

RECEIVED VIA EMAIL – June 21, 2021

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** June 21, 2021 4:14 PM  
**To:** Corrina Giles <  
**Subject:** Letter to be distributed to Council

June 21, 2021

Mayor and Council, Town of The Blue Mountains,

PO Box 310

THORNBURY, ON N0H 2P0

**RE: Barricades on Bruce Street in Thornbury**

I am writing to you to reconsider the barricades that have been placed at the Bruce Street location. Today, I am writing not only as a concerned resident but also on behalf of all individuals and families who have person(s) with disability, such as my immediate family. My immediate family has several individuals with disabilities, with varying levels of disabilities and some require the assistance of a device. My family is not the only family in our community in this unfortunate situation.

The barricades located on Bruce Street are located to the south of the only Disabled Person Parking spot on Bruce Street.

Today, I am writing Council to express my disappointment in their oversight of our disabled residents and visitors to our community. My concerns include disabled individuals, individuals with mobility issues, injured, elderly and their families as well as families with young child(ren) who use strollers, wagons and bicycles.

At this time, I would like Council to provide direction on where the persons of concern are to access the sidewalk from the street and vice versa. **Taking the barricades into consideration, my family members are unable to access the street and sidewalk from their vehicles parked in the Disabled Person Parking spot since the access point to the sidewalk has been removed.** Since the barricades were installed, the only entrances onto the sidewalk and street are via the corners of Highway 26 and Bruce Street at The Corner Cafe and TD Bank, or at the corners of Louisa Street and Bruce Street. This means that the most convenient access from and to the Disabled Person Parking spot is at Highway 26 and Bruce Street, more familiarly described as The Corner Cafe corner. This access is already busy and congested with the right hand turn lane together with left hand/through traffic at the set of traffic lights at Highway 26 as well as pedestrians traffic crossing the road. While my concerns are not limited to this reason only, Council is putting the Town in a liability situation allowing this to be the most convenient access to and from the sidewalk for individuals who cannot access the sidewalk in any other way.

In discussion with Shawn Everitt, CAO, I asked if the Town had an Accessibility Committee who had given their input into this unfortunate situation. Shawn advised that the Grey County Accessibility Committee should have commented on this prior to a permit being issued to our municipality. I have contacted the County of Grey to see if this project was distributed to the Accessibility Committee for input prior to issuance of the permit. I am currently awaiting their reply.

I feel there is a solution here that would work for everyone involved. Remove the barricades from Bruce Street and place the chairs on either side of the Tom Kritsch parkette or move the barricades one spot to the south to allow disabled, mobility issued, injured, elderly and people with strollers and young children to access the ramp as they have done for many years. I am asking Council to reconsider their decision that affects so many and to consider making accessibility easier on those who need it most.

Please find attached the following documents:

1. Page 34 from the CAUSE study prepared for the municipality in 1999. Note this page noted a problem being the cores need to be more pedestrian friendly.
2. Page 38 from the CAUSE study prepared for the municipality of 1999. Note this page improvements to streetscape can be achieved through create pedestrian friendly streets with wider sidewalks.
3. Accessible Exterior Paths of Travel which can be found on [AODA.ca](http://AODA.ca) website.
4. Letter from Breaking Down Barriers in support of this request.

Given the urgency of this request, in speaking with Shawn, I believe staff are looking for input/direction from Council with respect to this matter.

Yours truly

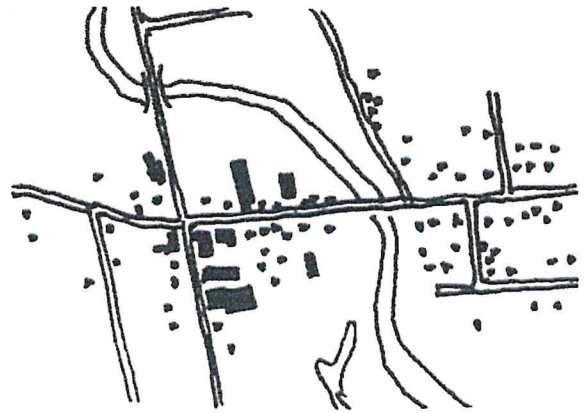
SHARON LONG

## Core Areas Overview

The Core Area of the Town of The Blue Mountains is formed by the downtown sections of Thornbury and Clarksburg. While physically separate, the downtown cores are linked by Bruce Street. The Library and Community Centre are also located along this axis. Both cores have good examples of late 19<sup>th</sup> century commercial and residential buildings.

### Problems:

1. There is a need to strengthen the links between the two cores.
2. The storefronts in both cores have lost some of their 19<sup>th</sup> century character through 'demolition of historic buildings and the use of poor signage.
3. The cores need to be more pedestrian friendly.
4. The cores need more pedestrian and business activity.
5. There is a need to create an awareness of the river from the downtown core of Thornbury.



Clarksburg Core Area



Downtown Clarksburg



Thornbury Core Area



Downtown Thornbury

## Core Areas

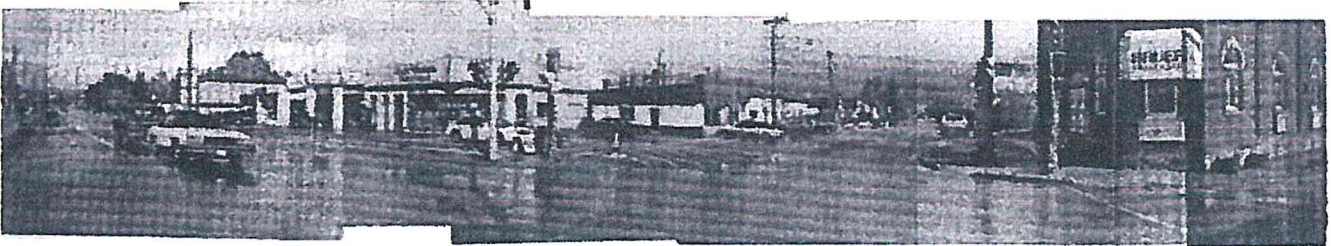
### Goal 2:

#### Improvement to Streetscape

Throughout the history of a town, buildings are demolished. This erodes the sense of enclosure and completeness of the building fabric. The Streetscape can be improved by practicing "urban infill". Restoring the building edges and corners helps define the street and public space. Examples of poor urban infill are the post office building on Bruce St. in Thornbury. The setback and architectural quality of the building does not harmonize well with the storefronts. Building close to the original street edge, and on empty lots to complete the block are good examples of urban infill..

Improvements to the streetscape can be achieved through the following means:

1. Create pedestrian friendly streets with wider sidewalks.
2. Provide road and sidewalk pavers.
3. Provide pedestrian scale lighting with lower height lamp standards.
4. Provide seating areas along the street for pedestrians.
5. Plant trees along the street.
6. Improve signage by encouraging raised letter signage over back-lit signage
7. Reduce traffic speed.



Bruce Street and Highway  
26 Intersection



Proposed Intersection Showing  
Urban Infill



# Accessible Exterior Paths of Travel

[February 4, 2019](#) [Greg Thomson](#)

Under the [Design of Public Spaces Standard](#) of the [AODA](#), cities and other organizations building or reconstructing exterior paths of travel, such as sidewalks and walkways, must make those paths accessible to travellers with disabilities. Rules for accessible exterior paths of travel apply to [private organizations with 50 or more workers](#) and all public sector organizations.

## Accessible Exterior Paths: What You Need to Know

### Before Building

Before building, organizations must consult the public and people with disabilities about the need for rest areas. Rest areas are locations where travellers can step out of the flow of traffic for a short time. *Cities that have municipal accessibility advisory committees must also consult their committees about rest areas before building or redeveloping paths.*

### Minimum Requirements

The Standard lists *minimum requirements for many aspects of exterior paths*. Entrances must have clear openings of at least 850 mm. Moreover, paths must have minimum clear widths of 1,500 mm. This width allows room for mobility devices or service animals going both ways along a path. However, parts of a path that connect to a curb ramp can be 1,200 mm wide. In addition, *paths must have minimum head room clearances of 2,100 mm*. This height ensures that paths are free of obstacles overhead that white canes cannot detect, like signs or tree branches. If part of a path does not have this clearance, that section should have a cane-detectable railing or barrier around it.

Paths must have firm, stable, and slip-resistant surfaces that canes, crutches, or the wheels of mobility devices will not sink into. Likewise, if there are openings in a path's surface, they must be smaller than 20 mm. This size prevents mobility devices from getting stuck in the openings. Long, narrow openings should be at right angles to the direction of travel. Finally, Any change in the level of a path must have a slope or ramp. Similarly, sidewalks with steep or depressed curbs must have curb ramps. All slopes and curb ramps must comply with the requirements for them listed in the Design of Public Spaces Standard.

*addition to the audible walk indicator tones, signals must vibrate so that travellers who are deafblind will know when they should cross.*

Moreover, signals must be no more than 1,500 mm away from curbs. The push-buttons on the signals must be no higher than 1,100 mm off the ground. The arrow-shaped buttons must be tactile and point in the direction that travellers should cross. Furthermore, signals should function both manually, when someone presses the button, and automatically. Two signals on one corner should be at least 3,000 mm apart. When there is not enough room on a corner and the two signals must be on the same post, verbal announcements must clearly state which street is safe to cross.

## Ramps and Stairs

*Many of the minimum requirements for flat paths also apply to ramps. The Design of Public Spaces Standard provides additional detailed technical requirements for the construction of ramps, handrails, and landings.*

The Standard also gives detailed technical requirements for stairs. Stairs can never be the only way of changing levels on a path because some travellers always use ramps. However, many other travellers with disabilities need or prefer to use stairs. When stairs are included on an exterior path, they must be slip-resistant and have closed risers. Furthermore, stairs in the same flight must be the same size. Additionally, they must have good colour contrast all the way along the edge of every step. Good contrast ensures that travellers with low vision can see where each step is. Likewise, there should be a tactile change in a path's surface at the top of each flight. Tactile surfaces indicate to travellers who are blind that the flight is approaching.

## Why do we need Accessible Exterior Paths of Travel?

Sidewalks, walkways, and other paths are everywhere in Ontario. Accessible exterior paths of travel ensure that everyone in the province has basic freedom of movement: across the street to visit a neighbour, around the corner to the local convenience store, or a few blocks away to catch the [bus](#).

June 21, 2021

Town of Blue Mountain  
32 Mill St.  
PO Box 310  
Thornbury, ON. N0H 2P0

Dear Mayor Alar Soere and Council,

Your Worship, recently we received information from people we support in Thornbury that have some concerns about the curb cuts on the main street being covered by patios and signs preventing access for those using mobility aids.

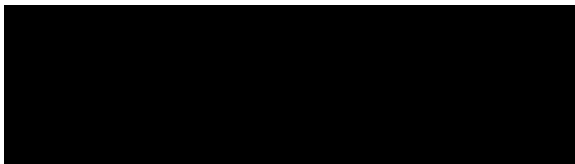
The curb cuts, as you know, allow people of all abilities to enjoy the benefits of the restaurants and stores in your town and with the arrival of summer and the fluid changes of the Lockdown restrictions it is important to be aware that people who use mobility devices, wheel chairs, walkers and canes among others, want to enjoy what the community provides for everyone.

Breaking Down Barriers Independent Living Resource Centre serves Simcoe, Bruce and Grey Counties. As an agency we advocate on behalf of those of all abilities to live independently in the community.

We wanted to ensure as Ontario moves toward Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance that this is brought to your attention for both the safety issues as well as ensuring accessibility and inclusion of all in the Communities we serve.

If you require more information about the concerns I will provide my email address at the bottom of the letter and would be happy to consult with your office.

Sincerely,



Tracey MacLeod  
Independent Living Skills Coordinator  
ilskills@bdbilrc.ca

Supported by: Avec le soutien de:

