

TBM Environmental Sustainability Fund

Terms of Reference



MISSION

Town of The Blue Mountains (Town or TBM) Environmental Sustainability Fund was created with the goal to advance sustainability in the Town. Funds are awarded to improve the Town's environmental performance, foster sustainability literacy and community engagement, advance climate change adaption and mitigation, and demonstrate sustainability technologies.

Proposed projects must support the goals and objectives outlined in The Blue Mountains Future Story and be consistent with the major planning documents of the Town including the Strategic Plan. The fund accepts small or large project proposals from charity and non-profit groups from or doing work in the Town. A total fund amount of \$8,000 is available for each application intake to be allocated amongst successful proposals, with a minimum of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$5,000 available per application. There will be one intake each year.

The Fund will be reviewed after every fifth year of operation to look at issues including funding take-up and consistency with Town priorities.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Types of projects funded

- Reducing strain on municipal infrastructure
- Climate adaption or mitigation
- Behaviour change & education: activities that foster culture of sustainability, such as efforts to improve sustainability literacy and stimulate behaviour change.

The Review Committee will allocate funds to projects that include but are not limited to:

- Decreasing the Town of The Blue Mountains' carbon emissions
- Increasing indoor and/or outdoor water efficiency
- Improving transportation options
- Reducing the amount of waste generated
- Education, research, and outreach initiatives directly related to sustainability
- Community awareness of sustainability

PROJECT GUIDELINES

- Projects must address environmental, social, or economic sustainability in Town of The Blue Mountains.
- All funded projects will be required to prepare a mid-point progress report as well as a final project report.
- Projects will normally be implemented and completed within 12 months of project funding.
- Projects must be stand-alone projects. This fund provides one-time funding for start-up projects and does not cover continuing operational expenses.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Address the themes and goals in the Towns' planning documents: The Strategic Plan and The Blue Mountains Future Story;
- Have measurable environmental benefits;
- Are innovative;
- Have sound financial benefits;
- Reduce strain on municipal infrastructure, finances and/or facilities;
- Have technical merit and chance of success and long lasting benefits;
- Potential for collaboration and reproducibility;
- Contribute to climate adaptation and/or mitigation;
- Benefit to the local The Blue Mountains area.
- Have a broad community impact.
- Use leveraged funds or matching funds.
- Are effective in educating or changing behaviour beyond the project itself.
- Are interdisciplinary and engage multiple stakeholders across Town of The Blue Mountains' community.

ELIGIBILITY

- Project implemented and physically located in Town of The Blue Mountains.
- Recipients are ineligible to apply again with other projects until they have successfully closed their previous project by submitting final reports and any other applicable materials.
- There is no limit on the number of proposals that may be submitted by one applicant, however only one project grant will be awarded per applicant per year.
- Members of the Review Committee cannot apply for funding or be on a project team of a new proposal while they are serving as a committee member.
- Not for profit or charity groups.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process consists of a proposal and selection stage. Applications will be accepted once yearly. Application intake deadlines are as follows:

- **December 2, 2024** – Full proposals due
- Early 2025 – Proponents notified of results
- December 14, 2025 – Awarded funds must be spent

Proposals can be submitted in one of the following three ways:

Email: sustainability@thebluemountains.ca

Mail to: Town Hall
32 Mill St. PO Box 310
Thornbury Ontario, N0H 2P0

Drop off: Town Hall, 2nd floor, Operations
32 Mill St. PO Box 310
Thornbury Ontario, N0H 2P0

Proposal

Complete the Proposal form. The Proposal gathers applicant information and project-related details in the following areas:

Project Description	Include an abstract that gives a brief yet comprehensive summary of the project in less than 500 words. How does the proposal demonstrate meaningful environmental/sustainability benefits?
People	Identify all project members, their roles, contact information, and relevant experience.
Partnerships	Identify all potential partnerships or collaborations and include letters of support to demonstrate all partners' commitment to your project.
Level of Impact	Outline the desired environmental/sustainability impacts.
Performance Measurement	What is the plan for measuring the project's performance in relation to the stated benefits?
Community Engagement	Describe how your project will involve and/or benefit the community.
Project Feasibility	Describe the project teams' skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to carry out this project. Does the project have reasonable expectations regarding its size, implementation time, and target audience, and is it cost effective?

Budget and Purchasing	Prepare a detailed budget using Environmental Sustainability Fund Budget template. If it is a continuing project, describe your strategy for financially supporting the project long-term. Itemize all sources of matching funding in support of the proposed project, and estimate dollar values for in-kind contributions. Include funding that has been applied for but not yet awarded. (Please disregard all sections in the budget template that do not apply)
Project Timeline	List anticipated project start and completion dates, order tasks and milestones chronologically, and estimate how long each task will require for completion.
Permitting	Include a letter of support from organizations whenever the success of your project is contingent on permitting.
Long-Term Plan	Is there a plan to continue the project once Town funding ends with other funding sources?

The above project details are organized into five selection criteria, each of which is evaluated according to the following Selection Procedure.

Selection Procedure

Selection of the projects will be done by the Review Committee, membership of which is comprised of the following:

Chair:

- Manager of Sustainability and Solid Waste

Members:

- Two or three staff members appointed by the CAO

Administrative Support

- Operations Department

Five Selection Criteria

Selection will be made by the Review Committee. The committee will identify successful projects based on the total score of the following five selection criteria. Each of the five criteria will be scored out of the amounts shown under the Criteria Weighting, and then given a final score out of 100. A minimum score of 70 must be obtained.

Five Selection Criteria	Description of Criteria	Criteria Weighting
Project description and articulation of benefits	The proposal demonstrates meaningful environmental and sustainability benefits to Town of The Blue Mountains	25
People and Partnerships	Project proposal must identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All project members, along with their roles, contact information, and relevant experience; and - All potential partnerships or collaborations, including letters of support to demonstrate commitment to the project, as needed 	15
Level of Impact	The impact measurement must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A description of how the project advances Town strategic planning documents; - A plan to measure the project’s performance in relation to environmental and sustainable benefits; and - The level of community involvement, including any education or outreach opportunities with the project 	25
Project Feasibility	Project feasibility is based on the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The applicant and project team have the knowledge, skills, time, and initiative to carry out this project; - The proposal is cost effective; - The proposal includes a full and reasonable description of the budget; and - The project size, implementation time, and target audience is reasonable 	20
Planning	Planning includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of anticipated start and completion dates, tasks and milestones ordered chronologically, and estimates of how long each task will require for completion; - Where donations or in-kind assistance is expected from other sources, letters of commitment or other assurances are included; - Where permitting is required, preliminary discussions have been held with all relevant organizations and any necessary letters of support have been obtained; and - Proposal includes a plan to continue once Town funding ends 	15
		Total out of 100

Budget Template

Complete the Environmental Sustainability Fund Budget template, ensuring the Grand Total for Column C does not exceed \$5,000. The Total project cost (Column A) is the sum of Columns B and C and represents the full cost (or value) of the project including costs supported by the Environmental Sustainability Fund (Column C) and those covered by the applicant (Column B). Up to 10% of the project value can be a contingency amount. The value of in-kind contributions, donations, admin support, etc. can be written into the project description, and may optionally be provided a monetary value within the Budget Template under Column B.

Recommendations

Projects will be recommended for funding on the basis of consensus decisions of the committee. The proposals receiving the highest score above the minimum required will be the preferred candidates. If the funding requested by the first and second place proposals is less than the total available funding, the remaining funds will be allocated to the third place proposal, then fourth place and so on with subsequent proposals until all available funding is expended, provided the minimum score is obtained.

Final Approval

Funding decisions will be made by Town Council following receipt of the recommendations of the Review Committee.

Meetings

Meetings will normally occur following the intake each year at the call of the chair. The number of meetings required will be related to the number and complexity of proposals being considered and whether or not additional information is requested from applicants.

Records and Reports

The Review Committee must keep the following on record:

- Minutes of all meetings, the names of those present and the proceedings.
- Adequate and correct books and records of account, including amount of assets, receipts, disbursements, gains and losses
- Record of projects selected each year and the funds allocated to each project.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

In the event of a lack of suitable applications, the funds will not be distributed and will not be rolled over to the next year.