

October 13, 2020

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Elgin County Launches Strategic Plan Video



After a final strategic planning session on September 22, 2020 to develop a measurement framework, County Council has finalized its Strategic Plan. The planning process began in late 2019 and includes an operational plan for staff, an action plan for Council and a framework for measuring success.

A key step in the development of this strategy was consultation and gathering of feedback from several different stakeholders. Council, County staff, Local Municipal Partners and the community at large were asked to provide input on Council's direction moving forward. The goal of this consultation was to ensure that Elgin County is responsive to the needs of the broader community and to strengthen trust and relationships with key stakeholders.

At its meeting held on October 13, 2020, Warden Mennill introduced a video designed to promote the goals and priorities of the Strategic Plan to members of the public and County stakeholders. Please click [here](#) to view the video.

For regular updates on the progress of the Elgin County Council Strategic Plan 2020-2022 please visit:
www.elgincounty.ca/strategicplan.

Elgin County Planning Update

Elgin County Council granted approval for a Draft Plan of Subdivision for the Brokenshire Farms Subdivision located in the village of Dutton in the Municipality of Dutton Dunwich. The Plan consists of 72 single detached lots, 20 semi-detached dwellings and 1 storm water management block.

Council reconsidered and confirmed approval of Official Plan Amendment No. 25 in the Municipality of Bayham. This approval was originally granted on March 10, 2020; however, as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, notices of decision between February 26, 2020

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and before April 15, 2020 were deemed not to have been completed, and were required to give notice again, after the termination of the COVID-19 emergency. The Province passed an amendment to the regulations to add a termination date of June 22, 2020 related to Planning Act applications. Recirculation of the notice for OPA 25 was not completed within the 15-day requirement from the Act. Council was therefore required to reconsider the amendment so that proper notice could be completed.

Elgin County Financial Update - August

The budget comparison for the County shows unfavourable performance of \$22,000 for the month of August, primarily the result of COVID costs, bringing year-to-date (YTD) favourable performance to \$281,000.

The full breakdown of August 2020 financials can be found in the October 13, 2020 Council Agenda Package.

Meeks Bridge Replacement

Elgin County Council approved the Project File for the Meeks Bridge Replacement Project. As identified in the County's 2019 biennial bridge inspection report, Meeks bridge was recommended for replacement in 6-10 years based on its existing poor structural condition. As a result, the County completed a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study which reviewed alternatives for the replacement of Meeks Bridge.

Based on the results of the study analysis and evaluation, replacement of Meeks Bridge with the use of the existing Acrow Port Bruce temporary modular bridge as the replacement structure was the preferred alternative. A new structure is currently being constructed in Port Bruce and the temporary bridge will no longer be needed in this location.

Council also directed staff to issue a purchase order to Acrow Corporation of America in the amount of \$204,180.00 (excluding HST) to begin manufacturing the additional bridge parts needed to repurpose the Port Bruce temporary bridge for Meeks Bridge so as to ensure their availability as soon as the contractor is engaged. This will avoid potential project delays of three to four months.

Traffic By-Law Amendments

Elgin County Council adopted amendments to By-Law No. 17-11 "Being a By-Law to Authorize Speed Limits" and By-Law No. 20-05 "Being a Consolidated By-Law for the Regulation of Traffic including Parking on County Roads" at its meeting held on October 13, 2020.

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By-Law 17-11 was amended to reduce speed limits on Iona Road in Iona and Iona Station from 60km/h to 50km/h at the request of the Township of Southwold Council.

By-Law 20-05 was amended to add a no parking zone in the village of Sparta from the east property line of Drake Street for a distance of 80 metres easterly on the north side of Sparta Line.

Salt Management Plan

Snow and ice control are important parts of keeping Elgin County roads safe for motorists. Road salt is the preferred de-icing chemical for maintaining winter roadway safety. The County of Elgin, like other road authorities, utilizes road salt to fulfil its obligations under the Municipal Act to maintain safe roads in winter.

In 2001, Environment Canada released an assessment report indicating road salts are entering the environment in large amounts posing risks to plants, animals, birds, fish, lake and stream ecosystems and groundwater. Users of road salts are encouraged to develop management strategies to minimize salt entering the environment.

At its October 13, 2020 meeting County Council approved the County of Elgin's updated Salt Management Plan. A copy of this Plan can be accessed [here](#).

Woodlands Conservation By-Law

At its September 22, 2020 meeting County Council reviewed the Woodlands Conservation By-law as part of the "fostering a healthy environment" strategic priority in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. At the October 13, 2020 meeting Council consented to a housekeeping update of the By-law which will be brought forward at a future meeting. Council also committed to considering a more fulsome review of the By-law in the future in conjunction with the review of other relevant policies.

Council Directs Staff to Issue Intranet RFP

Elgin County Council directed staff to draft and issue a Request for Proposal for a Council/Employee Intranet. An intranet provides one central place to store all corporate documents, ensuring staff and County Councillors can search and quickly access the information they need. This is particularly important given the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to provide staff with regular, up to date and easily accessible health and safety information.

An intranet site that is intuitive and responsive for mobile devices will encourage and enhance two-way communication and make information sharing simple.

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Solicitor Billing Increase

Elgin County Council approved a planned increase to the County Solicitor billing rate. Participating Municipal Partners will now pay \$195/hour up from \$175/hour previously.

Library Launches Curbside Plus

Elgin County Council approved the next phase in reopening of the Library service. Elgin County's library branches will be opening for restricted service described as Curbside Plus + as of October 19, 2020. Curbside service will continue and library interiors will be open for limited browsing, use of public access computers, photocopying, printing, scanning and faxing services (to be done by staff), and for renewing library cards, placing inter-library loans and placing holds. Occupancy of libraries will be limited to a one-to-one basis based upon staffing levels. Physical distancing, masking, and enhanced sanitization will be in place. Curbside Plus + conforms to the Provincial framework for libraries as authorized in Phase 2 and Phase 3 of reopening and follows all public health guidelines.

A detailed description of this service is included in the October 13, 2020 Council Agenda Package.

Registered Dietitian

The Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007 requires that every home engage the services of a Registered Dietitian to oversee the nutrition and hydration programs at the home.

Elgin County's current contract for Registered Dietitian services is expiring and a new RFP was recently issued. An evaluation committee scored each proposal received using set criteria. Council supported the evaluation committee's recommendation to award a three-year contract to Urbshott Faulds Dietetics Professional Corporation for \$89,000 per year. Funding for this service is provided by the Ministry of Long-Term Care.

Council Calls for Cannabis Legislation Loopholes to be Eliminated

Elgin County Council joined other Ontario municipalities in urging the Federal and Provincial governments to eliminate loop holes in Cannabis legislation that allow for unlicensed Cannabis operations to flourish without required municipal permits and required set backs. These illegal operations pose a threat to community safety, produce

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odours that adversely affect residents and are difficult to enforce. Council also called on the Provincial government to reevaluate minimum distance set backs associated with licensed Cannabis operations. These operations if located in proximity to residential areas cause unpleasant odours and light pollution for nearby homeowners.

The complete October 13, 2020 County Council Agenda package can be found [here](#).