

A Message from Greg Hallam

Over the past four years, we have delivered tangible community improvements while navigating unprecedented economic challenges. Below are answers to the top questions you've raised, alongside a summary of our accomplishments.

Our Answers to Your Questions

CAO Salary: Tay Valley's CAO also serves as Clerk, combining two senior municipal portfolios. The position requires specialized knowledge, professional certifications, and extensive municipal experience. The current CAO/Clerk's salary is competitive within Lanark County.

New Finance Position: Tighter provincial reporting timelines and a small finance team create operational and auditing risks. Adding extra capacity strengthens internal controls, ensures proper segregation of duties, and satisfies external auditors (KPMG).

- The added capacity also supports the delivery of essential services such as tax billing and grant applications to bring outside funding into Tay Valley (~ \$750k over four years for community programming, parks, and recreation).

Pay Equity: Council completed the first comprehensive employee pay equity and compensation review since 2008. This ensures legal compliance with the *Ontario Pay Equity Act* and aligns our staff compensation with neighbouring municipalities. Competitive compensation helps retain experienced employees and recruit qualified staff.

Budget Increases: Over the past five years, the Township's operating and capital budget increased from \$8.3 million in 2021 to just over \$12.1 million in 2026. Two external drivers outside the Township's control caused this increase:

1. Approx. \$1.66 million of the \$3.8 million increase is attributable to cumulative inflation.
2. OPP costs have risen substantially; in 2026 alone, they amounted to \$316,493, the biggest operational increase in the 2026 budget.

Maberly Pines Subdivision: After being stalled for 45 years, Council advanced work, at no cost to the taxpayer, toward this proposed 50-lot community, work that will broaden the tax base and support future growth. <https://media-003-ca.cdn.govstack.com/tayvalleytwp-ca/media/311pc3kp/2026-reeves-budget-final.pdf>

Private Unassumed Roads are municipality-owned rights-of-way that Tay Valley has not formally accepted for maintenance, plowing, or repair. This issue largely stems from pre-1998 amalgamation subdivision agreements where developers abandoned projects before bringing the roads up to official Township standards. The situation creates risks and liabilities for residents, the Township, and emergency services. **Options:**

1. **Road Associations (RRAs): Risk Mitigation** RRAs clarify responsibilities between the Township and Residents (who are responsible for the Maintenance) and require both to carry insurance so that if something occurs, all of the taxpayers of the Township are not taking on the cost. But also, so that the individual residents are not personally liable.
2. **Road Associations: Clarified:** Owners of vacant properties on private unassumed roads are required to enter into road access agreements; the OLT Order clarified that properties that have existing structures that are legally non-conforming are, in most instances, exempt from entering into an access agreement. If an incorporated road association enters into a road access agreement, then individual property owners don't have to. Many road associations already exist and carry this insurance.
3. **General Tax Funding: Unfair:** some prefer the township fund all upgrades. Doing so would force ~4,000 general taxpayers to subsidize a multi-million-dollar project that would increase property values for only ~360 private properties, creating a large equity/fairness issue.

- 4. Special Capital Charge: An option:** The option of a special capital charge such as that used in Maberly Pines is restricted to new developments or specific neighbourhoods that explicitly choose it on a case-by-case basis.
- 5. Private Road: A viable option** is that the road can be transferred into private ownership of the incorporated road association, negating the requirement for a road access agreement.
<https://foca.on.ca/road-issues>

Township Lawyer and Integrity Commissioner

We agree these roles should be separated. When the contract expires in two years, we will again work with all of the municipalities in Lanark County to undertake a request for proposals for an independent Integrity Commissioner.

Strong Mayor Powers: The province gives the Reeve powers to pass certain bylaws with only one-third of Council support and to veto Council budget amendments. We flatly refuse to use these Strong Mayor Powers. Democracy means respecting the majority of Council and keeping decision-making in the hands of the community - not centralizing it in the Reeve's office

Building Community Well-Being – \$750k Invested through Grants

Seniors Active Living Centre: In 2024, the province designated Maberly Hall as a Seniors Active Living Centre. It now serves more than 300 seniors through yoga, food-fit programs, a foot care clinic, a memory café, and a diners club.

Library Partnership: We established a satellite library location at Maberly Hall, bringing book club activities, book pick-up and return services, and children's Storytime closer to home.

Emergency Cooling Centre: We established a designated Cooling Centre at Maberly Hall to support vulnerable residents during extreme heat events.

Forest Trail Park: We completed a fully accessible, age-friendly forest trail park and installed a timber-framed pavilion, accessible exercise equipment, picnic tables and benches. The project was funded through grants and donations, including 10 years of maintenance, snow plowing, and toilet facilities.

Waterfront Improvements: We upgraded the public picnic and swimming areas at Glen Tay, and we upgraded the Otty Lake boat launch.

Supporting Environmental Well-Being

Better Homes Lanark Program: Residents gained access to property-linked financing of up to \$40,000 to help fund energy-efficient home improvements.

Micro-Living Affordable Housing: In 2025, Council approved Tay Valley's first micro-living affordable housing development, supporting energy-efficient, high-density housing.

Energy Conservation: We updated the Township's Conservation and Demand Management Plan and secured external funding to model emissions reduction retrofits.

Electric Vehicle: We purchased the Township's first EV for use by the Chief Building Official.

For sources and more info, google our websites: www.marilynthomas.ca & www.greghallam.ca

***Elect Greg Hallam for Deputy Reeve
Bringing Integrity, Sound Judgement & Solid Management Skills***