



# Mayor's Blog

March 21, 2025 Blog

The Oxford County bag tag program for garbage had two initial purposes. One was to encourage diversion, which is better for the environment, and would save us all money by delaying the cost of a new landfill (a starting point of a minimum of \$40M). The other was to give residents a measure of control over their own costs of waste. A user pay system is inherently more fair.

Oxford County does not operate the service, we award a contract based on a public competitive bidding process to get the best options and best price. The cost of curbside garbage collection has increased with population growth and increases in fuel and inflation in general since the price was set at \$2 in 2014. Bag tags cover the entire cost of waste (garbage, recycling, and in 2027 green bin) collection. Elimination of bag tags entirely would mean a 5.5% tax increase to pay the cost of the collection. This means that it would be an approximately 1.8% tax increase to keep the bag tag at \$2. Either way, there is a bill to be paid. There is no such thing as a "free bag". My preference is always the lowest bill, and the one that gives people the most control over their bill.

So Oxford Council considered all of this and as a result the price of garbage bag tags will increase from \$2.00 a bag to \$3.00 effective January 1, 2026. This is the first increase since 2014.

Oxford County Council gave careful consideration to the different alternatives for curbside waste collection and supported the best option and pricing available through a competitive process. There is a cost to collect waste and it must be paid either through \$3 bag tags or a 5.5% tax increase. At the end of the day, our waste collection program continues to offer great value for the level of service that is being provided to residents, in many cases for less than the cost of food delivery to your home. With the new organics program rolling out in Oxford, something residents have long asked for, we should also see fewer bags of garbage being set out at the curb. This is the end goal: extending the service life of our landfill, to save us all money, and delaying the need for a new one as stewards of our natural environment.

An independent audit of curbside garbage in Oxford County in 2021 found that on average more than half of the weight of individual garbage bags was made up of organic material. Curbside collection for organics will start in May 2027 in Zorra.

With the increase in bag tag fees, but a change to a six-day collection cycle and green bins in 2027, it is entirely likely that while we will all pay more for an individual tag, we pay may the same or less for a year's worth of tags because we'll need fewer.

I'm confident I couldn't get a business to come and get my garbage every week for \$3.

In response to direction from Zorra council staff have recommended several policy changes that will allow the Township to appropriately prioritize Canadian goods and

services over American. This is not as simple as it might seem as we are legally bound by treaties and trade deals. I am also working with the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus to get the Provincial and Federal governments to give municipalities increased legal ability to prioritize Canadian goods and services over American.

I've had a few people on social media push back against municipalities or Canada fighting back against tariffs and the USA. They argue that we're too small to make a difference, that nothing can be done. In some cases they won't answer the question "do you want Canada to be part of the USA?". We MUST push back. Our very sovereignty depends on it. We are a small country by population but that has never stopped us: Vimy, D-Day, Korea, UN Peacekeepers was a Canadian idea, 9/11, etc. Zorra is a small municipality by population but that has never stopped us: keeping schools open, stopping landfills, stopping the wasteful High Speed Rail, redeveloping abandoned industrial land to slow sprawl, unprecedented collaboration with TVDSB to get a new school, renewable energy buildings that reduce our tax costs, etc.

Sometimes you just do it because it's the right thing to do.

#Canada #elbowsup #buyCanadian #shoplocal #doingourpart #growingstrongertogether  
#never51 #11thprovince #Canadaisnotforsale

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

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