



Grey-Bruce In Favourable Position As Province Accelerates Reopening

With Omicron's peak in the rearview mirror and local public health indicators continuing to improve, Grey-Bruce's top doctor says the area is in a favourable position as it looks ahead to the Ontario government's plan to accelerate its reopening Thursday.

Grey-Bruce medical officer of health Dr. Ian Arra says all key public health and health system indicators are improving, including the number of new COVID-19 cases in high-risk sectors, hospitalizations, deaths and outbreaks in congregate care settings as well as the complexity of outbreaks. "We are in a good position to join the rest of the province in further easing public health measures in Grey-Bruce," Arra says.

"All indicators suggest that Omicron peaked in Grey-Bruce just over a month ago – ahead of the province. This is great news and directly related to the tremendous efforts invested by all in Grey Bruce. We know that everyone is excited to get back to normal. However, I would caution everyone to remain vigilant and continue following the public health measures and guidelines that are still in place. Only then will we be able to truly put this emergency behind us."

The Ontario government announced Monday that in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, it has decided to cautiously and gradually ease public health measures sooner, with the next phase of measures being eased Thursday at 12:01 a.m.

Social gathering limits will rise to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors, while capacity limits will be lifted for indoor public settings where proof of vaccination is required, such as restaurants, bars, gyms and cinemas.

Also Monday, the Ontario government announced it is expanding booster dose eligibility to youth aged 12 to 17, beginning at 8 a.m. Friday.

Booster appointments will be booked for about six months (168 days) after a second dose. Appointments can be booked through the provincial booking system and the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre, as well as at select pharmacies administering the Pfizer vaccine.

Other highlights of the Ontario government's announcement included the province's plan to: take additional steps March 1 to further ease public health measures, including lifting capacity limits in all remaining indoor public settings,

if health system and public health indicators continue to improve; and lift proof of vaccination requirements for all settings at that time.

Masking requirements are to remain in place, with a specific timeline to lift this measure to be communicated at a later date.

Grey Bruce Health Unit 519-376-9420 or 1-800-263-3456 ext. 1315
Communications@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

GREY BRUCE HEALTH UNIT VACCINE CLINIC

Beaver Valley Community Centre,

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 12:00pm - 6:00pm

58 Alfred St. W., Thornbury

Walk-ins available or book your appointment through the COVID-19 Vaccination Portal or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900

Ontario Extending Health Card Renewal

Individuals Have Until September 30, 2022 to Renew

The Ontario government is extending the requirement to renew health cards until September 30, 2022.

Ontarians will continue to be able to use their expired health card, including a red and white health card, to access insured health care services. Health care providers can continue to accept expired health cards following the previous February 28, 2022 deadline.

To make it easier and more convenient for Ontarians to renew health cards online, ServiceOntario is taking steps to enable online health card renewal using Ontario Photo Cards in the coming months.

An individual who faces difficulties renewing their health card, for whatever reason, should contact ServiceOntario at 1-866-532-3161 (TTY: 1-800-387-5559) to inquire about options for their specific situation.

Environmental Sustainability Fund Distribution

A Town Staff committee has reviewed and evaluated five applications made to the Town's 2021 Environmental Sustainability Fund.

The Tree Trust proposal includes two projects, which together total the full request for \$5,000.

The elements of this proposal are as follows:

- \$1,000 requested to plant more than 100 trees on 2-4 public, community-accessible outdoor spaces in a local tree planting event. This project aims to leverage more than 100 volunteers coordinated by the Rotary Club of Thornbury-Clarksburg, and will work with the Town to identify at least two candidate lands in parks or other land owned by the Town. In keeping with past Tree Trust initiatives, focus will be on planting the right trees in the right locations and ensuring they have the best chance to grow to maturity for maximum community and environmental benefits. The funds requested will enable the purchase of tree sapling stock in various sizes.

- \$4,000 requested as matching funds to hire a temporary (approximately 6-month) Tree Planting Coordinator position through the Eco-Canada Youth Employed in Natural Resources fund, which will pilot and evaluate various residential tree planting models with Town residents. The Eco-Canada Youth Employed in Natural Resources fund provides up to 80% in wages for eligible candidates 30 years and younger, meaning the \$4,000 request is leveraging \$16,000 in grant dollars for this position. This project, enabled by the Tree Planting Coordinator position, will deliver a backyard tree planting program testing various delivery models (e.g. educational workshops, homeowner DIY, full service, etc.) to encourage effective, appropriate tree planting on private land. After testing different models, the coordinator will prepare an implementation roadmap for ongoing community-wide delivery of the best programming model(s).

Applications were received from five groups in total; however, as the Tree Trust application scored the highest and requested the maximum available funding amount of \$5,000, there is no remainder to distribute to runner-up applications. The process of awarding requested funds to the top scoring applicant first, and remaining funds to applications with the next-highest score(s), is the process established by the Terms of Reference.



Current Situation: Day 700

www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

Follow the 3 W's – Wash hands frequently, Watch distance (ideally 6ft), and Wear face covering correctly, and the 2 A's - Avoid Crowds

Testing and case counts reported as of 23:59 hrs, February 14th

All data is preliminary and subject to change.

New cases reported are not an accurate representation of caseloads in the community due to recent changes in testing in Ontario.

New cases only represent those that are eligible to be tested.

- 30 new cases reported in past 24 hours in Grey Bruce
- 143 active cases
- 5980 confirmed cases
- 5793 resolved cases
- 8 confirmed local active case(s) hospitalized in Grey Bruce
- 2 confirmed cases from Grey Bruce are hospitalized outside of Grey Bruce due to COVID-19 (These numbers are reported to Public Health by Grey-Bruce Hospitals on confirmed COVID-19 cases admitted for treatment attributed to COVID-19 infection)
- 30 deaths in Grey Bruce
 - +1 death related to a Grey Bruce resident that acquired the infection and was treated outside of Grey Bruce
 - +9 deaths related to Grey Bruce residents that acquired the infection in Grey Bruce however passed away outside of Grey Bruce. Local and Provincial data may not align as cases with unconfirmed cause of death are not included above but are included in the Provincial data.
- 494 cases reported in health care workers; workers living in Grey Bruce and working both in and outside Grey Bruce 4
- Facility(ies) in COVID-19 outbreak. Reported in Long-Term Care/ Retirement Homes
 - Kelso Pines Retirement Home – Owen Sound
 - Maple Court Retirement Home – Walkerton
 - Grey Gables Long-Term Care – Markdale
 - R-Villa Retirement Home – Ripley
 - Central Place Retirement Home – Owen Sound

For Home Support, Overnight Relief, Physio Assistant, and more call Marg 519-373-4656

Valid Drivers Licence - References

Alleviate a Load - Enhance a Life



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ARTICLES are from media releases or those that are submitted acknowledge the author.

Ontario COVID-19 Small Business Relief Grant Applications are NOW LIVE

Eligible businesses that are part of the list below which were subject to closures as a result of the province's move to the modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen will receive a grant of \$10,000.

Applications for the Ontario COVID-19 Small Business Relief Grant will be open from February 9, 2022 to March 11, 2022.

Eligibility:

To receive the grant, a small business identified from the eligible list below must:

- be required to close due to public health orders that took effect 12:01 a.m. on January 5, 2022
- have fewer than 100 employees as of December 31, 2021
- be an active business as of January 14, 2022

Eligible small businesses include:

- restaurants and bars
- facilities for indoor sports and recreational fitness activities (including fitness centres and gyms)
- racing venues, casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments
- museums, galleries, aquariums, zoos, science centres, landmarks, historic sites, botanical gardens and similar attractions
- performing arts venues and cinemas,
- meeting or event spaces
- tour and guide services
- conference centres and convention centres
- driving instruction for individuals
- before- and after- school programs

www.ontario.ca/page/businesses-get-help-covid-19-costs

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E	B	S	A	E	N	Q	F	A	W	N	E	I	E
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ELM	PINE	ANIMALS	DEER



Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Ducks Unlimited Canada Surpasses One Million Acres Conserved in Ontario

Everyone is asked to mark conservation milestone by exploring local wetlands.

As nations around the globe prepared to mark World Wetlands Day, February 2nd, Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) is celebrating an important "wetland win" right here at home. DUC has surpassed an incredible milestone of conserving one million acres in Ontario.

Since 1974, DUC has completed more than 5,000 conservation projects in Ontario, altogether conserving one million acres of natural habitats—specifically, wetlands and their next-door natural spaces like grasslands and forests. Together, these habitats help make up functioning ecosystems and they're making life better for wildlife and communities.

What that means on the ground is 4,000 square kilometres of nature in Canada's most populous province. To celebrate this milestone, we're inviting everyone to put on their boots and jacket and take a stroll in nature. There's an old saying, enjoying winter is all about how you dress. With the right gear, winter can be as much fun as summer.

"We're inviting Ontarians to bundle up and enjoy a winter wetland together. There are a million reasons to get outside in a winter landscape," said Lynette Mader, DUC's manager of provincial operations for Ontario. "Fresh air and special times together, that's what many of us are looking for these days."

New interactive map of 17 public wetlands in Ontario

Wetlands are one of Ontario's best kept winter secrets. There are many public wetlands to enjoy and we've created an interactive map to help people discover 17 winter wetlands where they can go for a stroll. New interactive map from DUC: ducks.ca/winterwetlands

The 17 wetlands featured on the map are all conservation projects carried out by DUC on public lands, which are owned and overseen by the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada or local Conservation Authorities. Together with conservation landowners, both public and private, we are making progress on conserving important wetlands across the country.

DUC is uniquely positioned to provide large-scale, science-based wetland restoration. Restoring wetland habitat contributes to the natural infrastructure of landscapes by boosting climate resiliency, water quality, flood mitigation, phosphorus reduction and overall watershed health. The same productive wetland habitat sustains wildlife including waterfowl, other birds and hundreds of other species such as turtles, fish and pollinators.

www.duckrace.ca



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Recipes for Life

This is the perfect time and place to share 'recipes for life' and we invite you, the reader to do the same.

This Valentine's Day I was reminded not so much of roses, chocolates or perfume, but of those who have lost someone. Life can be so unfair, and you've never felt so alone. It matters not what you have, what you've done, how many fans, followers or views. It makes no difference in deep grief. We may never recover from loss, but life goes on and as long as there is life, there is love.

Your friends may bring you comfort, ask you to come over so you won't be alone. But when you leave you go home and you're alone.

'Why me?' we ask. Why do terrible things happen to those who shine? We don't know, and may never. Many things are difficult to accept because there is no rhyme or reason.

To find solace we have to invite consolation into our lives.

That requires self-examination. Life is for learning and it is this quest that leads to hope. Consolation involves a conversation with the soul. What does this mean in my life?

It is so simple. The recipe for life is to pay attention.

I dedicated this Valentine to those for whom romance is not a Hallmark card, but a way to live.

Judy Keeler Writing Services

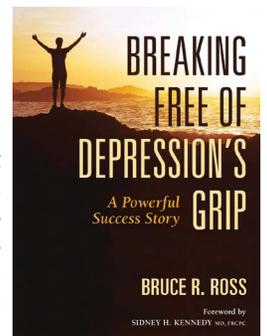
jkeeler2323@gmail.com 416-598-2724



Local Author Pens His Adult Life of Living with Depression

Meaford resident Bruce R. Ross has just published *Breaking Free of Depression's Grip – A Powerful Success Story*. The 422-page book chronicles Bruce's more than 45-year journey and struggle with depression and anxiety, from his school years until his recent retirement.

Breaking Free of Depression's Grip – A Powerful Success Story is available as an ebook through, www.BruceRoss.ca as well as in paperback (\$27) at the Blue Mountains Review office, 22 Louisa St. E., Thornbury 519-599-3345



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Beaver Valley Agricultural Society

The Beaver Valley Agricultural Society is looking to hire a Secretary to provide assistance and support for the Directors and General Membership.

Responsibilities include:

- recording minutes at Director and General Membership meetings (approximately 20 meetings annually)
- running the Office at the Fair including intake of membership fees, exhibitor entry forms and providing general information.
- monitoring email and mail correspondence

The position is considered volunteer with a nominal honorarium.

Further information on the Agricultural Society is available on the website www.beavervalleyfair.ca

Interested applicants should contact info@beavervalleyfair.ca
Applications will be received until March 1, 2022

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**(payment can also be made by cheque or [PayPal](https://www.paypal.com))*

Eight New Ontario Health Teams Announced

- Hastings Prince Edward OHT in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties;
- Upper Canada, Cornwall and Area OHT in the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, City of Cornwall, Akwesasne, parts of Russell Township and rural Southeast Ottawa;
- Four Rivers OHT in North Grenville, West Ottawa, Northern Lanark County, and Arnprior, McNab and Braeside;
- Network 24 OHT in the majority of Renfrew County and the Township of South Algonquin in Nipissing District;
- Grey-Bruce OHT in Grey and Bruce Counties;
- Barrie and Area OHT in Barrie and surrounding areas;
- Elgin OHT in Elgin County; and
- North Simcoe OHT in Midland, Penetanguishene, Tiny and Tay Townships, and Christian Island.

Ontario Health Teams are part of a new approach to health care that brings together health care providers as one collaborative team. Working together, they ensure that patients experience easier transitions with one patient story, one patient record and one care plan that is shared between the health care providers. With the addition of these new teams, the province now has a total of 50 Ontario Health Teams which will cover 92 per cent of the province's population at maturity.



The Grey-Bruce Ontario Health Team (Grey-Bruce OHT) is a group of 25+ allied organizations that offers complementary and integrated health and community care to patients in Grey and Bruce counties.

Mandated by the Ontario provincial government in 2019, the Ontario Health Team (OHT) model streamlines and integrates services of healthcare providers in a defined geographic region. Members work together to design a local integrated care delivery system that:

- Addresses LOCAL needs – meets the unique needs of the communities it serves.
- Provides INTEGRATED healthcare services – improves access to and quality of care and reduces duplication of services.
- Improves CARE DELIVERY – builds integrated partnerships between all healthcare providers to improve the delivery of services for patients.

What does it mean for patients in Grey and Bruce counties?

Patients access the services they need more easily. They will receive all their care – including primary care, hospital services, mental health and addiction services, long-term care and home and community care from one team. We are a dedicated partnership of connected organizations in Grey and Bruce counties working to improve the future of healthcare in our communities. The Grey-Bruce OHT team to date includes:

CORE PARTNERS

PRIMARY CARE

South East Grey Community Health Centre ~ Brockton and Area Family Health Team ~ Kincardine Family Health Team & Organization ~ Hanover Family Health Team ~ Hanover Family Health Organization ~ Owen Sound Family Health Team ~ Sauble Family Health Team ~ Peninsula Family Health Team

ACUTE CARE

Grey Bruce Health Services ~ South Bruce Grey Health Centre ~ Hanover and District Hospital

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Canadian Mental Health Association ~ Keystone Child, Youth and Family Services

LONG TERM CARE

Grey County Long-Term Care Homes

HOME AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Hospice Palliative Care Collaborative ~ Home and Community Support Services of Grey-Bruce ~ Alzheimer Society of Grey Bruce ~ Dale Brain Injury Services ~ Participation Lodge ~ Participation House

HOME CARE

South West Local Health Integration Network

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Public Health Grey-Bruce ~ Grey County Paramedic Services ~ Bruce County Paramedic Services ~ Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centres ~ Ontario Osteoporosis Strategy ~ Osteoporosis Canada ~ SouthWesthealthline.ca

SUPPORTIVE PARTNERS

Saugeen First Nation ~ Closing the Gap ~ Care Partners ~ Grey-Bruce VON ~ People Care ~ CNIB

Thanks to these efforts to better coordinate care and share resources, Ontario Health Teams have been able to respond more quickly and effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic. Working across the entire continuum of care, teams have supported a suite of initiatives that include leading local vaccine rollouts, supporting long-term care homes and other congregate care settings, distributing personal protective equipment, staffing assessment centres and leveraging virtual care. In particular, many teams have helped to address the unique needs of underserved communities by accelerating community outreach efforts and co-designing targeted health interventions.

To support the eight new teams, the government is providing each team with up to \$1.1 million in one-time funding over the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 fiscal years. This funding can be used by each Ontario Health Team to support the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic and coordinate programs that strengthen health system capacity by linking hospitals, primary care, home care and community services, and other services. www.greybruceoht.ca

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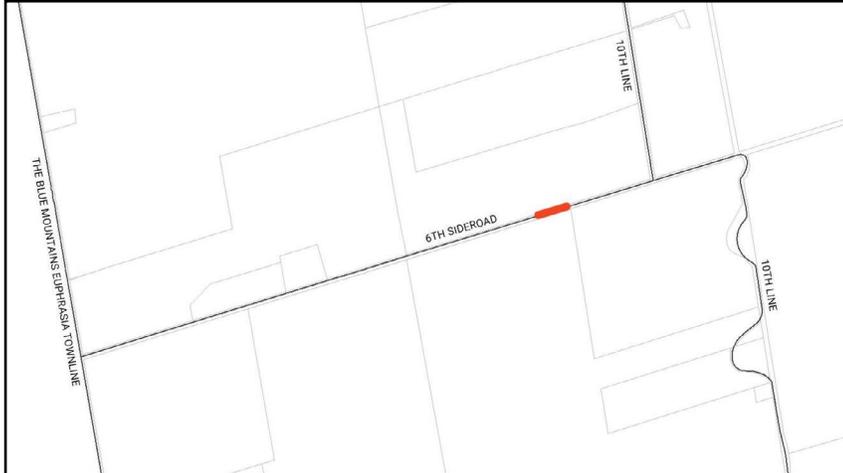
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➤ Sign Up for Town Emails

Stay up-to-date by signing up for Town email newsletters.

www.thebluemountains.ca/subscribe-for-updates.cfm

Notice of Public Information Centre Bridge 2 and 3 (Mitchell's Creek) Replacement



To address structural deficiencies and safety concerns, and in accordance with the preferred solution identified during the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment previously completed, the Town of The Blue Mountains is replacing Bridges 2 and 3 – also known as the Mitchell's Creek bridges.

The replacement includes:

- Minor width improvement to 4.9 m between curbs
- Removal of load restriction
- Improvement to the road profile
- Installation of crash-tested guide rail complete with guide rail end treatment

A Virtual Public Information Centre (PIC) is being held to gather input from stakeholders. All those interested in the project are invited to attend. The meeting will include a public comment and question period.

Date: Thursday, March 3, 2022

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Platform: Microsoft Teams

Registration for the meeting is mandatory to receive a link to attend the virtual meeting. Please visit the project web page to register for the meeting and to sign up for notifications as project updates become available.

www.thebluemountains.ca/Bridge2and3

Questions and information collected at the PIC will be maintained on file for use during the design project, and, unless otherwise requested, may be included in the design documentation and presented to Town Council which is available for public review.

Under the authority of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and in accordance with Ontario's *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, The Corporation of The Blue Mountains wishes to inform the public that all information including opinions, presentations, reports and documentation provided for or at a Public Meeting, Public Consultation, or other Public Process are considered part of the public record. This information may be posted on the Town's website and/or made available to the public upon request.

Contact Information

If you are unable to attend or require further information, please contact or provide comments to:

Town of The Blue Mountains

32 Mill Street, P.O. Box 310

Thornbury, ON NOH 2P0

Kevin Verkindt

Sr. Infrastructure Capital Project Coordinator

icpc@thebluemountains.ca

519-599-3131 ext. 304

Tatham Engineering Limited

115 Sandford Fleming Drive, #200

Collingwood, ON L9Y 5A6

Emma Wilkinson, H.B.A., B.E.Sc., P.Eng

Project Manager

ewilkinson@tathameng.com

705-444-2565 ext. 2101

Project Timeline

Design and Engineering

Completed

Construction

Scheduled to begin in Q2 2022 (est.)

Project Completed

Q4 2022 (est.)

The Blue Mountains Drainage Master Plan

Notice of Public Information Centre 1

Virtual Public Meeting Question and Answer Session that will be held on February 24, 2022 between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.

The Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains has initiated a Drainage Master Plan under the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Master Planning Process to identify existing drainage deficiencies and develop drainage solutions to address the deficiencies, reduce flooding, resolve public safety concerns, and improve maintenance opportunities within the settlement areas of the Town. An initial Public Information Center is planned to advise you of the drainage deficiencies identified through the initial stages of the project, gather comments on any additional deficiencies and elicit comment on the potential solutions that are being considered.

The Study area encompasses the whole Town with the primary focus being the settlement areas including Lora Bay, Thornbury and Clarksburg, Craigeith and Camperdown, and the Blue Mountains Village area. The existing drainage infrastructure in the study area consists of a combination of open channels, ditches, watercourses, culverts, storm sewers, overland flow routes, stormwater management facilities, and low impact development measures.

The Drainage Master Plan is being completed in accordance with Approach #2 of the Master Planning Process outlined in the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document (October 2000, amended in 2007, 2011, and 2015). The Town has retained the consulting firm Tatham Engineering Limited to complete this Drainage Master Plan.

The Town hereby notifies all interested individuals and parties that an initial Public Information Centre (PIC) will be held virtually. The format will consist of a pre-recorded slide show presentation that will be posted to the project website (www.thebluemountains.ca/MasterDrainagePlanEA) on February 1, 2022. Comment sheets will be provided to allow members of the public to comment on any specific drainage concerns, indicate preferences regarding the improvement options being considered and provide overall comments regarding satisfaction with the presentation.

Following the Virtual PIC anyone who is interested in more information can also register for a **Virtual Public Meeting Question and Answer Session that will be held on February 24, 2022 between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.** Town staff and representatives from Tatham Engineering Limited will be available at this session to discuss issues and concerns with members of the public. Comments collected through this process will be used to develop the alternative drainage solutions for evaluation. A second PIC will be held once the preliminary preferred alternative solutions are established.

Additional information related to the Drainage Master Plan is available on the Town of The Blue Mountains website (www.thebluemountains.ca/MasterDrainagePlanEA).

Should additional information be required or to be added to the project mailing list, please contact:

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Tel: (519) 599-3131 ext. 304 Fax: (519) 599-7723
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Tatham Engineering Limited
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Email: dtwigger@tathameng.com

Notice – Applications To Fill Vacant

Councillor Position

Following the decision of Council, the Town of The Blue Mountains is now accepting applications to fill one (1) vacant Councillor position for the remainder of the 2018 – 2022 term of Council.

If you are interested in applying, information packages are available on the [elections page](#) on the Town website or by contacting the Town Clerk. The vacant Councillor position will be filled by appointment and as a result, **no formal election or public vote will be conducted.**

All applicants must be a qualified elector as defined in the Municipal Elections Act. Applicants must be:

- A Canadian citizen;
- At least 18 years old, and;
- Resident of the Town of The Blue Mountains, or the owner or tenant of land in the Town of The Blue Mountains, or the spouse of such a person; and
- Not prohibited from voting (as per the Municipal Elections Act) or otherwise by law.

Background Information

The vacancy was created due to the appointment of Peter Bordignon to the position of Deputy Mayor, from his previous role as Councillor. The Deputy Mayor position was declared vacant due to the passing of Deputy Mayor Rob Potter.

At the January 17, 2022 Council meeting, one (1) Councillor position was declared vacant, and Council considered staff report [FAF.22.012 Options to Fill Vacant Councillor Seat for the balance of the 2018 to 2022 Term of Council](#). Council opted to proceed with Option #2B, "Appointment by Call for Applications" to fill the vacant Councillor Seat, with the application to include the option to declare whether the applicant intends to run in the 2022 Town of The Blue Mountains Municipal Election.

At the January 31, 2022 meeting, Council considered staff report [FAF.22.021 titled "Appointment Procedure to Fill Vacant Councillor Seat"](#) and approved the procedure to fill the vacancy.

February 22, 4:00 pm Applications Due to the Town Clerk

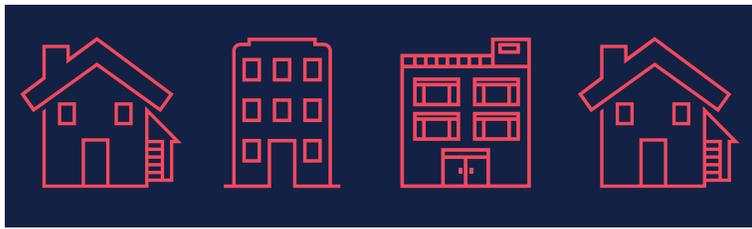
For more information, please contact:

Corrina Giles, Town Clerk, Town of The Blue Mountains
32 Mill Street, P.O. Box 310, Thornbury, Ontario NOH 2P0
Tel: 519-599-3131 ext. 232
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Ontario Publishes Housing Affordability Task Force Report

Ontario has published the report from the Housing Affordability Task Force, which highlights expert recommendations for additional measures to increase the supply of market housing to address the housing crisis. The Task Force is part of Ontario's ongoing three-part consultation with industry, municipalities, and the public to help the government identify and implement real solutions to address the housing supply crisis.

"Everyone has a role to play in addressing the housing supply crisis. As our government consults with municipalities, the public, and industry leaders and experts, we are balancing these perspectives to develop practical, forward-thinking policies that unlock and fast-track all types of housing for all types of Ontarians," said Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "I'd like to thank Jake Lawrence and the entire Task Force for their hard work, including conducting extensive consultations with other stakeholders, to develop their report."

The Task Force report's recommendations include five main areas to quickly increase the supply of market housing, to meet a goal of adding 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years:

- Make changes to planning policies and zoning to allow for greater density and increase the variety of housing.
- Reduce and streamline urban design rules to lower costs of development.
- Depoliticize the approvals process to address NIMBYism and cut red tape to speed up housing.
- Prevent abuse of the appeal process and address the backlog at the Ontario Land Tribunal by prioritizing cases that increase housing.
- Align efforts between all levels of government to incentivize more housing.

Additionally, the Task Force's report makes other recommendations to increase housing supply over the long-term, including to digitize and modernize the approvals and planning process, grow the skilled labour workforce, and encourage new pathways to home ownership.

"When Premier Ford and Minister Clark created the Task Force our instructions were clear: to deliver concrete, actionable recommendations to address the housing affordability crisis by getting more homes built," said Jake Lawrence, Chair of the Housing Affordability Task Force and Chief Executive Officer and Group Head, Global Banking and Markets at Scotiabank. "Lengthy reviews, bureaucratic red tape, and costly appeals are making it too difficult to build new housing. We propose an ambitious and achievable goal to build 1.5 million homes over the next ten years and the steps needed to get there."

The Task Force report is part of the government's broader plan to seek feedback from a variety of sources, including through municipal and public consultations, to identify and implement measures to address the housing supply crisis and get homes built faster. In January, Premier Ford and Minister Clark hosted the Ontario-Municipal Housing Summit and the Rural Housing Affordability Roundtable to coordinate efforts with municipalities, and the government recently held an online public consultation for Ontarians to share their input, which received over 2,000 responses.

www.ontario.ca/page/housing-affordability-task-force-report

Ontario Takes Further Action to Protect the Great Lakes

The Ontario government is supporting projects that help communities protect and improve the health of the Great Lakes by investing an additional \$1.9 million in the Great Lakes Local Action Fund.

"We all have a role to play in protecting and restoring the Great Lakes, and through the Great Lakes Local Action Fund, communities and local organizations can apply for funding to take environmental action right in their own backyards," said David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. "Following the success of our first round of funding, our government is proud to support more local projects to protect, conserve, and restore the Great Lakes and their watersheds for future generations."

This new investment will help support innovative projects led by community-based organizations, small businesses, municipalities, conservation authorities, and Indigenous communities that focus on protecting and restoring coastal, shoreline and nearshore areas of the Great Lakes and its connecting rivers and streams.

Examples of the types of eligible projects include:

- Restoring stream banks through the planting of trees and shrubs
- Local waterfront clean-ups to improve human health and protect wildlife from plastic pollution
- Application of best management practices to protect aquatic habitat and water quality – e.g. for fertilizers and road salt.

The deadline to apply for the second round of funding through the Great Lakes Local Action Fund is 2 p.m. on March 11, 2022.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/great-lakes-local-action-fund>



211 Ontario: Connecting Our Community to Available, Local Programs and Services

February 11 was 211 Day in Ontario. Every year, 211 Ontario uses this day as an opportunity to remind people that by dialing or texting 2-1-1, it connects them to Community Navigators who are ready to link them to programs and services in their local communities.

Need help finding food, housing, financial assistance, or mental health support? Get free, confidential referrals to community resources nearby. 211 is available in 150+ languages and their Community Navigators answer calls 24/7. 211 Community Navigators are trained to ask the right questions to fully understand an individual's situation, and find the right information, programs, or services for them.

Connect with 211 Today:

Dial 2-1-1 (Calls are answered 24/7 in 150+ languages)

Text 2-1-1 (Monday - Friday | 7 AM - 9 PM)

Online chat @ www.211Ontario.ca (Monday - Friday | 7 AM - 9 PM)

Finding the right program or service can be overwhelming. Finding help doesn't have to be.



Keeping Pets Safe During Cold Winter Months

Protecting Your Four-Legged Friends from Extreme Weather

As most of Ontario continues to experience extreme cold temperatures, it's critical to understand the risks that freezing temperatures can have on the health and safety of pets, how to recognize signs of an animal in distress, and who to call if you see a pet in danger.

"The extreme cold poses danger for humans and pets alike. In some cases, cold weather can be life-threatening," said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. "We strongly urge everyone to take the necessary precautions to keep your pets safe and protected during frigid cold temperatures – by limiting their time outdoors, using a coat when walking and wiping their paws to remove any salt or other chemicals."

While there are some dog breeds that thrive in colder weather, most cats, dogs and other pets left out in the cold are at risk of hypothermia, frostbite on their ears, paws and tails, serious illness or even death. Whenever possible, pets should be kept indoors in extreme weather. If they are kept outside, make sure they have some sort of shelter that's free from drafts, well-insulated and has sufficient bedding to keep them safe and comfortable. It is important to check on your pet regularly during adverse weather to ensure they are safe.

In addition to cold temperatures, it's important to be aware of other risks and environmental hazards that can be dangerous to pets in the winter. Some tips to keep pets happy and safe this winter include:

- Keeping toxic chemicals like anti-freeze or windshield-wiper fluid out of a pet's reach, as it can be lethal
- Protecting pets from salt used to de-ice roads, because it can irritate paws and be harmful if ingested. Wipe off their feet and stomach when you get home to ensure any salt or other chemicals are removed
- Never let them walk on frozen bodies of water, as falling through thin or cracked ice can pose life-threatening risks to humans and animals such as hypothermia or drowning
- When walking your dog, consider giving them a winter coat to help retain body heat, particularly for small dogs, elderly dogs, puppies and short-haired dogs, as they are more vulnerable to cold temperatures
- Don't leave your cat or dog alone in a cold car, because this could lead to hypothermia and potential death
- Feed your pet a bit more during winter months, as it takes extra energy to stay warm
- If members of the public see an animal in critical distress and are concerned the animal's life is in immediate danger, they should call 911 right away.

The Provincial Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) Act came into effect January 1, 2020, making Ontario the first jurisdiction in Canada to implement a full provincial animal welfare enforcement system to enhance animal safety.

Ontario's Animal Welfare Services issued more than 3,000 compliance orders, laid over 330 charges and executed over 120 warrants in 2021 to keep animals safe and healthy.

Ontario has the strongest penalties in the country for those who violate animal welfare laws, including causing distress to an animal.

Cruelty to any animal is not tolerated in Ontario. If you think any animal is in distress or being abused, call 1-833-9-ANIMAL (264625). Call 911 in an emergency when any life is in immediate danger or critical distress, such as when there is a public safety concern or an animal in a hot or cold vehicle.

To learn more about animal welfare in Ontario, visit ontario.ca/animalwelfare.



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Grey County Task Force to Address Mental Health and Addictions Crisis

Grey County Council has formed a Mental Health and Addictions Task Force to examine the challenges residents face gaining access to treatment for mental health and substance misuse. The task force, comprised of seven councillors and five representatives from local mental health and addictions services, will work together to determine opportunities for enhanced community supports. Council approved a terms of reference for the task force at the February 10 committee of the whole meeting.

Four objectives are outlined for the committee.

1. Focus on community members living with mental health and addictions challenges, particularly youth and those with housing insecurities.
2. Bring together government and non-government health and community partners to improve equity of service and meet the needs of the vulnerable.
3. Determine appropriate government advocacy for increased access to services and reduction of barriers.
4. Make recommendations for local action-focused programs that provide wrap around care leading to improved health outcomes.

Grey County does not have a direct role in the provision of mental health or substance use treatment; however, the Grey County Council recognizes there is an ongoing crisis in our community and intervention is necessary.

"We've been dealing with a crisis on two fronts for the past two years. Not only are we facing an ongoing pandemic, but we're also dealing with record high numbers of opioid overdoses and disturbing statistics around addiction and mental health in our communities," explains Grey County Warden Selwyn 'Buck' Hicks. "I commend County Council for making this issue a priority for the year. Now it's time to get to work and figure out how we can respond to the crisis and reinforce our partners on the frontlines and support those in need of care."

Community partners will bring important voices to the committee. As the people delivering services, they will provide important insight into the scope of the crisis and gaps in services and funding. The

committee will include representation from Keystone Child, Family and Youth Services, the Canadian Mental Health Association, Grey Bruce Health Services, the Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy peer advisory network, and the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit.

The task force will also engage with various other community partners and members of the public throughout the duration of the task force which is scheduled to meet monthly from February to June of this year.

"The mental health and addiction crisis in our community is urgent and it's important for our task force to move quickly if we want to start making a difference and improving lives," said Warden Hicks. "It's clear the system in place doesn't have the necessary resources to meet the demand in our community. We need action and we need it now."

Task force meetings will be streamed live on the Grey County website at www.grey.ca/live-stream. Meetings will be added to the Council calendar on the website in the coming days. Agenda packages and minutes will also be available on the site as they are prepared.



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