



Staff Report

Administration

Report To: Committee of The Whole
Meeting Date: November 3, 2020
Report Number: FAF.20.174
Subject: Follow-up to Local Media Review and 2021 Budget Request
Prepared by: Tim Hendry, Manager of Communications and Economic Development

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.20.174, entitled "Follow-up to Local Media Review and 2021 Budget Request";

AND THAT Council acknowledge receipt of the findings of the 2020 Local Media Review, as identified in staff report FAF.20.148, which is linked in the body of this report, and provided as Attachment 1 and approve the September 28, 2020 Community Communications Advisory Committee recommendation, being:

THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee receive Staff Report FAF.20.148, entitled "Local Media Review";

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee recommends to Council that:

- Newspaper and online newspaper advertisements be the primary form of paid advertising used by the Town;
- When placing newspaper advertisements that the publications Collingwood Connection (to satisfy legislative requirements), and The Blue Mountain Review, as appropriate, be utilized;
- When placing online newspaper advertisements, that Collingwood Today be utilized;
- Staff should be encouraged to use radio advertisements on an as-needed basis on the following stations:
 - 95.1 The Peak FM;
 - 560 CFOS AM;

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committees recommends that the Town enters into contract negotiations with the selected media providers;

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committees recommends to Council that additional paid advertising funds be allocated in the 2021 budget based

upon the level of financial need as suggested by staff through the contract negotiations,
CARRIED.

AND THAT, with respect to the Town's advertising budget, Council approve the following additional advertising costs in the 2021 Draft Budget for Council's consideration:

- Blue Mountain Review: \$21,600
- Collingwood Today: \$12,000

B. Overview

This report seeks request to include additional advertising budget in the 2021 Draft Budget for Council's consideration, following the completion of the Local Media Review.

C. Background

Staff received direction to conduct a Local Media Review, the results of which are available through staff report [FAF.20.148 Local Media Review](#).

Resulting from the report, the Community Communications Advisory Committee provided the following recommendation:

B.3.1 Local Media Review, FAF.20.148

Moved by: Paula Hope

Seconded by: Rob Potter

THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee receive Staff Report FAF.20.148, entitled "Local Media Review";

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee recommends to Council that:

- Newspaper and online newspaper advertisements be the primary form of paid advertising used by the Town;
- When placing newspaper advertisements that the publications Collingwood Connection (to satisfy legislative requirements), and The Blue Mountain Review, as appropriate, be utilized;
- When placing online newspaper advertisements, that Collingwood Today be utilized;
- Staff should be encouraged to use radio advertisements on an as-needed basis on the following stations:
 - 95.1 The Peak FM;
 - 560 CFOS AM;

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee recommends that the Town enters into contract negotiations with the selected media providers;

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee recommends to Council that additional paid advertising funds be allocated in the 2021 budget based upon the level of financial need as suggested by staff through the contract negotiations, CARRIED.

D. Analysis

In accordance with the recommendation by the Committee and to help inform this staff report, staff contacted the respective media providers to review advertising opportunities.

It is important to highlight that the amount of newspaper advertising required by the Town varies depending upon the activities undertaken by each department. The costs included within the recommendations below were calculated based on a three-year review of paid newspaper advertisements placed by the Town.

As detailed in the staff report [FAF.20.148 Local Media Review](#), paid advertising is generally grouped into two broad categories: Legislative and General. 'Legislative Advertising' includes any notices that are mandated under the respective Legislation, Acts or applicable Ontario Regulations. Whereas, 'General Advertising' is related to specific programs and initiatives that the Town wishes to communicate to residents, which is generally directed according to the Town's Notice Policy.

With this understanding, staff have drafted the following recommendations and associated advertising costs based on the recommendation from the Committee:

Collingwood Connection

- **Recommendation:** Maintain the current \$36,000 advertising budget as allocated.

Blue Mountain Review

- **Recommendation:** That \$21,600 be allocated annually for advertising with the Blue Mountain Review.

Collingwood Today

- **Recommendation:** That \$12,000 be allocated annually for advertising with Collingwood Today.

It is important to understand that each department manages its own advertising budget, and the cost of the advertisements are covered by the specific department and/or project.

Summary of Recommendation

	Collingwood Connection	Blue Mountain Review	Collingwood Today
Annual Cost	\$36,000	\$21,600	\$12,000
What is included?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current spend is approximately \$3,000 per month, which equals approximately \$36,000 per year in paid advertising. This is equivalent to 40 full-page advertisements per year. - The newspaper is printed weekly and distributed throughout Collingwood and The Blue Mountains - The newspaper meets the public notice requirements under the applicable legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The budget will equal 24 full-page advertisements per year that will be split between the monthly print editions - The monthly newspaper is direct mailed to 4300 homes in The Blue Mountains - Advertisements placed into monthly print edition will also appear in the weekly online edition that is emailed to 600+ subscribers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dedicated Town page on www.collingwoodtoday.ca - Town branded section directly on the homepage with link to most recent news items and notices - News items and notices can be added weekly or as required with no limits on the number of advertisements - 11,550 daily email subscribers and approximately 4000 TBM users per month
What will be advertised?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All legislative notices that require formal public circulation - All other notices as per the requirements of the Town's Notice Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislative notices that fit within the monthly print cycle of the newspaper - All other notices as per the requirements of the Town's Notice Policy that fit within the monthly print cycle of the newspaper <p>*Advertisements that do not fit into the monthly print schedule will be included in the weekly online edition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All legislative notices that require formal public circulation - All other notices as per the requirements of the Town's Notice Policy - All other notices and press releases that are warranted by staff

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communications and Engagement

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

F. Environmental Impacts

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

G. Financial Impact

The additional advertising cost of \$33,600 as identified within the report recommendation will be included in the proposed 2021 budget for review and consideration by Council.

H. In consultation with

Shawn Everitt, CAO

John Milne, Chair of Community Communications Advisory Committee

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to 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, communications@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. FAF.20.148 Local Media Review

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Hendry
Manager of Communications and Economic Development

Shawn Everitt
Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:
Tim Hendry
communications@thebluemountains.ca
519-599-3131 extension 282

This document can be made available in other accessible formats as soon as practicable and upon request



Staff Report

Administration

Report To: Community Communications Advisory Committee
Meeting Date: September 28, 2020
Report Number: FAF.20.148
Subject: Local Media Review
Prepared By: Tim Hendry, Manager of Communications and Economic Development

A. Recommendations

THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee receive Staff Report FAF.20.148, entitled "Local Media Review";

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committee recommends to Council that:

- When placing newspaper advertisements that publication(s) _____ be utilized;
- When placing radio advertisements that publication(s) _____ be utilized;

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committees recommends that the Town enters into contract negotiations with the selected media providers.

AND THAT the Community Communications Advisory Committees recommends to Council that additional paid advertising funds be allocated in the 2021 budget based upon the level of financial need as suggested by staff through the contact negotiations.

B. Overview

This report summarizes the findings of the Local Media Review, as requested by the Committee and directed by Council.

C. Background

To ensure effective communication with residents and stakeholders, the Town of The Blue Mountains has conducted a comprehensive review of local media providers to assess the communication platforms that are available to the Town for paid advertising.

The Town frequently purchases paid advertisements to advise and inform the public regarding Town operations and business. Paid advertising is typically within the form of a newspaper advertisement or radio campaign. The goal of the local media review is to ensure that the Town is utilizing the most appropriate local media providers to reach the public in the best manner

possible. Media providers were selected and contacted based on their coverage of Town news and the close geographical location to the Town.

After discussion with multiple local magazine publications, staff made the decision to remove magazines from this review process. The decision was due to the extended print cycles, style of news coverage, and the targeted nature of the publications. Combined, these factors did not ultimately meet the Town's goal of legislative or general paid advertising news coverage on a regular schedule. In addition, staff are aware of a new monthly magazine publication that will be considered for future use under the review of magazine opportunities. Staff would like to highlight that paid magazine advertisements are an extremely effective tool to reach targeted resident segments, and as such paid advertising in magazines should be considered for general Town awareness campaigns and for economic development / tourism related campaigns.

D. Analysis

Methods of Public Notice

It is important to note that a paid advertisement is generally only one part of public notice. For example, the promotion of a project typically includes the use of multiple communication tools. In addition, the purpose of paid advertising is to reach the greatest number of residents in a general non-targeted nature. Targeted advertising is achieved through the combination and use of the tools as listed below.

Examples of these tools include:

- Website Notice / Press Release
- Dedicated Project Page on Website
- Road Signs
- Mailed Post Cards
- Mailed Letters / Notices
- Newspaper Advertisements
- Radio Advertisements
- Public Surveys
- Public Information Centre
- Public Meetings
- Social Media Posting

The use of the various communication tools is selected based on the communication needs of the project. This process is managed by the respective staff member through the creation of a project specific communications plan developed in collaboration with the Communications Division

It is important to note that public notice is also implemented based upon the established Town standards as detailed in the Notice Policy.

Notice Policy

As directed by the *Municipal Act, 2001*, The Town of The Blue Mountains has adopted a corporate notice policy. Passed in 2008, the policy, titled "*Provision of Notice and Manner of Giving Notice to the Public*" details the Town public notice standards as approved by Council.

Under the policy, public notice is categorized into four classes, which includes a definition, a defined notice period and method of notice. The policy has been attached to this report as an appendix and a summary has been included below in chart form.

Classes	Definition	Notice Period	Method of Notice
Class 1- Standard Council/Committee Operating Process	This class refers to the normal operations of the Town of The Blue Mountains when notice is provided of upcoming Council and Committee meetings.	Minimum of 4 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - posting of the Agenda and supporting information including staff reports to the Town’s website; - direct delivery to affected individuals where they have requested to be notified of an upcoming meeting or the Town is legislatively required to provide notice.
Class 2- Defined or Specific Issues	The issues associated with this class of notice are more specific and affect a smaller, more contained population. These notice provisions will take into consideration difference between communities of interest, area municipalities and specific user groups.	Minimum of 14 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - direct delivery or prepaid first class mail to affected parties, that may include, but are not limited to, affected land owners/occupants, abutting land owners/occupants, license holders, stakeholders; and - posting of notice on the Town’s website, and - fax or email to any area municipality that would be affected. - at the discretion of the Department Head advertisement in a newspaper that is of sufficiently general circulation in the specific area

Classes	Definition	Notice Period	Method of Notice
Class 3- Major Issues	The issues associated with this class have a significant impact on the community. This notice shall meet the broadest audience as the topics may be of interest to the Town as a whole. It is important to allow sufficient time for the public to respond to these major issues.	Minimum of 21 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advertising in newspapers having general circulation in the municipality (The Blue Mountains Courier Herald and Collingwood Enterprise-Bulletin will be the primary newspapers) in advance of meeting and/or passing of By-law, etc.; and - posting of notice on the Town website in advance; and - posting of notice in the Town Office.
Class 4- Planned Service Disruptions	Notice of the disruption should include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of any available alternate services.	Minimum of 30 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - direct delivery or pre-paid first class mail to affected parties, that may include, but are not limited to, affected land owners/occupants, abutting land owners/occupants, license holders, stakeholders; or - posting of the information in a conspicuous place or on the premises as applicable; and - posting of notice on the Town’s website. - Consideration should be given on whether to notify the appropriate area municipality.

What does the Town Currently Advertise?

Paid advertising by the Town can be grouped into two broad categories: Legislative and General.

1) Legislative

Legislative advertising includes any notices that are mandated under the respective Legislation, Acts or applicable Ontario Regulations. Public notices under this category must adhere to the specific requirements as to what needs to be included and for how long the notice must be circulated. Examples of legislative advertisements include:

- Notice of Complete Application
- Committee of Adjustment
- Notice of Public Meeting
- Notice of Study Commencement
- Notice of Completion
- Notice of Public Information Centre
- Annual Drinking Water Report
- Sale of Land by Public Tender

2) General

Non-Legislative advertising is typically related to specific programs and initiatives that the Town wishes to communicate to residents. Under this category, there are no legislative or legal requirements to provide notice, however the act of providing notice is conducted through the requirements of the Notice Policy and through the understanding of ensuring proactive communication from the Town. Examples of non-legislative advertising include, but are not limited to:

- Council/Committees of the Whole Meeting Schedule
- Dog Licenses Advisement
- Public Surveys
- Town Events
- Water Restrictions
- Spring Hydrant Flushing / Water Restrictions

Current Advertising Contracts

As of August 31, 2020, the Town of The Blue Mountains has one active paid advertising contact. The contact is with Metroland Media for advertising in the Collingwood Connection newspaper. This contact was approved by Town staff after the closure of the Enterprise Bulletin newspaper as a single source purchase.

All other paid advertising is purchased on an as needed project basis based upon the standard advertising rates of the local media provider.

Current Advertising Expenses

To help inform this Local Media Review, staff reviewed all paid advertising for 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 to date. Over the review period, the Town has averaged \$57,000 per year in paid advertising spend. This includes a combination of newspaper advertisements, radio advertisements, employment opportunity postings and other advertising expenses related to public notice, public meetings or public information centres. Specifically, newspaper advertising accounts for an average annual spend of approximately \$30,000.

In addition, over the three-year average, approximately 45% of Town newspaper advertising is legislative and 55% is general.

Legislative Considerations for Newspaper Advertisements

Before any recommendations can be made regarding newspaper advertisements, it is important to understand the legislative considerations that municipalities are required to meet.

Within various Acts governing municipal operations, there are often guidelines regarding the notice and circulation requirements. Although each Act is different, they are all related and connected to the definition of “newspaper” as outlined in the Legislation Act.

“newspaper”, in a provision requiring publication, means a document that,

(a) is printed in sheet form, published at regular intervals of a week or less and circulated to the general public, and

(b) consists primarily of news of current events of general interest; (“journal”)

Paid Advertising Criteria & Evaluation

To ensure effective communication with residents and stakeholders, the following set of criteria was developed and used as a tool to evaluate local media providers.

Print Newspaper Advertising Criteria

1. General

- Does the publication allow for a dedicated Town page / section with branding?
- Does the publication meet the Legislative Requirement?
- Does the publication offer fair advertising rates?

2. Distribution & Media Coverage

- What is the publication frequency?
- Is the publication free or subscription based?
- How is the publication distributed?
- Is the publication distributed to all areas of the Municipality?
- Does the publication provide regular journalism and news coverage for The Blue Mountains?
- Does the publication follow a set of editorial standards and have editorial oversight?

Online Newspaper Criteria

1. General

- Does the publication allow for a dedicated Town page / section with branding?
- Does the publication offer fair advertising rates?

2. Distribution & Media Coverage

- What is the publication frequency?
- Number of Subscribers and Monthly Users
- Does the publication provide regular journalism and news coverage for The Blue Mountains?
- Does the publication follow a set of editorial standards and have editorial oversight?
- Does the publication provide analytic tracking for online advertisements?

Radio Advertising Criteria

1. Distribution & Media Coverage

- Does the radio station offer fair advertising rates?
- Is the radio station coverage available to all areas of the municipality?
- Does the radio station have a presence within the community? (Street teams, local event attendance, general advertising, etc.)
- Does the publication provide journalism and news coverage for The Blue Mountains?

2. Online Advertisements

- Does the radio station offer paid online advertising?
- If yes, is there an extra cost or is it included within a standard radio ad buy?
- Does the radio station provide analytic tracking for online advertisements?

Recommendation

To ensure that paid advertising and communication from the Town reaches residents as effectively and efficiently as possible, it is recommended that a mix of media providers as listed be selected.

Through the Community Communications Committee review and recommendation, Town staff will contact the selected media providers to negotiate a media contract to best suit Town advertising needs.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #2: Engage Our Communities & Partners

Objective #1 Improve External Communication with our Constituents

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence

Objective #3 To Consistently Deliver Excellent Customer Service

Objective #4 To Be a Financially Responsible Organization

Objective #5 Constantly Identify Opportunities to Improve Efficiencies and Effectiveness

F. Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this report

G. Financial Impact

The financial impact of this report will be based upon the contract negotiation process undertaken by staff. As directed through the report recommendation, the Community Communications Advisory Committees recommends to Council that additional paid advertising funds be allocated in the 2021 budget based upon the level of financial need as suggested by staff through the contact negotiations.

H. In consultation with

Carling Fee, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator

Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to 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, communications@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

Attachment- Local Media Provider Evaluation

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Hendry
Manager of Communications and Economic Development

Shawn Everitt
Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:
Tim Hendry
communications@thebluemountains.ca
519-599-3131 extension 282

Local Media Providers & Evaluation

The tables below outline the available options of media providers in and around the Town of The Blue Mountains. Media outlets were divided into the categories of printed newspaper, online newspaper and radio.

All media companies below were contacted and asked to provide information based upon the criteria listed above.

Printed Newspaper

	Collingwood Connection	The Meaford Independent	Blue Mountain Review
Does the publication allow for a dedicated Town page / section with branding?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the publication meet the Legislative Requirement?	Yes	Yes	No
Is the publication free or subscription base	Free	Subscription: \$1.50	Free
Does the publication offer fair advertising rates?	Yes	Yes	Yes
What is the publication frequency?	Printed weekly, with articles updated daily online	Printed weekly, with articles updated daily online	Printed monthly, with an online edition issued weekly In addition, 75 copies are printed and mailed weekly
How is the publication distributed?	11,300 weekly subscriptions hand delivered across distribution area which includes 2,000 subscribers in The Blue Mountains	Various pick up locations including: Pharmasave, Foodland, Wren's General Store, UltraMar and Esso and complimentary copies	Direct mailed to 4300 homes in The Blue Mountains and 600 online email subscribers

	Collingwood Connection	The Meaford Independent	Blue Mountain Review
	Over 77,000 pageviews per month for the Collingwood Connection	Additional locations are being brought on board	
Is the publication distributed to all areas of the Municipality?	Yes, available upon request	No	Yes
Does the publication provide regular journalism and news coverage for The Blue Mountains?	Yes	No	No journalism coverage. Content from the Town including news releases, information from Council reports, and other Town information is repurposed and posted.
Does the publication follow a set of editorial standards and have editorial oversight?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is the publication published online and are paid advertisements displayed both in print and online?	Yes, as a digital online newspaper	Online advertisements are an additional cost	Yes, as a digital online newspaper
Does the publication provide analytic tracking for online advertisements?	Yes	Yes	Yes

Online Newspaper

	Collingwood Today
Does the publication allow for a dedicated Town section with branding?	Yes, branding can be added through big box ads, classified ads or as a dedicated page similar to: https://www.guelphtoday.com/city-of-guelph-information
Does the publication meet the Legislative Requirement?	No, online newspapers do not satisfy the legislative requirement
Is the publication free or subscription base	Free, and no pay or subscription wall
Does the publication offer fair advertising rates?	Yes
What is the publication frequency?	Online with hourly content
Number of Subscribers and Monthly Users	Articles are available online and sent by email to subscribers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11,550 daily email subscribers • 188,444 total website users in the past 30 days • TBM users account for approximately 4000 users per month
Does the publication provide regular journalism and news coverage for The Blue Mountains?	Yes, there is a dedicated journalist
Does the publication follow a set of editorial standards and have editorial oversight?	Yes
Does the publication provide analytic tracking for online advertisements?	Yes

