

January 11, 2022

In This Issue

- [Council Commits to Joining SCOR Again in 2022](#)
- [Council Approves Community Grant Program Funding Allocations](#)
- [Policy Updates](#)
- [Planning Updates](#)
- [Engineering Updates](#)

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Council Commits to Joining SCOR Again in 2022

Council supported a continued investment of \$25,000 for membership in the South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR) to be considered as part of the 2022 Budget deliberations.

In 2021, Council joined the organization on a trial basis with the understanding that ongoing membership would be considered during 2022 budget deliberations.

2022 Warden Mary French and 2021 Warden Tom Marks were appointed to serve on the SCOR EDC Board of Directors for 2021.

For the past several years, SCOR's three (3) priority areas have been:

- public infrastructure that fosters economic development;
- development of human capital in support of economic development; and
- sector development – focus on agriculture and agri-food value added processing

A report contained in the January 11, 2022 Council Agenda Package details how SCOR has advanced these priorities over the past 12 months.

Council Approves Community Grant Program Funding Allocations

Elgin County Council approved the 2022 recommended grant funding allocations as presented by the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee.

The Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee is responsible for considering grant requests made to Council through the Community Grant Program and providing recommendations to Council as to which organizations should be granted funding as part of the Council budget process.

To ensure the process of allocating grants is as equitable and unbiased as possible, the Committee:

- Assesses eligibility of all applications against County Council approved criteria;
- Scores applications independently utilizing a standardized scoring matrix;
- Uses a needs-based criterion to allocate funds to each stream; and
- Assesses combined committee scores and recommends allocations.

After Committee scores were combined a weighted formula was used to calculate proposed funding allocations. A weighted formula is used because funding requests exceed the budgeted amount for grant funding.

In 2022 the proposed budget allocation for grants is \$69,498 which is \$3.51 per household. In total 18 eligible grant requests were received with a total funding request of \$109,253.

Approved allocations will be considered formally as part of the 2022 budget deliberation process. A list of approved allocations can be found in the January 11, 2022 Council Agenda Package.

Policy Updates

Elgin County Council approved revisions to several policies at its meeting held on January 11, 2022.

Long Term Care Homes

Council approved changes to the Homes – Infection Control Policy 2.10 – Immunization – Staff COVID-19; Policy 2.23 Pandemic Prevention and Control – Staff Testing; and Administration Policy 1.35 Visitors and Resident Absences During a Pandemic. Changes were related to:

- Third dose of COVID-19 vaccination requirements for staff, students, support workers, volunteers and visitors;
- Fourth dose option of COVID-19 vaccination for LTCH residents;
- Type and number of visitors permitted to attend Homes – e.g. general visitors currently paused;
- Absences – e.g. social and overnight absences for residents currently paused; and,

- Testing requirements – type, frequency.

Human Resources

Council approved the adoption of the following two Human Resources policies:

HR Policy 8.26 ‘Substance Use / Workplace Impairment’

This policy was developed to provide management an enforceable tool if issues arise relating to staff impairment or workplace possession, and to provide clarity to staff regarding what is not appropriate within County workplaces.

HR Policy 3.30 ‘Employment of Relatives’

This policy was amended to include additional detail to provide further clarity to the appropriateness of family, personal and workplace relationships, when they may potentially overlap.

Vaccination Verification

Council approved amendments to Elgin County’s Vaccination Verification Policy. Amendments were largely related to the possibility that the supply of Rapid Antigen Tests may become limited in the near future.

Digital Signature Policy

Council adopted a policy to govern the use of digital signatures. The development of this policy was necessary because of the increased use of electronic signatures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Displays, Bulletin Boards and Petitions – Elgin County Library

Council approved revisions to the Elgin County Library’s policy on Displays, Bulletin Boards and Petitions. Updates include:

- More explicit wording to make it clear that information displayed does not imply direct endorsement by the library.
- Clarification that the library will not distribute fundraising materials or engage in fundraising activity for external agencies unless specifically endorsed by Elgin County Council.
- Integration of terms from Council approved policies regarding “Code of Conduct for Elgin County Library Patrons” and “Use of County and Library Resources During an Election Campaign”.

New and revised policies can be read in their entirety as part of the January 11, 2022 County Council Agenda Package.

Planning Updates

Housing and Affordability Discussion Paper

As part of its Official Plan Review process, the County of Elgin has developed several discussion papers on related topics. Council approved a discussion paper on Housing and Affordability at its meeting held on January 11, 2022.

Affordable housing is a broad term which encompasses a range of housing types. It includes both low-cost market housing for homeowners and renters, and non-market housing available at subsidised rates. The County is seeing a stronger demand for a larger variety of housing types and sizes to meet the diverse range and needs of residents and workers.

The discussion paper looks at Provincial and local policies that refer to affordable housing, and what policies and tools have been implemented in surrounding municipalities. The paper also reviews a range of planning and financial tools that are available to encourage the creation of affordable housing.

To read the discussion paper and provide comment visit - https://engageelgin.ca/officialplanreview/news_feed/discussion-paper-2.

Official Plan Amendment (OPA) No. 27 – Municipality of Bayham

On January 11, 2022, County Council approved Official Plan Amendment No. 27 in the Municipality of Bayham. On December 17, 2020, the Municipality of Bayham Council approved Official Plan Amendment No. 26 to permit subdivision development in the Village of Straffordville and the Hamlet of Eden on municipal sanitary sewers and private on-site wells until such a time as municipal water services are available. County Council approved OPA No. 26 at its meeting held on August 10, 2021. In accordance with Section 4.2.1.4 a) of OPA No. 26, the developer must enter into an agreement with the Municipality as to the design and cost apportionment of any future public works required to bring these services or facilities up to the appropriate standard and securities from the developer may be required to cover the ultimate cost of these measures. OPA No. 27 removes the requirement to enter into an agreement for future municipal water works as there are too many questions about future costing and infrastructure details. There are too many unknowns to enter into a binding agreement for Straffordville and Eden where municipal water

servicing currently doesn't exist and is not planned for the foreseeable future. As an alternative, wording was revised to require engineered servicing plans that would consider future municipal water services in the subdivision. This will ensure adequate room in road allowances for future infrastructure.

Engineering Updates

Clachan Road Bridge Tender Awarded

The Clachan Road Bridge spans the Thames River and was built in 1958. It is located on Clachan Road, 1km south of Longwoods Road. The bridge is scheduled for rehabilitation in 2022. Clachan Road is a boundary road shared with the Municipality of Chatham-Kent and the County of Middlesex. A pre-existing repair and maintenance agreement states that Chatham-Kent maintains and repairs the bridge on behalf of Elgin County and Middlesex County. Elgin County will be responsible for 27.5% of the costs associated with the rehabilitation. The bridge will be closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic for the duration of the project and a detour will be in place.

For more details regarding the tender issued by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent please see the January 11, 2022 Council Agenda Package.

Imperial Road Roadside Safety Review – Port Bruce

Council received the results of a roadside safety review of Imperial Road in the Village of Port Bruce at its meeting on January 11, 2022. The Township of Malahide requested that the County of Elgin consider the installation of guide rail along a section of Imperial Road entering the Village of Port Bruce. This location was reviewed in context of the applicable technical manuals and it was determined that a guide rail is not warranted at this location.

The complete January 11, 2022 County Council Agenda package can be found [here](#).