



Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association (BMRA)

Housing Strategy Working Group

Presentation to Committee of the Whole

August 26 , 2024

Housing Strategy Working Group

Formed in early 2024, the Housing Strategy Working Group includes members of:

- Blue Mountains Ratepayers' Association
- Institute of Southern Georgian Bay
- The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce
- Members of the housing development community

Why the Working Group was formed

- To provide input and recommendations to help realize progress on affordable and attainable as well as market rental housing
- As has been stated many times in Council meetings, the Town is stalled on these files

Our Purpose Today

The purpose of today's deputation is to discuss the scope and scale of the housing challenge as described in the **Housing Needs Assessment Study**.

The Study was prepared by consultants Parcel and SGL as part of the Official Plan Review in 2023.

Current Housing Market and Demographics

- Housing mix is dramatically skewed with single detached homes at 80%
- Just 13% of residents rent, compared with 31% for the Province
- Income levels – there is a large proportion of high-income households, but 50% of households have incomes below \$100K

Gaps identified in the Housing Needs Assessment

The Housing Needs Assessment identified the following gaps:

- Affordable housing
- Purpose-built rental housing
- Smaller housing
- Seniors housing and long-term care
- Workforce housing

Affordable housing gap

- Per affordability definitions as described in the report, the affordable rent is \$1,160 per month or less and the affordable house price is \$483,900 or less. There is effectively no housing available in The Blue Mountains at these rents/prices
- One in every five households in The Blue Mountains is cost burdened (i.e., spending more than 30% of its income on housing) and six percent are in core housing need. Renter households are more likely to be cost burdened and in core housing need than ownership households
- **215 affordable housing units are required to fill the current deficit of affordable units in the Town for the existing population**
- Approximately 1,500 additional units of affordable housing could be required by 2046 if the Town grows 3% annually to 16,000 residents

Purpose-built rental housing gap

- There is no purpose-built rental housing in the Town
- Growth in renter households is outpacing construction of purpose-built rental in neighbouring municipalities
- A lack of purpose-built rental units in the town as well as surrounding municipalities means renter households must rely on the less stable, secondary rental market (such as rented houses or condominium apartments, as well as rented accessory apartments).

Smaller housing gap

- Two-thirds of households are over-housed in the Town
- Approximately 80% of our housing stock is single-detached dwellings and 80% of units have three or more bedrooms
- A variety of housing options is needed to provide greater affordability and to allow aging in place

Seniors housing and long-term care gap

- Approximately half of Blue Mountains residents are aged 60 or more
- There is limited seniors housing
- More dedicated seniors housing would help meet the needs of seniors. The Campus of Care is planned to address some of this need.

Workforce housing gap

- A majority of employees in TBM commute to work from outside the town. Only 36% of workers live in TBM
- The gap is particularly large in the accommodation and food services sector where there are 610 jobs in the Town but only 220 residents working in the sector, representing a gap of nearly 400 workers. This is likely related to the relatively low compensation for these workers, averaging \$31,000 per year

Declaration of a housing emergency

Given the scope of the housing challenge facing The Blue Mountains as presented in the Housing Needs Assessment, the Working Group has prepared a Declaration of a Housing Emergency for Town Council's endorsement. This will be presented in the following deputation.

Thank you

On behalf of all the the members of the Housing Strategy Working Group, thank you for this opportunity to share our views.