

Township of Zorra






Strategic Plan

2023-2026



Contents

Message From Zorra Township Council	3
Strategic Plan Overview	3
Vision Statement	5
Mission Statement.....	5
Core Values.....	6
Strategic Priority	7
A Sustainable Community	7
A Liveable, Healthy Community	8
A Fiscally Sustainable Community	9
Governance & Corporate Excellence.....	10
Strategic Initiatives	11

				
Kevin Stewart Ward 1 Councillor	Katie Grigg Deputy Mayor / Ward 2 Councillor	Marcus Ryan Mayor	Paul Mitchell Ward 3 Councillor	Crystal Finch Ward 4 Councillor

MESSAGE FROM ZORRA TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

Thriving Today and Tomorrow

As we came together as a new Council to consider our priorities for the coming term, we each brought our individual views on what we wanted to achieve. We also had many ideas in common, including a desire to pursue a new chapter for Zorra – one that preserves our many valuable existing assets and characteristics, while bringing what we need to thrive today and tomorrow.

Through this in-depth planning process, we developed a shared vision of what we wanted for Zorra.

We wanted to continue to build an innovative community that is an example in the region. We wanted to reinforce the social bonds upon which our community will grow and prosper.

We wanted to nurture all aspects of the community, including our environment and local economy, for a resilient future. We wanted to earn the trust of our residents and create opportunities for everyone to participate, engage and thrive.

Overall, we wanted to build a sustainable community that will serve our citizens today and for generations to come, and to continue to strive for excellence in all that we do.

All of this is represented on the following pages, in our mission, vision, core values and strategic priorities. We encourage you to get to know them – and keep us accountable to them – as, together, we continue to make Zorra a wonderful place to live.

Strategic Plan Overview

The Strategic Plan identifies the collective focus and priorities for Council to guide decision-making and activities during their term. The Plan provides a Mission, Vision and Core Values to guide the overall approach, and sets out Strategic Priorities with related Strategic Goals.

The intent is a Strategic Plan that will resonate with and inspire the public, Council, and staff while guiding the Township's work during the four-year Council term.

Staff develops Business Plans based on the Strategic Priorities and Strategic Goals and provides periodic progress reports to Council. The Strategic Plan is reviewed and updated as needed over the term, based on emerging priorities and needs.

A modified triple bottom line approach has been undertaken to assess initiatives and projects through this lens. Zorra needs to be environmentally sustainable, livable, healthy, and fiscally sustainable

This document includes the highlights of the Plan. Please see www.zorra.ca for more details.

Vision Statement

Our vision statement reflects the future we want for Zorra.

A vibrant, prosperous, engaged, and environmentally conscious community that evokes pride in residents for its accomplishments and continuing resilience as it forges the future.

Mission Statement

The Zorra team of elected officials, staff, and volunteers works together responsibly and transparently to realize and sustain the community's vision.

We are proud of our vibrant communities and rich history. The Township has provided a progressive cultural landscape that offers residents of Zorra the opportunity to celebrate our cultural identity.

We express our unique history and culture through annual festivals and events, the performing and visual arts, community centres, places of worship, as well as our built heritage. Zorra has an emerging and active artisan community with many artisans working in their homes.

Our community supports a diversity of lifestyles and is welcoming and close-knit. Our community offers a variety of lifestyles that ensure anyone can call Zorra home. From the rural and small-town village lifestyle we are also proud to be part of the broader Township of Zorra

Core Values

Trust: The trust between community members is what makes Zorra an inclusive community. Community trust is built through sensible planning, reliable services, and public engagement.

Respect: The residents of Zorra come from diverse backgrounds. It is through respect for the varied backgrounds and experiences that common ground can be achieved.

Innovation: Zorra must be a community which embraces change. It must remain open to all ideas to become a flexible, progressive municipality which can successfully anticipate and adapt to changing environments.

Accountability: Council and staff must be accountable to Zorra residents and be responsible for actions and inactions.

Teamwork: We will work cooperatively at all levels of the organization and community to accomplish the Township's objectives and to provide our residents with quality service.

Transparency: We will conduct all affairs for the Township openly and with complete transparency, except where prohibited by law.

Strategic Priority 1

A Sustainable Community

Our natural landscape is one of our greatest and most valuable assets. Zorra and our surrounding area includes many natural features that make us unique, such as significant woodlands, groundwater recharge areas, wildlife and fish habitat, and watercourses. As stewards of our environmental assets, we value our natural infrastructure, and we need to mitigate and adapt to reduce our climate impact.

Goals:

- Reduce municipal and greenhouse gas emissions
- Enhance and protect the health of our natural environment
- Introduce procurement policies that emphasize and recognize the impact of climate change
- Wise resource management



Strategic Priority 2

A Liveable, Healthy Community

Zorra is a growing community that needs to position itself to meet the needs of our changing demographics. From providing a range of housing stock, innovative and flexible land use policies, Zorra will continue to be forward thinking. We need to provide public spaces for our residents to engage their community and maintain an active lifestyle.

Goals:

- Facilitate expanded housing diversity and supply; to promote attainability
- Adopt policies to promote densification in our urban settlements
- Provide a diversity of inclusive and accessible recreation activities
- Promote a vibrant arts and culture community



Strategic Priority 3

A Fiscally Sustainable Community

Our local economy remains driven by the agri-business sector. We need to protect and enhance this through supporting growth and innovation. Zorra's strong residential growth now needs a vibrant and diversified commercial/retail sector to support our residents. Supporting our current businesses and attracting new enterprises will ensure we remain a strong economic base. Investing and renewing our infrastructure will be a benefit to current residents and future generations.

Goals:

- Renew and reinvest in our infrastructure
- Adopt policies to promote and support the agricultural sector
- Attract, retain and expand business investments to diversify the tax base and increase local employment
- Attract and retain a municipal workforce driven to provide customer service excellence and innovative service deliver.



Strategic Priority 4

Governance & Corporate Excellence

Responsive and accessible government is key to building public trust. We build trust through Zorra's communications, transparent engagement, and customer service experiences. Providing prudent financial management, effective public policy, and transparent decision-making are elemental in the way that Zorra Council and staff operate.

Goals:

- Identify and commit to opportunities for Zorra to provide an enhanced customer service experience. Learn from past mistakes and improve.
- Ensure organization and financial alignment to achieve Strategic Priorities and meet the needs of our growing community.
- Be accountable to the public through open and responsive government.
- Ensure Zorra is organizationally resilient, ready to adapt and succeed in a changing environment.



Strategic Initiatives

	Item
1	Upon completion of the Zorra Maintenance Facility (ZMF), a detailed report on the construction and financing costs of the ZMF be made available to Council and the public.
2	Work with cell phone providers to improve cell coverage in Thamesford and Embro
3	Review municipal facilities waste management practices to identify reduction of landfill contributions, increased diversion, and operational efficiencies. This could include consultation with Transition to Less Waste
4	Have hearing assisted devices available at all meeting facilities.
5	Align outside agencies (service group projects) to that of the municipality captured through 5 - 10-year capital business plan. Indexed as part of the municipalities overall budget. Host a Town Hall for presentations of business plans.
6	Investment Policy (2024)
7	Review staff training and regulatory requirements.
8	Review the boundary lines for response areas for the ZF&ES so that wherever possible all properties are serviced by the nearest located fire station within the township.
9	Upon completion of the Zorra Municipal Centre (ZMC), a detailed report on the construction and financing costs of the ZMC be made available to Council and the public.

10	Carry out review of staffing needs.
11	Implement policies to increase density in Thamesford and Embro and encourage additions of goods and services to reduce sprawl.
12	Work with Harrington community members to better engage the community.
13	Total life cycle cost models to better assess the true long-term costs of assets and services.
14	Implement a robust Asset Management Plan to accurately forecast the maintenance and replacement costs of all assets (buildings and equipment) and plan finances accordingly.
15	That a service level be defined for Recreation to reflect current service standards for all Parks and Recreational Facilities and Programs in Zorra.
16	Community Partner Program (Community Fundraising Initiatives) 30/70 funds. Assets are transferred to the township as part of the asset management plan. Develop and implement an official Township policy that reflects the funding model of a 30% contribution up to a set maximum dollar amount, based on the project's proposed budget, by the Township for infrastructure projects initiated by community groups.
17	Begin planning for a childcare facility in Embro
18	Provide resources to assist community groups in working together.
19	Review ward structure/electoral map of the Township (now that a Deputy Mayor position is in place)

20	Negotiate with neighbouring municipalities so that wherever possible all properties within Zorra, and the neighbouring municipalities are serviced by the nearest local fire station
21	Support, protect and enhance active transportation routes, especially in settlement areas.
22	Implement the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan to help include more people, better address mental health and addiction, and address homelessness and crime.
23	Promoting and advocating for local schools and long term planning for the location of new rural schools and schools in our communities
24	Advocate and explore options for expediting improvements of rural internet services