

Council Highlights

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Budget 2026 Approved in Principle, Wastewater Rates Frozen



BUDGET 2026

Council has given the 2026 Budget approval in principle. Council voted to approve operating and capital budgets for 2026.

Wastewater rates, which were set to rise by 2.0%, were instead frozen at 2025 levels. Water rates will be increased by 2.5%, as recommended by staff and in keeping with the recommendations of the Water & Wastewater Study.

The 2026 tax levy has yet to be finalized. The tax rate will be determined following a report from staff which will examine alternative financing options. This report will be presented to Council on January 12, 2026.

The levy requirement is currently 6.7%; however, this figure is subject to change based on Council's decisions at their next meeting. The 2026 tax rate will not be finalized until after Council receives the January 12 report.



New Sidewalk Plow to Arrive in November



Budget 2026 will add a second sidewalk plow to the Thames Centre fleet in November 2026.

This will allow for two sidewalk plows to clear snow at the same time, rather than having a single plow transported between communities.

A second plow will significantly increase snow clearing efficiency on sidewalks, and allow for snow removal on paved walking trails.

Budget Highlights

Budget 2026 Invests in Road Improvements



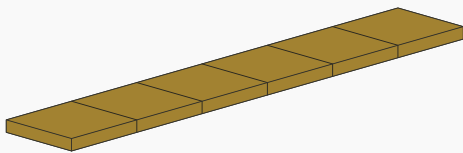
Budget 2026 includes \$1,955,690 in new road improvements.

These improvements include the partial paving of Fairview Road with hot mix asphalt between Evelyn Drive and Wyton Drive.

Other sections of Fairview Road are scheduled to be paved in future years.

The budget also approves single surface treatments to revitalize 12.86 kilometres of Gladstone Drive (from Westchester Bourne to Putnam Road) and 6.9 kilometres of Cromarty Drive (from Westchester Bourne to Elgin Road.)

New Funding for Sidewalks



As part of the 2026 Capital Budget, a sidewalk is scheduled to be completed on Dorchester Road (between Byron Avenue and the Boardwalk development).

A sidewalk extension on Catherine Street is also scheduled (from Northdale Public School to Shaw Road).

Another \$50,000 has also been allocated for minor sidewalk repairs across Thames Centre.

New Mobile Speed Radar Sign to be Acquired



A new portable speed radar sign will be purchased as part of Budget 2026.

This gives Thames Centre a second trailer mounted sign which can be moved between busy roads to help gather data on road use, while deterring motorists from speeding on these roads.

Funding for Ongoing Projects Set to be Completed in 2026

71 capital projects are being funded by Budget 2026, including 43 new projects and 28 which are ongoing from prior years.

These projects include the completion of the Thorndale Road and Upper Queen Urbanization projects.

These projects include the resurfacing of roads and the installation of new sidewalks and drains. The budget also includes \$30,000 in maintenance charges for Middlesex County to take over Cobble Hills Road from Dundas Street to Thorndale Road.

Budget Highlights

Budget 2026 Invests New Ice Pad



Budget 2026 includes \$2,062,445 to replace the CANUSA ice pad at the FlightExec Centre.

\$100,000 has already been allocated to the project in 2025, from a \$1,000,000 grant from the Ontario Government.

The new ice pad will feature improved safety along the boards.

The existing CANUSA rink will be in service until Spring 2026, and the ice pad will be replaced during the normal offseason. This will make it possible to replace the ice pad without losing ice time for rink users.

New Wading Pool in Dorchester Community Park

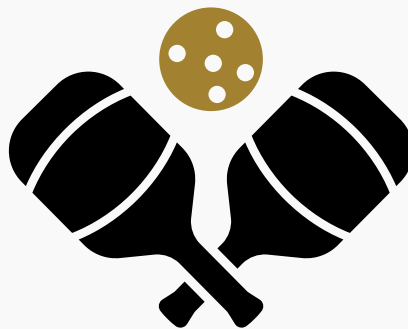
Budget 2026 includes \$278,850 that will be used to replace the wading pool in Dorchester Community Park.

Replacing the currently used 55-year old wading pool will satisfy Recommendation #14 in the 2023 Community Services & Facilities Master Plan.

The new wading pool will feature a new pump, filter, chemical system, and valves, as well as an accessible “beach entry.”

The new wading pool will also save roughly \$2,000 per year on water costs.

Pickleball/Tennis Courts, Baseball Fields to be Resurfaced



Existing Pickleball/Tennis courts in Dorchester will be resurfaced, which will help improve player safety.

In addition to this, 11 clay baseball fields across Thames Centre will be topped up to improve the quality of infields.

Funding for New Trails and Playgrounds

The 2026 capital budget includes \$50,000 to make improvements to the local trails network.

Specific trail improvements will be identified in 2026.

The budget also includes \$155,416 in investment for improvements to local playgrounds.

This will include replacing equipment at the park on Woodvale Drive, and a brand new playground at the Boardwalk at Mill Pond development.

Council Highlights

Municipal Services in Thorndale to be Expanded



Budget 2026 also includes funding to expand municipal services in Thorndale.

Currently residents can go to the Thorndale Lions Community Centre to deal with their bills, submit applications, or conduct other business with the Municipality of Thames Centre.

Administrative staff are currently present in Thorndale from Tuesday to Thursday every week.

Added funding in Budget 2026 will allow for administrative staff to provide an additional day of service every week. The specific weekday has yet to be selected.

Council Passes Mayor's Motion to Preserve Local Conservation Authorities

Mayor McMillan put forward a motion that calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands.

Council voted to support the motion, encouraging the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks to reconsider the province's current plans to consolidate 36 Conservation Authorities into 7 larger Conservation Authorities which would operate under a provincial Conservation Authority. This would diminish local input of local conservation issues, and Thames Centre is one of many local governments asking the province to reconsider its plans.

Site Alteration By-Law Proposed

Council received a draft Site Alteration by-law which is being designed to prevent the removal of topsoil, while not limiting the ability of residents to perform regular landscaping on their land.

To read the draft by-law, visit <https://www.thamescentre.on.ca/draftbylaws>. The public can provide comments by e-mailing comments@thamescentre.on.ca.