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Deputy Mayor Candidate

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?

The Town and the Council play an important role, but I do not believe the municipality should become the primary housing developer. Our role is to create the conditions that allow the private sector, non-profit organizations and other levels of government to deliver the housing our community needs.

That means using the tools available to us: municipal land where appropriate, faster and more predictable approvals, reducing unnecessary planning barriers, supporting in favour of additional residential units and missing-middle housing, allowing appropriate density in the right locations, and considering targeted development-charge or fee incentives where they will actually result in affordable or purpose-built rental housing.

Young families trying to enter the market, seniors wanting to downsize, single parents, service-industry workers and lower-income residents all have different needs. We need more rental housing, smaller ownership options and housing choices for every stage of life. We need Grey County, the Province, the federal government, non-profit providers and the development community to also step up. Council should be an active partner in bringing those pieces together, advocating for funding, and showing support around the table.

While TBM has already done significant planning around housing, this next Council needs to focus on implementation and measurable results not simply more studies. I would want us to track how many units are actually being approved and built, where the barriers remain, and whether the incentives we provide are producing the housing we intended.

Growth is going to continue. The challenge is making sure it includes housing for the people who work here, raise families here and want to remain here as they age. A healthy community cannot function if the people who contribute to it cannot afford to live in it.

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 Transportation Survey Results Presentation](#)

What role should Town Council play in providing transportation?

The BVO transportation presentation was extremely informative and clearly demonstrated how significant transportation barriers affect seniors, workers, youth and residents trying to access healthcare, essential services, employment or simply to socialize with friends.

That is why I was encouraged to see transportation and ride-sharing challenges raised by AMO, along with the Province's request for municipal feedback. The Province is looking at whether a broader, more consistent ride-share framework could help remove barriers and improve transportation options, particularly in rural and underserved communities, like ours.

I proactively contacted the TBM CAO to encourage us to participate in that process, since it's time sensitive, and he acknowledged the request and forwarded it to the appropriate department.

Council should continue that advocacy while working regionally with Grey County, Collingwood and neighbouring municipalities to improve connections and explore practical options such as on-demand transit, ride-share and community transportation.

Ultimately, the goal should be a financially responsible system that reflects how residents actually move throughout our region and ensures that not having access to a vehicle does not mean losing access to healthcare, employment or essential services.

Provincial Role:

“The Province is trying to remove some of the regulatory barriers that make rideshare difficult to operate consistently across Ontario, particularly in rural and underserved communities. They’re asking municipalities now because they need to understand what works locally before moving to a broader provincial framework. For a community like ours, where traditional fixed-route transit will never solve every transportation need, I think we absolutely need to be part of that conversation.”

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?

Firstly, one of the most important things we can do is make it easier for people to find help before they reach a crisis.

I realize that Grey County is responsible for most of our social and housing services, but that does not mean residents of The Blue Mountains should have to travel to Owen Sound to access every form of support. I would like to better understand how often Grey County’s Supportive Outreach Services are currently reaching residents in The Blue Mountains and, if there is a gap, advocate for a more visible and regular local presence. It is an excellent mobile model, particularly for people who struggle to access traditional services, and I would like to see our residents benefit fully from it.

I also see an opportunity to better use trusted community spaces such as our library and community facilities as places where residents can find information, connect with 211 and County services, participate in programs and simply stay socially connected. We should continue partnering with organizations such as BVO, Seniors Network Blue Mountains, youth organizations and healthcare providers to identify people who may be isolated and connect them with help.

We also need more affordable and supportive housing options locally. Maple Villa and Lemon Court demonstrate that the need exists, but the supply is limited.

I have supported regional transitional housing initiatives during my time as an elected official, and I would bring that same approach here: work collaboratively,

remove barriers to good projects and use the Town's voice at the County table to make sure residents in The Blue Mountains are not overlooked.

Improving quality of life can sometimes be as practical as helping a senior get to an appointment, giving an isolated resident somewhere to connect with others, or making sure someone facing a difficult period knows exactly where to turn for help.

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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?

Environmental sustainability has been an important part of my municipal work. In Aurora, I advanced a Climate Lens for municipal decision-making, supported natural capital asset management, protection of natural heritage lands, invasive species management and Green Development Standards. I also chaired the Environmental Advisory Committee, participated in the Ontario Climate Caucus, and was actively engaged in the initiatives of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

I would bring that same practical experience and engagement to The Blue Mountains. The Town already has strong plans in place; my focus would be on implementation and ensuring climate resilience is considered in infrastructure, development and budget decisions and bring motions forward to advance policy, if needed.

I am particularly interested in protecting and valuing natural assets such as wetlands, forests, tree canopy and watercourses because they provide real services, including flood protection, water management and cooling.

For me, sustainability means making practical, long-term decisions that protect our environment, strengthen community resilience and reduce the need for more costly infrastructure and remediation in the future.

For example, wetlands and healthy watersheds can absorb stormwater and reduce flooding pressure; trees provide shade and cooling; forests and vegetation help stabilize soils and manage runoff. If those natural systems are lost, municipalities can end up paying for more engineered drainage, flood mitigation, erosion control, cooling infrastructure, or repairs after severe weather.

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?

Affordable child care is essential to working families and to the economic health of our community, and the waiting lists clearly demonstrate that demand is significant. As such, Grey County is our child-care service manager and is also responsible for planning services and administering provincial/federal child-care funding. The Town's role should be to work closely with the County and local providers to help remove barriers to expansion. As Deputy Mayor, I would also have a seat at Grey County Council, which gives me the opportunity to advocate directly for The Blue Mountains as those funding and service decisions are made.

We already have a very relevant local example with BVO's proposed expansion at 54 King Street East in Thornbury. Council has been considering how the Town can appropriately support that project, including development-related costs and possible assistance through existing municipal programs. I would support working constructively with BVO to understand how many new licensed spaces the expansion would create, what barriers remain, and what municipal tools are legally and financially available to help move the project forward.

If a reasonable municipal contribution can unlock significantly more child-care spaces, leverage other funding and support local workforce participation, then I believe Council should evaluate that investment on its merits.

I would also want clear local data on current and projected demand, existing licensed spaces and workforce constraints so that any targets we establish are realistic and based on evidence, rather than arbitrary numbers developed in isolation.

Our population grew rapidly during the pandemic, and we need to continue monitoring whether that growth is continuing or stabilizing while ensuring families who live and work here can access the child care they need.

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

The most significant challenge over the next four years will be restoring and protecting the Town's financial health while continuing to meet the pressures of growth.

We are facing major infrastructure needs, significant capital costs, pressure on reserves, rising operating expenses and increasing expectations for services. Residents are also feeling the impact of higher taxes and the rising cost of living.

We need to turn the horse's head in the right direction and make sure we are on a sustainable path toward long-term economic vitality. That means disciplined choices: prioritizing essential infrastructure, improving capital project oversight, rebuilding reserves, controlling operating growth and making sure new development pays its fair share.

At the same time, we cannot lose sight of housing, transportation, healthcare access and protecting the character and natural environment of our community.

For me, the challenge is not simply spending less. It is spending better, planning further ahead and rebuilding confidence that every tax dollar is being managed responsibly.

7. What specific goals would you like to achieve if elected?

My first goal would be to help get our own house in order. The Town has experienced significant senior leadership turnover, and we need organizational stability, a healthy internal culture and a strong working relationship between Council and staff. Restoring public trust starts there.

Financially, I want us looking well beyond the next annual budget. TBM has started moving toward longer-term planning, including a 10-year capital outlook and updated asset management and long-term financial planning. I have had the benefit of working in a municipality where those tools were already well established. In my experience as an elected official, our Treasurer, who came from York Region, guided us to implement a 10-year capital plan, 2-3 multi-year operating budgets, a long-term Fiscal Strategy and regular asset-management planning throughout the term. I would bring that experience to TBM by building on the work already underway, strengthening capital oversight, setting clear reserve targets and making sure Council understands the long-term financial impact of decisions before they are made.

I also want us to fully evaluate opportunities such as a Municipal Service Corporation and evaluate a business case where they could improve long-term service delivery and financial sustainability.

Economic vitality also has to be part of the equation. Our farmers, small businesses, hospitality and tourism sectors, residents and seasonal residents are all part of the same community. Each is a cog in the wheel, and the community works best when every part is respected and supported.

By the end of the term, I would like to see a more stable organization, stronger financial footing, better delivery of major projects, greater public confidence and a Council that works collaboratively while still being prepared to ask difficult questions.

If we get those fundamentals right, we will be in a much stronger position to address housing, infrastructure, transportation, environmental protection and the services residents depend on.