



Andrea Matrosovs, Candidate for Mayor Responses

Town of The Blue Mountains Election - 2022 Candidate Questionnaire

A. Before we begin with our priorities, please tell us why you are running, what your priorities will be if elected, and finally, why BMVA members should vote for you?

- I am a local business owner of Wild Willow Studio in Clarksburg and live with four generations of my family on our small acreage where I raise my crop of basket willow. I am a farmer-researcher with the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario. My business started in 2018 and in 2019 I expanded to the retail studio location, so I have weathered the difficulties of COVID and understand the challenges facing businesses here in our community.
- I have been working, volunteering, and raising a family locally for 22 years. I have seen the changes in our Town over the past two decades and understand the needs of the community. I advocate for a sustainable community for all ages and stages of life. I come home each night to the reasons I am running: my mother, my son, and his family. I am thinking each day about how to best meet the needs of our seniors, my son's generation and how to provide opportunities for my grandson to live and work in our community in the next decades.
- I keep involved in the community beyond the Council table. I currently volunteer at our Royal Canadian Legion Branch, Beaver Valley Fall Fair, Marsh Street Centre, community clean-ups, tree plantings and Grants & Donations events. I learn about our community needs by working alongside other volunteers and listening to their perspectives.
- I have the current experience of being on Council for the last four years and have proven my leadership capability as Chair of Finance, Administration and Legal Services, Vice-Chair of Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and Chair of Council Advisory Committees.
- A vote for me is a vote to continue the progress we have made in this term of Council. We have controlled taxes and delivered services efficiently. With extensive community input we created a plan to manage our growing community. We have 20 bold actions to accomplish in the coming years.

that are measurable, accountable, and balance economic prosperity with community well-being and environmental resiliency. I ask for your vote to continue to serve the community for another four years. Together we can build a sustainable community for all ages and stages of life here in our beloved Town of the Blue Mountains.

B. Have you worked with BMVA in the past and do you believe we add value to residents, businesses, and government?

- **Yes, because I am currently on Council, I have had the opportunity to participate in multiple events hosted at the Village and have supported partnerships such as our first annual Blue Mountain Film Festival.**

C. Did the outgoing council implement any changes/ bylaws /policies that you hope to reverse or change?

- **I am committed to continuing the progress we have made in the last four years of Council and my platform is based on the next steps of that work. It is crucial we continue that momentum forward.**

Economic Recovery & Development

BMVA supports continued growth and diversification of our local economy to assist businesses, municipalities, and social agencies to meet the service needs of local residents and visitors. Predictable and equitable tax rates, employment lands development, key infrastructure improvements and innovative partnerships between private, public, and social agencies are needed. The local economy will be in recovery and rebuilding mode over the full course of the next municipal term of office. All sectors of the economy will require time and support to rebuild; now is not the time to implement new taxes, increase costs to do business or to over-regulate.

D. Do you support the above statement?

- **Yes, I do.**

E. Will you continue to collaborate with and support BMVA's DMO/Tourism role as well as our arts, culture, and sports programming?

- **Yes, I will. It is vital that the Town partner with experts in the community such as BMVA and collaborate with regionally with our municipal neighbours and Grey County. Tourism initiatives at the County level is one way for us to see a return on investment of our tax dollars that go to Grey County.**

F. Will you commit to not increasing taxes or implementing new taxes?

- **In the last four years, this Council has controlled taxes. Every draft budget was scrutinized at the Council table working with staff and inviting public comment until we could bring increases down to a manageable level while still delivering services to our residents. I will bring that process and my experience as Chair of Finance, Administration and Legal Services to the new Council table. New taxes such as models of an accommodation tax**

can only be explored in consultation with the public and with key stakeholders such as BMVA.

Local Labour Market Development

Our local labour market is insufficient to meet the needs of businesses, municipalities, social agencies and consumers across the region. This is the result of population growth by demographics that do not participate in the local employment market, the size of Canada's workforce approaching retirement, high cost of living, out-migration of local youth, low local immigration settlement and more. The Town of The Blue Mountains needs to strengthen the local labour market by stimulating local infrastructure investments in: attainable and workforce housing, regional public transportation, local post-secondary programs, supports to welcome new Canadians and their families, childcare, productive relationships with upper- and lower-tier regional municipalities and more.

G. What initiatives would you support to attract and retain workers to the area, and will you prioritize this issue?

- **I support all the above initiatives as proven by the work we have done on Council in these last four years. There are next steps that are accountable and measurable based on new plans and strategies we have worked hard to complete with public consultation.**
- **Georgian College has already an established partner in delivering post-secondary education and experience opportunities to BMR. I taught locally at Collingwood Collegiate and taught International Students at Niagara College, so I will continue to advocate for these opportunities with the stellar local college we have!**
- **Our Town's new Transportation Master Plan includes strategies to support the labour force between where they live and work. We need to keep building regional solutions with our neighbours, such as Collingwood Transit circuits in our Town.**

H. New Canadians often look for unique supports (i.e., places of worship, community centres) when choosing a place to settle. What role do you see for the municipal government to assist in this regard?

- **We need to collaborate with Grey County programs such as the Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership to be a welcoming inclusive community. One of our bold actions in our new Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is to develop a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy. Let's keep moving forward.**

Transportation

Getting around South Georgian Bay and the Blue Mountains efficiently and safely has become an issue that urgently needs to be addressed. We believe the following priorities are critical: improved safety measures on local roads, new highway capacity, expanded public transit service, and increased active transportation and trails (particularly in the Craigeith/Village community).

I. Public transit, bike paths, highways and public parking often compete for the same municipal dollars, how will you juggle these competing transportation and transit priorities?

- We have a complex network of roads under provincial (Highway 26), County and municipal jurisdictions. In the last four years we have repeatedly met with the Ministry of Transportation to advocate for the need of our community. I want to press Grey County to follow through with all their commitments to road upgrades from outlined in their 2019 to 2028 plan. We have seen that return on our tax dollars sent to Grey County this summer with upgrades on County Roads 2 and 13. Let's keep going.
- Our new Transportation Master Plan will help us create long-range strategy that includes identifying infrastructure requirements both today and in the future. This includes policies to apply to future decisions in both transportation and land use. Another bold action is to monitor and estimate increases in active transportation uptake as supported by the Transportation Master Plan.

J. What road safety improvements would you prioritize and why?

- Street lighting is an issue in both the Village area and elsewhere in the community because we need all the tools possible when pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles are using the same roads.
- By coordinating a whole-community perspective, we can make sure that pathways in one development or neighbourhood connects to the next and the next. This eliminates active transportation merging back on to roads to get from point A to B.

K. What initiatives would you support to increase transportation options for visitors, residents, and workers in the area?

- A decade ago, my son's friends used to spend 25% of their daily wage on taxis from Collingwood to work here at BMR. We have since partnered for public transportation options, and it is working. We need to expand that option in consultation with BMR and in conjunction with shift needs for BMR staff.
- Our new Transportation Master Plan will help us create long-range strategy that includes identifying infrastructure requirements both today and in the future. This includes policies to apply to future decisions in both transportation and land use. Another bold action is to monitor and estimate increases in active transportation uptake as supported by the Transportation Master Plan.
- Visitors and residents have also asked for Uber options so they can enjoy an evening at the Village and return safely afterward. We also need to think about public transportation options to shuttle residents and visitors between Craighleith, Thornbury and Clarksburg. I would like to explore this in the next term of Council.

L. E-scooters/bikes & electric cars, both privately owned and rental, are more available than ever before, do you support these modes of transportation, and will you invest in infrastructure to allow the safe operation of them?

- **One of our bold actions is to expand low-carbon transportation options to include regional electric vehicle infrastructure. Charging stations will be located across our Town. I am in favour of encouraging partners to create opportunities to rent an e-bike in Clarksburg, Thornbury or Craigleith and drop it off at another location.**

Housing

The Town of The Blue Mountains lacks attainable home ownership, rental supply, and workforce housing options. Numerous strategies have been created over the last decade by industry, local municipalities, and our local not-for-profit Attainable Housing Corporation. We do not need to develop more strategic plans. We need changes to our Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw to permit development of a greater range of attainable residential and workforce housing options, as well as balanced and appropriate increases in density and height in the right places. A strengthened partnership between the Town and The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation can accelerate the right policies and implementation plans.

M. Will you champion the implementation of changes to our official plan and zoning bylaws to expedite the development of attainable and workforce housing? What else do you envision can be done to meet this need?

- **Yes, I will continue to champion those changes. This Council endorsed in principle recommendations in Phase One of the Official Plan update that supports new attainable housing options and I stand by that endorsement.**
- **Please see my response to the Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation Questionnaire as well.**

Sustainability/Whole Communities

BMVA believes that a collaborative approach on key initiatives can make a big difference, including: financial incentives for businesses and residents to implement green technologies and upgrades, increasing electrical vehicle infrastructure, and joint municipal/private sector service delivery to achieve economies of scale (e.g., snow removal, waste, recycling).

Public greenspace, parks, family amenities, waterfront access and trails are lacking in the Craigleith/Blue Mountain Village community. With the recent boom in new residential development (and associated development charge and property tax revenues), residents want a more integrated, safe, green, and accessible Craigleith/Blue Mountain Village community.

N. What commitments will you make to the residents of Craigleith and Blue Mountain Village to address these concerns?

I am committed to not only ensuring greenspace but also valuing it as natural assets. My final research I am wrapping up this fall for my MA in Community Studies has been about municipalities adopting Natural Asset Management to value and manage greenspace, wetlands, trees etc. in the same way we manage our built assets. Representing the Town on both

Conservation Authorities has also underscored my understanding about the work our natural areas do for minimizing flooding and erosion.

I also want to see a balance of community sustainability right across our Town with our parks. We should stop assuming a development is being built for a certain demographic, but anticipate every current or future neighbourhood may be the future home of families, seniors or weekenders together. I therefore want to make sure playgrounds are a walkable distance for as many residents in our Town as possible. We are not a tightly built urban area like in the GTA, so that presents some challenges. We have three larger communities and smaller hamlets right across our Town of the Blue Mountains. Let's distribute our resources fairly.

We are lacking in public waterfront access due to decades of private acquisition leaving little left for the Town to pursue for the community. What we have done on this Council in the last term is hold on to our road allowances ending at the bay. The challenge we also see is how to manage parking at those locations. This is a work in progress.

O. Are there any current municipal services you would increase or decrease?

We need to make sure our existing infrastructure is working as efficiently as possible. For example, we have been able to identify infiltration and inflow issues in our wastewater which means water is seeping into the system and we therefore end up treating 30% that we should need to treat. I want to continue that progress by addressing what we have identified.