



Staff Report

Administration – Communications

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: December 9, 2024
Report Number: FAF.24.143
Title: Blue Mountain Resort Parking Sign Program
Prepared by: Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.143, entitled “Blue Mountain Resort Parking Sign Program”;

AND THAT Council approves the Blue Mountain Resort Parking Signage program as presented based on the project being a partnership between Blue Mountain Resort and the Town to support the management of visitor parking at Blue Mountain Resort parking lots.

AND THAT Council directs staff to work with Blue Mountain Resort to bring a future staff report forward after the first year of implementation to review and report on the program’s effectiveness in managing visitor parking.

B. Overview

This report seeks Council approval for the implementation of a phased parking signage program at Blue Mountain Resort to improve the management of visitor parking.

C. Background

As the leading tourism destination in Ontario, Blue Mountain Resort welcomes more than three million visitors each year to the Town of The Blue Mountains. With the flow of visitors, the supply and management of parking is a core business activity of Blue Mountain Resort.

In mid-2024, Town staff met with Blue Mountain Resort to discuss various opportunities to more effectively and efficiently manage visitor parking.

Through the meeting, an opportunity was presented to implement a digital parking sign program to provide real-time parking availability information to visitors. The proposal is for digital signs to be installed on Blue Mountain Resort property, and within the right-of-way on Town and County roads. The proposed digital signs will show the number of available spots for each parking lot and will provide real time counts on parking space availability throughout the Resort area.

This request is being presented to Council for consideration as the Town's [Sign By-law \(2016-71\)](#), does not support the sign program as recommended by Blue Mountain Resort due to limitations related to the placement of digital display signs.

For reference, Digital Display Signs are referred to in the By-law as the following:

Digital Display Sign (Section 4.7) – shall mean a sign that displays text and/or images shown in a digital format that includes but not limited to LCD, LED and projection and may include:

Electrically Energized: Illuminated signs whose motion or visual impression of motion is activated primarily by electrical means. Electrically animated signs are of two types:

a) Flashing Signs: Illuminated signs exhibiting a pre-programmed repetitious cyclical interruption of illumination from one or more sources in which the duration of the period of illumination (on phase) is either the same as or less than the duration of the period of darkness (off phase), and in which the intensity of illumination varies from zero (off) to one hundred percent (on) during the programming cycle.

b) Illusionary Movement Signs: Illuminated signs exhibiting the illusion of movements by means of a pre-programmed repetitious sequential switching action in which illuminated elements of the sign are turned on or off to visually simulate the impression of motion characteristic of chasing, running, blinking, oscillating, twinkling, scintillating, or expanding and contracting light patterns.

Further, Digital Display signs are only permitted on Commercial, Institutional and Recreational Ski Facility properties. The regulations further stipulate the following:

- (1) Sign shall not exceed 0.5 square metres
- (2) Digital display signs shall be separated by a minimum of 300 metres measured on any side of the road from which the sign may be viewed except for digital Fuel Price signs, subject to the provisions of section 3.9.
- (3) Signs shall not display more than one (1) image per 60 seconds
- (4) A Digital Display Sign may form a part of another sign.

D. Analysis

Blue Mountain Resort intends to use dynamic digital signs to assist in managing six of its main visitor destination parking lots, which account for approximately 2,000 visitor parking spaces of the Resort's overall parking capacity of approximately 4,600 spaces. Understanding the seasonality of the local tourism industry, parking capacity is generally not a major concern for Blue Mountain Resort. However, visitor parking capacity on long weekends, holidays and peak demand days requires enhanced parking management.

Over the years, Town staff have worked with Blue Mountain Resort to improve parking management through various means including wayfinding signage, traffic light timing and by-law enforcement.

Utilizing digital technology, there is a significant opportunity to improve the flow of visitors and the management of visitor parking by providing real-time parking space counts and lot availability information.

The parking sign program, as recommended by Blue Mountain Resort, would include two (2) signs being installed on Blue Mountain Resort property, seven (7) signs installed within the Town's right-of-way and seven (7) signs installed within Grey County's right-of-way. A map of the proposed sign locations is included as Attachment #1 of this staff report. Blue Mountain Resort has indicated that the signs will be installed in phases, with the immediate focus on the main village parking lot (P2).

Through the motion, staff are recommending that Council approves the sign program as presented based on the project being a partnership between Blue Mountain Resort and the Town. This is supported under Section 4.10 of the Sign By-law as related to Federal, Provincial or Municipal Signs, of which *"may include a municipally approved and administered program of Directional signage to be located within public right-of-way in partnership with private sector operators...at strategic locations in the municipality, with the approval of Council."*

Further, a Directional Sign (Section 4.8) is defined as – *an on-premise sign giving directions, instructions, or facility information and which may contain the name or logo of an establishment but shall not contain advertising copy, e.g., parking or exit and entrance signs.*

Through the review by Staff, the proposed sign program meets the criteria of Section 4.10 based on the partnership for Directional Signage between the Town, County and Blue Mountain Resort. It's important to note that the Sign By-law does include a formal variance process; however, based on the importance and scope of the proposed dynamic digital sign parking program, staff determined that the request would be best handled and considered by the Council for approval.

Pending Council approval, Blue Mountain Resort will be required to apply for a Municipal Lands Work Permit with the Town's Operations Department to determine exact locations for signs installed within the Town's right-of-way. A similar process will also be followed for signs installed within Grey County's right-of-way.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this report.

G. Financial Impacts

No financial impacts are anticipated as a result of this report. All costs associated with the purchase, installation and ongoing management/maintenance of the signs will be paid for by Blue Mountain Resort.

H. In Consultation With

Jim McCannell, Manager of Roads and Drainage
Tim Murawsky, Chief Building Official
Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

Blue Mountain Resort Staff

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives, si@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Map of Proposed Sign Locations

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Hendry
Director of Strategic Initiatives

For more information, please contact:
Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives
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519-599-3131 extension 282

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	FAF.24.143 Blue Mountain Resort Parking Sign Program.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 Map of Proposed Sign Locations.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 27, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tim Hendry - Nov 27, 2024 - 3:30 PM