



Red River Ward Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 11, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Thunder Bay 55 Plus Centre

700 River Street

1. Red River Ward Meeting 03-2024

Chair: Councillor Michael Zussino

2. Resource Persons

Cynthia Olsen, Director - Strategy & Engagement

Keri Greaves, Commissioner - Corporate Services & City Treasurer

Flo-Ann Track, Council & Committee Clerk

3. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed those in attendance and provided introductory comments.

There were approximately 24 people in attendance.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Red River Ward meeting held on September 18, 2024, for information.

5. Parking

The Chair provided the following information relative to new paid parking hours in effect across Thunder Bay.

Effective December 10, 2024, the hours of paid parking across Thunder Bay are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Paid parking is found at surface lots across the city, the waterfront, and at on-street meters found in the downtown cores and Westfort area.

These new hours replace the previous hours that had paid parking enforced from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. The hours have changed due to a change in the Parking By-law, approved by Council on Monday, December 9.

The rates for meters and surface lots remain the same, at \$2.00 per hour, which can be purchased in 15-minute, or \$.50 increments. The Market Square lot at the waterfront remains at \$3.00 an hour.

Starting December 16, complimentary holiday parking will be offered at all surface lot and metered spaces across Thunder Bay. This allows drivers to park at a space for no charge. This offer is in effect until January 1, 2025.

Additionally, the Construction Zone Parking Exemption area, in the downtown north core, will be eliminated on Monday, December 16. The yellow hoods will be removed from parking meters. However, this elimination of the exemption zone coincides with the introduction of complimentary holiday parking, which runs until January 1.

Parkades will continue to have a flat rate of \$5.00 per visit, with payment required upon exit.

For more information about rates, hours of enforcement and calendar parking, visit thunderbay.ca/parking.

Discussion was held relative to the above noted. Some of the items discussed as follows:

A resident asked if Council wants to make further changes to the By-law will another Notice of Motion be in order?

The Chair provided that a Notice of Motion would be required.

A resident suggested that the City could install the same pay system for paid parking at the waterfront that the hospital utilizes, where a ticket is provided when you enter the parking lot and paid for when exiting, and that this change could be implemented during the next phase of construction.

A resident noted that public areas of the City are being patrolled more frequently than residential areas and asked if parking is enforced in-house or if it is contracted out.

The Chair provided that parking is enforced by City of Thunder Bay employees and by contracted enforcement officer's dependant on time of day.

A resident asked if paid parking at the marina was put in place to be profitable?

Commissioner - Corporate Services & City Treasurer Keri Greaves provided the following information.

- The goal is for parking to be sustainable not profitable.

- Future report to Council will include data for the months September, October and November 2024, the period where metered parking was in effect from 6-9 p.m.

A resident asked if individuals with valid parking passes for Marina Slips during the boating season have parking privileges for the entire year?

Commissioner - Corporate Services & City Treasurer will bring this back to Administration for follow up.

A resident asked if selling the Parkades would help off-set costs.

Commissioner - Corporate Services & City Treasurer provided that no one has approached the City to purchase Parkade(s), and there has been no interest shown by anyone to purchase Parkade(s).

A resident asked for "No parking signs" to be placed on Sunrise Boulevard near Golf Links Road as there is no room to travel this portion of the road when vehicles are parked on both sides especially during the winter months.

The Chair supported this suggestion and advised a motion would be brought forward to Council for consideration.

6. Temporary Village Initiative

Director - Strategy & Engagement Cynthia Olsen provided an update relative to Report 425-2024-Growth-Strategy & Engagement, Temporary Village Initiative - Site Location, and responded to questions.

Discussion was held relative to the above noted. Some of the items discussed as follows:

- At the November 25, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting Report 425-2024-Growth-Strategy & Engagement was presented recommending a location on Miles Street for the Temporary Village. Council referred the report back to Administration to find an alternate location.
 - Council supports this initiative but would like alternate locations to be presented for consideration.
 - A new survey has been launched, asking residents to identify any municipally owned land, or alternately, private land for sale, rent, or lease where the village can be located.
 - The survey is available until January 15, 2025 on the City's Get Involved web page [getinvolvedthunderbay.ca](https://www.getinvolvedthunderbay.ca)

- Administration will report back to Council with alternate locations, ranked in order from most suitable to least suitable (based on the criteria), once the survey has concluded.

A resident asked why the City is not considering a more permanent structure, similar to a hotel?

Director Olsen provided the following information:

- The City of Thunder Bay does not provide housing.
- This initiative is a temporary stop-gap solution to ensure unsheltered-homeless people have a safe place to shelter with access to supportive resources 24 hours a day, until long-term solutions become available.
- This is one part of the 10-part human rights-based community action plan to better support people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and assist with managing encampments.
- The 10-Part Plan brings a suite of interventions together to be more effective.
- The Temporary Village will need to be truly accessible; meaning it needs to be barrier free:
 - allow couples and pets.
 - individuals will not be denied because of active substance use or mental health issues.

A resident asked how many people are currently unsheltered-homeless?

Director Olsen provided the following information:

- At the peak during the summer, there were 200 individuals named and engaged with outreach.
 - Recent Point-In-Time statistics are higher, approximately 574 – but this includes individuals in shelters, individuals in institutions with no fixed address, people who are couch surfing, and individuals who are staying unsheltered; it is a snapshot of those who self-identify within a 24-hour period count.

Director Olsen provided some history on encampment work in the community:

- Encampment response work has been ongoing since the onset of the Pandemic.

- In April 2023 a Human Rights-Based approach to support the unsheltered-homeless was adopted.

Commissioner - Corporate Services & City Treasurer Keri Greaves provided the following information:

- In Ontario, the Province provides money for social services, including social housing, administered and co-funded by municipal Service System Managers. In the City of Thunder Bay, this responsibility falls under the jurisdiction of the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB). The City of Thunder Bay does not receive provincial funding specifically earmarked for social housing and homelessness.
- In Southern Ontario the Province provides funds directly to Cities to administer because they are the Service System Managers.
- Community Partners have received some funding to expand their services and ability to provide additional space to shelter indoors, and access hotels for the interim.

A resident asked if more than one location is being considered?

Director Olsen provided the following information:

- One location is preferred to limit the cost. Two locations would double the operating costs (supportive services, infrastructure and maintenance).

A resident asked if City employees will be providing support services?

Director Olsen provided the following information:

- Municipal employees will not be providing 24-hour supportive services, Community Partners will be coordinating and providing these services.

7. 2025 Capital Projects - Red River Ward

The Chair provided an overview of the following 2025 Infrastructure Projects:

- Pavement Rehabilitation
 - Theresa Street - Madeline Street to Bruce Street
 - River Street - Algoma Street to High Street
 - Red River Road - Hodge Street to Clarkson Street
- Midblock Pedestrian Signal
 - Red River Road at McDonald's restaurant

- Multi Use Trail
 - Thunder Bay Regional Hospital to St. Andrews Cemetery with bridge over the river
- Thunder Bay's Interocean Development Servicing Program, under the Housing Enabling Water System Fund (HEWF)
 - \$10.4 million in funding provided by the Province to advance the development of approximately 100 acres of land in the Central Avenue area between Balmoral and Golf Links Road. The project will add more than two kilometres of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure to the existing municipal service.
- Traffic Lights
 - Burwood Road at Oliver Road
- Sidewalk Replacement
 - Clarkson Street - John Street to Windsor Street E/S

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.