



Council Highlights

Tuesday,
February 27, 2024

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Empowering Workforce Well-being: County Council Adopts Flexible Work Policy

After a year of thoughtful consideration and staff engagement, County Council took a proactive step in enhancing workplace dynamics by adopting the new HR Policy 2.10, 'Alternative and Flexible Work Arrangements'. This decision, spurred by feedback emphasizing the importance of clarity and simplicity in policies, reflects Council's commitment to fostering a supportive and responsive work environment. Collaborative efforts between Human Resources and the Executive Leadership Team culminated in a policy that not only addresses staff concerns but also aligns seamlessly with operational requirements across all service areas.

The newly adopted policy presents a refreshing array of options, including compressed schedules, flex time, and remote work, tailored to meet the diverse needs of County staff. Notably, the policy reintroduces a cherished practice allowing employees to compress monthly hours for a lieu day off—a testament to Council's dedication to promoting work-life balance. Embracing flexible work arrangements not only enhances staff satisfaction but also positions the County as a forward-thinking employer, capable of adapting to evolving workplace trends. This positive shift not only enhances recruitment and retention efforts but also reinforces the County's commitment to delivering high-quality services while prioritizing the well-being of its workforce.

Strengthening Safety Nets: Council Advances Emergency Plans for Elgin County and Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre Inc.

Council authorized the Director of Homes and Seniors Services to execute the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for emergency planning with the Corporation of the County of Elgin and Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre Inc. (DCCCC). The MOU seeks to establish a reciprocal agreement allowing the use of each other's facilities, Bobier Villa and Dutton Child Care Centre, as safe havens during potential emergency evacuations. Through collaborative efforts between County of Elgin Homes, DCCCC staff, and consultations with the County Solicitor, a consensus was reached on a draft MOU to support temporary evacuation and emergency plans for both facilities. This proposed agreement not only aligns with legislative requirements but also underscores a collective commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of residents and children during crises. With a keen focus on financial responsibility and clear communication, the authorization to execute the MOU reflects a proactive stance towards emergency preparedness and fostering community partnerships.



Charting the Course for Strategic Growth: Elgin County Council Adopts Steering Committee's Terms of Reference

Elgin County Council received and, subsequently, adopted the Terms of Reference as recommended by the Growth Planning Steering Committee (GPSC). This important decision came after the establishment of the GPSC earlier in the year, tasked with spearheading a strategy to support growth across the County. The GPSC also aims to proactively address the significant changes and opportunities spurred by strategic investments in the Elgin – St. Thomas region.

The inception of the GPSC marked a pivotal moment for Elgin County, particularly amidst boundary adjustments and infrastructure planning challenges triggered by the Province's strategic investments. Despite ongoing negotiations for financial compensation and infrastructure planning that has been narrow in focus, Council recognized the need for a broader, more holistic approach. Thus, the GPSC was formed to develop a comprehensive growth management strategy, identify crucial infrastructure needs, and ensure collaborative efforts among stakeholders for the region's benefit. With the adoption of the recommended Terms of Reference, Elgin County reaffirms its commitment to responsible, sustainable growth, grounded in both financial prudence and environmental stewardship, fostering a prosperous future for all residents and businesses.

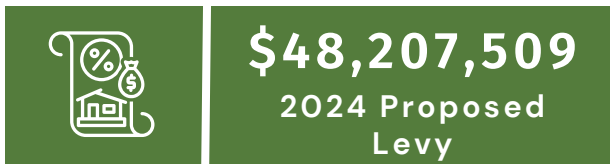


Budgeting for Growth: Elgin County Council's Strategic Decisions for 2024

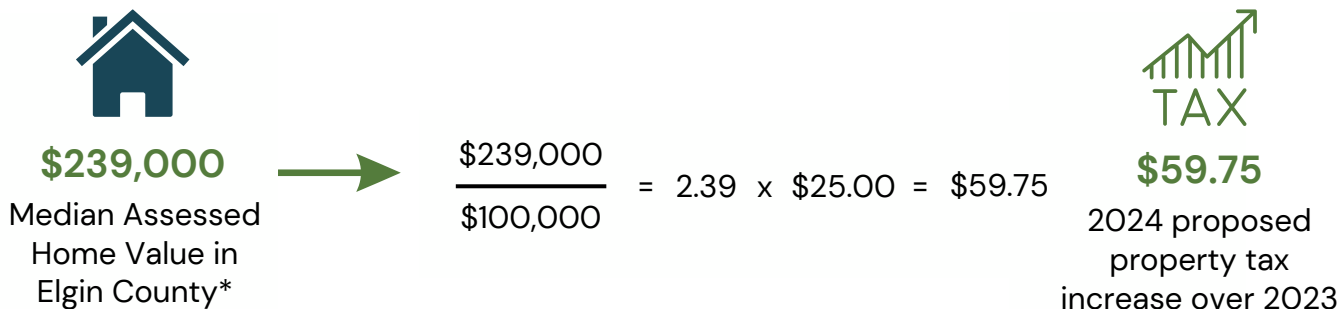
On February 27th, Elgin County Council approved vital recommendations pertaining to the 2024 budget and strategic memberships. Notably, Council endorsed the proposed budget outlined in the **2024 Proposed Budget document**. While these decisions are significant, the approval of the budget by-law remains pending, awaiting consideration at the upcoming council meeting.

The proposed 2024 budget represents a meticulously crafted blueprint, tailored to meet the evolving needs of Elgin County. Through a comprehensive budgetary process spanning months, Council engaged in public consultations, reviewed departmental presentations, and deliberated over discretionary and non-discretionary expenditures. The resulting budget, featuring a 3.79% tax rate increase, underscores a balanced approach to fiscal responsibility and strategic investment in core municipal services.

Amidst the fiscal deliberations, Council emphasized the significance of key memberships, such as the South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation (SCOR) and the St. Thomas Elgin Public Art Centre (STEPAC), in driving economic prosperity and cultural enrichment across the County. By approving these memberships alongside critical budget allocations, Council reaffirmed its dedication to prudent governance and equitable resource distribution. As Elgin County charts its course towards a prosperous future, these decisions underscore a steadfast commitment to community well-being and sustainable growth.



What does this mean for residential properties?



For the complete **February 27, 2024 Agenda Package**, please visit the following link:
[County Council Agenda Package](#)