

Town of The Blue Mountains Election - 2022 Candidate Questionnaire – Tony Poole

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 believe what makes a vibrant community is an informed and empowered community member. I believe in making a difference and have spent all of my working career in roles that allowed me to take leadership, empower people, and chart new horizons. Most importantly, implementing solutions that drive value to the organization and its members. Success is only possible when you're able to deliver and implement solutions that resolve the problems you are trying to solve.

I want to make the Town of The Blue Mountains the most desirable community and build on the community character that originally attracted my wife, Josie, and I, to move here. My platform includes five main priorities:

1. Implement an attainable housing solution that addresses the community needs.
2. Ensure that our community has the necessary health and medical resources to support our growing community.
3. Support economic and environmental sustainability that balances responsible growth with the infrastructure necessary to support all our community needs.
4. Work with Grey County to build a better working relationship.
5. Improve youth and school age children's community programs.

I believe that responsible governance protects our community and secures our future through financial discipline.

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

- I have worked with BMVA in the past in my role as Vice Chair of the Thornbury BIA and participant in the TBM Economic Development Committee and value the important role the BMVA provides in engaging the full spectrum of economic issues in our community.

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

- I would like to see further discussion and evaluation of the Tree By Law and further review of planned changes to the Official Plan.

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?

- we need to evaluate a full spectrum of solutions mindful of economic impact and recovery.

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

- yes

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

- As a member of Council and in the capacity of Mayor it would be prudent to examine any and all avenues to support the smooth efficient management of our town guided by good governance models. No candidate should commit to any tax changes without prudent examination of all the facts and issues.

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?

- Generate and review feedback from key community sectors which include private and public sector partnerships
- Deferring development charges for select housing projects
- Consider incentives for private home owners like small apartments and granny suites

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?

- TBM partnership with community to support initiatives that support family and cultural environment.

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?

- Implement policies and long term strategies that will protect corridors for all modes of transportation to meet current and projected population growth. With primary consideration to prioritizing health and safety issues.

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

- adopt Vision Zero approach to road safety as articulated in the TBM Transportation Master plan.

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

- provide connectivity between transportation modes to move people and goods sustainably, efficiently and safely.
- K. **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?**
- I believe we need to establish a sustainably integrated multi model transportation system that reduces reliance on any single mode and promotes walking, cycling and local transit.

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.

- L. **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?**
- One of my key platforms is implementing an attainable housing strategy that addresses key community sectors. This includes possible short term and long term solutions such as:
 - Creating private and public sector partnerships
 - Deferring Development Charges for select projects
 - Finding Private sector partners to build affordable options
 - Incentives for private homeowners to provide small apartments and granny suites

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.

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

We need to work with the community and partner with business to address these concerns. Work with developers and builders to plan for and adopt new initiatives that address these concerns.

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

We need to look at programs and services that support and take in to account the physical, mental and developmental needs of children and youth.