

BSRA Input for  
Bluewater Strategic Planning  
January 2005

**Strengths and Assets:**

1) Lake

Lake Huron is an asset to the Bluewater community. It attracts tourists, encourages lakeshore development and provides a safe source of water both for residents and industry.

2) Diversity

Bluewater has a very strong rural component, lead industrially by agriculture providing business and employment opportunities, while at the same time having urban areas in villages and the lakeshore industrially anchored by tourist related industries and manufacturing and residential growth in some villages and the lakeshore.

3) Land

Bluewater is a prime agricultural area and also has a lakeshore.

**Concerns/Issues/Challenges:**

1) Economic development

An economic development plan is needed that is consistent with a vision for the future of Bluewater. It could include the following:

- Vision for future
- Analysis what is, what is desired
- Supports to key industries which probably includes Agriculture, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Accommodation Food and Beverage and construction
- Bluewater should look at increasing its support to agriculture, issues could include:
  - Define desirable development ie family farm
  - Ask industry what it needs ie Business Retention and Expansion
  - Tax policy
  - Land use policy
  - Job creation for off farm employment

## 2) Environment

During the summer months the lake is over the safe limit for swimming more than 50% of the time. The ravines draining into the lake are essentially open sewers over the safe limit almost all the time. This has a negative impact on residence health, the tourist and construction industries. This in turn limits job creation opportunities that impacts on family farm operations that rely on off farm employment. Council's response to this issue has been very limited, frequently suggesting nothing can be done or that it is someone else's responsibility.

## 3) Tax Equity

The proposed seasonal and permanent classification of lakeshore residence and reduced municipal services for seasonal owners will lead to demands for area rating for those residence who do not receive full municipal services.

4) De-amalgamation

A growing number of lakeshore and village residence see Bluewater as being dysfunctional and not working. They propose to leave Bluewater and either go back to the old municipal structure or create new ones.

5) Political Leadership

Current Bluewater leadership appears to have a vision of Bluewater that is linked with the past, is not understanding of the current reality that is Bluewater, lacks a vision of the future and attempts to maintain things the way they use to be. Majority of current counsel lack ability or are not interested in dealing with issues based on best interests of all residents. Most default to representing local areas or interest groups.

6) Administration

There are several issues with the current administrative structure:

- Does not represent the interests of all residence
- Tends to take sides on political issues and in fact intervene or influence decisions
- Manipulates information
- Uses delay as a issue resolution tactic
- Not enough opportunity for public input into decision making process
- Councilors are being expected to do there information gathering and decision making at council meeting frequently all at the same meeting. This leads to long meetings and ineffective decision-

making.

**Priorities:**

- 1) Tax Equity
- 2) Water quality
- 3) Development of a Bluewater Identity
- 4) De-amalgamation
- 5) Vision
- 6) Political leadership