



## Town of The Blue Mountains

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**Date:** October 16, 2024

**Re:** Summary of Comments Regarding Possible Elimination of Parking on Louisa Street

This memo is intended to provide a summary of the comments and feedback that was in reply to the letter dated February 2, 2024 titled "RE: Further Consultation Regarding Possible Elimination of Parking on Louisa Street."

This letter was distributed by mail and by hand to downtown Thornbury businesses and residents of Louisa Street between Bruce Street and Elma Street as directed by Town Council. Additionally, a presentation was made to the Thornbury BIA at their meeting on February 7, 2024 seeking their organizational feedback.

In total, nine unique individuals provided their feedback. Included below is a table summarizing their positions, as well as their complete statements copied verbatim.

### Feedback on elimination of parking on Louisa Street

	For Elimination	Against Elimination
<b>Louisa Street Residents (Elma Street to Bruce Street)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Local Businesses</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Thornbury BIA</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Other Residents</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

**Written Comments Received from Louisa Street Residents (Elma Street to Bruce Street)**

<p>Michael &amp; Verla Martin 23 Louisa Street West Mailed 2/12/24</p>	<p>We are very concerned with the re construction of Louisa St West. Our house was build in 1911 and has a rubble basement. The water leakage was addressed in 1994 making it entirely dry even in the heavy rains. We paid a LOT OF MONEY to have this construction. With the removal of the trees and the heavy machinery we feel it may break apart. Where is our soil going to descend to??? Where is my rock garden going to erode into?? The north of Louisa??? There has been no PROFESSIONALLY DESIGNATED ENGINEER to discuss this situation with us.</p> <p>We have learned that the town plans are to break apart the retaining wall of 25 Louisa street only less than six inches is on the town property. The remaining twelve feet belongs to the owners. What will happen to the soil of that property as well?? We note that The Town of Blue Mountains are making HUGE decisions that will impact us enormously!!</p> <p>We feel unless each property with their special requirement as too what will happen with the soil in the retaining bank GONE and THE TREES ... to make PARKING???really needs to be addressed and to what compensation the town will .... PAY!!! There are five old houses on Louisa. Is the TBM going to pay mimium thirty thousand to each home owner that they project impact??</p> <p>2/20/24</p> <p>In reply to your soliciting information on proposed parking on Louisa Street West, please keep in mind that Louisa Street is more than an access way. It is and has been for over a century a community cultural asset part of the Towns fabric: its trademarks are the sugar maples lining the street and the hill or embankment having been former prehistoric lake edge a millennia ago.</p> <p>Being the owner of 23 and 25 Louisa Street West approximately 1/3 of the top of the embankment <b>we object</b> to the parking scheme as it involves the regarding of the angle and slope.</p> <p>Where is the need for of parking on Louisa? The Town is encouraging active transportation i.e. walks or bicycle. The many alternate parking areas are as follows:</p> <p>New parking lot on HWY 26 behind TD Bank <b>and 2</b> has existing parking at post office <b>and 3</b> parking behind the store fronts on easterly side of Bruce Street, <b>4</b> the1 e millennia ago area around the "Mews", <b>and 5</b> Bruce street itself, <b>and 6</b> the area of the Harbour. Also the Town is encouraging active transportation i.e. walks or bicycle.</p> <p>From the attached letter of 8 November 2023 which illustrates issues of :saving Town costs estimated in 2022 dollars of \$190,000 to \$350,000 provides a summary of Pro and Cons of not grading the embankment:</p> <p><b>Pros:</b> reduces safety concerns at Bruce street; maintains traffic flow; minimizes Tree removal ;minimizes slope impacts; eliminates stone wall and retaining wall removal; minimizes retaining wall construction; reduces impacts on residential driveways; meets Community design and social values and economic design criteria ; significant financial savings.</p> <p><b>Con:</b> loss of some on street parking.</p>
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<p>V I Moore</p> <p>25 Louisa Street West</p> <p>Mailed 2/12/24</p>	<p>In response to the letter regarding Louisa St West I am elated to learn the town has succumbed to the will of the people and will be leaving the BEAUTIFUL tree on the embankment standing. With their ability absorb pollution to perform the "clear cutting" was very short sighted.</p> <p>Why does the town require more parking?? As per the staff at the post office the plus millions of dollars on the parking lot behind the bank remains empty most of the time. Also, as does the parking adjacency to the Laundromat and behind The Cheese Gallery. There should be ZERO parking on Louisa West when ample parking is provided and totally underutilized. Why destroy a beautiful street for a few tourist trying to save a dollar and get free parking ???</p> <p>I agree with one way traffic west bound BUT speed bumps need to be build as some of the vehicles travel at alarming speeds.</p> <p>The so called urban forest planted along Elma is a joke. It will take fifty years before the little saplings become trees. Elma now looks like a street in a new subdivision ... ugly</p> <p>In summary ... LEAVE LOUISA WEST ALONE!!!</p>
<p>Alice Fisher</p> <p>32 Louisa Street West</p> <p>Mailed 2/16/24</p>	<p>I was out of town for a few days after we spoke and returned under the weather.</p> <p>I have re-read the February 6<sup>th</sup> document. I can understand the need for public parking on Louisa St. W between Bruce and Elma Streets from a business need. I would prefer angle parking as a resident. This would, I feel, deflect the car emissions from our front doors.</p> <p>Having seen the plans for seating and landscaping, I look forward to their completion.</p>
<p>Stan Thomson</p> <p>26 Louisa Street West</p> <p>Emailed 2/20/24</p>	<p>As a resident of Louisa St I have followed the project very closely, viewing Council meetings as well as in person discussions with Mr Campbell. When the motion to reconsider was passed to open the project up to more consideration, it seemed after viewing the Counsel meeting and seeing the orange signs posted to the trees from a member of the community that the impetus for this decision to reconsider was based on whether or not mature trees could be saved by making changes to the original Counsel approved design. There seemed to be a misconception with some residents of Thornbury and perhaps Counsel itself that if the design was changed to remove the parkette and eliminate the parking that all these mature trees could be saved. It is evident to me from Mr Campbell's in depth reports available on the Towns website that this is not the case, most if not all of the mature trees have to be removed to accommodate the implementation of the new sewer and storm water services which is the reason for the project in the first place.</p> <p>Since we moved into our home on Louisa St 6 years ago we have planted a total of 34 trees in the rear yard. During this time these trees have grown and now range anywhere between a few feet to as high as 25 feet tall. As obvious tree lovers it is my concern that if the parking and retaining wall are not included in the project the planting of new trees on the slope could potentially be jeopardised. Once the decision is made and the project is complete it will remain as constructed for many decades to come. My preference would certainly be to have new trees planted rather than just barron ground after construction.</p> <p>It seems unusual to have a street within the proximity of downtown to not have parking, I don't think there are any other similar streets in town without parking. Not having parking could present a problem for residents when family or guests are visiting as some of the driveways can only accommodate 1 or 2 cars.</p> <p>Regarding the decision to include or exclude the parkette, it is also my understanding that none of the mature trees would be lost to its inclusion in the plan. I think the design is attractive although I do not have a particular opinion one way or the other on this part of the design as I am somewhat removed from that location and feel this decision would be better spoken to by residents closer to the area and local businesses.</p> <p>In regards to the construction of the road itself, I would strongly suggest implementing some form of physical speed control. Many drivers going North on Bruce St use Louisa to avoid the downtown area and the traffic lights in pursuit of saving time and many of these hurried drivers accelerate very quickly along Louisa creating a dangerous situation.</p>

**Written Comments Received from Local Businesses**

<p>Marion Erskine Marion's Hair Studio Emailed 2/22/24</p>	<p>Thanks for coming and updating me about the Louisa st parking. Makes sense to have parking there and very happy about it since you need to take trees down for services. Looking forward to some nice young trees and the future for the downtown.</p>
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**Written Comments Received from the Thornbury BIA**

<p>Submitted on behalf of the Thornbury BIA Board Mailed 2/20/24</p>	<p>On Wednesday February 7, 2024 Mike Campbell, Senior Infrastructure Capital Project Coordinator brought forward this project for discussion. Based on the information provided to the BIA Board and Membership, and in consultation with business owners directly impacted we, 1) support the elimination of the parkette to preserve as many mature trees as possible, 2) we support parking spaces that are considered in consultation with Louisa Street residents, and local businesses owners that are directly impacted, 3) we support a plan for parking spaces in which the preservation of as many mature trees as possible is also considered.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, we appreciate being consulted. The BIA has no objection to parking and understands that this is a decision to be made by Town Council and Staff of the Operations Department, through consultation with the residents and property owners directly impacted on Louisa Street.</p>
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**Written Comments Received from Other Residents**

<p>Sid &amp; Louise McFarlane</p> <p>36 Elma Street South</p> <p>Emailed 2/8/24</p>	<p>Town council has made a decision to delay the road construction of the Thornbury West Construction Project. The major concern was the removal of mature trees. There are many trees within the construction area that are at the end of life stage or dying or diseased or simply dangerous. There are also trees that have been recognized, by all involved parties, as being an overwhelming necessity to be removed because of the new infrastructure or at the request of the homeowner. All of these trees will eventually be removed.</p> <p>Many homeowners were devastated by the Council decision to delay the project for yet another year and many are frankly very angry. This has been a build up of almost 10 years of frustration. Council should have been brought up to speed on this project when they became a member of council and completed their reading of staff reports. Previous councillors walk the streets with the residents to get a feel of how the project would evolve.</p> <p>The Town appears to be on a very misguided mission to bend to the whim of every special interest group in the area. The reality is that some trees must be removed and a qualified arborist would totally agree. It is time for Council to show some good faith to the residents in the project area that have been treated poorly. This is the designated time of year for tree removal. A necessary step in the construction process is the removal of trees.</p> <p>The Town should have embarked on this immediately to show the residents that the project is progressing and that the project will be proceeding within the time lines and will not be delayed by special interest groups or councillors changing their vote at an inopportune time. Town representatives and councillors have an ideal opportunity to engage with individual residents on their particular issue regarding trees. No one has approached residents regarding planting of trees on private property to compensate for removed trees.</p> <p>It is also my understanding that the Town will not be hiring a qualified arborist to address the needs of the trees that the Town has designated as being "savable". These trees will not survive if they do not receive the proper care and pruning before, during and after road construction. Two trees bordering onto my property have received protection status according to the Town. That was well over 6 months ago and I have yet to see any indication of care directed towards these very needy trees. It is time for Council to be proactive on this matter rather than being reactive and causing disruption of well planned infrastructure and adding to the frustration of affected residents.</p> <p>The Town has experienced two Directors of Operations personnel during the time line of this project and at least two Town Councils. I am asking Council to initiate a motion to direct staff to begin the process of tree removal and dialogue with property owners as soon as possible. Mike Campbell has been providing good communication with the residents and has ample knowledge of the feelings of many of those affected. If Council proceeds at this time there is time for decisions, dialogue and being pro-active.</p> <p>I would be pleased to speak with council to discuss this matter at any time.</p>
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<p>Sabine Abt</p> <p>41 Bruce Street South</p> <p>Emailed 2/14/24</p>	<p>I am writing to provide my comments with respect to the elimination of parking on Louisa Street.</p> <p>I <u>fully support</u> the elimination of parking on Louisa Street and the parkette. I strongly feel that the potential to preserve as many mature trees as possible far outweighs the need to add 27 additional parking stalls as well as a parkette to Thornbury.</p> <p>I reside at 41 Bruce Street South and my close proximity to Louisa Street West affords me the unique opportunity to witness the following on almost a daily basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal parking on Louisa Street West makes it difficult for one car, let alone two, to have enough room to safely navigate the road where it meets Bruce Street South.</li> <li>• As cars turn onto Louisa Street West from Bruce Street and cannot find immediate parking, more likely than not, drivers will make a U-turn in the laneway or the Optometrist's lot (10 Louisa Street West) instead of driving along to Elma Street. This causes unnecessary delays for other drivers and pedestrians.</li> <li>• The Arthur Street parking lot (17 Arthur West) is wildly underused. Again, I constantly see cars going around the block or making a U turn on Bruce Street South to find a primo spot rather than having to walk a block to get to the stores/restaurants on Bruce Street.</li> </ul> <p>I feel that the Town could provide better signage to direct drivers to the parking lots on Arthur West, Hester Street Parkette, Thornbury Harbour, off Mill Street and Cedar Grove. As well, any enforcement of the 2 hour limit on Bruce and Louisa Street appears to be non-existent.</p>
<p>Paul Woolner</p> <p>14 Louisa Street East</p> <p>Emailed 2/20/24</p>	<p>While it is outside the area in question, there are many similar issues on the east side of Louisa Street and Bruce, as is found on the west side. I agree that entering Bruce Street from Louisa Street, is dangerous from either side of the street. It becomes more dangerous from the east side of Louisa, due to the illegal parking on Bruce Street at the corner by delivery trucks or other drivers with large vehicles, blocking the site line. The corner is clearly marked, no parking and yet it is ignored. It means an inching forward out into the north lane of traffic while still watching up the hill, watching for pedestrians and finally the traffic coming south on Bruce. It is the same entering Bruce Street from the west. The view to the south is blocked by the hill and you must inch out, into the south bound lane to get a clear view up the hill. The difference on this side is the view north bound. It is usually clear because the vehicles don't get parked up to corner on Bruce, leaving a better sightline. We have dealt with this corner for four decades and we know it is dangerous.</p> <p>With respect to the parking. I would have to agree with the residents on Louisa Street west, if they are against the parking. There is currently parking on the street on Louisa Street east. Many times, we have our driveway blocked by some who are only going to be a minute. This, despite a sign saying , DO NOT BLOCK DRIVEWAY. I think you know where I am going with this. Spring, summer and fall, the parking can be tolerated. If I may suggest, restrict the parking to the south side of Louisa Street East in the winter. Parking on both sides reduces the road to one lane of traffic. I am sure people on the west side of Louisa will have the same concerns.</p> <p>I am not sure parking on the Louisa Street west will be of any great benefit. Once you get passed 14 Louisa Street West the parking becomes less relevant to the main street. It will be considered to far away.</p> <p>If it is decided to do away with the parking aspect, I would like to suggest that two lanes of traffic be retained. I know I said earlier that entry on to Bruce Street was a safety concern, but my wife and I use it all the time when we are coming home. Many times, we turn right coming out of the post office, due to high traffic volume east bound. We then go to Elma Street, turn left, then up to Louisa west turn left to home. A bit selfish but what can I say. The residents living on Louisa Street will not be able to approach their homes from the west and will instead be funnelled up the main street, increasing traffic on the main street and the corner light at highway 26 and Bruce Street.</p> <p>The parkette would have been a nice idea, if it was located on the corner of Bruce and Louisa, with sightlines down the main street. As it is now planned buried back out of sight on Louisa west, I don't think it would be used enough to be of value</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read this . I realize I included suggestions that included Louisa St. east, but I wanted to plant some seeds for future consideration.</p>