



StandOurGround.ca NEWSLETTER

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**Save our
Communities
from Urban
Sprawl!**



Foods for All Occasions
1128 Concession St., Russell
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Meet the Candidates

Tara Barton-Maclaren, PhD—Candidate for English Language Public Trustee – Upper Canada District School Board



Tara Barton-Maclaren

Our children are our future, and I believe that every child deserves the opportunity to succeed.

I have deep roots in the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) community. I am a Vankleek Hill Collegiate Institute (VCI) graduate, parent of three, community volunteer and advocate for high-quality education. A lifetime in this community has given me a clear understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing students, families and rural communities.

As a candidate for UCDSB Trustee in Ward 10, my priorities are clear: advance student success with measurable outcomes, champion future-ready learning that is responsive to a rapidly changing world and ensure open and responsible governance.

I currently serve as an interim UCDSB Trustee and previously served for three years as Chair of the VCI School Council. I have also contributed to the UCDSB Parent Involvement Committee and the Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant Subcommittee providing oversight of funding for projects that enhance parent engagement in their children's education. Through coaching, athletics, agriculture and youth mentorship, I have seen how high expectations, physical activity, and strong community partnerships can help young people thrive.

My commitment to excellence in education is supported by a strong record of professional leadership, innovation and continuous learning. I bring more than 19 years of experience in the public service leading teams, as well as serving on international scientific advisory boards. As a Senior Fellow at the University of Ottawa, I continue to support academic success and mentorship for young adults. Throughout my career, I have managed public funds, developed and implemented strategic plans and brought people together to solve difficult problems. I will apply this experience to the Trustee role to support student achievement, ensure responsible use of

public resources and guide thoughtful planning for the future.

I offer the perspective of a UCDSB parent and community member, the experience of a public-sector leader, and a proven ability to deliver meaningful results to serve Ward 10 and the broader UCDSB community.

I will listen carefully to community concerns and perspectives, consider the evidence, collaborate respectfully, and ask difficult but constructive questions to support sound decisions and better outcomes for students.

I hold a BSc in Biomedical Science from the University of Guelph and a PhD in Pharmacology and Therapeutics from McGill University.

Tara Barton-Maclaren, PhD

2026 Russell Municipal Elections

Municipal government decisions affect our communities every day — from roads, taxes and development to farmland, infrastructure, recreation and the future growth of Russell Township.

Your vote is your opportunity to have a say in the future of your community. Take the time to learn about the candidates, consider the issues that matter to you and make your voice heard. Every vote counts, and every resident has a part to play in shaping the community we call home.

The 2026 Municipal Elections are October 26, 2026. The Voting Period will be held from October 21 to October 26, 2026. You can vote online or by phone anytime during the voting period: October 21 at 9:00 a.m. to October 26 at 8:00 p.m.

Update Your Voter Registration. Do you want voting to be quick and easy? **Update your information in advance!**

To confirm, update or add your information to the Voters' List, please contact the Township of Russell's Elections Office:

- Email: elections@russell.ca
- Phone: 613-443-3066 (Clerk's Office)

Taking a few minutes to confirm your information in advance can help make your voting experience quick and easy.

Make sure you are registered. Learn about the candidates. Ask questions. And most importantly— VOTE!

*"If you don't vote,
you lose the right
to complain"
—Anonymous*



Ontario Farmland Trust's Fall/Winter Webinar Series

Ontario Farmland Trust (OFT) has invited members of the **StandOurGround** community to the OFT's Fall/Winter Webinar Series!

This year's free, online webinars will explore farmland protection, food security, municipal policy and ways community members can get involved in protecting farmland locally.

UPCOMING WEBINARS:

October 5 | 12–1 PM

Farmland Protection and Policy: An Introduction

Sara Epp, Associate Professor at the University of Guelph, and Bridget Ryan, Councillor for the Town of Erin, will explore how municipal planning decisions can impact farmland, tools for advocating for its protection, and how community members can participate in local decision-making.

Learn more and register!

October 30 | 12–1 PM

Food Security and the Agri-Food System

This session will explore why protecting farmland is essential to Ontario's agri-food system, local economies, and food security, including the role of the Greenbelt in supporting agricultural productivity and food production.

Learn more and register!

Date TBA | 12–1 PM

New Municipal Council: Now What?

Following the municipal election, this session will highlight ways community members can continue advocating for farmland protection and engage their new municipal Councils using resources from OFT's Community Mobilization Toolkit.

Learn more and register!



Introducing *The Rustler*—Russell Township's New Online News Source!

A new online news publication has arrived in Russell Township. *The Rustler* is a new source of independent local news dedicated to keeping residents informed about what is happening in Russell, Embrun, Marionville, Limoges and throughout the Township. The publication covers local government and council decisions, infrastructure, recreation, community events, arts and culture, local services and other issues that directly affect the people who live here.

What makes a local news source so valuable is its focus on the things that can easily get lost in larger regional or national media. *The Rustler* provides readers with stories about Township decisions, planning and development, public spending, recreation facilities, community activities and upcoming events. It also includes a public-record section, community information, local services and election coverage, making it a useful place for residents who want to stay informed about their own community.

The launch of *The Rustler* is a welcome development for anyone interested in Russell Township and its future. Having accessible, locally focused journalism gives residents another way to find out what is happening around them and to take part in informed community discussion. We encourage residents to visit *The Rustler*, explore the site and make it part of their regular reading.



YOUR TAX BILL in YOUR COMMUNITY with YOUR VOICE

All the research, good intentions and carefully written reports in the world will accomplish little without substantial community support to turn findings into action.

Reports submitted to Russell Township raise serious questions about development costs and resident protection. Taxpayers deserve clear accounting: what does growth expressly cost, what does development specifically contribute and what/why are existing households left to pay?

Assurances about compliance with the law and good engineering practices cannot replace detailed answers, particularly when the information provided is not independently back-checked by competent professionals represented by taxpayers, paid for by the developer.

Other communities have demonstrated that residents can influence how municipal money is spent.

In Victoria, residents voted on community projects that received more than \$54,000 through its 2021 participatory budgeting program. In Toronto, Council approved a \$500,000 participatory-budgeting park-improvement project for Avondale in 2026, funded entirely through development-related community benefits. These examples show that meaningful public involvement in spending decisions is achievable.

Russell and Embrun need to mobilize as well. A handful of volunteers cannot carry the research, correspondence and professional scrutiny required on behalf of an entire community.

Broad participation matters alongside funding. Residents can contribute, join SOG, share its work and attend Council meetings.

Our tax bills affect every household. Obtaining answers and pursuing change must become a community effort.

FAILURE TO ACT HAS A COST

Acting after costs have been incurred, damage has occurred or commitments have been made is a poor strategy. Given the unanswered questions and limited responses to date, simply hoping that things will change is equally inadequate.

If residents do not organize and support this effort, any avoidable costs falling on taxpayers may continue unchecked. We need clear answers, effective safeguards and enforceable obligations before problems become expenses that households must absorb.

Help build the numbers, expertise and persistence needed to hold the Township accountable.

SUPPORT STANDOURGROUND

If you would like to help support our work, we welcome voluntary financial contributions.

We will accept E-transfers contributions sent to our email address at standourground.russell@gmail.com.

Contributions will be used to help cover the costs of newsletters, printing, advertising, meeting expenses, website costs and other activities that support the work of **StandOurGround**.

Please note: **StandOurGround** is not a registered charity, so contributions are not eligible for a charitable income-tax receipt.

Every contribution, large or small, is greatly appreciated and helps us continue to keep residents informed and give our community a voice.

Support SOG now, because hope alone will not secure accountability and action after the fact statically always comes too late to prevent the cost. The “we will do better next time” is no help to mounting taxes.

StandOurGround.ca welcomes your feedback, counterarguments, photographs, and written submissions for our Newsletter. Kindly inform us if you would like your Letter to the Editor to remain anonymous.

 standourground.ca

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