

2026 TBM MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

BEAVER VALLEY OUTREACH

**2026 TBM MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE
SURVEY**

**RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR
CANDIDATES**



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Thank you to all candidates who responded. On behalf of the community that we serve, BVO appreciates the time and care that candidates took with their responses. The candidates that responded are listed on the next page.
- Candidate responses have not been edited, other than to remove paragraph breaks in order to fit the responses in a readable format, and to correct spelling errors.
- BVO surveyed candidates about topics that are important to BVO and to the community that we serve. The candidates' responses in the pages that follow are shared to assist voters in understanding the positions of the candidates on these topics.
- BVO does not endorse any candidate response, or any candidate, in this municipal election.
- BVO is not responsible for any of the content of these responses, including factual errors, if any.
- All candidates were asked the same questions.
- The order of candidate responses as been randomly placed on the pages so that any given candidate is not always the first response on the page.
- If you wish to follow up directly with any candidates about their responses, contact the candidate directly. BVO will not be responding to inquiries for further information from candidates. Candidate contact information can be found on the Town of the Blue Mountains website: [Elections | Town of The Blue Mountains, ON Candidates](#)
- Additional information about the 2026 municipal election can be found at: [Elections | Town of The Blue Mountains, ON](#)
- This document will be available on [Advocacy - Beaver Valley Outreach](#) and BVO will also use social media channels to promote the document. In addition, BVO will email the document to our staff and volunteers.

QUESTION TOPICS

TBM
MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS
2026

01

HOUSING
AFFORDABILITY

04

SUSTAINABLE
ENVIRONMENT AND
CLIMATE CHANGE

02

TRANSPORTATION

05

EARLY LEARNING
AND CHILD CARE

03

COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS AND
SUPPORT

06

MUNICIPAL
CHALLENGES AND
LEADERSHIP GOALS

COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES RESPONDED

8 out of 9 Councillor Candidates responded to our questions.

BRAYDEN DEWITT

PAULA HOPE

SEAN KELLY

MEGHAN LONEY

ALEX MAXWELL

GEORGE MCLEOD

SEAN MCMURRAY

JUNE PORTER

Voting period October 16-26



RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES

QUESTION 1

Housing affordability continues to be one of the most significant challenges facing our community. Many lower-income residents, seniors on fixed incomes, young families, and service industry workers struggle to find safe and affordable housing within the municipality. What do you see as Town Council's role in addressing affordable/attainable housing?



Question 1 Responses



Brayden DeWitt: I think Council should focus on the housing barriers it can actually change.

I would support making accessory apartments and garden suites easier and less expensive to create; identifying areas where duplexes, triplexes, smaller units, and purpose-built rentals can be accommodated; and looking for opportunities to add housing through mixed-use development in our commercial areas. I would also support an inventory of suitable Town-owned land and buildings to determine whether any could contribute to a credible affordable or attainable housing partnership. Where the Town provides land, incentives or another financial benefit, I would want the resulting affordability to be measurable and protected for a meaningful period. Finally, housing planning needs to include seniors. We need more options for residents who want to downsize and remain in The Blue Mountains rather than leave because the right housing simply isn't available. The Town cannot control housing prices, but these are practical things within municipal influence that can create more choices.

Sean McMurray: As past chair(7 Years)for the board of directors with the Canadian Mental Health Association and advocate for those that have no voice, I believe Council plays a pivotal I role in providing attainable Housing. We can do that through planning, zoning and other amendments within our purview. I was able to secure, along with the executive team, a 14 bed homeless shelter in Owen Sound, that work was done with a strong relationship with the county, city of Owen Sound and province. This is where the heart of my platform is, being a strong team player, knowing who to work with and how we can get this done. I have seen other communities step up in this way and I know we can do the same.

Question 1 Responses



George McLeod: To address the question: innovative and flexible housing options present tremendous opportunities for low-income residents, seniors, young families and workers.

Non-traditional housing options are being increasingly utilised and can include land-lease arrangements, smaller and alternative housing forms, and congregate or shared living. Overall home prices have also fallen substantially from the peaks reached during the COVID housing boom, creating an additional opportunity to improve access to home ownership. One of the biggest barriers to owning a home is the municipality itself—namely, arduous, inflexible and outdated zoning rules. As a Councillor, I support zoning reforms and the use of appropriate municipal land to facilitate flexible, practical and affordable options. This can help seniors remain in the community, allow small businesses to access the workers they need, and give lower-income residents a better chance of finding or owning a home. Many of the options already exist. Council needs to remove unnecessary barriers to making them possible.

Sean Kelly: We are in a unique situation in this town with housing. Majority of permits issued are for larger and expensive homes which first time buyers or renters cannot hope to afford. We have to be open to alternatives to housing which exist in other parts of country and the world. A special zoning must be created to accommodate this and we can invite builders in with new ideas. We have land offers in our pocket that has been rejected by town staff. We need to stop chasing development fees at the expense of cheaper housing and and to cover our mistakes.

Have someone on staff and council that can find money for this project.

Question 1

Responses

Paula Hope: The Town Council's role in addressing affordable/attainable housing has evolved over the last 2 terms. A learning from the 2018-2022 Council term is that the Town should not get into the role of developer of affordable/attainable housing. Moving forward, the 2022-2026 Council was able to create a partnership with a developer which has led to 100+ units of affordable rental housing next door to the LTC facility in Craigleith. And the recently-developed Corporate Strategic Plan points to a collaborative approach with developers and charitable organizations to create unique solutions to this stubborn problem. Town staff has formed a team to implement this direction called the Housing Action Team (HAT). A dedicated team of staff members to this file is the chosen direction of the majority of municipalities in Ontario. Most importantly, funds have been patiently collected from Town land sales and placed into the Community Improvement Plan (CIP), an initiative that allows the Town to provide qualified private enterprises with monies to assist with various affordable/attainable housing projects. After the land sale to PeopleCare in Craigleith, this fund will contain around \$2.5 million. The September 8th Committee of the Whole approved 12 different categories of projects to which businesses and organizations across the municipality may apply for these funds, at any time. I have advocated and voted for the above solutions during my 2 terms of Council. I look forward to ensuring that these opportunities are pursued and enabled by Council and Town staff during the 2026-2030 term. The goal of 215 affordable/attainable units must be met, and hopefully, exceeded!

Question 1

Responses

Meghan Loney: I believe Town Council has an important role in creating the conditions for more affordable and attainable housing, while recognizing that municipalities cannot solve the housing crisis alone. The Blue Mountains has already set a goal of supporting 215 affordable housing units by 2030. I want to see us move from targets and planning to measurable results. That means using the tools available to us: identifying opportunities on municipally owned land, supporting additional residential units and a greater mix of housing types, reviewing incentives and development processes, and prioritizing infrastructure decisions that can help viable affordable and purpose-built rental projects move forward. It also means working closely with Grey County, the Province, non-profit housing providers and responsible private-sector partners. I am particularly interested in partnerships that can keep housing affordable over the long term rather than simply making a unit less expensive at the point of construction. We also need to remember who we are trying to house. Our seniors, young adults, families, seasonal and service workers, and people working in our community should have realistic opportunities to remain part of it. For me, success isn't simply approving more housing. It is creating a greater range of homes at different price points and stages of life so that the people who contribute to this community can also afford to live here.



Alex Maxwell: Council's role is to create the climate for public and private partners to deliver affordable housing and, in our case, we will need to work in concert with Grey County. Council and the municipality can bring municipal tools to the table, ranging from financial to planning.

June Porter: Town Council's role in advancing affordable/attainable housing is to progress the projects already in various stages while ensuring they contribute to a diverse and sustainable housing supply for our community. A housing crisis was declared, and the town has begun to make meaningful progress to achieving the core baseline set by Parcel Economics (in collaboration with SGL Planning & Design Inc.) for the Town of The Blue Mountains approximately 215 affordable housing units. The Town has several significant opportunities before it, including the McPherson Builders who recently had their land rezoned for the construction of 112 townhomes with purpose-built Additional Residential Units (ARUs), something they are already constructing in St Thomas. There is also the Memorandum of Understanding with Home Opportunities which I introduced to the Town, the proposed Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) lands on Grey Road 19, and the ongoing discussion regarding 171 King Street. Clarity and direction need to be brought to the future of 171 King Street. The property has been the subject of discussion for many years and has long been viewed as a potential location for a mixed-housing development. With public consultation still outstanding, I believe it is important that Council complete that process, establish a clear vision for the site, and determine how it can contribute to our housing objectives and or other social infrastructure that can positively impact later questions in this survey. The Town, also and specifically Council has a role in setting policy and direction, of which the Strategic Plan, 'Our Path Forward, the new Official Plan recently approved by our Provincial Government as well as the Town's new Community Improvement Plan have significant language in support of affordable/attainable housing initiatives. We need a broad mix of housing types and price points to reflect the needs of people at various stages of life and across a wide range of income levels. The town needs to focus on moving viable projects forward while ensuring Council and residents have a clear understanding of any associated infrastructure costs and long-term financial impacts. For that reason, I have been a long-time supporter of the BMRA's Housing Strategy Working Group and more recently supportive of the establishment of the Town's housing action team. On a personal note, I have been a long-standing member of the Social Finance and Housing Group in Grey County, a non-partisan volunteer organization focused on exploring practical solutions to housing affordability and workforce housing challenges. Through this work, I have contributed to and moderated numerous online learning events hosted by the Institute of Southern Georgian Bay, bringing together experts, practitioners, and community leaders to discuss innovative housing approaches. This experience has significantly expanded my knowledge and understanding of workforce housing, community land trusts, social finance, and the wide range of financial tools that can be combined, or "stacked," to make affordable housing projects viable. I have learned that solving housing challenges requires more than good intentions. It requires creative partnerships, sound financial planning, and a clear understanding of how projects can be delivered successfully. This experience uniquely positions me to contribute to advancing housing solutions in The Blue Mountains. It allows me not only to support innovative and attainable housing initiatives, but also to ask the necessary questions regarding financing, infrastructure, environmental considerations, and long-term community impacts. Strong leadership requires both a commitment to finding solutions and the diligence to ensure those solutions are sustainable, responsible, and in the best interests of our community.

RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES

ELECTION

QUESTION 2

Transportation is a growing concern for residents who do not have access to a vehicle, including seniors, youth, young adults, people with disabilities, lower-income residents, isolated residents, and workers. Access to healthcare services, employment, shopping, recreation activities, and social supports is often limited by the lack of transportation options. Many residents must travel outside the municipality for medical appointments and specialist services. BVO recently conducted a survey of residents about transportation and you can find more information at this link: [BVO 2026 Public Transportation Survey Presentation](#) What role should Town Council play in providing transportation?



Question 2 Responses

Sean Kelly: Short term I would make it simple, We have a school bus system that operates 9 months a year. What a special treat for seniors if they could get on and off at the same spots the kids do, what a great way for the kids to meet the elderly . But also we could keep these buses on the road during day. The school bus company has these assets sitting the majority of the time. We could have a pool run to Collingwood a few times a week . a shopping run . etc. Use what we have and figure it out on the go. Again have someone on council and staff that can find funding.

Paula Hope: Thank you for the survey results which point to a shuttle bus or bus system with connecting stops across the municipality. Since transit solutions are so costly, yet beneficial to so many within and outside the municipality, collaboration with Grey County, local businesses and neighbouring municipalities will be required. That collaboration has started with Grey County but much more research and resources will be needed. I would start with a Notice of Motion directing staff to review the BVO survey, consider a Town survey on the same topic and to present Council with options for moving forward with a solution, including costs and potential partners. I would be happy to do so, if elected.

Alex Maxwell: Public transportation is a necessary piece to be considered in the overall affordability piece. Given our challenging geographic nature, potential low ridership and seasonal swings, council will need to work collaboratively with all public and private partners to create a business case that is acceptable to residents.

Voting period October 16-26

Question 2 Responses

Meghan Loney: I believe Town Council has a responsibility to help ensure that not having a car does not mean being disconnected from essential parts of community life. Through my work with BVO, I have been directly involved in our community transportation survey and recently spoke to Council about what it actually means to live here without reliable access to a vehicle. Transportation affects much more than getting from one place to another. It affects whether someone can get to a medical appointment, hold a job, buy groceries, participate in recreation, volunteer, or simply remain connected to other people. I do not think the answer is necessarily one large, traditional transit system. Our geography and population require us to be creative. I would support examining a combination of regional transit connections, on-demand or rideshare models, community transportation partnerships, safer active transportation routes, and better connections with neighbouring municipalities. The Town should also continue advocating with Grey County and other levels of government, because many of the trips residents need to make — particularly for healthcare, education and employment — cross municipal boundaries. Most importantly, I want us to use the information residents have already provided. BVO's transportation survey gives us valuable local data. The next step should be testing potential solutions against the actual trips people need to make and determining what is practical, affordable and sustainable. Transportation is infrastructure too. If we want people of different ages, incomes and abilities to be able to live here, we need to think seriously about how they move through our community.

Sean McMurray: I believe that we can also advocate for transportation within Grey County and Simcoe County; we are in a tight spot with budgets. I am realistic here, as this does fall within the county and province, much like housing and health care. We can continue the conversations with other municipalities to be creative and work within the guidelines.

Voting period October 16-26

Question 2

Responses

June Porter: The Town currently does play a role in providing public transportation; however, it is limited to the east end with the most westerly served point being Timmons Street. While innovative transit solutions must be explored, they must also be practical, evidence-based, and financially sustainable. Collingwood's 2023 on-demand transit pilot was ultimately discontinued after ridership did not transition to the service at levels needed to support the program, demonstrating that not every model will be successful in our region. However, early days post COVID, this may have influenced the outcome, and The Blue Mountains Link route was unfortunately not part of that Collingwood pilot. The need for improved transportation connections between Blue Mountain, Thornbury, Collingwood, Craigleith and further west remains. The recent deputations from your organization and ARGO highlighted both the ongoing demand for enhanced regional mobility options, particularly for workers, seniors, and those without access to a vehicle and a potential solution. As Council has already directed staff to work with ARGO to develop a business case and identify potential transit opportunities within The Blue Mountains, both Council and the community look forward to reviewing that work as it progresses. I am supportive of innovative transit solutions, including demand-responsive services where there is demonstrated need/ridership projections, a sustainable operating model and measurable community benefits. Concurrently, I would actively support pursuing provincial and federal funding opportunities to help develop and expand regional transit services while minimizing the financial burden on local taxpayers.

Question 2

Responses

Brayden DeWitt: I would start by bringing BVO's transportation findings together with the Town, Grey County and existing transportation providers to identify the highest-priority gaps and develop options for addressing them. I would specifically support investigating an on-demand or community transportation service for residents who cannot otherwise access medical appointments, groceries and essential services. That should include transportation outside The Blue Mountains where necessary. I would also approach Grey County and neighbouring municipalities about cost-sharing where residents are travelling to common destinations such as Collingwood and Owen Sound. We should not each build separate systems if a regional service can work better. Finally, I would review our existing transit services based on ridership, cost and accessibility. If another model can provide the same or better service for less money, I would be willing to change how we provide it. My goal would be straightforward: not having a car should not mean losing your independence.

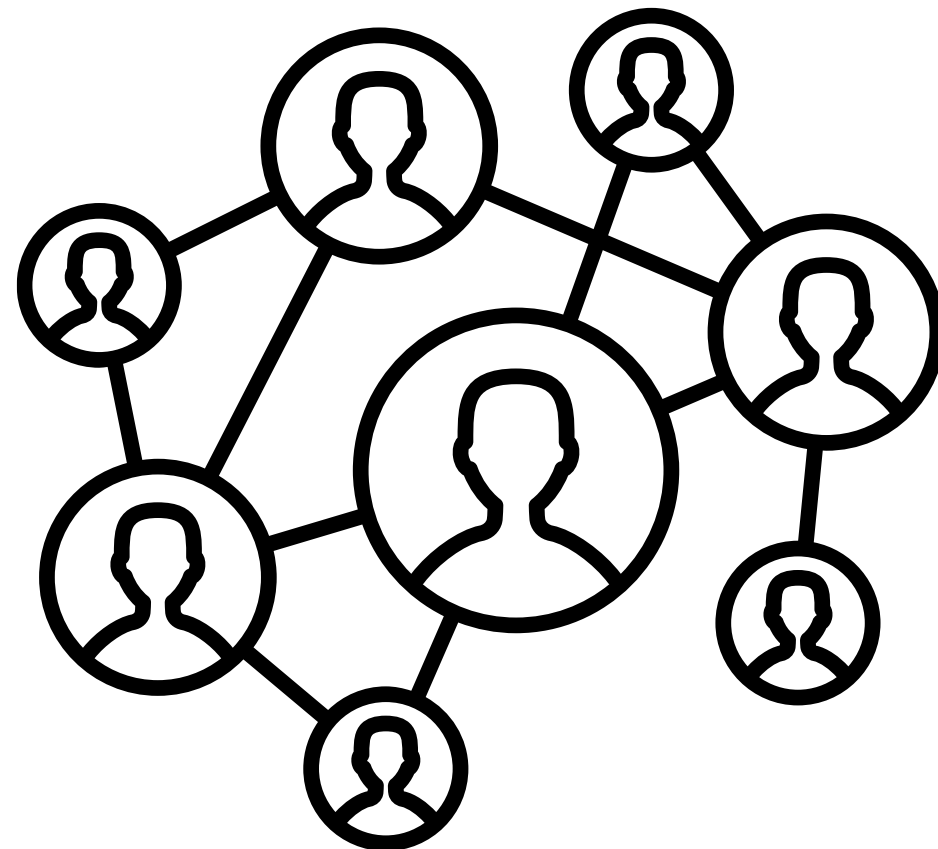
George McLeod: As your survey suggests, there is a tremendous need for flexible transportation that allows people to get where they need to go without owning a car. Beyond allowing residents to shop, attend appointments, work, and visit friends and family; higher fuel costs make affordable transportation alternatives increasingly important. I support strengthening community shuttle and bus services. These are already in place in parts of TBM and other Ontario communities. Effective communication will also be essential so residents know what transportation options are available and how to use them. I'm also interested in innovative approaches. Ride-sharing through a partnership with Uber is being used in Innisfil and I am watching closely to see how that model performs and whether we can learn from it. As an avid cyclist I support bike lanes, while recognizing limitations. Our climate restricts cycling for part of the year, and bicycles are not a realistic transportation option for many elderly residents or people with mobility limitations.

RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES

ELECTION

QUESTION 3

Community connections and support for residents who may be isolated, vulnerable, or facing difficult circumstances is an ongoing concern. What initiatives would you propose to improve quality of life for vulnerable residents?



Question 3

Responses

Sean McMurray: Seniors, especially, are isolated. I know this too well and purchased a home with a legal dwelling beside it to allow my Dad to live with us until he passed away in 2025. I am personally connecting neighbours and friends and believe in community. We need to make people aware of the programs that do exist in our community today, and ensure families and neighbours are checking in with the senior population. We are far more isolated today than at any point in our history, spending less time with friends. It is a challenge across Canada and one that I am on a personal mission to be the connected neighbour. Community organizations like Rotary, EFL and other agencies like HCCS also play a large role in this. We need to lean on these organizations that are speaking with seniors to ensure we stay connected, this is an issue we can solve. I know that the Postal Carriers in England are allowed to do wellness checks on people with they notice a pile of mail, we can take that same approach.

George McLeod: I also support community events and meeting places such as the Marsh Street Centre, the Legion and BVO. Everyone loves the BVO thrift shop and it's places like these that bring people together and give residents access to affordable clothes, tools and household goods. Community connection is closely related to transportation: better local transit makes it easier for seniors, lower-income residents and other vulnerable people to participate in community life.

I hope to work closely with BVO on this issue

Alex Maxwell: Perhaps we could look at neighbourhood groups to check in on people, tie a public small bus into outings for needs and other activities. Build on what we already have, for example look into cooking classes at the Marsh Street Center for all ages.

Voting period October 16-26

Question 3

Responses

June Porter: Having worked in healthcare, I know firsthand how social isolation directly impacts physical, mental, and social health. Building stronger community connections for our vulnerable and isolated residents is an essential public health priority. Proposed Initiatives:

1. Emergency Preparedness & Safety

- **Vulnerable Persons Registry:** Create a voluntary register for vulnerable or isolated residents. This enables emergency services to quickly prioritize targeted wellness checks during extreme weather, prolonged power outages, or telecommunication failures—especially in rural sectors.

2. Centralized Information & Resource Mapping

- **Resource Expansion:** Expand existing municipal tools—such as the Home Residential Booklet and the Health Care and Hospital directory created with the Family Physician Recruitment Working Group—to include direct phone numbers and dedicated support listings for isolated and vulnerable individuals.
- **Community Service Audit:** Conduct a baseline inventory of existing local organizational programs to identify service overlaps, uncover gaps, and direct resources where they are needed most.

Others depending on what an inventory would reveal I would propose increased community outreach programs, volunteer visitor schemes, and accessible community hubs to reduce social isolation. Expanding digital inclusion initiatives, supporting community meal programs, and providing more opportunities for intergenerational activities would help vulnerable residents remain connected and engaged. Partnerships with local organizations, including EMS to deliver mental health support, wellbeing checks, and practical assistance would further improve quality of life and strengthen community resilience.

Question 3 Responses

Brayden DeWitt: I would focus on better connecting residents with services and strengthening the organizations already doing this work. First, I would like the Town to improve how it directs residents to services provided by Grey County, BVO, healthcare providers, 211, and other organizations. Someone asking the Town for help shouldn't simply reach a dead end because another organization is technically responsible. Second, I would support bringing local service organizations together regularly to identify gaps, duplication, and opportunities to work together. This is particularly important for issues like transportation, seniors' isolation, and access to services that cross organizational boundaries. Third, I would support Town funding for specific community initiatives, and broader support where a strong case exists, while requiring clear expectations and reporting for significant ongoing funding. I don't think the Town needs to recreate services BVO and others already provide well. Sometimes the most effective municipal initiative is bringing the right people together and helping an existing service reach more residents.

Sean Kelly: Use the community center , the libraries , even town hall to host events. Engage with the bus company for pick ups and drop offs. Bring seniors to schools to talk , or watch our kids in action. Encourage the VILLAGE to have events for TBM residents only. Identify the hungry. We should have a food bank. An ounce of prevention as opposed to a pound of cure. Have our local dentists visit the school and see which kids don't go on regular basis. Have a lunch program.

Voting period October 16-26

Question 3

Responses

Meghan Loney: I would like us to think about community connection as a form of infrastructure. A municipality cannot replace organizations like BVO, healthcare providers, schools or social-service agencies, nor should it. But Council can help create the conditions that allow people to access those supports and participate in community life. I would support stronger partnerships between the Town and organizations already doing this work, particularly around transportation, accessible recreation, youth and senior programming, food security, volunteering and opportunities for intergenerational connection. We should also look closely at the accessibility of our public spaces and facilities. Something as simple as a place to sit, an accessible washroom or change space, affordable recreation, safe walking routes, or transportation to an activity can determine whether someone is actually able to participate. Through my community work, I have seen the value of bringing organizations together rather than expecting one organization to solve a problem alone. I would bring that same approach to Council: identify the gap, listen to the people experiencing it, bring the right partners to the table, and determine what role the municipality can realistically play. Quality of life is not measured only by the services we provide. It is also measured by whether people feel connected to and able to participate in their community.

Paula Hope: Research has pointed more and more to the relationship between social connection, mental health and longevity. And, to the crux of this question, resources in the Town of the Blue Mountains for support in this area are inadequate. The initiatives that I would propose to improve quality of life for vulnerable residents is to reach out to the current deliverers of answers to this challenge, including BVO, church groups, seniors organizations and the Marsh Street Centre luncheon group, to create a community forum. These groups would be able to provide excellent ideas, resources and direction for next steps. A solution package could be developed with requests to various organizations for funding including Grey County, United Way and charitable foundations. The Town could be approached for assistance, possibly through the CIP program. I would be happy to assist with such an initiative, working with BVO and Town staff.

Voting period October 16-26

RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES

ELECTION

QUESTION 4

BVO recognizes the important relationship between environmental health and community wellbeing. Environmental sustainability contributes to a healthier and more resilient community for current and future generations. What opportunities would you propose and/or support for Town Council to create a more sustainable and climate-resilient community?



Question 4 Responses

Meghan Loney: Environmental health and community wellbeing are deeply connected in The Blue Mountains. Our natural environment is part of our identity, our economy and our quality of life, and protecting it needs to be integrated into how we make municipal decisions. I would support continuing to implement the Town's sustainability and climate plans, with particular attention to protecting natural assets, strengthening our tree canopy and biodiversity, improving waste reduction and reuse, expanding low-carbon and active transportation options, and ensuring infrastructure is designed to withstand increasingly severe weather. I am also a strong believer in community-led environmental action. Through my work with local environmental initiatives, I have seen what can happen when residents, youth, community organizations and the municipality work together. Small projects can build environmental literacy and community ownership while contributing to larger municipal goals. I would like the Town to continue supporting opportunities for residents and community organizations to test practical ideas — from circular economy and waste reduction projects to naturalization, local food and youth-led environmental initiatives — and then scale up approaches that demonstrate results. Climate resilience should also be part of our financial thinking. Protecting natural assets and designing resilient infrastructure today can help us avoid much larger costs in the future. My goal would be to make sustainability part of everyday municipal decision-making rather than treating it as a separate environmental issue.

George McLeod: I support ensuring that new development does not unnecessarily infringe on environmentally sensitive or undeveloped areas.

Good planning also means directing growth to appropriate locations and ensuring infrastructure decisions are based on realistic—not inflated—growth assumptions. We should preserve natural areas that manage stormwater, protect tree cover, and ensure new infrastructure is designed with changing weather conditions in mind. I support zoning that preserves environmentally-sensitive locations and I oppose the introduction of large data centres.

Voting period October 16-26

Question 4 Responses

Brayden DeWitt: I want environmental resilience built directly into how the Town plans capital projects. When a major building or piece of infrastructure is being replaced, I would want Council shown not only the cheapest compliant option, but also the cost and long-term benefit of improving energy efficiency, reducing emissions and making the asset more resilient to extreme weather. I would also support investigating a dedicated component within our long-term capital planning to help fund worthwhile environmental upgrades when the better option has a reasonable additional upfront cost. I would prioritize stormwater and drainage planning as our community grows, continue protecting important natural features through the planning process, and actively pursue provincial and federal funding that can make resilient infrastructure more affordable. For me, sustainability means making better decisions about what we build, how long it will last, what it will cost to operate, and what we protect as the community grows.

Sean McMurray: This is a hard one, since we are so rural, which means driving everywhere. I know Kincardine just allowed for electric golf carts to be driven in city streets; this cuts down on emissions, and even 2nd cars with gasoline. Again, this is a global issue; we can play a small part. Ensuring charging stations are accessible too. We can move to more electric vehicles when we require cars to be replaced; the Total Cost of ownership will need to be examined to ensure this meets budgets.

ELECTION

Voting period October 16-26

June Porter: Partnering with healthcare professionals to promote Green Prescribing is an innovative opportunity to encourage residents to use parks, trails, and natural areas as part of preventative health and wellness strategies. Time spent in nature supports both physical and mental health while reinforcing the importance of protecting and expanding our natural assets. I am also supportive of nature-based wellness initiatives, such as those being advanced through the South Georgian Bay Innovation Fund. The recently approved Official Plan contains stronger policies regarding cash-in-lieu of parkland, creating additional opportunities to secure meaningful public green space as our community grows. Access to parks, trails, and natural areas for both passive and active recreation contributes directly to a healthier and more resilient community for current and future generations. The addition of the 208 Peel Street North Park was a tremendous win for residents living between Little Beaver and Christie Beach Road north of Highway 26. Prior to its acquisition, this area had access to only 2.44 acres of parkland. Similarly, the ongoing redevelopment of Moreau Park and future Craigleith Community Park demonstrate a forward-thinking commitment to providing accessible and meaningful public green spaces for all ages. The Town's new Final - Our Path Forward 2026-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan.pdf is particularly encouraging because it embeds the three pillars of sustainability, environmental, social, and economic, into its core framework. The plan recognizes that community well-being, environmental stewardship, climate resilience, and economic prosperity are interconnected and must be advanced together. The priorities of Community for Everyone, Resilient Growth, and Strong & Diverse Economy provide a balanced approach to achieving long-term community outcomes. Moving forward, this integrated framework will help Council evaluate decisions through multiple lenses, ensuring that investments in parks, trails, active transportation, climate adaptation, healthcare partnerships, and economic development deliver broad community benefits. It also provides a solid foundation for the Parks and Trails Master Plan, ensuring that sustainability remains a guiding principle in municipal planning and decision-making. Initiatives such as Green Prescribing demonstrate how environmental, social, and economic objectives can work together to create a healthier, more resilient, and more sustainable community.

Question 4 Responses

Paula Hope: The Town's Corporate Strategic Plan does commit to the importance of protecting the environment for community wellbeing. Studies have shown that 10 minutes in nature will comfort and soothe us in important ways. In order to realize this goal, the Town will need to continue to collaborate with fundamental organizations such as Tree Trust, Escarpment Corridor Alliance, Georgian Bay Forever, the new Conservation Authority, CANN, Watershed Trusts, to name a few. These groups require Town co-operation and support as they move forward to their goals. It is Council's role to provide an open door, to listen, to support when needed and, to provide resources, if available. Maintenance and development of the Town's natural assets such as our parks, waterfront and the Georgian Trail ensure that the Town's environmental gifts are available to all. Areas of concern to me start with protecting the UNESCO and Biosphere designations, the Niagara Escarpment, drinking water, the tree canopy, mature trees, watersheds, all our natural assets. Projects that threaten our environmental well-being such as the Castle Glen development and the Meaford Pumped Storage Project must be addressed and taken off the table in a way that is equitable yet fair to the residents of TBM.



Alex Maxwell: Trees, trees and more trees - for shade, erosion control and natural habitat. I have always been a huge supporter of healthy watersheds and connectivity of green space. We are going to get a handle on how we build using more permeable landscaping material, drought resistant plants and the use of new building products, like bamboo. I'm 100% in favour of solar energy and encourage those who want to reduce their dependency on traditional energy products.

Sean Kelly: We really have to look at what our biggest concerns for that are in our Town, Air and water. I don't think we are going like the answer.

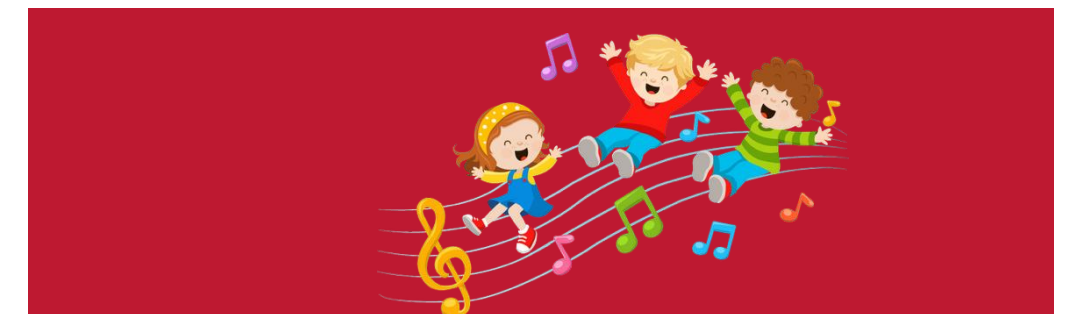
Voting period October 16-26

RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES

ELECTION

QUESTION 5

Early learning and child care is often treated as a federal or provincial responsibility—especially since the introduction of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system. But whether families can actually find affordable, high-quality care is also shaped by decisions made close to home. The BVO PreSchool has an extensive waiting list, as do all other child care centres in the Grey County. Municipal governments plan neighbourhoods, approve development, own land and buildings and finance infrastructure. You can find out more about child care in Ontario at this link: [Child Care Must Be a 2026 Municipal Election Issue - Building Blocks for Child Care](#) . If elected, what would you do to create and support a local child care expansion plan with measurable targets for our growing community?





Question 5 Responses

George McLeod: This issue falls into provincial programming, but that doesn't mean that council cannot do a better job making land available and reducing red tape for child care facilities. I would welcome the opportunity to learn more about this issue and to speak with BVO.

Paula Hope: Thank you for the article on building blocks for child care. If elected, working with BVO, I would pursue many of the meaningful but actionable steps outlined in this article. I would start with setting targets for the number of spaces required to meet the community goal of providing affordable, high quality care for every child. As mentioned above in your outline, our community would require a local child care expansion plan, I would be happy to work with and/or support all relevant parties who could create that plan. I would also note that with my 4 years experience as Council liaison with the Planning department, I would pursue solutions for bringing in child care solutions at the early consultation stage of the planning process for projects. I would also challenge the Planning department to address all available touch points for child care solutions in the subdivision development process.

Alex Maxwell: Childcare is part of the overall affordability piece and a required economic piece within our local economy. To expand spaces, the town will need to cooperate with Grey County and other like-minded public and private community partners. Council and the municipality can bring to the table physical planning and local economic development tools. As part of its decision-making process, council must be familiar with Federal, Provincial and County levels of involvement. To effectively leverage the Canada-wide Early Learning and Grey County, the TBM will need to align its targets with the realities of Provincial funding cycles, county services and local municipal powers.

Sean Kelly: I know its a way of life now for child care, but after being part of raising 5 boys , I wish the mothers/ fathers could stay home in the early years. But we have the facility's at the rec center on some days . I think a library after school program would be great, give them a place to go after school and enrich their minds. Again have staff and council find programs to fund. I remember the sports bubble in Collingwood , something like that to start right beside the BVO and town hall.

Question 5 Responses

Brayden DeWitt: I would support developing a local child care expansion plan with Grey County, BVO, and other providers. My first step would be establishing a local baseline: how many licensed spaces we have, the size and age distribution of the waitlist, where demand is concentrated, projected demand from growth, and what is currently preventing providers from expanding. From there, I would want measurable targets for additional spaces and reduced waitlists, with progress reported publicly. The Town should then focus on the barriers it can actually help remove. If providers need land or facilities, I would examine suitable Town-owned property and municipal partnerships. If a reasonable capital contribution could unlock a significant number of long-term spaces, I would consider it with clear conditions attached. If the real bottleneck is a shortage of early childhood educators, however, constructing another building won't solve it. In that case, I would work with Grey County and providers to determine what can realistically be done about recruitment and retention first. Child care is also economic infrastructure. Families and employers both feel the consequences when spaces aren't available.

Sean McMurray: I agree, we need this to be a highlighted issue; the struggle is with the provincial and federal governments who fund education and early years. I would suggest the BVO working towards a capital campaign to build a facility to grow into, council's role would be securing the land, working with the BVO to ensure development fees are managed. We are in a tight spot financially and would work with BVO at the County, Provincial and Federal levels and assist with any fundraising ideas.



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June Porter: I know first hand that there is a long waiting list for the BVO PreSchool as recently I approached the BVO to see if a Family Physician couple could access a spot for their child. Access to affordable, high-quality child care is essential for families, employers, and the to play in ensuring that enough spaces are available to meet local needs. If re-elected, I would support the development of a local Child Care Expansion Plan in partnership with Grey County, child care operators, school boards, employers, and community organizations. The plan would assess current and future demand, identify service gaps, and establish measurable targets for the number of new licensed child care spaces needed as our community grows. It would also include annual reporting on key indicators such as wait-list numbers, new spaces created, geographic access to care, and progress toward established goals. The municipality may not operate child care directly, but it can lead planning, remove barriers, identify potential sites, advocate for funding, and hold partners accountable for achieving expansion goals. I would work to ensure that child care considerations are incorporated into municipal growth, infrastructure, housing, and development planning so that new neighbourhoods are designed with families in mind from the outset. I also believe child care should be viewed as essential community infrastructure and an economic development priority, not simply as a social service. Our ability to attract and retain young families, address workforce shortages, support local businesses, and sustain long-term economic growth depends on access to affordable, reliable child care. When families cannot find care, employers struggle to recruit and retain workers, and communities lose opportunities for growth. To address this, I would also advocate for provincial and federal funding to support capital projects and new licensed spaces, while ensuring that child care needs are considered alongside housing, transportation, and other community infrastructure investments. Child care is both a family issue and an economic issue. By taking a proactive leadership role and establishing measurable targets, the municipality can help ensure that our growing community remains a place where young families can live, work, raise children, and thrive. I would also support annual public reporting on key indicators such as wait-list numbers, new spaces created, geographic access to care, and progress toward established targets. Transparency and accountability are critical to ensuring that plans translate into results.

Question 5 Responses

Meghan Loney: Child care may not be delivered directly by the Town, but that does not mean the municipality has no role. If elected, I would support developing a local child care expansion plan in partnership with Grey County, existing providers, schools, community organizations and potential operators. The first step should be establishing a clear picture of current and projected demand in The Blue Mountains and setting measurable targets for additional spaces based on population growth. We should then identify the practical barriers to creating those spaces. The Town can examine whether municipal land or facilities could support future child care, consider child care needs when planning new neighbourhoods and community facilities, and ensure our planning and development processes do not unnecessarily prevent appropriate child care expansion. At the same time, Council should advocate alongside Grey County for additional provincially funded CWELCC spaces. Grey County's existing allocation has already been committed, which makes that advocacy particularly important. I would also want progress reported publicly. If we establish a target, residents should be able to see how many spaces have been created, what projects are underway, what barriers remain and what the Town is doing about them. Child care is community infrastructure. Families cannot fully participate in our workforce or community if they cannot find care for their children, and a growing municipality needs to plan for that reality.



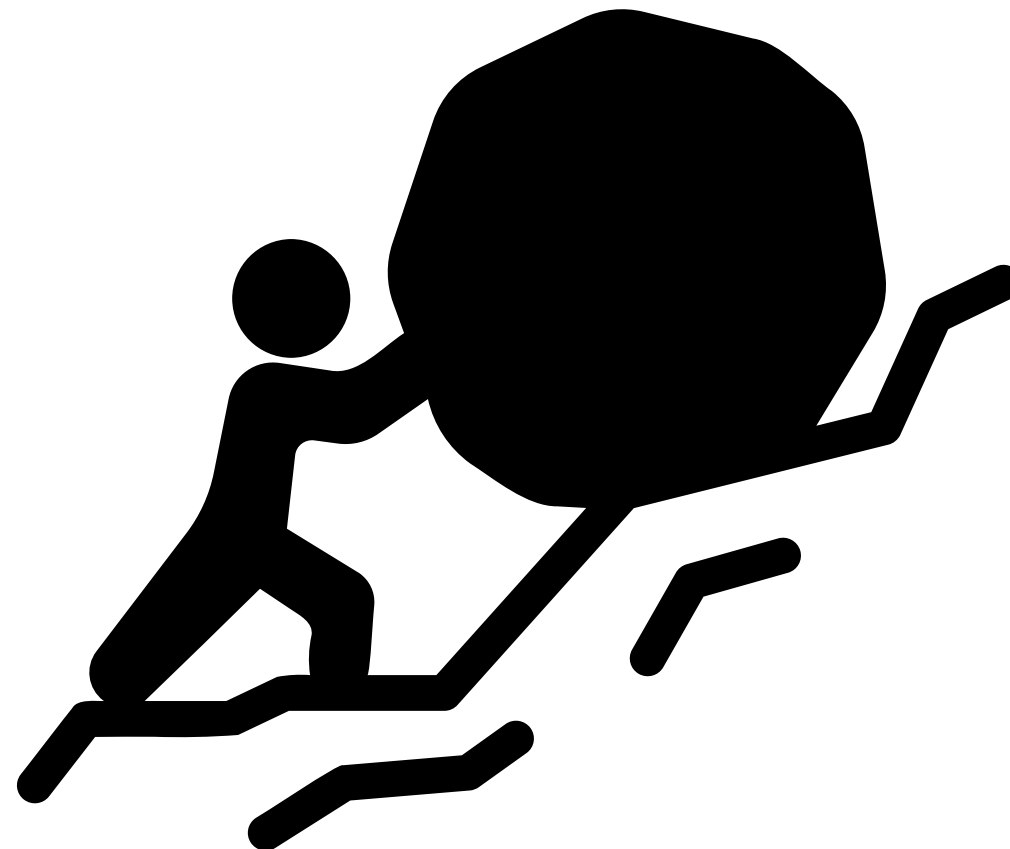
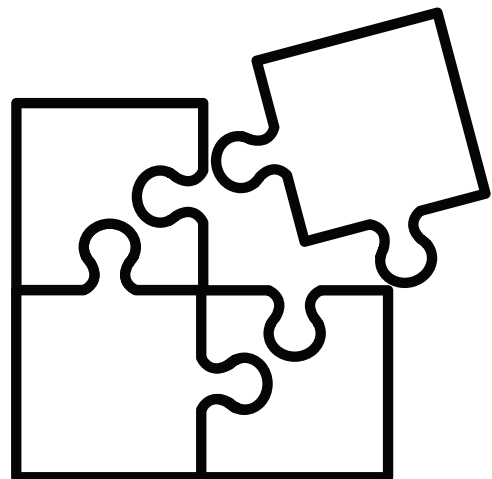
Voting period October 16-26

RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES

ELECTION

QUESTION 6

What do you believe are the most significant challenges facing the municipality over the next four years?



Question 6 Responses

Paula Hope: The most outstanding challenge facing the Town over the next four years is to develop a bullet-proof plan for providing core services to all residents, for the long term, while also meeting its financial obligations and keeping tax levies at current levels. The Town will also need to be vigilant with protecting its incredible natural assets and community character, while balancing intelligent growth and tourism. Public engagement and accountable and transparent communication are fundamental deliverables that must underpin all Town initiatives. The issues raised in this questionnaire, including affordable/attainable housing, transit, helping vulnerable residents, climate-resilience and well-being as well as affordable and available child care are also significant challenges that must be met.

Brayden DeWitt: Infrastructure capacity and capital costs; rebuilding financial flexibility/reserves; accommodating growth without degrading community character/environment; and keeping TBM accessible to year-round residents through housing, transportation and services.

Alex Maxwell: Our largest challenges will be uncertainty and affordability as a result of the trade wars.

ELECTION

Voting period October 16-26

Question 6 Responses

June Porter: The most significant challenges are individually addressing our financial health, growth and development, housing, transit, childcare and social infrastructure etc. The previous questions are all issues in their own right, but without coordination are at risk of not realizing their full potential for the Town.

Managing and supporting growth in The Blue Mountains requires breaking down municipal silos so that planning occurs in a coordinated and integrated manner rather than in isolation. This approach must be supported by rigorous financial accountability to ensure The Blue Mountains remains affordable for future generations. I would like to see an integrated municipal service delivery model that connects land use planning and hard infrastructure, such as wastewater systems, with social infrastructure planning. Cross-departmental collaboration among Planning, Operations, Finance, and Community Services would help align development approvals with associated infrastructure needs, including parks and recreation facilities, while ensuring these investments are reflected in our 10-Year Capital Plan and coordinated with school board capacity planning. By leveraging developer-funded amenities, co-locating community hubs, and requiring full life-cycle costing so the Town of The Blue Mountains can build complete, well-serviced communities while protecting local tax dollars and keeping government lean. Because growth rarely pays for itself, existing taxpayers cannot fund endless retrofits or new debt this needs to be done through an integrated, financially disciplined growth framework.

Sean McMurray: Keeping taxes in line with inflation, creating affordable housing so workers can work and live here and driving economic growth to keep the tax burden on homes lower.



Question 6 Responses

Meghan Loney: I believe our greatest challenge over the next four years will be managing growth while protecting both affordability and quality of life. The Blue Mountains is growing, and that creates interconnected pressures: housing, water and wastewater infrastructure, roads and transportation, recreation, child care, environmental protection and the cost of delivering municipal services. At the same time, residents are facing their own affordability pressures and expect Council to demonstrate value for every tax dollar. We will have to make difficult choices about what we build, when we build it and how we pay for it. That requires strong long-term financial planning and a willingness to distinguish between what we need, what we would like, and what we can responsibly afford. Housing and workforce retention will remain significant challenges. So will transportation for people who cannot or do not drive, ensuring that families and seniors can remain in the community, and adapting infrastructure and services to a changing climate. But I also think there is a less tangible challenge: maintaining a sense of community as we grow. The Blue Mountains includes rural residents, long-time families, newcomers, seasonal residents, businesses, agricultural communities, workers, young people and seniors. We will not always agree. Council's job is to listen broadly, communicate clearly, use good evidence and make decisions with the long-term interests of the whole municipality in mind. Growth is coming with both opportunities and costs. Our challenge is to manage it responsibly without losing the things that make people want to call this community home.

Sean Kelly: Stop spending. Find the leaks. Forecast our revenues in real time. Budget accordingly. Solve our big issues, but also fix the obvious stuff.

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ELECTION

George McLeod: (1) The budget crisis - I have more than 15 years of experience in finance and investigations, and I will prioritize addressing TBM's serious financial situation. The Town is facing a roughly \$19.5 million budget shortfall (a deficit) while its reserves are dwindling. Addressing this does not necessarily mean indiscriminate budget cuts or reductions to important community services. I have advanced a series of measures aimed at putting the Town's finances on a sustainable footing, including scrutinizing spending, improving financial oversight, and correcting unrealistic budget and growth assumptions. This is directly connected to the issues BVO is raising. Affordable housing, transportation, community services and environmental protection all require a financially sustainable municipality. When governments face severe financial pressure, services relied upon by seniors, lower-income households and other vulnerable residents are the hardest to protect. Getting TBM's finances under control is therefore not separate from social policy—it is what allows us to sustain it.

2. Improve housing options - Housing affordability requires more than simply approving large conventional subdivisions. We need a wider range of housing choices that reflect the actual needs of seniors, workers, young families and lower-income residents. I support sensible zoning reforms that make it easier to create smaller homes, secondary units, land-lease arrangements, shared and congregate housing, and other innovative forms of housing where appropriate. I will also support examining whether suitable municipal land can be used to facilitate attainable housing. The goal should be practical: make it easier for seniors to remain in the community, give younger and lower-income residents a realistic path to housing, and help local employers attract and retain workers. Council should remove unnecessary regulatory barriers while ensuring new housing remains compatible with the character of our communities.

3. Improve transportation - For residents who cannot drive—or cannot afford to—transportation is fundamental to independence. A resident may have access to affordable housing, health care, employment and community programs, but those opportunities mean little if they cannot reliably get to them. I will support strengthening and better coordinating existing community shuttle and transit services, improving communication so residents know what services are available, and examining flexible alternatives such as on-demand transportation and public-private ride-sharing partnerships. We should focus particularly on connections between Thornbury, Craighleith, Clarksburg, Collingwood and other destinations residents regularly need to reach. The objective should not be to recreate a big-city transit system. It should be to develop a practical, affordable and flexible network suited to the geography and population of The Blue Mountains.

Together, these three priorities are closely connected: sound finances give us the capacity to invest in housing, transportation, community services and environmental protection; better housing allows people to remain part of our community; and better transportation ensures they can participate fully in it.

RESPONSES FROM COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES

ELECTION

QUESTION 7

What specific goals would you like to achieve if elected?



Question 7 Responses

Alex Maxwell: Get school children safely on and off a school bus and get traffic speeds slowed down in residential and school zones. Improve drainage. Keep encouraging the public to participate in the municipal process. Assist in affordable housing. Just keep advancing community projects.

Sean Kelly: Get our finances in order, Find out where we are in the first year . Then decide our needs, then decide our wants.

Paula Hope: I would like to ensure that all of the above-mentioned goals in the previous question are achieved.

I would also like to achieve greater growth in the areas of the arts, heritage and culture. Finally, I would like to ensure that the Town follows its own Corporate Strategic Plan and builds an even stronger plan after the current 2 year plan is fulfilled.

Sean McMurray: Housing is my main goal. Less red tape for developers and balancing the budget, being fiscally accountable to the taxpayers while maintaining roads, water and a healthy community.



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June Porter: While after six years of working on Family Physician recruitment I was so pleased to see two join our community resulting in nearly 1,600 residents securing access to local primary care, I would like to see more set up practice here.

My Platform Theme: Accountability for an Affordable Future — Pragmatic, Persistent, and Professional Leadership

- Financially Disciplined Budgets and Infrastructure Investment
- Natural Landscape as a Strategic Asset
- Housing Choices Through Multi-Sector Financing

Having said that there is another specific goal which I would like to achieve that that is increased: Accountability, Transparency, and Meaningful Public Participation. Throughout my entire professional career, I was accountable to a regulatory body. That experience taught me that public trust is never automatic. It must be earned through openness, responsibility, and a willingness to be held accountable for decisions and actions. As Chair of the Accountability and Transparency Advisory Committee, I had the opportunity to help advance what is still a rare and forward-thinking approach in the municipal world. Our committee worked to strengthen accountability and transparency across many aspects of municipal governance, from policy development and strategic planning to public reporting, ethical conduct, and evidence-based decision-making. Over time, I came to view Accountability, Transparency, and Public Participation as inseparable. Accountability ensures decision-makers answer for their actions. Transparency ensures residents can see and understand how decisions are made. Public participation ensures that the voices of residents are not only heard but genuinely considered in shaping those decisions. Our committee helped establish important initiatives such as the Accountability and Transparency Policy, the Lobbyist Registry, improved reporting frameworks, enhanced public access to information, and stronger connections between strategic priorities and day-to-day municipal operations. We also emphasized evidence-based decision-making and the importance of measuring outcomes so residents can see whether promises are being delivered. One of the accomplishments I am most proud of was creating what became known as the "Guardian Layer" of Accountability and Transparency within the Town's Strategic Plan. This framework was designed to ensure that community priorities remain at the center of municipal decision-making and that progress can be monitored and measured over time. If there is one issue that is near and dear to my heart, it is building and maintaining public trust in local government. Residents deserve more than information when decisions are being made. They deserve meaningful opportunities to participate before decisions are made. They deserve transparency about how and why decisions are reached. And they deserve accountability for results. Strong communities are built when governments are open, transparent, responsive, and willing to engage citizens as partners. That is why Accountability, Transparency, and Public Participation have become paramount to me, and why I will continue to champion them as essential foundations of good governance.

Brayden DeWitt: My priorities will continue to develop as I speak with residents and learn more, and these are certainly not the only issues I would work on. But three goals consistently rise to the top of my list:

1. Restore our financial and infrastructure footing. I want to see the Town's finances stabilize, reserves begin to rebuild, and our long-term planning improve so we have a much clearer picture of what the next five, ten, and fifteen years will require. That also means getting infrastructure planning ahead of growth, rather than waiting until we reach a servicing constraint before acting.

2. Make Town government easier to understand and engage with. I want residents to be able to find plain-language Council meeting summaries, track major projects through a public dashboard, and easily understand why a project is delayed, over budget or affecting their neighbourhood. That's important for accountability, but it also makes it easier for residents to contribute. We have an enormous amount of knowledge and experience in this community, and people are better able to bring that to the table when they can easily understand what Council is working on and why.

3. Build a more diverse year-round economy. A healthy year-round community needs a broader range of employment opportunities. I want to use the Town's economic development tools to help attract and retain small businesses, professional services, skilled trades and compatible small-scale manufacturing. Combined with progress on housing, that can give more people the opportunity not just to work here, but to build a long-term future here.

These certainly aren't the only issues I want to work on, but they are three areas where I would particularly like to see meaningful progress over the next four years.



Question 7 Responses



Meghan Loney: If elected, I would like to look back after four years and be able to point to measurable progress rather than simply a list of discussions we had. My goals would include: Make measurable progress on attainable housing. Support the implementation of the Town's housing strategy and help move appropriate affordable, attainable and purpose-built rental housing from plans to actual homes.

Advance practical transportation options. Use the local transportation data already collected to pursue regional, on-demand, community and active transportation solutions that better connect residents with healthcare, employment, education, recreation and essential services. Plan infrastructure responsibly. Make long-term water, wastewater, roads, recreation and other infrastructure decisions based on evidence, realistic growth projections and what residents can sustainably afford.

Strengthen supports for families and people at every stage of life. I would like to see a measurable child care expansion plan, improved accessibility and continued partnerships that help youth, families, seniors and vulnerable residents participate fully in community life. Protect the environment while preparing for change. Continue implementing climate adaptation, natural asset protection, waste reduction, active transportation and other practical sustainability measures, while considering both their environmental and long-term financial benefits.

Across all of these goals, I would also like to improve how Council communicates with residents. People should be able to understand what is being considered, why decisions are being made, what they will cost and how they can participate. Ultimately, I would like my term on Council to be measured by whether we made thoughtful decisions, strengthened connections across our community and left The Blue Mountains better prepared for the people who live here today and those who will call it home in the future.



Question 7 Responses



George McLeod:

If elected, I would focus on three specific goals:

1. Restore the Town's financial stability.

My first priority would be addressing TBM's serious financial situation. I would push for more realistic growth and revenue projections, stronger oversight of major capital projects, greater scrutiny of spending and procurement, and a long-term plan to protect and rebuild municipal reserves.

2. Expand practical and attainable housing options.

I would work to remove unnecessary zoning barriers that prevent innovative and lower-cost forms of housing. This includes supporting secondary units, smaller homes, land-lease arrangements, shared and congregate housing, and appropriate use of municipal land. My goal is to make it easier for seniors to remain in the community, for young families and lower-income residents to find housing, and for local businesses to attract workers.

3. Improve transportation for people who cannot or do not drive. I would work to strengthen connections between Thornbury, Clarksburg, Craigleith, Collingwood and other destinations residents need to reach. That means improving existing shuttle and transit services while exploring flexible options such as on-demand transportation and ride-sharing partnerships. The objective should be a practical system designed for a small, geographically dispersed community—not an expensive big-city transit model.

These goals are interconnected. A financially sustainable Town has greater capacity to support housing, transportation, environmental protection and community services. My overall goal is to make TBM more affordable and accessible while protecting the rural character that makes it such a desirable place to live. Finally (and as always) I want to emphasize that I write my responses myself; not with AI.



Question 7 Responses



GET INFORMED! GET READY TO VOTE!

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ASK QUESTIONS

Take the time to ask candidates about the issues that matter to you and our community. Stay informed, ask questions, and learn where candidates stand on the issues you care about.

KNOW THE CANDIDATES

In the 2026 Town of The Blue Mountains Municipal Election, voters will choose from 3 candidates for Mayor, 4 candidates for Deputy Mayor, and 9 candidates for Councillor.

VOTE BY INTERNET OR TELEPHONE

In the 2026 Town of The Blue Mountains Municipal Election, eligible voters can cast their ballot online or by telephone for Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, and School Board Trustee.

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LOCAL ELECTION. LOCAL VOICES.

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VOTE

OCTOBER 16-26TH



ELECTION

2026

