



## Ward Meeting Minutes

**Thursday, October 24, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Thunder Bay 55 Plus Centre**  
**700 River Street**

**1. McIntyre Ward Meeting 03-2024**

Chair: Councillor Albert Aiello

**2. Resource Persons**

Lori Wiitala, Committee Clerk/Legislative Specialist

**3. Guests**

Krista Power, Director/Legislative Services & City Clerk  
Heather McLeod, Council Composition Review Committee  
Darrik Smith, Housing Accelerator Coordinator

**4. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed those in attendance to the meeting, introduced Administration, and provided introductory comments.

There were 16 people in attendance.

**5. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the McIntyre Ward meeting held on June 12, 2024, for information.

**6. Council Composition Committee**

Member - Council Composition Review Committee Heather McLeod provided a presentation relative to Phase Two of the Council Composition Review. City

Clerk, Krista Power was present to respond to questions from residents about the legislative process associated with making changes to City Council.

The presentation included an overview of the committee make up and process, and key findings from the consultations in Phase One.

Heather McLeod presented the two options that are being presented to the community for feedback during Phase Two:

- Option 1 – 10 elected at-large, mayor
- Option 2 – 4 wards (2 each) + 2 at-large, mayor
  - Wards will divide via main thoroughfares (Red River Road / Dawson Road; Oliver Road; Arthur Street) and will run east to west to include waterfront, urban, industrial, rural, potential growth areas in each ward
  - Names will be replaced with numbers
  - Wards will be balanced according to: population, income, education, number of households, and diversity.

Heather McLeod and Clerk Power fielded questions and comments from constituents:

1. Why is the city currently reviewing council composition and ward boundaries?

A motion from a Member of Council was passed in 2020, to complete a full review of the ward boundary system and council composition; the Covid-19 pandemic delayed the work due to contact restrictions, and the City Clerk requested to wait until 2023/2024 to complete the review. The focus of the review was representation and equitable population sizes.

2. Can the decision be reversed once final?

The decision could be reversed by a decision of council, or if 500 or more citizens sign a petition specific to ward boundaries, to present to Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) for consideration.

3. How can we bring the city to a one-city mentality, opposed to the former two cities of Fort William and Port Arthur

The proposed ward system was built to be more unified, and to include population and boundary equity, within each ward.

4. Are we the only city with an equal ward system?

Thunder Bay is not the norm having a hybrid, ward and at-large system.

5. Why are we going from 12 to 10 council representatives?

Within the 700 surveys received the average response was 10 members of council; in comparator municipalities, the average was 11 members of council. The committee considered 10 members a suitable representation.

6. Is the Mayor not responsible to represent the community as a whole?

The Mayor and all Members of Council represent the community as a whole.

## **7. Housing Accelerator Fund Program**

The Housing and Land Needs Study and Strategy has shown that Thunder Bay is experiencing a nationwide housing crisis due to an undersupply of units available to the market

The Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) program through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is providing funding to eligible municipalities of up to \$20.7M, to build and supply housing. The goal of HAF is to support affordable, multi-unit housing including smaller multis like 2, 3 and 4-plex, with a priority to build in-and-up instead of outward.

According to the work being done on our Asset Management Plan, our current deficit to keep our assets in a good state of repair is \$31.9M per year; encouraging building more homes on the infrastructure taxpayers have already bought and paid for can be helpful.

Building new infrastructure is costly, both from a capital and operational perspective; to keep taxes in check, the City has Community Improvement Plans (CIP) to fund projects for community improvement. The Housing Community Improvement Plan covers the fully urban serviced boundary of the City, including wards. All grants have general eligibility criteria to apply and may have specific criteria.

Three of the main requirements include:

1. Inside the eligible project area map;
2. Result in the creation of the targeted types of homes and;
3. Meet one of the objectives of the Community Improvement Plan

Increase the variety and inventory of homes in Thunder Bay, multi-unit develop in transit areas and close to amenities, increase population density, and maximize use of existing infrastructure

The housing CIP is made up of the following grants:

Multi-Unit Residential Grant

- Additional Dwelling Units (ADU) grant supports the construction of new residential units In (classic interior apartment/suite), On (addition to a building), or Around (backyard home); value is up to \$20,000 per new unit
- Planning and Building Permit Fees Grant – Up to \$10,000
- Servicing Grant (water service) – up to \$10,000

An additional housing unit that is built in accessory to an existing residential or mixed-use building:

- Most familiar form would be a suite
- Legalizing existing units may be eligible for funding
- Legislation separates units created before and after 1994/1995
- Community benefit: renovation is generally less expensive than new construction – market units rent affordably
- Living closer to work, shopping, and amenities can reduce vehicle trips, making transit and active transportation an option
- Adding income to your property increases purchasing power, reduces the cost of living, creating free time
- Opportunity for healthy aging, including the income benefit and utilization of less-used space
- Information about the grants is available on our website:  
[buildthunderbay.ca](http://buildthunderbay.ca)

Over 20 Additional Dwelling Unit applications have been received.

## 8. Ward & City Issues

The Chair mentioned Simpson Street, specifically Cherry's Corner.

Discussion was held regarding available housing at Lakehead University and Confederation College and based on the percentage of students coming into city, the residence should not be full.

Discussion was held relative to the James Whalen Tug. Some citizens proposed moving the vessel to the Transportation Museum to use as an attraction. It was

not recommended to disassemble, and majority of citizens agreed that too much money has been invested to date.

Discussion was held relative to the carousel at Chippewa Park and the \$850,000 investment to move it 50 metres and add a gender-neutral bathroom; \$450,000 will cover the cost to move the carousel. The government is expected to provide funding.

Discussion was held regarding the proposed Temporary Shelter Village; funding through the province is being requested. The Chair agrees with the 10-step plan, but not the operating costs at \$12.5M for a temporary 5-year plan. A citizen mentioned having the temporary shelter village within the revitalization of the South core could become detrimental to businesses in the area.

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.