

FutureOxford

Future Oxford Partnership

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October 21, 2022

Federal Electoral Districts Redistribution 2022
Commission for Ontario
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Commission for Ontario:

In response to the planned redistribution of the federal riding's boundaries for Oxford County, Future Oxford supports Oxford County and the Town of Tillsonburg in the resolutions passed by their respective Councils on the planned changes.

Future Oxford is a community group of volunteers working towards improving quality of life in our community through environmental stewardship, economic improvements, and community wellbeing, as outlined in the [Future Oxford Community Sustainability Plan](#).

Future Oxford is not in support of the planned changes based on the following:

- 1) **Risk to democratic engagement.** Changing the federal riding borders in a substantial way that does not match township lines causes greater confusion when it comes to election time. Given current downward trends in election participation, we are concerned this will contribute to the decline and, further, see it as an added hindrance to voter engagement, which is essential for our democracy and an area of particular focus for our collaborative.
- 2) **Impact on representation.** Participation in a County is based on where people believe they fit. Areas proposed for separation from a core Oxford riding will lose the historical connection to their County. Already smaller in numbers, Oxford's residents will suffer a more profound loss of opportunities for advocacy on key community issues if representation is spread across multiple jurisdictions.
- 3) **Impact on social and community services.** Current community outreach programs that are County-based could be greatly affected by changes to the federal riding boundaries. These social programs have worked hard to gain traction within the different communities in our existing County, and this type of change—for instance, through funding allocations and funding competition-- could negatively impact the work that has been done, leaving these communities underserved as a result.

- 4) **Council alignment.** The proposed new boundaries do not meet with favour by Oxford County Council. Council is composed of people who live in the County, work with people in the different sectors on a daily basis, and connect with their constituents regularly. The proposed changes divide Oxford's area municipalities among four electoral districts.

We appreciate the work that is going into this process, but would encourage another review of the changes to Oxford County.

Samantha Haverkamp
Chair, Future Oxford

cc: Dave MacKenzie, MP, Oxford County
Ernie Hardeman, MPP, Oxford County
Larry Martin, Warden, Oxford County