

August 20, 2022

I spent two days in August at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference in Ottawa. I spoke with the Ministry of Education about working with Oxford County to streamline the administration of childcare services. I spoke with the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions about flexibility to locally driven solutions to support persons living with mental health and addictions. We recommended to the Ministry of Long-Term Care that they fund their requirement for Infection, Prevention and Control (IPAC) personnel and the Emergency Management Coordinator. At the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing I focused on the need for municipalities to be allowed to use inclusionary zoning to require developments to have a component that is affordable. And at the Ministry of Infrastructure I enquired about their recent high speed internet announcement for Zorra/Oxford and how much would be fibre vs wireless. I expect another announcement on this soon to clarify. And of course I spoke with the Minister of Education about our local challenges with the TVDSB and that residents want alternate models of decision making.

A big topic of conversation at the conference was the recently announced “Strong Mayor” legislation from the province proposing to give some executive and veto powers to Mayors (starting with Toronto and Ottawa, but eventually extending to all municipalities). A Mayor should be “strong” because they understand their community, have good ideas, advocate, and execute, not because they have a veto. This proposal goes against the fundamental democratic principles of how councillors do their work and how councils function. In the long run it will discourage good people from running for council. We do not need this, and I will oppose it.

At the August 17 meeting, Zorra Council approved a plan to construct a new Zorra Municipal and Child Care (ZMCCC) facility on Brock Street in Thamesford. Geographically Zorra is the largest municipality in Oxford. Over the course of this term several possible locations for a new office were considered, all with various pros and cons. But the size and future growth of Thamesford (it is currently almost 3000 of Zorra’s 8400 population and on track for well over 4000 within a few years) made it the choice. Construction is expected to commence in November and will take approximately 11 months. The total project cost is estimated to be \$6.5 million. The new ZMCCC will cost less over the next 30 years than the existing building, will use renewable energy, and provide 88 much needed childcare spaces.

Council remains focused on life-cycle costing for all municipal projects. The ZMCCC life-cycle costs over the course of 30 years will be less than that of the costs for the existing Municipal Office.

Lastly, the municipal election is on October 24th. The last day for anyone to enter, or withdraw was August 19 and I am honoured to be acclaimed for another term as Zorra Mayor and Oxford County Councillor.

Our communities have achieved a lot that people thought we couldn’t do: from saving schools, to stopping high speed rail and a dump, and building a new public works building that uses 100% renewable energy and will cost residents LESS than the current or



conventional buildings. Most recently we've committed to building a new municipal office with an 88-space childcare and renewable energy that will cost less than the current building.

We've done all this and kept property taxes below inflation.

But my main motivation to run again is our communities' children. Whether it's the climate they will live in, responsible long term finances that determine how they live, or making sure every one of them belongs. There's more to do and I still think I can contribute.

Housing, sprawl, schools, finances and taxes, economic development, environment, gravel pits, fibre, childcare.

Some of these will be very challenging, and none of them will be quick. But hard things are hard, our communities have never shied away from that.

I'm honoured to be acclaimed for another term as Zorra Mayor and Oxford County Councillor, and I'm ready to get to work for the next term and get those things done.

#unleashed for another term!

There are still races in Wards 1 & 4, whatever your voting intention please vote. As Canadians we are fortunate to have the right to vote, but voting is also a privilege and a responsibility. So please ensure you are on the voters list by checking at [voterlookup.ca](http://voterlookup.ca)  
Details at [elections.zorra.ca](http://elections.zorra.ca)

As always, please feel free to contact me on any issue:

Marcus Ryan  
Mayor, Zorra Township, Oxford County Councillor  
email: [mryan@zorra.ca](mailto:mryan@zorra.ca)  
Mobile: 1.519.301.1634