



Spring Newsletter - 2026

Welcome to our 2025 Year-end update. There are a number of issues affecting Bayfield and your BRA is actively monitoring and working to represent your interests.

SAFETY FOCUS GROUP ESTABLISHED

Who We Are

The Bayfield Safety Focus Group is a coalition of concerned residents supported by the Bayfield Ratepayers Association. We are dedicated to improving traffic, pedestrian, and cyclist safety along the three-kilometre stretch of Highway 21 through Bayfield Village, from Jowett's Grove Road to Paul Bunyan Road as called for in the official Bayfield Secondary Plan. We advocate for practical, cost-effective measures that improve safety while respecting the needs of residents, visitors, businesses and through-traffic.

Why We Formed

The group was formed in response to growing concerns about serious collisions and near-misses along this corridor, particularly at the Highway 21 / Mill Road (County Rd 3)/ Cameron Street intersection. Residents are also concerned about the risks pedestrians and cyclists face when attempting to cross Highway 21.

Inconsistent speed limits (80 → 60 → 50km/h → 60 → 80km/h) within a very short stretch containing approximately 15 side street access points further compound safety concerns. While Bayfield is known as a walkable village, access between the east and west sides remains dangerous.

Current Situation

The Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) conducted traffic studies in October 2025 and recommended installing traffic lights and turn lanes at the Cameron/Mill/Highway 21 intersection. However, the study occurred during the off-season rather than peak summer months when traffic volumes are highest. The recommendation addresses only one intersection rather than the entire three-kilometre corridor. No timeline or cost estimate has been communicated, and the study was completed prior to a proposal in the Secondary Plan for approximately 500 new homes that may significantly impact traffic volumes.

Immediate, Low-Cost Safety Recommendations

- Implement a consistent 50 km/h speed limit across the full three-kilometre village stretch to improve safety, simplify driver decision-making, and reduce hazards at key bends and access points. This is in keeping with the official Bayfield Secondary Plan.
- Install a pedestrian-activated crosswalk near Clan Gregor Square to allow safe crossing between the east and west sides of the village in keeping with the secondary plan.
- Place solar-powered radar speed indicator signs along the corridor to reinforce speed compliance.
- Install rumble strips at both northbound and southbound village approaches to alert drivers

entering the reduced-speed zone in the 3 km village stretch.

- Address line-of-sight issues at Cameron Street and Highway 21, including vegetation management and winter snow pile placement.

Why Act Now

These interim measures will immediately reduce risk to people who live and visit Bayfield while allowing further data collection during peak tourist season. They provide flexibility as development plans evolve and represent fiscally responsible, common-sense solutions. We support long-term infrastructure improvements but believe a corridor-wide safety strategy is necessary to reflect peak traffic realities, future growth, and Bayfield's identity as a walkable community.

MUNICIPAL SPENDING CONCERNS

The BRA continues to observe all council meetings, follow Council activities, lobby issues on behalf of our community where appropriate and monitor what is considered wasteful spending. Recently we have been made aware of excessive salary increases (over 10%) for some of the municipal key employees and overall large (7.8%) annual increases. The details of this can be seen at the Sunshine List for Bluewater <https://ontariosunshinelist.com/employer/municipality-of-bluewater>. We question the leadership of our council leaders that allow such a growing payroll when the municipality struggles to meet its operating needs continually pulling funds out of reserves.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2026

There will be a municipal election this fall on October 26, 2026. Municipal elections are critical and have perhaps the largest impact on your day to day life. We encourage you to pay close attention to the election process and plan to vote. You can register to vote or update your voter information at www.registertovote.ca

We will be watching the election details and when appropriate hold an all candidates meeting as we get closer to the date.

COMMUNITY CENTRE EXPANSION

The BFIT Private, Public Partnership with the Municipality has been extended for 10 years. As part of this Private, Public Partnership (PPP) between the Municipality and BFIT, BFIT is required to develop a plan for expanding the existing community centre.

As previously mentioned, a committee has been formed which includes the BRA, Bayfield Lions, BFIT and the Bayfield Chamber of Commerce. The committee has developed initial draft designs based on the results of the needs survey run in the Bayfield Breeze in late 2024 and secured potential donations for a large percentage of the proposed build. Before the project can proceed there are a number of steps required including conducting public review sessions of the plan, obtaining Council support for the plan, securing land for the expansion, applying for grants and running a fundraising campaign for remaining required funds

The committee and the Municipality of Bluewater continue to work with the Agricultural Society to find a mutually beneficial path forward that can be in the best interest of both Agricultural Society and the entire Bayfield community.

BRA SPRING GENERAL MEETING

The BRA will be holding its Spring General Meeting on May 23, 2026 at 10:00 am. At the Bayfield Community Centre. Topics for discussion in the meeting will be:

Bayfield Safety Focus Group

- Bayfield 150 Activities
- Sewage Treatment Plant Expansion
- 2026 Municipal Election
- Community Centre Expansion

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

We would like to thank all of our members for their ongoing support. We look forward to representing your interests on issues impacting Bayfield in 2026.

If you are not already a BRA member, we encourage you to join. Please see our website at www.bayfieldratepayers.ca and become part of supporting how your tax dollars are spent.

Board of Directors

Bayfield Ratepayers Association