



Township of Zorra

Poverty negatively impacts our ability to create a healthy, vibrant community. The fact that some people in Oxford County cannot afford basic needs, including nutritious and sufficient food is a real concern. In Oxford County, based on the 2010 after tax Low Income Measure, 12.3% of families live in low income.

On September 17, 2014, all Township of Zorra Candidates were contacted via email and provided an introduction to, and a link to the following survey. The survey questions provide an opportunity for voters to start a discussion with candidates about poverty reduction. Our hope is that this survey serves as a starting point to an ongoing conversation about poverty in Oxford County.

Participation in the survey was voluntary. Responses provided by the candidates that completed the survey are posted and have not been changed in any way. The Oxford Poverty Action Coalition and Social Planning Council Oxford would like to thank those candidates who have completed the survey.

The following candidates from Zorra did not submit a completed survey:

Candidate	Position
Margaret Lupton	Mayor
Gordon MacKay	Mayor
Ron Forbes	Ward 1 Councillor (Acclaimed)
Douglas Matheson	Ward 4 Councillor (Acclaimed)

Question One

How would you best define poverty? Please select all that apply:

- Lacking the resources to meet one's physical needs for survival (e.g. lacking shelter, food, and clothing)
- Lacking the resources to fully participate in social and recreational opportunities in the community
- Lacking enough resources to be self-sufficient
- I don't know
- Other

Candidate	Position	Lacking the resources to meet one's physical needs for survival	Lacking the resources to fully participate in social and recreational opportunities in the community	Lacking enough resources to be self-sufficient	I don't know	Other
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	X	X	X		
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	X				

Question Two

Local groups are coming together across Canada to develop comprehensive approaches to poverty reduction and help guide community efforts. These groups (sometimes called coalitions or committees) are usually composed of diverse sectors, including business, government, voluntary organizations, and people living in poverty. At least 14 municipalities in Ontario have poverty reduction coalitions, including: Halton, Hamilton, Huron County, Kingston, Leeds and Grenville, London, Niagara, Oxford County, Peel, Peterborough, Simcoe County, Thunder Bay, Waterloo, and Windsor-Essex County.

Do you think Oxford County needs a *poverty action coalition*?

- Yes
- No

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes

Question Three

Often one of the first priorities of poverty reduction coalitions is to develop a local poverty reduction strategy to help shape local priorities and provide measurable objectives. At least 10 municipalities in Ontario have local poverty reduction strategies, including: Halton, Hamilton, Kingston, London, Niagara, Peel, Peterborough, Thunder Bay, Waterloo, and Windsor-Essex County.

Did you know Oxford County does not have a *poverty reduction strategy*?

- Yes
- No

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	No

Question Four

Do you think Oxford County needs a *poverty reduction strategy*?

- Yes
- No

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes

Question Five

There are a number of key roles municipal government could play in overall poverty reduction. Read each of the statements below and tell us whether or not you think Oxford County should be playing that role.

I think that the municipality should be a connector of organizations and partners from various sectors to allow them to work together on poverty reduction:

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes

I think that the municipality should be an exemplary employer, including implementing employment practices that reduce poverty and providing a living wage to internal staff and outsourced services:

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes

I think that the municipality should be an investor in community programs and processes that support poverty reduction:

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	No

I think that the municipality should be a leader and champion for community based poverty reduction initiatives, including raising community awareness about poverty and advocating to the federal and provincial levels of government:

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes

I think that the municipality should be a provider of services that reduce poverty, such as child care, social assistance, arts and recreation, etc:

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	No

Question Six

Municipal governments across Canada are taking steps to assist in poverty reduction in a variety of ways. **If elected, would you support the implementation of any of these public policies and programs in Oxford County?**

Affordable housing strategy: Affordable housing strategies identify the ways in which the municipality will assist with housing affordability

Affordable transit programs and services: Affordable transit programs and services increase people's ability to participate in employment, attend important medical and other appointments, and participate fully in community life

Food charter: Food charters are statements of values, principles, and priorities that guide municipal food related planning, policy, and programs

Food policy council: Food policy councils support a variety of community food initiatives and promote a healthy sustainable and accessible food system for all

Housing first policy: Housing first policy is an approach to ending homelessness that involves giving people direct access to permanent housing, along with the services they need and want to maintain it

Candidate	Position	Affordable Housing	Affordable Transit	Food Charter	Food Policy Council	Housing First Policy
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes	Uncertain	Yes	Yes	Yes

Question Six Continued

Municipal governments across Canada are taking steps to assist in poverty reduction in a variety of ways. **If elected, would you support the implementation of any of these public policies and programs in Oxford County?**

Living wage campaign: *Living wage campaigns are community-based initiatives that calculate the amount a family needs to meet basic expenses, such as housing, child care, food, and transportation, and supports measures to ensure they can be met*

Municipal living wage policy: *Municipal living wage policy ensures that municipal workers, as well as contracted staff, are paid enough to meet basic family living expenses*

Discounted supplies for municipal recreation, arts and culture programs: *Sports, recreation and other leisure activity access promotes inclusion and are associated with an enhanced quality of life through gaining new skills and improved physical and psychological well-being*

Financial assistance to youth to cover the cost of non-municipal recreation program fees, equipment, and/or transportation: *Sports, recreation and other leisure activity access promotes inclusion and are associated with an enhanced quality of life through gaining new skills and improved physical and psychological well-being*

Free admission to municipal recreation facilities: *Sports, recreation and other leisure activity access promotes inclusion and are associated with an enhanced quality of life through gaining new skills and improved physical and psychological well-being*

Candidate	Position	Living Wage Campaign	Municipal Living Wage Policy	Discounted Supplies for Municipal Recreation	Financial Assistance to Youth for Non-Municipal Recreation	Free Admission to Municipal Recreation Facilities
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Uncertain
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Question Seven

Nutrition-related diseases (e.g. diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers) cost Oxford County and the province of Ontario millions annually. Low income residents can't afford to eat a healthy diet, once housing and other essential bills are paid.

What would you do, if elected, to help ensure that everyone in Oxford County is available to afford a healthy diet?

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	"Support policies and strategies that ensure everyone has access to a healthy diet. Support public health programming to provide knowledge for healthy diets. Support subsidies for Fresh Box Programs to allow greater access by those who are in need."
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	"I think the practical reality is that as Ward 3 Councillor for Zorra, there is little to nothing I could do to "ensure that everyone in Oxford County is able to afford a healthy diet."

Question Eight

If elected, would you support poverty reduction in Oxford County?

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	Yes

Question Nine

If you would support poverty reduction in Oxford County, please provide at least two specific examples or actions of support you would take:

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	"Support cooperation/development of non-profit housing support and encourage community gardens and delivery of fresh produce to those who have restricted mobility or are unable to access inexpensive transportation."
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	"I strongly support a "living wage" for all Township and County employees. Zorra and Oxford in general has a bounty of local healthy food; we need to encourage, and make it easier for people to eat it."

Question Ten

Please select up to three issues you would be committed to championing, if elected. Select #1 for your first choice, #2 for your second choice, and #3 for your third choice:

- Affordable child care is available for all families
- Affordable public transit is available for all individuals
- Extensive and affordable library services are available
- Extensive and affordable recreation programs are available for all individuals
- Free income tax clinics are available to families who need them
- People on low-income have access to subsidies to live in private market rental properties
- People who are homeless get housed as quickly as possible
- Portion of all new housing developments is dedicated to subsidized housing for those living on low income
- The number of people living in poverty is reduced
- The overall health of our community improves
- The right to live in a food secure community with dignified access to sufficient, affordable, healthy, safe, and culturally appropriate food is obtained by all

Candidate	Position	Response
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)	#1: People who are homeless get housed as quickly as possible #2: People on low income have access to subsidies to live in private market rental properties #3: The right to live in a food secure community with dignified access to sufficient, affordable, healthy, safe, and culturally appropriate food is obtained by all
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)	#1: Portion of all new housing developments is dedicated to subsidized housing for those living on low-income

Question Eleven

In your opinion, rate each of the following on their responsibility to reduce poverty as either: No responsibility, Some responsibility, A lot of responsibility, Don't Know.

- Charitable organizations and non-profits
- General public not living in poverty
- General public living in poverty
- Private business
- Municipal government
- Provincial government
- Federal government

Candidate	Position	No Responsibility	Some Responsibility	A lot of Responsibility	Don't know
Marie Keasey	Ward 2 Councillor (Acclaimed)		Charitable organizations and non-profits General public not living in poverty General public living in poverty Private business	Municipal government Provincial government Federal government	
Marcus Ryan	Ward 3 Councillor (Acclaimed)		Charitable organizations and non-profits Municipal government	General public not living in poverty General public living in poverty Provincial government Federal government	