

July 14, 2020

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### SWIFT 2.0 Update

The Warden provided an update on a special Western Ontario Wardens Caucus (WOWC) meeting, which was held on July 2, 2020, to discuss the Caucus' support for a Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology 2.0 initiative as Southwestern Ontario's funding mechanism to advance the expansion of critical broadband infrastructure across Southwestern Ontario.

The WOWC passed a resolution at its meeting held on July 2, 2020:

- Supporting Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) as Southwestern Ontario's funding mechanism to advance the expansion of critical broadband infrastructure across Southwestern Ontario;
- Requesting that the Government of Canada provide direct funding of \$254 million and the Government of Ontario provide direct funding of \$221 million to support development of high speed (50 megabits per second and faster) community broadband; and
- Stating that combined with a \$68.4M commitment from the region and a \$105M contribution from the private sector (ISPs), WOWC intends to successfully address the \$1B Southwestern Ontario infrastructure deficit and achieve the interim goal of providing 50/10 broadband services to 95% of the population within Southwestern Ontario by 2025.

Click [here](#) for information with respect to the anticipated financial commitment from Elgin County.

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### Warden's Charity Golf Tournament Cancelled

The 12th Annual County of Elgin Warden's Charity Golf Tournament scheduled for the fall of 2020 at the St. Thomas Golf and Country Club has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

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Out of respect for the health and safety of Elgin County residents, and due to Provincial restrictions on public gatherings, Warden Dave Mennill has made the difficult decision to cancel the tournament.

"Keeping our residents safe and healthy and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities is the number one priority of Elgin County Council," said Warden Mennill. "We are of course disappointed to cancel an event that provides a significant contribution to the United Way Elgin Middlesex and the agencies that it serves. Given the on-going needs of the organization and the increasing demand for its services as a result of the pandemic, we are challenging those who would have participated in the past to donate directly to the United Way to help meet the needs of Elgin's most vulnerable community members. We can't gather in person but we can still make a difference."

You can donate to United Way online here:

<https://community.unitedwayem.ca/comm/SinglePageRegPledge.jsp?&SA=2232551>

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## Festival and Event Grant Allocations and Community Grant Program Update

County Council approved funding in the amount of \$3000 for the STEAM Centre and \$2000 for the Elgin 4-H Association through the Festival and Event Partnership Program as recommended by the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee. Many events have been cancelled in 2020 as a result of COVID-19; however, the STEAM Centre and the Elgin 4-H Association are finding creative ways to continue delivering their services to the residents of Elgin County through the innovative use of virtual programming.

Council also approved a new Community Grant Program that seeks to standardize the process of applying for Elgin County grants, assist established and emerging community programs, and encourage new and innovative programming ideas from applicants.

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## Terrace Lodge Fundraising Committee Appointments and Steering Committee Updates

Council officially appointed three (3) new members to the Terrace Lodge Redevelopment Fundraising Committee as recommended by the Committee. Jamie Chapman, Richard Kisuule and Jim Jenkins will join the existing members in raising funds to purchase items that will make the newly redeveloped Terrace Lodge feel more like a home for residents. The experience and enthusiasm of these individuals will be assets to the Committee as it moves forward.

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The Terrace Lodge Steering Committee brought a report before Council detailing the progress of the project to date. Work has been delayed as a result of COVID-19, preventing construction workers from entering resident areas during lockdown. A plan has been developed to allow the first 12 months of the construction to begin on the addition with no entry into resident areas.

The Committee has also given some consideration to additional features that could be included in the construction that would make operations during future pandemics more efficient. These features include oxygen storage, negative pressure rooms, staff locker room modifications and expanded dining space. The preliminary additional costs for these features are detailed in the report titled "Terrace Lodge Redevelopment July 2020 Update" and will be further explored in a future report to County Council.

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## Changes to Elgin County Reduced Speed Zones and Community Safety Zones

The County of Elgin has made amendments to the by-law regulating reduced speed zones on Elgin County roads and to the by-law regulating Community Safety Zones.

Four separate reduced speed zones along County roads require revisions. It is proposed that two existing speed zones be reduced from 60km/h to 50km/h (Talbot Line - #3 in the hamlets of Shedden and Wallacetown), a new 60km/h zone is introduced on County Road 40 (Glencolin Line) and an existing 60km/h zone is eliminated (Wonderland Road).

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## Council Undertakes Development Charges Study

Elgin County Council voted to reconsider a motion, originally defeated in March of 2019, to undertake a development charges study. Considering both increasing residential growth in the County and new information provided by Director of Engineering Services, Brian Lima, Council decided to undertake the study. Next steps include the preparation of a growth forecast, compiling historic inventories and preparing a 10-year development charges capital plan. The results of this study will be brought before Council before any decisions are finalized regarding the implementation of development charges in Elgin.

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## Service Delivery Review Interim Report Summary

In January of 2020, the County of Elgin received funding through the Municipal Modernization Program to carry out a Service Delivery Review (SDR). The purpose of this review is to make municipal services more effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of Elgin's residents and municipal partners.

StrategyCorp Inc. was selected to undertake this review and have been engaging in extensive stakeholder reviews since February. An interim report was presented to Elgin County Council and subsequently submitted to the Province in June.

The [Service Delivery Review Interim Report Summary](#) provides an overview of the review, its key priorities, deliverables to date, opportunities identified and next steps.

A final report will be presented to County Council and submitted to the Province in September.

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## Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Update

The County of Elgin in conjunction with the Town of Aylmer, the City of St. Thomas and local police services are undertaking the process of developing a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan in accordance with the Police Services Act and Bill 175 – The Safer Ontario Act. This plan will mark a shift in focus from a reactive, response-based approach to incidents to a more proactive, holistic approach to community safety.

Despite initial setbacks due to COVID-19, work on the CSWB Plan is moving forward albeit in a different format than originally anticipated. An Advisory Group comprised of relevant local organizations and community groups has been surveyed and engagement of these individuals will continue as the process moves forward.

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## Environmental Committee Established

Elgin County Council established an Environmental Committee and appointed Councillors Jones and Martyn to serve on the Committee as Council's representatives. The Environmental Advisory Committee provides input, advice and makes recommendations on environmental matters affecting the County of Elgin.

The Advisory Committee is responsible for the following:

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- To serve as an advisory, resource and information support group to the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee, Municipal Council and its Committees as required, and to the citizenry to encourage and promote sustainable programs and functions such as: Waste reduction, reuse and recycling programs; Water and energy conservation measures; and Climate change mitigation.

- To investigate such other aspects of environmental concern as may be suggested by County Council, its other Committees, or civic administration.

- To initiate and/or receive submissions and/or delegations regarding any environmental concerns and to report with recommendations to the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee and/or County Council when appropriate.

The full Committee Terms of Reference can be accessed in the July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 County Council Agenda Package.

The recruitment process for citizen appointees will begin in July.

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## County to Review Deer Crossing Signage

In response to a request from Police Services Board Chair, Sally Martyn, Elgin County Council directed Brian Lima, Director of Engineering Services, to review the County's deer crossing warning signage to ensure its adequacy in response to a significant increase in deer/vehicle collisions during the first Quarter of 2020. The results of the review will be brought before County Council at a future date.

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The complete July 14, 2020 County Council Agenda package can be found [here](#).