



Council Highlights

**Tuesday,
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Elgin County Economic Development Champions Community Initiatives Through Strategic Sponsorships

In a bid to fortify its commitment to community development, Elgin County Economic Development is set to sponsor three significant local events. The department proposed a \$2,500 sponsorship for the Impact Awards, an annual celebration hosted by the St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce, recognizing local business excellence. Another sponsorship of \$250 was recommended for The Jean Collective's Elgin Women's Leadership Conference, an event dedicated to empowering women leaders in the County.

In addition, the Elgin Business Resource Centre (EBRC) will receive a \$4,000 sponsorship for their International Women's Day Celebration, a concert highlighting women's contributions to business. The event will also highlight women's contributions to our community, and it aligns with Elgin County's goal of supporting a diverse and thriving workforce. These sponsorships align with the County's strategic priorities and economic development goals. As part of an ongoing initiative, Elgin County Economic Development is also working on a comprehensive sponsorship policy to ensure transparent and consistent decision-making in the future.

Navigating Hazards, Shaping Safety: Elgin County Confronts Legacy Wells Challenges Through Strategic Funding

In response to the Ontario government's \$23.6 million investment to address legacy wells and enhance emergency preparedness, Elgin County Council is taking a proactive stance. The Manager of Emergency Management & Elgin-Middlesex Regional Fire School provided a report on the Legacy Wells Initiative to Council, to outline how Elgin County will utilize funds received from the province.

The initiative, funded with \$7.5 million over three years, supports municipalities in identifying and plugging old oil and gas wells to mitigate potential hazards. Elgin County, part of a Year 1 Pilot Program, joins others in undertaking eligible activities to address legacy wells, with a particular focus on emergency management. The program aims to enhance community safety, assess risks, educate decision-makers, and train responders on potential petroleum emergencies.

While the funding is welcomed, the County acknowledges challenges, including tight deadlines, fragmented initial involvement, and the need for clear roles and responsibilities during emergencies. The grant, providing up to \$280,000 in 2024, is expected to cover all eligible activities, minimizing municipal costs in the first year. As Elgin County navigates this complex issue, collaboration with provincial partners remains crucial for consistent practices and effective hazard mitigation.



Charting the Future: Elgin County Library Embraces 4th Edition Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems

In a move towards progressive library planning, Elgin County Council has received the 4th edition (2023) of the Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems, recently adopted by the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO). The report highlights key changes since the 3rd edition in 2017, providing an essential reference for future library planning in Elgin County. The revised guidelines, developed through extensive consultations and incorporating legislative considerations such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and post-pandemic space planning, offer a comprehensive roadmap for assessing various branch service components, from facility size and hours of operation to staffing levels, collections, user seating space, and technology.

Notable revisions in the 4th edition include better alignment with best practices, integration of AODA and post-pandemic considerations, and a flexible approach to public access computers, emphasizing various forms of technology. The guidelines, while discretionary, hold significance for local municipal partners, particularly concerning facility size considerations. In the months ahead, Elgin County Library staff will analyze the library's performance against these guidelines, with ARUPLO members committed to engaging in a peer benchmarking exercise in 2024, marking a collaborative commitment to elevating library services in Ontario.



Flowing Forward: Elgin County Approves Sewage Solution for Growing Educational Needs

To accommodate anticipated student population growth and requests from the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), Elgin County Council has given the green light to an increase in sewage flow from the Southwold Public School. The Elgin Manor Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP), operational since 2006, currently operates at 54% of its approved capacity. With the additional sewage allocation from the Southwold Public School and consideration of flows from other serviced properties, the WWTP is expected to operate at 70.8% capacity, well below the threshold triggering expansion planning activities. Council has directed staff to update the service agreement with TVDSB to accurately reflect cost recovery calculations, ensuring seamless and well-funded wastewater treatment. The decision aligns with Elgin County's commitment to support infrastructure needs while responsibly managing capacity and growth.

Empowering Futures: Quad County Support Services Extends Gratitude for Elgin County's Impactful Charity Golf Tournament Contribution

In a heartfelt thank-you letter, Quad County Support Services expressed deep appreciation to Elgin County for selecting them as one of the beneficiaries of the Warden's Charity Golf Tournament. The funds allocated to Quad County's Summer Youth Transition Program played a crucial role in supporting nine youths from the community. Recognizing the significant gap in services for youth transitioning from high school, the organization highlighted the challenges of operating without dedicated funding from the Ministry. The funds facilitated a memorable summer for participants, offering work experience opportunities and skill development in the catchment area. Quad County emphasized the importance of preparing families for the transition to adult services, acknowledging the existing disconnect between youth and adult systems and the positive impact of well-informed families on outcomes. The letter conveyed the profound impact of Elgin County's support on the lives of local youths and families.



A Night of Giving Back: Kinsmen Club's Gala Fundraiser Sparks Joy and Generosity for Terrace Lodge Comforts of Home Program

The Kinsmen Club of Aylmer is thrilled to invite residents to their Gala Fundraiser on Saturday, February 17th! Join us in supporting the Terrace Lodge Comforts of Home program, dedicated to enhancing the lives of our beloved seniors.

This event will include cocktails with live music, a served sit-down dinner, dancing and a silent and live auction! Tickets are \$100 per person and a portion of that ticket is eligible for a charitable tax receipt.

Your presence will contribute to providing comfort, engagement, and entertainment for seniors through the purchase of items like Netflix memberships, gaming tables, fitness equipment, music therapy instruments, and more!

Tickets are available now:

- Campbells II
- First Impressions Hair Design Team
- Contact us at aylmerkinsmen@gmail.com

Join us for or a night filled with joy, generosity, and making a difference in our community!

— PROCEEDS TO —



Terrace Lodge
COMFORTS OF HOME

For the complete **January 30, 2024 Agenda Package**, please visit the following link:
[County Council Agenda Package](#)