shortages directly impact economic growth and business sustainability.

The event will feature an expert panel, facilitated discussion, and opportunities for cross-sector collaboration. It will be a ticketed in-person experience (approximately 120–150 attendees), with a free livestream available to participants across Elgin County, Ontario, and beyond. The session will also be recorded and shared for ongoing public access.

Funding will directly support venue rental, audiovisual production and livestreaming, speaker honorariums, catering, and event materials. These elements ensure both an accessible and high-quality experience, while expanding reach beyond those physically in attendance.

How does your project, event, or program/service fill a need within the community? Please describe how your project, event, or program/service enhances the community to achieve a positive impact.

This forum responds to a critical and growing need within the community: the intersection of social challenges and economic stability. Businesses across Elgin County are increasingly impacted by issues such as housing availability, workforce retention, and mental health, yet there are limited spaces where these conversations happen collaboratively across sectors.

Our region has emerged as a leader in addressing complex social issues through coordinated, community-driven solutions. Building on this momentum, including recognition from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce with the 2025 Outstanding Advocacy Campaign Award, this event creates a platform to share proven strategies, reduce stigma, and align efforts between business and social sectors.

The impact of this initiative is both immediate and long-term: strengthening partnerships, increasing awareness, and equipping attendees with practical, scalable solutions. By making the event accessible through livestream and recorded content, its benefits extend well beyond a single day, supporting continued learning and engagement across the province.

If this is not a new project, event, or program/service, please explain how County support will help enhance your existing initiative to boost participation and/or volunteer involvement.

This event builds on the success of previous forums led by the Chamber, which have demonstrated strong community engagement and measurable impact. County support will allow us to significantly enhance both the reach and quality of the initiative.

Specifically, funding will expand access through professional livestreaming and recorded distribution, ensuring participation from rural and underserved areas across Elgin County. It will also support a more robust event experience, including higher-calibre production, stronger speaker engagement, and improved attendee accessibility.

Additionally, this support will help deepen cross-sector participation by reducing financial barriers and enabling broader outreach. By strengthening the delivery of an already successful model, County investment directly contributes to increased participation, stronger collaboration, and greater overall community impact.

Please describe the financial need of your organization and the reasons for requesting this support. Indicate other forms of sponsorships/funding that have been applied for or received.

As a non-profit organization, the St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce relies on a combination of sponsorships, ticket revenue, and grant funding to deliver high-impact community programming. While this event will generate some revenue through ticket sales (estimated at 50 ticket holders at \$50 each) and confirmed sponsorship support (including \$2,500 from Steelway Building Systems), there remains a significant funding gap.

Total event costs are projected at approximately \$13,500, with major expenses including production (\$2,500), venue rental (\$1,500), and catering and materials. To ensure accessibility – particularly through free livestream access – and maintain the quality and reach of the event, additional funding is essential.

We are actively seeking approximately \$8,500 in additional sponsorships and grant support. We have applied for another funding grant through the Municipality of Central Elgin as well. County funding would play a critical role in closing this gap, enabling us to deliver an inclusive, high-quality event that benefits the broader Elgin County community.

COUNTY OF ELGIN

By-Law No. 26-16

**“BEING A BY-LAW TO CONFIRM PROCEEDINGS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF
THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF ELGIN AT THE
APRIL 14, 2026 MEETING”**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 5.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended, the powers of a municipality shall be exercised by its Council;

AND WHEREAS pursuant to Section 5.3 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended, the powers of every Council shall be exercised by by-law;

AND WHEREAS it is deemed expedient that the proceedings of the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the County of Elgin at this meeting be confirmed and adopted by by-law.

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the County of Elgin enacts as follows:

1. THAT the actions of the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the County of Elgin, in respect of each recommendation contained in the reports and each motion and resolution passed and other action taken by the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the County of Elgin, at its meeting held on April 14, 2026 be hereby adopted and confirmed as if all such proceedings were expressly embodied in this by-law.
2. THAT the Warden and appropriate officials of the Corporation of the County of Elgin are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the actions of the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the County of Elgin referred to in the preceding section hereof.
3. THAT the Warden and the Chief Administrative Officer, or alternate, are authorized and directed to execute all documents necessary in that behalf and to affix thereto the seal of the Corporation of the County of Elgin.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 14TH DAY OF APRIL 2026.

Blaine Parkin,
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk.

Dominique Giguère,
Warden.