

Town of The Blue Mountains Declaration of A Housing Emergency

Whereas between 2016 to 2021, the population in the Town of The Blue Mountains grew by 26% (Grey County and the province grew by 7.6% and 6.7% respectively) per the 2021 Census, making The Blue Mountains the second fastest growing community in the Province of Ontario, yet 64% of the people working in The Blue Mountains do NOT live here;

Whereas in order to understand the housing situation in The Blue Mountains, the 2023 Housing Needs Assessment was completed and, based on local and 2021 Census data, the following concerning traits within the Town were identified:

- 82% of housing is single or semi-detached, 12% is row and 6% is apartment (page 24);
- 87% of residents own their own home while 13% are renters (page 14);
- There is no purpose-built rental housing (page 15);
- 78% of 4 out of 5 dwellings have 3 or more bedrooms meaning there is a lack of smaller units of 2 or less bedrooms (page 17);
- 2/3 of households are over housed with more bedrooms than there are persons living in the house (page 13);
- The average resale price of a house in Grey county is \$712,000 but in the Town of The Blue Mountains it is \$1,370,000 requiring an income of \$397,000 (page 35);
- The average resale price of condo townhouses is \$833,000 and apartments is \$507,000 (page 29);
- The weighted average of all salaries in the Town of The Blue Mountains is \$68,132 with 40% of the 4300 jobs earning less than \$50,000 (page 12);
- 20% of the Town's households are cost-burdened and spending more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs (page 26), which means much less income is available to spend at our local businesses; and
- In The Blue Mountains, based on incomes, ownership housing is considered affordable if it cost less than \$483,900 and rental housing is considered affordable if it costs \$1160 per month or less (page 36) and
- **There is no housing in the Town of The Blue Mountains that meets either of these affordable housing criteria!**

Furthermore, the Town of The Blue Mountains is working towards creating a sustainable, welcoming and complete community but finds that the following needs to be addressed urgently:

- 215 units of purpose-built affordable rental housing (under \$1300 per month) for 1-2 person households are needed immediately (page 26);
- To meet the Town's targeted growth projection of 16,300 residents by 2046, Grey County projects at least 145 new dwelling units of all types are needed per year (page 20);
- Smaller units with studio, 1 and 2 bedrooms are needed for the low-moderate income workforce and seniors (page 6 and 18);
- Workforce housing is needed for the Accommodation and Food Services Sector (page 11);
- Subsidized family housing, accessible housing, emergency shelters and long-term care accommodations are lacking in the Town;

Whereas while the long-term economic viability of the Town of The Blue Mountains is dependent on our economy, our residents, our services, and our natural environment, many of these strengths of a community are at risk due to the lack of livability for many sectors of our community, the cost burden of housing and the lack of choice when seeking a place to live in the Town of The Blue Mountains;

Whereas the goal of the Municipality of the Town of the Blue Mountains is the same as Goal 11 of the United Nations which is to make human settlements safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, we call on all peoples of the Town of The Blue Mountains to work together to promote and provide adequate shelter for all by improving human settlements management and promoting better sustainable land-use planning and management;

Based on these conditions we, the Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains, declare a State of Emergency in the Town of The Blue Mountains for the purposes of supporting the work of the Town to improve the supply of housing to meet all needs in our community and to support the call to action and funding to meet this directive.

Janet Findlay
Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association