

Georgian Bay VOTES

COUNCIL 101

Municipal Information Guide For
The 2026 Election



Township of Georgian Bay
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We acknowledge that we are on the traditional ancestral territory of the Anishinaabeg, specifically the Ojibwa, Chippewa, and Algonkian Peoples. This territory is covered by the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850 and the Williams Treaty of 1923.

As settlers, we are grateful for the opportunity to meet here, and we thank all generations of people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years. Long before today, there have been Indigenous Peoples who have been the stewards of these lands and waters.

We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic and present connection to this place. We also recognize the contributions First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous Peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community in particular, and our province and country as a whole.

We also recognize the Indigenous communities that neighbour the Township – The Wahta Mohawks, Moose Deer Point First Nation, and the Beausoleil First Nation. As settlers, we commit to make the promise and challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in these communities.

Overview

The 2026 municipal election is just around the corner! This guide will give residents and visitors a brief overview of how municipal governments function, the structure of the Township of Georgian Bay, and provide information for anyone interested in running for office in the upcoming election.

In this guide you will find information pertaining to:

- The Township of Georgian Bay
- Municipal governance and authority
- Roles of the Mayor, Council, and staff
- Details on the 2026 municipal election and important dates
- Requirements to run for Council and the nomination process
- Voter eligibility and voting method

What is Municipal Government?

Municipalities in Ontario are incorporated geographic areas such as towns, townships, cities, counties, or regions that are governed by a group of elected officials called a council. Municipalities are responsible for many of the services people interact with every day, including the water you drink and wash in, the roads and trails you walk and drive on, what you can build and where, and so much more.

Municipal governments operate under the authority of provincial legislation, most notably the Municipal Act. The Municipal Act provides a legal framework for local governments and outlines their powers and responsibilities.

Within the political structure of Canada, municipalities are the closest level of government to the people. Residents of a municipality have several ways to participate in local governance – by electing their mayor and councillors, attending and speaking at public meetings, or sitting on advisory committees.

The Township of Georgian Bay was founded in 1971 with the amalgamation of the Townships of Baxter, Freeman, and Gibson, as part of the formation of the District of Muskoka. The Township encompasses the communities of Port Severn, Honey Harbour, and MacTier.

The Township hugs the south-eastern shore of Georgian Bay and features more than 100 inland lakes and hundreds of islands. The natural beauty of the landscape draws people to the Township of Georgian Bay to visit, cottage, and live full-time.

The Wahta Mohawks, Moose Deer Point First Nation, and Beausoleil First Nation neighbour the geographic boundaries of the Township and the Indigenous Peoples of these communities and beyond have played, and continue to play, an enormous role in the rich history and culture of the region.

Fun Facts about the Township of Georgian Bay

164 lakes

2,932.4 km of shoreline

619 islands

3,500 full-time residents

17,500 seasonal residents

Two-Tier Municipal Structure

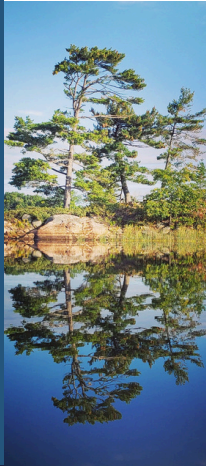
The Township of Georgian Bay is a lower-tier municipality within the District of Muskoka, an upper-tier municipality. In a two-tier municipal system, responsibilities are split between the upper and lower tiers. Typically, lower-tier municipalities provide services specific to the unique needs and characteristics of their communities, such as local roads, fire services, libraries, recreation programming, and land-use planning.

Upper-tier municipalities provide a broader scope of services, such as maintaining larger roads, water and wastewater systems, health and social services, and waste management.

Upper-tier municipal councils are typically comprised of members from its lower-tier municipalities.

Some Responsibilities of the District:

- Waste management
- Public utilities (water, sewer)
- Health and social services
- Community transit (Highway 11)
- Airport
- Social housing
- Children and senior services



Some Responsibilities of the Township:

- Parking on Township roads
- Culture, parks, and recreation
- Drainage and flood control (except storm sewers)
- Animal control
- Economic development
- Environmental sustainability
- Building and planning
- Lottery and marriage licences
- Fire protection services
- Municipal law enforcement

District of Muskoka Council

The District of Muskoka's Council is comprised of 23 members including a council-appointed Chair, the mayors of its six member municipalities, and 16 councillors elected by their residents. The Township of Georgian Bay is represented at District Council by the Mayor and two District Councillors.

The District Municipality of Muskoka Council generally meets on the third Monday of every month. The District also has several committee meetings that typically occur during the same week as its Council.

You can find the complete meeting schedule, agendas, minutes, and more on the [District's website](#).

District of Muskoka Member Municipalities



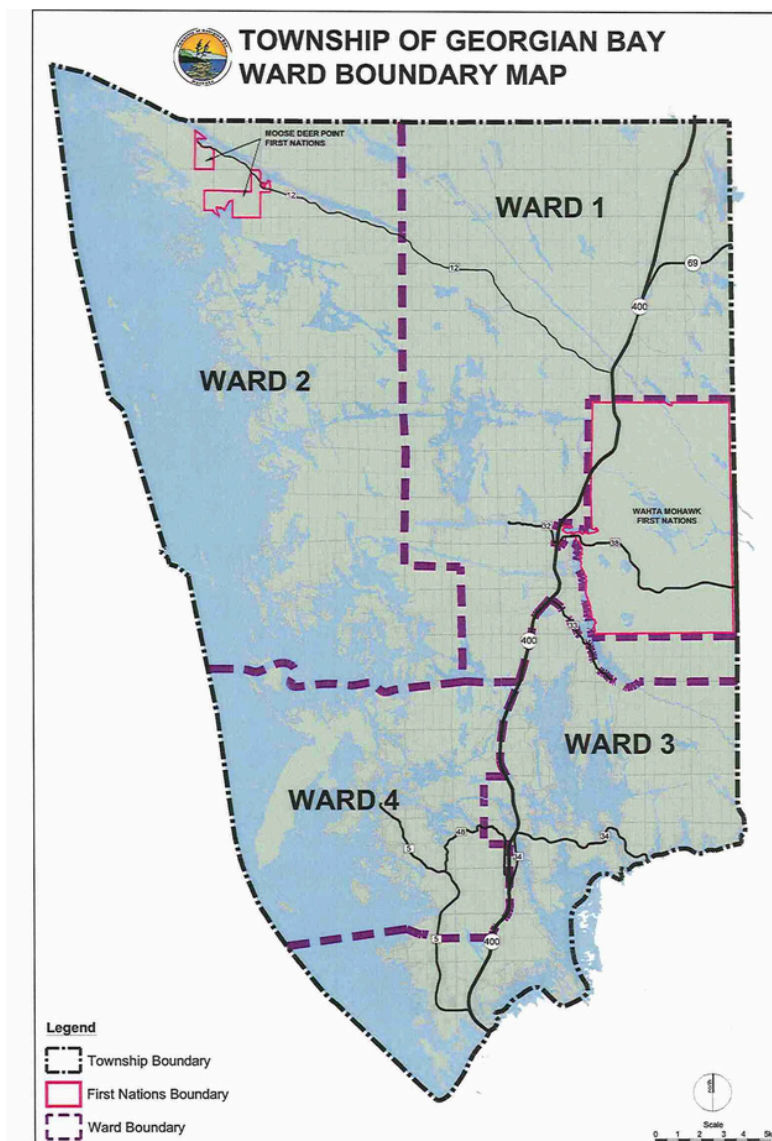
The lower-tier municipalities within the District of Muskoka are Town of Bracebridge, Township of Georgian Bay, Town of Gravenhurst, Town of Huntsville, Township of Lake of Bays, and Township of Muskoka Lakes.

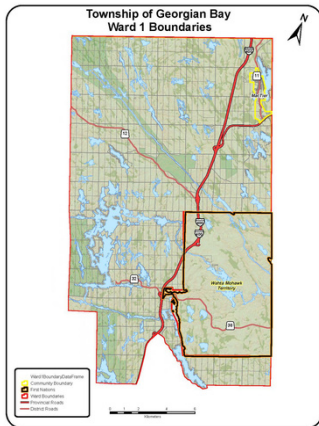
Township of Georgian Bay Council

The Township of Georgian Bay Council meets monthly from February through December (Special Council meetings may be called at any point to address time-sensitive matters). The Council is comprised of seven elected members representing its four electoral wards: the Mayor, who is elected at large; District Councillor Wards 1 and 3; District Councillor Wards 2 and 4; Ward 1 Councillor; Ward 2 Councillor; Ward 3 Councillor; and Ward 4 Councillor.

Ward Boundaries

The Township is divided into four wards, as shown in the map below. The wards are detailed in [By-law 2013-057](#), and ward maps can be found on the Township website at www.gbtownship.ca/election.

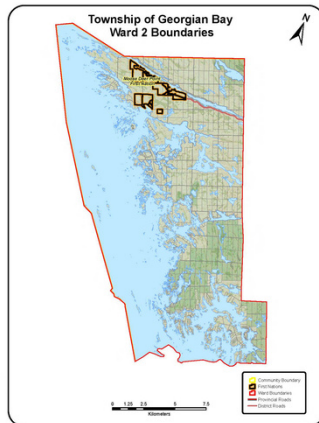




Ward 1

The north-eastern portion of the Township, including:

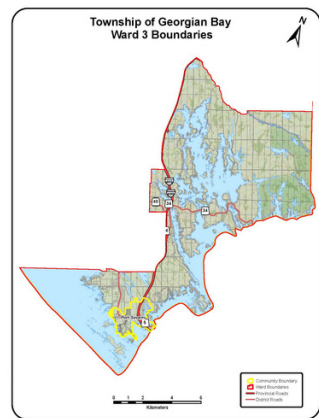
- Go Home Lake
- Gibson Lake
- Musquash River
- Minors Bay
- MacTier



Ward 2

The north-western portion of the Township, including:

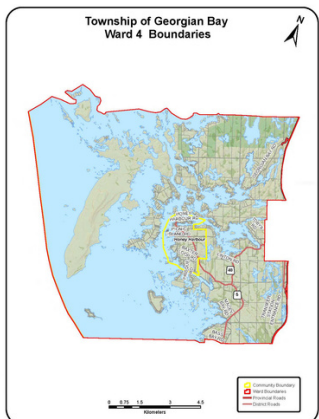
- Go Home River
- Go Home Bay
- Lower Musquash River
- Twelve Mile Bay
- Cognashene



Ward 3

The south-eastern portion of the Township, including:

- Port Severn
- Six Mile Lake
- Gloucester Pool
- Little Go Home Bay
- Little Lake



Ward 4

The south-western portion of the Township, including:

- Honey Harbour
- Georgian Bay
- North Bay
- South Bay
- Macey Bay

Role of Mayor and Council

Role of the Mayor

The Mayor is the Head of Council, and is elected at large by residents of the Township of Georgian Bay. The role of the Mayor, or any head of council in a municipality, is laid out in [Section 225 of the Municipal Act](#). The Mayor is responsible for the following:

- Acts as Chief Executive Officer of the Township
- Presides over Council meetings
- Provides leadership to Council
- Represents the municipality at official functions
- Sits on District Council

Role of Council

The Township Council is elected to represent constituents and advocate for their best interests. Council, as a whole, is charged with roles and responsibilities in [Section 224 of the Municipal Act](#).

Some of these, and other specific roles and responsibilities include:

- Developing policies and programs
- Determining which services the Township provides
- Making decisions on spending and budgetary matters
- Approving or denying planning and other applications

Strong Mayor Powers

The Provincial Government introduced strong mayor powers and duties in 2022 to assist in reaching its goal of building 1.5 million homes by 2031. By late 2025, a total of 215 municipalities, including the Township of Georgian Bay, had been given the designation, with a mandate to use the powers to advance the Provincial priorities like housing, transit, and infrastructure – as laid out in [Ontario Regulation 580/22](#).

Heads of council in strong mayor municipalities are prescribed additional powers and duties by [Part VI.1 of the Municipal Act](#). These include the creation and vetoing of by-laws; appointments and dismissals of certain senior staff positions; appointment of committee chairs; and presenting the Mayor's Budget.

All strong mayor powers decisions must be made in writing and be available to the public. The Township's strong mayor decisions can be found in the [Council Portal](#).

Procedure of Council Meetings

The Procedure By-law governs the proceedings of all Council and Committee meetings in the Township. The By-law outlines the roles and responsibilities of Council and staff; when meetings take place and how they are conducted; the preparation and distribution of agendas, minutes, and by-laws; and general procedure and decorum.

Meetings of Council are generally held on the second Monday of each month at 9:00 a.m., Planning Council on the second Tuesday at 9:00 a.m., and Committee of the Whole following Planning Council. The meeting calendar is proposed by the Clerk and approved by Council annually.

Council, Planning Council, and Committee of the Whole agendas are published two Fridays before the meeting date. Other Committee agendas are published seven days before the meeting date. The preparation and distribution of all agendas is the responsibility of the Clerk or their designate.

Most Council and Committee meetings are hybrid in nature, and are held in-person in the Council Chambers at the Township Office in Port Severn, and virtually via Zoom. Meetings are livestreamed on the Township's Council Portal and on YouTube, and video recordings can be watched after the meeting in the same places.

With the exception of closed sessions, all meetings are open to the public, and residents are welcome, and encouraged, to attend in person or virtually. People who wish to speak to Council or a Committee regarding an item on the meeting agenda can do so during Open Forum. The public can also request to make a delegation to Council on a particular matter, which is a formal presentation listed on the public agenda.

Committees of Council

The Township has several committees that meet regularly on a range of topics. Committees report and make recommendations to Council, Planning Council, or Committee of the Whole on matters within the scope of responsibilities of the committee. Committee members are generally appointed for the four-year term of Council.

Some committees pay members an honorarium and others are volunteer positions. Honorariums are listed in the table on page 13.

A call for applications to sit on committees will go out in the Fall of 2026 for the next term of Council. During this time, those interested in joining a committee may submit an application with the Clerk. Additional applicants may be sought throughout the term to fill vacancies, or for newly formed committees.

The current committees at the Township of Georgian Bay are:

Committee of Adjustment

The Committee of Adjustment is a quasi-judicial body, operating independently from Council. The Committee is prescribed several duties under the Planning Act, including making decisions on consent applications and minor variances.

The Committee of Adjustment is composed of four citizen members and three members of Council. Councillors are appointed annually to the Committee, which meets monthly in the same week as Council.

The citizen members of the Committee of Adjustment also serve on the Property Standards Appeal Committee, which meets as required.

Property Standards Appeal Committee

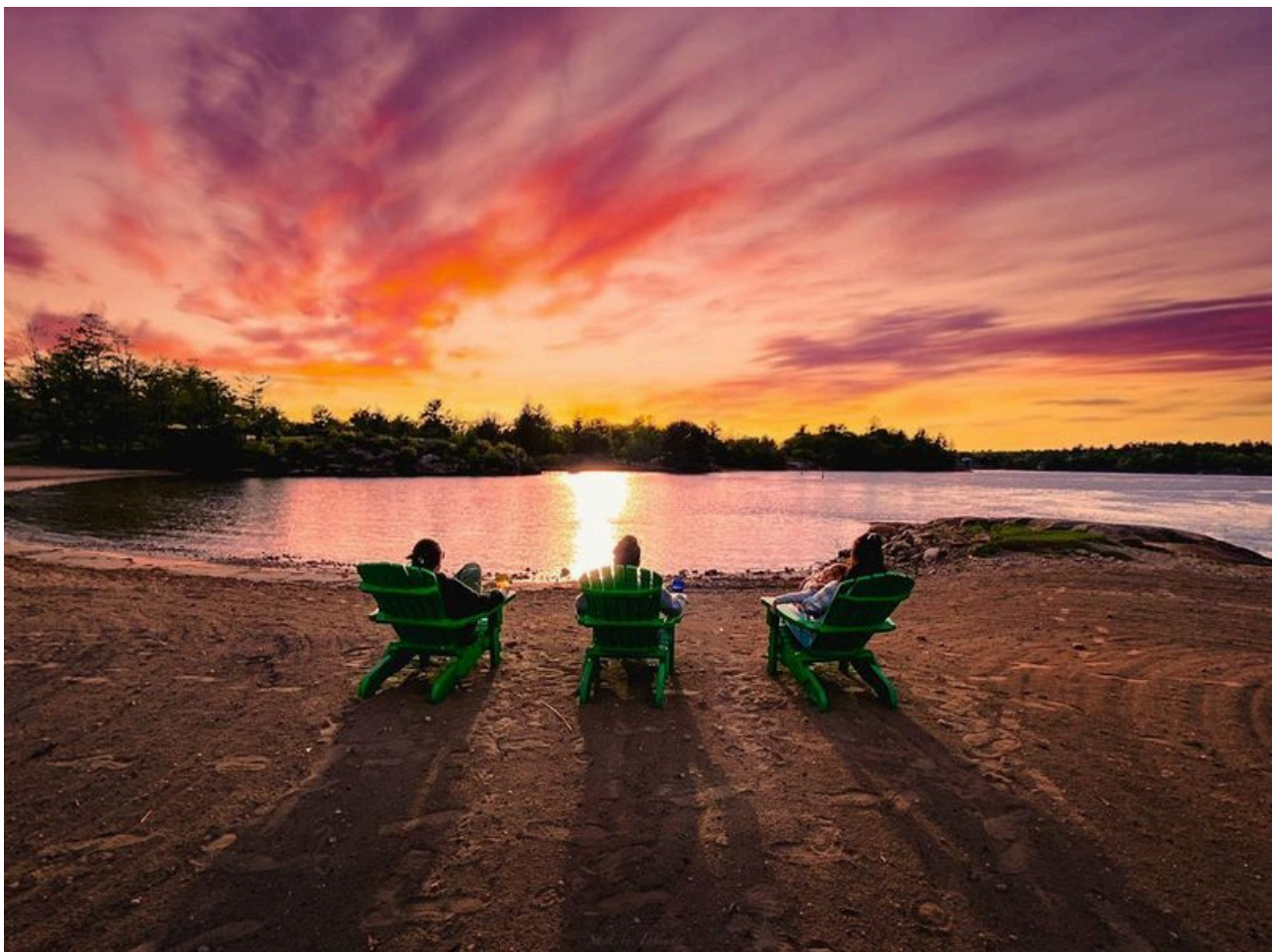
The Property Standards Appeal Committee meets as needed to hear appeals to orders served by the Township under the Ontario Building Code Act for violations of the Property Standards By-law. The committee has the power to confirm, quash, or amend the orders.

Refresh MacTier Advisory Committee (RMAC)

The newly formed Refresh MacTier Advisory Committee (RMAC) will help lead in the planning, evaluation, and implementation of Refresh MacTier initiatives. Its mandate is to review, investigate, and make recommendations to Council on priority projects in the community of MacTier.

Sustainable Communities Advisory Group (SCAG)

The Sustainable Communities Advisory Group meets every other month, opposite the MAAC, to discuss matters of sustainability in all areas of the Township. The role of the Committee is to advise Council and Committee of the Whole on matters of sustainability as it relates to the environment, economy, heritage, culture, and communities within the Township of Georgian Bay.



Council and Committee Remuneration

Rates of pay for members of Council and committees are set out in the Township's Council and Committee Remuneration By-law (2025-092). The tables below outline the set remuneration.

Council					
Position	Honorarium	Meeting Allowance	Health Spending Account	IT Stipend (once per tem)	IT Stipend (annual)
Mayor	\$54,641.49	\$10,000 per year	\$4,000 per year	\$0	\$600
District Councillor	\$26,021.11	\$6,500 per year	\$4,000 per year	\$0	\$600
Councillor	\$26,021.11	\$6,500 per year	\$4,000 per year	\$1,692 per term	\$600

Committee of Adjustment (paid twice annually)		Property Standards Appeal Committee (paid twice annually)	
Position	Meeting Honorarium	Position	Meeting Honorarium
Citizen Chair	\$300 per meeting	Citizen Member	\$100 per meeting
Citizen Member	\$200 per meeting		

Municipal Services

Role of Staff

Municipal staff are tasked with implementing the decisions of Council. They are responsible for the operational needs of the municipality, with various departments holding distinct roles in the administration.

While administrative structures may vary in different municipalities, some offices are statutory positions, with prescribed obligations under provincial legislation. These positions include the Clerk, Treasurer, Chief Building Official, and Fire Chief.

Staff at the Township of Georgian Bay are led by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), who both acts as liaison between staff and Council, and as Council's principal advisor. All employees report to the CAO through the corporate structure. The Township's departments are briefly summarized below.

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) serves as the Township's top administrative official, providing leadership across all departments and ensuring the effective implementation of Council's decisions. The CAO is the only employee hired by Council and is tasked with translating Council's policy direction into operational reality - guiding municipal services to align with community priorities and legislative requirements. The CAO oversees day-to-day operations, manages interdepartmental coordination, and fosters a culture of accountability, innovation, and service excellence.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Department, led by the Township Clerk, provides administrative support to Council and committees, maintains records, manages the cemetery, administers liquor and lottery licensing, responds to Freedom of Information requests, sells shore road allowances, issues marriage licences, and conducts civil marriage solemnizations. The Clerk of a municipality is a statutory position, which has prescribed responsibilities per the Municipal Act, including the management of municipal elections.

Financial Services

The Financial Services Department, under the direction of the Director of Financial Services/Treasurer, is accountable for the overall financial management and integrity of the Township. Core responsibilities include the administration of property taxation, capital asset management and financial reporting, and the development and coordination of the annual budget. The Department also provides leadership and oversight for the Township's Information Technology (IT) services, ensuring efficient and secure digital operations in support of municipal objectives.

Operations

The Operations Department manages core municipal services including roads, parks, facilities, and the Township fleet, ensuring safe, accessible, and well-maintained infrastructure. Operations staff are responsible for maintenance, drainage, and traffic safety on municipal roads; maintenance of outdoor spaces such as parks, playgrounds, and boat ramps; facility maintenance, rentals, and programs; and management of municipal vehicles and equipment.

Fire and Emergency Services

The Fire and Emergency Services Department encompasses the Georgian Bay Fire Department and the Township's Municipal Law Enforcement Officers. The Department responds to fire and medical emergencies; enforces by-laws such as short-term rentals, parking, property standards, and animal control; and provides education to the public on fire safety and by-law requirements.

Planning

The Planning Department is responsible for present and future land-use planning in the Township, including the development, review, and implementation of land-use policies and by-laws such as the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. Township Planners review and process land development applications and present applications to Council and Committee of Adjustment with their professional recommendations on how to proceed.

Building

The Building Department is led by the Chief Building Official, and is responsible for ensuring that all construction within the Township meets the minimum health, safety, structural, and environmental standards set out in the Ontario Building Code, the Building Code Act, and applicable municipal by-laws. The Department is also responsible for the creation and implementation of the septic re-inspection program, the regulations at the municipal level for Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations (VORR), and oversight of the Water Quality Monitoring Program.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department is responsible for managing all aspects of staffing and employee support. Key functions include talent acquisition, onboarding and orientation, compensation and benefits, payroll and pension administration, labour relations, training and development, employee engagement, and health and safety.

Sustainability

The Sustainability Department oversees all environmental sustainability efforts in the Township. The Department is also responsible for communication, economic development, Indigenous consultation and engagement, and leads Township events such as the Honey Bee Festival.



Georgian Bay Public Library

The Township of Georgian Bay Public Library operates three branches – one in each community of Port Severn, Honey Harbour, and MacTier.

The libraries serve their communities by offering books, programs, and services for people of all ages. The libraries also offer select municipal services, such as the selling of dog licences, burn permits, and parking passes.

For more information on the Township of Georgian Bay Public Library, visit its website at www.gbpl.ca.



Library Board

The Township of Georgian Bay Public Library Board operates as a separate legal entity and is the employer of several staff, including a Chief Executive Officer, who run the day-to-day operations at the three library branches. As per the Public Libraries Act, the board has the legal duty to provide “a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community’s unique needs”.

The Library Board gives staff direction on library services and budget. The Board is comprised of six members, including a Chair and Vice Chair, who are appointed the same way as committee members, and serve for the same four-year term of Council. The Library Board meets once per month.

Members of library boards are appointed by Council at the beginning of each term. Although library boards operate separately from the municipality, they are accountable to Council, who approve their funding and budget annually.

The next municipal election will be held on October 26, 2026.

Georgian Bay residents will head to the polls to elect their Ward Councillor, District Councillor, Mayor, and School Board Trustee.

Municipal elections in Ontario are administered under the authority of the Municipal Elections Act. The legislation outlines when municipal elections occur, who is eligible to vote and to be a candidate, regulations regarding campaign finances and reporting, and more.

Important Dates

May 1, 2026

Nominations Begin - first day for candidates to file, and for third party advertisers to register with the Clerk.

August 21, 2026

Nomination Day - candidate nominations may be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.; last day for a candidate to file or withdraw nomination.

August 24, 2026

Clerk to examine candidate nominations and, if satisfied, certify the nomination and declare acclamations, if applicable.

August 31, 2026

Election signs can be posted.

October 14, 2026

First day of voting period.

October 23, 2026

Last day for third party advertisers to register.

October 26, 2026

Voting Day - voting closes at 8:00 p.m.

October 29, 2026

Election signs to be removed by end of day.

November 15, 2026

2026-2030 term of office commences.

November 16, 2026

Inaugural Council meeting.

November 19, 2026

Inaugural District of Muskoka Council meeting.

Candidate Information

Offices to be Elected

People interested in running for elected office can file nominations for one of the following offices:

- Mayor
- District Councillor
- Ward Councillor
- School Board Trustee

Candidate Eligibility

To be eligible to run for office in the municipal election, you must be an eligible voter in the Township of Georgian Bay, and not be legally prohibited from holding municipal office. Full eligibility criteria can be found in [Section 29 of the Municipal Elections Act](#).

Municipal Nomination Process

In order to run for office in the municipal election, you must submit nomination papers with a minimum of 25 endorsement signatures of eligible voters within the Township of Georgian Bay. The signatures must be in their original form, no digital signatures or scanned copies will be accepted.

The nomination papers can be obtained from the Corporate Services Department and, once complete, must be signed in the presence of the Clerk, or their designate. The signing occurs in person at the Township administrative office in Port Severn, and nominees are encouraged to book an appointment with the Clerk's office in advance to streamline the process.

The nomination fee of \$200 for the Mayor, and \$100 for Councillors is due at the time of filing.

A person may only be a candidate for one office. If a nominee chooses to change the office they would like to run for, they must file their new nomination and withdraw the original. The original nomination fee will be transferred to the new office. No changes are permitted after the close of nominations at 2:00 p.m. on August 21, 2026.

Acclamations

If after all candidates have been certified there is no competition for a specific office, the certified candidate will be declared elected by acclamation.

Election Campaigning and Advertising

Once a candidate has filed their nomination papers with the Clerk, they may begin their campaign. Campaigning in Township and District facilities is not permitted.

Charging of campaign expenses and receiving of donations cannot occur prior to the filing of a candidate's nomination papers, or registration of a third party advertiser.

Expenses

The Municipal Elections Act details the requirements and regulations surrounding campaign finances. All registered and potential candidates should become familiar with these provisions. Campaign expenses are costs incurred by the candidate or on the candidate's behalf during their campaign.

The maximum contributions allowed are calculated by the Clerk, with an initial notice published by May 1st, and a final calculation published by October 1st.

Highlights of campaign expense legislation include:

- Goods and services donated to the campaign are reportable expenses.
- Only nominated persons can incur expenses during their campaign period.
- Payment of expenses must be made from a campaign account and a report providing the details and proof of payment must be obtained.
- All expenses must be reported on the financial statement form to be filed by the candidate with the Corporate Services Department.
- Candidates are responsible for ensuring they do not exceed financial maximums in collecting donations and expenses.

Signage

The Township's Election Sign By-law (2025-021) outlines rules surrounding campaign signage. Restrictions include:

- No signage on municipal property or road allowances adjacent to those properties, including parks, or sight triangles.
- No signage placed within 100 metres of a voting place.
- Signs shall not be attached to trees, have flashing lights or rotating parts, be illuminated, or simulate any traffic control device.

All candidates and third party advertisers are required to remove their signs within 72 hours following Voting Day. Sign removal must occur as soon as possible so as not to interfere with regular road operations and to eliminate the potential negative impact on the environment. Any signs removed by staff for violation of regulations are subject to a charge of \$100 per sign, per the Fees and Charges By-law (2025-083).

All election signs must adhere to the below size and setback requirements.

Max. Election Sign Face Area	Less than or equal to 1.3 square metres	Greater than 1.3 square metres to less than 2.8 square metres	Greater than 2.8 square metres
Min. Setback from Street Line on Private Property	1 metre	3 metres	Not permitted
Max. Height of Election Sign from Grade	3.7 metres	3.7 metres	
Min. Setback from Public Property not Including Highways, a Voting Place, or Public or Catholic School Lot Line	50 metres	Not permitted	
Min. Setback from Any Other Lot Line	0.6 metres	0.6 metres	

Third Party Advertisers (TPA)


A third party advertiser is any individual, corporation, or trade union that promotes, supports, or opposes a registered candidate. A third party advertiser is required to identify themselves and provide mandatory information on all advertising throughout the campaign.


A third party advertisement is a message in any medium (billboard, newspaper, radio, electronic ad, etc.) that supports or opposes a candidate. Advertising that does not cost money to post or broadcast, such as comments made on social media, will not be considered to be third party advertising.

Like candidates, TPAs must register with the Clerk during the prescribed registration period. TPAs must also register in each municipality they wish to advertise in, if there is more than one. There is no registration fee for third party advertisers.

Third party advertisers are required to adhere to legislated spending limits and are required to submit financial statements to the Clerk at the conclusion of the campaign.

**A TPA IS:
A PAID ADVERTISEMENT IN ANY
MEDIUM SUPPORTING OR
OPPOSING A CANDIDATE.**

- 
- Newspaper advertisement
 - Promoted social media post
 - Signage

- 
- Letter to the editor
 - Regular social media post
 - Signs for a cause

**A TPA IS NOT:
EXPRESSING AN OPINION, OR
PAID ADVERTISING IN SUPPORT
OF A SPECIFIC CAUSE.**

School Board Trustees

School boards are formed by a group of elected officials, called trustees, and function similarly to a council. The boards' responsibilities include setting expectations and standards for student achievement within their school district, allocating the resources to support these achievements, managing funds as provided by the Province, and supporting the mission of the Minister of Education for all students across Ontario.

Nominations for school board trustees are filed with the board's lead municipality, which is determined based on the highest student population for each trustee position. Historically, the Township of Georgian Bay has not been a lead municipality. Trustee candidates from a municipality farther than 100 km from the lead municipality may file locally with the Clerk.

The Township is serviced by the following five school boards, nominations for which are filed at their respective lead municipality. The lead municipality will be announced in April, and information for filing nominations will be available on the [Township's Election website](#). Meeting schedules and remuneration are set by each board.

School Boards Servicing Georgian Bay	
English Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trillium Lakelands District School Board• Near North District School Board
English Separate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
French Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conseil scolaire du public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario
French Separate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir

In addition to the requirements for running for municipal office, school board trustee candidates must also meet the following:

- Be a resident in the area of jurisdiction of the board.
- Be eligible to be an elector for the school board in which the person is a candidate.
- Be a supporter, or the spouse of a supporter, of the board.
- For Catholic boards, be a Roman Catholic.
- For French boards, be a French-language rights holder per the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Residents, landowners, and tenants in the Township of Georgian Bay are entitled, and encouraged, to vote in the 2026 municipal election.

Each voter is able to vote for four offices:

- Mayor
- District Councillor
- Ward Councillor
- School Board Trustee

People are eligible to vote if on election day they are:

- A Canadian citizen
- At least 18 years old
- Residing in the local municipality, or an owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such a person
- Not otherwise prohibited from voting

Individuals are ineligible to vote if they are:

- Serving a sentence or imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution
- A corporation
- Convicted of a corrupt practice for an election held within four years of voting day
- An estate or a person appointed as Power of Attorney for an eligible voter
- Otherwise prohibited by law

Elections Ontario Voter Registration

Residents can use Elections Ontario's website to check or update their information for provincial and municipal elections.

Voter registration website:

EN: www.registertovoteon.ca

FR: www.inscriptionvoteon.ca

School Support Designation

Voters' school support designation dictates which school board their tax dollars will fund, and which board trustees they will vote for in the election.

The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) manages which school board is attached to each property.

You can check and update your school support designation using MPAC's [AboutMyProperty](#) tool.

Voting Process

The Township of Georgian Bay utilizes telephone and internet voting for its municipal and school board elections, allowing voters to cast their ballot anywhere, anytime during the voting period.

Eligible electors can use their computers, tablets, or smart phones to access the voting website, or can call in their vote. Voters will receive a personalized Voter Information Letter (VIL) directing them to a designated website or telephone number.

Letter from Dr. Greg Mariotti Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)



We're excited that you are considering a run for municipal office in the upcoming election! This guide should serve as an overview of the requirements to run in the 2026 municipal and school board elections, and help get you started with filing your nomination and beginning your campaign.

The Township of Georgian Bay is a unique municipality whose diverse landscapes and attractions entice people to live, cottage, and visit year-round. As an organization, the Township prides itself on maintaining an exceptional working environment that is inclusive, positive, and productive. We believe our residents are best served when staff and Council work together towards our common goals.

Serving on Council is an incredibly rewarding opportunity, and one of the most direct ways to help shape our community; from guiding long-term planning and environmental priorities, to budgeting for services and infrastructure, the decisions made by Council today will affect the community for years to come.

If you're still wondering if sitting on Council is for you, I encourage you to attend a meeting (in person or virtually) to get a sense of the process and pace of Council meetings, as well as the types of decisions being made.

There is so much to learn about municipal governance, far too much to cover in a short guide. I've included a couple of my favourite relevant books for your consideration, and a list of reference materials can be found at the end of this guide. We welcome and encourage you to reach out to our Corporate Services team with any questions you may have.

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to an exciting election season.

ON MY BOOK SHELF:

Welcome to the Hall

James Ridge

Handbook for Municipal Councillors

George Rust-D'Eye



Reference Materials

The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) - www.amcto.com

Association of Municipalities of Ontario - www.amo.on.ca

Committee Terms of Reference Policy - www.georgianbay.civicweb.net/document/227755

Council Portal - www.georgianbay.civicweb.net/portal

Council and Committee Remuneration By-law 2025-092 - www.georgianbay.civicweb.net/document/240648

The District Municipality of Muskoka - www.muskoka.on.ca

Election Signs By-law 2025-021 - www.georgianbay.civicweb.net/document/233909

Elections Ontario - www.elections.on.ca

Fees and Charges By-law 2025-083 - www.georgianbay.civicweb.net/document/240595

Township of Georgian Bay Public Library - www.gbpl.ca

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing municipal election webpage - www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-elections

Municipal Act - www.ontario.ca/laws

Municipal Elections Act - www.ontario.ca/laws

Municipal Property Assessment Corporation AboutMyProperty - www.aboutmyproperty.ca

O. Reg. 580/22: Provincial Priorities - www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r22580

Procedure By-law - <https://www.gbtownship.ca/media/hsedzacl/2023-117-procedure-by-law-office-consolidation.pdf>