

March 21, 2023 Blog

Zorra is revising its Strategic Plan! The Strategic Plan sets broad priorities for Council and Staff based on the communities' needs and wants. Please check the website and talk to your Councillor about the goals you have for your community and all of Zorra. We've achieved big things, and this is how it's done: by identifying those things (no matter how big or difficult) and developing a strategy to get them done.

What do you love about your Zorra Township?

What are the things you like to tell people about Zorra?

What are the places and moments that you'll remember?

What can we do as a community to make Zorra even better?"

To make Zorra even better, you suggest we _____.

Look here for more info and to give feedback:

<https://www.zorra.ca/en/our-township/strategic-plan.aspx>

We need to hear from you!

On March 7 it was my honour to break ground for the new Zorra Municipal and Child Care Centre. This facility will house the new municipal office, an 88-space daycare, and will be a hub for the Thamesford and Zorra community. The new building will include roof top solar panels advancing our commitment to 100% renewable energy. Over its' life it will cost less than the current building. Again, we are advancing the goals we committed to in our Strategic Plan.

Oxford County Council established the Steering Committee for the Community Safety and Well-being Plan: Safe & Well Oxford, and determined next steps to begin turning it into action. The goal is to help address priority risks, such as mental and physical health, housing and addictions, with proactive, integrated strategies for children, youth, adults, older adults and families who live, work and participate in our communities. Read the plan at safewelloxford.ca.

Our schools are vital to the future of our communities. Schools, libraries, recreation and community spaces are in fact ALL community spaces and they are all paid for by the same people. Whether it's libraries, recreation spaces, or schools, we need to maximize the community use of the facilities our communities pay for. Where there are institutional barriers to that, it is our job to break them down and ensure effective and efficient use of tax dollars to maximize service delivery. At its' March 1 meeting Zorra Council passed a resolution directing staff to collaborate with the Thames Valley District School Board, Oxford County Library, and the County of Oxford to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate exploration of multi-service co-builds for the following projects:

- a new joint Thamesford District Recreation Complex including a junior kindergarten to grade 8 school and a public Library in Thamesford; and,
- a new joint community space and/or public library and classroom addition to the AJ Baker Public School;

- commits to exploration of a possible multi-service co-build before any closure, expansion, or consolidation of Zorra Highland Park P.S. is considered;
- and that all multi-service co-builds permit public access to all community spaces in the school buildings, and school access to all municipal facilities and community spaces.

Staff have been directed to circulate the resolution to all parties mentioned, as well as Ernie Hardeman, MPP for Oxford County; the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; and the Minister of Education. The intent is that Zorra staff, Oxford County staff, and Thames Valley District School Board staff meet and talk about if there is a way we could come up with a deal where we could consider the possibility of building these things together, increasing the access of our residents to more services, and possibly even for less dollars if we co-build these things.

The final reports on 2022 Council remuneration for both Zorra and Oxford have now been published.

The total paid by Zorra residents for me to be their Mayor in 2022 was \$35,866.08. The total paid by Oxford residents for me to represent Zorra residents at Oxford County Council in 2022 was \$36,150 (Councillor for 11 months and Warden for 1). Full reports available in the March 22 Zorra Council Agenda, and the February 22 Oxford Council Agenda at: oxfordcounty.ca & www.zorra.ca.

The Thamesford Lions Club has donated \$50,000 towards the Thamesford multi-use court project. This is an amazing commitment by the Lions, and a huge endorsement of the multi-use court committees work! #doingtheirpart

The total funds required are \$266,500. With the Township commitment of \$79,950, the community has raised \$12,149.25, and now the \$50,000 from the Lions this leaves \$124,400.75 to be raised. Well over halfway to the goal!

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