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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026

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POSTMEDIA

NP

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HMCS Hunter naval reserves S1 Lauren Werner, left, and PO2 Griffin Chauvin sort supplies for new crew members at the Windsor reserve centre Monday. The Canadian Armed Forces says it recruited more people into its regular ranks in the last fiscal year than any time in the past decade. **DAN JANISSE**

Naval reserve recruitment spikes

Officers reluctant to connect near tripling of applications to Trump

TREVOR WILHELM

Recruitment has tripled at Windsor's HMCS Hunter naval reserve — hitting a 30-year high — amid escalating global tensions and U.S. President Donald Trump's threats against Canadian sovereignty.

Across the country, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) said it recruited more people into its regular ranks in the last fiscal year than any time in the past decade. That was followed by a 13 per cent

increase in applications so far this year.

Officials have avoided directly tying recruitment increases to any specific reason, including Trump. But Lt.-Cmdr. Chris Elliott, commanding officer of HMCS Hunter, told the Star that global tensions are a factor.

"Certainly, the world is a different place than it was five years ago," he said. "These conversations are happening all over the world, and especially in our NATO countries.

So that level of readiness and increasing our posture and the number of people we have in our force is part of our national conversation. That's us being prepared to defend Canada and our interests, should we be called to do so."

Elliott said HMCS Hunter has averaged 28 recruits a year for the last decade. Since April, it has enrolled 86 new members — the largest number of recruits in "definitely the last 30 years."

The new recruits include 19 women, seven permanent residents, and 31 co-op students. The youngest is 16. The oldest is 50.

HMCS Hunter will host an enrolment ceremony on Thursday

for 14 high school co-op students entering the Canadian Armed Forces. The co-op program allows students to enrol in the navy and earn high school credits for completing basic training.

Following that event, HMCS Hunter will have 201 members. Another 150 applications are waiting for assessment, said Elliott.

Recruitment numbers for the Windsor Regiment, the region's army reserve, were not available for the ongoing 2025-26 fiscal year. But the regiment took in 59 recruits from April 2024 to March 2025, according to public affairs officer Capt. Igor Winiarczyk.

SEE RECRUITMENT ON **A5**

Detroit Renaissance Center's proposed overhaul aims to reshape city's skyline

MADELINE MAZAK

Detroit's iconic skyline (as seen from Canada) is headed for its most significant transformation in decades.

For nearly half a century, the Renaissance Center has dominated Detroit's skyline with its cluster of towers unmistakable from Windsor's waterfront.

That highrise landmark is headed for its most significant transformation to date.

A US\$1.6-billion redevelopment, still in its conceptual phase, would see demolition of Towers 300 and 400, the two 39-storey attached buildings closest to the Detroit River.

In their place, developers envision a six-acre public park, new promenades and uninterrupted access between downtown and the waterfront.

"I think there are a number of things that are very exciting about, not only the vision that has been proposed, but also the ability to preserve what is a very important iconic aspect of our skyline since, obviously, the mid-'70s, when the Renaissance was originally delivered," said Eric Larson, CEO of the Downtown Detroit Partnership.

"But I also am very excited because it does create another visually, esthetically important addition to the skyline with the renovation

and improvements that they're proposing."

The proposal, led by billionaire Dan Gilbert's Bedrock Detroit, in partnership with General Motors, departs from the Renaissance Center's original 1970s design.

Under the plan, the sprawling podium at the base of the towers would be removed entirely. The remaining buildings would be reworked into a mix of residential units, hotel space and modern offices.

"That would be another six acres of public land that would be added to what has already been a five-mile improvement of our riverfront," said Larson.

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