










Town News

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS NEWSLETTER

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Thornbury ON, N0H 2P0
-  Hours of Operation:
Monday to Friday
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

STAY UP-TO-DATE:

Stay up-to-date on Town news, operations, projects and more by subscribing to the Town Email Newsletter. Never miss an update!

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Please Recycle
After Reading

Senior's Fair Returning on September 6th

With a stunning waterfront on Georgian Bay, small-town charm, trails for biking and hiking and access nearby to key services, it's no wonder that many seniors call The Blue Mountains their home. Residents aged 65 and over make up more than one-third of the Town's population. With this in mind, it's important to ensure that all residents, including seniors, are connected to the resources and supports that enable them to live comfortably, with dignity and independence.

That's where the Blue Mountains Seniors Network comes in. Formed in 2015, the Seniors Network is focused on maximizing access for seniors to resources and services throughout the Town through a network of representatives from various community organizations. The Seniors Network works to understand the needs of seniors within the community and partners with the Town to advocate for various opportunities, issues and concerns. Linda Potter, Chair of Blue Mountain Seniors Network, and Pamela McDermid, BVO Coordinator of Senior Programs & Representative of Grey-Bruce Elder Abuse Prevention, are two members of the Network who are committed to enhancing the lives of those in the community.

"The Seniors Network has representation from several community organizations that are concerned with the issues and situations seniors are living with.

The Network's member organizations are available to listen to seniors about what they want or would like in the community and works to connect them to the assets and resources available. It also provides feedback to the Town about these concerns," says McDermid.

The main project for the Seniors Network is the Senior's Fair, held annually each September. This year, the event is scheduled for Wednesday, September 6, from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Bayview Park in Thornbury. This free event offers seniors, caregivers, family members, and anyone interested the chance to meet in person with representatives from many organizations, businesses, and clubs that serve seniors and their families. The support and resources within the community are wide-ranging – a few examples include tech support for seniors at the library, property tax relief from the Town, support for veterans through the Legion, health and community services and more!

Learn all about what's available, meet with friends and enjoy free lunch and refreshments at the Senior's Fair. Mark September 6 in your calendar! Parking is free and transportation will be provided from key locations throughout Town to the Fair and back.

For more information, visit www.thebluemountains.ca/seniors or call (519) 599-3131 ext. 254

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Andrea Matrosovs



On behalf of the Town, I am pleased to present July 2023 Town Newsletter. Within this edition you will find information about the second phase of the Official Plan Review project, an overview of summer road maintenance activities, a behind-the-scenes look at the recipe for the best tasting drinking water in Canada and more!

With the long summer days, I encourage everyone to explore the many natural wonders that we are lucky to have in The Blue Mountains. Spend a day hiking the Bruce Trail, paddling the Beaver River, taking a stroll down the Georgian Trail or enjoying public access to Georgian Bay.

Community events are abundant in this season, too. Several fantastic events in our parks have already launched the summer season and there are more opportunities coming to enjoy gathering outdoors with friends, family and neighbours. My thanks to all of the volunteers who organize these events. One highlight will be the Beaver Valley Fall Fair on September 8 and 9 at our Beaver Valley Community Centre where there is something for everyone from children to seniors! Community organizations submit their events to our Town community calendar.

The easiest way to stay up-to-date on key Town projects is by subscribing for email updates on the Town website. To sign up, visit www.thebluemountains.ca/subscribe.

On behalf of Council, I wish you a fun, safe and enjoyable summer season.

Andrea Matrosovs



Official Plan

Phase 2 of the Official Plan Review Launches with Public Survey, Background Papers and Public Workshops.

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Behind the Scenes

A glimpse at what it takes to filter & distribute some of North America's best-tasting drinking water.

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Road Maintenance by the Seasons

Summer has arrived and road maintenance is underway throughout the town.

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2023 Tax Bill Information

2023 Final Tax Bill Payment Due Dates: August 24, 2023 and October 24, 2023.

Please note that payments made after July 7 may not be reflected in the Past Due amount on the final tax bill.

Property Tax Inquiries:

If you have questions about your tax bill, please email tax@thebluemountains.ca, call **(519) 599-3131 ext. 221** or visit www.thebluemountains.ca/property-taxes.

Assessment Inquiries:

For information on your property assessment, please contact the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Please call **1-866-296-6722**, email enquiry@mpac.ca or visit mpac.ca.

E-Billing (Property Taxes & Utilities)

Property tax and utility account information and e-billing is available online through the Town's "Virtual Town Hall" system. To access or to activate your account, visit www.thebluemountains.ca/online-services.

To Calculate Your Taxes:

The residential tax rate for 2023 is 0.00922296. The following example shows how to calculate property taxes levied on a residential property valued at \$300,000 (exclusive of local improvements, if any):
 $\$300,000 \times 0.00922296 = \$2,766.89$.

The Town issues two tax bills each year and each tax bill has two installments. The Interim Tax Bills are based on 50% of last year's taxes. The Interim Tax Bill due dates for 2023 were March 24, 2023, and May 24, 2023.

The Annual (Final) Tax Bills are sent out in early July. The bill includes total taxes and special charges for the year, minus the interim amount. The Final Tax Bill due dates for 2023 are August 24, 2023, and October 24, 2023.

Payment Options:

Please see the reverse of your tax bill for tax payment options. A Pre-Authorized Payment Plan (PAP) application for your taxes is available on the Town's website at www.thebluemountains.ca/taxpap.

Late Payment Charges:

Penalty and interest charges of 1.25% per month are added to unpaid taxes on the first day of the month following the due date and on the first day of each month thereafter until taxes are paid. Please advise the Town of mailing address changes in writing by regular mail or email. Failure to receive your tax bill does not relieve the liability for taxes or penalty/interest charges.

Supplementary Tax:

Supplementary tax bills are issued when the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) revalues a property based on new construction and/or improvements. MPAC has up to two years to provide the Town with the supplementary assessment. Homeowners are encouraged to factor in these tax bills and set aside funds for future bills.

Tax Reductions:

Pending Tax Reductions resulting from an Assessment Appeal, Request for Reconsideration, Section 357 Reduction or Tax Incentive will be processed in due course after the final tax bill.

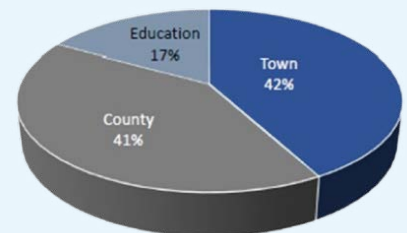
Tax Incentive Programs:

To view information about tax incentive programs, including conservation land, farm property classes, and managed forest tax, visit www.thebluemountains.ca/property-taxes.

How Your Tax Dollars are Spent:

Residents in all municipalities are required to pay municipal property taxes. The funds collected are used to ensure the Town can provide a variety of local services including road maintenance and repairs, parks and trails, fire services, and more.

Of every residential tax dollar that is collected by the Town, \$0.41 goes to Grey County and \$0.17 goes to support Education.



THE BLUE PRINT

OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW

Phase 2 of the Official Plan Review Launches with Public Survey, Background Papers and Public Workshops

Phase 2 of the Official Plan Review project is underway. This phase includes the release of background papers, a public survey and four public workshops.

Phase 1, completed in 2022, considered high-level action items, including the vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives. Phase 2 allows a closer look at critical topics that emerged through this process to develop policies to guide future land-use decisions in the Town.

Background Papers:

The first four Background Papers are now available at www.tbmbblueprint.ca, with the remaining seven to follow throughout July. The Background Papers provide research and supporting data, consider previous comments received and provide options and recommendations for updating the Town's existing policies.

Topics of the Background Papers include: Environment and Climate Change, Infrastructure and Servicing, Agricultural and Rural Lands, Commercial and Employment Lands, Buildings Heights Study, Transit and Transportation, Parks and Open Space, Source Water Protection, Cannabis Facilities Policies, Indigenous Engagement, and the Community Planning Permit System.

Public Survey:

A survey to gain public feedback related to Phase 2 is now open and available at www.tbmbblueprint.ca. The survey seeks input regarding community design elements, including character and design, community services, housing, climate change, parks, trails and open space.

The survey will be open until August 13, 2023. The results will be presented to Council in September. Paper copies are available at Town Hall and The Blue Mountains Public Library or by request by calling (519) 599-3131 ext. 263.

Public Workshops:

Four public workshops are scheduled throughout July and August on key topics related to the focus of Phase 2; registration is required. To register, please visit www.tbmbblueprint.ca.

July 13, 1:00 - 3:00pm: Environment, Climate Change, Agriculture & Parks Workshop

This workshop will consider policy updates to Environment and Climate Change, Agriculture and Rural Lands, Source Water Protection and Cannabis Facilities.

August 1, 2:00 - 4:00pm: Community Growth & Design Workshop (Afternoon Session)

August 1, 6:00 - 8:00pm: Community Growth & Design Workshop (Evening Session)

These workshops will consider the update to the Community Design Guidelines, which seeks to understand the desired design elements in the public and private spaces and the features that make each community and area unique, while incorporating community design best practices. They will also include consideration of policy updates to Building Height, Commercial and Employment Lands, Transportation, Infrastructure and Servicing.

August 10, 1:00 - 3:00pm: Affordable Housing Workshop

This workshop will consider the Housing Needs Assessment, which will analyze historic, current and future overall housing needs and inventory, affordable housing needs, and evaluate policy enhancements that will increase the supply of affordable/attainable units in the Town. It will also include consideration of policy updates regarding the Community Planning Permit System.

Please keep involved in this important community project. Visit www.tbmbblueprint.ca to take the survey, register for a workshop or submit a comment.





Behind the Scenes of an Award-winning Water Treatment Plant

In this series, we're taking you behind the scenes of departments and essential services within the Town of The Blue Mountains. Peek behind the curtain at what it takes to filter and distribute some of North America's best-tasting drinking water.

Last month, the Town of The Blue Mountains' Water Department was excited to share the announcement of a first-place award in the Drinking Water Taste Challenge at the Spring 2023 Georgian Bay Waterworks Conference. The challenge consisted of a blind taste test of room-temperature drinking water samples from attending municipalities. Unlike in past competitions where experts (similar to a wine sommelier, but for water) judge the samples, the criteria this time was based on the personal preference of attendees, and the Town Water Operators brought home the gold. This award marks the third time that the Town has won the best-tasting drinking water award. The other two wins were awarded at the Ontario Water Works Association conference, as well as the American Water Works Association - the first municipality in Canada to win the prestigious award!

So what's the secret recipe to filtering and distributing award-winning drinking water? Scott Hill, Water Supervisor for the Town explained that "no chemicals are added to the water other than chlorine.

Compared to some plants that add other chemicals that can affect the taste of the water. Additionally, our source water supply is half a kilometre off-shore and 35ft deep which provides for a stable and consistent quality."

Scott Hill and Allison Kershaw, Manager of Water and Wastewater Services, are proud of the recent win but their focus remains on delivering safe, clean, quality drinking water every time you turn on the tap. The process of treating water and operating the municipal drinking water system is expensive and resource intensive, so they would like to remind residents to be mindful and aware of water use, especially during the hot summer months.

Per a recently enacted By-law 2023-37, water use and restrictions are implemented annually from June 1 to September 1. The purpose of the restrictions is to ensure there is an adequate supply of potable water for consumer demand and essential services such as firefighting.

These water use restrictions only apply to properties connected to the municipal water system. During the restriction period, lawn watering is permitted between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., as well as 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Properties with odd-numbered addresses can water on odd-numbered calendar days, and properties with even-numbered addresses can water on even-numbered calendar days. Additionally, Kershaw and Hill want to ensure that residents are keeping their water supply safe by identifying leaks on their property and addressing them immediately (e.g., running toilets or changes to water pressure). With home renovation and construction season upon us, it's also important that home owners obtain locates before digging on private property for fences, patios or other construction to avoid hitting underground utilities, including water lines.

With approximately 10,000 homes connected to the municipal water system in The Blue Mountains, let's work together to ensure that drinking water in the Town is not only the best-tasting in Ontario but in ample supply for everyone.

To learn more about the water treatment process, please visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/water-services

Road Maintenance by the Seasons

Summer has arrived and road maintenance is underway throughout the town.

Summer has arrived and the Roads and Drainage Division is busy completing their annual road maintenance inspections and work throughout the Town. Working out of the Operations Yard in Ravenna, the Roads and Drainage Division is responsible for completing roads and drainage-related maintenance work and activities to ensure that the 265+ km of Town-owned roads are maintained according to the Town’s policies and the Ontario Minimum Maintenance Standards.

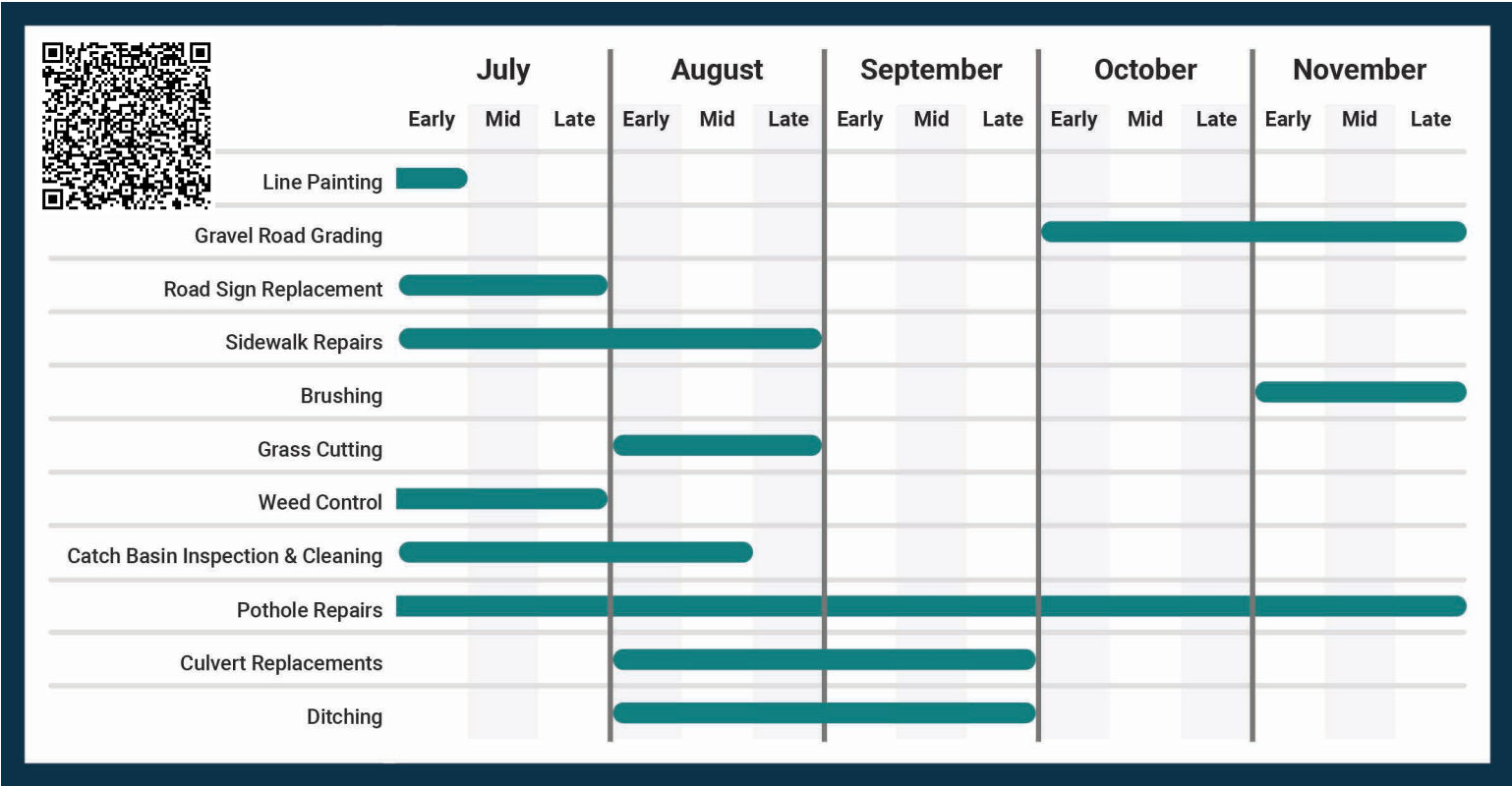
Once the snow melts, the spring, summer and fall activities of the maintenance program begins with street sweeping, bridge cleaning and brush cutting. Towards the end of April and throughout May, staff begin grading gravel roads and making repairs to boulevards and road signs damaged during the winter season. Line painting and weed control begins in mid-May, followed by sidewalk inspections, street sign inspections, grass cutting, maintenance gravel and dust control throughout June.

Once school is out, crews begin replacing missing and damaged road signs, working on sidewalk repairs identified through the inspections and clean out catch basins that are clogged and causing drainage issues. Grass cutting crews also come back out in August and crews begin working on culvert replacements and ditching through to the end of September. In preparation for the winter season, gravel roads are graded again through October and November, and brush cutting is completed again in November before the snow falls.

Keeping Town-owned roads maintained is truly a year-round effort. Of course, the schedule and tasks listed here are all subject to weather conditions and other external factors. The Town asks all residents to follow posted signage and use extra caution when they encounter workers or construction zones. Residents are also reminded that they can report road maintenance issues including potholes, boulevard damage, tree removal, culvert blockages, flooding, sign damage, light repairs and more using the Town’s Online Service System at www.thebluemountains.ca/report.

Road Maintenance Schedule July - November

To view the full schedule, scan the QR code or visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/spring-summer-fall-maintenance



Staff Spotlight: Barbara Sheridan

In this ongoing series, Town Staff will be introduced to the public with a glimpse into their roles and how their service impacts the community.

A trip to the landfill in The Blue Mountains may give you more than you bargained for - in a good way - thanks to one of the longest-standing employees at the Town, Barbara Sheridan.

Born and raised in Clarksburg, Barb has made a home and a living within the Town of The Blue Mountains. She began working for the Town nearly 30 years ago in April of 1994 and transitioned to her current role as Scale House Attendant in 2003 "I had just started my family and the part-time role was ideal for my growing family. I love being outside and working with people!"

Beyond controlling access to the landfill, delivering a high standard of customer service, and directing patrons where to dispose of their waste, Barb finds new challenges and adventures every day on the job. There's never a dull day at the landfill, thanks in part to the residents and visitors who visit the site.

She muses, "I've joked that one day I will write a book!"



We've found all kinds of treasures; rings, will documents, you name it, I've seen some interesting things! But I don't judge people."

A testament to the superior service Barb provides was when a woman recently stopped by the landfill to give Barb a bouquet of flowers. The enclosed card indicated that the woman's mother had passed away and it was her dying wish that her daughter give flowers to someone who made her smile, every year on her birthday.

For this and many other reasons, garbage runs in The Blue Mountains are more than just a routine errand.

Outside of work, Barb spends time with her grandchildren, and enjoys helping folks who have lost family members or spouses - something she can relate to with the tragic loss of her own husband in 2021. As for when she may retire, Barb won't say for certain but one thing is for sure: she will leave big shoes to (land)fill! Her only request? "When I do retire, I hope they give me a tiara!"



Not sure how to dispose of your waste?

Visit the Town's Waste Resource Tool!

www.thebluemountains.ca/wastecollection



COMMUNITY EVENTS

JULY
29

REGGAE ON THE MOUNTAIN

In celebration of National Emancipation Day discover the magical musical genre that captures the spirit of Jamaican culture as the sounds echo throughout the Village.

Location: Blue Mountain Village

Visit: www.bluemountainvillage.ca/events

SEPT
8-9

BEAVER VALLEY FALL FAIR

The Beaver Valley Fall Fair is held annually on the weekend after Labour Day and showcases the very best of rural living in The Blue Mountains!

Visit: www.beavervalleyfallfair.ca

SEPT
6

SENIOR'S FAIR BY THE BAY

The Blue Mountains Seniors Network is hosting an outdoor senior's fair at Bayview Park in Thornbury. Features live music, refreshments, and information booths on local senior services, housing & recreation.

Location: Bayview Park, Thornbury

Visit: www.exploreblue.ca/events

OCT
7-9

APPLE HARVEST WEEKEND

The best time of year to Fall in love with Blue! Apple Harvest Weekend festivities bring live music, roaming entertainment, and more family fun.

Location: Blue Mountain Village

Visit: www.bluemountainvillage.ca/events



EVENTS & PROGRAMS



Town of The Blue Mountains Town Hall
PO Box 310, 32 Mill Street, Thornbury ON, N0H 2P0

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
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