

MARCH 2026

# Council Connect

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## Firearm Discharge By-law



The Township's Firearm Discharge By-law will go to Council for ratification following approval at the March Committee of the Whole meeting.

The latest draft of the by-law came forward following significant public input and consultation, and was amended by staff to address the most common concerns of residents, stakeholders, and Council.

Highlights of the approved draft include:

- Updated definition of "firearm" – The definition of firearm was amended to remove smaller class firearms such as low-velocity pellet, BB, and paintball guns from the scope of the by-law.
- Property size restriction – The originally proposed restriction prohibiting firearm discharge on a property smaller than three acres has been removed.
- Safety setbacks – The updated by-law retains safety setbacks from prohibited areas (such as educational properties, parks, and public trails); and any dwelling, building, or structure except with the consent of the owner or occupier.

The report, including the draft by-law, can be found in the March Committee of the Whole agenda or by [clicking here](#).



Township of  
**Georgian Bay**  
MUSKOKA

## Newsletter Highlights

Refresh MacTier

Septic Re-Inspection Program

Canoe For Cancer

Water Quality Monitoring

*follow us*



## Recognizing Canoe for Cancer's 25<sup>th</sup> Year

Council voted to recognize Canoe for Cancer's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a financial donation, matching funds raised by the Gloucester Pool Cottagers Association on a dollar-for-dollar basis up to a maximum of \$10,000.



The event, run by the Gloucester Pool Cottagers Association (GPCA), sees paddlers take to Gloucester Pool to complete a 13 km route from Upper Big Chute down to Port Severn Park. Funds raised are donated to the Canadian Cancer Society.

## Water Quality Monitoring Program

Kim Schiefer, Project Manager of the Water Quality Working Group, presented Council with the 2026 Water Quality Monitoring Program.

Schiefer spoke to the Township's commitment to water quality monitoring over the past 25 years, highlighting the low levels of total phosphorus and E. coli in the Township's waters. These low levels have led the Group to developing a more stringent Water Quality Objective to maintain Georgian Bay's high-quality waters, compared to provincial guidelines.

The Program also identifies hot spots that exceed the objective for total phosphorus and/or E. coli, and implements a three-tiered threshold for monitoring the waters with associated action steps.

You can see Schiefer's presentation in the [March Council Agenda](#).

## Official Plan and Zoning By-law Review

The Township's Planning Department will begin reviewing and updating the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, following endorsement of their proposed plan at March's Planning Council meeting.

Staff will bring forward each update as separate amendments, rather than a more typical approach of hiring a consultant to do one large review and update.

"The process is one that I think recognizes the nuanced nature of land-use planning, and challenges of regulating development in a coastal community like Georgian Bay, which has so many rich natural heritage resources," Director of Planning Derek Witlib said.

The review is expected to take two years, and will be guided by four inputs: Council's wish list, staff's wish list, input from community and First Nations partners, and conformity to legislation. Each amendment will go through its own public open house and meeting, and will be subject to Council's decision.

As part of the resolution that was passed, Planning Council confirmed its wish list, and authorized Planning staff to move forward with the next steps of their project plans.



## By-laws Enacted

2026-010 - Sustainable Communities Advisory Group Appointment

2026-011 - Confirming Council March 9, 2026

2026-012 - SRA Closing (210 Birch Acres Drive)

2026-013 - Deeming By-law (210 Birch Acres Drive)

2026-014 - SRA Closing (210 Birch Acres Drive)

2026-015 - Confirming Planning Council March 10, 2026

## Upcoming Meetings

**Sustainable Communities Advisory Group**

Monday, March 23 at 10:00 a.m.

**Council**

Monday, April 13 at 9:00 a.m.

**Planning Council**

Tuesday, April 14 at 9:00 a.m.

**Committee of the Whole**

Tuesday, April 14 following Planning Council

**Committee of Adjustment**

Friday, April 17 at 10:00 a.m.

## Refresh MacTier

Vanja Vukic-Doucet, Senior Consultant from Quarry Consulting, presented Council with the Refresh MacTier Plan Proposal, providing an overview of the scope of the plan as updated following community, Council, and stakeholder engagement.

Integral to the rescoping of the project is the inclusion of decisions regarding the MacTier Memorial Arena. The Arena is seen as the “heart of the community,” Vukic-Doucet said, however, as identified by the Township’s recent Facility Condition Assessment, it is a costly asset requiring substantial investment to maintain going forward.

As the Refresh MacTier consultation project winds down, Quarry Consulting outlined recommended next steps, including the creation of a steering committee with representatives from the Township, the community, youth, seasonal residents, and Moose Deer Point First Nation.

Council passed a motion to accept the report and to consider implementing the recommendations contained within it.

## Septic Re-Inspection Program

Deputy Chief Building Official, Cody Avery, presented a report to Council regarding modernization of the Township’s septic re-inspection program.

Council endorsed the development of a more robust program, and directed staff to temporarily pause discretionary septic re-inspections during the 2026 season due to staffing constraints in order to undertake a comprehensive program review.

You can read the report, included in the March Council Agenda, by [clicking here](#).

