



March 2025

I wanted to take this monthly opportunity to reflect on our recent accomplishments and share a preview of the exciting initiatives and events we have planned for April.

In March, a key milestone was Council's unanimous approval of the 2025 Budget, with zero-percent tax rate increase and \$15.3 million in capital investments. Central Elgin is in a unique position having been able to utilize investments, including interest from the \$15 million settlement Central Elgin received in 2024 from the boundary compensation agreement with St. Thomas, to benefit all municipal ratepayers.

I'm pleased that after careful consideration by the Finance Committee and Council, and thanks to the diligent work of staff, we have approved a budget that reflects our commitment to maintaining and improving services for residents while ensuring fiscal responsibility and infrastructure required for growth.

I had the opportunity to connect with and hear from residents throughout March, including at two community open houses for the Short-Term Rental Accommodations Licensing Program and at free community skating in Port Stanley. I also had the opportunity to attend a Lions club Belmont, Ontario meeting with Councillor Baughman to speak with members, provide an update on local initiatives, and answer questions. I was also pleased to have a fully booked afternoon during my March Office Hours. Meeting with the community and ensuring residents have their voices heard is something that has been very important to me as Mayor, and I look forward to continuing these important conversations.

Earlier this week, we celebrated the retirement of Fire Chief Raymond Ormerod. Chief Ormerod's dedication to our community's safety has left a lasting legacy, and I know you'll join me in congratulating him as he enjoys his well-deserved retirement.

Our roads teams have kicked-off spring maintenance across Central Elgin. Street sweeping has started, the snow fence has been removed from Port Stanley's Main Beach, and debris has been cleared from Main Beach, Little Beach, and Erie Rest. Crews are also working on shoulder maintenance and pothole repairs to keep our streets clean and safe.

A big thank you to our dedicated roads crews for their hard work in keeping our community looking its best!

Over the coming weeks, residents will also begin to see advance construction work in preparation for another busy construction season across our community, as capital projects approved through the 2025 Budget process begin.

Central Elgin is excited to host the April Business After 5 Event at RIVA Italian Restaurant in Port Stanley. I am looking forward to welcoming members of the St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce and guests for an evening of networking, delicious food, and a few surprises.

Lastly, don't forget my upcoming Office Hours on Tuesday, April 15, from 1–3 p.m. If you'd like to meet, please call 519-631-4860 ext. 286 or email deleitch@centralelgin.org to reserve your spot. If you can't make it but would still like to connect, feel free to reach out for a more convenient appointment.

Thank you for your continued engagement and feedback as we work together to make Central Elgin an even better place to live, work, and visit.

All the best,
Andrew