

MAY 2026

Council Connect

Council Planning Council Committee of the Whole

2026 Municipal Grants

Council approved the distribution of the 2026 Municipal Grants, authorizing disbursement of a total of \$10,000 between 14 approved applicants, per the Municipal Grant Policy.

The Township is pleased to be supporting various community programs and events this year, including trail revitalization, summer camp, Santa Claus parades, pickleball programming, and more.

You can read the report, including the approved grants for 2026, in the [May Council Agenda](#).

Honey Bee Festival Returns for 2026

The Honey Bee Festival will return to the Port of Honey Harbour on Saturday October 3, 2026.



New this year, a kick-off gala in support of the festival and the Georgian Bay Biosphere will take place on June 20, 2026.

For more information you can visit the [Honey Bee Festival's website](#).

MacTier Town Hall

Township staff will be organizing an in-person town hall in MacTier to discuss the future of the arena and the community of MacTier.

The direction to organize the event came from a resolution out of the MacTier Arena Advisory Committee, which was amended by Council to broaden the scope of discussion, and to authorize up-to \$7,000 to be funded from the working fund reserve to hire a consultant to facilitate the town hall.



Township of
Georgian Bay
MUSKOKA

Newsletter Highlights

VORR Policy

Waste Management

Six Mile Lake Gross Floor
Area Definition

Better Regional
Governance Act

follow us



Code of Conduct and Integrity Commissioner

At Committee of the Whole, Council discussed the Township's Code of Conduct and Integrity Commissioner process. The Code outlines standards of behaviour and the ethical obligations of all members of Council and committees, both during and outside of meetings. All municipalities are required, per the Municipal Act, to have a Code of Conduct and an appointed Integrity Commissioner to review, investigate, and provide conclusions on complaints against members of Council.

The discussion followed a report to Council in April which provided a summary of the history of Integrity Commissioner reports, including costs.

Councillor Allan Hazelton brought a motion forward seeking a revision to the Code which would change the process for staff-filed Integrity Commissioner complaints, including mandatory mediation. The motion stemmed from several members of Council expressing concerns with the cost of Integrity Commissioner investigations as well as the stress and public scrutiny faced by Councillors under investigation. Both Council and staff generally agreed that mediation should be encouraged but there was debate regarding whether or not it should, or could, be mandated.

Chief Administrative Officer Greg Mariotti highlighted that the proposed changes would have to be checked for legality, noting that there are various issues under the provincial legislation. CAO Mariotti also noted the Province has committed to putting a standardized Code of Conduct into place which may override anything passed by Council.

Clerk Karen Way emphasized that municipalities must follow the rules and regulations of the Province, and that the Township's current Code does include the option for mediation. She noted that neither staff nor members of Council can be forced into mediation, and that even if everyone agrees to attend mediation, it isn't effective unless both parties are willing to be accountable and actively participate. Way also reminded Council that staff are not the only people able to file complaints with the Integrity Commissioner, and that the complainant doesn't necessarily have to be the person affected by the behaviour being complained about.

Councillor Peter Cooper suggested that Integrity Commissioner Guy Giorno may take a different approach to processing complaints that centers around mediation. The original motion was referred to staff, who agreed to contact Mr. Giorno regarding him sharing his process with the Township.

Waste Management



Chief Administrative Officer Greg Mariotti presented Council with a report exploring options for Township-provided reprieve to residents impacted by the closure of the District of Muskoka's unsupervised bin sites.

In the report, requested by Council at a special meeting held in March, CAO Mariotti laid out several options, along with the financial and tax base impact of each.

You can read through the report in the [May Council Agenda](#).

VORR Policy

Council voted to adopt an update to the Township Vessel Operation Restriction Regulation (VORR) policy.

The VORR program falls under the umbrella of Transport Canada, and mandates speed restrictions through specific waterways. Applications for VORRs are submitted by the municipality. The Township's updated policy is aimed at providing a clearer outline for processing VORR applications, aligning with Transport Canada's most recent update to their Local Authorities Guide.



Six Mile Lake Gross Floor Area Definition

The Township-led Zoning By-law Amendment to add a new definition of Gross Floor Area (GFA) for dwellings in the Six Mile Lake Inland Waterfront Community was approved at Planning Council's May meeting.

The amendment was brought forward to re-establish the GFA definition for the community as it existed when the maximum GFA limits were set. The definition excludes certain areas, such as detached garages and unfinished basements, from the GFA calculation.

For more information on the Six Mile Lake Gross Floor Area project, read the report in the [May Planning Council agenda](#), or visit the [Planning Department's Z26-01 GFA Definition folder](#) in the Township's Document Center.

Proposed Ice Cream Parlour Approved

Planning Council unanimously passed a Zoning By-law Amendment to allow for a property in MacTier to move forward with plans to open an ice cream parlour on High Street.



Bill 98

Director of Planning Derek Witlib presented Council with a District of Muskoka report summarizing the Province's Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act (Bill 98), along with recommendations to Council to provide feedback to the Province on the proposed legislation.

Since the May Council meeting, Bill 98 passed its third reading in the Ontario Legislative Assembly on May 14th. It makes significant changes to land use planning, including some changes that Witlib explained could have unintended consequences for the Township. He recommended Council focus its feedback to the Province on the bill's proposed standardized Official Plan, limits to site plan control, and list of required contingent studies for complete planning applications.

Council unanimously passed the motion with staff's recommended feedback to the Province, and requested staff also distribute the motion to MPP Graydon Smith, MPP Brian Saunderson, the Georgian Bay Association, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, and other cottage associations.

Staff will be making a request for a delegation with Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Rob Flack at the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August.

By-laws Enacted

2026-027 - 2026 Final Tax Rate

2026-028 - Discharge of Firearms

2026-029 - AMPS Amendment -
Discharge of Firearms

2026-030 - Confirming Council May 4,
2026

2026-031 - SRA Closing (88 Chain of
Lakes Road)

2026-032 - ZBA (Six Mile Lake GFA
Definition)

2026-033 - ZBA (414 High Street)

2026-034 - OPA No. 28 (2416 Island
414)

2026-035 - ZBA (2416 Island 414)

2026-036 - Confirming Planning Council
May 5, 2026

Upcoming Meetings

Sustainable Communities Advisory Group

Monday, May 25 at 10:00 a.m.

MacTier Arena Advisory Committee

Wednesday, May 27 at 10:00 a.m.

Council

Monday, June 1 at 9:00 a.m.

Planning Council

Tuesday, June 2 at 9:00 a.m.

Committee of the Whole

Tuesday, June 2 at 1:00 p.m. or
immediately following Planning Council

Committee of Adjustment

Friday, June 5 at 10:00 a.m.

Better Regional Governance Act

At its May 4th meeting, Council carried a motion supporting the District of Muskoka's resolution requesting the Province exclude Muskoka from the Better Regional Governance Act (Bill 100).

On May 7th, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario voted to pass Bill 100 on its third reading. The bill later received its required Royal Assent to be passed into law. The District Municipality of Muskoka was included in the list of regions that will be affected by the new law.

According to the Province, Bill 100, which amends both the Municipal Act and the Municipal Elections Act, is aimed at increasing efficiency, streamlining decision-making, and aligning regional councils with the priorities of the Province. Some of the changes in the bill that will affect Muskoka's Council include: a new section which authorizes the minister to make regulations governing the votes of members of councils of upper-tier municipalities, and authorizing the Province to appoint or remove the chair of upper-tier municipalities, who are currently elected by their fellow members.

To read about the new legislation, visit the [Legislative Assembly of Ontario's website](#).

Upcoming Reports and Considerations

The following items are either scheduled for a future meeting or were referred to staff to bring back to Council during this month's meetings:

- A Vessel Operation Restriction Regulation (VORR) application for the area in Honey Harbour near Nautilus Marina and the Honey Harbour Boat Club was deferred pending additional information, further public consultation, and/or additional agency review.
- The Financial Services report summarizing legal fees from 2023-2026, and for Quarter 1 of 2026, will be added to the June 2, 2026 Committee of the Whole agenda for further discussion.