

BMRA Survey 12/2020 – Open-Ended Responses – Content Grouped

Managing Development...

- Enough of kowtowing to developers and the RICH GTA people who come up here and trample on our way of life. We are being squashed like cockroaches, and the mayor, council and STAFF in positions of authority and power are complicit. E.G. Delphi Lane. Being turned into a gated locked up area, not allowing public access to shale beach in front of McMansions. ENOUGH. I'm ready to go picket and make some noise!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Stop the insanity. The mayor and council are NOT doing their job in oversight of actions (and inactions) taken by planning, zoning, by-law enforcement staff. STAs are NOT being controlled. The tail is definitely wagging the dog on that. Seems Staff and council are afraid of the STA owners' association. WTF!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- The TBM needs to do a better job with transparency about development projects. The current list on the website is out of date.
- Town has allowed too high density in Craighleith, village, windfall and now Aquaville. Allowable density should be rolled back to 5 units per gross hectare. 40 percent open space should be strictly adhered to. I didn't move here to live in a suburb. This is a rural county.
- Encourage net zero on all new developments. Go green for a better blue!
- Require very strong protection for our residential areas from Airbnb type encroachment.
- Be vigilant about maintaining the small-town charm of Thornbury in this community of communities.
- My number one concern is that residents are informed of what plans the town has for their neighbourhood. I live on Louisa Street West and am deeply concerned by the lack of information as to what is about to happen to our street and surrounding streets. It was only when I called the Town to inquire about all the stakes and flagging and spray paint marks on our street, did I find out that you want to remove our trees, our stone walls and change the entire look of the street.
- When the town looks to development perhaps the developers can be called upon to supply some of the infrastructure costs.
- For me managing growth that respects the character of the area. I am concerned when I see developments like neighbourhoods of Delphi which are not in character of the area.

- Council is approving too much new development, too quickly. Serious problems such as traffic congestion and drainage issues are being created. The character and natural assets of our community are being destroyed.
- How do I learn about the status of planned developments e.g., Aquaville?
- Pause all new development and upcoming development projects until infrastructure needs have been adequately addressed - water, sewage and roads - expect green space / parkland allocations in all new development projects
- The biggest challenge I see is the over development of new housing around BMR. It is too much, too fast and the roads and other infrastructure cannot manage the volume of vehicles and people today.

Attainable Housing

- Strongly disagree with the attainable (geared to income) housing project. None of the present council or mayor during the election said they wanted to remove com property from the tax roll and build a five-storey subsidized rental building at the entrance to Thornbury with no public input the mayor and council have bought the property and changed the zoning based on some survey. The mayor and council should run on this issue in the next election to confirm that the taxpayers in TBM support this subsidized housing project if re-elected then proceed
- Halt BMAHC activities until a five-year plan has been drafted with public input & approved by Council.
- I am not happy with the Attainable housing project. So many aspects of this project appear to be under the table. For example, this survey is the first notice from TBM aside from the poorly placed sign on the highway. For such an important project to the city there has been unacceptably poor communication. The city bought the old IGA lot without seeking input from taxpayers. This project is about getting tax payers to provide subsidized housing for Blue Mountain employees. Get Blue and other ski hills to pay.
- I have some concerns regarding the site for the attainable house project. Feel having it located along Hwy 26 there is already a traffic problem getting thru Thornbury and additional traffic in/out of the development will slow the flow even further.
- We need to make sure the attainable housing project is finance viable and not let the special interest groups turn it into a white elephant like the library.

- Spend the money wisely. Get your 1st housing project off the ground without costing me money. Taxes are very high and an issue.

Staffing at Town Hall

- Clear accountabilities for staff with clear measurements.
- Council is proceeding with its own agenda and is dismissive and rude to the permanent resident tax payer. Staff is also dismissive and condescending in their attitudes.
- Impose hiring freeze.
- Some long-term staff are too close / buddy buddy with developers and should be 'retired'. Fresh blood is needed in town hall staff.
- Staffing at Town Hall is bursting at the seams. Are these new hires providing any value? Seems not as consulting expenditures are out of control. BMAHC is a good example. We have hired a high-priced Executive Director whose strength seems to be spending money on PR and hiring consultants for advice and direction that should be coming from her.
- We have too many employees on payroll for a town of our size. But no one wants to admit the waste of our tax dollars. Shameful
- I am also concerned with the number of municipal employees we have. The cost of administration is excessive given pensions. Good pay should be offset by the long-term benefit of a secured pension. Sometimes I think we are working to support our government instead of the other way around.
- Return to core services and have elected officials stop micro managing
- We seem to have a lot of municipal employees per capita.
- Do we need so many committees?

Infrastructure

- Excessive promotion of tourism and development without proper current infrastructure.
- Is the "water related infrastructure" related to shoreline and harbour protection ? Or potable water / sewage infrastructure. Or both - the \$25 million expenditure is appropriate if it includes all these aspects
- Growing too fast for the infrastructure in place
- Water and Sewage Costs are very high
- The septic and water with the emphasis on septic upgrades is a critical issue in Clarksburg. It impacts everything right now in the town- biz and home owner investment and dev cannot happen without a municipal septic and water system. It is critical and a serious liability/health issue -- it must be addressed as a huge priority. read the last EA report -- it is a ticking time bomb.
- Matching infrastructure to support new development. Getting developers to support turning lanes, and traffic lights, etc. to ease density increase problems. Beef up by-law enforcement activity against abuses.
- Hopefully TBM Municipality has been managing long term investments needed to replace old infrastructure. After all, this has been a known expenditure for 25 plus years and not a surprise expenditure.
- I hope TBM has a good financial plan in place for all necessary capital investments. We most certainly have paid very high taxes to TBM for over 11 years and our dollars, we definitely expect, are being wisely managed!
- We are building house on the water and in spite of agreeing to pay for the total cost of sewers the town dragged their feet and we are putting in septic. very disappointed that the town did think it was important to work with us and approve sewers as I think environmentally it's better for the town. Also, it took many months to get a permit and I feel the town did not try to work with us and was quite difficult even though we were not asking for any variances. feel so many of the members have egos and don't work for us but think they should have total control of the town. I feel residents and councillors should be working together for the good of the town.

Traffic

- As recreational biking is surging in popularity please build more bike lanes/shoulders adjacent to major roads i.e., 119 and 19 and Blue Mtn Road. In addition, serious safety concerns prevail where the Georgian Trail crossed Hwy 26 just east of Thornbury. As this is a diagonal crossing in the middle of a blind S turn this is a death waiting to happen
- Traffic jams on highway #26, specifically at the bridge.
- We live on Lakewood Dr. We desperately need a traffic light at Grey Rd 40 and Hwy 26. A major accident is waiting to happen.
- Improve the roadways entering the area before all new development is built
- Traffic congestion and flow, management of public beaches
- Encourage MTO to build a bypass around Craigleith, not a bigger hwy.
- No more cutting speed in 80 K to 50 K. moved out of Clarksburg for that stupidity
- For the past 5 years, the traffic, the chaos along 26 has been frustrating. OMG don't even get me started on the two set of lights in Thornbury. Most of us haven't even been able to get to our beaches. Not once this summer, no room and rude visitors, taking up spots by the dozens. I am not racist but found it disheartening witnessing what was going on along our beautiful shorelines. I work full-time with only some weekends off...not once did I get to go for a swim, never did receive my resident pass.... trails were packed. No control whatsoever....none....greenspace is turning into no space....Mother nature's animals being displaced.....homes being destroyedtruly heart wrenching .

Priorities

- Admittedly it has been a difficult year, however I believe that the Town Council could better communicate their priorities.
- Main priorities: - manage town budget and staff allocation with cost saving as priority - maintain and enforce the existing official Plan, without exceptions (which would set a precedent for Future development)

The County

- I would very much like to see a better deal with the county. Based on the expanding property tax base I would like to see a reduction in property the tax rate, and would you please update the Blue Mountains population signs. It's been showing 7500 for years.
- The key issue for me is the imbalance of tax dollars going to Grey County. This will only increase with the growth of TOBM. Council must strive to make this a fair process for the TOBM and Grey County. Perhaps more Grey County dollars could be directed to the TOBM for infrastructure and other development projects to help offset the current imbalance. This is a major concern that needs to be rectified and proactive steps must be taken to address this issue.
- We need to get our fair share back from the county

Kudos to Council

- Good job Alar
- Overall think they (Council) are doing a decent job.
- Very impressed with Council and staff performance during this challenging time.
- Very happy with Mayor Soever and current council.
- It's a relief to see an end to the petty in-fighting and persecution of a former upstanding Councillor in the previous term. That was a shameful waste of time and resources!
- Also, I must commend the Mayor and Town Council on strategies implemented to address COVID and to communicate these strategies to the general public. As an example, the Mayor's weekly video message helped to keep everyone in the know about our situation in the TOBM. Thanks also to the BMRA for identifying issues of concern and holding our elected representatives accountable. Great job!
- Town is showing leadership on a number of fronts which is refreshing!
- With pandemic and development pressures nipping at your heels I believe you are willing to listen to concerns regarding over-development and environment. I commend you on trying to be balanced to business and residential concerns and to trying to maintain our special character here.

- We are very happy with your strong position regarding the nixing of air B/Bs in our neighbourhood. Mr. Sampson and others must be highly commended for their efforts in this matter.
- And I appreciate the town working to improve street surfacing in our area although we have no sidewalks and open drainage ditches which are unsightly, hard to maintain and may not be sanitary due to standing water. The transparency from the town is commendable.
- A culture shift at Townhall is a slow and careful business. My sense of it is that this is happening. Perhaps we need to be patient - the council has had a lot to catch up on. Plus, there's much more public engagement to manage now. Everyone is working hard seems to me.
- Council has taken its responsibilities seriously. It has responded well to the pandemic crisis. They have been good caretakers of the town's welfare.

COVID

- I felt that there should be more information about COVID provided to residents - numbers, area etc. As I did hear from a friend about The Dam Pub. I felt this info should be made more aware to residents etc. I know we are all trying to follow the rules but I do still see people walking into the Post Office with no mask. Not sure how one can control this other than maybe the Mayor in the weekly address stressing more the importance about it. Some residents need more reminding of the danger of COVID
- Thank you for keeping us safe during Covid.

Official Plan

- Keep to election issues: particularly stop amending the O.P. for town projects of parking behind T D bank and "Gateway" project. Stop the high-density madness in single unit residential areas, etc.
- Neither the Climate Crisis nor the threat of lingering and new Pandemic Crises will go away. To build a more resilient community, we need long term plans for infrastructure and development that respect the long term needs of all ratepayers and visitors for healthy living environments with adequate infrastructure and natural open spaces. We need to plan for a healthy, regenerative community for people at all ages and stages of life. Our Official plan spells out how this can be achieved. This is legislation we can stand on together, or change together in due process. The Provincial Policy Statement gives the Town's Official Plan priority status when conflicts arise. Council and Staff will have our full support when they plan and manage development in keeping with the OP for a sustainable, 25-year horizon, as recommended in the PPS, while standing with us on firm legislated foundations every step of the way. "Sustainable plans . . . avoid conflict" Antonio Guterres Secretary General UN
- The Official Plan has little significance to them Lead by the Mayor they are not true to their word re campaign promise

Town Council

- Better engage & make public the Committees of Council & the work they have & are undertaking
- There is little evidence of fiscal responsibility shown by council.
- At least some of the town vehicles are more expensive vehicles than required.
- Council is trying too hard to be politically correct in trying to implement measures that duplicate the jurisdiction of other authorities

Recreation

- Recreation around the Mountain should continue to be promoted
- Recreation facilities should be available to TBM residents in priority. Find a way to have a multi-use Rec Centre
- Seek and secure fair tax distribution For Blue MTS to allow for community Recreational needs (for adults and children)

Library

- Stop funding ridiculous amounts to the Library - Use is way down but the council has been coopted in the funding of it. Time to stand up to them

Tourism

- City planning: one of the main attractions is Georgian Bay We hide it by building right on the edge making it private. Attracting tourists along the lakefront would benefit businesses and the city.

Environment

- Environmental issues are being neglected and Georgian Bay is being ignored in these neglectful actions. Council and staff seem to absolutely ignore people's concerns on drainage and the environment considering this area was apple orchards. They will not enforce the developers to stop dumping unknown soil which could affect the health of the citizens and their drinking water. Tree cutting is out of control and their "opinion " that "they can be replaced" is absolutely absurd. This is an environmentally sensitive area and Council seem just to want to make money and a name for themselves and developers at the expense of the residents.
- Too many 'minor (which are actually MAJOR) Adjustments' are being approved to OP and to bylaws set up to control land use, lot coverage, etc. And also, on wetlands/special protected areas. TOO many trees are being allowed to be clear cut for unneeded and unwanted development projects which only bring money to developers and contribute nothing to the quality of life in TOBM. Our physical environment MUST be more greatly valued and protected in every aspect of policy decision made. It should be top of the list.
- I am concerned about climate change. It upsets me to see the total removal of trees in the new Lora Bay development beside the 4 Th and 5 Th golf holes. I feel and most of our fellow residents of east side of Lora Bay that trees add much to the landscape of the area, not to mention the removal of CO2 by the trees. Why can't the council demand that trees be protected for future generations. It was done initially in Lora Bay. We should protect out trees in the entire of Blue Mountains.

Ward System

- Move towards a ward system
- A ward system for the next election Shared regional services e.g., fire water recreation building inspection

Other Comments

- We pay taxes at the same rate as residents on town adopted roads yet our condo corporation is responsible for maintaining infrastructure such as sewers and drains on our road which has not been adopted by the town. It would be fairer and safer if these services were taken over by the town
- Why is there snow sidewalk clearing in Thornbury, not Craigleith subdivisions? Half the Town's tax revenue come from Craigleith, but almost all the resources and services are in Thornbury. This needs to change. Thanks for the continued work against STA owners who need to be held accountable for the disturbances their renters cause full time residents.
- Still not sure why there was a sudden push for the new parking bylaw. Seems like a tax grab.
- It's been a tough year especially for permanent residents. I've lived here for over 35 years as a health care professional. It's frustrating that, no one listens to Health Care Providers....we were in trouble prior to the Pandemic....Hospitals/clinics were struggling and trying to keep up, one mess after another. We are a tourist area, but do not have the infrastructure to support it....that needed to be addressed when Intra West, Golf Courses came in to the area.
- The growth of full-time residents who can work from home. Impact on school, health care, library. They need encouragement to become part of "us" and not indifferent to the "locals"
- Better response and action to requests
- Craigleith gives the most in taxes as Blue Mountain village etc. Is here. We in Craigleith see little investment in our area.
- Hire a professional to sort out STAs
- We would like to see an off-leash dog park established in Heritage Park as we're a fairly dense community and a majority of households have one or more dogs even

seasonal households. Dogs and owners need a place to exercise their dogs in a safe environment. Our tax dollars should be used for this important purpose. Thanks

- Improve communication to constituents through website updates and summaries of town Council goals, their status, projected completion dates (not current lengthy copies of minutes and agendas)