

March 23, 2021

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Council Receives Annual Report from St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre

Laura Woermke, Executive Director of the St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre (STEPAC) provided Council with an update of the Centre's activities in 2020. The update included a list of exhibits (in-person and virtual), school programs and events, online resources available for teachers and students, annual acquisitions and art preservation efforts. The COVID-19 pandemic affected attendance at the Centre greatly and made it difficult to hold in-person workshops and school programs; however, the Centre took this opportunity to make a considerable amount of its collection available online through [virtual exhibits](#) and educational resources.

ST. THOMAS-ELGIN PUBLIC ART CENTRE

Engineering Services/Facilities Contract Awards

Transportation Master Plan Study

Council awarded the provision of engineering services associated with the Transportation Master Plan, to IBI Group for the amount of \$234,826.00 (excluding HST). The Transportation Master Plan Study is intended to provide direction for the planning, coordination and implementation of a multi-municipal road and potential transit network, active transportation amenities, and commuter facilities for the next 30 years and beyond. The Study is expected to take one (1) year to be completed and will be presented to Elgin County Council for approval in the spring of 2022.

Elgin County Administration Building and Elgin Manor Roof Replacement

Council selected E-D Roofing Ltd. for the Administration Building and Elgin Manor Roof Replacement Project, Tender No. 2021-T07 at a total price of \$328,265.41 inclusive of a \$19,000 contingency allowance. A total of seven (7) contractors submitted bids for this project.

Cold-In-Place Asphalt Recycling and Culvert Rehabilitations

Council selected Roto-Mill Inc. to complete Cold In-Place Asphalt Recycling on various roads, at a total price of \$2,790,687.98 exclusive of HST.

Council also selected Gary D. Robinson Contracting Ltd. to complete Culvert Rehabilitations on various roads, at a total price of \$464,030.00 inclusive of a \$25,000 contingency allowance and exclusive of HST.

Full details of the abovementioned contract awards are contained within the March 23, 2021 County Council Agenda Package.

County Approves Specific Telecommunications Road User Agreements

Council approved the preparation and use of a Road User Agreement specific to application for installation of telecommunications equipment within County Road Allowances. Previously multiple Road Occupancy Permits were used for these types of installations. Staff investigated a request for consideration of a Road User Agreement specific to the telecommunications industry and discovered an opportunity which not only improves the current approach to installation of telecommunication equipment within County road allowances but creates a degree of flexibility which is better suited to telecommunication installations at multiple locations as Elgin County encourages and seeks to improve conductivity within its territorial limits.

Council Approves Engagement Strategy for Official Plan Review Process

The Elgin County Official Plan is a land use planning document that is a statement of where and how development should take place. The purpose of the 5-year Review of the Official Plan is to ensure that the vision/values, directions, policies, and actions in the Official Plan meet the needs of the community into the future.

The Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee endorsed an Engagement Strategy for the Official Plan process at its meeting on March 9, 2021 and recommended the Strategy for Council's approval.

[The Engagement Strategy](#) is focused on ensuring public engagement is transparent, focused, accessible and will serve as a guiding document detailing the County's approach to external public engagement.

SWIFT Announces \$6.1 Million in Broadband Funding for Elgin County

On March 17, 2021 the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology Network announced \$6.1 Million in broadband internet upgrades for Elgin County. The newly announced projects will collectively service 114 kilometres of underserved roadway to bring better broadband connectivity to 1,399 households and businesses within the municipalities of Dutton Dunwich, West Elgin, Bayham and within the Township of Southwold.

To read the full media release from SWIFT [click here](#).

Elgin County is Accepting Applications for the International Plowing Match Scholarship

The County of Elgin is now accepting applications for the 2021 International Plowing Match Legacy Scholarship.

The scholarship was approved in 2011 by a Committee formed by County Council, staff and members of the 2010 Elgin International Plowing Match to award a County female and male student a \$2,500 grant each to assist them in their agriculturally-related studies in college or university. The scholarship is provided as a result of the generous support of legacy funds from the 2010 International Plowing Match hosted in Elgin County. The first scholarships were granted in 2012 and the ten-year term of the scholarship will be complete after 2021.

"The County of Elgin is pleased to be able to offer this scholarship in its tenth and final year," said Elgin County Warden Tom Marks. "Agriculture is the foundation on which our County was built and it remains a vital part of our economy today. Technologies may change and evolve but our need for agriculture will not. The County is committed to encouraging the next generation of agricultural leaders and we have been proud to administer this scholarship over the past decade."

“The International Plowing Match is a celebration of agriculture and rural life,” said Councillor Duncan McPhail, Mayor of West Elgin and Chairman of the 2010 Elgin International Plowing Match. “It was a great honour to host this event in Elgin County and be able to celebrate our agricultural heritage while showcasing our accomplishments. The planning and implementation of this event was a significant undertaking but everyone involved can be proud of the legacies achieved – one of which is this scholarship.”

In order to be eligible, applicants must be a resident of the County of Elgin or the City of St. Thomas, and must be enrolled and have completed at least one year in a post-secondary institution in Canada studying in a discipline related to agriculture. Examples of such programs include agricultural sciences, agri-business, agri-tourism, nutrition, earth sciences and food sciences. Applications will close on June 1st, 2021 at 4:30p.m.

For more information about eligibility criteria and a copy of the application visit www.elgincounty.ca/ipmscholarship.



Photograph showing the 2010 International Plowing Match Committee. Duncan McPhail (Chair), Rein Van Brenk (Vice Chair), Donna Lunn (Vice Chair), Allister Cameron (Secretary), Cathy Bishop (Resources), Bill Walters (Vice Chair), Roberta Gillard (Treasurer), Ralph Millman (OPA President). Absent is Nancy Millman (Tractor Park).

The complete March 23, 2021 County Council Agenda package can be found [here](#).