



# **Town of The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan**

**Adopted by Council November 14, 2005**



## **Letter from the Mayor**

On behalf of Council and Town staff, I am pleased to introduce the Strategic Plan for the Town of The Blue Mountains. It is a high level, future focused plan that will guide the work of the municipality for the next 3-5 years.

The Blue Mountains is a community experiencing rapid growth and development, and as a result, we are facing a number of challenges. Council and staff face some tough decisions in moving forward, and the Strategic Plan will provide a roadmap to help us navigate our future direction.

The Strategic Plan was developed with input from members of the community and the staff of the Town. It builds on the many successes we have experienced during the past few years and identifies key strategic areas of focus for the coming years. I want to recognize and thank the input of those members who contributed to the development of the Strategic Plan by attending workshops and commenting on the draft Strategic Plan. The general response has been positive and very much in support of the overall vision, mission, goals and strategic actions contained in the Strategic Plan.

However, success depends on implementation. Staff will be developing a detailed implementation plan including specific activities to support each of the strategic actions, responsibilities, timeframes and budgets. The implementation plan will be used as part of the annual work plans and budget process. There will be annual reports on the progress made in implementing the Strategic Plan.

It is an exciting time for our community. This Strategic Plan will steer our course for the future by supporting our current initiatives and provided key areas of focus for future work.

Yours very truly,

Ellen Anderson, Mayor  
Town of The Blue Mountains



## The Blue Mountains: A Community Profile

---

The Blue Mountains is a municipal corporation that commenced operations on January 1, 1998. It is comprised of the former Collingwood Township and the Town of Thornbury and various other small hamlets including the communities of Craigeleith, Clarksburg, Heathcote, Redwing, Duncan, Little Germany, Ravenna, Victoria Corners, Loree, Kolapore, Banks, Gilbrater, Castle Glen, Swiss Meadows and Camperdown. This community profile describes some of the key features of the municipality and the community.

### Geography, Environment and Population

The Town of The Blue Mountains is located on the south shore of Nottawasaga Bay between Collingwood and Owen Sound, extending south from the Bay over rolling hills and verdant farmland. The Blue Mountains is bisected by the Niagara Escarpment or “The Blue Mountains range” as it is called, one of several significant geological features in the area, including the Beaver Valley and a Town wide shoreline offering several public access parks and beaches. The Town contains the highest hills in Ontario, which has led to the Town’s motto, “*Recreation at its Peak*”. The area also contains a mix of small centres, rural areas and features an excellent, full-service harbour in Thornbury. Its location and exceptional features have made the community popular for permanent and seasonal residents and numerous visitors to the area. It has been Provincially designated as a four season recreation area.

The current population of permanent residents is approximately 6,100 but the real population is closer to 16,000. The population expansion is due to the “dual citizen” residents and visitors who are attracted to the area. It is estimated that a busy winter weekend can attract up to 40,000 residents and visitors to the municipality. It is anticipated that the population could increase to over 25,000 during the next 15 years. The population living in The Blue Mountains is increasingly older and there is a decline in the percentage of children living in the municipality.

### Economic and Development Trends

The community developed around an economy based on agriculture, particularly apples. However, tourism has become the fastest growing and dominant economic sector in the Town with the largest single development being Intrawest. The growth in tourism has been accompanied by strong residential development, catering largely to affluent and active individuals and couples who are eligible to retire. It is anticipated



that non-residential development (e.g. service sector, retail) will increase to support the residential growth in the area.

The Town has an industrial park of approximately 160 acres with land available for development. In 2004, the municipality issued building permits with an estimated value of \$110 million.

### **Municipal Infrastructure and Community Services**

The Town, Grey County and the Province of Ontario are responsible for maintaining approximately 265 km. of roads in The Blue Mountains. Highway 26 is the main highway running through the municipality and follows the Georgian Bay shoreline. The Thornbury water treatment plant provides the municipal water supply and the Town also has a contract to purchase water from the Town of Collingwood. Municipal sewage treatment plants are located in Thornbury and Craigleith. The municipality does not operate a public transit service, although bus coach lines stop in Thornbury and Craigleith, and taxi service is available from Meaford and Collingwood.

The Town provides numerous recreational facilities, beaches, parks and picnic areas. The municipality also owns its own library – the L.E. Shore Memorial Library, operated by the Library Board. The Town has its own fire department, police services and is responsible for emergency management.

A number of service clubs and recreational groups and organizations support the various municipal initiatives through fundraising and programming. There is a strong spirit of volunteerism in the community of The Blue Mountains.

Grey County provides services to the community including social assistance, long-term care facilities, land ambulance and the museum, among others. Private sector tourism facilities and attractions also serve the residents of the Town (e.g. the Bruce Trail, Blue Mountain Resorts, Craigleith Provincial Park, etc.).

### **Municipal Government**

The Town of The Blue Mountains is governed by a seven-member Council comprised of a Mayor, Deputy-Mayor, Town-County Councillor and four Councillors elected at large. The Town operates a broad range of services through its Committees as described on the following page.



<b>Town Services</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>General Government</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administration</li> <li>- Finance</li> <li>- Human Resources</li> <li>- Information Technology</li> <li>- Legal</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• <b>Planning and Development Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning</li> <li>- Building</li> <li>- By-Law Enforcement</li> <li>- Property Standards</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• <b>Public Works</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roads</li> <li>- Waste Management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recreation and Culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parks</li> <li>- Arena</li> <li>- Halls</li> <li>- Harbour</li> <li>- Cemeteries</li> <li>- Library</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• <b>Environment Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waste Water Treatment</li> <li>- Water Treatment</li> <li>- Sewer and Water Infrastructure</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• <b>Policing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Police Services – OPP (Contract)</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• <b>Fire and Property</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fire Protection</li> <li>- Municipal Property</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The Town's annual gross expenditures are approximately \$50 million.



## The Town's Strategic Planning Process

---

In the spring 2005, the Town of The Blue Mountains commenced development of its first ever Strategic Plan. The work was under the overall direction of the Council with input from the Town's senior management. The strategic planning process was designed and facilitated by The Randolph Group, a management consulting firm with considerable experience in municipal and strategic planning.

The work was undertaken in two phases. **Phase 1 – Strategic Situation**, included interviews with all members of Council and senior staff to develop a profile of current services provided by the Town, and to assess the current situation in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and key strategic issues facing the community. Members of Council and senior management participated in a working session to review and comment on the assessment of the current situation, and to develop a draft community vision, corporate mission and supporting goals for The Blue Mountains.

**Phase 2 – Strategic Direction**, again included a one-day working session for Council and senior management to review the draft vision, mission and goals, and to develop high-level strategic actions to indicate how the vision, mission and goals will be realized. The session also included a discussion of how best to consult with members of the community.

A draft of the Strategic Plan was made available on the Town's web site and at numerous locations throughout the municipality. Sessions were held with members of the public, representatives of community organizations and agencies and Town staff. Individuals were encouraged to complete a user-friendly feedback form with their comments and suggestions for the Strategic Plan. All of the input received was synthesized and reviewed by Council and senior management as part of developing the final Strategic Plan.



## Introducing the Strategic Plan Components

---

The Strategic Plan for the Town of The Blue Mountains is divided into four areas which comprise the main elements of any good strategic plan.

- ◆ **Vision**, which describes what the community of The Blue Mountains is striving to become
- ◆ **Mission**, which describes the role of the Corporation of the Town of the Blue Mountains in realizing the community vision
- ◆ **Goals**, which describe the results that the Town of The Blue Mountains wants to achieve in its key areas of interest and responsibility
- ◆ **Strategic Actions**, which provide the high level activities demonstrating the ways that the Town will contribute to making those results happen

There is also an explanation of how the mission, goals and strategic actions will be implemented and monitored.



## Community Vision

---

### Community Vision

*The Blue Mountains will be a progressive four season community, building on its agricultural and recreational features, offering a healthy and supportive lifestyle to a diverse range of residents, businesses and visitors.*

## Corporate Mission

---

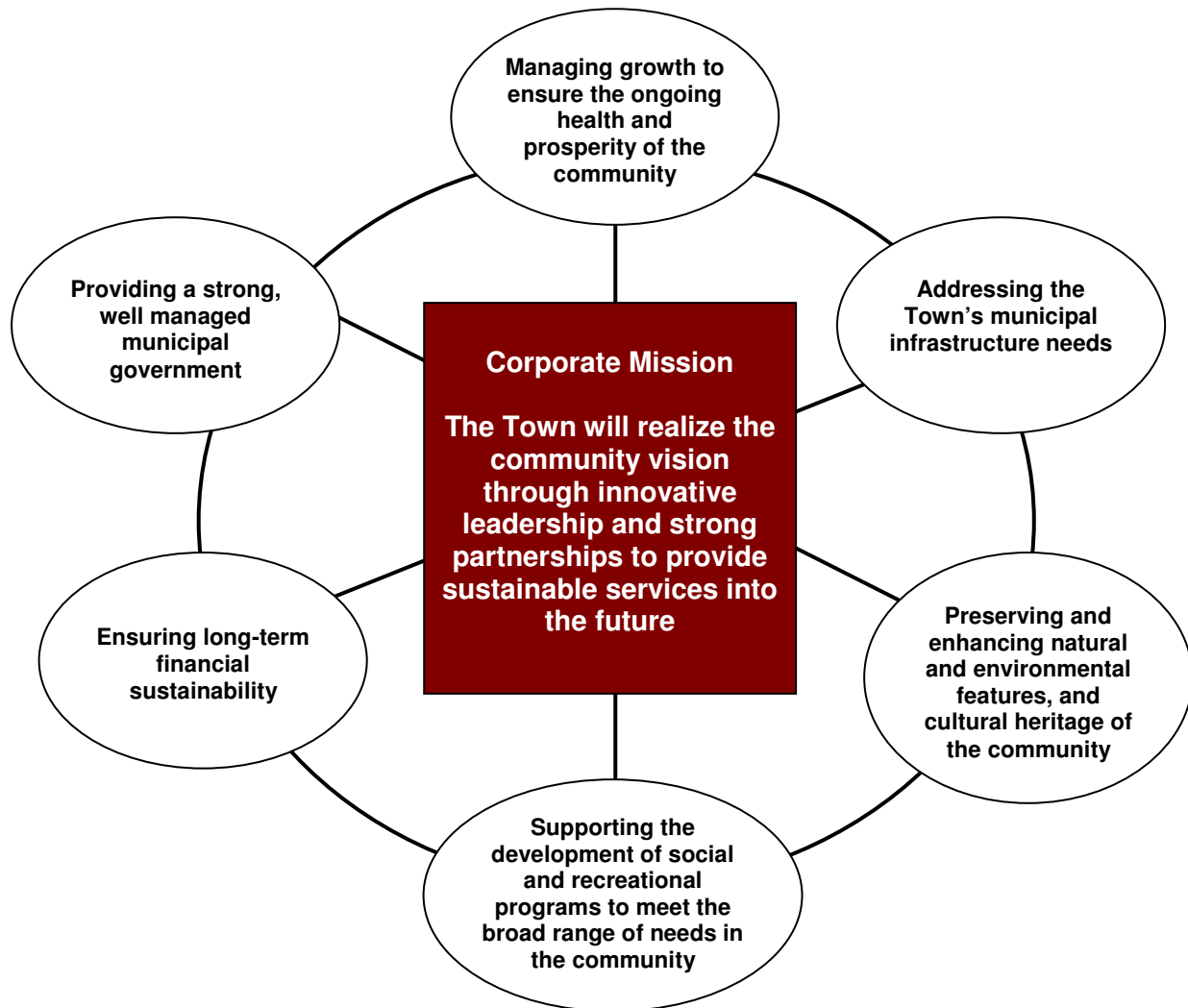
### Corporate Mission

*The Town will realize the community vision through innovative leadership and strong partnerships to provide sustainable services into the future.*



## Mission and Goals

---





## Goals and Strategic Actions

---

***1. Managing growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the community***

### Strategic Actions

- 1.1 Prepare an annual staging plan for development
- 1.2 Complete demographic projections to determine future population growth and composition
- 1.3 Advocate with other governments on transportation issues affecting the Town
- 1.4 Prepare an economic development strategy
- 1.5 Complete and implement all secondary plans
- 1.6 Develop a strategy to coordinate and streamline planning policies with other governments and related agencies



## Goals and Strategic Actions

---

### ***2. Addressing the Town's municipal infrastructure needs***

#### **Strategic Actions**

- 2.1 Identify existing deficiencies in the current municipal infrastructure
- 2.2 Complete a comprehensive roads needs study
- 2.3 Update master servicing plans for water and sewer facilities
- 2.4 Develop a storm water management plan for each watershed
- 2.5 Develop a waste management strategy to meet diversion targets and address landfill capacity
- 2.6 Undertake a comprehensive lighting plan for streets and walkways
- 2.7 Develop a long range plan for emergency facilities and services



## Goals and Strategic Actions

---

### ***3. Preserving and enhancing natural and environmental features, and cultural heritage of the community***

#### **Strategic Actions**

- 3.1 Undertake a “GREEN” strategy to proactively protect air, water and land features and sites
- 3.2 Develop a municipal energy management plan
- 3.3 Provide appropriate policies and zoning to protect existing architecture and natural heritage features
- 3.4 Develop information and educational initiatives to promote cultural heritage
- 3.5 Continue to support cultural groups and community events
- 3.6 Implement policies in the Official Plan related to shoreline areas, preservation of the rural area and Natural Heritage Systems



## Goals and Strategic Actions

---

### ***4. Supporting the development of social and recreational programs to meet the broad range of needs in the community***

#### **Strategic Actions**

- 4.1 Liaise with the County, Province and other municipalities to improve health care and access to social services
- 4.2 Develop an action plan to support the provision of affordable housing
- 4.3 Prepare a Leisure Activities Plan
- 4.4 Encourage and promote theatre and the arts
- 4.5 Encourage and promote library services across the entire municipality
- 4.6 Liaise with the Province, the County and the Conservation Authority with regard to the formal management of public recreational lands



## Goals and Strategic Actions

---

### ***5. Ensuring long-term financial sustainability***

#### **Strategic Actions**

- 5.1 Create policies and procedures for current and long term capital budgets including public input
- 5.2 Create a solid long term capital budget (3-5 years with a 6-15 year vision)
- 5.3 Create a current budget with a 3 year projection
- 5.4 Develop a capital asset management plan
- 5.5 Develop a program to monitor current expenses and revenues
- 5.6 Ensure regular updating of the Town's assessment roll



## Goals and Strategic Actions

---

### *6. Providing a strong, well managed municipal government*

#### **Strategic Actions**

- 6.1 Attract, develop and retain skilled, and well trained Town employees
- 6.2 Encourage a positive team approach between Council and staff, and across Departments
- 6.3 Practice open and proactive communications
- 6.4 Develop and encourage innovation and use of best practices by Council and staff
- 6.5 Involve the community, business sector, developers, public partners and others in the ongoing work of the municipality
- 6.6 Implement processes for continuous improvement
- 6.7 Implement the Town's emergency management plan
- 6.8 Develop and implement occupational health and safety policies



## **Implementing the Strategic Plan**

---

The Strategic Plan will be implemented through a number of initiatives.

### **Preparation of Detailed Action Plans**

As a first step, staff will take the strategic actions supporting each goal and develop more detailed activities to implement each one. These activities will include specific tasks to be completed, responsibilities, timeframes and budget implications. Performance measures will also be developed.

### **Business Planning and Budgeting**

The detailed plans will be reviewed and priorities established. This information will be used to develop the annual business plan and budget for the Town of The Blue Mountains. Once the business plan has been developed, it will be important to review it regularly. Changes in priorities or new initiatives must be considered in the context of all the other actions contained in the business plan, and adjustments made as appropriate.

### **Annual Review and Monitoring**

On an annual basis, Council will review its progress through a report from the Chief Administrative Officer. The review will include an evaluation of the performance of the organization in achieving the actions contained in the Strategic Plan. The report will also highlight new challenges and issues which the Town needs to address through new or updated goals or strategic actions. This step is essential to ensuring that the Strategic Plan remains a relevant document that will continue to guide the work of the municipality.



## Contact Information

---

For more information, please contact Irene McGuire, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer at (519)599-3131 ext. 233, or email: [imcguire@town.thebluemountains.on.ca](mailto:imcguire@town.thebluemountains.on.ca)