

October 21, 2021

As I write this on October 20th there are 0 active COVID-19 case in Zorra, 44 in Oxford, and 76 in Southwestern Public Health as a whole.

There have been several changes over the past months regarding access to public spaces and workplaces due to COVID-19. Staff at the facilities and halls you visit are doing their job. Be patient and understanding. Encourage others to be patient and understanding. Let's help each other out. And yes, all Zorra Staff are required to get vaccinated, so they are not asking anything of you that hasn't been asked of them.

Council has passed a resolution to begin consultation with relevant First Nations to develop an appropriate land acknowledgement policy for Zorra. By the time you read this I will have begun both formal and informal discussions with residents and representatives of First Nations on what they think of a possible land acknowledgement, and their relationship with Zorra.

Oxford County is currently considering changes to land use policy in the "agricultural reserve". There are many changes being considered and I encourage you to search the Zorra or Oxford web pages for the draft document. None of this is finalized yet, please watch for opportunities for input over the coming months.

Housing is a major issue that needs to be addressed. We have rapidly gone from "housing is expensive" to "housing is unaffordable" for many people. This is a complex problem that requires all levels of government, and the private sector, to address. In Zorra and Oxford we need to do more with zoning to not only allow, but encourage, and require smaller, higher density, and more variety in, housing. We need to make spaces in our settlement areas for taller buildings to address the housing crisis, and stop sprawl into our farm fields.

Did you know Zorra is considering, but has not yet decided on, a possible new municipal office in Thamesford that could include a gym and childcare? Information is available on the Zorra website, get informed and talk to your Council.

The Embro, Zorra Agricultural Society put on a fantastic Embro Fair! A fantastic day of people, parade, vendors, and food trucks! It is so satisfying to see groups navigate the public health regulations for their immunity's safety and begin to put on events again. Thanks so much to the Embro and Zorra Agricultural Society for doing their part and giving us a fair this year, well done!

It was my pleasure to present his year's Volunteer of the Year award to Paul Hoelzli. Paul created a literal "winter wonderland" for his community on the river in Thamesford. While we all skated, played hockey, and socialized on the river under the bridge he was the guy who was anonymously driving around in his modified lawn tractor/Zamboni clearing the ice. Thanks for doing your part Paul.

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

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