THE BUE MOUNTAINS FUTURE STORY:
INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SUSTINABILITY PLAN

Phase 1: Current State Report

DATE
May 2021

TOWN OF
THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Table of Contents

Introducing Sustainability

1.1 Purpose of This Document

In order to effectively move towards a sustainable future, it is important to understand the realities of the community today. When considering an issue as complex as sustainability in a community as dynamic as the Town of The Blue Mountains [TBM], understanding the current state requires inputs from a variety of sources- historical trends and data, current policy, community views and global best practices, which contextualize The Blue Mountains context. This Current State Report provides a review of varied sources and provides insights that will be considered as The Blue Mountains Future Story project moves into future phases and develops actions to move the community from the current state to the desired future. This document reflects a wide array of information gathered to date, but this doesn't represent the end of learning in the process. As The Blue Mountains Future Story project evolves, learning will continue to occur with an exploration of the future in phase two and the development of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan in phase three. The report is organized into 'snapshots' of varied community issues in order to provide key information that can be accessed through future phases of The Blue Mountains Future Story.

1.2 The Opportunity

The challenge question established for The Blue Mountains Future Story process is:

How might we build upon the unique attributes of the Town of The Blue Mountains while creating a shared path towards a future of increased livability, vibrancy and health of all living systems in our community?

The Blue Mountains Future Story will help shape local decision-making by providing a clear path to the future, starting with a sound understanding of today's context as explored in this report. Four community systems were identified as a starting point for understanding sustainability in the Town of The Blue Mountains.

• The social system (how we can all live our best lives)

• The environmental system (how we protect our natural resources and manage climate changes)

• The economic system (how the community can remain vibrant and successful for decades to come)

• The cultural system (how our human and natural heritage can be preserved and enhanced)

These systems may be refined as the process evolves, to best reflect the unique context of the community.

1.3 Building on The Sustainable Path

The Blue Mountains community has a strong history of exploring sustainability in a comprehensive way. In 2009-2010, the Town developed The Blue Mountains Sustainable Path- a long-term sustainability plan to guide the future of the community. This plan included goals for the future and 667 related actions (159 primary actions with 508 secondary and tertiary actions). Below is a summary graphic which depicts the current status (as of 2021) of the actions originally proposed. The action statuses listed were retrieved by Town staff and committee members and documented to the best of their ability. The nature of the document having shared accountability between community, Town administration, and committees has resulted in many actions having an "unknown" status. The current status of 2010 Sustainable Path actions presented within the plan itself are documented below. For more information, contact sustainability@thebluemountains.ca.

Figure 1: The four community systems that framed the exploration of the current state of The Blue Mountains.

Table 1: Action statuses from the 2010 ICSP (Sustainable Path)

	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Completed	6	28	1
Ongoing/in progress	26	77	4
Included in Future Plans	5	14	2
Never Initiated	17	88	10
Unknown	105	275	9
Total	159	482	26

Figure 2: 2009 ICSP (Sustainable Path) Action Status by Theme
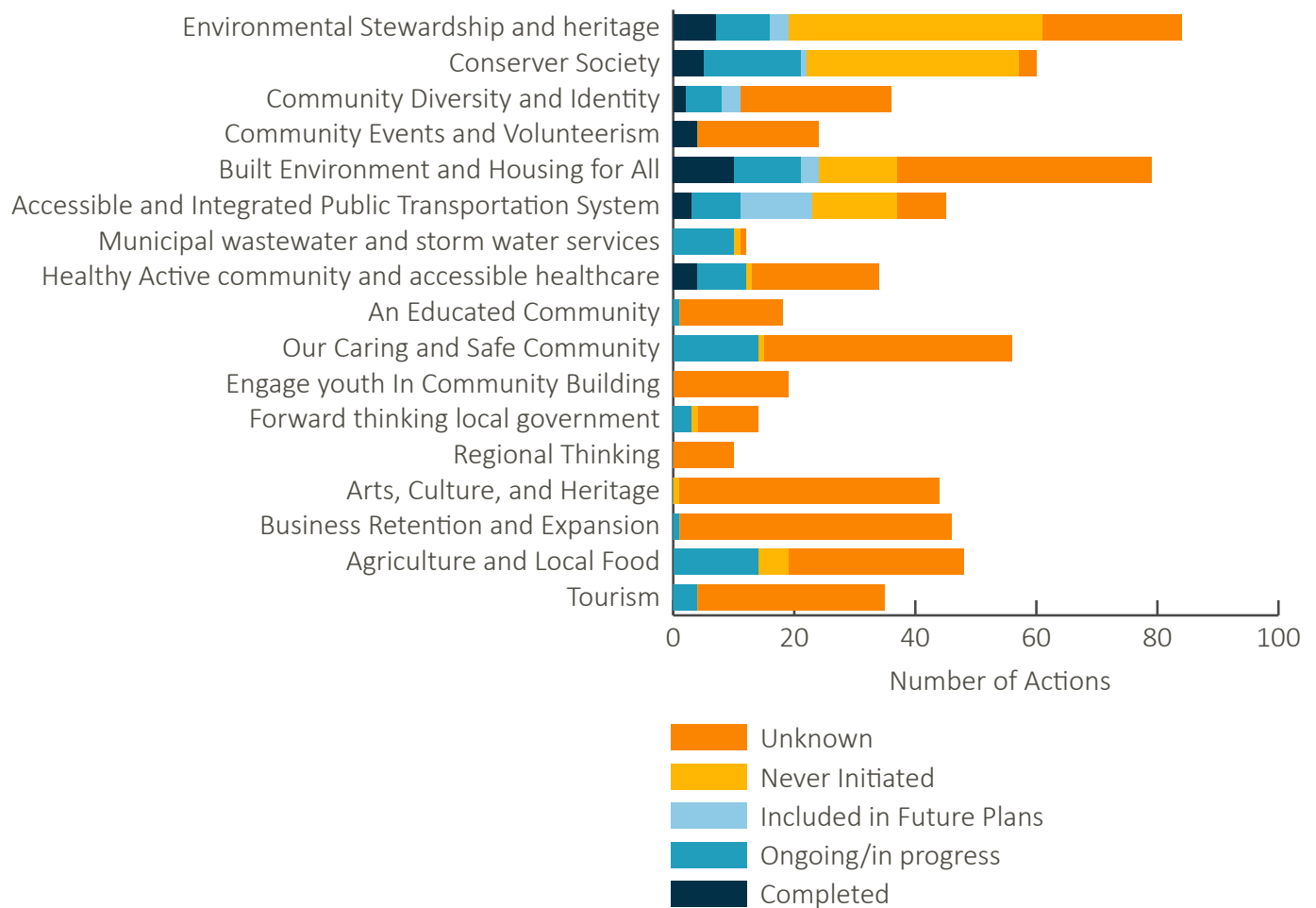
Since The Sustainable Path was completed in 2010, local to global realities have changed significantly. From the COVID-19 pandemic and **the declaration of a climate change emergency** to demographic shifts, from technological advances to changes in the local economy, some of the pressures and opportunities for the community are very different. Other priorities likely remain the same. For example, concern for the natural environment, agricultural land preservation, equitable economic development and a variety of other community needs identified in this Current State Report were also brought forward in The Sustainable Path. The Blue Mountains Future Story is an opportunity to reflect on persistent needs and new realities, setting a new course to address our challenge question that leads us to a future of increased livability, vibrancy and health of all living systems in our community. The Blue Mountains Future Story aims to build on lessons learned in The Sustainable Path, while being responsive to the current realities, pressures and implementation needs of The Blue Mountains today.

Declaration of a Climate Change Emergency: On October 21, 2019, the Town of The Blue Mountains declared a Climate Change Emergency for the purpose of enhancing and accelerating action on our commitment to protect our community, our economy, and our ecosystems from the impacts of climate change. At the time of this declaration, hundreds of Canadian municipalities, including Grey Highlands and West Grey, had already declared Climate Change Emergencies, and many more such declarations have been made since.

1.4 The Blue Mountains Future Story Process

The Blue Mountains Future Story process has three phases:

Phase 1: Community Situational Assessment

This phase surfaces the current realities of The Blue Mountains's context (including data, trends, policy, experience, and perspectives). Engagement in this phase focused on understanding the views and experiences of stakeholders and community members and exploring what makes it unique.

Phase 1 Deliverable: Current State Report

Following the completion of Phase 1, a Current State Report discussing current realities in The Blue Mountains will be presented to Council.

Phase 2 - Visioning and Objectives

This phase will develop a picture of the desired future for The Blue Mountains based on the ideas, hopes and dreams of the community. This is our largest phase of engagement, as we will focus on collaboratively gathering insights for what the community wants The Blue Mountains to look like in the future. Stakeholder engagement in this phase will ensure broader community outreach and will include deliberate efforts to engage with those who may not have been aware of, or felt included in, Phase 1 of engagement. Building these cross-community connections will increase community awareness and involvement as the project moves onto phase three.

Phase 2 Deliverable: Vision and Objectives Report

Following the completion of Phase 2, a Vision and Objectives Report on a desired future will be presented to Council.

Phase 3 - Develop Action Plan

This phase will develop a plan for the future that moves the community from the current reality (Phase 1) to the desired future (Phase 2), turning ideas into meaningful action steps grounded in The Blue Mountains's unique context. This phase of engagement will explore the most impactful ideas and opportunities for shared ownership of the actions to move towards the desired future, with participation and leadership of both Town staff and community members necessary for long-term success.

Phase 3 Deliverable: The Blue Mountains Future Story: Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

Following the conclusion of the first three phases, a final report

Project Timeline

PHASE ONE

Community Situational Assessment

September 2020 - May 2021

PHASE TWO

Visioning and Objectives

May - October 2021

PHASE THREE

Develop Action Plan

September - December 2021

Figure 3: Project Timeline

Figure 4: The Blue Mountains Organizational Plan Hierarchy

will be developed for further review. Once the final report is complete, the Action Plan will be presented to Council for adoption.

The Blue Mountains Future Story: Integrated Community Sustainability Plan completed in phase 3 will provide the foundation that will inform the Town's directional plans and resources, as illustrated in the diagram above.

1.5 Report Methodology

The Current State Report was developed through four streams of inputs, including:

• Community feedback explored the views, experiences and ideas of residents. This provides an understanding of what matters to the community, what life is like today and what changes could improve the future. A more in-depth report of community feedback can be found in *Appendix A*.

• Local statistics and data looked at local context and trends that represent varied aspects of community life. This provides an

understanding of historical trends and objective information on the community. Raw contextual research data can be found in *Appendix B*.

• Best practice examined broader trends and directions in other municipal, national and international policy and practices. This provides a broader context to understand the current reality of The Blue Mountains and where the community may go in the future. Broader trend research summaries can be found in *Appendix B*.

• Future direction research reviewed the policy direction for the community and region. This provides a local perspective on the current direction for change in the community. Detailed policy research can be found in *Appendix B*.

This Current State Report and its insights were developed by analysing the information gathered in these four streams. Information and learning will continue to evolve throughout the project. Detailed findings from each of these inputs can be found in *Appendix A* and *Appendix B*. A brief summary of what went into each input is provided below.

Community Feedback

Community feedback was obtained during phase one of engagement. This phase of engagement is the first of three, with phase two focusing on community ideas for a desired future for The Blue Mountains and phase three focusing on developing actions to move the community towards the vision. During phase one, community members were asked to:

- Attend the stakeholder workshop session held on February 18th on Zoom, or respond in the data walks survey following;

- Provide feedback via social media using the hashtag #tbmfuturestory;

- Provide feedback online via the project website: online survey, print survey, ambassadors network, spreading social media and poster imagery;

- Request a print survey on the website, through The Blue Mountains Review, or through the library delivery service;

- Be interviewed and share personal lived experiences from the Blue Mountain in user experience interviews; and

- Become a sustainability ambassador to host coffee chats and give feedback for sustainability.

- The results of these engagement methods, and who took part in them can be found below, with additional resources available in *Appendix A*.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching impacts on communities, many of which impact civic life and involvement. Influential events and dates in The Blue Mountains leading up to and during engagement include: a strict province-wide shutdown mandated by the province (December 26, 2021 for 28 days in The Blue Mountains area), a second declaration of emergency in Ontario with new stay at home orders (January 12th for January 14th), new federal travel restrictions (January 29th), declaration of emergency expired (February 8th), stay at home order lifted in Grey (February 16th).

Phase 1 of engagement ran from January 18th to February 29th. It is advised that readers take COVID-19 considerations under account when reviewing engagement feedback, both in terms of numbers, but also in terms of focus and reported stresses. Read more in *Appendix A.*

Engagement during COVID-19: Key Dates

January 14: New Stay at Home Order

January 25: Survey Opens

February 16: Stay at Home Order Lifted

February 18: Data Walk Workshop

February 26: Survey Closes & Interviews Begin
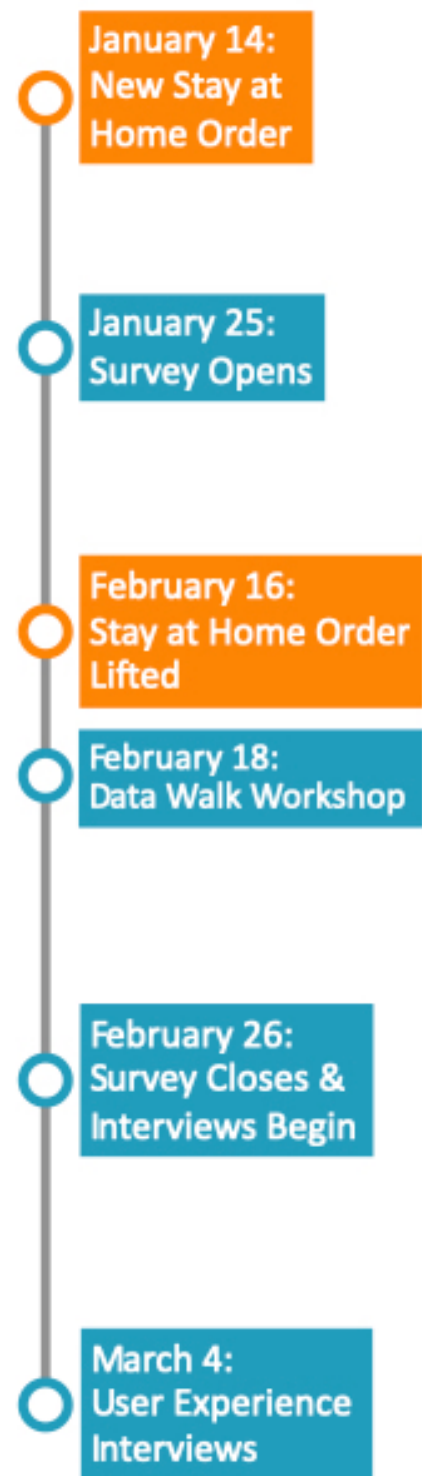
March 4: User Experience Interviews

Figure 5: Phase 1 engagement timeline during COVID-19

Online Survey

The approach to online and print engagement gave residents an opportunity to share their insights for action in a way that allowed for 24/7 access with a relatively minimal investment in time. This enabled the project team to gain a broader variety of insights into the current state in The Blue Mountains. Survey highlights include:

• 261 between January 25th and February 26th

• A series of open-ended questions to understand the general experiences, priorities and concerns of the general public which includes residents, visitors, and business owners alike. We asked:

» What are the best things about The Blue Mountains?

» What changes would make our community even better?

» Please rank the following aspects of The Blue Mountains that make the community unique in order of importance

• Natural features including the Georgian Bay Shoreline, the Niagara Escarpment, Nipissing Ridge, etc.
• Active recreation and eco-tourism draws in the community (ski resorts and clubs, trails for cycling and hiking in the Niagara Escarpment, and sailing in Georgian Bay, etc.)
• Strong ties between local area services and businesses (Owen Sound, Meaford and Collingwood) including transportation, business, and employment connections
• The rural lifestyle
• Small town, village and hamlet feel and connection between neighbours
• Agricultural opportunities
• The Town's location and relationship with the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)
• A mix of residents who are both full-time and seasonal
• A diverse mix of businesses, including products, experiences, and services
• Arts and culture scene, including public programs and commercial creativity and galleries
• Local government that develops ties between community needs and municipal services
• Other

» In your opinion, what else makes the Town of The Blue Mountains unique?

» How would you describe life today in the Town of The Blue Mountains in 100 words or less?

Type of Resident
- Full-time, Year Round
- Part-time, 6 Months - 11 Months
- Seasonal, 6 Months or Less
- Flex, Live in TBM but work outside of community
- I do not live in The Blue Mountains

"I am responding to this survey as a_____"
- TBM Resident
- Business owner in TBM
- Both a resident and a business owner
- Working in TBM only
- Visitor
- Other

Number of People in the Household
- I do not live in TBM
- 1-2 people
- 3-4 people
- 5 people or more

Age of Respondent
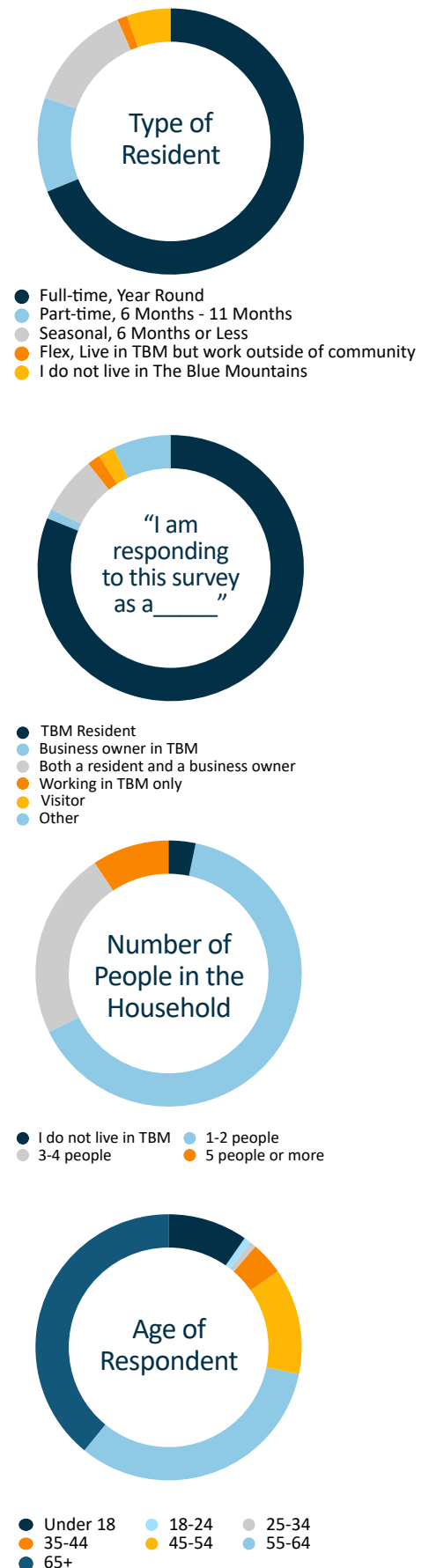- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Figure 6: Summary stats: who we heard from

Data Walks Workshop

The data walks workshop invited targeted stakeholders to gather with key The Blue Mountains staff to explore a variety of data. Using a dynamic mix of data, visual precedents and real-time visualization, the aim of the workshop was to gain insights into data trends in the community. To briefly summarize this process:

• Between February 18th and February 26th, a data walks workshop was held, followed by a data walk survey for those unable to attend, engaging with 39 (27 in person, 12 via survey) stakeholders.

• This workshop was created as a means to understand local trends in more detail for a series of data. The categories of data, analysis and questioning including:

  » Demographics- age profile data

  » Economics- Industry employment data

  » Agriculture – Direct farm sales, farmer age, and spray use data

  » CO2 Emissions – Community Co2E Emissions and Global GHG decrease statistics from the UN

  » Waste – residential diversion rate, and waste over time data

  » Housing – South Georgian Bay Housing price and required income data

  » Watershed Health – Watershed health report card data

  » Food Insecurity and Poverty – Grey Bruce food insecurity and worldwide young worker poverty data

• This workshop and subsequent survey brought together a series of people representing a variety of organizations including:

  » Sustainability Advisory Committee

  » Agricultural Advisory Committee

  » Communications Advisory Committee

  » Economic Development Advisory Committee

  » Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

  » Grey Sauble Conservation Authority

  » Grey County

  » Niagara Escarpment Commission

  » Blue Mountains Public Library

  » Museum Advisory Council

  » Georgian Bay Youth Roots

  » Grey Bruce Public Health

  » The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce

  » Institute of Southern Georgian Bay

  » The Grey Bruce Sustainability Network

  » Blue Mountains Ratepayer Association

  » Council

  » Town Staff:

      • Roads and Drainage
      • Water and Wastewater Services
      • Parks and Trails
      • Development Engineering
      • Sustainability & Solid Waste
      • Operations
      • Sustainability
      • Community Services

User Experience Interviews

When addressing significant systems change, the lived experiences of residents are often missed. This can then lead to a detachment from the proposed change and solutions to the community it is intended to help. To address this issue, we underwent a set of discovery interviews with local residents to understand life in the community in a precise way- leading to a more contextualized understanding of the current lived experience in The Blue Mountains.

Between February 26th and March 4th, we interviewed ten individuals who live and/or work

in The Blue Mountains to understand the diversity of lived experiences in The Blue Mountains. Interviewees were selected due to their varied lived experience in the Town, employment and residence situations, and other demographic details where possible, however, interviewees were not asked to self-identify by age, gender, race or to share any other specific personal information. Interviewees are described as follows for anonymity:

- Three Farmers, two who own a series of land and employ other farmers, and one farmer with little owned land, but who provides services to other farmers;

- One small business owner who recently moved to The Blue Mountains;

- One individual who lives outside of The Blue Mountains, but works in the Town;

- One individual who lives with a young family in The Blue Mountains, but works elsewhere in the innovation sector;

- Two retirees who have been in The Blue Mountains for more than 5 years;

- One retiree that is new to the community;

- One resident who has a young family and grew up in the area.

User experience interviews varied slightly depending on interviewee, but the general structure consisted of a brief introduction, a walk through the interviewees typical day-in the life in The Blue Mountains (first before COVID, then any changes during COVID that will make long-term effects), an exercise of discussing choices and thoughts associated with each action they undertook in a day, a choice of their most sustainable habit, a brainstorm of possible ways to improve sustainability in the community, and a listing of one things that they would want to see retained/protected in The Blue Mountains 50 years from now.

Sustainability Advisory Subcommittee

The sustainability advisory committee assembled a subcommittee to assist in the development of the ICSP, and all of its parts. The subcommittee is comprised of three Blue Mountains residents. The current state drafting process has sought the help of this committee during:

- An interactive project Startup that asked for local plans and policies, current issues (globally), trends (local, provincial, national, and global), existing programs and initiatives, and visions for the project process

- Ongoing update memos and presentations

- Direct asks for engagement communications

- Brainstorming engagement interviewees

- Attending and providing inputs at the data walks workshop

- Taking part in a current state workshop which took community engagement, research and policy inputs, and synthesized sustainability insights that informed section 2.0 of this report.

- Continued input for future phases of engagement and production.

Local Statistics and Data

Local statistics and data was retrieved from the sources listed below. This data was used to inform the data walks workshop described above and the 'snapshots' that follow. More detailed data recording by source can be found in *Appendix B*.

- The Blue Mountains Annual Landfill Report [2019]

- Town of The Blue Mountains Community Profile (primary source: Statistics Canada) [accessed January 2021, undated]

- Town of The Blue Mountains Permit Activity reports [2018, 2019, 2020]

- Grey agri-food strategy [2017]

- South Georgian Bay Tourism Labour

Task Force Report [2018]

- Town/Community GHG Inventory [2005]

- Grey county The Blue Mountains profile [2020]

- Sustainable Development Goals Reports [2020]

- Government of Canada Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Environmental Indicators website [2021 retrieval- continuously updated]

- Government of Canada Energy Regulator Website [March 2021 retrieval]

- PCP Milestone One Report [2005]

- Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan [2019]

- Saugeen Ojibway Nation website [various dates];

- Grey/Bruce Sustainability Network website and documents [various dates]

- Niagara Escarpment Commission Documents

- Grey Sauble Watershed Report Card [2018]

- Indian Brook Subwatershed Report Card [2020]

- Nottawasaga Valley Watershed Report Card [2018]

- Grey County Climate Change Action Plan Presentation [2021]

- OMAFRA County profiles: Agriculture, food and business for Grey County [2016]

- OMAFRA County profiles: Agriculture, food and business for Simcoe County [2016]

- Draft Economic Development Strategy [2021- 2025]

- The Sustainable Development Goals Report [2020]

- Year End 2020 Building Permit Statistics Summary [2021]

- Partners for Climate Protection National Measures Report [2015]

Best Practice Research

Best practice research was recorded as a series of case studies that are noted in detail in *Appendix B*. The sources explored were selected by The Blue Mountains staff from national or international guiding principles, or unique or leading case studies for sustainability. The sources reviewed included:

- The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision [2018 – 2024]

- The Drawdown Review [2020]

- Whitby's Green Standard [2020]

- Federal Sustainable Development Strategy [2019]

- Environment Canada Indicators supporting the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy [2019 – ongoing]

- UN Sustainable Goals [2016 – ongoing]

- Sustainable Waterloo Region [ongoing]

Local Policy and Plan Direction

Local policy and plan direction research collected a series of policy and plan directions from within Grey County and The Blue Mountains. A detailed set of policy considerations and summaries can be found in *Appendix B*. The list of policy documents that have been reviewed include the following:

- The Provincial Policy Statement [2020]

- Grey County Official Plan [2019]

- Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan [2016]

- Grey County Trails master plan [2019]

- The Blue Mountains Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan [2019]

- Grey County Climate Action Planning documents [2021]

- Green in Grey [2017]

- Grey County Growth Management Strategy [2015]

- Town of The Blue Mountains

Strategic Plan [2019- 2024]

• 2010 Integrated Community sustainability Plan

• Endangered Species Act [2020 update]

• Niagara Escarpment Plan [2020]

• Draft Economic Development Strategy [2021- 2025]

• Primary Care Physician Recruitment Strategy and Action Presentation [2018]

Creation of this report

As discussed, understanding the current state of a community requires a multifaceted approach to information gathering and review. To organize the wealth of information that has been gathered, two sections have been developed: current state challenge questions and current state snapshots.

Current state challenge questions:

No single source of information provides the true reflection of the current reality of the Town of The Blue Mountains. Reviewing the varied sources identified above and looking to integrate information about the environmental, economic, social and cultural life of The Blue Mountains is necessary to obtain a more holistic understanding of the community. Within this initial phase of The Blue Mountains Future Story process, it is important to recognize that the integration of these varied sources of information is intended to surface issues, rather than propose solutions (which will occur in the third phase of the project). Through the review of the information, a number of challenges were identified. In section 2.2 that follows, a series of challenge questions have been developed to spark thinking about the future of the Town of The Blue Mountains as we explore the community's vision for the future in phase two of the process and develop a plan for a sustainable future in phase three. These questions shed light on the complex reality of the Town of The Blue Mountains and will frame part of the exploration of future phases of The Blue Mountains Future Story process.

Current state snapshots:

Current state snapshots were created through an analysis of local data, policies and plans, data walks participant feedback, international best practice, and public feedback. In total nine sustainability snapshots emerged as key elements of sustainability. In addition, five supplementary snapshots were identified that support the functioning of the initial nine sustainability themes. These themes provide a high-level overview of some of the dynamics affecting sustainability in The Blue Mountains.

Community sustainability is about understanding the interconnectedness of all components of the community in order to ensure a thriving, healthy community of tomorrow. These snapshots are intended to capture an overview of information gathered to date, providing an initial foundation of knowledge about the community as The Blue Mountains Future Story moves into the next phases of the project.

Snapshot categories were developed as follows:

• All data that had been accumulated to date was differentiated into topic categories;

• Sustainable Development Goals were overlaid with this data to highlight were there may be overlapping data or gaps in our knowledge;

• Community feedback was incorporated into the snapshot areas;

• Policy direction, originally collected under topic areas of environment, social, economic, and cultural sustainability were overlaid into topic areas where appropriate;

• Statistics and data were added where appropriate and available; and

• Broader trend research was overlaid into categories based on high-level directions and goals within these documents.

Current State Challenge Questions

2.1 Challenge Questions

Given the complexity of community sustainability, it is important to understand how elements of the community interrelate to one another. Challenge questions are a way to integrate elements of the community that, if answered effectively, can reconcile aspects of The Blue Mountains that may be somewhat in tension. Rather than defaulting to an 'either/or' mindset, challenge questions encourage ideas and solutions that positively influence a number of elements of the community at the same time These challenge questions will help to inform phase two of engagement, as we aim to collect vision and objective statements that aim to improve these tensions that exist in The Blue Mountains.

How might we share in the enjoyment of our natural assets while ensuring their preservation for future generations?

The natural assets of The Blue Mountains are what we've learned to be the most treasured by the community. These assets are a major economic driver, as visitors are drawn to the natural beauty and recreational opportunities of the area. There is a perceived risk by some survey respondents and interviewees that high levels of visitation and use could degrade the quality and enjoyment of these very assets, if not managed properly. At the same time, improvements to infrastructure and access to natural areas such as the shoreline, which attract visitors, can also improve quality of life for residents.

How might we build upon the unique attributes of The Blue Mountains to become a community of more diverse opportunities?

The local economy benefits from a strong tourism sector and a strong agricultural heritage, both of which are closely tied to the history and identify of the community. Unfortunately, the higher cost of living contributes to a less diverse population as many of the workers that local industries rely upon are unable to comfortably live and work in the community. With a less diverse community, The Blue Mountains may be missing unique perspectives and ideas to address local challenges, and may be a less desirable place to work for prospective employees or potential new employers.

How might we establish a shared set of values of what is worth preserving in The Blue Mountains and what changes are needed for a sustainable future?

The Blue Mountains is so many things to so many people. The result is a varied and sometimes conflicting set of views and expectations for life in the community, and a tension between enjoying the local resources and culture today and preserving these same resources for future generations. Some engagement respondents are concerned that visitors and part-time residents do not share the same mindset to preserve our natural assets, while policy reminds us that parts of The Blue Mountains' have been planned as tourism-focused communities. In addition, actions take to meet today's community needs and build for the future - such as building apartments to address housing affordability- may run counter to the expectations of some existing residents.

How might we leverage the benefits of a significant number of visitors to enhance the quality of life for all residents?

As a community that is relatively affluent, socioeconomic problems are often hidden to much of the community. With a lack of awareness, it can be a challenge to address issues, magnifying the difficulty of balancing local needs with visitor needs. With such a strong visitor-driven local economy, there is an opportunity to explore how the strengths of this existing economic base can be leveraged to address persistent challenges in the community.

How might we leverage the initial attraction to the beauty of The Blue Mountains as a way of generating actions that address the challenges of today and tomorrow?

Thinking about crisis and pleasure isn't easily done together. Like every other community, The Blue Mountains is grappling with the climate crisis, challenges to infrastructure, and demographic and economic pressures. Addressing these challenges requires a commitment to the future and a willingness to understand difficult realities.

How might we generate a sense of shared responsibility and action towards a sustainable future?

In understanding the varied community systems (economic, environmental, social, cultural), it is apparent that issues and opportunities do not exist in isolation. Rather, these systems are interconnected in ways that are both obvious and subtle. Given this complexity, it is evident that sustainable solutions need many hands. There is a strong need for leadership in all areas of the community to realize healthy and equitable economic growth, environmental protection and preservation, cultural and social security for today and future generations. Local government has a critical role to play in improving the community's sustainability, but can't do it alone. Meaningful and coordinated action from individual citizens, businesses, institutions and regional partners will be required to move the community forward.

As The Blue Mountains Future Story process continues, these challenge questions, coupled with the rich detail of information described in Section 3 will provide information and provocation to establish a future path for sustainability in The Blue Mountains.

Sustainability Snapshots

Sustainability planning requires looking at all of the existing dynamics in a community. These snapshots were developed by synthesizing information collected from local data, policy, best practice and the feedback we've heard from the community so far. Snapshots, by nature, are not intended to be all-encompassing. They are summaries of the information that has been accumulated to date to understand current strengths and challenges of the community. The current state is not fixed, and thus learning within *The Blue Mountains Future Story* process will evolve as the project progresses.

Through the process described in *section 1.5,* nine sustainability snapshots emerged as necessary contributors to sustainability. In addition, five supplementary snapshots were identified that support the functioning of the initial nine sustainability themes.

Sustainability snapshots include:

• Watershed Health
• Greenhouse gas emissions and energy
• Consumption and Production
• Sustainable Towns and Communities
• Sense of Community
• Affordability
• Healthy Economy
• Agriculture
• Government and Partnerships

Supplementary snapshots include:

• Health and Safety
• Arts and Culture
• Local Business
• Education and Learning
• Infrastructure and Innovation

3.1 Watershed Health

Watershed health refers to the status of the natural environment including significant natural features, water, wetland, forest, and wildlife conditions. International best practice, local policy, and data walks participants support the protection and maintenance of ecological resources, while enhancing biodiversity, wildlife environments, and improving water quality.

A 2018 analysis found that local watersheds have varying health status.[1,2] Respondent feedback prioritized natural environment as the most unique aspect of the Town, but also reports that tourism and development may be a threat to continued protection.

3.1.1 STATISTICS AND DATA

In 2018, both Nottawasaga and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities underwent watershed "health checks" that reported on the health of the watershed's forest and wetland conditions, stream health, and groundwater quality.[3,4] Overall, southern parts of the municipality scored higher than northern catchments, particularly for wetland and forest conditions (see below). Grey areas in the attached map also contribute to watershed health, but are not monitored/recorded in the same way as other watersheds due to their drainage into the Georgian Bay.

This watershed health snapshot is meant to give a general overview of watershed health. To learn more about the dynamics of watershed health in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- Blue Mountains SUBWATERSHED Health Check [2018]
- Grey Sauble WATERSHED Report Card [2018]
- Indian Brook Subwatershed Report Card [2020]
- International Joint Commission: Great lakes areas of concern

Catchment	Forest Conditions	Wetland conditions	Surface Water Quality
1) Beaver River	A	B	A
2) Mill Creek	A	B	B
3) Little Beaver	D	F	C
4) Indian Brook	D	F	B
5) Townline Creek	B	A	C
6) Pretty River*			
7) Silver Creek*	C	D	B
8) Black Ash Creek			

* Blue Mountains Watershed data retrieved by NVCA is not divided by catchment area, therefore the scoring is generalized for representation.
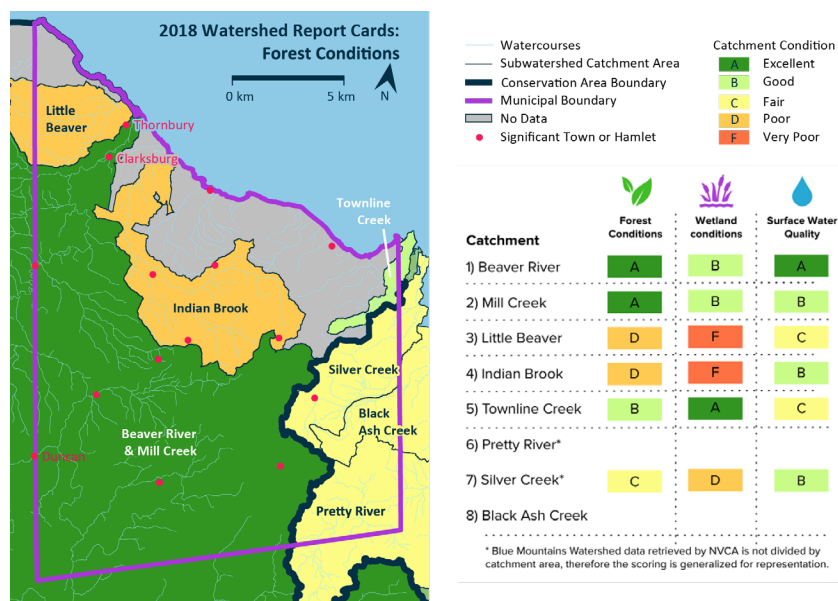
Figure 7: 2018 Watershed Health Report Card Results. Mapping data retrieved from Grey Sauble and Nottawasaga Conservation Authorities

When looking closer at forest conditions for Indian Brook in 2020, the scores were broken down into: % forest cover (scored "fair" (C)), % forest interior (scored "poor" (F)), and % riparian zone forested (scored "good" (B)).[5] Each of these forest requirements have improved over past reports, but remain short of the optimal percentages determined by the province. In particular, percent forest interior– "the remaining portion of a woodlot when a 100 metre buffer is removed"[6]–rated poorly due to a lack of large forested areas. These areas are important as they provide native species with undisturbed habitat.

Wetlands in The Blue Mountains scored low due to their lack of land coverage. The report notes that some of the threats to wetlands include: land conversion for development, drainage for agriculture and invasive species such as Phragmites.

3.1.2 BEST PRACTICE

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision

One of ICLEI's five sustainability pathways is nature-based development. This pathway aims "to protect and enhance the biodiversity and ecosystems in and around our cities, which underpin key aspects of our local economies and upon which we depend for the well-being and resilience of our communities."[7] This pathway encourages the maintenance of healthy environments (including, air, water and soil), and using nature for ecosystem services and economic opportunities.

Project Drawdown Review

Project Drawdown is a report that tracks the actions necessary to reach the goal of the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to, but preferably below, two degrees Celsius (see *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*).[8] Two action areas to help support this are land sinks and coastal/ocean sinks.[9] Carbon sinks (including land sinks and coastal/ocean sinks) are plants, waterbodies, soils, or human made capture systems that store carbon that would otherwise be released

into the atmosphere. Within these action areas, recommendations are made to use degraded land like brownfields, protect & restore ecosystems, and to use regenerative agriculture practices.[10]

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Three Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are reflected in watershed health goals include:[11]

• **Goal 6:** Clean Water and Sanitation: To ensure access to safe water sources and sanitation for all. This goal suggests investing in water research, development, and governance which includes Indigenous voices, women and youth.

• **Goal 14:** Life Below Water: To conserve and sustainably use the world's ocean, seas and marine resources. This goal suggests protecting valuable habitats and making responsible water choices.

• **Goal 15:** Life on Land: to sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss. This goal suggests supporting recycling, eating a locally sourced diet, and consuming only what we need.

Whitby Green Standard

The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the multiple green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. Whitby's Green Standard is a list of required and suggested standards for developers to implement to receive approval. Two of ten of the standard's implementation categories are land use and nature, and sustainable water. These categories include requirements attending to:[12]

• Ecological function and integrity;
• Tree canopy and the heat island effect;
• Bird- and bat-friendly glazing;
• Restoration of biodiversity and pollinator habitat;

- Invasive species management;
- Key natural features or buffers;
- Native drought resistant plants; and
- Water balance and irrigation for lots/units.

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Five of 13 of the Federal Sustainable Development Goals align with watershed health, and include:[13]

- Healthy coasts and oceans;
- Pristine lakes and rivers;
- Sustainably managed lands and forests;
- Healthy wildlife populations;
- Clean drinking water.

3.1.3 LOCAL POLICY AND PLANS

Watershed health and the protection of water resources is included in County and Town policy documents. Some common suggestions include:

- Enhance and support biodiversity, particularly in natural heritage spaces;

- Maintain, protect and enhance natural heritage features including: forests, wetlands, naturalized spaces, sensitive land uses, fish habitat, valleylands, areas of natural and scientific interest, endangered species and their habitats, biodiversity and ecological function;

- Connect wildlife and plant linkages and core areas;

- Ensure municipalities consider their effects on the whole watershed, minimize their negative impact on the watershed, and are aware of necessary water features, and their connectivity;

- Develop on lands that are stable and not prone to flooding;

- Protect portable water quality and quantity;

- Encourage low impact development stormwater management techniques, in addition to traditional stormwater management; develop education and community outreach programs to promote water best management practices;

- Develop and regenerate brownfield lands.

Ontario's Conservation Authorities deliver services and programs that protect and manage water and other natural resources in partnership with government, landowners, and other organizations. They promote an integrated watershed approach, aiming to balance human, environmental, and economic needs.

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority's Indian Brook Report Card for 2020 included some recommendations for protecting watershed health, which include recommendations to:[14]

- Maintain vegetated buffers around water courses, and plant windbreaks;
- Minimize fertilizer and pesticide use near water;
- Identify and control invasive species, and plant native species;
- Fence livestock out of streams, and upgrade manure storage;
- Reduce soil erosion using "no-till, residue management and cover crops;"
- Conserve water and collect rain water;
- Increase land permeability and implement low impact development;
- Work with conservation authorities for planning regulations, and monitoring;
- Adopt environmental sustainability initiatives and community grants; and
- Purchase and protect environmentally significant properties to connect natural features.

3.1.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 2 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to watershed health.

Table 2: Status of watershed health actions by goal		
Goal	Type	Action Status
Develop links between natural areas and wildlife corridors	Primary	C · · · · · · U O
	Secondary	U U · · U · O C C N N
	Tertiary	· U U O O
Achieve long-term Conservation of existing forest resources for future generations	Primary	C · · · · · · · · O
	Secondary	O · · U C C U U O U U U U
	Tertiary	N U U U O
Provide Education and Marketing of the Value of the Local Natural Environment	Primary	N · · · · N
	Secondary	I N N N N O N N N
Protect Local Biodiversity and Habitat	Primary	N · · N · N N
	Secondary	N N N N N U N N O U N N
Preserve, Protect and Enhance the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater	Primary	N · · · · · N
	Secondary	N N N C N N U U U N N N N N U N N
Becoming a Dark Sky Community	Primary	I
	Secondary	O N N N

Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).

3.1.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see *section 1.4*). When asked "if the watershed had a voice, what do you think it would say it needs?", data walks participants reported the watershed would cry for: help, respect, more trees, less chemical runoff, less erosion, and increased government concern.

When asked what contributes to decreased watershed health, data walks participants answered:

• Urban expansion in sensitive areas;
• Poor compliance with legislative setbacks;
• Recreation and tourism activities;
• Lack of incentives to rehabilitate creeks;
• Rivers and watersheds impacted by previous developments;
• Agricultural tensions, with particular reference to livestock in the Beaver River/Silver creek;
• Loss of forest and wetlands;
• Debris, drainage, and runoff from parks, lawns, farmland, and sewage systems; and
• Lack of education on importance and protection.

Brainstormed opportunities to improve included:

• Sustainable investment in aging infrastructure;
• Low impact development;
• Built form, design, and enforcement;
• Regenerative farming;
• Reforestation;
• Tourism practice changes;
• Ecosystem services approach to infrastructure; and
• Data collection, analyzing, engagement, outreach, and action planning.

3.1.6 SURVEY AND RESPONSES

During Phase 1 of engagement, public survey respondents and interviewees highlighted the following as the best aspects of the community:

- **Natural features,** including: Blue Mountain, Georgian Bay, the harbour, natural or wild landscapes, Niagara Escarpment, beaches, forests and trees, lakes and rivers, parks, open, and green space, and trails;

- **Scenery and natural beauty** including the view of the Georgian Bay, the pastoral view of agriculture, and the view of the mountain, hills, and valley; and

- Respondents reflected on how lucky and grateful they are to live where they do for the natural environment and the recreational activities associated within. Interviewees put natural environment features as the main thing they would retain as it was the reason why many of them moved to the area in the first place.

Natural features, including the Georgian Bay Shoreline, the Niagara Escarpment, Nipissing Ridge and others, were ranked as the most unique element of The Blue Mountains.

When asked "what changes would make the community even better," survey respondents said:

- **Increased natural landscape respect and protection**, particularly: air quality protection, forested area protection and tree planting, wildlife protection, and trail improvements. This was often raised when referring to new developments;

- **Improved public access to waterfront and rivers**, particularly in regards to beaches. They also listed access to public parks, and greenspace.

In addition, when asked about the story of today, some residents spoke about environmental loss in the area. This was particularly referenced in context of urban development and the actions of new residents and tourists. There is a perception that tourists are more likely to deteriorate the area because they do not have a "stake" in it.

3.2 GHG Emissions

Greenhouse gas [GHG] emissions in The Blue Mountains are largely attributed to building energy consumption and reliance on private automotive transportation for both local and tourist access. Policies, best practice and data walks participants promote the increased use of active transportation, renewable energy sources, improvement of agricultural practices, and the development of green building standards for new development.

3.2.1 LOCAL STATISTICS AND DATA

The Blue Mountains Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan reports the operational emissions produced by Town-owned buildings and infrastructure. This report found per capita Town emissions decreased since 2005, noting that the lead contributors to Town corporate GHG emissions include: fleet, buildings, water, wastewater and solid waste, and streetlights and traffic lights.[15] This decrease since 2005 is largely attributed to the provincial phase out of coal power plants.
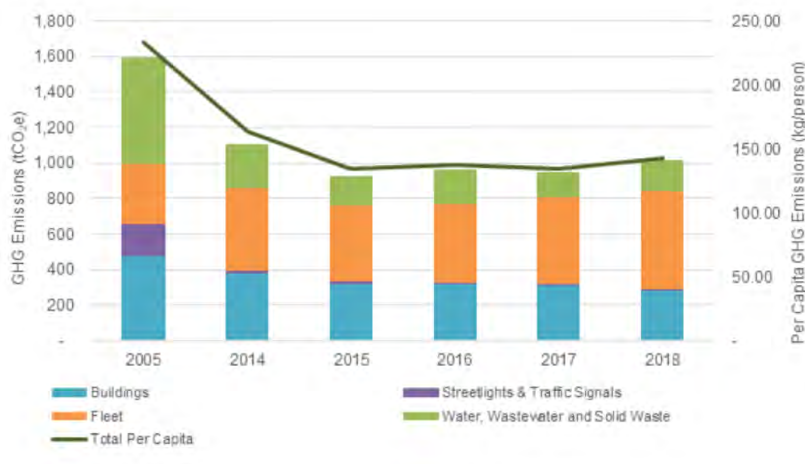

Figure 8: The Blue Mountains coprporate GHG emissions over time

The Town of The Blue Mountains' Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) Milestone One Report found that the majority of community carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (CO_2e) originated from transportation (37%) and residential sources (26%) (see *Figure 9*).[16] While this report was created in 2005, there has not been another report developed in The Blue Mountains since, making it the most up to date source of local emissions data.

This greenhouse gas emissions snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of greenhouse gas emissions in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *The Blue Mountains's Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) Milestone One Report [2005]*
- *The Blue Mountains Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan [2019]*
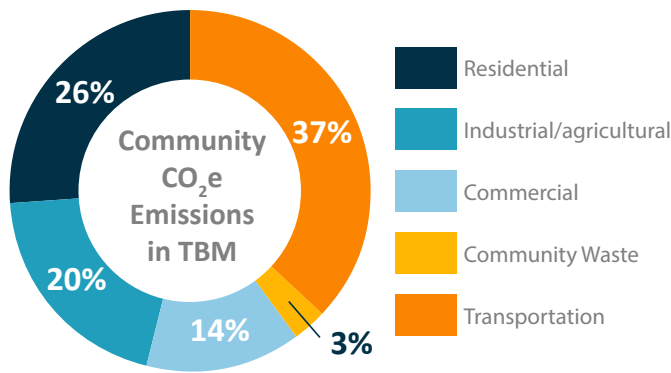- *Grey County's Climate Change Action Plan Draft documents [2021]*

Figure 9: Community CO2e Emissions in The Blue Mountains

These proportions differ from the GHG emissions in Canadian communities, which was reported to be the following in PCP's 2015 National Measures Report as:

- 26% transportation
- 10% residential
- 7% commercial
- 9% industrial
- 47% non-urban[17]

In comparison to national community GHG emissions, The Blue Mountains has a higher proportion of their emissions coming from transportation and residential sources.

This difference is indicative of The Blue Mountains's lack of significant industry and electrical production. For a local comparison, in 2018 Grey County underwent a review of community emissions by subsector, which found that in the county overall, emissions were from:

- Agriculture (44%)
- Private Vehicles (23%)
- Residential Buildings (11%)
- Commercial/Institutional Buildings (10%)
- Solid Waste (landfill) (6%)
- Off-road vehicles (3%)
- Industrial Buildings (3%)[18]

Petroleum products are the largest fuel type consumed in Ontario at 48% of total usage, with natural gas at 28% and electricity at 16%.[19] Ontario's electricity generation mix primarily includes zero carbon emitting sources such as

nuclear power (60%), hydro-electricity (26%), green forms of electricity generation (wind: 7%, solar: 2%), with roughly 3% Natural Gas generation. Ontario's total energy demand is the second highest overall in Canada, yet only eighth per capita in Canada.

3.2.2 BEST PRACTICE DIRECTION

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Two Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are reflected in greenhouse gas emissions goals include:[20]

- **Goal 7:** Affordable and Clean Energy: ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. The goal suggests investment in renewables, prioritizing energy efficient practices, adopting clean energy technologies and infrastructure, encouraging businesses to source electricity from renewable resources, encouraging employers to implement telecommunications and incentivizing train travel and active transportation over automobile travel.

- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: encourages changes, particularly after COVID-19, including: Green transition to decarbonize the economy, the creation of green jobs and sustainable inclusive growth, investment in sustainable solutions that do not rely on fossil fuels, ensuring polluters pay for their pollution, confronting climate risks, and cooperation between all levels of government (municipal, provincial, and federal).

According to the 2020 SDG report, it's approximated that COVID-19 caused a 6% drop in greenhouse gas emissions globally for 2020. This 6% decrease in global GHGs is 1.6% short of the annual global reduction needed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2030.

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment lists low emission development as one of five sustainability pathways. The aim of this pathway is "to curb climate change, create new economic opportunities and improve the health of people and natural systems."[21] Suggested actions include, implementing the Paris Climate Agreement, implementing climate neutrality in infrastructure and operations, and promoting sustainable mobility and transportation.

Project Drawdown review

Project Drawdown is a report that tracks the actions necessary to reach Paris Agreement goals to limit global warming to, but preferably below, two degrees Celsius.[22] They report that carbon sinks are vital to climate change (see *Watershed Health*), with 24% of emissions removed by plants on land and 17% removed in oceans.[23] The report notes that 59% of heat-trapping emissions stay in the atmosphere.

Key insights from Project Drawdown Review:

- If we begin advancing climate solutions now rather than waiting on new technologies, we can achieve the Paris Agreement goal;

- Climate change actions need to have an integrated systems approach that includes energy efficient buildings, improved farming practices and reduced meat consumption;

- Climate solutions have cost savings over the long term, particularly when factoring in healthcare savings, savings from reduced air pollution, and the avoidance of climate damages (like agricultural losses and water rise);

- Climate solutions require stopping the use of oil and gas, and incentivizing green energy alternatives;

- We need to build carbon sinks at the same time we reduce emissions;

- Climate change is not an issue for one government or group, and requires cooperation and action at all levels;

- It is essential to collectively turn from theory to solutions-based actions immediately.

Action categories for proposed solutions include:

- Electricity (e.g. enhancing efficiency of energy uses, shifting production, and improving the electrical system);

- Food, agriculture & land use (e.g. addressing waste and diets, protecting ecosystems, and hifting agricultural practices);

- Industry (e.g. improving materials, reducing waste, and addressing refrigerants);

- Transportation (e.g. shifting to car-alternatives, enhancing efficiency of transportation, and electrifying vehicles);

- Building efficiency (e.g. enhancing energy efficiency, shifting energy resources, and addressing refrgerents);

- Improve land sinks (e.g. addressing waste diets, protecting and restoring ecocyctems, shifting agricultural practices, and using degredated land);

- Improve coastal & ocean sinks (e.g. protecting and restoring ocean ecosystems); and

- Decrease societal barriers (e.g. health and education improvements).

Strengthening actions for climate change initiatives include: shaping culture, setting goals that are specific to GHG and carbon; shifting capital to finance climate change efforts; changing behaviour; and improving technology.

Whitby Green Standard

The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the multiple green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. The Town of Whitby is a municipality that implemented a green development standard after the Town declared themselves in a climate emergency.[24] They set the

Town's GHG reduction target to 80% by 2050. One of Whitby's 10 principles that informs this standard is energy and climate change, which addresses the following actions:

- District energy systems;
- Renewable energy;
- Passive solar orientation;
- Building commissioning;
- Energy efficient appliances and performance; and
- Building resilience.

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Two of the 13 focus areas within the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy emphasize effective action on climate change and clean energy.[25] Indicators that support tracking this at the national level include greenhouse gas emissions, sea ice quality and coverage, snow cover and temperature change.

3.2.3 POLICY

The *Provincial Policy Statement* (PPS), *Grey County Official Plan* and other high-level documents state that municipalities and all levels of government should prepare for the impacts of climate change. This includes addressing the impacts that climate change will have on water in their area.

Grey County's Official Plan also outlines the need to consider climate change in development by:

- Increasing canopy in parks and natural areas;
- Updating infrastructure;
- Supporting green technologies and construction methods;
- Encouraging active transportation;
- Reusing older existing building stock;
- Promoting retrofits.

Grey County's Official Plan also specifies the need for shade and ultraviolet radiation protection to mitigate the urban heat island effect.

In advance of 2024, the *Town of The Blue Mountains Corporate Strategic Plan* identified the need to define the Town's Climate Emergency Declaration.

The Blue Mountains Official Plan sets strategic objectives to promote the use of leading-edge sustainable development and energy conservation policies, and commits to working with partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

3.2.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 3 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to greenhouse gas emissions.

Table 3: Status of greenhouse gas emissions actions by goal												
Goal	Type	Action Status										
Create an Energy Conservation Culture	Primary	C										
	Secondary	N	N									
Embrace Renewable Energy Production and Achieve Efficiencies in Energy Generation and Consumption	Primary			N				N		N		
	Secondary	N	N	N	N	N	U	U	N	N	N	
Reduce Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 80% and achieve carbon neutrality for Town Sources by 2050	Primary					N			N			
	Secondary	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N			
	Tertiary	O	N									

Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).

3.2.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see *section 1.4*). We asked data walks participants why transportation and residential emissions are the main contributors to the community's CO2 emissions. Their responses included noting that the Town has a high proportion of housing compared to industry and commercial, with few transit and active transportation options due to the geographical spread of their communities. It was suggested that the age of residents was also an important factor, because the elderly may be less able to use active transportation or transit in their activities of daily living.

Due to the unique rural and tourism draws within the municipality, private vehicle travel is a significant factor. The preference for large homes has also been flagged as a specific issue, and notes that we should be more cognizant of other greenhouse gases, particularly those like nitrous oxide that come from farming (see *Agriculture*).

We asked data walks participants what may have reduced GHG emissions in The Blue Mountains during COVID-19. Their responses primarily included travel restrictions for air travel and decreased local travel and tourism travel. Active transportation has been more common during COVID-19. Other participants noted that more people are reflecting on the natural world around them, and perhaps are more aware of the need to protect it (see *Watershed Health*).

Participants also shared ideas to reduce carbon emissions in The Blue Mountains, including:

- Supporting alternative energy including solar, wind, and water resources;
- Tree planting and tree planting policies;
- Energy conservation and alternative energy incentives;

- Improved active transportation network and advocacy;
- Cost-benefit analysis as well as testing and reporting public transportation;
- Electric and fuel efficient cars and infrastructure supports;
- Town leading by example through fleet and public buildings, net zero and green building policies for new builds and retrofits;
- Supporting complete and walkable communities;
- Exploring agricultural methods to achieve net zero emission with cover crops;
- Education;
- Having the Town commit to sustainability in all communications.

3.2.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

In the first phase of public engagement, questions were raised to gain a general understanding of community perspectives on life in The Blue Mountains currently. When asked what changes participants suggest to make the community even better, responses included:

- Creating a green/environmentally friendly community;
- Green building initiatives;
- Public transportation;
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Minimizing climate change.

Some interviewees mentioned options that are related to climate change:

- Gardening from home;
- Trail use and active transportation;
- Shopping locally;
- Supporting local agriculture;
- Planting trees;
- Purchasing long-lasting products;
- Enjoying recreational activities close to home.

3.3 Consumption & Production

This consumption and production snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date about consumption and production. To learn more about the dynamics of consumption and production in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *The Blue Mountains Annual solid waste reports [various years]*
- *The Blue Mountains Single Use Plastics voluntary ban [2019]*

Consumption and production refers to the reduction of waste being produced and water, and energy that is being used by The Blue Mountains overall. There has been an increase in the residential waste diversion rate over the past 15 years, but little to no decrease in the overall amount of waste going to landfill. This suggests that people are recycling and composting more, but still throwing away as much garbage as before. Some recommendations for improvement include production reductions for businesses, more diversion options and education for tourists and the encouragement of a circular economy.

3.3.1 STATS AND DATA

Waste diversion and reduction trends in The Blue Mountains are similar to national trends: the rate which materials have gone to the landfill has remained about the same, while additional materials are diverted. In The Blue Mountains, residential diversion has increased since 2015 when a composting program was introduced *(see Table 4).*

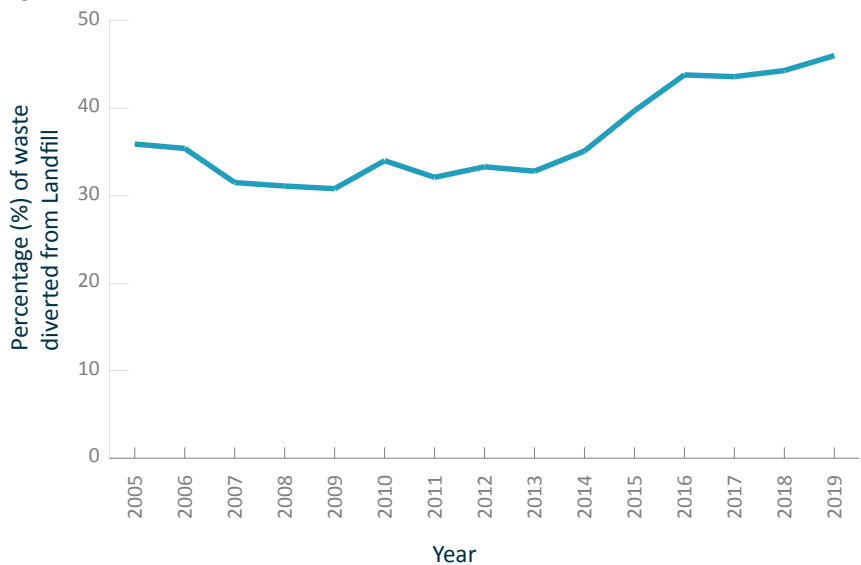*Figure 10: Residential Waste Diversion in The Blue Mountains*[26]

Table 4: Total waste materials over time in The Blue Mountains		
	2009	2019
Recycled materials:	1,898 Tonnes	1,411 Tonnes
Composted materials:	932 Tonnes	1,379 Tonnes
Landfilled materials:	4,772 Tonnes	4,657 Tonnes

According to the 2019 Solid Waste Report, composting rates are the highest they have ever been, which has resulted in higher diversion rates.

At the current rate of waste landfilled, it is estimated that The Blue Mountains's landfill capacity will be reached in 2046.[27]

At the national level, although Canadians are diverting more materials away from landfill, we are not cutting down on waste over time. Instead, we are disposing more than ever, plus recycling more. This is not unlike The Blue Mountains's current state. Over the course of 14 years, the solid waste collected in Canada increased by 11%, while Canada's population grew by 13%.[28] In The Blue Mountains, the reported census population increased by 3% while landfilled waste increased by 2% over a 10 year period.[29, 30] It should be noted that 2009 waste numbers may appear higher than other years due to a significant tornado in that year.

Population growth may be outpacing waste use per capita, but not significantly. Moreover, there is an increase in diversion, though this does not put an end to local waste issues. In particular, given new national recycling restrictions over this 10 year period, this rate of decrease is not sustainable for future citing.

3.3.2 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

One Sustainability Development Goal that reflects consumption and reduction is Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production.[31] This goal supports the reduction of waste overall; it acknowledges that the sources from which we purchase goods and services and the sustainable options we choose on a daily basis help play a role in reducing waste.

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision

Circular Development is one of five pathways in the ICLEI commitment. This pathway supports circular development, and aims to shift our current linear model of production, consumption, and discarding materials. Some actions this commitment speaks to include: decentralizing resource extraction from economic development, supporting economies that are responsible for using the "three R's", and working with businesses to reach production and consumption goals.[32]

Project Drawdown Review

Project Drawdown is a report that tracks the actions necessary to reach the goal of the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to, but preferably below, two degrees Celsius. Two of the action areas related to consumption and production in the report are land sinks and industry-proposed solutions.[33] Land sinks were highlighted, as decreasing waste and encouraging plant-rich diets are important components in ensuring the health of land sinks. Industry-proposed actions include: the improvement of materials (such as the replacement of plastics, metals and cement), the reclamation of materials, better management practices for the replacement of refrigerants, and the enhancement of waste management efficiency.

Whitby Green Standard

The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the multiple green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. "Zero waste" is one of the 10 action areas highlighted in the Whitby Green Standard for development.[34] Some actions included under this category include: waste collection and storage, household hazardous waste, and construction waste reduction.

Consumption and reduction improvements for waste, water, and energy described in many policy documents within the County and Town, including:

- *The Blue Mountains's Official Plan* supports the reduction of energy, water, land, and other non-renewables.

- *Grey County's Official Plan* encourages the reduction and elimination of waste, mandatory waste diversion tactics, a decrease in the amount of waste going into households, and food waste reduction in the following priority: a) source reduction; b) diversion to food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters; c) diversion to animal feed; d) use for fuel conversion and energy recovery; and e) composting.

- *The Provincial Policy Statement* suggests that there be sufficient planning for efficient and sustainable water use. *The Blue Mountains's Official Plan* also suggests promoting practices to conserve water and protect or enhance water quality.

- Policy documents describe energy efficiency as being an important component to sustainable planning. The *Provincial Policy Statement* emphasizes the need of energy conservation, for buildings, transportation, and infrastructure, in order to negate climate change, and improve air quality.

- *The Blue Mountains's Official Plan* supports the building of energy efficient communities which are compact, energy efficient in design, and that minimize space heating and cooling energy consumption. Grey County's Official Plan also specifies to consider energy conservation when assessing public proposals.

- *Grey County's Official Plan* encourages its municipalities to explore sharing economy resources like car sharing, shared economy transportation, and bike sharing.

3.3.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 5 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to consumption and production.

Table 5: Status of consumption and production actions by goal														
Goal	Type	Action Status												
Develop and promote The Blue Mountains as a Con-server Society	Primary	C	O											
	Secondary	C	O											
Enhance Water Conservation strategies	Primary			O										
	Secondary	O	I		N		U							
	Tertiary			N	N	N	N							
Assume Full Responsibility for the Management of our wastes within regional borders	Primary	O	O											
	Secondary		N											
Become a community that supports a movement towards a zero waste society	Primary			O						O		O		
	Secondary	C	N	N	N	C	N	O	N	O	O	O	O	N
Promote smart use of recycled and re-used materials within the built environment and provide for new technologies in waste management	Primary	U		C	C		N			N				
	Secondary	U	U			N	O	N	N	N	C	N		
Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).														

3.3.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see *section 1.4*). Data walks participants were asked to reflect on a series of production and consumption data points related to waste. In response, they noted that there was some progress made for diversion, particularly when considered on a per capita basis. At the same time, they noted there was still a lot of waste going to landfill, with diversion programs not having as much of an impact as originally thought.

They mentioned that a "buy and toss" culture was strong in the area, attributable to part-time residency and visitors, construction and demolition, and commercial areas. Here, it was suggested that part-time residents and tourists had fewer opportunities to properly dispose of waste, particularly in short-term rentals. Furthermore, it was highlighted that building practices were not reflective of environmental needs, and that there is a need for deconstruction versus demolition and construction site waste management plans that sort materials at the source and on site.

When asked for opportunities to continue to decrease waste locally, participants suggested:

• Increased public engagement for reduction;
• Adopting circular economy practices;
• Changing policy to provide incentives for decreased food packaging, and increased business recycling and composting options;
• Deconstruction to be enforced rather than demolition;
• Building for quality with local materials that can be easily repurposed and repaired;
• Creating a framework for social procurement and green building;
• Leading by example in public events;
• Diversifying the Town's recycling program;
• Creating visitor-specific waste programming; and
• Reducing construction waste.

3.3.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

When asking the public what could improve the community, survey respondents and interviewees mentioned changing habits, particularly in regards to littering and polluting. There was frustration—particularly from those under 18—about the amount of pollution and littering in The Blue Mountains. Potential solutions were offered, including: creating the conditions for a decreased reliance on plastic, purchasing of fewer things, and ensuring a better distribution and supply of Town waste and recycling receptacles.

Consumption and production themes were prevalent in interviews where respondents went through their daily activities and reflected on their sustainable implications. Many interviewees were already aware of environmental efforts and how they relate back to production and consumption, with some actions including: gardening from home, waste reduction, trail use and active transportation, shopping locally, supporting local agriculture, and planting trees. Other sustainable consumption actions that individuals listed that were less common included: lessening their water use with laundry and hygiene choices, purchasing durable products, pursuing recreation within close proximity to where they live, and often taking active modes of transportation.

3.4 Sustainable Towns and Communities

Sustainable towns and communities refers to good overall planning practices, with particular reference to service provision, housing, and transportation. In this section, some resident tensions are highlighted, particularly regarding the volume and type of developments in the Town, but also the lack of transportation and housing options. Policy and best practices call for increased density, active transportation-oriented development, and providing a diversity of housing options to support the formation of complete communities.

3.4.1 STATS AND DATA

The Blue Mountains is serviced by two transit connections: The Grey Transit Route that runs from Owen Sound to The Blue Mountains and the Collingwood-Blue Mountains transit, which runs from Craigleith Area to Collingwood and Wasaga Beach.[35] These transit options are relatively new and the latter was supported largely as a way to bring workers living in Collingwood to The Blue Mountains.

Development in The Blue Mountains over the past four years can be seen in the table below. Permits for dwelling units issued by the Town has increased over the past four years, particularly in November and December of 2020 due to high application rates during this time. Dwelling units, in this instance, are classified as any applications for new single family detached, semi-detached, town- or multiple unit homes, whereas total permits includes additions, renovations, decks, accessory buildings, demolitions, non-residential builds, agricultural or miscellaneous applications.[36]

Table 6: Dwelling units, permits, and construction value in TBM[37]

Year	New Dwelling Units	Total permits issued	Construction Value
2017	353	674	$185,347,013
2018	201	589	$161,170,029
2019	320	584	$181,611,294
2020	429	649	$214,022,941

This sustainable towns and communities snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of sustainable towns and communities in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *The Blue Mountains Official Plan [2016]*
- *Grey County Official Plan [2019]*
- *Provincial Policy Statement [2020 update]*
- *The Blue Mountains Transportation Master Plan [TBD]*
- *The Blue Mountains Building Permit Activity [various dates]*

In 2020, 14.9% of housing in The Blue Mountains is rental tenure, which is lower than surrounding municipalities of Meaford (20.6%), and Grey Highlands (15.7%). In addition, 83.8% of the community are commuting by car, which is slightly lower than neighbouring municipalities of Meaford (85.7%), and Grey Highlands (87.8%).[38]

3.4.2 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities was reflected often in community feedback and local policies. The SDG states that "there needs to be a future in which cities provide opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more,"[39] and supports actions that reflect general good planning practices.

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision

Resilient Development is one of five pathways highlighted in the ICLEI commitment, which focuses on the anticipation, prevention, absorption, and recovery from shocks and stresses, including those from "rapid environmental, technological, social and demographic change, and to improve essential basic response structures and functions."[40] Actions that support this pathway include prioritizing resilience in local governments, strengthening systems to respond to external stressors, and enhancing trust in government through transparency.

Project Drawdown review

The Review establishes transportation as one of its action focus areas in order to slow the increase in global warming. To do so, the report suggests shifting to alternative modes of transportation and supporting compact cities with advanced communications technologies to reduce travel demand. The report also suggests to improve transportation efficiency, and electrify vehicles.[41]

Whitby Green Standard

The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the multiple green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. Whitby's Green Standard highlights "Travel and Transport" as one of 10 main action areas.[42] Some actions supported by the Green Standard are:

• accessible pedestrian infrastructure and walkways;
• active transportation planning and infrastructure;
• transit supportive compact built form;
• parking footprint and traffic control;
• off-street surface parking;
• access to transit;
• carpool and car-share parking;
• functional entry to the urban mobility network;
• complete street design; and
• electric vehicle charging stations.

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Green Growth was highlighted as one of the 13 goals highlighted in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.[43]

3.4.3 POLICY

Sustainable City and Community policies are extensive in The Blue Mountains area, but some examples of local policy direction include:

• Supporting active transportation for healthy and active communities;

• Establishing an equitable distribution of resources for recreation and access to shorelines;

• Creating walkable, and easily accessible communities;

• Encouraging the decreased use of private automobiles by promoting alternative modes of transportation;

• Supporting land development

that is transit-supportive;

- Developing a range of housing options (rental and ownership), to support a diverse workforce;

- Developing housing that meets the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents;

- Supporting at least 10 year of residential growth, creating barrier free environments, and intensification; and

- Supporting density to ensure transportation and other community benefits.

3.4.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 7 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to susatinable towns and communities.

3.4.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see section 1.4). Data walks participants were not explicitly asked about sustainable city and community topics, but housing and transportation in particular were woven throughout professional commentary.

3.4.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

When asked about the best things in The Blue Mountains, respondents highlighted the accessibility of the area, particularly to medical supports in neighbourhing municipalities, dining options, and shopping opportunities, either in the Town or in surrounding communities in the GTA, Collingwood, or Meaford.

Table 7: Status of sustainable towns and community actions by goal																	
Goal	Type	Action Status															
Build strong neighbourhoods through sustainable neighbourhood design	Primary	C		U		O		U		O			O				O
	Secondary	O	N	O	O	N	C	C		N		N	N	I	C	N	
	Tertiary								I	I							
Protect, Preserve and Enhance agri-cultural, natural and environmentally sensitive lands	Primary		U			U				U							
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U						
Eliminate provincially significant traffic passing through the urban areas of the municipality	Primary		I														
	Secondary	C	U	N													
Develop an integrated public transportation system	Primary				U							U		I			
	Secondary	I	I	O	C	N	I	O	I	C	N	N	N	I			
	Primary (cont'd)				U								U				
	Secondary	O	I	O	N	I	O	U	N	I	O	I	U	O	O	I	N
Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).																	

Respondents mentioned that they moved here from the GTA and compared the community favourably as being "less urban." Some highlights included the lack of: chain stores, congestion, crowding, highrise development and sprawl. However, in other parts of the survey, others stated that the area is starting to take on urban characteristics.

While many spoke positively to the general feeling of living in a small town, some respondents specified that it was due to the area's small population size relative to other municipalities in the region and province. Respondents also noted the diversity of experiences that exist within the region, and the community spirit that unites the area.

When asked for what improvements would make the community even better, respondents highlighted:

• **Growth and development management**. Some residents voiced a frustration with the amount and types of development being built. Some were opposed to subdivisions, some to high density housing, some to building heights, and some to location of housing developments. A prominent subtheme was a want for coordinated plans at a regional level and within Town administration. Some felt that development did not align with the Town's Official Plan or the Planning Policy Statement. Additionally, some felt as though development was happening too fast and in a haphazard approach, rather than strategically.

  » Frustrations were voiced about some ongoing developments in the area. These include: the high number of gas stations, secondary homes, subdivisions replacing apple orchards, and a high-rise development across from Georgian Peaks. These were often voiced in frustration when referring to a loss in small town feel or damaging of natural features.

• **Traffic management**, including a want to divert traffic away from waterfront areas and to insert traffic-calming measures. Respondents reported an increase in traffic, particularly during COVID-19, and were concerned about traffic's relationship to new developments and more permanent residents due to COVID-19.

• **Development tied to community benefits.** These benefits include allocated greenspace, green building needs, forest land dedication, funding for cultural activities, and facilities tied to new development proposals. There was an understanding by some that growth was necessary, but that it wasn't serving the community in the way they were hoping.

• **Public and "green" transit** was mentioned, particularly in order to connect the rural towns in The Blue Mountains, to form greater transit connections with the GTA, Collingwood, Meaford, and Owen Sound.

When asked about life today in The Blue Mountains, themes related to sustainable community building practices included:

• **Overdevelopment:** some respondents reported that the area feels like it's being developed too fast, or being over developed.

• **Growth:** respondents referenced this theme with regard to recent developments, and a reported increase in full time residents over the time of COVID-19. Feedback was mainly an ask for development and growth to be slowed, particularly for new development applications.

• **Busy:** While restrictions for COVID-19 were put in place during this time of engagement, respondents described the times before the provincial stay-at-home order as busy due to the influx in tourists and visitors from the GTA (particularly in summer 2020). This was particularly true for outdoor trails, beaches, and at Blue Mountain.

- **Congested:** Associated with development and tourism, respondents also mentioned how congested the area and highway had become, with frustrations about the noise, access, and overall manners of those they came across on the road.

Some interview themes regarding sustainable development included:

- **Transportation Options:** when asked about why respondents chose to drive, it was clear that transit infrastructure was either not available or would take too much time to be usable. The school bus was even an extension of this; one respondent noted that he chooses to drive his children to Collingwood each day because transit would take up 3 hours a day for his child. In contrast, another respondent referenced this bus ride as a right-of-passage in small towns.

- **Remote working and events:** Some respondents talked at length about how COVID-19 has opened up the possibility for them to engage remotely with places they would not usually travel to (e.g. In Downtown Toronto), or working from home rather than losing time driving daily. These respondents were hopeful that these groups and employers would continue to offer these remote working options and events. Some residents who worked from home before COVID-19 mentioned that it would be an opportunity for residents to diversify economically without a direct need for an industry hub in the Town itself.

- **Walkable Downtown with amenities:** Thornbury residents were grateful to be in a walkable neighbourhood with many local coffee shops and most amenities within close proximity. It was also noted that restaurants in the area are particularly impressive, with one respondent stating "Thornbury is outside of its league in terms of restaurants."

3.5 Sense of Community

Sense of community refers to the overall community in The Blue Mountains, the feelings and acceptance the area evokes, the involvement of its residents, and the support it shows for different demographics. Many of these elements are not quantifiable, but data shows that the Town is primarily home to an older demographic of affluent Caucasian residents who are heavily involved in their community. Though policy and best practices suggest creating communities for all, and enhancing the small-town feel, there is currently a tension between the full-time residents and the new residents and tourists in the community. Full-time community members reported feeling removed from the Town, as they felt there was too much emphasis on the tourists of an area.

3.5.1 STATISTICS AND DATA

According to the 2020 Grey County Individual Municipal Profiles Presentation, and 2016 Federal census data, the population of The Blue Mountains is older than the Ontario average.[44] In 2016, census data found that The Blue Mountains had almost double the number of people over 60 compared to the Ontario average, with 45% of residents over 60 and a median age of 57.6. In 2020, the County found that the household maintainer (those who rent or own a home in The Blue Mountains) average was 20% over 75 years old, 26% between 65 and 74, and 25% between 55 and 64. Comparatively, Meaford and Ontario have a lower household maintainer average in these age demographics.

The age demographics for permanent residents have been reportedly changing throughout the pandemic. However, due to the recency of the pandemic, there has not been sufficient time to collect, analyze, and release any demographic data to confirm this trend in The Blue Mountains.

Average household income has been increasing in The Blue Mountains since 2001, to its current average of $143,748 according to Grey's 2020 Individual Municipal Profile Report. This report, and The Blue Mountains's community profile report that there are few visible minorities reported in the Town, and a high proportion of part-time residents.[45]

This sense of community snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of demographics and sense of community in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *The Blue Mountains Community Profile [2021]*
- *Grey County Individual Municipal Profiles Presentation [2020]*
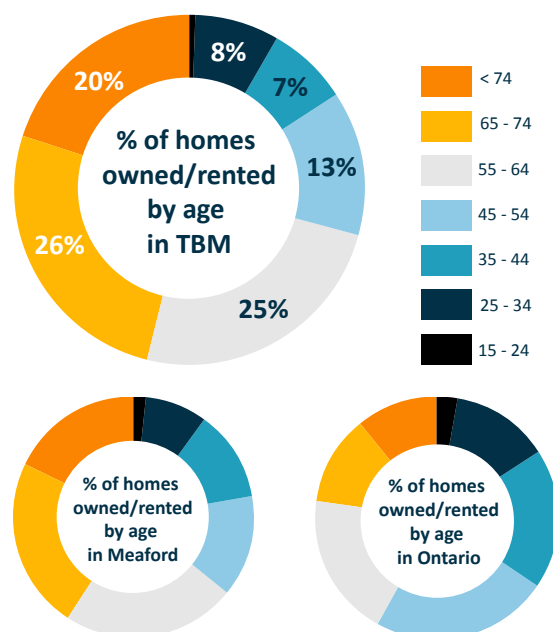- *Statistics Canada Census Summary Tables [2016]*

Fuigure 10: Percentage of homes owned/rented by age in The Blue Mountains, Meaford and Ontario

3.5.2 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Two UN Sustainable Development Goals that contribute to sense of community include:[46]

- **Goal 5:** Gender Equality: To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. This goal specifies the need for services in order for women to stay in school.

- **Goal 10:** Reduced Inequalities: which focuses on creating policies that are universal, yet pay special attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations.

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision

Equitable and people-centred development is one of five pathways for ICLEI, "to build more just, livable and inclusive urban communities and address poverty."[47] Some actions in this pathway include creating cities and development that are inclusive, that promote health, wellbeing, safety and livability, and that thrive with cultural vibrancy.[48]

3.5.3 POLICY

Some local policy in The Blue Mountains area that supports creating a sense of community include:

- Supporting a high quality of life for all ages, all life stages, for both residents and visitors;

- Creating complete communities that are viable for all ages and demographics;

- Creating an age-friendly approach to development, design, and decision making;

- Creating supports for youth, young families and newcomers including attainable housing, recreation and childcare;

- Creating awareness and appreciation for the cultures of municipalities through education and outreach initiatives;

- Creating and defining a sense of place that includes built form and cultural planning, in addition to the conservation of features that help define character, like heritage features;

- Creating an inventory of underutilized spaces to modify into cultural hubs; and

- Protecting and enhancing the community feel and the character of the Town through multiple placemaking features.

3.5.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 8 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to sense of community.

3.5.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see section 1.4). Data walks participants were shown a population-by-age graph and the percentage of the population 60 years-old or older for multiple local regions in Ontario (see figure 11).

We asked this group why The Blue Mountains is home to a larger population of seniors per capita. They responded by saying the age of The Blue Mountains is attributed to the "retirement community" orientation of the Town and the quick access to services, family and housing flexibility from previous livelihoods in the GTA. There is an attraction to the community for recreation, nature, quality of life and the small-town pace of life for older populations. The area is thought to be less expensive for GTA homeowners, who can downsize

Table 8: Status of sense of community actions by goal																		
Goal	Type	Action Status																
All residents and their local government identify strongly with The Blue Mountains' community culture and feel both a sense of pride in, and a responsibility for their success	Primary	I				O			U	I			U				
	Secondary	C	U	O	U	O	U	O	I	O	U	U	O	U	U	U	U
	Primary (cont'd)		U			U				U							I
	Secondary	U	U	U	C	U			U	U	U	O	U	U	U	U	
To enhance community life and pride by providing a wide range of community events	Primary				U												
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	C	C	C	U							
Facilitate a strong volunteer force to support community events and services	Primary		U				U										
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	C	U	U								
Secure facilities and programming that are adaptable to changing community needs	Primary	U		U		U											
	Secondary	O	O	U	U	U	O										
To meet the social and community service needs of our seniors	Primary			U													
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U											
Meet the social, employment and community service needs of our families	Primary	U	U	O	U												
Encourage youth to remain in, or to return to, the community	Primary		U		U	O			U								
	Secondary	U	U	U		U	U	U	U	O							
Provide adequate daycare services within the community	Primary		U														
	Secondary	U	U	U													
Improve and enhance communications and engagement of local youth	Primary		U		U	U		U									
	Secondary	U	U	U	U			U	U	U	U						

Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).

Figure 11: Statistics Canada, 2016. The Blue Mountains and Ontario Age Demographics.[49],[50]
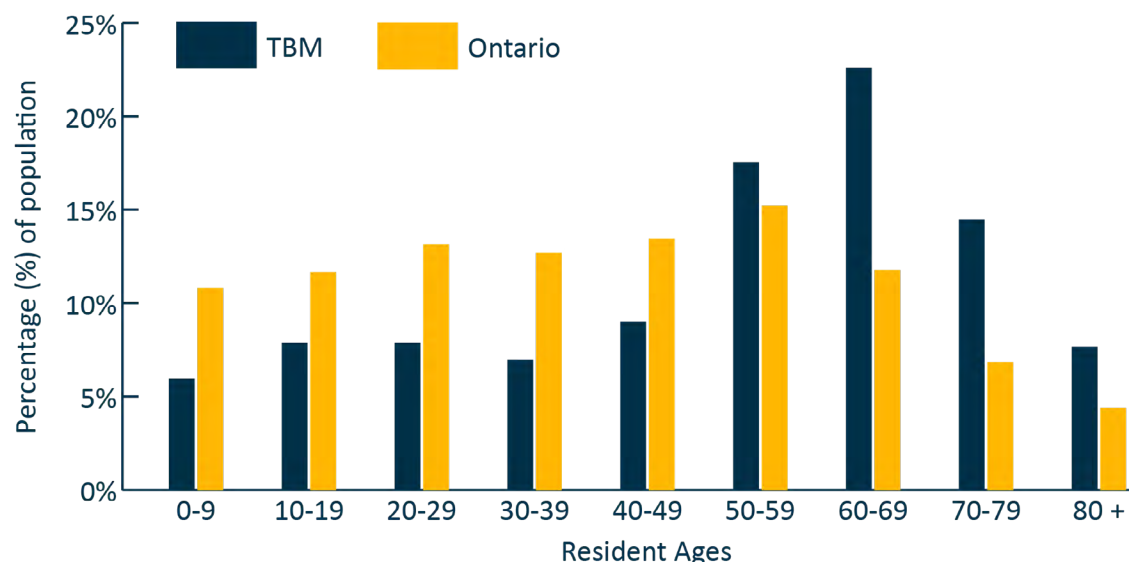
from more expensive housing prices. The net growth of average housing prices and rents has outstripped what an average wage can afford and is seen as part of the reason why younger people leave or cannot settle in the area.

Attendees were asked what implications having an older population has on the long-term sustainability in The Blue Mountains. They noted there is a need to better support existing older demographics, and there is a need for a long-term plan to support and attract other demographics. The Town's older population implies an increased demand for healthcare and support services and for resources available in residents' prior residences, like the Greater Toronto Area.

Advantageously, it was also noted that the wisdom of these older generations can be mobilized to great effect. The area's older population may provide guidance for younger generations and – with many of them retired and financially comfortable – may participate in civic and volunteer life in greater numbers. One Data walks participant noted that, "in the long-term the businesses created by the increased spending of the senior population will provide jobs that will remain here."

The age profile of The Blue Mountains brings with it implications for long-term planning. As generations age and pass on, attention must be paid towards attracting other demographics to ensure the community does not foster a monoculture which may lead to its eventual decline. An absence of younger demographics has led to a decrease in area career opportunities, unmet job vacancies, and declining numbers of youth who wish to stay in the area.

We asked the group what some opportunities would be better support to support youth in The Blue Mountains. The main opportunities for youth retention and support in The Blue Mountains that were highlighted include lowering housing costs, increasing income and diversifying employment opportunities, creating youthful spaces, supporting

youth leadership and mentorship, and creating unique educational opportunities in the area. Additional areas of inquiry focused on technology supports like Wi-Fi hotspots, mental health and community building opportunities, and meaningful youth engagement.

3.5.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Small-town, village and hamlet feel and connection between neighbours was ranked as the third most unique aspect of The Blue Mountains, after it's natural features and recreation opportunities.

When asked what the best things were in The Blue Mountains, survey respondents highlighted:

• **Small-town feel,** particularly in the downtown businesses, neighbourly friendliness and connection. Some themes similar to small town feel include: rural charm, friendliness of neighbours and residents, and the quaint feeling of the towns. Residents were afraid to lose small town feel to new development.

• **Sense of community,** particularly as some individuals simply liked to feel a part of the community either through involvement, or neighbourhood bonding.

• **Quiet and relaxed lifestyle,** particularly in comparison to their previous residences in the GTA and other more urbanized communities. They mentioned a slower pace, relaxed feeling, and quiet setting.

When asked what could be changed in the community, some respondents highlighted the need for **all-ages support**, which entails building a community that has services needed for all age demographics, particularly families, youth, and seniors.

We asked respondents what the story of The Blue Mountains today was, and their responses described:

- **A community of engaged citizens,** with the reliance on citizens in committees, social and cultural groups, and event organization.

- **A retirement community**, particularly in reference as a series of like-minded community members who are involved after retiring to the area in recent years from other communities.

- **Loss of small-town feel**, particularly when referencing new community developments. There is a fear that with the new developments, that the Town is taking on more traits of a city than the area's heritage and small-town feel.

Interviewees spoke more in detail about some of these aspects that affect sense of community, including:

- **Social connections and differences**
There were expressions of frustration from both longer term residents and new residents regarding stereotypical perceptions of each other. Several of these perceptions illustrate a desire for more community involvement opportunities for all residents, and a need to foster respect among all people and for the natural environment. Of all survey respondents, 31% were not full-time residents. These respondents were less likely to express frustrations with part-time residents and tourists, though a small number did express concerns about sharing amenities with visitors and with high density development. Whether perceived or real, these concerns illustrate that there is room to strengthen social and cultural networks between various residents and tourists. Some respondents suggested this divide could be addressed by providing more opportunities for new residents to learn and participate in community events.

- **Community Events:** Many residents mentioned events that they already love in The Blue Mountains, but they also mentioned events that used to exist that could help bring a sense of community back. These included sports games for the community to watch, and the "old-fashioned" community events put on by public groups, such as "old fashioned Christmas," as mentioned by one interviewee.

- **The replacement of general community groups:** One interviewee spoke at length about the growth of special interest and business groups in the area. In contrast, they spoke about how many of the general community benefit associations and groups were disappearing from the area in particular and Ontario in general. This was tied to the reduction in community cohesiveness and the importance of these groups to pull everyone together.

3.6 Affordability

Affordability was a common theme in The Blue Mountains due to challenges in affordable housing, services and food options. The area was highlighted as having starkly divergent affluence levels. There is a large portion of high-income earners, and a large number of low to mid-income earners who cannot afford to live in the area. The latter is particularly the case for those employed in the service or tourism industry.

3.6.1 STATISTICSS AND DATA

Affordability challenges are present in a number of ways in The Blue Mountains. In the South Georgian Bay, median household income in 2016 was $67,762, an increase of 12% since 2011.[51] In the same year, The Blue Mountains had an even higher median household income of $76,490.[52] In comparison, the average price for a single-family home in The South Georgian Bay increased 34% in the same amount of time to $433,000.[53] The Blue Mountains had an even higher median home price of $500,370.[54] In 2017 prices in The South Georgian Bay rose an additional 18% year-over-year to nearly $512,000. At this price, (assuming a 20% down payment) a qualifying household income of about $121,000 is required, almost double the region's median income.[55]

The images on the right show the average household prices recorded for The South Georgian Bay area reported in the 2018 South Georgian Bay Tourism Industry Workforce Housing Research and Business Case. Housing prices have since increased further, particularly in The Blue Mountains, making the area even more economically unattainable for many populations.

In 2016, 51% of private dwellings in The Blue Mountains were occupied by permanent residents, whereas the rest were occupied by short term accommodations or secondary homeowners.[56] There has been informal reporting of that percentage increasing during COVID-19, but current numbers are yet to be confirmed.

The South Georgian Bay Tourism Worker Survey found that:

- 56% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that housing affordability is a barrier to living in the area permanently;

- 79% of respondents indicated that it is difficult to find appropriate housing in South Georgian Bay; and

This affordability snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what we're heard and found so far. To learn more about the dynamics of affordability in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *The Blue Mountains Community improvement plan [2021]*
- *The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation website [thebluemountainshousing.ca]*
- *South Georgian Bay Tourism Industry Workforce Housing Research and Business Case [2018]*
- *Food Security Meeting: Town of The Blue Mountains Follow up Report [2019]*

South Georgian Bay Region Affordability 2016

Ownership

Rental

Detached House
$627,000
Income Required
$146,000

1-Bedroom
$1190/month
Income Required
$47,600

Townhouse
$490,000
Income Required
$116,000

2-bedroom
$1465/month
Income Required
$58,600

Condominium
$400,000
Income Required
$96,000

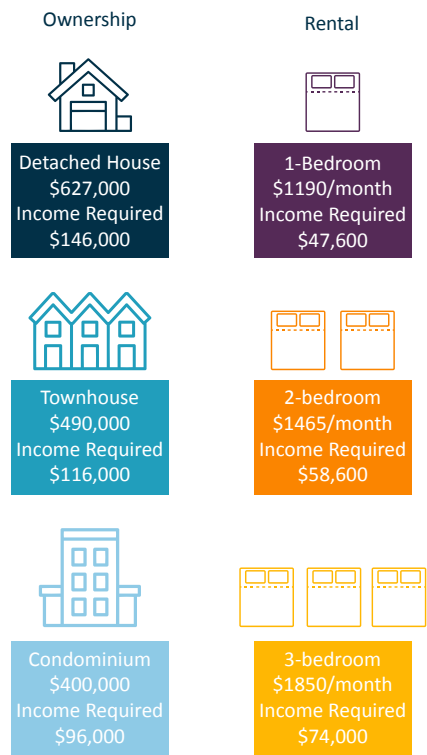3-bedroom
$1850/month
Income Required
$74,000

Figure 12: Price of South Georgian Bay accommodations (2016)

- 75% of respondents indicated that if housing costs and availability were not an issue, they would consider living in the area permanently.[57]

Another indicator of affordability in The Blue Mountains is food insecurity and poverty. 20% of households in Grey Bruce are food insecure, which is higher than the provincial average of 15%.[58] Similarly, 11.3% of households in The Blue Mountains are low income, 23.1% of households have unaffordable shelter costs, and 4.7% of residents are unemployed.[59] 15.1% of children and youth and 7.3% of elderly adults in The Blue Mountains are in low-income households.[60]

Some identified causes of food insecurity and poverty in Grey Bruce communities include:

- Lack of affordable transportation;
- Income insecurity;
- Stigma with food insecurity;
- Access to fresh foods year-round is limited due in part to lack of competition; and
- Limited understanding of existing programs.[61]

3.6.2 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Two Sustainable Development Goals that are associated with affordability include:[62]

- **Goal 1**: No Poverty: to end poverty in all its forms everywhere by 2030. The main actions mentioned in this goal include governments encouraging and enabling job opportunities for the poor and marginalized.

- **Goal 2:** Zero Hunger: to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Some action areas include: supporting local farmers & markets, and making societal changes to sustainable food choices.

Whitby Green Standard

The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the multiple green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. Equity and local economy is one of Whitby Green Standard's 10 action areas. Related development actions include: affordable housing, varied housing types and size, and community safety.[63]

3.6.3 POLICY

Affordability is a foundational principle in many local policies, including direction to accommodate an affordable market, and a mix of uses to encourage affordable complete communities, using plan development, service delivery, growth, and transportation improvements.

The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation is a not-for-profit organization established in 2014 with the goal of providing housing to moderate income working individuals and families locked out of the local housing market, including through attainable ownership housing units and rental opportunities. The Town also adopted a Community Improvement Plan in January 2021 to provide a set of key municipal initiatives and financial incentive programs to support the development of attainable housing within the Town of The Blue Mountains.

3.6.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 9 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to affordability.

Table 9: Status of affordability actions by goal																				
Goal	Type	Action Status																		
Require a mix of housing types	Primary	O						U						U						
and uses accommodating the	Secondary	O	O	C	C	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	C	U	U	U	U
need for attainable housing for	Primary (cont'd)	U		U																
all income groups	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	U	U												

Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).

3.6.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see section 1.4). Data walks participants were shown multiple statistics on food insecurity, poverty and housing costs in The Blue Mountains and the surrounding area.

When asked what contributes to food insecurity in Grey Bruce, attendees listed the following:

• High housing prices, and lack of options;
• Low wages and transient jobs;
• Lack of access to year-round produce, and competition in grocery stores;
• Limited practices for growing own food;
• Mental health barriers; and
• Limited access to social services in the area.

We asked what contributes to high housing costs in the South Georgian Bay, to which data walks participants and residents mentioned:

• Competition among affluent, and often previous GTA residents for desirable housing locations;
• Lack of housing stock, particularly for diverse attainable properties;
• Competition heightened by short-term accommodations;
• An increased migration to the area due to COVID-19; and
• National market forces.

Those who were mentioned as the most vulnerable to affordability issues included:

• Lower- and middle-income earners in general;
• Those with low education levels;
• Students and youth;
• Young families;
• Homeless;
• Seniors relying on a fixed income and who have not experienced housing inflation;
• Singles; and
• Those with special needs.

When asked where there are opportunities to improve food access, poverty, and affordable housing in The Blue Mountains, attendees suggested:

• Increase living wage and employment opportunities;
• Build attainable and affordable housing;
• Increase grocer competition and enhance buy local opportunities;
• More gardening opportunities and education;
• Increase access to services, and focus on proactive ways to address poverty and food access;
• Affordable services like daycare;
• Reduced short term accommodations, or consider timeshare options for continued use;
• Incentives for higher density developments;
• Create partnerships with business and government to enhance housing options;
• Coordinate sustainability goals with

attainable housing co-operation;

- Improve local education about attainable housing; and
- Consider alternative housing models like tiny home villages, cooperative housing, and granny suites.

3.6.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

When asking the public what improvements need to occur in The Blue Mountains, survey respondents highlighted affordable and attainable housing, particularly in regards to housing young families and service workers. Respondents placed focus on affordable rental prices and creating a range of housing options that are more attainable and integrated into the community.

Some associated sub-themes that arose with affordable housing included: affordable food options, affordable recreation options, affordable retail (everyday needs), employee housing, affordable services, and affordable taxes.

Similarly, when asked about what life in The Blue Mountains looked like today, respondents highlighted that the area was not affordable for many. Groups mentioned include: children of residents who hope to remain in the area, people looking for work in service industries, and those in lower and middle-incoome groups looking to move to the area.

In interviews, respondents highlighted affordable groceries and services as equally important to affordable housing. Interviewees witnessed an increase in food prices particularly in comparison to local stores in Meaford and Owen Sound. There is a desire to make sure the everyday residents are able to afford the food options that exist in The Blue Mountains.

3.7 Healthy Economy

A large portion of The Blue Mountains's economy is reliant on tourism. This provides significant local economic activity and prosperity. Many survey respondents expressed a desire for increased economic diversification to ensure varied opportunities and increased community resilience. Policy direction suggests that the tourism industry and new economic opportunities can grow and evolve together.

3.7.1 STATS AND DATA

Figure 13 shows the distribution of employment by industry pre-COVID.[64] In comparison to local areas and the province, The Blue Mountains has a larger proportion of agriculture, real estate and leasing, arts, entertainment and recreation, and accommodation and food services. It has a smaller proportion of health care and social assistance, retail, and manufacturing within its borders than Ontario, Grey County, Meaford, Collingwood, and Wasaga Beach.

Accommodation and food services are directly related to the tourism industry in The Blue Mountains, bringing more than $188.3 million in revenue from visitors to the community in 2017 (roughly 34% of the Town's total export revenue of $547.4 million that year), and employed an estimated 1,868 people in 2019. The local arts, entertainment and recreation industry generated almost $25.2 million in export revenue in 2017, and employed an estimated 380 people in 2019. Blue Mountain Village and its partners are major local employers, with between 2,700 and 3,300 full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees, accounting for about 20% of the tourism labour force in the South Georgian Bay.[65]

This Healthy Economy snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of what created a healthy economy in The Blue Mountains, please see:

• Draft Economic Development Strategy [2021]
• Economic Development Advisory Committee documents and minutes [various dates]
• The Blue Mountains Official Plan [2016]
• Grey County Official Plan [2019]
• Provincial Policy Statement [2020 update]
• South Georgian Bay Tourism Industry Workforce Housing Research and Business Case [2018]
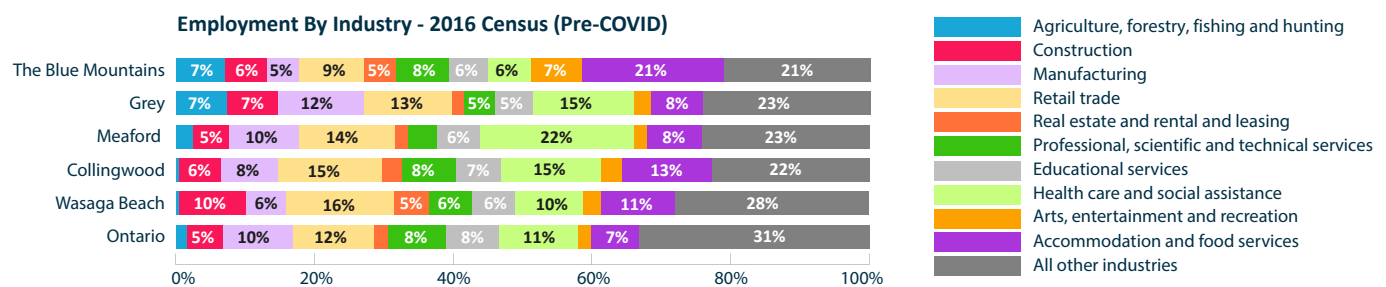• The Blue Mountains Commercial Retail Gap Analysis [2020]

Figure 13: Employment by Indutry from 2016's census data

Despite employing relatively fewer people than tourism-related sectors, the Town's manufacturing sector generated more than $106 million in export revenue in 2017 – the second-most valuable export sector for the Town – and employed around 232 people in 2019. The agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industry follows as the third-most significant export sector, with more than $46.8 million in export value in 2017, and employing an estimated 124 people in 2019.

Table 10: Jobs and Exports by Industry[66]		
Industry	Jobs (2019)	Exports, $ million (2017)
Accommodation and food services	1868	$188.3
Manufacturing	232	$106.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	124	$46.8
Administrative And Support, Waste Management And Remediation Services	297	$44.1
Public Administration	167	$26.3
Arts, entertainment and recreation	380	$25.2
Retail trade	428	$17.8
Real Estate And Rental And Leasing	98	$17.8
Construction	166	$13.4
Professional, scientific and technical services	143	$13.1
All other industries	663	$48.5
Total	4,566	$547.4

Prior to COVID-19, Blue Mountain Village, one of the major employers in the area, reported a labour shortage, with approximately 150 positions continuously left unfilled at any given time.[67] Labour shortages have been connected to affordability issues in the area, as there are not enough attainable housing options for those earning an average income in the Town. As *The Blue Mountains' Economic Development Strategy for 2021-2025* reports, "an individual or family looking to purchase a home would require an income of at least $169,354 based on standard mortgage calculations and rates," with an increase in average house prices from $637,041 in 2016 to $913,577 in 2020.[68] Only 20% of households in the Town earn more than $150,000/year, and 50% of households earn less than $70,000/year, meaning the average rent of $1825/month for a two-bedroom unit is unaffordable for at least half of workers in the community (see *Affordability*).[69]

3.7.2 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Healthy Economy relates to Sustainable Development GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. This goal aims to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.[70] Action areas related to this include: providing youth with education, and economic empowerment, implementing safety measures for workers, and supporting people-centred economies promoting youth employment.

3.7.3 POLICY

Sustainable economic policies exist in multiple levels of local policy, with some policy directions being:

• Support rural diversification to increase employment opportunities through goods and services, including value-add products, and the sustainable management and use of resources;

• Recognize and celebrate diversified businesses for their role in the local economy, particularly in times of economic downturn;

• Support flexible and diverse economic

development and planning policies to support and open and competitive and entrepreneurial investment;

• Balance the needs of residents and visitors of diverse economic circumstances;

• Improve affordability for low-income groups;

• Develop sustainable tourism opportunities, particularly in rural areas by utilizing existing assets;

• Protect the natural features that make the area attractive, including biodiversity and culture;

• Increase sustainable tourism revenues through managing and marketing Grey County as a tourism destination;

• Create positive and creative planning policies to accommodate tourism and recreation-oriented developments;

• Recognize tourism and recreation as important to economies in Grey County;

• Encourage ecotourism, agri-tourism and cultural heritage tourism, and support programs to better customer service provision in tourism; and

• Create a leisure activities plan.

The local tourism economy has been cultivated by zoning and master planning exercises between municipalities, industry, and residents for decades. This sector integrates with and supports myriad primary and secondary industries in the Town, and municipal planning, policy and programming to support tourism is being considered alongside various other local economic development initiatives in The Blue Mountains' upcoming *Economic Development Strategy for 2021-2025.* The Apple Pie Trail is an example of South Georgian Bay communities collaborating to find new economic development opportunities that integrate local economic strengths including agriculture, accommodations, recreation and other tourism-related services and features.

3.7.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 11 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to Healthy Economy.

3.7.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see section 1.4). We showed data walks participants the graph in section 3.7.1 and asked what it said about industry in The Blue Mountains. Some components they highlighted included:

• A strong tourism industry;
• A rural community with a seasonal user population;
• A gap in local healthcare and health professionals;
• Being vulnerable to loss of talent and difficulties attracting talent;
• A diverse economy;
• Danger of over-tourism, and too much reliance on tourism, which has low wages, seasonal fluctuations, and limited ways to transfer into other industries in the community;
• A need for diversification, training and education;
• Acknowledgement that local communities have a lot of the services that the Town is missing; and
• "If the tourism industry is hit badly (as per COVID-19 or climate change) then 35% of the workforce is in trouble!"

When asked where the opportunities were to support existing industries to become more sustainable, workshop attendees listed:

• Affordable housing to bring and keep workers in our area;
• Public transportation;
• Local food markets, and the slow food movement;

Table 11: Status of healthy economy actions by goal		
Goal	Type	Action Status
Improve access to the area for a wide range of tourists	Primary	N
	Secondary	U N
	Tertiary	N N N N
Create employment opportunities for youth	Primary	U
	Secondary	U U U U U U
Encourage economic development that is compatible with the community's values and priorities and attracts new business initiatives that support economic diversity	Primary	U U U
	Secondary	U U U U U U U U U U U
Develop a strategy that clearly defines the current and future economic opportunities	Primary	U
	Secondary	U U U U U U U
Attract a diversified mix of retail service for all income levels	Primary	U
	Secondary	U U U
Identify emerging new business opportunities to create permanent well-paying employment	Primary	U
	Secondary	U U U U U U U U U U U U U
Support the Development of a Regional Tourism Plan that guides the achievement of the Vision	Primary	U
	Secondary	U U U U U U U U U
Create an economic plan that will welcome sustainable and appropriate tourism investment	Primary	U
	Secondary	U O U U O I
Be part of a tourism destination that distinguishes itself by its sustainable focus thereby creating a competitive market advantage as well as serving its community	Primary	U
	Secondary	U U U U O U U U U U U U
	Tertiary	U U U
To become a tourism destination renowned for its truly friendly service and people	Primary	U
	Secondary	U

Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).

- Agricultural efficiencies;
- Clear and consistent government regulations and policies across sectors;
- More support for older populations;
- Youth employment opportunities; and
- Financial assistance and requirements for green businesses.

When asked where the opportunities were to diversify industries to become more sustainable, workshop attendees suggested:

- Expanding the industrial sector;
- Creating a growth sector by encouraging things like tech-hub or industry-hub to attract like-minded industries or businesses;
- Working with local tourism sector to further strengthen year-round opportunities;
- Consider supporting other year round industries that may not be tourism-related;
- Use our unique natural environment to attract talent that can work from home;
- Green initiatives and industry;
- Services for aging in place;
- Diversifying opportunities, such as education and health care; and
- Creating value-add and diverse agricultural opportunities.

3.7.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

When asked to identify what makes The Blue Mountains unique, "Natural features" ranked first, "Active recreation and eco-tourism draws in the community" ranked second, a "Diverse mix of businesses" ranked fifth, and the "Arts and culture scene" ranked sixth.   Other community aspects, including "Strong ties between local area services and businesses" ranked eighth-most unique, "a mix of residents who are both full-time and seasonal" ranked as the tenth most unique (third-lowest rating), and the "Town's location and relationship with the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)" ranked as eleventh most unique (second-lowest rating). It is clear that the Town's unique draws include many connections to the local economy, with survey respondents valuing many of the amenities that serve both residents and tourists.

When asked about the story of today, and opportunities for the community to improve, some survey respondents requested that the Town set limits or manage tourism more effectively, namely asking for visitation caps (Venice was offered as an example), or for tourism attractions to be more dispersed throughout the area. Several respondents were frustrated by the high numbers for tourism in 2020. Correlated with this, many felt like Council placed more priority on the tourist community than full-time residents.

It should be noted that The Blue Mountains received abnormally large numbers of tourists from the GTA during the summer of 2020 due to international travel restrictions from COVID-19, which may have influenced some of the negative perceptions of tourism among survey participants.

3.8 Agriculture

Agriculture has been highlighted as a significant contributor to The Blue Mountains's economy and culture. The agricultural sector has strong ties to community history, identity and local food distribution. Survey respondents and interviewees noted their access to fresh farm produce as one of the highlights in the community. Both best practice and data walks participants recommend regenerative agriculture practices to both improve soil health and reduce local reliance on pesticides and fertilizers. Other members of the community and policy spoke to the need to preserve agriculture, continue agricultural succession planning (particularly to youth) and to improve agricultural technologies.

3.8.1 STATS AND DATA

Agriculture makes up 7% of the employment industry in The Blue Mountains. The area has a unique climate that facilitates the growth of a unique mixture of crops and animals including:

- Hay- 5199 acres (9.72% decrease from 2011);
- Soybeans- 3818 acres (37.93% growth from 2011);
- Apples- 2490 acres (3.6% decrease from 2011);
- Cattle and calves- 2205 (21.64% decrease from 2011);
- Dairy cows- 165 (126.03% increase from 2011); and,
- Hens and Chickens- 726 (17.31% decrease from 2011).[72]

Table 12: Agricultural Land Changes (2006- 2016)[73]	2006	2016	% Change 2006 to 2016
Total farm area-Farms reporting	140	119	-15.0
Total farm area-Acres	26,653	25,736	-3.4
Land in crops (excluding Christmas tree area)-Acres	17,099	17,531	+2.5
Summerfallow land-Acres	156	37	-76.3
Tame or seeded pasture-Acres	2,073	2,551	+23.1
Natural land for pasture-Acres	1,781	972	-45.4
Christmas tree area, woodland and wetland-Acres	4,181	3,190	-23.7
All other land-Acres	1,363	1,455	+6.8

This agriculture snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of agriculture in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *Agricultural Advisory Committee documents and minutes [various dates]*
- *OMAFRA County profiles: Agriculture, food and business for Grey County [2016]*
- *Grey County Agri-food Strategy [2017]*

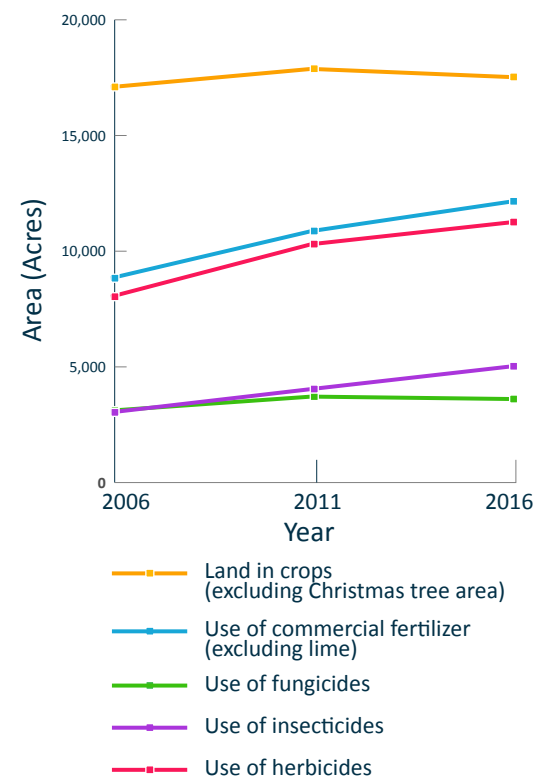Fertilizer, fungicides, insecticides and herbicides use by land area over time

Figure 14: Fertilizer, fungicide, insecticide and herbicide use by land area over time[71]

Table 12 reports the general changes in farmland between 2006 and 2016. Overall, total farm area has decreased in the Town over time. Land in crops (excluding Christmas trees), and tame/seeded pasture gained acreage in this time period, while decreases in acreage occurred with Christmas tree area, natural land for pasture, and summer fallow land.[74]

There appears to have been some farm consolidation between 2006 and 2016, and most farms are on the smaller size being between 10 and 129 acres. Figure 14 shows that insecticide, herbicide, and commercial fertilizer use has increased per acre.

Farmers in The Blue Mountains areas are older than the provincial average; in 2016, the average age of a farmer in The Blue Mountains was 60, 53 in Grey County, and 55 in Ontario overall.

Lastly, the County and the Town have a large proportion of direct farm sales in comparison to the remainder of the province. In fact, Grey County has the highest number of farm direct sales in Ontario.[75] Additionally, 19% of TBM's agricultural base has farm direct sales.[76]

3.8.2 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Agricultural practices in The Blue Mountains align with three UN SDGs, mainly:[77]

- **Goal 9:** Industry Innovation & Infrastructure: essential investments to ensure the fruition of other sustainability goals.

- **Goal 14:** Life Below Water: To conserve and sustainably use the world's ocean, seas and marine resources. This goal suggests protecting valuable habitats and

making "ocean-friendly" choices.

- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: to sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss. This goal suggests supporting recycling, eating a locally sourced diet, and consuming only what we need.

Project Drawdown Review

Food, Agriculture and Land Use Proposed Solutions is one of the action areas of focus to reach climate change goals in the Drawdown report. Some action areas focused on in the report include:[78]

- Addressing waste and diets to shift what people eat,
- Protecting ecosystems to improve food production on farmland, and
- Shifting agricultural practices- to release less gases like methane, nitrous oxide, and carbon dioxide.

Whitby Green Standard

The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the multiple green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. Local and Sustainable Food is one of the action areas in the Town of Whitby's Green standard, which encourages development to support local food production.

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Sustainable Food is one of the 13 focus areas in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.[79]

3.8.3 POLICY

Agriculture policies exist for all levels of government surrounding The Blue Mountains, but some general themes include:

- Preserving and promoting local agriculture production to grow a strong affordable food system facilitating access to healthy foods and to eliminate food scarce areas;

- Promoting community gardens, local markets, urban agriculture, and other local food initiatives;

- Promoting agricultural practices that conserve

water, soil, and environmental features;

- Protecting and supporting local farms, through protecting agricultural resources, minimizing land use conflicts;

- Providing opportunities to support local food, and maintaining and improving the agri-food network;

- Encouraging more young farmers, and succession farming; and

- Strengthening of links between food producers, distributors, and customers.

3.8.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 11 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to agriculture.

3.8.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see section 1.4). When presented with some of the agricultural data represented in section 3.8.1, we asked local data walks participants what contributes to agricultural sustainability in The Blue Mountains? Some responses they reported included:

- Climate of the area;
- Local partnerships for sales through restaurants;
- Local farm sales via farmgate or farmers market;
- Agri-tourism;
- Soil health- nutrient cycling and farm diversity;
- Regenerative agriculture;
- Transitional support services;
- Value and educate about local agriculture;
- Rewards for sustainable agriculture; and
- Technology advancements.

Table 13: Status of agriculture actions by goal																					
Goal	Type	Action Status																			
Maintain and improve the economic	Primary		U		O																
viability of agriculture	Secondary	U	O	O	O	U	U														
Enhance sustainable agriculture	Primary		U			U			U												
within TBM community that pro-	Secondary	O	U	U	U	O	U	U	O	O	U	O	N								
motes prosperous family farming																					
and encourages youth engagement																					
in the farming profession																					
Enhance education, marketing and	Primary		U						U								U				
promotion of the local agricultural	Secondary	N	U	U	O	U	O	U	U	N	U	U	U	N	U	O	O	N	U	O	U
industry and lifestyle																					
Ensure that all residents have access	Primary		U		U																
to healthy, nutritious foods	Secondary	U	U	U	U	C	C	U													
Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).																					

We also asked data walks participants where there were opportunities to improve agricultural sustainability in The Blue Mountains, to which they brainstormed:

• Regenerative farming practices;
• Agri-tourism;
• Local marketing of direct farming opportunities;
• Encourage high value-additions in agricultural practice to improve income or find market value for crops;
• Preserve agricultural lands;
• Diversify crop species;
• Connect farmers with one another for services, youth connection, and to sell produce;
• Find alternatives to pesticides and fertilizers;
• Do a deep dive locally to understand if organic and regenerative agriculture is possible;
• Celebrate farming successes; and
• Educate the community on agricultural and gardening practices.

3.8.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

The rural lifestyle was voted as being the fourth-most unique element of The Blue Mountains, while agricultural opportunities were ranked ninth. This aligns with the shared love of the aesthetics of the area, without the connection to the agricultural practices themselves. During an interview, one farmer highlighted in reference to local tourism that "many people come up here for the view [and] agriculture is the view."

Local agriculture was highlighted as one of the best things in The Blue Mountains as many residents appreciated having fresh and healthy food options grown close to them. There was also a large acknowledgement of the agricultural history that makes up the area due to their unique climate. There was also a brief mention on the markets that The Blue Mountains residents have access to.

Other interview themes included:

• **Agriculture protection:** We spoke in length to two farming households; one who mainly rents and provides services and has a supplemental income, and one who farms full time. Both farming families, and some other residents spoke to the need to protect and appreciate farmland, both for production and for aesthetic value.

• **Agricultural environmental considerations:** One of the interviews raised that many of the farmers in The Blue Mountains already have an existing environmental plan. These plans are not recorded by OMAFRA, hence why many may not know about them. Additionally, one farmer spoke about which grants they apply to; instead of changing their practice for the sake of the grant, they often apply for grants that they're already progressing towards.

• **Shared agricultural services:** One interviewee spoke at length about their family's experience providing combining, bailing, and threshing services to the local farmers in the area. These shared services are a way to provide a more immediate income source in comparison to cash crop farming, and provided the local community with equipment that they might otherwise not have had. He went on to speak about how these services need to be hyper-local, and are often spread by word of mouth.

• **Farming partnerships for new farmers:** Farmers spoke at length about some unique partnerships they have with people trying to get into the farming sector. One farmer splits a herd of cattle with a new resident to the community who cannot take care of their cattle full time. The unique partnership provides the farm interviewee with a source of income, and provides the new farmer with the ability to supplement his income while still farming for passion. The other farmers spoke about the farmers that assist them on their farmland. They often try to connect these farm workers with the landlords they lease land from, in the case that ownership becomes an option.

3.9 Government and Partnerships

Government and partnerships are mentioned often as important components to building sustainable practices as sustainability is an encompassing concept larger than the Town administration alone. Best practices and policy support partnerships within and outside of the local community, to ensure that sustainability actions are achievable, and have far-ranging impacts. The local public is generally positive toward the current Council, mentioning that they are approachable, and feel like a voice of the people. There is however a disconnect between residents and recent developments (see Section 3.4: Sustainable Towns and Communities).

3.9.1 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Government and partnerships are highlighted in two UN SDGs:[80]

- **Goal 16:** Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Action areas within this goal include transparency, and the inclusion of people with different ethnic origins, religions, gender, sexual orientations or different opinions.

- **Goal 17:** Partnerships for the Goals: to revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development through promoting citizen action groups, partnering with businesses towards sustainability, and supporting the SDGs partnership platform.

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision

Sustainable governance and management is highlighted as one of the supporting accelerators for other pathways towards sustainability. They mention that sustainable development is a collective effort, and they commit to prioritizing diversity and

This government and partnerships snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of government and partnerships in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *Council documents and minutes [various dates]*
- *Committee of the Whole documents and minutes [various dates]*
- *The Blue Mountains Corporate Strategic Plan [2019 – 2014]*
- *Committees of Council minutes and documents [various committees and dates]*

inclusivity across administrations and communities, strengthening cooperation at a regional scale, bringing the voice of citizens to the global sustainable development debate, and fostering strong partnerships to advance global sustainability.

Resilient Development is one of five pathways highlighted in the ICLEI Commitment, which focuses on the anticipation, prevention, absorption, and recovery from shocks and stresses, including those from "rapid environmental, technological, social and demographic change, and to improve essential basic response structures and functions."[81] Some actions that were highlighted to support this pathway include prioritizing resilience in local governments, strengthening systems to respond to stressors, and enhancing trust in administration using transparency.

Project Drawdown Review

Project Drawdown highlights partnerships and government-related actions as accelerators to achieve climate change goals including the importance of setting climate change goals across administrations, altering rules and policy to align with climate change needs, shifting capital to finance climate change actions, changing behaviour like building power towards climate change, and improving technology through partnerships.[82]

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Government and partnerships are related to two Federal Sustainable Development Strategy goals: greening government, and connecting Canadians with nature.[83]

Sustainable Waterloo Region

Best practices focus on partnering with other agencies such as non-profits to further regional sustainability goals. Sustainable Waterloo Region is a part of Green Economy Canada, which is an organization that helps launch and grow green economy hubs across Canada. Green economy hubs, such as Sustainable Waterloo Region (the longest-running example) are social enterprise

non-profit organizations that help businesses and other local organizations become more sustainable. Sustainable Waterloo Region's mission is "to catalyze transformation to sustainable systems of energy, mobility and buildings to build a cleaner, more diverse economy," and their program focuses include: organizational sustainability target-setting and best practices, commuting behaviour, developing a 'Culture of Sustainability' for building occupants to maximize their building's energy performance, mobilizing the broader community to mitigate GHG emissions, and supporting electric vehicle uptake.

3.9.2 POLICY

Some local government and partnerships policy objectives regarding sustainability include:

- Create programming for land stewardship and land acquisition;

- Lead by example for sustainability initiatives;

- Consult with and take indigenous voices into consideration when protecting and managing cultural/archaeological heritage; and

- Promote opportunities to work with the indigenous and traditional cultures of this territory in seeking mutually beneficial and socially- and environmentally-sustainable economic development opportunities.

3.9.3 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 14 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to government and partnerships.

Table 14: Status of watershed health actions by goal												
Goal	Type	Action Status										
ensure that The Town continues to assume a leadership role in implementing sustainable actions.	Primary	U				U			U			
	Secondary	N	U	O	U	U	U	U	U	U	O	O
Create a strong vibrant regional community	Primary	U										
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U						
Explore the option of future amalgamated single tier community and its local government	Primary	U										
	Secondary	U	U	U								
Service groups and agencies engage with each other and community members to enhance community life	Primary	U										
		U	U	U								

Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).

3.9.4 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see section 1.4). We did not ask this group to reflect on government and partnerships at this time.

3.9.5 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

"Local government that develops ties between community needs and municipal services" ranked 7th for the things that make The Blue Mountains unique, while strong ties between local area services and businesses (Owen Sound, Meaford and Collingwood) including transportation, business and employment connections ranked 8th.

Government was brought up multiple times in public engagement outreach, in both positive and negative ways. Residents reported an appreciation for the local government, particularly for how approachable Council and administration are. There was mention that this Council in particular was felt to be making decisions on behalf of the people.

Government was referenced regarding frustrations with administration, Council, and planning due to recent urban development, or praise for transparency, approachability, and involvement opportunities in local government.

3.10 Health and Safety

Health and safety refers to multiple factors in The Blue Mountains including: access to medical facilities, improving active and healthy lifestyles of residents and promoting resident safety. Residents stay in their community because of the accessibility to nature, and a healthy active lifestyle and other communities. As the population ages, there is a reported need for medical facility expansion.

3.10.1 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

One SDG reflected in local health and safety is Goal 3: Good Health and Wellbeing.[84] This goal aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Some actions within this goal include \ promoting healthy choices, including education, safe sex and vaccination, and healthy lifestyles.

Whitby Green Standard

The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the numerous green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. Health and Happiness is one of the Town of Whitby Green Standard's 10 action areas, and includes related action areas of: public/boulevard trees; access to parks and open space; and parkland and open space provision.[85]

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Safe and Healthy Communities is one of 13 of the Federal Sustainable Development goals.[86]

3.10.2 LOCAL POLICY & PLANS

Healthy development is reflected in local plan directions including:

• Creating development that is in line with the healthy development checklist, which includes: supporting mixed use development within 800 meters of retail, recreational centers, parks and public spaces, including affordable housing options, preserving natural heritage, building cycling infrastructure, and conducting health impact assessments.

• Developing healthy communities through physician recruitment, and wellbeing plans.

This health and safety snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of health and safety in The Blue Mountains, please see:

• *The Blue Mountains Official Plan [2016]*
• *Grey County Official Plan [2019]*
• *Primary Care Physician Recruitment Strategy and Action Presentation [2018]*
• *Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee documents and minutes [various dates]*

- Developing, implementing and measuring progress of a sustainable solution for Primary Care Physician recruitment in the short and long term

3.10.3 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 15 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to health and safety.

3.10.4 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with community representatives and local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see *section 1.4*). The group was not asked to provide feedback on health and safety.

3.10.5 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Active recreation and ecotourism amenities were ranked as the second-most unique aspect of the Town.

When asked about the best things about The Blue Mountains, respondents reported many elements related to keeping a healthy and active lifestyle:

- Recreation and outdoor activities like cycling, golf, hiking, skiing, snow sports, and water sports were activities that keep them active and healthy in their community. These activities were often reported to be the main reason the community came here, particularly for those who reported that they were retired in this response;

- Four-season activities, highlighting the trail network and ski trails provide for year-round entertainment outdoors; and

- Active and outdoor lifestyle, and the multiple like-minded healthy residents in the community. Walkability was also mentioned due to the close proximity of services, particularly in Thornbury, and mentioned that it adds to the health and activity of the area.

When asked what improvements would make the area even better, respondents answered:

- Recreation or community centre and swimming pool for indoor sports, particularly including a pool (either indoor or outdoor), tennis courts, ice rinks, a space to host sports teams, and other needs; and

- Medical Facilities and practitioners in or close to town, or to help support the growth of Collingwood's hospital.

Table 15: Status of health and safety actions by goal														
Goal	Type	Action Status												
Provide accessible and equitable health care services to all residents	Primary	U	O						U					
	Secondary		O	U	C	C	U	U	N	O	U	U	O	
Explore alternative mechanisms to provide health care	Primary	O	U											
All residents shall have access to community services that meet psychological, social and physical needs that promote long-term prosperity within a safe and secure community	Primary			U			U	U	O	U	N			
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U					
T10, G6: Foster a safe environment for all members of the community considering their particular risk factors and needs	Primary		U		U				O					
	Secondary	U	U		I		O	O	O	N	U	O	O	I	U
				I	I									
Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).														

3.11 Arts and Culture

In comparison to other surrounding municipalities, arts and culture is a larger part of The Blue Mountains's economy. Some elements that contribute to the unique culture of the Town include: small-town feel (see *section 3.5*), agricultural history (see *section 3.8*), and public amenities like The Blue Mountains Public Library.

3.11.1 BEST PRACTICE

Project Drawdown Review
One of the accelerators listed in the Project Drawdown review to achieve climate goals is to shape local culture to support climate change, including media and culture production.

Whitby Green Standard
The Whitby Green Standard is a leading example of the multiple green development standards that are being implemented across Canada. Culture and Community is one of 10 action areas supported in Whitby's Green Standard. Some actions included in this standard include: art (within the site), outdoor amenity space, culture heritage resources, sustainable culture (education).[87]

3.11.2 POLICY

The protection and enhancement of local culture and heritage resources are included in many local policies with focuses on:

- Protecting heritage and culture resources to support the tourism and recreation sector. These areas are in particular need of infrastructure renewal and continued support, to support these year-round tourism needs;

- The conservation of built, cultural, and archaeological heritage resources. It is encouraged to have adaptive reuse of existing buildings, to both protect heritage, but also to attract and retain new talent to the area;

- Creation of archaeological management plans and cultural plan development to conserve cultural heritage;

- Flexibility when accommodating cultural activities; and

- Designing public spaces that showcase public art, creative spaces, and natural heritage and archaeological resources. Coordinate awareness for these spaces.

This arts and culture snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of arts and culture in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *The Blue Mountains Public Library Strategic Plan [2018 – 2022]*
- *Committees of The Blue Mountains Library Board [various dates]*

Goal	Type	Action Status									
Table 16: Status of arts and culture actions by goal											
To celebrate and support the development of the arts and culture sector in TBM	Primary			U							
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	U				
Create a vision that inspires and calls everyone to action, including the Town Council, staff and volunteers, the arts and culture community, residents and visitors, to support and develop arts and culture in TBM	Primary			U							
	Secondary	N	U	U	U						
Encourage youth participation in culture, heritage and the arts	Primary		U								
	Secondary	U	U								
Provide funding for the arts community to engage and act in partnership with the municipality	Primary	U	U	U	U						
	Secondary			U							
Position TBM Community as a cultural and heritage destination	Primary		U		U		U		U		U
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U
Community Partners to preserve local cultural and heritage resources	Primary			U			U				
	Secondary	U	U	U	U	U	U	U			
Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).											

3.11.3 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 16 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to arts and culture.

3.11.4 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and local experts to understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see *section 1.4*). The group was not directly asked about arts and culture, but some did reflect on the value of their arts and culture amenities when referring to youth attraction.

3.11.5 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Arts and culture, including public programs and commercial creativity and galleries was ranked as the sixth-most unique aspect of the Town.

When we asked the community where there were opportunities to improve the community, survey respondents and interviewees highlighted the creation and support of arts and culture activities and facilities. Arts and culture activities include the delivery of theatre and music programs and the importance of continued library support.

In interviews, respondents mentioned the importance of the history of the area, either Indigenous or agricultural, that made the place what it is today. Agriculture in particular draws lessons from past generations, as one farmer noted that "farming is one example where you feel the impacts of the generation before." In a different light, another farmer referenced how history is the key to innovation, as he often instructs his children to "think about what [their] grandfather would have done," rather than their parents.

Other interviewees highlighted the importance of community events to reflect local culture and improve connections to new community members from different cultural backgrounds.

3.12 Local Business

Local business was highlighted as a key element that adds to the community feel in The Blue Mountains. With national trends focused on buying local during COVID-19, public feedback reported a general desire to see more support for local businesses. Best practice and policy advocate for this through enhancing of placemaking and vibrancy.
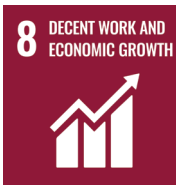
3.12.1 STATS AND DATA

In 2020, Tate Economic Research Inc. conducted a study to analyze the commercial retail gap in The Blue Mountains. The study found that The Town is in need of general merchandise, furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores, clothing and accessories, personal services, pharmacies and personal care, and a surplus of eating and drinking establishments, and building and outdoor supply shops.

3.12.2 BEST PRACTICE

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Local businesses help to contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.[89] This goal aims to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all. Action areas related to this include: providing youth with education, and economic

This local business snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of local business in The Blue Mountains, please see:

- *Draft Economic Development Strategy [2021]*
- *Economic Development Advisory Committee documents and minutes [various dates]*
- *The Blue Mountains Official Plan [2016]*
- *Grey County Official Plan [2019]*
- *Provincial Policy Statement [2020 update]*
- *The Blue Mountains Commercial Retail Gap Analysis [2020]*

Figure 15 (below): Quantitative Gap Analysis of Business Services, Tate economic Research Inc. 2020.[88]
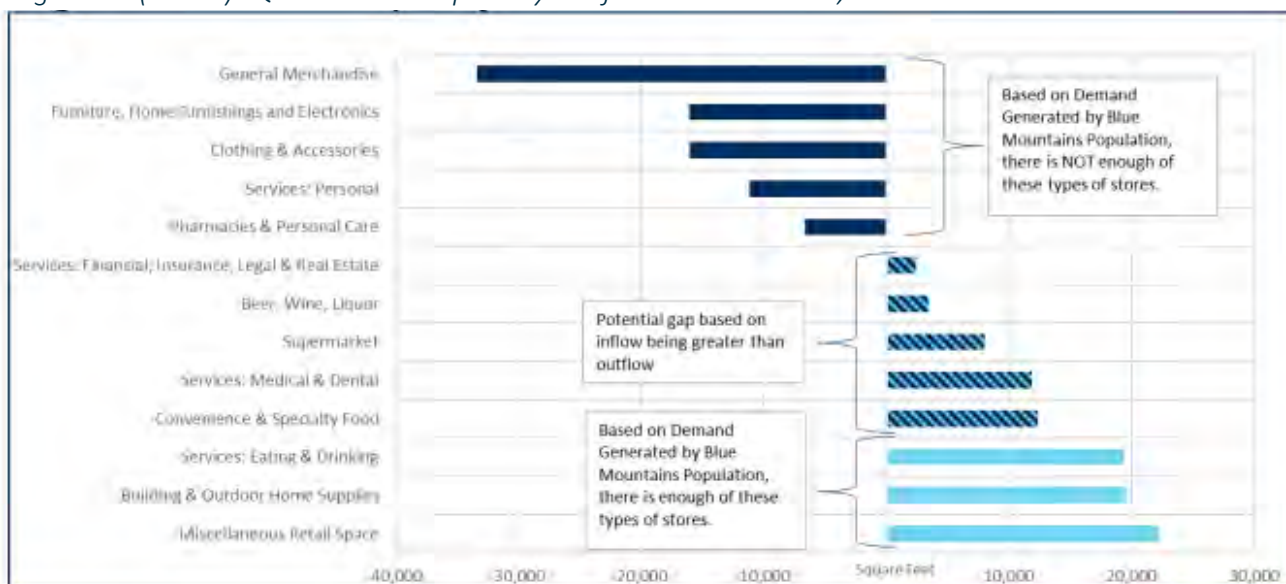
Table 17: Status of local business actions by goal				
Goal	Type	Action Status		
Attract and retain small businesses	Primary	U	U	U
	Secondary	U	O	U
Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).				

empowerment, implementing safety measures workers, primarily healthcare workers, and supporting people-centred economies promoting youth employment.

3.12.3 POLICY

Local business is supported in policy in relationship to downtown vibrancy and placemaking to help ensure economic prosperity.

The Blue Mountains is working to finalize a draft *Economic Development Strategy* for 2021-2025 which will include a variety of actions to support attraction and retention of local businesses and workforce participants.

3.12.4 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 17 above summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related to local business.

3.12.5 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see section 1.4). Data walks participants were not directly asked about local business, as it was a theme to emerge from public engagement.

3.12.6 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

The diverse mix of businesses, including products, experiences, and services was ranked as the fifth-most unique aspect of The Blue Mountains.

We asked the public what the best things in The Blue Mountains were. Survey and interview respondents mentioned:

• **Small or local business**, as they are unique, and residents knew the owners and can see the direct benefit of purchasing locally; and

• **Downtown**, for its character and walkability, particularly Thornbury's downtown.

When we asked what could be improved, respondents mentioned the protection and enhancement of small businesses. Small business support, protection and enhancement was often mentioned in alignment with retaining the local character of the Town, as well as a necessity for the Town's sustainability. The increase of everyday goods and services was also requested, particularly in regards to more food options available outside of Blue Mountains Village.

In interviews, buying and supporting local businesses was an ongoing theme, particularly during COVID-19. Many respondents mentioned that while the pandemic spurred them to buy locally, they will continue to do so because of the high quality of food in The Blue Mountains and local vendors' connection with the community.

3.13 Education and Learning

Lifelong learning was a common theme for public interviews, as education opportunities for elderly and young populations were referenced as important for mental health and retention. Best practice supports education as important, particularly in regards to sustainable practices and lowering population growth, while improving everyday cultural habits.

3.13.1 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Education and learning is also highlighted in UN Sustainability Goal 4: Quality Education.[90] This goal aims to ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning, and suggests placing education as a priority in policy and practice.

Project Drawdown review

Health and education are highlighted in Project Drawdown's action items to Improve Society. Education is highlighted specifically in regards to the protection and upholding of women to have ripple effects of lowering population growth, and increasing sustainability.[91]

3.13.2 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 18 above summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions that are related toeducation and learning. For a full status report on all 667 actions and sub actions, please contact sustinability@thebluemountains.ca.

Table 18: Status of education and learning actions by goal								
Goal	Type	Action Status						
All residents shall have access to education opportunities that assist in attaining life-long learning aspirations	Primary	U	U	U	U	O	U	U
All residents have a heightened awareness of the education opportunities available	Primary		U					
	Secondary	U	U	U	U			
Achieve collaboration, coordination and communications among many education-related organizations and groups	Primary	U	U	U	U			
Establish a local education facility	Primary	U	U					

Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).

3.13.3 DATA WALKS FINDINGS

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with a series of community representatives and a variety of local experts to help us understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see *section 1.4*). Data walks participants were not directly asked about education and learning opportunities, but the topic was mentioned in relation to a variety of topics, including watershed health as an opportunity to increase protection, economy as a means to diversify the workforce, food insecurity and poverty to increase plant-based diets, housing as a way to increase income, and demographics as a way to support youth in The Blue Mountains.

3.13.4 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Though not mentioned directly in surveys, lifelong learning was a common theme for interviewees. Almost all interviewees, but particularly those who were older, mentioned the importance of lifelong learning. They attributed lifelong learning, and its associated resources (libraries, conferences, etc.) to be invaluable to the long-term mental health of the local population.

When working with the Sustainability Advisory Subcommittee, the attraction and retention of local schools was highlighted as an important priority for The Town, particularly for programs that consider the unique agricultural and archaelogical atttractions in the community.

3.14 Infrastructure and Innovation

Infrastructure and innovation was highlighted as essential ensuring practices stay sustainable. It was mentioned that infrastructure improvements and resilient development practices are important in ensuring we rely less on transportation and other carbon-emitting sources. Technology advances are also important in ensuring agriculture, economic development, and naturalization practices continue to remain resilient and improve over time.

3.14.1 BEST PRACTICE

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

One Social Development Goal that reflects infrastructure and innovation is Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure which is listed as an underpinning crucial element for all other aspects of sustainability.[92]

The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision
Innovation & science was highlighted as one of the main supporting elements to achieving ICLEI's 5 focus areas. Some considerations in the commitment include:[93]

• Creating policy approaches to help achieve 5 focus areas;
• Using digital technologies as a tool for inclusion;
• Promoting evidence-driven and science-based policy;
• Driving innovation through partnerships and collaboration; and
• Creating space for open innovation.

Project Drawdown review
The Drawdown review suggests supporting communications infrastructures specifically, to decrease travel reliance, and therefore slow the effects of global warming.[94]

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy
Modern and resilient infrastructure is one of 13 of the country's sustainability priorities.[95]

Sidebar: This infrastructure and innovation snapshot is meant to give a general overview of what has been gathered to date. To learn more about the dynamics of infrastructure and innovation in The Blue Mountains, please see:

• *Grey County Official Plan [2019]*
• *The Blue Mountains Official Plan [2016]*
• *Transportation Master Plan [in development]*
• *The Blue Mountains Municipal Infrastructure Project webpage documents and projects [various dates*
• *Town-wide Drainage Master Plan [in development]*
• *Provincial Policy Statement [2020]*

3.14.2 POLICY

Infrastructure and Innovation underpin many local policy directions, but are explicitly mentioned when:

- *Grey County's Official Plan* suggests supporting business activities that provide new technologies and the sharing economy;

- *The Provincial Policy Statement* supports offering long-term use of land and infrastructure to ensure economic prosperity. Grey County's Official Plan also recognizes that infrastructure and its renewal are integral to sustainability; and

- *The Provincial Policy Statement* also specifies that telecommunications infrastructure is essential to economic prosperity in Ontario.

3.14.3 2010 ICSP (SUSTAINABLE PATH) DIRECTION

The Town and its committees have reviewed the status of actions proposed 11 years ago in the 2010 ICSP Sustainable Path document to the best of their ability. Table 19 summarizes the status of actions and their associated secondary and tertiary actions related to infrastructure and innovation.

3.14.4 WHAT DATA WALKS PARTICIPANTS SAY

The Town hosted a data walks workshop with community representatives and local experts to understand current state trends in The Blue Mountains (see *section 1.4*). Though not directly asked about infrastructure and innovation, data walks participants mentioned that technology innovation and infrastructure improvements were vital to ensuring the overall sustainability of the economy and agriculture.

3.14.5 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Infrastructure and innovation improvements were mentioned when we asked what improvements would make the community even better. Transportation was the most commonly mentioned infrastructure improvement.

Recommended road and parking improvements included highway widening and more parking at trailheads to accommodate increased use by newcomers and tourists. There were also requests to give residents priority access at some trailhead parking areas as a result of the overwhelming number of tourists present during the summer of 2020.

Walkability was highlighted as a priority in the Town; some respondents mentioned a need for more pedestrian-only spaces and trails and to sidewalk improvements. Cycling improvements largely focused on bike lanes and connectivity in opposition to the current risk of collision due to mixed travel on the road without clear delineation of space.

Other recommended infrastructure improvements mentioned included: water and sewage, cell phone and internet connections, hydro infrastructure improvements, and pier and harbour improvements. Importance of infrastructure, particularly cellular connections, internet access, roads, and waste collection were mentioned as important to interviewees, particularly in rural areas.

Innovation was mentioned as a growing economic group in The Blue Mountains by another interviewee, who suggested supporting more local entrepreneurs and other technology companies to come to the Town, helping to diversify the economy.

Table 19: Status of education and learning actions by goal											
Goal	Type	Action Status									
Optimize the municipal wastewater and stormwater systems	Primary	O			O			U			
	Secondary	O	O	O	N	O	O	O	O	O	
Note: Primary actions, and their corresponding secondary and tertiary actions, are recorded as complete (C), are ongoing or in progress (O), are introduced in future operational plans (I), were never initiated (N), or have an unknown status (U).											

Next Steps

The information within this Current State Report provides an important foundation for The Blue Mountains Future Story process. Reviewing and integrating data, policy, community views, and best practices provides a robust understanding of the current state of the community which will inform subsequent phases of developing an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan for The Blue Mountains.

In Phase 2, the process will extensively engage the community to understand their ideas for the future of The Blue Mountains. Questions about the future of The Blue Mountains will be framed in part by the insights and challenge questions identified in Section 2 of this report. In addition, exploration of the biggest, boldest ideas will help to build a vision and objectives for the community, setting the course where the community believes The Blue

Mountains should proceed.

In Phase 3, the information represented in this report will serve as a starting point for the new Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. Through the generation of ideas, prioritization and selection of the actions that will have the most impact, the new plan will identify strategic, actionable steps to move from the current state towards the desired future.

Throughout the upcoming phases of work, this report will serve as a continual reference point as we answer the question:

How might we build upon the unique attributes of the Town of The Blue Mountains while creating a shared path towards a future of increased livability, vibrancy and health of all living systems in our community?

Endnotes

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APPENDIX A
What We Heard Report

APPENDIX A

The Blue Mountains Future Story Internal What We Heard Report

Submitted to Jeffery Fletcher
March 8th, 2021

Table of Contents

This is a working document.
Its intended use is for reference
only.
This is not a draft document.

Executive Summary

The 6-week Phase 1 Future Story engagement process is now complete. The following report highlights what the general public, local stakeholder groups, and committee members have said in response to our questions regarding The Blue Mountains Future Story: Community Sustainability Plan. Using a variety of engagement approaches, feedback was obtained on the current state of the environment, the community, the cultural importance, and the economy in The Blue Mountains [TBM]. This feedback will inform the Current State Report, which is the first of three reports to inform The Blue Mountains Future Story.

Themes across all engagement tactics included:
- Natural features and recreation activities were the most commonly mentioned positives of living and visiting The Blue Mountains. Similarly, natural area preservation was mentioned as being important to residents. The preservation of natural spaces, in addition to the retaining of clean air, water, and appreciation for the outdoors will be key in future phase messaging.
- Small town feel and sense of community were also strong reasons why people choose to stay in The Blue Mountains.
- There is a reported tension between new residents, tourists and long time-locals that has increased during COVID-19. To overcome this, community members suggested more community events post-COVID-19, increased education materials, and welcome packages for new residents.
- The Blue Mountains is highly affluent, and in need of affordable housing, programming and food access alike - this was highlighted in all forms of engagement.
- There has been a large amount of growth reported by residents during COVID-19, with a series of developments that the community has felt disconnected from. There has been increased tension and questioning of how this growth is being managed.
- Traffic and tourism management have come up as tension points in the community as a result of the increased traffic from COVID-19 and new developments. The Transportation Master Plan will help to facilitate these discussions further.
- There is a want for an updated community vision with the wealth of changes that have occurred over the past year, as residents feel disconnected from some government decisions.
- Small businesses are important to everyday life in TBM, and it is anticipated that resident support for them post-COVID will continue to grow.
- There is a breath of knowledge in the Blue Mountains, both professional and agriculturally that will be tapped into for action planning phases.

- Active lifestyle and lifelong learning opportunities were both mentioned as necessary supports for physical and mental health in TBM. Community amenities like the library and the natural features of the area are valuable to both keeping people happy, but also for improving their health.
- Residents and stakeholders alike are calling for a diversified economy away from the heavy reliance on tourism, and the precarious jobs and housing needs that it creates in the area.
- Green procurement and development documents have been highlighted as helpful options in guiding new development to build sustainably in TBM.

1.0 Introduction

There are three key phases to The Blue Mountains Future Story:

Phase 1: Assessing the community's current state (December 2020 - April 2021).
This phase will surface the current realities of TBM's context (including data, trends, policy, experience, and perspectives). The engagement in this phase focuses on storytelling and asks professionals and community members what makes TBM unique, and will be paired with current state research, policy direction, and best practice research for the Current State Report.

Phase 2: Developing a vision for the future of the community (April 2021 - September 2021).
This phase will develop a picture of the desired future for TBM based on the ideas, hopes and dreams of the community. This is our largest phase of engagement, as we will focus on collaboratively gathering insights for what the community wants TBM to look like in the future.

Phase 3: Finalizing the Community Sustainability Plan (October 2021 - January 2022).
This phase will develop a plan for the future that bridges the gap between what was surfaced in Phase 1 and Phase 2, and turns ideas into meaningful action steps grounded in TBM's unique context. This phase of engagement will ensure that we are proposing what the community wants for the future of TBM.

This What We Heard Report summarizes the findings for engagement and communications tactics in phase 1, which focuses on the current state of sustainability in TBM.

2.0 Process and Participation

From January 18 to February 26th, an engagement process was implemented to ensure the public, municipal and community stakeholders could share their insights and feedback on the current state of sustainability in The Blue Mountains, as part of the The Blue Mountains Future Story. Throughout the course of the phase, we heard from 310 community participants.

2.1 How We Engaged

To share questions, comments and insights, people were encouraged to:
- Attend the stakeholder workshop sessions held on February 18th on Zoom.
- Provide feedback via social media using the hashtag #tbmfuturestory.
- Provide feedback online via the project website: online survey, print survey, ambassadors network, spreading social media and poster imagery.
- Request a print survey on the website, through the Blue Mountains Review, or through the library delivery service.
- Be interviewed and share personal lived experiences from the Blue Mountains
- Become a sustainability ambassador.

Online Survey

The approach to online and print engagement gave residents an opportunity to share their insights for action in a way that allowed for 24/7 access with a relatively minimal investment in time. This enabled the project team to gain a broader variety of insights into the current state in The Blue Mountains. We asked questions about resident favorite parts of living in TBM, what could be improved, what makes the Town unique, and the story of the Town in the current state.

Between January 25th and February 26th, the survey received 261 responses, and print surveys continue to increase this number.

SURVEY		Number of responses
	The approach to online and in person engagement gave residents an opportunity to share their insights for action in a way that allowed for 24/7 access with a relatively minimal investment in time. This enabled the project	**261**

		Dates open
	team to gain a broader variety of insights into the current state in The Blue Mountains.	
	What we asked:	January - February
		25 - 26

- What are the best things about The Blue Mountains?
- What changes would make our community even better?
- Please rank the following aspects of the The Blue Mountains that make the community unique in order of importance
    - Natural features including the Georgian Bay Shoreline, the Niagara Escarpment, Nipissing Ridge, etc.
    - Active recreation and eco-tourism draws in the community (ski resorts and clubs, trails for cycling and hiking in the Niagara Escarpment, and sailing in Georgian Bay, etc.)
    - Strong ties between local area services and businesses (Owen Sound, Meaford and Collingwood) including transportation, business, and employment connections
    - The rural lifestyle
    - Small town, village and hamlet feel and connection between neighbours
    - Agricultural opportunities
    - The Town's location and relationship with the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)
    - A mix of residents who are both full-time and seasonal
    - A diverse mix of businesses, including products, experiences, and services
    - Arts and culture scene, including public programs and commercial creativity and galleries
    - Local government that develops ties between community needs and municipal services

| | ○ Other
● In your opinion, what else makes the Town of The Blue Mountains unique?
● How would you describe life today in the Town of The Blue Mountains in 100 words or less?
● Demographic questions | |

Workshops

Workshops invited targeted stakeholders to gather with key The Blue Mountains staff to explore the questions being asked about The Blue Mountains Future Story, and to dive deeper into the nuance of the subject. Using a dynamic mix of data, visual precedents and real-time visualization, the aim of the workshop was to gain insights into data trends in the community.

Between February 18th and February 26th, a data walks workshop was held, followed by a data walk survey for those unable to attend, engaging with 39 (27 in person, 12 via survey) stakeholders.

User Experience Interviews

When addressing significant systems change, the lived experiences of residents are often missed. This can then lead to a detachment from the proposed change and solutions to the community it is intended to help. To address this issue, we underwent a set of discovery interviews with local residents to understand life in the community in a precise way - leading to a more contextualized understanding of the current lived experience in The Blue Mountains.

Between February 26th and March 4th, we interviewed ten varied residents and workers to understand the diversity of lived experiences in The Blue Mountains.

Website

With a client website the team shared project details, advertised engagement sessions, provided means for feedback and displayed ongoing developments as the process unfolded.

Starting on January 18th to date, the website received 1500 visits: 1,146 aware participants, 561 informed participants, and 225 engaged participants.

2.2 Engagement Communication

Engagement opportunities were communicated using the following:
● Website content for 1. Bang the Table and 2. Town Special Project pages

- Online survey
- Print survey
- One-pager project overview
- Ads for Collingwood Connection, Collingwood Today and Blue Mountain Review
- Signage with Chamber of Commerce
- Social media posts
- Sustainability awareness materials (social media posts and topic-specific posters with QR codes spread throughout the Town)
- Engagement posters
- Coffee Chats
- Sustainability Ambassadors promo materials (print/digital ads, Coffee Chat guide, draft asks to help spread the word with posters, etc.)
- CSP FAQ
- Media release to all Town papers, radio stations, and websites on the distribute list from The Town
- Email update to TBM subscribers (used media release)
- Project noted in Mayor's weekly YouTube video
- Direct invitations to 37 key stakeholders - and a follow up data walks online survey
- Facebook promotion on The Blue Mountains Residents Forum
- Two week campaign and link to project page placed on the Town Waste Resource App
- Post and link to project page on the Town's Solid Waste Disposal Site Google Places page
- Project email created (sustainability@thebluemountains.ca), and features on project websites and all print materials distributed
- School engagement

2.3 Who We Heard From

Stakeholder Organizations Represented in data walk and follow up survey:
- TBM residents
- Sustainability Committee Members
- Agricultural Committee Members
- Communications Advisory Committee Members
- Economic Development Advisory Committee Members
- Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
- Grey Sauble Conservation Authority
- Grey County Representative

- Niagara Escarpment Commission
- Blue Mountains Public Library
- Museum Advisory Council
- Georgian Bay Youth Roots
- Grey Bruce Public Health
- The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce
- Institute of Southern Georgian Bay
- The Grey Bruce Sustainability Network
- Blue Mountains Ratepayer Association Members
- Council members
- Town Staff:
    - Manager of Roads and Drainage
    - Manager of Water and Wastewater Services
    - Manager of Parks and Trails
    - Manager of Development Engineering
    - Manager Sustainability & Solid Waste
    - Director of Operations
    - Sustainability Coordinator
    - Director of Community Services

Online Survey Representatives:

Online

Type of resident:
- Full-time, Year Round: 168
- Part-time, 6 Months - 11 Months:28
- Seasonal, 6 Months or Less: 32
- Flex, Live in the Town but work outside of the community: 3
- I do not live in The Blue Mountains: 13

Property Location:
- Banks: 1
- Blue Mountain Village: 42
- Castle Glen: 1
- Clarksburg: 29
- Craigleith: 33
- Gibraltar: 1

- Heathcote: 3
- Lora Bay: 22
- Loree: 2
- Osler: 1
- Ravenna: 5
- Red Wing: 3
- Sandhill   : 1
- Slabtown: 1
- Swiss Meadows: 2
- Thornbury: 71
- Victoria Corners: 9
- I do not live in The Blue Mountains: 24

"I am responding to this survey as a _____."
- Town of The Blue Mountains Resident (full-time/part-time, property owner, renter): 206
- Business owner in the Town of The Blue Mountains: 3
- Both a resident and a business owner: 18
- Working in the Town of The Blue Mountains but living elsewhere: 4
- Visitor (Where are you visiting from?) Please indicate in the 'other' box below: 5
- Other: 18

Number of people in Household (including self)
- I do not live in the Town of The Blue Mountains: 8
- 1-2 people: 158
- 3-4 people: 56
- 5 people or more: 23

Age
Under 19: 24
18-24: 2
25-34: 2
35-44: 10
45-54: 32
55-64: 81
65+: 97

The engagement process engaged 310 stakeholders. The number of responses or points of contact and conversation are detailed below:
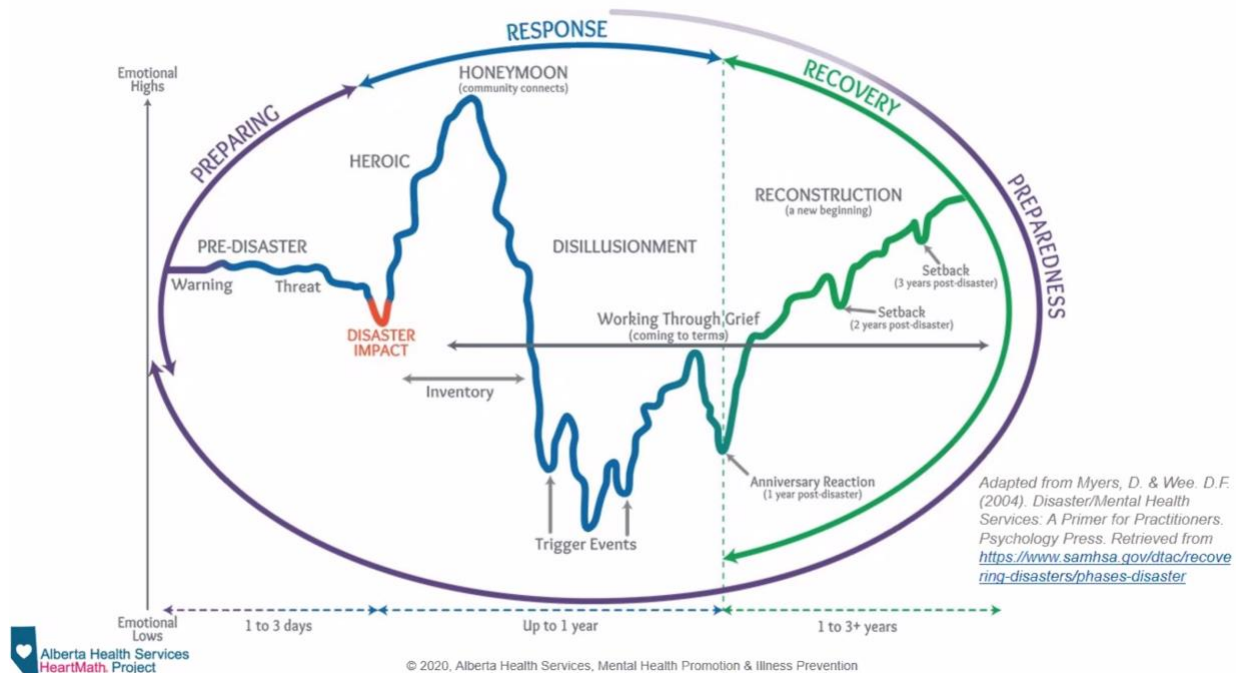
- Online Survey: 261 responses
- Data Walk & Supplementary Survey: 39 participants
- Discovery Interviews: 10 participants (to date)
- Website: 1500 visitors

Interviews

Interview respondents were members of the community from a variety of different demographics, and included unique backgrounds that make up The Blue Mountains.

2.4 COVID-Environment at time of Engagement

The following is a brief discussion on what was happening in the community in regards to COVID-19 during phase 1 of engagement. The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching impacts on communities, varying from immediate health challenges to adjustments to daily behaviours due to lockdown measures to ongoing issues of mental health.The following is a graph provided by Alberta Health Services which displays the emotional response a population has to traumatic disaster relief. Assuming that 'disaster impact' hit when Ontario entered into its first lockdown on March 17th, there may have been a spike in emotional highs and community solidarity, as neighbours checked in on one another, and pulled together to combat the impending doom that was COVID-19. It is hard to identify when this 'honeymoon phase' ended in The Blue Mountains, as summer brought a decrease in numbers and increase in physical activity outdoors. It is apparent that the 'trigger events' in the area would be correlated with additional lockdown measures within the area, with influential events and dates being: province-wide mask mandate (October 3rd), a strict province-wide shutdown mandated by the province (December 26, 2021 for 28 days in The Blue Mountains area), cases continuing to climb, peaking on January 8th in Ontario, second declaration of emergency in Ontario with new stay at home orders (January 12th for January 14th), new federal travel restrictions (January 29th), declaration of emergency expired (February 8th), stay at home order lifted in Grey (February 16th).

RESPONSE

HONEYMOON
(community connects)

RECOVERY

Emotional
Highs

PREPARING

HEROIC

RECONSTRUCTION
(a new beginning)

PREPAREDNESS

PRE-DISASTER

DISILLUSIONMENT

Setback
(3 years post-disaster)

Warning   Threat

Setback
(2 years post-disaster)

DISASTER
IMPACT

Working Through Grief
(coming to terms)

Inventory

Anniversary Reaction
(1 year post-disaster)

Adapted from Myers, D. & Wee. D.F.
(2004). Disaster/Mental Health
Services: A Primer for Practitioners.
Psychology Press. Retrieved from
https://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/recove
ring-disasters/phases-disaster

Trigger Events

Emotional
Lows

1 to 3 days   Up to 1 year   1 to 3+ years

Alberta Health Services
HeartMath. Project

© 2020, Alberta Health Services, Mental Health Promotion & Illness Prevention

Phase 1 of engagement ran from January 18th to February 29th. The majority of the engagement was during this stay at home order and can be assumed to be associated with a period of emotional lows. The effects of these emotional lows are reflected in the everyday behaviours and involvement of residents in events, engagement, the news, among many other activities associated with the increased stress, anxiety and depression associated with COVID-19.

The psychological and behavioural symptoms that result from the increased stress, anxiety and depression induced by COVID-19 can include: virus-related worries and insecurity, feelings of being overwhelmed by events, powerlessness, a negative vision of things or daily events, feelings of discouragement, insecurity, sadness, anger, difficulty in concentrating, withdrawal, insularity, difficulty in making decisions, increased use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco and/or medication.[1] These symptoms affect multiple aspects of civic life and should be heavily weighed when reviewing the responses gathered during this phase of engagement.

These considerations should be taken into account when reviewing engagement feedback, both in terms of numbers, but also in terms of focus and reported stresses. It is advised that we take the findings from this report into consideration, but understand that the community is under

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[1] Stress, anxiety and depression associated with the Coronavirus Covid-19 disease. (n.d.). Retrieved March 01, 2021, from https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/stress-anxiety-and-depression-associated-with-the-coronavirus-covid-19-disease/#c47201

higher levels of collective stress over a longer period of time than many have experienced in their lifetime.

Similarly, these considerations have greatly affected our understanding of data in The Blue Mountains, as there have been reported changes in full time population, and an increase in population which is not yet recorded in census or County data, but has been seen in recent waste counts, and through public accounting. This will affect the current state reporting.

3.0 What We Heard

The following section shares the questions that were asked as part of the community engagement process paired with what was heard from participants in response to these prompts.

3.1 Online Survey

Unique Prioritization

Question: Please rank the following aspects of The Blue Mountains that make the community unique in order of importance (1 being most important and 12 being least important). The top preferences from most supported to least supported were:

Choice	Average Ranking	Count												Ranking
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Natural features including the Georgian Bay Shoreline, the Niagara Escarpment, Nipissing Ridge, etc.	2.16	128	63	26	8	8	1	0	4	3	4	3	1	1
Active recreation and eco-tourism draws in the community (ski resorts and clubs, trails for cycling and hiking in the Niagara Escarpment, and sailing in Georgian Bay, etc.)	3.15	60	77	34	26	9	4	6	6	5	4	9	3	2
Small town, village and hamlet feel and connection between neighbours	3.46	35	52	86	20	14	8	6	9	2	8	3	3	3
The rural lifestyle	5.42	9	22	28	44	20	26	32	22	19	13	7	1	4

Choice	Average Ranking	Count												Ranking
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
A diverse mix of businesses, including products, experiences, and services	5.81	3	5	17	39	53	35	31	22	18	14	3	2	5
Arts and culture scene, including public programs and commercial creativity and galleries	6.18	7	4	9	36	28	30	48	28	23	14	8	4	6
Local government that develops ties between community needs and municipal services	6.83	8	8	6	16	26	32	20	44	21	19	33	5	7
Strong ties between local area services and businesses (Owen Sound, Meaford and Collingwood) including transportation, business, and employment connections	6.85	1	2	18	14	25	40	29	22	32	33	16	2	8
Agricultural opportunities	7.47	3	3	10	14	19	23	21	31	38	32	31	11	9
A mix of residents who are both full-time and seasonal	7.47	1	7	7	13	17	23	19	31	31	41	33	9	10
The Town's location and relationship with the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).	7.61	6	6	10	20	24	15	16	14	21	34	45	25	11
other	10.37	2	0	3	0	4	5	6	1	11	10	21	67	12

In your opinion, what else makes the Town of The Blue Mountains unique?

Overarching themes for other uniques pick up on some of the subtleties of the above mentioned, and are detailed more in the following three open ended responses.
- Recreation and outdoor activities (35)
- Small Town feel (29)
- Scenery and Natural Beauty (27)
- Four-seasons activities (24)
- Sense of Community (19)
- Niagara Escarpment (15)
- Georgian Bay (14)
- Friendly (13)
- Arts and culture community (13)
- Small or local business (13)
- Retail services - mostly restaurants (12)

- Government - approachable and progressive (12)
- Local Agriculture (12)
- Blue Mountain & Blue Mountain Village (12)

What are the best things about the Town of The Blue Mountains?

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
Recreation and outdoor activities (98)	The leading highlight from The Blue Mountains remains the recreation and outdoor activities. The community reported that recreation activities like cycling (20), golf (7), hiking (26), skiing (39), snow sports (7), and water sports (6) were activities that keep them active and healthy in their community. These activities were often reported to be the main reason the community came here, particularly for those who reported that they were retired in this response.
Natural Features (90)	It is not secret that the natural features are a highlight in the Blue Mountains experience, and also correspond with the recreational activities names above. The most common natural features and access features that were mentioned include: Blue Mountain (27), Gerogian Bay (38), harbour (8), natural or wild landscapes (6), Niagara Escarpment (17), beaches (12), forests and trees (11), lakes and rivers (12), parks, open, and green space (20), and trails (52). Top trails that were highlighted include Georgian Trail (13), and the Bruce trail (5), among others.
Small town feel (58)	Small Town feel was highlighted often by respondents, particularly when referring to the feel of the downtown businesses and neighbourly friendliness and connection. Some top sub themes similar to small town feel include: rural charm (11), friendliness of neighbours and residents (22), and the quaint feeling of the towns (7). Small Town feel was also mentioned often as an element residents were afraid of losing (see following questions).
Accessibility (50)	Many respondents mentioned that the best thing about the Town of Blue Mountains was it's access to unique and necessary support, either in the Town or in close proximity. Examples of accessible elements include:amenities (14), medical professionals and facilities (5), nature (18), other Communities

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
	like Collingwood, Owen Sound, Meaford and the GTA (5), the waterfront (10), retail services particularly restaurants and food (33), and unique experiences (11).
Scenery and Natural Beauty (50)	Many respondents mentioned that their initial attraction to the area was due to its natural scenery and beauty. Specific elements that were mentioned include the view of the bay when coming in from the city, the pastoral view of the agriculture, and the view of the mountain, hills, and valley.
4 season activities (30)	There was a large focus on the 4-season attractions that the area promotes, mentioning that the trail network and ski trails provide for year-round entertainment outdoors.
Not Urban (23)	Many of the respondents mentioned that they moved here from the GTA, and compared the benefits of the community as not being urban like Collingwood, or their previous community. Some highlights for them included the lack of chain stores, congestion, crowding, highrise development and sprawl. This is in contrast to the reported views in question 2, as many believe that the area is starting to take on these characteristics.
Sense of Community (21)	The sense of community was highlighted separately from small town feel, as some individuals simply liked to feel a part of the community either through involvement, or neighbourhood bonding.
Local agriculture (18)	Local agriculture was highlighted most in this category as many residents appreciated having fresh and healthy food options grown close to them. There was also a large acknowledgement of the agricultural history that makes up the area due to their unique climate. There was also a brief mention on the markets that TBM residents have access to.
Small communities (17)	Though more people specified they enjoyed the feeling of living in a small town, some specified that it was the limited population of these areas that adds to their appeal. There was a focus on the appreciated diversity among these towns, and that each is made up of communities who know each other well.
Quiet and relaxed lifestyle (15)	Many reference TBM as quiet and relaxed, particularly in comparison to their previous residences in the GTA and other

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
	communities. The mentioned a slower pace, relaxed feeling, and quiet setting.
Active lifestyle (12)	Residents highlighted that they enjoyed the active and outdoor lifestyle that is promoted in TBM. There was also mention of how they like that there are multiple like-minded healthy residents as well. Walkability was also mentioned due to the close proximity of services, particularly in Thornbury, and mentioned that it adds to the health and activity of the area (9).
Small or local business (12)	There was much appreciation for the small and local business that make up the Town, as they are unique, and residents knew the owners and could see the direct benefit of purchasing locally.
Government (12)	Residents reported an appreciation for the government, particularly for how approachable council and administration are. There was mention that this Council in particular felt to be making decisions on behalf of the people. This is contrasted in some government associations in question 2.
Clean air (10)	Clean air was mentioned by respondents often.
Downtown (10)	The character and walkability of downtown, particularly Thornbury's downtown, were highlighted as attractive features for living in TBM.
Other themes	- Water - natural (7) - Wildlife (4) - School, education, learning opportunities (7) - History (4) - Well managed growth (4) - Library (3) - Events and live entertainment (6) - Diverse opportunities (5) - Arts and culture community (8)

What changes would make our community even better?

The following themes surfaced as a result of the open responses for "What changes would make our community even better?"

Primary themes were a want to manage and influence the Town's development to ensure it gives back to the Town, a want to manage traffic and tourism, a want for a new recreational facility, a call to protect the natural environment and heritage of the area, to increase affordable housing, and the improve the conditions of infrastructure, mainly for transportation needs. These are described in detail below.

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
Growth and development management (83)	Growth and development management was the most common theme, and largely voiced a frustration with the amount and types of development being built. Some were opposed to subdivisions, some to high density housing, some to building heights, and some to location of housing developments. A prominent subtheme was a want for coordinated plans both regionally, but also internally to administration - some felt that development did not align with the Town's Official Plan or the Planning Policy Statement. Additionally, some felt as though it was happening too fast and in a haphazard approach, rather than strategically. Frustrations were voiced about some of the current developments, namely the high number of gas stations, secondary homes, subdivisions replacing apple orchards, and a high rise development across from Georgian Peaks. Primary reasons that were documented concerning why growth management was important for respondents: ● A fear of losing the small town character of the area ● Environmental loss
Traffic management (33)	Traffic management largely reflected a want to divert traffic away from waterfront areas and to insert traffic calming measures. Respondents reported an increase in traffic, particularly during COVID-19, and were concerned about traffic's relationship to new developments and more permanent residents than previous to COVID-19.
Recreation/community centre and swimming pool (33)	There were many that called for a new recreation centre for indoor sports, particularly including a pool (either indoor or

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
	outdoor), tennis courts, ice rinks, a space to host sports teams, and other needs.
Natural Landscape Respect and protection (28)	Many were concerned with the protection of the natural landscape in general. Many respondents stated that the natural environment was why they come to the area, and that it was important to protect it. Some smaller protection themes associated with this included: ● Air protection (2) ● Forested area protection and tree planting (9) ● Wildlife protection (5) ● Trail improvements to these areas (3) The protection of these areas was often mentioned in association to new developments being a threat, or needing to consider these elements.
Affordable and Attainable Housing (27)	Affordable and attainable housing was mentioned often, particularly in regards to housing young families and service workers. There was mention of wanting to focus on affordable rental prices, and a focus away from deeply affordable, and instead on creating a range of housing options that are more affordable and integrated into the community. Some associated sub themes that arose with affordable housing included: affordable food options, affordable recreation options, affordable retail (everyday needs), employee housing, affordable services, and affordable taxes.
Roads and Parking Improvements (23)	Roads and parking improvements spoke to widening of the highway, and to increasing parking at trailheads with increased use of trails by newcomers and tourists. There were also requests to make some trailhead parking areas prioritized for resident access, due to the overwhelming number of tourists during the summer of 2020.
Development tied to community benefits (23)	Some spoke to the need for development to be tied to community benefits such as allocated greenspace, or green building needs, or forest land dedication, or funding for cultural activities and facilities. There was an understanding by some that growth was necessary, but that it wasn't serving the community in the way they were hoping.

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
Accessibility to waterfront and rivers (17)	Some respondents wanted improved access to the waterfront, particularly in the forms of beaches. It was reported that many of the public access spots were overcrowded last summer, and there is a want/need for more public access, particularly for residents.
Improved access (16)	Improved access to outdoor areas was highlighted through an increased want for public parks, parkettes, gardens, and trails. These improvements were often associated with benefits that could be associated with development.
Cycling and walking improvements (14)	Walkability was highlighted as a priority in the Town, as some mentioned a need for more pedestrian-only spaces and trails, in addition to sidewalk improvements. Cycling improvements largely focussed on bike lanes and connectivity, and was contrasted with the current risk of accident from having mixed uses on roads without clear delineation of space.
Public transit (13)	Public and green transit was mentioned, particularly in order to connect the rural towns in The Blue Mountains, to form greater transit connections with the GTA, Collingwood, Meaford, and Owen Sound.
Litter, water, and general pollution changes (12)	There was frustration, particularly from those under 18 about the amount of pollution and littering in The Blue Mountains. Some waste requests were made, like a decreased reliance on plastic, the purchasing of fewer things, a better distribution and supply of Town waste and recycling receptacles.
Water protection (11)	Water protection was referenced both in response to increased development, but also largely to leachate and pollution concerns surrounding the TC energy project. Water protection mainly focussed on the Bay, with few mentions to general natural heritage protection.
Small business support, protection and enhancement (10)	Small business support, protection and enhancement was often mentioned in alignment with retaining the local character of The Town, as well as a necessity for the Town's sustainability. The increase of everyday goods and services was also requested (8), particularly in regards to more food options available outside of Blue Mountains Village.

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
All ages support (10)	All ages support entails building a community that has services needed for all age demographics, particularly families (4), youth (3), and seniors (2).
Tourism Management (10)	Some respondents requested that the Town set limits or manage tourism more effectively, namely asking for caps (Venice was mentioned as an example), or for tourism attractions to be more spread out throughout the area.
Medical Facilities and practitioners in or close to town (10)	Respondents requested either bringing medical practitioners/facilities to the Town of the Blue Mountains, or to help support the growth of Collingwood's hospital.
Infrastructure improvements (10)	General infrastructure improvements (beyond roads, cycling and walking improvements), included: water and sewage (3), cell phone and internet connections (4), Hydro infrastructure improvements (1), and pier and harbour improvements (5).
Arts and Culture Activities and facilities (10)	Arts and culture activities involved the facilitation of theatre and music programs supported by the Town, and included the importance of continued library support.

Other themes	Other themes less frequently mentioned include:
	• Agriculture support (4)
	   ○ Organic (1)
	   ○ Pesticide reduction (2)
	   ○ Regenerative agriculture (2)
	• COVID-19 changes (5)
	• Communications and engagement improvements (6)
	• Community bonding (8)
	• Diverse residents (8)
	• Dog park (3)
	• Green/Environmentally Friendly Community (7)
	• More events (3)
	• Climate Change and GHG reduction (7)
	• High paying or living wages (4)
	• Increase Housing Stock (3)
	• Continue Maintenance (3)
	• More outdoor recreational activities (5)
	• Preserve heritage (5)
	• Safety (3)

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
	- Technology and Innovation Support (2) - Tourism Improvements (4) - Vision for who we are (3) - Welcome newcomers (4)

How would you describe life today in the Town of The Blue Mountains in 100 words or less?

A note - many of the sentiments from the previous two questions were repeated in these questions. Instead of summarizing these answers twice, only those which were not explicitly explained were described below with numeric counts documented below. A result of this may be the appearance of answers to be more negative, when in fact it is a result of consistency.

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
General Positive (60)	The most common answers to this question were short 1-10 word answers like "Idyllic," "perfect," "fun," or "Life here is my definition of happiness."
Over Development (32)	Similar to the growth suggestions when answering "What changes would make our community even better?" some respondents reported that life today feels like it's being developed too fast, or being over developed.
General negative (25)	The general negative code was largely used for comments that were upset about change in the Town, but were not specific as to what type of change they were upset about. This code was also sometimes applied when another code was mentioned in a generalized negative way, like growth, over development, or government.
Government (25)	Government is described in a variety of ways for this question, with common reference to frustrations with administration, council, and planning (due to recent development), or praise for transparency, approachability, and involvement opportunities in local government.

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
Growth (22)	Growth was commonly referenced in regards to recent developments, and a reported increase in full time residents over the time of COVID. Feedback was mainly an ask for development and growth to be slowed, particularly for new development applications.
Not affordable (17)	Respondents noted that life in TBM is not affordable for many, particularly for their children who hope to remain in the area, for people looking for work in their service industries, and for anyone who is not overly affluent.
Busy (17)	While restrictions for COVID were put in place during this time of engagement, respondents described the times before the provincial stay at home order as busy due to the influx in tourists and visitors from the GTA (particularly over the summer). This was particularly true for outdoor trails, beaches, and at Blue Mountain.
Congested (18)	Associated with development and tourism, respondents also mentioned how congested the area and highway had become, with frustrations about the noise, access, and overall manners of those they came across on the road.
COVID (16)	Some respondents mentioned that life simply wasn't the same due to COVID and the stay at home order.
Excessive tourism (13)	Respondents were frustrated by the high numbers for tourism this year. Correlated with this, there were doubts as to the priority of the Town - some felt like Council puts too much priority on the tourist community than their full-term residents.
Loss of small town feel (12)	When referencing development, it was often contrasted with a loss in small town feel or the environment. There is a fear that with the new developments, that the Town is taking on more traits of a city than the area's heritage and small town feel.
Engaged Citizens (10)	Engaged and involved citizens were mentioned as being a support to TBM, with the reliance on citizens in committees, social and cultural groups, and event organization.
Environmental Loss (9)	Environmental loss was mentioned in cross reference with over development, but also with tourist and new citizen actions.

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
	There is a perception that tourists are more likely to deteriorate the area because they do not have a "stake" in it.
Retirement Community (8)	Retirement community is referenced here as a series of like-minded community members who are involved after retiring to the area in recent years from other communities.
Divided Community (9)	Divided community life came up a lot in interviews, particularly when referencing new residents and tourists. Full time residents describe tourists and new residents as affluent, inconsiderate and rude. These perceptions have led to suggestions for education for new residents and an increase in community events to bridge this divide.
Common themes described in earlier questions	- Quiet lifestyle (49) - Recreation and outdoor activities (34) - Active Lifestyle (23) - Scenery and Natural Beauty (19) - Small Town feel (19) - Friendly (16) - Small or local business (13) - Access to nature (13) - Access to other communities (13) - Arts and Culture Community (12) - Local agriculture (10) - Access to amenities (10) - Sense of community (9) - Access to unique experiences (9) - Infrastructure (8) - Beaches (7) - Access to retail services (particularly dining) (7) - Natural Features (7) - Skiing (7) - Cycling (6) - Clean air (6) - History (6) - Trails (6) - Tourist attractions (6) - Not urban (5)
Other themes	Clubs and societies (7)

Theme (# of occurrences)	Notes
	- School and education (7) - Events and Live entertainment (5) - A place to grow a family (4) - Safety (4) - Urban (4) - Innovation (2)

"The Georgian trail! The Town of The Blue Mountains is an amazing all-season outdoor playground that we feel lucky to have in our backyard. Indoors, the attractions and shops are such high quality and made with local love. It's a flavour and feeling you get when you visit all the boutiques in this area. We seem to be a community who supports small business and creative entrepreneurial ideas. That is important to us as young professionals who have just moved into the area to work from Toronto to work and live."

"Was great but now that small town feel is slowly slipping away, high density building , short term rentals, overcrowding is all changing the feel of the town. Still has got some great businesses and restaurants but traffic is becoming a major problem especially on long weekends. Still the best place to live DO NOT ruin it . "

"Relaxed atmosphere with lots of fresh air and yet close to whatever one needs for everyday living. But definitely not boring as there is plenty of culture in town and nearby. I like the tourists because they bring life and prosperity to local businesses but do not want it to take over our atmosphere to point where locals cannot enjoy our own amenities."

"We are property taxpayers for almost 40 years and in that time there have been many changes, primarily because Blue Mountains has become a destination and preferred retirement area for many. As a result, we now experience both increasing traffic issues but more amenities as well."

"Many opportunities for recreation, education, volunteer involvement are offered. There is a transition going on now due to retiring Baby Boomers, Millennials moving out of cities and COVID transplants. that is taxing the infrastructure . The pandemic is playing a huge role in the daily life of businesses and schools and individuals. We have a very uncertain idea of what is sustainable now."

"A mixture of peaceful, exciting, new and old influences, with challenges that are slowly tackled with a need to open up to new ideas and let go of old grudges, but also welcoming and enriching if you give the place time. A place where you can always find something new to experience and learn from. The best views and natural resources to enjoy and take care of. The variety of homes and buildings are spectacular and vary from unique, rustic to supermodel ski chalets yet fit together perfectly."

"Reasonable building development that is respectful of the existing community and rural surroundings."

- Affordable and environmentally sound housing with garden space. By nature, this area attracts all walks of life. If it is a retirement community then we must invite the young families to create a beautiful balance of spunk and wisdom! "

3.2 Workshop

Themes

The ideas and actions from the data walks workshop revolved around the following main themes: demographics, waste, watershed health, greenhouse gases, housing, food insecurity and poverty, economy, and agriculture. These themes are indicative of data supported sustainability in The Blue Mountains.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Workshop attendees were shown a population by age graph and the percentage of the population 60 years old or older for multiple local regions in Ontario. The graph displayed the percentage distribution of ages of the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Province of Ontario. The Blue Mountains has a higher proportion of people over 50 than the Ontario average.

Q1. Why is The Blue Mountains home to a larger seniors population per capita than Ontario?

The older demographics in The Blue Mountains is attributed largely to the retirement community traits of the Town, and the quick access to services, family, and housing flexibility from previous livelihoods in the GTA. There is an attraction to the community for recreation, nature, quality of life and the small town pace of life for older populations. The area is thought to be less expensive for GTA

homeowners, who can downsize to the area from more expensive inflated housing prices. The net growth of housing prices, and overall poor access to high paying jobs is also seen to be part of the reason why youth cannot settle in the area. The 2016 census statistics were flagged as being different than COVID realities, but comparing to the 2020 County household maintainer age statistics, the skew remains. We will see in upcoming projections if there is a significant enough demographic change to alter the demographic considerations of the community.

Q2. What implications does having an older population have on the long term sustainability of The Blue Mountains?

The implications for having an older population can be summarized to be in 2 areas: there is a need to better support existing older demographics, and there is a need to long term plan to support other demographics. The Town's older population implies an increased demand in immediate services, such as healthcare and accessibility demands, and resources available in residents' former communities, like the Greater Toronto Area. There are implications for long term planning, primarily past 10 years, as these communities will be different as generations age and pass on, and more attention is proposed to be made towards attracting other demographics, to ensure it does not continue to be a monoculture. Having an absence of youth is reported to decrease career path opportunities in the area, maintain job vacancies, and further decrease the amount of youth who wish to stay in the area. There is a proposal to build intergenerational communities in The Blue mountains, starting with the types of homes - will the next generation need large, over-inflated housing sizes? It was also noted that the wisdom of these older generations can also be a great resource for the area, both in providing wisdom for younger generations, and through having the time to be involved, but also because "In the long term the businesses created by the increased spending of the senior population will provide jobs that will remain here."

Q3. Where are there opportunities to better support youth in The Blue Mountains?

The main opportunities for youth retention and support in The Blue Mountains that were highlighted include housing costs, higher income and diverse employment opportunities, the creation of youthful spaces, the support of youth leadership and mentorship, and unique educational opportunities in the area. Additional areas of inquiry were about technology supports like wifi hotspots, mental health and community building opportunities, and meaningful youth engagement.

CO2

The two largest carbon dioxide equivalent emitting categories in The Blue Mountains are transportation and residential. Greenhouse gas [GHG] emissions saw a 6% drop in 2020, yet are still not enough to meet global GHG reduction goals.

Q4. Why are transportation and residential emissions the main contributors to The Blue Mountains' community CO2 emissions?

It was proposed that The Blue Mountains has a high proportion of housing as compared to industry and commercial, with few transit and active transportation options due to the geographical spread of most of its communities. The demographic overlay was also highlighted due to the age of residents being older, and less able to use active transportation or transit to move goods. Due to the unique rural and tourism draws within the municipality, transportation options appear to be an omnipresent issue. The local preference for large homes has also been flagged as a specific issue in the area. It's documented here that we should be more cognizant of other greenhouse gases, particularly those like Nitrous oxide that come from farming particularly.

Q5. What are some of the aspects of COVID that may have reduced GHG emissions in The Blue Mountains?

Most responses revolved around travel restrictions, both air travel, but also decreased local travel and tourism travel. Active transportation has become the activity to pass the time during COVID, and it was recorded that more people are reflecting on the nature that is around them, and perhaps thinking to protect it. Closing of businesses was also highlighted as a potential for GHG reduction during COVID-19.

- "Taking a pause to reflect on the beautiful area we are in which we need to preserve and protect from over tourism by over using. At least we are moving in the right direction!"

Q6. Where are there opportunities to reduce carbon emissions in The Blue Mountains?

Some ideas brainstormed include:

- Supporting alternative energy including solar, wind, and water resources
- Tree planting and tree planting policies
- Energy conservation and alternative energy incentives
- Improved active transportation network and advocacy
- Cost benefit analysis, testing and reporting
- Public transportation
- Electric and fuel efficient cars and infrastructure supports

- Town leading by example through fleet and public buildings
- Net zero and green building policies for new builds and retrofits
- Supporting complete and walkable communities
- Explore agricultural methods to becoming net zero emission with cover crops
- Education and Town being committed to sustainability through all communications

HOUSING

These are the average housing costs in the South Georgian Bay Area. Housing is largely unaffordable throughout the area, but particularly in The Blue Mountains. The data shown includes the average housing and apartment costs in The Blue Mountains.

Q7. What contributes to high housing costs in the South Georgian Bay Area

Components noted to drive up housing costs in the area include:
- Competition among affluent owners for a desirable housing location, often close to the water or natural resource
- The sale of GTA properties allows homeowners to move up here and purchase expensive properties
- Lack of housing stock, and particularly of diverse attainable properties
- Lack of affordable housing being built
- Short term accommodations making the area more competitive
- COVID work from home mandate has caused many with money to move up here as they now have an option
- Market forces nationally

Q8. Who is most vulnerable when it comes to housing in the region?

Identified groups included:
- Lower and middle income earners in general
- Those with low education levels
- Students and youth
- Young families
- Homeless
- Working poor and minimum wage earners
- Seniors relying on a fixed income, particularly single seniors
- Those with special needs
- Local seniors who have not experienced housing inflation

Q9. Where are the opportunities to make housing more affordable in The Blue Mountains & area?

Opportunities brainstormed include:
- Reduced short term accommodations, or consider timeshare options for continued use
- More affordable housing - particularly rental
- Raise minimum wage to a living wage
- Incentives for higher density developments and affordable housing
- Create partnerships to enhance
- Coordinate sustainability goals with attainable housing cooperation
- Improved convincing of locals for the need of attainable housing
- Incentives for housing
- Cooperation with multiple tiers of government on Affordable Housing
- Consider alternative housing models like tiny home villages, cooperative housing, and granny suits
- Create housing using a housing strategy, not singular developments

"Require all development projects to have 10%-15% of their units be affordable/attainable for a long period of time (40-50years) and both rental or ownership. Without investing in home ownership at the start one does not capitalize on housing price appreciation to build tax-free wealth or assets. Leased housing is not the answer - an artificially lower cost to start but additional expenses mean expensive annual costs and unclear ownership rules impede capital appreciation of units."

FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecure households are households without adequate or reliable access to food and are considered an indicator of poverty. The date provided showed that 20% of Grey Bruce Households are food insecure, and that youth workers are more likely to be in extreme poverty.

Q10. What contributes to food insecurity in Grey Bruce?

Some contributions that were brought up in the workshop and survey include:
- High housing prices
- Low wages and transient jobs
- Lack of access to year-round produce in grocery stores
- Lack of competition for groceries, therefore high costs
- Inability to live on your own in the area (or difficulty doing so)
- Lack of housing options
- Growing own food no longer the reality
- Mental health barriers

- LImited access to social services in area

Q11. Where are there opportunities to reduce food insecurity and poverty in The Blue Mountains?

- Increase living wage
- Build attainable and affordable housing
- Increase grocer competition and enhance buy local opportunities
- More gardening opportunities - community gardens, rethinking lawn space, educate on how to grow your own local food
- Education on plant based diets and computer literacy for ordering food
- Increase access to services
- Create proactive solutions that don't rely on service delivery
- Food programming for seniors
- Diversify economic base, potentially into manufacturing
- Increase education opportunities
- Affordable services like daycare

"There is relatively little poverty/food insecurity in TBM mostly because we don't have much housing that someone who is food insecure could afford. People put their money towards housing before food."

AGRICULTURE

Crop land has decreased in the Town, while fungicide, insecticide, herbicide, and commercial fertilizer use has increased. Blue Mountains farmers are older than the provincial average. The County and the Town have a large proportion of direct farm sales in comparison to the remainder of the province. The data shown to stakeholders for this workshop included statistics showing the increase in pesticides and herbicides, the older age of local farmers, and the proportion of farm gate sales in the area.

Q12. What contributes to agricultural sustainability in The Blue Mountains?

- Climate of the area
- local partnerships for sales through restaurants
- Local farm sales via farmgate or farmers market
- agri-tourism
- Soil health - nutrient cycling and farm diversity.
- Regenerative agriculture
- Transitional support services
- Connections between farmers (e.g. shared farm equipment - see interviews).
- Value and educate about local agriculture to ensure more local agriculture stays
- Rewards for sustainable agriculture

- Technology advancements

- Regenerative farming practices
- Aquaponics
- Agri-tourism
- Encourage and support youth transition and take over of agriculture
- Trees along sides of fields
- Direct local marketing of farm direct opportunities
- New business types - abatoirs
- Encourage high value add to improve income - or find market value for crops
- Preserve agricultural lands
- Diversify crop species
- Education and knowledge sharing for how to grow small scale market gardens
- Connect farmers with one another for services, youth connection, and to sell produce
- Find alternative pest control other than pesticides
- Fertilizer alternatives
- Do a deep dive locally to understand if organic and regenerative agriculture is possible
- Celebrate farming successes
- Educate community on agricultural practices
- Note for later: Does the town have a local ag portal for farm gate sales like he County?

WASTE

The waste data showed the diversion rate from landfill over time. The numbers below display the total weight of recycled, composted, and landfilled waste over time. Although residential diversion rates in The Blue Mountains continue to grow, large gains in waste diversion for total waste managed have not occurred in 10 years.

Q14. What does this data tell you about issues of consumption, environment and growth in The Blue Mountains?

- Some progress made for diversion, particularly when considered on a per capita basis
- Styrofoam reduction in waste stream
- Still a lot of waste going to landfill, diversion programs not helping that
- Buy and toss culture is strong here

- Part time residents and tourists have fewer abilities to properly dispose of waste (in Air BNBs)
- Building practices not reflective of environmental needs

Q15. Where are there opportunities to continue to decrease waste in The Blue Mountains?

- Public engagement for reduction, possible through data or environment days
- Circular economy
- Policy, advocacy or monetary incentives for decreased food packaging and increased business recycling
- Deconstruction should be enforced rather than demolition
- Build for quality; select products/materials that can be disposed cost effectively and safely e.g. spray foam on steel in buildings
- Framework for social procurement
- Compostable materials push
- Biofuel from waste for district heating
- Local materials
- Green building initiatives
- Town as an example - event products
- Quality products that are easy to fix
- Diversify Town's recycling program
- Recycle styrofoam Sort/reduce construction waste
- Visitor specific programming

WATERSHED

In 2018, both Nottawasaga and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities underwent watershed health checks that reported on the health of the watershed's forest and wetland conditions, stream health, and groundwater quality. Overall, southern parts of the municipality scored higher than northern catchments.

Q16. If the watershed had a voice, what do you think it would say it needs?

Some representative quotes include:

- "Help me!"
- "Understand my needs"
- "Help I'm drowning in plastics"
- Headwater and source water protection
- More trees
- "I need more of your love"
- "stop pouring salt and chemicals on my wounds"

- "Respect me"
- "Maybe the Bay wouldn't speak English - maybe it would be a First Nations/Metis/Inuit language"
- More regulation and increased setbacks
- Some issues with Thornbury WasteWater Treatment Plant sewage and water taking from Indian Brook
- "Great? Please help me ! Some areas are highlighted as doing fine but what about those that are not?"
- "Stop the leaching of chemicals!"
- "The watershed has no voice. It has been smothered by chemical runoff, silt, and government apathy."

Q17. What contributes to decreased watershed health in the northern Blue Mountains?
- Urban expansion, intensification in sensitive areas, and not complying with legislative set-backs
- Recreation and tourism activities
- Water drainage going into sewage system and wastewater treatment plant
- Lack of incentives to rehabilitate creaks, rivers and watersheds impacted by previous developments
- Livestock in the Beaver River/Silvercreek
- Loss of forest and wetlands
- The tension between agricultural land and canopy cover
- Litter
- Humans and dogs
- Chemical runoff from parks, lawns and farmland
- Lack of education on importance and protection of the watershed

Q18. Where are there opportunities to improve watershed health?
- Investment in sustainable stormwater management infrastructure
- low impact development
- built form/design improvements
- regenerative farming
- Reforesting private and public lands to help retain water
- Tourism practice changes
- Ecosystem services approach to infrastructure
- Create new and expanded aquatic and land sanctuaries
- Top Down regulation of plastic manufacturing
- Create a data group to collect current information, analyze, engage the public and create action plans

- Improve aging infrastructure
- Incentives to rehabilitate wetlands- restore functionality (daylighting)
- Enforce legislative set-backs
- Municipal wide inspection of septic systems
- Salt management
- Filtration in roadside ditches
- More research into wetland replication instead of stormwater management ponds
- residential to support grey water cycling; each home/location has their own grey water support
- Eco tourism opportunity at Northwinds
- Conduct a watershed outreach campaign
- Be more aware of sensitivity of wetland areas in new developments
- Note: will focus on coordinating with Conservation Authorities

ECONOMY

The economic graph shown displayed the distribution of employment by industry pre-COVID. In comparison to local areas, The Blue Mountains has a larger proportion of agriculture, real estate and leasing, arts, entertainment and recreation, and accommodation and food services, while having a smaller proportion of health care and social assistance, retail, and manufacturing.

Q19. What does this tell you about industry in The Blue Mountains?
- We have a strong tourism industry
- It is a rural community with a seasonal user population
- Healthcare and health professionals gap
- Not for profit organizations need to be recognized as an integral part of our economy
- Vulnerable to loss of talent and difficulties attracting talent (industry)
- Agriculture is contributing less than expected
- Diverse economy
- Danger of over-tourism, and too much reliance on tourism - low wages, low education, seasonal fluctuations, few ways to get into community in other industries
- "Not taking care of community"
- In need of diversification, training and education
- Most is in some way related to retirement and tourism

- We have neighbouring communities that have resources that we could contribute to and use ie hospital
- 1/3 of the employment (9 5 21) is in hospitality and is low wage earning.
- "If the tourism industry is hit badly (as per covid or climate change) then 35% of the workforce is in trouble!"

Q20. Where are there opportunities to support existing industries to become more sustainable?

- Affordable housing to bring and keep workers to our area; public transportation
- Local food markets, slow food movement
- Address agricultural efficiency, sustainability and needs
- Governmental regulations/policies need to be more clear and consistent and apply to all levels of government and sectors
- More support for older population
- Encourage youth employment opportunities
- Research and development opportunities
- Rezoning industrial lands - manufacturing vs other land uses
- Financial assistance for green businesses
- Improved transit network to move workforce.
- Promote and enforce a standard of sustainability when permits

Q21. What are the opportunities to diversify industries to become more sustainable?

- Expand industrial sector.
- "Create a growth sector by encouraging things like tech-hub or industry-hub to attract like-minded industries or businesses. Example film shoots, manufacturing of vaccines"
- Focus less on tourism, more year round industries
- More full time stable employment
- "Can our natural environment advantages help attract work from home options, ie tech?"
- OFDUs/ARUs properly scaled - investment in rural areas
- National advocacy groups ex. POW (Protect Our Winters) Canada
- Green initiatives and industry
- services for aging in place
- diversify opportunities, education, health care
- Value add and diversify on farm uses to take advantage of the new residential base
- "Consider the Netherlands AgriTech approach. TBM could become a powerhouse of food production."

All verbatim workshop feedback can be found at this link:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15MehEgx0940HXMLhVQHuzK_aNRmkzR58-
_m40IZuUc/edit?usp=sharing

3.3 User Experience Interviews

User experience interviews varied slightly depending on interviewee, but the general structure consisted of a brief introduction, a walk through the interviewees typical day-in the life in TBM (first before COVID, then any changes during COVID that will make long-term effects), an exercise of discussing choices and thoughts associated with each action, a choice of their most sustainable habit, a brainstorm of possible ways to improve sustainability in the community, and a listing of one things that they would want to see retained/protected about TBM 50 years from now. The following are the themes that emerged from these conversations.

Themes

The great divide: new residents and local resident tensions: Multiple respondents mentioned the tension between long-time residents and new community members and tourists. There was a range of perspectives in terms of length of residency from both sides of this 'divide'. Long term residents reported frustrations with new residents for a perceived lack of respect, rudeness, lack of understanding of local culture and practices, excessive environmental degradation due to the other group's new development, and general lack of involvement in what makes the community unique. On the other hand, those who were new to the community reported that even though they and other new residents are incredibly involved in the community and giving back, they are still seen as the new and separated from long-term residents. A respondent who was a new resident and person of colour reported that even though their partner grew up in the area, their family is often seen as being from the city because they look different from the locals.

For those we spoke to that were new residents, they believed that the disconnect was due to COVID, and the lack of interaction between new residents and old. They also wished that there were efforts to welcome them as new residents to the Town to get oriented. Long-time residents suggested creating educational materials, with emphasis on local cultures like agriculture. Community events, both traditional and new variations were also discussed as a way to bring these groups together once COVID is over.

Community Events: Many residents mentioned events that they already love in TBM, but they also mentioned some that used to exist that could help bring a sense of community back. These included sports games for the community to watch (like hockey used to be in the area), and the old fashioned community events put on by public groups.

Attainable Housing and High paying employment: similar to engagement documented above, multiple people voiced these needs, particularly as their children and service workers could not find housing in the area.

Appreciation for the natural environment: Many respondents reflected on how lucky and grateful they are to live where they do for the natural environment and the recreational activities associated within. Many put a natural environment feature as the main thing they would retain as it was the reason why many of them moved to the area in the first place.

Transportation Options: when asked about why respondents chose to drive, it was clear that transit infrastructure was either not available or would take too much time to be useable. The school bus was even an extension of this, as one respondent chooses to drive his children to Collingwood each day because transit would take up 3 hours a day for his child. Another respondent however, documented this bus ride as a write of passage in small towns.

Remote working and events: Some respondents talked at length about how COVID has opened up the possibility of them being a part of more societies that they wouldn't travel to usually (e..g. In Downtown Toronto), or working from home rather than losing time driving daily. These respondents were hopeful that these groups and employers would continue to offer these remote working options and events. Some residents who worked from home before COVID mentioned that it would be an opportunity for residents to diversify economically without a direct need for an industry hub in the Town itself.

Walkable Downtown with amenities: Thornbury residents were grateful to be in a walkable neighbourhood with many local coffee shops and most amenities within close proximity. It was also noted that restaurants in the area are particularly impressive, with one respondent stating "Thornbury is outside of its league in terms of restaurants."

Environmentally Conscious Actions: Many interviewees were already aware of environmental efforts and how they relate back to sustainability. Some common actions that made them think of sustainability were: gardening from home, waste reduction (many a part of the styrofoam group), trail use and active transportation, shopping locally, supporting local agriculture, and

planting trees. Other sustainable actions that individuals listed that were less common included: lessening their water use with laundry and hygiene choices, purchasing long lasting products, doing recreational within close proximity to where they live and often taking active modes of transportation.

Buying Locally: many respondents mentioned that the pandemic spurred them to buy locally, but that they will continue to do so, because of the high quality of food in TBM, in addition to knowing who they are buying from.

Affordable Groceries and Services: A few interviewees spoke to the need for affordable groceries, food options and recreational activities in the area. They've witnessed an increase in food prices particularly in comparison to local stores in Meaford and Owen Sound. There is a want to make sure the everyday residents are able to afford the food options that exist in Town.

Agriculture Protection: We spoke in length to two farmers - one which mainly rents and provides services and has a supplemental income, and one that farms full time. Both farmers, and some other residents spoke to the need to protect and appreciate farmland, both for production and for views. As one of the farmers mentioned when referring to many people coming to the area for the views, "agriculture is the view - we have to try our best to maintain it."

Agricultural environmental considerations: A note than came up in one of the interviews is that many of the farmers in The Blue Mountains already have an existing environmental plan. There plans are not recorded by OMAFRA, hence why many may not know about them. Additionally, on farmer spoke about which grants they apply to - instead of changing their practice for the sake of the grant, they often apply for grants that they're already progressing towards. This should be considered if considering agricultural grant programs through the Town.

The death of general community groups: one interviewee spoke at length about the growth of special interest and business groups in the area. In contract, they spoke about how many of the general community benefit associations and groups were disappearing from the area and Ontario in general. This was tied to the reduction in community cohesiveness, and the importance of these groups to pull everyone together. How might we support community organizations that seek to benefit the whole of the community to bring cohesion?

History: Many respondents mentioned the importance of and their connection to the history of the area, either indigenous or agricultural history that made the place what it is today. Agriculture in particular draws lessons from past generations, as one farmer noted that "generational farming is one example where you feel the impacts of the generation before." In a different light, another farmer referenced how history is the key to innovation, as he often instructs his children to "think about what your grandfather would have done."

Shared Agricultural Services: One interviewee spoke at length about their family's experience providing combining, bailing, and threshing services to the local farmers in the area. These shared services was a way to provide a more immediate income source in comparison to cash crop farming, and provided the local community with equipment that they might otherwise not have had. He went on to speak about how these services need to be hyper local, and are often spread by word of mouth.

Farming Partnerships for new farmers: Both farmers spoke at length about some unique partnerships they have with people trying to get into the farming sector. One farmer splits a herd of cattle with a new resident to the community who couldn't take care of their cattle full time. The unique partnership provides the farm interviewee with a source of income, and provides the new farmer with the ability to supplement his income while still farming for passion. The other farmers spoke about the two farmers that assist them on their farmland, and how they try to teach them all of the tricks of the trade. They often try to connect these farm workers with the landlords they lease land from, in the case that ownership becomes an option.

Lifelong learning: Almost all interviewees, particularly those which were older mentioned the importance of lifelong learning. The attributed life long learning, and its associated resources (libraries, conferences, etc) to be invaluable to the long term mental health of the seniors population in the area.

Actions:
- Newcomer welcome package
- Events that welcome and educate residents about other cultures (e.g. as an addition to old fashioned Christmas).
- Education materials about the area.
- Community events to pull new and old residents together - funded and supported by the Town
- Improved trail map
- Transit to smaller communities

- Pedestrianised spaces
- Green building development
- Support community-oriented groups

4.0 Next Steps

This document will be incorporated with the current state research conducted to date to create a final current state document.

For more information on the project and to stay in touch with the process, please visit: tbmfuturestory.ca

Thank you to all who participated! We are grateful for your time and appreciate the energy you have put into planning for the future of The Blue Mountains Future Story.

APPENDIX B

The Blue Mountains Future Story:

Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

Research Document

This is a working document.

Its intended use is for reference only.

This is not a draft document.

1. Introduction

This draft working document provides a summary-level overview of research conducted for Phase 1.3 ("Background Review Study") of the Town of Blue Mountains Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP).

2. Project Issue

Using the "How Might We…" question format as a guide, the overarching issue that the Town of Blue Mountains intends to solve through the ICSP process is:

How might we preserve and build upon the unique attributes of the Town of the Blue Mountains while creating a shared path towards a future of increased livability, viability, vibrancy and health of our community?

To begin the exploration of this question, we look to Phase 1.3 ('Background Review Study') of the proposed process. The described approach requires the consultant team review key government documents (as described in the proposal) and applicable case studies from other jurisdictions.

3. Research Questions

The team will use the following research questions to guide the background review process:

a) **Local Context (50%):** What are the unique attributes and trends in the Town of the Blue Mountains [TBM] and surrounding County that affect sustainability?
b) **Provincial/federal/international context and trends (20%):** What are provincial, national and global trends that will affect TBM and should be considered in the ICSP discussion?
c) **Future Planning Discussion (30%):** How might we leverage existing policy direction in our local context to ensure community sustainability is met and maintained?

4. Goals

The background review aims to:
- Establish a baseline, shared understanding of all local and external factors/trends/issues that may impact progress towards an ideal sustainability target state(s) in the Town of Blue Mountains;
- Uncover beneficial examples of sustainability planning and implementation in similarly sized jurisdictions with tourism as a major industry; and
- Inform the development of a series of stakeholder engagement materials to be used in Phase 1.4 ('Current State Consultation').

5. Thematic Areas

The four thematic areas that will be investigated in this process are social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability.

6. Scope

The background review draws largely from documentation prepared by government (supranational, national, provincial, regional, local) and non-government organizations, pertinent case studies, and peer-reviewed journal articles. The review process is scoped to include approximately 25 sources, including those cited in the December 2020 amendment.

The resources to be consulted are highlighted in green here. In addition, there are 5 resources that are highlighted in yellow, these resources are ones which we will consult briefly, and pull high-level reference to. The latter sources are differentiated because we have already reviewed them in depth, they are currently in development, or because they were included for action planning purposes only.

7. Research Criteria

In the event that additional literature is required to complete the background review, specific research criteria will be used to ensure that sources are accurate and contextually appropriate. A hierarchy of criteria is provided here – preference will be given to sources which reflect levels 1 ("Outcome") and 2 ("Practice") of the hierarchy, demonstrating both practical application and positive outcomes.

Level	Criteria	Description
1	Impact	Has the source led to positive and demonstrable impact?
2	Practice	Has the source been applied within a jurisdiction?
3	Scale / Context	Has the source been tailored to preferred scale / context?
4	Theory	Is the source theoretically sound?
5	Subject Alignment	Is the source aligned with the overarching subject?

8. Intended Audience

The intended audience for the background review deliverable is Town of Blue Mountains administration and committee members associated with the ICSP. The deliverable will be written to reflect a sufficiently high level of understanding in areas of cultural, economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The background review is also a preliminary opportunity to establish a benchmark for language, tone, and content that will guide the development of other deliverables in the planning process.

9. Presentation Format

The draft document contains the following elements:

1. Purpose and research question
2. List of sources
3. Research outcomes – reference details, review summary, significance to project, identification of gaps and potential issues.

The tabular format used to communicate policy research findings (in Google Sheet), and case study summaries (at the end of this document), is provided below. For policy - key takeaways were subdivided into the 4 categories of sustainability, and then subdivided based on policy content.

Name:			
Author:		Year	
Thematic Area(s):			
Jurisdiction:			
Statistics/stories/arguments to inform datawalks:			
Key Takeaways & Best Practices:			
Questions:			

10. Research Outcomes

Local Data

Local data was accumulated to inform both the current state materials, in addition to the plan and its indicators. The most immediate material these statistics informed was the data walks boards. The intention of a datawalks board is to show a series of data points and graphs that tell a story about an area. Each board has a series of questions that are aligned with the data, and help to provide insight into why certain trends are occurring in the current state.

Data sources researched for this plan include:
- TBM Annual Landfill Report [2019]
- Town of The Blue Mountains Community Profile (primary source: Statistics Canada) [accessed January 2021, undated]
- Town of The Blue Mountains Permit Activity reports [2018, 2019, 2020]
- Grey agri-food strategy [2017]
- South Georgian Bay Tourism Labour Task Force Report [2018]
- Town/Community GHG Inventory [2005]
- Grey county TBM profile [2020]
- Sustainable Development Goals Reports [2020]
- Government of Canada Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Environmental Indicators website [2021 retrieval - continuously updated]
- Government of Canada Energy Regulator Website [March 2021 retrieval];
- PCP Milestone One Report [2005];
- Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan [2019];
- Saugeen Ojibway Nation website [accessed: 2021. Undated web copy documents];
- Grey/Bruce Sustainability Network website and documents [various dates]
- Niagara Escarpment Plan [2020]
- Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Documents [2018 Grey Sauble Watershed Report Card, 2020 Indian Brook Subwatershed Report Card]
- Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Documents [2018 Nottawasaga Valley Watershed Report Card]
- Grey County Climate Change Action Plan Presentation [2021]
- Draft Economic Development Strategy [2021 - 2025]
- OMAFRA County profiles: Agriculture, food and business for Grey County [2016]
- OMAFRA County profiles: Agriculture, food and business for Simcoe County [2016]

Local raw data and graphs can be ordered upon request from sustainability@thebluemountains.ca

Plans & Policies

Policy documents were summarized as they relate to the four areas of sustainability: Environment, Economy, Society, and Culture. Each policy was then subdivided into sub themes that each of these policy areas focussed on.

For specific policy reference, see the google sheet linked above. This summary will help inform the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan's policy, and action recommendations in phase 3.

Plans and Policies that were prioritized for investigation in this section include:
- The Provincial Policy Statement [PPS] [2020 update]
- Grey County Official Plan [GC OP] [2019]
- Town of the Blue Mountains Official Plan [TBM OP][2016]
- Grey County Trails master plan [TrMP][2019]
- TBM Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan [2019]
- Grey County Climate Action Planning documents [2021]
- Green in Grey [2017]
- Grey County Growth Management Strategy [GCGMS][2015]
- Town of the Blue Mountains Strategic Plan [CSP] [2019 - 2024]
- 2009 Integrated Community sustainability Plan [2009 ICSP]
- *Endangered Species Act* [ESA] [2020 update]
- Niagara Escarpment Plan [2020]
- Draft Economic Development Strategy [2021 - 2025]
- Primary Care Physician Recruitment Strategy and Action Presentation [2018]

All Plans and policies were organized into this Google sheet, and are briefly summarized below.

The 2009 ICSP actions will be recorded into project snapshots, based on the actions tables found here.

Theme: Environment

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Summary
Environmental Sustainability	CSP	The CSP identifies sustainability in it's introduction, with three main pillars: Environment, Economy, and Social & Cultural. The environmental pillar reads as: "We are stewards of our geography, biodiverse ecosystem, and unique microclimate."
Climate Change & GHGs	PPS, TBM OP, GC OP, CSP	**Climate Change** The PPS, Grey County Official Plan, and other high-level documents state that municipalities, and all levels of government should prepare for the impacts of climate change. This includes the impact climate change will have on water in their area. GC's OP also specifies to consider climate change in development, and later mentions ways to do so, including: increase canopy in parks and natural areas, update infrastructure, support green technologies and construction methods, encourage active transportation, reuse of older existing building stock, and promote retrofits. The CSP identified in section 3, that one of their actions in advance of 2024 is to define the Town's Climate Emergency Declaration. **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** The TBM OP's Sustainable Development Strategic Objectives promotes the use of leading edge sustainable development and energy conservation policies, and commits to working with partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. **Urban Heat Island** GC's OP specifies the need for shade and Ultraviolet Radiation Protection to mitigate urban heat island effect. The Blue Mountains Future Story will be sure to include climate change messaging and effects, as an overarching guiding principle, and objective to combat.
Biodiversity	PPS, 2009 ICSP	The PPS highlights biodiversity as an important ecological consideration for both urban and rural populations. In particular, there is emphasis on conserving the existing biodiversity in natural heritage spaces. The 2009 ICSP also set one of their goals as the protection of local biodiversity and habitats. The Blue Mountains Future Story will encourage the retainment and enhancement of biodiversity.
Natural Heritage	PPS, TBM OP, GC OP, CSP,	The 2009 ICSP proposed the potential for building a Natural Heritage Protection Plan that identifies wildlife linkage areas, and contains an action

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Summary
Protection	2009 ICSP, GinG, NEP, CO	plan for stewardship and land acquisition. In addition, it suggests that the TBM OP adopt policies for maintenance, protection, and enhancement of natural area features, connectivity and forest management. Since then, the GC OP has implemented Natural Heritage Linkages and Core area identification, and a series of environmental considerations, that the TBM will need to be updated with regardless. This is an area that could use further investigation, to understand where the remaining gaps are beyond policy. **Natural Heritage Definition** According to Green in Grey, natural heritage systems and biodiversity conservation strategies are the roles of the municipality. Natural heritage is defined in the 2020 PPS as "features and areas, including significant wetlands, significant coastal wetlands, other coastal wetlands[...], fish habitat, significant woodlands and significant valleylands [...], habitat of endangered species and threatened species, significant wildlife habitat, and significant areas of natural and scientific interest, which are important for their environmental and social values as a legacy of the natural landscapes of an area." The types of natural heritage include: significant wetlands (identified provincially), significant woodlands (identified by The County), significant valleylands (identified by The County), significant wildlife habitat (protected with significant natural features from The County), and species at Risk. The Niagara Escarpment plan policy aims to maintain the remaining natural features and the open, rural landscape character of the Escarpment and vicinity. **Parks and open space classifications:** There are 6 classes within the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System: Nature Reserve, Natural Environment, Recreation, Cultural Heritage, Escarpment Access, and Resource Management Area. Each have their own unique needs and allowances. **Sensitive Land uses** The TBM OP aims to minimize land use conflicts with sensitive land uses and noise, vibration and emission sources, and light pollution while maintaining public safety. **Linkages and Natural Core Areas** GC OP supports the enhancement, protection, and connection of wildlife and plant linkages (natural areas that lead to one another), and core areas (large natural areas that support flora and fauna). They mention that agriculture and other permitted uses on page 119 should be generally permitted in these areas, while utilities and naturally disturbing activities should not. Green in Grey speaks about the Greenway Vision for Grey Bruce Counties created by the Ontario Nature and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (2008), building on the Big Picture 2002 study. The Greenway consists of core

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Summary
		lands and waterways of conservation value, connected by corridors that allow wild species movement. Green in Grey supports the creation of wildlife linkages. Identifying important ecological and wildlife linkages was also identified as a key step in the 2009 ICSP. **Ecological function** The PPS emphasizes that natural systems should be maintained, restored, or improved in regards to biodiversity and ecological function where possible. This includes recognizing the value of linkages between natural heritage features, including water systems. **Forests** The GC OP and the PPS supports the retention and enhancement of significant woodlands. The CSP has identified a town tree canopy and natural heritage features review as one of its future actions before 2024. The 2009 ICSP's goals include "achieving long-term Conservation of existing forest resources for future generations" **Watershed** Section 2.2.1 of the PPS introduces watershed protection suggestions, to ensure municipalities consider their effects on the whole watershed, minimize their negative impact on the watershed, and are aware of necessary water features, and their connectivity. TBM's OP states the importance of protecting and enhancing watercourses and areas near watercourses, and ensures that development will not occur on lands that are unstable or prone to flooding. The Plan also specifies that the Town should protect the quality and quantity of potable water supply. GC's OP has a series of suggestions for stormwater, surface water, and ground water management and protection, including: the encouragement of low impact development stormwater management techniques, in addition to traditional management; the development of education and community outreach programs to promote the best management practices of these water types. The 2009 ICSP highlights the importance of protecting surface and groundwater, both in quality and in quantity, as is reflected in their natural heritage protection goals. TBM Future Story will recognize the importance of preserving and enhancing natural heritage systems, particularly by promoting the importance of linkages to water and air quality, flora and fauna migration, and the user's quality of experience. **Conservation Authorities Role** Conservation Authorities deliver services and programs that protect and

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Summary
		manage water and other natural resources in partnership with government, landowners,and other organizations. They promote an integrated watershed approach, aiming to balance human, environmental, and economic needs.
Endangered Species	ESA	Endangered species act - endangered species maps are not exactly known or mapped in an official capacity - the natural heritage system helps to support these areas.
Fish Habitat	GinG	According to the Candian Fisheries Act - "watercourses and water bodies are generally protected and may be part of a Natural Heritage System."
Conservation	PPS, TBM OP, GC OP, 2009 ICSP	TBM's OP supports the reduction of energy, water, land, and other non-renewables. The 2009 ICSP recommends general resource conservation practices, including the following goals: ● Develop and promote The Blue Mountains as a Conserver Society ● Enhance Water Conservation strategies ● Create an Energy Conservation Culture ● Embrace Renewable Energy Production and Achieve Efficiencies in Energy Generation and Consumption ● Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 80% by 2050 ● Move significantly towards becoming a zero waste society Many of these recommendations were reflected in other documents below. **Waste** GC's OP encourages the reduction and elimination of waste, mandatory waste diversion tactics, a decrease in the amount of waste going into households, and food waste reduction in the following priority: a) Source reduction; b) Diversion to food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters; c) Diversion to animal feed; d) Use for fuel conversion and energy recovery; e) Composting; **Water Consumption** Section 2.2.1. of the PPS suggests that there be sufficient planning for efficient and sustainable water use. TBM's OP suggests to promote practices to conserve water and protect or enhance water quality. **Energy Efficiency** Policy documents describe energy efficiency as being an important component to sustainable planning. Section 1.1.3. And 1.8 of the PPS both emphasize the need of energy conservation, for buildings, transportation, and infrastructure, in order to negate climate change, and improve air quality. TBM's OP supports the building of energy efficient communities which are compact, energy efficient in design, and that minimize space heating and cooling energy consumption. GC's OP also specifies to consider energy conservation when assessing public proposals.

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Summary
Ecological Footprint	TBM OP	The TBM OP aims to reduce its ecological footprint by encouraging new development based on sustainable development principles.
Naturalized Landscapes	TBM OP, GC OP,	The TBM OP set a strategic objective to develop design standards to encourage the use of naturalized landscapes to improve air quality. **Parks** GC's OP encourages having access to multiple types of parks, that are designed to be age friendly. **Trails** The GC OP encourages that their municipalities develop their own trails master plan to ensure consistency of trail design throughout the municipality.
Air Quality	TBM OP	TBM's OP states that it wishes to improve air quality where possible, and support land use and development patterns to minimize negative impacts on air quality.
Local Ag Production	TBM OP, GC OP,	TBM's OP aims to preserve and promote local agricultural production. GC's OP specifies to capitalize on local foods in the County, and The County's ability to grow a strong affordable food system facilitating access to healthy foods and to eliminate food scarce areas. The County will promote community gardens, local markets, urban agriculture, and other local food initiatives.
Sustainable Farming	GC OP,	GC's OP suggests promoting agricultural practices that conserve water, soil, and environmental features.
Sharing Economy	GC OP,	GC's OP encourages its municipalities to explore sharing economy resources like car sharing, shared economy transportation, and bike sharing.
Stewardship	2009 ICSP	The 2009 ICSP recommends that an action plan be created for land stewardship and land acquisition. It also suggests that land owners understand the value of natural heritage, but that it should be communicated to new residents. This is reflected in their goal: *Provide Education and Marketing of the Value of the Local Natural Environment*.
Dark Sky	2009 ICSP	The 2009 ICSP set one of it's natural heritage goals to *Becoming a Dark Sky Community.*

Theme: Economy

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Impact Summary
Economic Sustainability	CSP	The CSP identifies sustainability in it's introduction, with three main pillars: Environment, Economy, and Social & Cultural. The economy pillar reads as: "Our community has a diversified economy, ever mindful of our agricultural roots and role as a premier four-season destination." The CSP also listed the building of an Economic Development Strategy as one of their core actions for 2024.
Economic Diversification	PPS, GC OP, GCGMS	**Rural Diversification** The PPS mandates that rural areas be supported by promoting diversification to increase employment opportunities through goods and services, including value-add products and the sustainable management/use of resources. The Grey County Growth Management Strategy Update recommends that The County should monitor on-farm small-scale industrial and commercial uses so they do not compromise municipal or provincial agricultural objectives. These businesses should be recognized and celebrated for their role in the local economy, particularly in times of economic downturn. TBM Future Story will consider diversification as a means to maintain the long term sustainability of existing farmland and rural land in TBM. GC also supports economic diversification, particularly in areas of tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, and retail.
Farm Protection	PPS, GC OP,	The PPS supports the protection and support of local farms, through 'protecting agricultural resources, minimizing land use conflicts, providing opportunities to support local food, and maintaining and improving the agri-food network.' GC's OP protects farmland by directing development to stay within the settlement boundaries, and create more compact communities.
Protect Heritage and Culture Resources	GC OP,	The GC OP supports the protection of natural and cultural resources to support the tourism and recreation sector. It also was clear to message that these areas are in particular need of infrastructure renewal and continued support, to support these year-round tourism needs.
Flexible and diverse economic development	GC OP, CSP	GC's OP promotes creating flexible economic development and planning policies to support and open and competitive and entrepreneurial investment. The Town's CSP identifies the need to "balance the needs of residents and visitors of diverse economic circumstances" and advises staff to be aware of and make recommendations for improving affordability for the lowest income groups.
New	GC OP,	GC's OP suggests supporting business activities that provide new

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Impact Summary
technologies and innovation		technologies and the sharing economy.
Infrastructure	GC OP,	The PPS supports offering long-term use of land and infrastructure to ensure economic prosperity (1.7). GC's OP also recognizes that infrastructure and it's renewal are integral to sustainability. The PPS also specifies that telecommunications infrastructure is essential to economic prosperity.
Brownfield	PPS	It is recommended that where possible, brownfield sites should be redeveloped, and there should be a focus on regeneration of land development. TBM Future Story will touch on the benefits of redevelopment and regeneration, particularly in its relationship to other planning and economic development tools, like the Community Improvement Plan.

Theme: Social

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Impact Summary
Social and Cultural Sustainability	CSP	The CSP identifies sustainability in it's introduction, with three main pillars: Environment, Economy, and Social & Cultural. The social and cultural pillar reads as: "Our resourceful and caring urban and rural residents enjoy a high quality of life and face any challenges together."
Affordability	PPS, GC OP, CSP	The PPS supports accommodating an affordable market, and a mix of uses to encourage affordable complete communities. Similarly, the GC OP, and the CSP also prioritize housing affordability. The CSP made the implementation of affordable housing into their CIP an action for 2020. They also listed delivering an attainable housing strategy in section 3 of their CSP.
Access to Public Assets	PPS,	The PPS specifies that Healthy and active communities should be supported by a street and land use network that supports active transportation, equitable distribution of resources for recreation (e.g. parks), providing public access to shorelines, and by recognizing provincial parks and minimizing negative impact onto them.
Complete communities for all ages	TBM OP, GC OP, CSP	TBM's OP supports creating complete communities that are viable for all ages of demographics to live in, which helps to support aging in place. GC's OP supports the creation of complete communities for all ages. The CSP's 4th strategic priority supports the creation of a high quality of life for all ages, all life stages, for both residents and visitors.
Aging Community needs	TBM OP, GC OP, GCGMS	GC's OP discusses the County's older population (as compared to the province), and the unique opportunity it created to consider an age-friendly approach to development, design, and decision making. According to Grey County's Growth Management Strategy, the County is seeing an increase in housing without much of an increase in population, as a result of smaller household sizes and an aging population. The County has an overall net positive migration of all ages except those between 20 and 30 which have the highest outward migration.
Supporting Youth	GC OP,	GC's OP discusses the high outward migration of youth in its municipalities, and their necessity for addressing workplace needs. They discuss necessary supports for these groups, including attainable housing, recreation, and childcare.
Healthy Development	GC OP, CSP	The GC OP supports creating development that is in line with the healthy development checklist, which includes concepts like: supporting mixed use development within 800 meters of retail, recreational centers, parks and public spaces, including a variety of affordable housing options, preserving natural heritage - trees, soil integrity, and native species, building cycling infrastructure, and conducting health impact assessments.

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Impact Summary
		The CSP supports the development of healthy communities in strategic priority 4, quality of life. Some of the actions they've listed in association with this pillar is a physician recruitment strategy, and a wellbeing plan.
Succession Farming	GC OP,	The GC OP encourages more young farmers, and succession farming.
Food Linkages	GC OP,	The GC OP supports the strengthening of links between food producers, distributors, and customers.

Theme: Cultural

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Impact Summary
Tourism & Recreation	PPS, GC OP, CSP	The PPS encourages sustainable tourism development, particularly in rural areas by utilizing existing assets. GC's OP also suggests protecting the natural features that make the area attractive, including biodiversity and culture. The GC OP supports year round tourism attractions such as resorts, as the County's goal is to "increase sustainable tourism revenues through managing and marketing Grey County as a tourism destination." The GC OP also supports the creation of positive and creative planning policies to accommodate tourism and recreation-oriented developments, such as: recognize tourism and recreation as important to economies in GC, encourage ecotourism, agri-tourism and cultural heritage tourism, and support programs to better customer service provision in tourism. The GC OP suggests to do this while linking to surrounding cultural facilities in the County and area. The CSP also supports the creation of a leisure activities plan, often associated with tourism and recreation.
Heritage	PPS, GC OP,	The PPS and the GC OP support the conservation of built, cultural, and archaeological heritage resources. The GC OP also acknowledges that this can be hard with municipal intensification plans, so they encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings, to both protect heritage, but also to attract and retain new talent to the area.
Culture Plans	PPS,	The PPS promotes archaeological management plans and cultural plan development to conserve cultural heritage.
Indigenous Heritage & Collaboration	PPS, GC OP	The PPS mandates that planning authorities need to consult with and take indiginous voices into consideration when protecting and managing cultural/archaeological heritage. The GC OP also encourages municipalities to promote opportunities to work with the First Nations ad Metis in seeking mutually beneficial and socially and environmentally sustainable economic development opportunities.
Preserve Local Culture	TBM OP, GC OP	In TBM's OP, "general development policies focus on active and sustainable transportation, cultural heritage landscapes, viewscape preservation, rural character preservation, barrier-free access, parkland and open space management, housing supply and mix, sustainable development standards, tree canopy maintenance, urban agriculture, energy conservation and efficiency, air quality, water conservation, outdoor lighting." The GC OP supports intensification, while maintaining a small town feel.
New Cultures	GC OP,	The GC OP suggests creating awareness and appreciation for the cultures of municipalities through education and outreach initiatives.

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Impact Summary
Cultural Accessibility	GC OP,	The GC OP suggests that municipalities be flexible when accommodating cultural activities.
Public Art	GC OP,	The GC Op promotes the design of public spaces that showcase public art, creative spaces, and natural heritage and archaeological resources. Coordinate awareness for these spaces through implementing wayfinding strategies, connecting to existing trails, and other active transportation routes.

Across Themes

Sub theme	Plans Mentioned	Policy Impact Summary
Transportation	PPS, GC OP, TBM OP	**Active Transportation** Active transportation is encouraged throughout the PPS, and within the sustainable development objectives in the TBM OP. The GC OP also supports active transportation, and the land use requirements necessary to create these environments feasible. Furthermore, the GC OP proposes giving these transit options right of way (in addition to transit), and to make new developments walkable. It also encourages the development of tourism that supports active transportation. **Transit Opportunities** The TBM OP and GC OP encourage the reduced use of private automobiles by promoting transportation demand management measures like public transit and active transportation. The GC OP supports the improved coordination among transit providers, and to ensure that transit is put in place to aid the aging population, who may not be able to drive later in life. **Development to support active transportation** Land development is supported by transit-supportive development to improve accessibility, to shorten commute times between cities **Multi-modal Transportation system** The PPS supports the need for a multimodal transportation system that is integrated with systems from surrounding jurisdictions to encourage economic prosperity. **Heritage Roadways** The GC OP also supports the protection of heritage roadways, in addition to culture, and built heritage. TBM Future Story will consider the effect of transportation and transit-oriented land use development, and it's long term effect on The Town's sustainability.
Housing	PPS, GCGMS	The PPS supports the development of a range of housing options, to support a diverse workforce. The PPS also specifies that housing is required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents. GC's OP recommends to support at least 10 year of residential growth, and suggest to do so with a variety of housing types, by creating age-friendly and ability-based access for long term occupancy, creating barrier free environments, and intensification. Grey County's Growth Management Strategy projected that The Blue Mountains will have the second highest growth rate leading to 2036 at a 16.1% increase, second to Owen Sound's prospective growth rate of 17.1%. TBM Future Story will support the creation of a mix of rental and ownership housing typologies to support all ages, incomes, and demographics that will support societal needs, health, the economy and overall well-being.

Placemaking	PPS, GC OP, CSP	**Downtowns** The PPS supports the maintenance and enhancement of existing downtown and mainstreet vibrancy and vitality to ensure economic prosperity. **Sense of Place** The PPS encourages creating a sense of place that includes built form and cultural planning, in addition to the conservation of features that help define character, like heritage features. The GC OP states that long term economic prosperity requires a defined sense of place, through planning, and conserving features that define its character. It also supports pedestrian friendly design to encourage street festivals. The GC OP also mentions creating an inventory of underutilized spaces to modify into cultural hubs, like local libraries, and closed schools. The CSP states that the Town will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town through multiple placemaking features, including: defining their character.
Density	PPS,	Density is encouraged for a variety of reasons, but the PPS specifies density to encourage more transportation by active transportation modes. Density will be an underlying best practice in TBM Future Story.

Sustainability Best Practice

Best practice documents that were analyzed during this process include:
- The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision [2018 – 2024]
- The Drawdown Review [2020]
- Whitby's Green Standard [2020]
- Federal Sustainable Development Strategy [2019]
- Environment Canada Indicators supporting the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy [2019 – ongoing]
- UN Sustainable Goals [2016 – ongoing]
- Sustainable Waterloo Region [ongoing]

Findings from these plans are summarized below.

Name:	The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision		
Author:	ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability	**Year**	2018
Thematic Area(s):	All, but mostly based in environment		
Jurisdiction:	Montreal		
Statistics/stories/arguments to inform datawalks:			
N/A			
Key Takeaways & Best Practices:			

- Great summary image at the intro, generally great design to look to, and a short and understandable plan.
- 5 pathways:
  - **Low emission development** - "to curb climate change, create new economic opportunities and improve the health of people and natural systems."
    - Reduce pollutants, GHGs, and implement Paris Climate Agreement
    - Climate neutrality in infrastructure and operations
    - Promote sustainable mobility and transportation
  - **Nature-based development** -" to protect and enhance the biodiversity and ecosystems in and around our cities, which underpin key aspects of our local economies and upon which we depend for the well-being and resilience of our communities."
    - Healthy environments (air water soil)
    - Use nature for ecosystem services and economic opportunities
      - *This links to TBM and GC's call to agri- and eco-tourism*
  - **Circular Development** - "and new models of production and consumption to build sustainable societies that use recyclable, sharable and regenerative resources, to end the linear model of "produce, consume, discard" and to meet the material/development needs of a growing global population."
    - 'Decouple urban economic development' from resource extraction
    - Support economies that are productive, and encourage three R's

Name:	The ICLEI Montreal Commitment and Strategic Vision

- Work with business to deliver solutions and procure green economies
  - ○ **Resilient Development** - "to anticipate, prevent, absorb and recover from shocks and stresses, in particular those brought about by rapid environmental, technological, social and demographic change, and to improve essential basic response structures and functions."
    - Prioritize resilience in other municipal areas
    - Strengthen internal systems to respond to stressors
    - Enhance trust in administration using transparency
  - ○ **Equitable and People-centred Development** - "to build more just, livable and inclusive urban communities and address poverty."
    - "inclusive development for all"
    - Cities promote health, wellbeing, safety, and livability of people
    - Enhance communities with cultural vibrancy

Policy Approaches to help them achieve above:
- sustainable governance & management: sustainable development is a collective effort
  - ○ we will prioritize diversity and inclusivity across our administrations and communities.
  - ○ we will strengthen cooperation at a regional scale.
  - ○ we will bring the voice of our citizens to the global sustainable development debate.
  - ○ we will foster strong partnerships to advance global sustainability.
- innovation & science: sustainable development must work with and for all
  - ○ We will use digital technologies as a tool for inclusion and safeguard sustainability-driven digitalization.
  - ○ we will promote evidence-driven and science-based policy and action at all levels of government.
  - ○ we will drive innovation through city- business collaboration and create space for open innovation.
- finance: sustainable development needs innovative models of finance
  - ○ we will shift the financing and procurement landscape.

Questions & comments for Further consideration:

- Look to this document for design inspiration
- Do we want to make an explicit claim/reference to the Paris Climate Agreement Goals?
- Is there interest in having a brief forward-facing document like this, that is supplemented with RACI charts, and supplementary execution information in a background report similar to Whitby's approach? This may help improve transparency and create a more widely referenced resource.

Name:	The Drawdown Review		
Author:	Project Drawdown	**Year**	2020
Thematic Area(s):	Environment: Climate Change		
Jurisdiction:	Global		
Statistics/stories/arguments to inform datawalks:			

Name:	The Drawdown Review

Reduce Creation of GHGS: Heat-trapping greenhouse gases come from six sectors:

- ~25% Electricity Production
- ~24% Food, Agriculture & Land Use
- ~21% Industry
- ~14% Transportation
- ~6% Buildings
- ~10% - Other Energy-Related Emissions

Supporting Carbon Sinks: "While ~59% of heat-trap-ping emissions stay in the atmosphere, ~24% are quickly removed by plants on land and ~17% are taken up by oceans"

Key Takeaways & Best Practices:

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Review - Broken down into the 1) reduction of sources (electricity, food and ag use, industry, transportation, buildings), 2) Supporting Sinks (Land sinks, coastal ocean sinks engineered sinks), and 3) improving society (health and education)).
- **Drawdown** - the point where GHGs in the atmosphere stop climbing, and start to decline. It is possible to get to this point globally by 2060 if we act now.
- 10 key insights
  - If we start climate solutions now, we can reach drawdown goals - they encourage that Now technology is better than new - they suggest to stop waiting around for new technology and instead just to get started
  - Climate change combatting issues need to occur in an integrated systems approach, rather than choosing to implement one large-scale change. Some that they mention include: energy efficient buildings, food system requires better farming practices, and reduced meat consumption, electric vehicles need to run on clean power generation.
  - Think of climate solutions, as supporters for other objectives, like public health, job creation, safeguarding water supply and add resilience to an area - by preventing damages to come from climate change. Climate change is also an equity issue.
  - There are cost savings with climate solutions: "Overall, net operational savings exceed net implementation costs four to five times over: an initial cost of $22.5–28.4 trillion versus $95.1–145.5 trillion saved. If we consider the monetary value of co-benefits (e.g., healthcare savings from reduced air pollution) and avoided climate damages (e.g., agricultural losses), the financial case becomes even stronger."
  - Climate solutions require stopping the use of oil and gas - fossil fuel use produces ⅔ of Heat trapping GHGs. Solutions either limit or replace their use. Suggests the halt and reallocation of subsidies to green energy solutions rather than oil and gas. Listed solutions - switching to clean energy, retrofitting buildings, public transit. Requests continuous start and stop actions.
  - We need to build carbon sinks at the same time as reducing emissions
  - We need to leverage accelerators (things that progress us towards being closer to our goals, like policy or political change) - and all of them - the slower ones and the longer-term accelerators.
  - Climate change is not an issue for one government or group steps needs to happen in all hierarchies
  - We collectively need to turn from theory to solutions based - now. They reference Greta's statement: "In September 2019, Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg testified before the U.S. Congress. "You must unite behind the science," she urged. "You must take action. You

Name:	The Drawdown Review

must do the impos- sible. Because giving up can never ever be an option.""

* NOTE! All solution categories have detailed tables of ideas in the back

- Electricity proposed solutions:
  - Enhance efficiency - in buildings and industry
  - Shift Production - move away from fossil fuels for production
  - Improve the system - flexible grids for transmission, & energy storage
- Food, Agriculture & Land use proposed solutions
  - Address waste and diets - shift what people eat
  - Protect Ecosystems - protect environments and improve food production on farmland
  - Shift Agricultural Practices - to release less gases like methane, nitrous oxide, and Carbon dioxide
- Industry proposed solutions
  - Improve materials - replacing plastics, metals, and cement
  - Use waste - support reclamation of materials
  - Address Refrigerants - better manage and replace refrigerants
  - Enhance Efficiency
- Transportation
  - Shift to alternatives - change modes - support with "Compact cities, intentional infrastruc- ture, and advanced communication technologies"
  - Enhance Efficiency - Improve necessary vehicles through "mechanical improvements, lightweighting, better design, and more artful operation."
  - Electrify Vehicles
- Buildings
  - Enhance Efficiency - through retrofits and new construction
  - Shift Energy Sources - same as above
  - Address Refrigerants - same as above
- Land Sinks
  - Address Waste & Diets - decrease waste & plant-rich diets
  - Protect and Restore Ecosystems - 'let nature be nature'
  - Shift Agricultural Practices - regenerative agriculture
  - Use Degraded land - BROWNFIELDS
- Coastal & Ocean Sinks
  - Protect & Restore Ecosystems - protect blue carbon sinks
  - Shift Agriculture Practices - regenerative practices near water
- Engineered Sinks - Remove carbon - (cap and store - currently no resale value on resale)
- Improve Society
  - Health & Education - for protection and upholding of women to have ripple effects of lowering population growth

To Accelerate solutions:
- Shape culture - reshaping media, culture production
- Build power toward climate change - not away
- Set goals - that are specific to GHG and carbon
- Alter Rules & policy in favour of environmental actions
- Shift Capital - finance climate change efforts
- Change behaviour
- Improve Technology

Questions & Project Notes:

Name:	The Drawdown Review

- How can we apply an integrated climate change system approach while still allowing for budgetary hierarchical approaches to goal setting?
- How do we propose a climate action plan to a municipality who does not use climate change in their official plan language, and only references greenhouse gases in regards to sustainability, and not across sectors?
- Has someone conducted a climate model for what will happen to the georgian bay region with climate change?
- Is there a way to include action and recommendations for both starting helpful practices, and stopping detrimental ones?
- It seems like an action needs to be common language for climate action in local policy document updates, like the OP update in 2025
- The increased support of telecommunications lines is supportive of enviro sustainability!
- I like the formatting of this report, where it has an accelerating solutions component that would make any actions stronger.

Name:	Whitby Green Standard		
Author:	Town of Whitby		September 2020
Thematic Area(s):	All		
Jurisdiction:	Town of Whitby		

Statistics/stories/arguments to inform datawalks:

N/A

Key Takeaways & Best Practices:

- Other examples of green building standards, and green building standards resources from the federation of Canadian Municipalities: https://fcm.ca/en/resources/mcip/case-study-green-development-standards-growing-communities
- Whitby's Town GHG gas reduction target is 80% by 2050
- The Standard is based on One Planet Living's Sustainability Framework, which has 10 principles: health and happiness, equity and local economy, culture and community, Land use and nature, Sustainable water, local and sustainable food, travel and transport, materials and products, zero waste, energy and climate change.
- All new site plan applications and draft plans of subdivision need to reach baseline standards
- There are 4 tiers:
  - Tier 1: Baseline; Tier 2: Good; Tier 3: Better; Tier 4: Best
  - To move up in tiers, it requires a certain number of extra criteria in each category, plus 'voluntary' efforts above baseline requirements.
- Tier 2 or above are eligible for incentives, including - expedited process approval, stormwater credit, external grants, recognition program awards, servicing allocation, development charge exemptions,

community improvement plan benefits, TIEG, etc.
- Happened in response to the Town declaring itself in a climate emergency in 2019.
- Required and voluntary actions/inclusions range from:
  - **Health and happiness:** public/boulevard trees; access to parks and Open space; parkland and open space provision
  - **Equity and local economy:** affordable housing; housing types and size; community safety
  - **Culture and Community:** Art (within the site), outdoor amenity space, culture heritage resources, sustainable culture (education)
  - **Land use and Nature:** private street signs, ecological functions, ecological integrity, tree canopy, heat island effect, construction plan, bird and bat friendly glazing, biodiverse green roofs for pollinators, restoration of biodiversity and pollinator habitat, invasive species, key natural features or buffers
  - **Sustainable Water:** Stormwater management, residential driveways and/or parking lots, native drought resistant plants, stormwater management quality, water balance, stormwater management quantity; irrigation for lots/units
  - **Zero Waste:** waste collection and storage; household hazardous waste; construction waste reduction
  - **Local and Sustainable Food:** local food production - TBM'S COULD HAVE MORE BUILT IN HERE FOR CONNECTIONS
  - **Travel and Transport:** Accessible Pedestrian Infrastructure; Active transportation Plan, accessible pedestrian infrastructure, transit supportive compact built form; traffic control; off-street Surface parking; walkways; access to transit; carpool and car-share parking; parking footprint; street networks, functional entry to the urban mobility network; bike storage; complete street design; electric vehicle charging stations
  - **Energy and Climate Change:** District Energy Systems; renewable energy; passive solar orientation; building commissioning; energy efficient appliances and performance; building resilience
  - **A series of voluntary efforts** (30)

Questions:

- What is the likelihood of TBM Town Council declaring itself to be in a environmental state of emergency? What halted this in October 2019? What happened to the climate action team in TBM?
- Is there political will to implement a standard this progressive? If not, how might we cultivate it in this process?
- Do we need to wait on OP updates to implement a green standards approach?
- If this is an action that is executed, the supplementary background report, found here gives multiple case study examples of other locations to implement a green standards execution toolkit.
- Looking at this example, do we want the end result to be a mandatory implementation tactic like this, or a recommendations and action document to influence other plans for implementation? Or both? If we want something like this, Jeff and IF should discuss because it would require slightly different administrative functions to lead up to implementation, and more time case-making for Council and Planning.

Name:	Federal Sustainable Development Strategy		
Author:	Government of Canada	**Year**	2019

Name:	Federal Sustainable Development Strategy
Thematic Area(s):	All
Jurisdiction:	Canada

Key Takeaways & Best Practices:

The development strategy focuses on 13 main goals
- Effective action on climate change
- Greening government
- Clean growth
- Modern and resilient infrastructure
- Clean energy
- Healthy coasts and oceans
- Pristine lakes and rivers
- Sustainably managed lands and forests
- Healthy wildlife populations
- Clean drinking water
- Sustainable food
- Connecting Canadians with nature
- Safe and healthy communities

For each goal, there is information including:
- **why is this issue important**
- **Canada and the world** - lists connections to other federal sustainable development strategies in the Pan-Canadian Framework
- **our partners** - describes the roles of other governments and agencies - states " Municipal governments can influence about 50% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions and are taking actions such as retrofitting their facilities to generate renewable energy, implementing district energy systems, and installing charging stations for electric vehicles. To support municipalities in building, resilient and sustainable cities, Budget 2019 proposed to invest $950 million to increase energy efficiency in residential, commercial and multi-unit buildings. These investments will be delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities through the Green Municipal Fund (see Clean Energy)." this is just one example.
  - the section also highlights success stories from their partners
- **Target** - describes canada's starting point, and series of actions
- **Milestone** - states a series of short-term milestones for each
- **Key priorities** - indicated under each area for federal focus
- **Action** - List of actions that the federal government will be executing to achieve their indicated targets
- **Take action** - call to action for residents under each goal

- The strategy does a lot for case making in each category and focuses on case study references for successes.
- This plan references to resources that municipalities can implement, including
  - https://fcm.ca/en/focus-areas
  - Ontario Centres of Excellence
  - Indigenous Clean Energy

Name:	Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Questions:

- Is this plan to set up a series of case making language similar to this plan? If yes, what information is the most powerful to gather for casemaking in TBM?
- How might we include calls to action for residents in our plan, in addition to internal and partnership actions?
- How might we circulate resident calls to action?
- Is there a preference to setting up actions that directly correlate with goals as done here, or to have actions that support multiple goals?
- In target setting and understanding where TBM stands, which municipalities would we need to benchmark against?
- Is the Town comfortable in recognizing positive stories from their partners in this plan? The federal government mentions both municipal, provincial, private, and non-profits who are supporting their goals.
- Do we want to include external stories from elsewhere that tell of inspiring changes made elsewhere? For example, on the canadian website RE: Sustainable Food: *"Restaurant owners have prepared food and ingredients that they simply throw away if they can't sell enough before close. This results in a lot of food waste. To tackle that issue, 2 cousins from Toronto have developed a mobile application to reduce waste in restaurants. Their app, Feedback, allows users to get access to time-sensitive deals during off-peak and end of day hours so that they can buy food that might otherwise be discarded, at a steeply reduced price."*

Name:	Indicators Supporting the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy		
Author:	Government of Canada	**Year**	2019 - Ongoing
Thematic Area(s):	All - Indicators		
Jurisdiction:	Canada		

Statistics/stories/arguments to inform datawalks:

There is data on each of the indicators listed below. This data has also been captured in the data table provided above.

Key Takeaways & Best Practices:

These are the indicators that are being tracked at a national level:
- **Climate Change**
    - Greenhouse gas emissions
    - Sea ice
    - Snow cover
    - Temperature Change
- **Greening Government**
    - Solid waste disposal and diversion

Name:	Indicators Supporting the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

- ○ **GHG emissions - see above**
- **Healthy Coasts and Oceans**
  - ○ Not applicable for TBM
- **Pristine Lakes and Rivers**
  - ○ Metal and diamond mining effluent quality
  - ○ Nutrients in the St. Lawrence River
  - ○ Phosphorus levels in the offshore waters of the Great Lakes
  - ○ Pulp and paper effluent quality
  - ○ restoring the great lakes area of concern - **Collingwood Harbour is one of these areas of concern, but one of the only 4 to be restored!**
  - ○ Water quality in Canadian rivers
  - ○ Water quantity in Canadian rivers
  - ○ Municipal wastewater treatment
  - ○ Others not applicable for TBM
- **Sustainably managed lands and forests**
  - ○ Canada's conserved areas
  - ○ Ecological integrity of national parks
  - ○ Extent of Canada's wetlands
  - ○ Sustainability of timber harvest
- **Healthy wildlife populations**
  - ○ Changes in the status of wildlife species at risk
  - ○ Population status of Canada's migratory birds
  - ○ Species at risk population trends
  - ○ Status of wild species
- **Clean drinking water**
  - ○ Drinking water advisories
  - ○ Number of drinking water advisories affecting first nations water systems
- **Sustainable Food**
  - ○ Management of canadian aquaculture
  - ○ Wildlife habitat capacity on agricultural land
- **Safe and Healthy communities**
  - ○ Air health trends
  - ○ Air pollutant emissions
  - ○ Air quality
  - ○ Emissions and harmful substances to air
  - ○ Human exposure to harmful substances
  - ○ Perfluorooctane sulfonate in fish and water
  - ○ Polybrominated diphenyl ethers in fish and sediment
  - ○ Population exposure to outdoor air pollutants

Questions:

- Do we have the ability to monitor these indicators - is there data tracking capacity in the Town?
- Should we include national statistics in our datawalks?

Name:	UN Sustainable Development Goals		
Author:	United Nations	**Year**	2016 - Ongoing
Thematic Area(s):	All		
Jurisdiction:	Global		

Statistics/stories/arguments to inform datawalks:
There are great stats for every development goal - these are included in the data sheet mentioned above.

Key Takeaways & Best Practices:

17 Goals Proposed
- **GOAL 1: No Poverty** - To end poverty in all its forms everywhere by 2030.
  - Governments enable environment for job opportunities for the poor and marginalized
- **GOAL 2: Zero Hunger** - To end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
  - Support local farmers & markets
  - Make sustainable food choices
- **GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being** - To ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
  - Make/promote healthy choices - education, safew sex, vaccination
  - Support healthy lifestyles
- **GOAL 4: Quality Education** - Ensure inclusive and qual- ity education for all and promote lifelong learning.
  - Place education as a priority in policy and practice
- **GOAL 5: Gender Equality** - To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
  - provide services for women to stay in school
- **GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation** - To ensure access to safe water sources and sanitation for all.
  - Invest in water research and development
  - Include indiginous voices, women and youth in water resource governance
- **GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy** - To ensure access to afford- able, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
  - Invest in renewables, prioritize energy efficient practices, adopt clean energy technologies and infrastructure
  - Businesses to source electricity from renewable resources
  - Employers to encourage telecommunications and incentivize trail travel over auto
  - Active transportation
- **GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth** - To promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.
  - Provide youth with education, and economic empowerment
  - Implement safety measures workers, primarily healthcare workers
  - People-centres economies promoting youth employment
- **GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**
  - "Investments in infrastructure are crucial to achieving sustainable development."
- **GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality**

Name:	UN Sustainable Development Goals

- ○ "To reduce inequalities, policies should be universal in principle, paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations."
- **GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**
  - ○ "There needs to be a future in which cities provide opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more."
- **GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**
  - ○ Reduce waste and be cognizant of where you buy - supporting sustainable options
- **GOAL 13: Climate Action**
  - ○ Covid response:
    - Green transition: Investments must accelerate the decarbonization of all aspects of our economy.
    - Green jobs and sustainable and inclusive growth
    - Green economy: making societies and people more resilient through a transition that is fair to all and leaves no one behind.
    - Invest in sustainable solutions: fossil fuel subsidies must end and polluters must pay for their pollution.
    - Confront all climate risks
    - Cooperation – no country can succeed alone.
- **GOAL 14: Life Below Water -** To conserve and sustain- ably use the world's ocean, seas and marine resources.
  - ○ Protect valuable habitats
  - ○ Make ocean friendly choices
- **GOAL 15: Life on Land** - To sustainably manage forests, combat deserti- fication, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.
  - ○ recycling , eating a locally sourced diet, and consuming only what we need
- **GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions** - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
  - ○ Transparency
  - ○ Inclusion of people with different thnic origins, religions, gender, sexual orientations or different opinions.
- **GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal -** To revitalize the global partnership for sustain- able development
  - ○ promote citizen action groups
  - ○ Partner with businesses to implement SDGs
  - ○ Promote SDGs Partnership Platform

- For each goal, there is an overview, which includes an update on how each goal is doing during COVID.
- There is an evaluation for how these SDGs are doing now in a time of COVID, and what it might mean for policy makers : https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/SDO2020_Book.pdf
- Multiple resources available for each goal area, but in summary pages, each goal is given 2-pages to discuss: description, why aim for it, and why it's an issue, and then a call to action.

Questions:

- SDGs pull in good global data that is up to day for post-covid repercussions - do we want to pull some of these international data trends into the datawalks given the want for a larger than TBM pull?

Name:	Sustainable Waterloo Region		
Author:	Sustainable Waterloo Region - Non-profit	**Year**	Ongoing
Thematic Area(s):	All		
Jurisdiction:	Waterloo Region		

Key Takeaways & Best Practices:

Note: this resources was highlighted in the second Sustainable Future workshop put on by the South Georgian Bay institute. This may be their role or another role for a different community organization that could support the TBM Future Story. This initiative is a part of Green Economy Canada, which is an organization that helps launch and grow green economy hubs across Canada.
- A social enterprise non-profit that helps businesses and the region to become more sustainable
- "Our mission is to catalyze transformation to sustainable systems of energy, mobility and buildings to build a cleaner, more diverse economy."
- Program focuses: organizational sustainability practices, commuting behaviour, regenerative buildings, community GHG impacts and electric vehicles.
- Programs:
  - Regional sustainability Initiative - a collection of businesses that partner together to support sustainability initiatives. They are given a membership status of Gold Silver or bronze, and are ranked among other businesses for how many actions they partake in. They supply employers and organizations with a series of supports, including: best practice findings, reporting, events, recognition, and employee engagement.
  - Travelwise - a commuting support network for local communities. Organizations and employers are encouraged to create supporting transportation networks like transit, active transportation, car sharing, emergency ride home programs, and trip planning portals.
  - Charge WR - a program to implement more electric cars, and charging stations in KW
  - Climate Action WR - a program to create partnerships, share collaborative opportunities, and monitor reduction targets across the region.
  - Evolvgreen - A partnership between schools, government, and business incubators to create new and emerging research, commercialization and change network to reduce environmental impact and improve well being.

Questions:

- To what capacity are we able to support this form of initiative?
- How can we work collaboratively with the institute of South georgian bay municipalities to support these changes?