

May 22, 2023 Blog

In May Zorra Council recognized former Mayor & Councillor Margaret Lupton on her retirement after 31 years of service in Municipal Government. To me, her greatest achievement was as an example by her behaviour, contributing to the political culture of Oxford County. Her example is a challenge to us all. Thank you for challenging us. #shedidherpart

The Thamesford Trojans treated us all to a fantastic season. We wish you all the best and are looking forward to next year!

The Provincial government has indicated that it intends to combine the existing Provincial POLICY Statement and Places to Grow policy (which was previously focused on the "Greater Golden Horseshoe" area) into a single Provincial PLANNING Statement that would cover most of the Province including Oxford. I was shocked by parts of the plan. Cities and towns shouldn't be allowed to expand with virtually no justification whatsoever. We should have to justify land needs before there is expansion. We should be placing a greater focus on increasing density, intensification, housing options, mix of uses and the development of complete communities. However, the format and structure of the proposed policy changes creates uncertainty and confusion which is the last thing we need to encourage building of houses. Additionally, this legislation proposes to require municipalities to allow for up to 3 residential lots to be severed from a 'farm' property. This could mean the loss of 5-10% of all the agricultural land in Oxford.

At the April 19 meeting Zorra Council decided to "provide notice of intent to declare a block of land from the Embro Zorra Community Centre property to be surplus to be made available for a potential affordable housing partnership with Oxford County. At the May 17 meeting Zorra Council decided to defer that decision to June 21 to explore other possible locations and get more information.

S2LGBTQAI+ youth face a higher risk of suicide and substance abuse than their heterosexual peers, higher rates of depression, anxiety, PTSD, and bullying, rejection, and physical attacks, among many other social injustices. Zorra and Oxford's Safe & Well Oxford Plan specifically addresses these issues. The number one issue identified by residents in the consultation to develop the Safe & Well Oxford Plan was belonging. Our Safe & Well Oxford Plan states as a Vision: "Communities where individuals and families feel safe, supported and included and where they can access what they need, when they need it, to live fully." For too long people who identify as S2LGBTQAI+ have not felt that they belong. A Pride flag is certainly an appropriate way to indicate our support for our own vision to include everyone and grow stronger together. There are things we don't all agree on, but what we have to agree on is that everybody belongs, and if they feel otherwise then that's just not okay. On June 1st I'll be very proud to raise the Pride flag at both Oxford County and Zorra Township offices. #doingourpart #growingstrongertogether #Pride

Another fantastic Calithumpian weekend in Thamesford! Yard sales, live music, beer “cage”, kids fun fair, amazing fireworks, and a parade! Many thanks to the Calithumpian committee for putting on this great party for all of us!

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

Marcus Ryan

Mayor, Zorra Township (and Warden, Oxford County)

email: mryan@zorra.ca

Phone: 1.519.425.2338