



StandOurGround.ca NEWSLETTER

Issue 011 - June 2026

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Communities
from Urban
Sprawl!!**

A Glimmer that Residents are Being Heard

At its June 8 meeting, Russell Township Council considered a motion ([page 3](#)) brought forward by Councillors Deacon and Armstrong directing staff to examine compatibility and transition measures between the Highway 417 Industrial Park and neighbouring residential properties.

The motion was approved by Councillors Deacon, Armstrong and Laurin. Councillor Lalonde was absent. Despite the fact that the motion was rooted in fundamental planning principles, Mayor Tarnowski voted against it.

For residents who have spent the past two years raising concerns about the industrial park's impact on nearby homes, private wells, farmland, and rural quality of life, the vote offers a glimmer of encouragement.

NOT because the issue has been resolved.

NOT because protections are guaranteed.

AND CERTAINLY NOT because the work is finished.

What makes this vote significant is that some members of Council have acknowledged a principle that **StandOurGround** has consistently advocated: compatibility between industrial development and existing residents must be planned for intentionally and proactively.



That may seem obvious, but it represents an important shift in the conversation.

Too often, discussions about industrial development begin with economics. How much land can be developed? How quickly can lots be sold? How much revenue can be generated? What will mitigation measures cost?

Those questions are important, but they should not come first.

The first question should not be how much land can be developed. The first question should be:
What kind of community are we building?

What protections are required to ensure compatibility between industrial uses and sensitive uses such as homes, private wells, and rural residential communities? Are we planning in a way that respects and strengthens our rural identity, or are we slowly transforming Russell Township into just another highway interchange lined with industrial lands and suburban expansion?

Roads, drainage systems, environmental protections, and compatibility measures are all part of the cost of development. They are not optional extras to be reduced when budgets become uncomfortable. Responsible development requires responsible planning and fiscal discipline.

The discussion surrounding this motion highlighted that Council still has important choices to make. Will compatibility requirements be determined through planning best practices? Or will financial considerations determine the level of protection residents receive?

Those questions remain unanswered.

The real test lies ahead. Council motions do not create enforceable protections. The upcoming zoning by-law will determine whether principles such as buffering, setbacks, transition areas, lighting controls, and operational restrictions become meaningful requirements or simply aspirations.

Last week's vote should be viewed for what it is: we are not there yet, but perhaps persistent, respectful, and informed advocacy is beginning to have an impact.

Some members of Council appear to be listening.

The real test is whether that listening translates into meaningful, enforceable measures that balance growth with the protection of existing residents and communities.

Free StandOurGround.ca Bumper Stickers



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Save our Communities from Urban Sprawl!

If you would like a free **StandOurGround.ca** bumper sticker (12" x 3") please [email us](#) or contact us through our [online form](#).

Notice of Motion of May 25, 2026 – 417 Industrial Park Compatibility and Transition Planning – Moved by Councillor Lisa Deacon and Seconded by Councillor Charles Armstrong

WHEREAS Council recognizes that industrial development is anticipated to expand westward within the 417 Industrial Park;

WHEREAS Council recognizes the importance of ensuring long-term compatibility between future industrial lands and the adjacent rural residential area;

WHEREAS Council recognizes the importance of maintaining the surrounding rural and natural character over the long term through coordinated compatibility and transition planning measures;

WHEREAS the municipality, as a local government, planning authority, landowner, and future developer of the industrial park lands, has the responsibility to demonstrate compatibility planning, transition design, and long-term stewardship of these lands;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council supports a proactive staff review of options, timeline development and establishment of buffer and transition areas along the interface between the future industrial lands and adjacent rural residential uses prior to development proceeding further west within the 417 Industrial Park;

AND THAT the review include consideration of various options for buffer areas that meet and exceed minimum separation distance requirements and remain in agricultural, naturalized, landscaped, or open space form, including consideration of municipal buffer blocks, vegetated berms, naturalized landscape corridors, and retained agricultural transition areas;

AND THAT the review include consideration of the impact of various options for zoning and Russell Township's 417 Industrial Park financial strategy.



Anticipated Changes based on public comments
Schedule A5a - Industrial Park: Add a 70 metres strip Open Space Zone to provide a buffer and transition between the future industrial uses and adjacent rural residential uses

Candidate's Questions

This October, residents will head to the polls for the Municipal Election. As part of our commitment to informing voters we have prepared a series of questions for those seeking elected office. We invite our readers to submit their own questions for candidates. Questions can be sent by [email](#) or submitted through our [online form](#). Candidates are encouraged to provide written responses to these questions. We will publish their replies in our newsletter to help residents make informed decisions before Election Day.

- 1 Why did council approve construction of high-end houses across the township leaving owners with unmanageable mortgages today?
- 2 Why did the over-ambitious council approve construction of an elite regional hockey tournament sports complex and then have to shrink certain aspects of it to stay within budget?
- 3 Why did council massively expand the industrial park without first confirming adequate water supply leaving businesses with the high cost of digging their own wells?

Clarence-Rockland's Alto position

StandOurGround had become aware that Clarence-Rockland Mayor Mario Zanth posted a Facebook video outlining why he supports an Anti-Alto position. This clip of his says **ALL** the things we wish our Council would say. This is what our kind of leadership sounds like. Below is a transcript of Mayor Zanth's [Facebook Post](#).



Mayor Mario Zanth
Clarence-Rockland

"So yesterday the United Counties of Prescott Russell made the decision by refusing to grant Alto access to county land and by refusing to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Major infrastructure projects must be transparent, accountable, and respectful of local communities from day one. Our residents deserve to know exactly what is being proposed. How it's going to affect farmland, property owners, local roads, the environment, and taxpayers before decisions are made behind closed doors, namely expropriations. An NDA would have limited open discussion with the public and that's not how trust is built. Economic development does matter and transportation matters as well. But protecting our communities and rural character and the right of residents to be informed matters as well. This was not a vote against progress. It was a vote for transparency. It was a vote for local autonomy and responsible decision making. The message yesterday was simple. If you want to work with our communities you must do so openly and respectfully. Nation building should not be community dividing."— Clarence-Rockland Mayor Mario Zanth

Alto Protest

On June 10 residents from Quebec and Ontario who were against the Alto High Speed gravy train met on the Alexandria Bridge between Ottawa and Gatineau then marched in solidarity to Parliament Hill. Police on the Hill estimated 800-900 people attended, including a handful of Conservative and Bloc MPs. Numerous speakers were cheered, particularly Jean-Denis Garon, MP of Mirabel, and we in Eastern Ontario remember the Mirabel fiasco (only a few acres needed but 97,000 acres of farms and properties expropriated for an airport that was not wanted or needed). Speakers repeated that the protest was not the end but the beginning of the fight. Anyone interested in learning more about Alto can read in-depth analyses by local lawyer Erin Durant on her [substack](#). Then read the official [Alto page](#) and be amazed at what they're not telling us.



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.

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