



Ward Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 8, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

Current River Community Centre, 450 Dewe Avenue

1. Current River Ward Meeting 01-2025

Chair: Councillor Andrew Foulds

2. Resource Persons

Cynthia Olsen, Director - Strategy & Engagement

Ian Spoljarich, Manager - Roads Division

Lori Wiitala, Committee Clerk/Legislative Specialist

3. Welcome and Opening Remarks

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

There were approximately 37 people in attendance.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Current River Ward meeting held on November 12, 2024, were provided, for information.

5. Roads Maintenance

Manager – Roads Division Ian Spoljarich provided information on road maintenance.

Thunder Bay has 2000 kilometers of roads and sidewalks and 9 kilometers of gravel roads. Roads Division maintenance standards are guided by the Municipal By-law.

Roads Division employs over 60 staff who operate 24 graders, 3 loaders, 6 plows, 11 combination machines, 16 sidewalk, 2 handheld snowblowers. There are 32 snow clearing routes; starting at 2am priority routes are cleared and takes 5-7 hours to complete, residential areas are started at 9am and takes approximately 72 hours to complete; a map of the routes is available online. Laneways are only cleared when required or initiated by business. Locations not cleared include transit stops, hydrants and mailboxes.

Calendar parking comes into effect between November 15 and March 31 between 9am – 5pm; priority routes are cleared between 2am - 7am followed by residential.

Temperatures above zero during the day and below freezing at night create a recurring cycle of melting and freezing on sidewalks and roadways. To minimize slips and falls, the city uses sidewalk plows in the mornings to sand areas that froze over night. To address standing water issues, you may see sidewalk plows out with graders pushing snowbanks back over the curb and opening up frozen catch basins.

Major roads and highways are salted or sanded during a storm to prevent snow and ice from adhering to the pavement. Local streets are typically salted or sanded at crossroads and curves. Sand is the only material used in residential areas. The operators of all sand/salt trucks use infrared thermometers to gauge the temperature of the road surface. They utilize the temperature of the road surface to decide if salt or sand is needed to ensure that the material is only used when the road temperature is below freezing and ice can form, or when snow or rain causes ice to form.

The website includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and updates are posted to the webpage and social media every morning. To report concerns call Dispatch 807-625-2195.

Sidewalk Clearing

Why is the sidewalk plow not clearing low enough?

New equipment was purchased to address operator safety concerns, the new machinery does not have as much pressure.

Snow Plowing

A constituent noted that Grenville Ave was plowed 2 days after the most recent snowstorm and was not fast enough.

How do operators report poor condition roads?

Operators don't report directly to Manager Spoljarich; and would report to the Supervisor for the North or the South.

Potholes

Winter pothole repairs occur between November to May using cold mix asphalt. The repair is temporary until hot asphalt is available starting May Long Weekend. Spring and summer crews use the Python 5000 for larger holes and only requires one operator.

Why can't potholes be marked?

Sometimes a cone is placed in the hole, or a bump sign is used as an indicator. It is recommended to call dispatch to report potholes.

6. Temporary Shelter Village

Director - Strategy & Engagement provided information regarding the Temporary Shelter Village and the proposed Cumberland Street location.

The Chair provided background information regarding the proposed Temporary Shelter Village and how the Cumberland Street location was considered including a brief outline of the process of Council including ratification of a decision.

Director Strategy & Engagement Cynthia Olsen provided further information on the proposed Temporary Shelter Village site and how the 10-part program is intended to run.

The city received \$2.8 million for Temporary Shelter Village project, there is a deadline to have a location secured otherwise there's risk of losing funding. Applications to other funding sources have been submitted.

The Temporary Shelter Village

- 80-100 units being erected - 100 maximum
- staffed 24/7, including security
- social supports and programming will be available
- community washrooms
- garbage collection provided

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- Request for Proposal (RFP) for experienced 3rd party to manage operations
- occupancy agreement is required, residents can be evicted
- 60 service providers and 30 organizations have shown interest in the project at any of the proposed locations
- recommend that citizens take the survey on the Get Involved website <https://getinvolvedthunderbay.ca/temporary-village-proposed-sites>
- it is recommended to email Council to voice concerns

On Monday, November 25, 2024, Administration brought a report to Council recommending 114 Miles St. location for the Temporary Shelter Village, Council requires 7 votes to pass the recommendation, if approved, the ratification date follows at the next Council meeting. The vote was lost, and the report was referred back to Administration.

Administration reviewed properties within the city, A score card evaluation was performed and 29 potential locations were sourced

On Monday, April 7, 2025, Administration brought the report back to Council with 1111 Fort William Road as the proposed location.

- scored high on list of 29 recommended locations
- close to social services
- access to transit
- further distance to schools and daycare
- size of land will accommodate 100 units
- site readiness
- concern for the impact on businesses
- owned by LRCA
- infrastructure installation required, lands not owned by city
 - after 5 years lands returned to LRCA with infrastructure
- an amendment to the resolution was passed and the Cumberland Street location was discussed. Council agreed to the location with a 9-3 vote
 - Councillor Foulds opposed to location
- was on list of approved locations and scored high
- city owned lands
- infrastructure already installed
- cost for tree removal
- suspect drainage and bedrock issues
- concern no public consultation

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- concern Salvation Army - Journey to Life Centre adjacent
- A Member of Council can recommend an amendment to this decision prior to ratification on May 5, 2025

Major Concerns for Residents

- lack of community engagement on site selection aside from Miles Street location
- increased garbage
- increased substance use, public intoxication
- risk of theft
- close to schools, businesses, daycares, the Salvation Army Journey to Life Centre, Boulevard Lake, and residential areas

What will happen in 5 years when the project wraps up?

- more housing options should be available
- enough supportive services should be available
- fewer people in tents – approximately 30 individuals choose to remain outdoors through winter months
- Designated Encampment report back to Council

Encampments 2025

- Encampment Response Team was formed to address concerns
- summer 2025 will remain the same while Temp Shelter Village is being constructed
- no evidence that others will travel to Thunder Bay to access encampments or the shelter program
- residents are prioritized; a scoring card will be used and priority will be given to:
 - families and couples
 - parent with child/children
 - people with pets
- there is a budget available for garbage collection

7. **Ward and City Issues**

Capital Projects: Current River Ward

Residential Street Resurfacing

Gibbon Street - Clayte Street to Margaret Street

Blaquier Avenue - Gibbon Street to House #113

Clayte Street - Matthews Street to Dead End

Road Reconstruction and Intersection Improvements

Cumberland Street. - Tupper Street to McVicar Street

Marina Park Overpass / Cumberland Street / Water Street - New Roundabout

Sediment Removal and Streambed Restoration

Margaret Street Culvert

Pedestrian Crossing - Hodder Avenue at Lillian Street

Pedestrian Bridge Rehabilitation - Clayte Street, Hartviksen Street

Park & Open Spaces Projects

Centennial Park Wayfinding Signage (carry-over project)

Centennial Park Playground Area Amenities (carry-over project)

Trowbridge Forest Gravity Trails (carry-over project)

Boulevard Lake Canoe and Kayak Docks Birch Point Bike Rack Area

Waddington Park Court Enhancements North End Park Rink Leveling

Capital Facilities Construction Projects

Current River Arena Retrofit (project funding dependent)

Terry Fox Tourism Centre Roof Replacement

Whalen Building various projects

Traffic Calming Measures

It was noted that the installation of bollards on Arundel slowed traffic by 13%.

Council Composition

- remains status quo, likely to come back with next council
- hybrid model in Thunder Bay is an anomaly
- no evidence that the change would make Council more efficient

- no cost savings to reduce the size of Council

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.