

August 11, 2020

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### Council Supports Royal Oak Retirement Residence Request for Transitional Beds

The County of Elgin voted to support the Royal Oak Retirement Residence Project's application to the Ministry of Health for 20 transitional beds at its new facility in Southwold Township.

Ensuring that residents of all ages have access to a superior quality of life is a key strategic priority of Elgin County Council. As our population ages, it is crucial that seniors have access to the services that will allow them to remain living within the community they call home.

The Royal Oak Retirement Residence Project is in the process of constructing a 6.5-acre seniors' residence in a park-like setting. Single units each with exterior access and concierge services will be offered to residents. This facility will provide a transition between independent living and long-term care settings.

An additional component of this project is the proposed 20 transitional beds for 30-60 day stays. These beds will provide residents of our community with safe transitions between discharge from hospital and a return to independent living in their homes. These beds will not only free up much needed space at the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital but will provide the care necessary to prevent these individuals from being readmitted to hospital once they return home.

These transitional beds are part of an integrated system of care that is crucial for active, meaningful and safe living for senior residents of our community.

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### Council Supports Safer and Vital Communities Grant Application

County Council supported M.I. Understanding and the St. Thomas Rainbow Optimists' application to the Safer and Vital Communities Grant. If successful, grant funds will be utilized for the creation of videos and other communications tools that will increase understanding and awareness and connect families with resources to support children's mental health. The grant will allow M.I. Understanding to develop professional learning tools that address racism and deliver

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culturally adaptive programs and resources that consider the diversity of participants and support respectful curiosity and open communication.

## Plowing Match Scholarships Awarded

Elgin County Council is pleased to award the 2020 International Plowing Match Legacy Scholarship to Annie Watson of Central Elgin and Isaac Clutterbuck of Southwold.

Ms. Watson is completing a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree from the University of Guelph. Her essay focused on ways to educate and inform the public on sustainable farming practices through open houses and displays. Mr. Clutterbuck is also completing a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree from the University of Guelph. His essay focused on ways to ensure a more stable food supply, especially in light of COVID-19. This includes creating incentives for food processing plants to locate in Elgin County, creating more local abattoirs and an awareness campaign on the importance of buying locally-sourced food.

Warden Mennill commended the recipient's dedication to their studies and their innovative focus on the future of agriculture in Elgin County.



*Entrance to the Elgin County Exhibit at the 2010 International Plowing Match*

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## Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Public Survey Available

The Coordinating Committee for the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan has launched a survey that will be available throughout the month of August. This survey will seek feedback regarding what community safety and well-being means to the broader public.



## Terrace Lodge Steering Committee Updates

The Province of Ontario announced a further \$4.2M in funding for the Terrace Lodge Redevelopment Project and Council considered how to utilize this additional funding based on recommendations by the Terrace Lodge Redevelopment Steering Committee.

The Committee recommended enhancements to the Project including oxygen storage, negative pressure rooms, and modifications to the staff locker room that would improve operational efficiency and resident comfort and safety during a pandemic. Additional cleaning and safety measures during construction will also need to be implemented due to COVID-19. The Committee also recommended the replacement of the aging Nurse Call System. These enhancements would cost an additional \$443,450.

The Committee also asked that Council consider enhancements to the dining areas that would allow for a more pleasurable dining experience for residents, more efficient use of staffing resources and space for physical distancing during future pandemics or outbreaks. Additional costs for this expanded dining space will be \$750,000.

Council voted to support both of the aforementioned enhancements. More comprehensive information can be found in the report titled

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“Terrace Lodge Redevelopment August 2020 Update” as contained in the [August 11, 2020 County Council Agenda Package](#).

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### Planning Update

The Elgin County Planner presented a summary of changes made to the Provincial Policy Statement that came into effect in May of 2020. In accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act, all decisions on land use planning matters made on or after that date are required to be consistent with the PPS 2020. A detailed breakdown of these changes can be found in the report titled “Changes to the Provincial Policy Statement - May 1, 2020” contained within the [August 11, 2020 County Council Agenda Package](#).

Council granted approval of Official Plan Amendment CE-OPA 7-20 in the Municipality of Central Elgin. The lands in question are located on the north side of George Street, between Front Street and Sydenham Street, geographic Village of Port Stanley. The purpose of the amendment is to change the lands use designation on the subject lands from “Natural Heritage” to “Residential” recognizing the existing residential dwelling and accessory structure on the property and allowing for a proposed severance.

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### Elgin County Roads Update

County Council approved a pedestrian crossover on Belmont Road (County Road 74) and Union Street in the village of Port Stanley to be installed by the Municipality of Central Elgin. This crossover will include rapid flashing beacons and curb “bump outs” intended to shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians.

At the request of Central Elgin Council, the County of Elgin performed speed and volume counts on Centennial Ave (County Road 28) and reviewed traffic calming measures. The result of this investigation can be found in the report titled “Centennial Avenue- Speeding Concerns” in the [August 11, 2020 County Council Agenda package](#).

Council endorsed the Centennial Road / Elm Line Intersection Improvements Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Project File. The County of Elgin has completed a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Study to develop a transportation plan for intersection improvements at Centennial Road (CR28) and Elm Line (CR56) in the Municipality of Central Elgin. The Study had evaluated alternatives to improve the operation, safety and capacity of the existing intersection, and has identified a 45m Roundabout as the preferred alternative. The full project file can be accessed [here](#).

At the request of the Elgin Group Police Services Board, the County of Elgin undertook an investigation of deer crossing signage on County roads as a result of an increase in deer/vehicular collisions in the first quarter of 2020. As a result of this investigation, Council approved additional deer crossing warning signage to be installed on County Roads.



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## Library, Museum and Archives Update

The Elgin County Library, Museum and Archives are all open, under strict health and safety guidelines, after having to close their doors in March as a result of COVID-19.

All ten branches of the Elgin County Library are now offering curbside pickup with limited hours of operation. The Elgin County Heritage Centre is open for drop in visits; however, capacity is limited to three (3) persons or two (2) social circles provided that the size of each circle is five persons or less.

The Elgin County Archives is open by appointment only and capacity is limited to two (2) researchers at a time.

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## June 2020 Financials Update

The budget comparison for the County shows favourable performance of \$68,000 for the month of June, primarily the result of favourable wage performance, bringing year-to-date favourable performance to \$341,000.

A detailed financial analysis can be found in the report titled “June 2020 Financial Update” in the [August 11, 2020 County Council Agenda package](#).

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## Council Approves Amending Agreement for POA Transfer Agreement

Elgin County Council approved the amending agreement to the Provincial Offences Court Transfer Agreement between the Province of Ontario and the County of Elgin in relation to the extension of functions to be provided by Elgin County in administration of the St. Thomas Provincial Offences Court and more specifically in relation to the prosecution of proceedings under Parts III and IX of the Provincial Offences Act.

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## Connectivity Committee Appointments

County Council appointed Shawn Southern, Justin Pennings and Mike Andrews as Community Members of the Connectivity Committee. All three individuals have considerable experience with telecom and fibre network projects and are passionate community volunteers.

The Committee is scheduled to meet for the first time on September 9<sup>th</sup> and will be tasked with finding innovative and effective solutions to connectivity challenges across the County.

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The complete August 11, 2020 County Council Agenda package can be found [here](#).