



Council Highlights

Thursday,
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Council Receives Annual Committee Reports

At the December 12, 2024 County Council meeting, Council members received annual update reports from several key committees providing an overview of their activities in 2024 and proposed initiatives for the upcoming year.

The reports, presented by each committee, highlighted their respective mandates, accomplishments, and plans for 2025. Committees that shared their updates included the Land Division Committee, Finance Committee, Terrace Lodge Redevelopment Steering Committee, Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee, Human Resources Committee, Museum Advisory Committee, and Growth Planning Steering Committee.

These reports give Council and the public an in-depth look at the valuable work being done at the committee level, ensuring that Elgin County remains on track to meet its long-term goals.

The full Committee Reports are available as part of the December 12, 2024 County Council Agenda Package.

County Council to Oversee Museum Directly

Elgin County Council approved the dissolution of the Elgin County Museum Advisory Committee (ECMAC) and replacement of it with direct oversight by Elgin County Council. Established in 2007, ECMAC served as an advisory body for matters such as exhibitions, events, policy reviews, and museum liaison. Initially, the Committee had representation from the Women's Institutes (WI), the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE), and the Elgin County Tourist Association, all of which have since diminished or dissolved. The Committee currently includes members from Elgin County Council, the agricultural community, and other local museums, but there is a vacancy for a WI representative.

The Committee has faced challenges, including low attendance and an inability to meet quorum, with the last two meetings failing to do so. After consulting Committee Members, it was agreed that a new governance model would better address these issues. Similar to other County departments (such as the Elgin County Library and Archives), the Museum will report directly to the County Council without the need for an advisory committee.

The Museum has an exciting year ahead with a photography exhibit to run from January to June. In July, an exhibit about Jumbo will open. It will coincide with the 140th anniversary of Jumbo's death and will run into early 2026. A semi-permanent exhibition will be mounted in the back section of the museum, drawn from the permanent collection. Selections will be made to highlight aspects of the County's history and to represent, where possible, the individual municipalities. Collections work will focus on continuing the collections review and identifying items for transfer or deaccession and updating records and photographs in the online database.



Council Appoints ADR Chambers Inc. as Integrity Commissioner/Closed Meeting Investigator

Elgin County's contract for Integrity Commissioner and Closed Meeting Investigator services expires at the end of 2024, and Council directed a new procurement process for a 2½-year contract. An RFQ was issued on November 12, 2024, and closed on November 29, 2024, with four bids received from the following firms: Deloitte LLP, Ross & McBride LLP, ADR Chambers Inc., and Lerner LLP.

The RFQ required firms to meet minimum qualifications, including at least five years of experience in municipal integrity services, expertise in areas such as Municipal Conflict of Interest Act compliance, mediation, communication, investigations, adjudication, and municipal government. The lowest compliant bid was from ADR Chambers Inc. at a rate of \$300 per hour for both services.

ADR Chambers has proposed Michael Maynard as the Integrity Commissioner and Closed Meeting Investigator. Maynard has been serving in these roles since 2018 and currently works with 18 Ontario municipalities and three school boards.

Contract Awarded for Village of Fingal Reconstruction Project

Council approved awarding the engineering services contract for the Village of Fingal Reconstruction project to AECOM Canada Ltd. for \$628,039 (excluding HST). The contract covers the provision of engineering services, including project engineering, detailed design, tender preparation, inspection, and contract administration for the reconstruction of Township and County roads and full municipal servicing in the Village of Fingal. This project is a collaboration between the County of Elgin and the Township of Southwold. The County oversees Union Road, Fingal Line, and associated stormwater systems, while the Township is responsible for sanitary sewer, water systems, local roads, and pedestrian facilities.



Council Establishes Two New Restricted Parking Zones

Elgin County Council established restricted parking in two areas along County roads to improve traffic safety and flow.

The first area is Fulton Street (CR 41) in the Village of Vienna, where the Municipality of Bayham requested parking restrictions between Elm Street and Snow Street. Parked vehicles on the grass boulevard in this section of road create potential hazards due to restricted sightlines and the existing road geometry.

The second area is St. George Street (CR 26) in the Municipality of Central Elgin, which was recently reconstructed to include narrower 3.35-meter travel lanes as a traffic calming measure. The 6.7-meter width between curbs does not accommodate on-street parking, and vehicles that attempt to park there obstruct traffic and pose safety risks. Therefore, staff recommended restricting parking along St. George Street. To minimize sign clutter, restricted parking signs will be placed at both ends of the street. If parking violations continue, additional "No Parking" signage will be installed.



New Structure for Council Meetings

Elgin County Council has approved a new structure for Council meetings, which will be incorporated into a draft of the procedural by-law for Council's review in the new year. Currently, Elgin County Council uses a structure that combines Committee of the Whole within the Council meeting format. Under this structure, all actions from Committee of the Whole are approved immediately following discussion during the same meeting.

The new structure will separate Council and Committee of the Whole into distinct meetings, though they will still occur on the same day. Items discussed in Committee of the Whole will not be approved until the following regular Council meeting, two weeks later. This change will allow time for public comment and further discussion if deemed necessary by Councillors.

Elgin County Prioritizes Community Safety with Updated Emergency Plan and By-Law

Elgin County's Emergency Management by-law was established in 2018 and did not fully align with the requirements of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA). During the 2023 compliance process, Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) recommended that Elgin County adopt an all-encompassing by-law to ensure better alignment.

Council adopted a new by-law that adopts the emergency management program and plan, and formally appoints the primary and alternate Community Emergency Management Coordinators (CEMCs), along with the County's Emergency Management Program Committee (EMPC) and Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG). This updated by-law also provides flexibility for future administrative changes, ensuring the ongoing effectiveness and efficiency of the emergency management program.

In addition to the new by-law, the Emergency Management (EM) Department has taken the opportunity to update the Emergency Response Plan (ERP). These updates are primarily administrative, aligning the ERP with the new by-law and removing or updating outdated information to ensure it remains relevant and effective.



For the complete **December 12, 2024 Agenda Package**, please visit the following link:
[County Council Agenda Package](#)