

My First 30-60 Days as Mayor

There are several issues the next Council will inherit that cannot wait. My approach will be to get to work immediately, understand exactly where the municipality stands, and make sure the new Council has the information and support it needs to make good decisions.

1. Within the first 7 days - Begin the 2027 budget process.

The budget will be one of my immediate responsibilities as Mayor, and there will be no time to waste. I want to immediately understand our starting position - operating pressures, debt obligations, major capital commitments, previously approved spending and what is already built into 2027. From there, we can begin building the budget based on the actual financial position of the municipality.

2. Within the first 7 days - Start the search for a permanent CAO.

Strathroy-Caradoc needs stable administrative leadership. I will work with Council to determine what we need from our next CAO and get the recruitment process underway as quickly as possible.

3. Within the first 7-15 days - Establish a Council Mentorship and Orientation Program.

For newly elected members of Council, I want to make the transition into the role as practical and welcoming as possible. I would like to pair new Councillors with one or more experienced members of Council who can help show them the ropes and be available to answer questions as they get started.

This doesn't need to be complicated. Take them through the Council Chamber, show them where they will sit and how things work, walk them through the municipal offices, and personally introduce them to staff in their departments so they can begin putting faces to names and understanding who does what.

This would complement, not replace, the formal orientation provided by the Clerk and staff. It isn't about telling a new Councillor how to vote or what to think. It's experienced members helping new members understand the practical side of the job and become comfortable in their new role.

4. Within the first 15 days - Meet individually with every member of Council, if schedules allow.

I want to sit down one-on-one with each Councillor and the Deputy Mayor, hear their priorities and concerns, and understand what they want the new Council to accomplish. A Mayor cannot accomplish anything alone. Building a productive Council starts with listening.

5. Within the first 15 days - Meet with the CAO or interim CAO and senior staff.

With the CAO or interim CAO present, I want an early discussion with senior staff about how Council and administration will work together. My expectations are straightforward: clear and complete information, questions answered, recommendations supported by facts, mutual respect and professional communication.

6. Within the first 30 days - Review our significant outstanding legal matters.

Council needs to understand where our significant lawsuits and legal matters stand, our potential exposure, the advice of legal counsel and what reasonable options may exist to reduce risk and cost. Some of these discussions will necessarily take place in closed session.

7. Within the first 30 days - Address the Adelaide Metcalfe servicing agreement.

We need a clear understanding of where negotiations stand, what remains unresolved and what needs to happen to move the agreement forward. This has implications for infrastructure, servicing and long-term planning and needs attention early in the term.

8. Within the first 30 days - Review the Delegation of Authority By-law.

I want Council to review the authority that has been delegated away from Council and determine whether the balance is right. Routine operational decisions need to remain with administration, but significant decisions should come before the elected Council when appropriate. Where Council should be making the decision, I want that responsibility brought back to the Council table.

9. Within the first 60 days - Complete a Council-wide review of major projects and the project pipeline.

I want the new Council fully briefed on every significant municipal project already underway - where it stands, what has been spent, what remains to be spent, the expected timeline and any major issues or decisions still outstanding.

Just as importantly, Council needs to see what is sitting in the queue for the upcoming year. Before we approve new projects or make additional commitments, we need to understand what has already been planned, what resources those projects will require and whether they still reflect the priorities of the newly elected Council.

The timing recognizes that the beginning of the term runs directly into the Christmas period, but within the first 60 days I want Council to have a clear picture of what we inherited, what is underway, what is coming next and what decisions need to be made.

These aren't promises that every problem will be solved in 30 or 60 days. They are commitments to start the work immediately, establish clear priorities, give Council the information it needs and create accountability from the beginning.