

# THE TINY COTTAGER

A GEORGIAN BAY PERSPECTIVE

Issue No. 67

Spring/Summer 2026

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By PAUL COWLEY, Carusoe Bay

Since Tiny's incorporation with Tay in 1851, we have been blessed to enjoy her majestic forests, farmlands, rocky promontories, pristine beaches and amazing wildlife.

Tiny has also enjoyed the benefits of being debt-free since incorporation, making it a supremely affordable township in which to reside. That is, until the current council decided without any citizen involvement or support to plunge Tiny into massive debt, driving taxes to a level that could cause many to move out of Tiny or worse, lose their homes.

Council refused to listen to the citizens who *en masse* made it abundantly clear with the presentation of an over 8,000-signature petition at Queens Park — over 2\3 of our population — that they do not need or want a new administrative building that will impose a 30-year, \$50 million debt and send property taxes soaring. In the last four years, this council has already raised taxes by a compounded rate of 35%.

In a thinly veiled attempt to gain more control over Tiny's beaches under the guise of being "environmental stewards," this council tried to introduce a highly controlling, unnecessary overreach in the Shoreline By-law, without any credible scientific evidence. As a result, this has led FoTTSA and multiple property owners to challenge the by-law at the Ontario Land Tribunal, leading once again to an unnecessary expenditure of taxpayer dollars.

It has become abundantly clear that, with the exception of Councillor Brunelle, not listening to citizens is what this council does best. In classic examples of arrogance, indifference and intentional deafness, they ignored any input from our Indigenous community even though the new administrative building is sitting on historic Indigenous land. As a result, an injunction was recently filed to halt construction. This matter is now formally underway in the federal court system.

Council's behaviour reached another egregious level with its 2025 Citizen Code of Conduct, which critics claim could be used to suppress public criticism, silence dissent, and limit democratic engagement. A superior court judge recently agreed, reprimanding the Township for banning outspoken resident Karen Zulynick from all meetings in council chambers.

As for financial management, there are too many examples of questionable decisions — at the expense of our crumbling infrastructure — to list here. Again, driving our taxes up.

In this fall's municipal election, we all have a duty to speak up and voice our opinion. As election preparations begin, inform yourself of the issues and candidates' platforms, and encourage every eligible person you know — resident and non-resident — to do the same. And get ready to vote! For voting options, see the article on page 16.

This council must be removed and replaced with one responsive to citizens' needs and wishes.

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Awenda Provincial Park's shoreline, captured by Juan Paulo Gomez, first place winner in a 2019 Friends of Awenda photo contest. Read about the park on page 8

## FoTTSA to Challenge Township Shoreline Restrictions at Tribunal

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach

New shoreline by-laws passed by Tiny Council but now under appeal threaten to impose severe restrictions on exterior site alterations that property owners may make within 45 metres of Georgian Bay's historic elevation (the 178-metre contour line) above sea level.

As these restrictions are unsupported by any scientific evidence, FoTTSA and 16 other concerned parties are challenging them at an Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) hearing in April 2027. These challenges have prevented Council from enacting the by-laws.

The restrictions take the form of a new municipal by-law and two zoning by-law amendments. According to the Township, they are intended to protect Tiny's beaches and natural heritage features, and avoid creating flooding and erosion hazards. The by-laws would achieve this by regulating site alterations, retaining walls and fences along Tiny's entire Georgian Bay shoreline.

Under these restrictions, almost any alteration within 45 metres (148 ft) of the bay's 178-metre Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) elevation above sea level would require township approval and various permits, potentially including a coastal engineering study that could cost thousands of dollars.

The 45-metre setback is three times the existing setback of 15 metres (50 ft). Many shoreline properties in Tiny are not even 45 metres deep.

### FoTTSA's primary concern

As an organization that has taken on many environmental challenges in its 36-year history,\* FoTTSA fully supports protecting Tiny's beaches. However, FoTTSA has a grave concern with the proposed 45-metre setback: the Township has no current scientific data to justify applying it to the entire Georgian Bay shoreline, especially since research cited by the Township itself estimates only a 1% annual chance of floodwaters rising above this elevation. Instead, the Township intends to put the onus on individual owners to prove whether the setback would apply to their property.

### What the 45-metre setback would mean for shoreline owners

Owners whose properties sit within this setback would require permits for making virtually any changes, such as

- building or repairing residences, boathouses, decks, patios, walkways, and steps
- landscaping
- controlling erosion
- restoring wind-blown sand to the beach.

Applying for a permit from the Township could mean commissioning extensive and costly supporting documentation. Depending on the nature of the project, this documentation could include:

- a land survey showing the property's 178-metre GSC elevation and setbacks
- a costly wave uprush/coastal engineering study
- a coastal geomorphology study
- flooding, erosion and slope stability reports
- a geotechnical/soils stability report.

Even after meeting these requirements, permits could still be denied, with limited recourse only to Tiny Council, at the whim of a director.

All this, without any current scientific data to justify applying the 45-metre setback to the entire shoreline.

If the Township succeeds in imposing these conditions, the economic consequences could be far-reaching, such as

- lower waterfront property values as potential buyers balk at the conditions
- significant compliance costs for waterfront residents considering making even minor changes to their property
- fewer contracts and jobs for local trades and businesses as waterfront owners defer making changes to their property
- additional administration and enforcement costs for the municipality, and ultimately all taxpayers, without any clear benefit.

— continued on page 3

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<p>\$1,495,000</p> <p>517 SILVER BIRCH , THUNDER BEACH</p>	<p>\$1,285,500</p> <p>15 STONEY ROAD, TINY</p>	<p>\$769,500</p> <p>87 TROUT LANE, TINY</p>	<p><b>WATERFRONT</b></p> <p>\$795,000</p> <p>739 CONC 15 , TINY</p>
<p>\$679,000</p> <p>6 BAYSIDE RD, TINY</p>	<p><b>WATERFRONT</b></p> <p>\$2,695,000</p> <p>12 WALKER RD, TINY</p>	<p>\$1,039,500</p> <p>683 LAFONTAINE RD TINY</p>	<p>\$789,500</p> <p>158 DESROCHES TR, TINY</p>
<p>\$1,095,500</p> <p>59 TROUT LANE , TINY</p>	<p>\$895,500</p> <p>2 SEGUIN RD, TINY</p>	<p>\$1,249,500</p> <p>54 VINCENT CIRCLE, TINY</p>	<p>\$1,385,000</p> <p>48 ACRES + BARN + POOL</p> <p>7190 HWY 93 , TINY</p>
<p>\$545,500</p> <p>8 MANITOU CRES, TINY</p>	<p>\$685,000</p> <p>144 TROUT LN, TINY</p>	<p>\$174,500</p> <p>LT 16 REMI RD, THUNDER BEACH</p>	<p>\$1,199,500</p> <p>5 LOTS/ VOYAGER DRIVE, TINY</p>

WHO YOU WORK WITH MATTERS

### How FoTTSA is responding

“After a succession of submissions and deputations to Council had no effect,” says FoTTSA president Paul Cowley, “we’re doing what the Township should have done at the very beginning. We are looking into commissioning an independent study of Tiny’s Georgian Bay shoreline.”

This research comes at a significant cost to FoTTSA. “We’re a volunteer-run, not-for-profit umbrella organization representing 24 beach associations, each with their own challenges and priorities,” explains Cowley. “We don’t have deep pockets, but we’re taking this on because we believe it’s the right thing to do for all shoreline owners.”

Once the research is completed, FoTTSA will take the results to the OLT hearing in April 2027. “In the absence of relevant scientific data from the Township, we will be making our case with our own independent data,” says Cowley.

### Issues to be raised at the hearing

The issues below are a sampling of 22 considerations not dealt with by proposed by-law amendments but which FoTTSA believes are essential before making amendments. The issues were compiled with assistance from Ray Duhamel of The Jones Consulting Group, which provides professional land use planning services.

7. Is a 45-metre setback from the 178-metre Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) necessary to protect the shoreline development area?

8. Is it appropriate to apply the 45-metre setback to all properties in the shoreline development area?

9. Does the Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) adequately recognize existing footprint, buildings and structures including, but not limited to, dwellings, storage buildings, bunkies, retaining walls and fences for properties subject to the ZBA?

16. Does the Official Plan Amendment and the ZBA represent good planning and are they in the public interest?



### FoTTSA Facts

Since its founding FoTTSA has intentionally taken no position on individual private property rights. Ownership of all beachfront in Tiny is a matter of public record in the provincial registry office in Barrie.

Over 70% of our members are non-waterfront property owners. Their beach associations are neighbourhood organizations, each unique in history and make-up, representing waterfront and inland properties.

“Shoreline” is in our name because FoTTSA represents associations of ratepayers in areas the Township has designated “shoreline residential.” In many beach associations, inland members are in the majority.

FoTTSA is not affiliated with any political organization or public interest group in the township.

### How you can help

Visit the township website to learn more about the proposed changes: <http://www.tinyurl.com/yc57f775>. Join other township residents who have already contributed to FoTTSA’s Community Action Fund, which will enable FoTTSA to defend owners’ rights at the OLT hearing. Send your contributions to [fottsatreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fottsatreasurer@gmail.com) or to FoTTSA, 53 Charlton Blvd., Toronto, ON M2M 1C1. Please include your

current email address and, for FoTTSA members, your beach association.

Also, help us build awareness of this important development in Tiny by sharing this article with family, friends and neighbours, and by watching for updates in our monthly e-newsletter, *FoTTSA Flash*. Not on the mailing list? Sign up today at <http://www.tinycottager.org>.

\* Among FoTTSA environmental activities are the following:

1) Biennial lake water testing for E. coli, which FoTTSA has conducted every two years since 2001 to supplement limited testing conducted by the Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit. Early results led the Township to make significant changes to prevent erosion and reduce the amount of pesticides, fertilizers and livestock fecal material entering water courses.

2) Opposing an extension to the Teedon Pit, an aggregate operation, into a recharge area above the Alliston Aquifer, which is believed to contain the world’s purest water. FoTTSA’s intervention at the Ontario Land Tribunal resulted in the OLT imposing important vital monitoring and reporting activities on the pit owner.

3) Opposing Site 41, a planned 21-hectare (50-acre) landfill site for municipal waste that also would have been sitting above the Alliston Aquifer. The project was finally abandoned after extensive community protests.

## Annual Sewage System Inspections Underway

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach

The Township of Tiny’s annual sewage system re-inspection program gets underway this season, with visits taking place in the northwest area of the Township.

Inspectors check only those systems more than 10 years old. If your system is scheduled for inspection, watch for a notification letter in the mail.

Managed on behalf of the Township by Tatham Engineering, the program takes about six years for inspectors to work their way across the township before another cycle of inspections begins. The program helps protect the quality of groundwater by identifying potential sewage problems and ensuring they are corrected.

The two-stage program begins with a visual site inspection by Tatham Engineering field staff. The second stage requires property owners to have their septic or holding tank pumped out by a licensed sewage hauler and submit by October 31, 2026 a report on the condition and size of the tank. Pumping out is not required if this was done in 2024 or 2025. However, owners must still submit a written report by October 31. Tatham Engineering follows up with all property owners who do not submit pump-out records or have not responded to deficiency notices from the previous years’ programs.

### What inspectors look for

Tatham Engineering’s field staff keep their eyes out for the following items:

- type of system(s) on the property (dimensions, number of runs, etc.) and units served
- type of tank(s), size, condition, location, and pump chamber(s)
- visible signs of sewage effluent and/or odour
- evidence of erosion on any part of the system
- surface water flow directed toward or around the system
- sewage system component setbacks and separations
- excessive plant growth in the leaching bed area

- trees, structures or driving in leaching bed or tank area
- lots with a high groundwater table.

### What Tatham Engineering found in the 2025 inspections

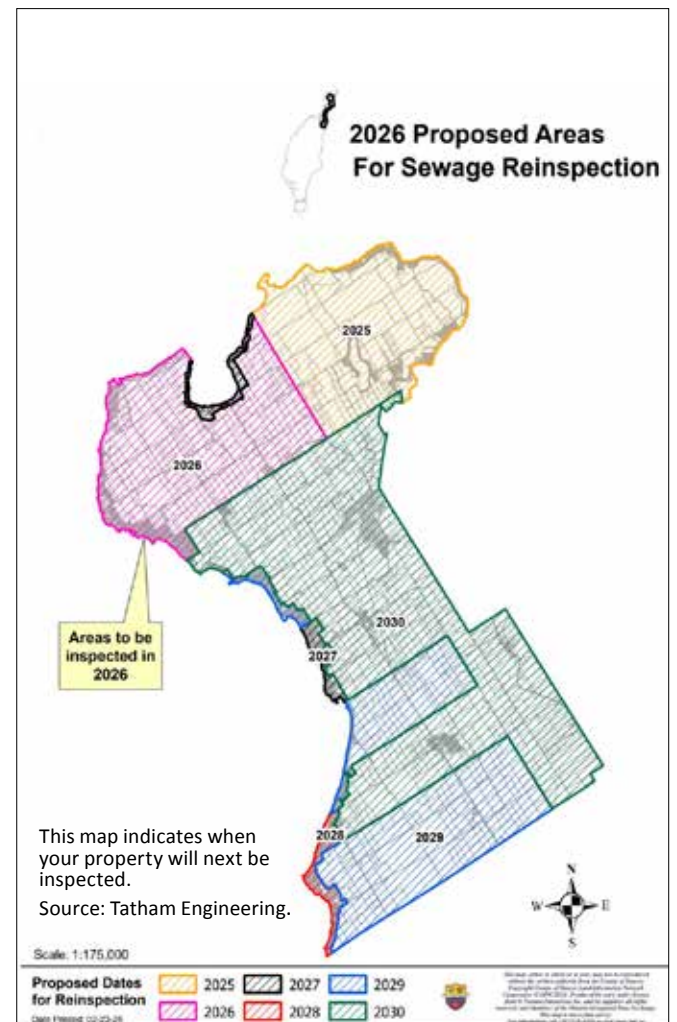
Last year, inspections took place in the northeast area of the Township, including Toanche, Farlain Lake and Champlain Rd. The last time this area was inspected was in 2019.

Tatham completed 1433 inspections and 160 lots (11%) were found to be deficient. Additional deficiencies will be identified when the outstanding septic tank reports are submitted by the property owners. Among the 160 initial deficiencies were the following:

- 45 had screws missing from their septic tank lids
- 17 had root intrusions into the leaching bed area
- 16 properties had tank lids that were broken
- 16 properties with indications of vehicles parking or driving on the septic tank or leaching bed
- 10 properties with unknown pipes leaving structures that needed confirmation of their purpose
- 7 properties with downspouts directed towards the sewage system
- 6 properties with a deck or other structures being supported by the septic tank
- 4 properties with fire pits dug into the surface of the leaching beds
- 3 properties with an outdoor sink or shower with a drain discharging onto the ground.

As well, by February this year, 535 (37%) properties had not submitted their pump out report.

Visit the township website to learn more about the sewage system re-inspection program: <https://tinyurl.com/3n2zeh68>.



Read the full report, *Sewage System Inspection Report: Status Report for 2025*, from Tatham Engineering: <http://www.tinyurl.com/y42z55wp>.



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## THE TINY COTTAGER

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The *Tiny Cottager* is published each May/June and September/October.

The Federation's members are associations of property owners in those parts of the Township of Tiny designated as "Shoreline" in the Township's Official Plan.

The *Tiny Cottager* is mailed to the permanent addresses of more than 10,600 Tiny Township property owners (including 7,200 in the shoreline areas of Tiny) and to businesses in the area. It reaches some 25,000 readers. Copyright is claimed on all original articles and on advertisement layout and design created by this publication.

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The *Tiny Cottager* acknowledges that Tiny Township is situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture, and committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation, respect and partnership with all First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

## REPORT ON COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 2025 - MARCH 2026

By **CHUCK STRADLING**, Lafontaine Area Homeowners Association

This report captures highlights of Tiny Council and Committee of the Whole (CoW) meetings from September 2025 to March 2026. Detailed meeting reports are published monthly at [www.tinycottager.org](http://www.tinycottager.org).

## MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

**Mayor:** David Evans

**Deputy Mayor:** Sean Miskimins

**Councillors:** Dave Brunelle, Kelly Peter Helowka, Steffen Walma

### SEPTEMBER 17 MEETING OF COUNCIL

**Township of Tiny Administrative Centre (TTAC) update:**

**Tim Leitch**, Director of Public Works, advised that environmental controls are in place and the construction area has been delineated. Grubbing and design are underway and the accessibility committee is reviewing plans.

**Drainage at Cawaja Beach:** Andrew Milligan raised concerns about erosion, which has created a safety issue. He has requested a drainage study be undertaken. Janet Marks, Cawaja Beach Property Owners' Association, requested a study be undertaken in the spring, showing photos of erosion and noting that tree removal on private property was affecting water absorption. Council directed staff to prepare a report on conducting a drainage study.

**High water levels in Farlain Lake:** Mary and Doug Kirk outlined historic changes in lake levels and concerns about flooding, its environmental impacts, and beach loss. They support option 4 in the staff report: instruct staff to petition for a municipal drain.

**Developing a special events strategy:** **Josh Pallas**, Director, Recreation & Special Events, advised the Township needs a formal approach to ensure the viability, strategic alignment and greater economic return of community events. The Rural Economic Development (RED) Program's Community Development Stream supports developing strategies and plans for economic development activities, offering up to 50% cost-share, to a maximum of \$50,000. Staff propose developing a special events strategy with the support of a consultant. Estimated cost: \$50,000. Staff intend to apply to the RED Program for half of the cost, with the rest funded through Tiny's Economic Development Reserve. Council approved moving forward with developing a strategy if the funding application is approved.

### SEPTEMBER 17 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (CoW) MEETING

**Climate Change Action Plan Implementation:** **Jonathan Main**, Severn Sound Environmental Association (SSEA), presented on the Climate Change Action Plan, including several reports available on the township website.

**SSEA - TC Energy pumped storage proposal:** **Deputy Mayor Miskimins** feels that insufficient answers have been provided regarding project impacts and questioned whether Council should support opposition. Councillors Brunelle and Helowka also voiced opposition. Mayor Evans feels more information is required before making a decision. To be discussed at the next CoW meeting.

**Planning and Development Report - 2025 Second Quarter Comparative Building Permit Activity:** Staff reported that in Q2 2025, 169 permits were issued worth \$10,583,800, compared to 283 permits in Q2 2024 worth \$20,892,166. If the volume of permit applications continues to be lower than forecast, funds from the Township's building reserve may be required to cover some departmental operating expenses.

**Township of Tiny snow fencing trial update:** fencing will be installed on Concession 11 East, Baseline Road South, and Concession 6 East this winter. Staff obtained consent from two residents to install snow fencing in their fields and engaged Pat Lalonde Fencing to perform the work.

**Joan Charlebois' environmental concerns related to open air sandblasting:** Council moved to receive the letter as information and refer the correspondence to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, and that Township staff investigate the compliance with applicable building code and zoning requirements.



Natural pest control PLUS help with the high cost of groceries! For more on natural pest remedies, see the article on page 8

By Lawrence Sagar

### OCTOBER 8 MEETING OF COUNCIL

**TTAC update:** **Director Leitch** updated Council on progress. Councillor Brunelle inquired whether Class C estimates referred to in the August 25, 2025 TTAC minutes are available to the public. Director Leitch confirmed estimates will be published once finalized and approved by the TTAC Committee.

### OCTOBER 8 CoW MEETING

**Considerations for a lobbyist registry:** **Councillor Walma** moved to defer this item to the November CoW meeting to give more time to review the recommendations. Councillor Brunelle suggested the current policies are sufficient and to follow staff recommendation that a registry is unnecessary. Council approved the motion to defer.

**Heritage Advisory Committee resolution - tribute to Major Brent Handy:** a committee recommendation dated September 15, 2025 recommends a tribute in honour of Major Handy of Wyevale for his accomplishments as leader of the Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds aerobatic team. Council directed staff to 1) include in 2026 budget deliberations redesigning the Wyevale town sign to include "The home of Major Brent Handy of the Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbird Aerobatic team," and 2) request the Huronia Airport Commission consider installing a plaque, with costs borne by the Township.

**Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament Working Committee resolution:** the 2026 tournament will be held at the Orr Lake Golf Club on Thursday, June 11.

**Tiny Community Engagement Project 2050:** **Mayor Evans** advised that he feels Tiny lacks strategic direction. Councillor Brunelle questioned the rationale of a 25-year vision and suggested a 10-year strategic plan. Council moved to implement a community engagement process to develop a long-term vision through to 2050 and directed staff to 1) implement it, including a survey and related outreach activities, and 2) report back to Council in March 2026 with a summary of engagement results and recommendations.

**TC Energy Storage Project:** Council resolved the following principles: 1) any project of this magnitude must meet the highest standards of environmental assessment and protection, 2) full transparency in the project approval process, 3) collaboration among municipalities, provincial authorities, and Indigenous partners to ensure that any energy project reflects regional priorities, and 4) a precautionary approach, including comprehensive independent studies and a thorough review process before any approvals or construction activities proceed.

### OCTOBER 29 COUNCIL MEETING

**TTAC update:** the site has a new access road. Pouring of the concrete pad foundation is scheduled for early December.

**TC Energy project:** **Pasquale Zita** outlined factors he believes make the TC Energy project unacceptable and requested Council oppose its implementation.

**TTAC:** **Brandon Fronson** raised concern with the sheer size of the proposed administrative building and the waste of space.

**Short term rental application fees:** the current fee structure has created a \$130,000 deficit for a program intended to be self-sustaining. Council approved a new fee of \$2,000 for new and expired applications, and \$1,750 for renewals.

### OCTOBER 29 CoW MEETING

**Zoning By-law amendment application - Robitaille Farms, 113 Concession 17 West:** Council approved re-zoning a severed lot from agricultural to rural residential.

**Development Charges Background Study and Township Development Charges By-law:** Council approved the study report and a companion by-law. The study provides background for updating charges that reflect the servicing needs of development and redevelopment.

### NOVEMBER 17 SPECIAL CoW MEETING: BUDGET

This meeting was held to receive presentations from non-profit and charitable organizations requesting funding in 2026: Georgian Bay General Hospital Foundation — \$20,000 • Southern Georgian Bay Physician Recruitment — \$10,000 • Community Reach North Simcoe — \$7,500 • Huronia Seniors' Volunteer Care Team (Wheels 4 Wheels) — \$5,000 • Severn Sound Environmental Association — \$256,514 • Huronia Airport Commission — \$35,860 • Business Association of Balm Beach (Busk 'til Dusk) — \$4,000 • Bay Shore Seniors Club — \$4,000 • MTM Conservation Association — \$7,980 • Child & Youth Advisory Centre Simcoe Muskoka — \$10,000 • The Guesthouse Shelter — \$5,000.

### NOVEMBER 19 COUNCIL MEETING

**TTAC update:** **Director Leitch** reported that the foundation is to be poured December 1. Hydro line location is being scoped out running from Concession 8.

**Noise By-law request for amendment:** The St. Amants, neighbours of Perky's Fish & Fries in Perkinsfield, made a deputiation about an ongoing issue: continuous noise generated by the trailer's exhaust fans. They requested the by-law be amended to address continuous noise from commercial or industrial establishments. Staff had previously been directed to report on the Noise By-law and were further instructed to include this in their review.

**By-law 25-062:** renames the Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament Working Committee to Township of Tiny Events and Charities Committee, and having the following terms of reference: 1) the committee shall serve as an advisory and coordinating body providing strategic guidance and recommendations to Council on charitable initiatives and community events, 2) its expanded role includes exploring and supporting new fundraising opportunities, cultivating partnerships with volunteers, residents, community groups, and businesses, and enhancing the Township's community engagement through inclusive, high-impact events, and 3) the committee will ensure transparency and accountability in all initiatives through regular reporting to Council. Council approved the by-law.

### NOVEMBER 19 CoW MEETING

**Considerations for a lobbyist registry:** Council approved that the staff report be received as information and rely on existing policies and legislation that address concerns regarding relations with third parties, including the Accountability and Transparency Policy, Code of Conduct, Procurement By-law, and *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

**Withall Dam project update:** staff have reviewed the potential for installing a small hydroelectric facility at this dam. The flow of water could support a turbine able to produce approximately 18 kW of power. However, staff believe that giv-

en the expense required to overcome obstacles the amount of energy that could be produced would not justify proceeding. Equivalent green energy could be produced by solar panels for less time and cost. Council approved receiving the report as information only.

**Formation of Tiny Pickleball Club:** A staff report identified pickleball as one of the township's fastest-growing recreational pursuits and an important driver of community connection, inclusion and active living. Based on feedback from a survey, open house and focus groups, staff have outlined three strategic options: 1) adopt the Pickleball Strategic Planning Document and establish a pickleball working group in 2026, progressing toward the creation of a Tiny Pickleball Club in 2027, 2) maintain existing programming while improving communication and scheduling, introduce a \$30 +HST registration fee to partially offset program expenditures, or 3) maintain existing programming while improving communication and scheduling, introducing a \$60 +HST registration fee to achieve a revenue-neutral program. Council approved option 1.

**Municipal access agreement for fibre-optic internet to Christian Island: Broadband North,** contracted by Beausoleil First Nation, seeks approval to place telecommunications infrastructure along Cedar Point Road and Sandy Bay Road. Council directed staff to draft a by-law providing for a municipal access agreement.

**Ombudsman review and request for administrative hold on TTAC project:** Gerd Damitz wrote to the Township advising a formal complaint has been filed with the Ontario Ombudsman regarding the project. The complaint requests an investigation into governance, fiduciary oversight and procedural compliance under the *Municipal Act, 2001*. The letter requests that Council suspend any further discretionary actions, financial commitments, or construction progress related to the project until the Ombudsman's examination has been completed and any findings or recommendations are issued.

#### DECEMBER 10 COUNCIL MEETING

**TTAC update:** Director Leitch reported the foundation started pouring and work continues on the Hydro feed.

**Community safety:** David Bradshaw, Woodland Beach Property Owners Association, detailed regulatory requirements that could justify designating a community safety zone and implementing automated speed enforcement (ASE). Director Leitch advised that legislative changes eliminate ASE as an option and proposed a pedestrian crossing at White Oaks Trail and Locust Trail and a 3-way stop at Tripp Lane.

**By-law 25-067** to Delegate Authority to the Mayor and the Clerk to Execute a Municipal Access Agreement with Broadband North Inc. was passed unanimously.

#### DECEMBER 10 CoW MEETING

Reports marked below with an asterisk are available through the meeting agenda: [tinyurl.com/5cpczv6u](http://tinyurl.com/5cpczv6u).

**Age Friendly Community Plan 2025-2030:** Jodi Ball, J Consulting Group, recommended a 2017 local aging plan be retired and replaced by the more recent age-friendly community plan since Tiny has experienced rapid demographic shifts. Tiny's senior population grew 21% from 2016 to 2021 and will reach 5,000 seniors by 2031 (1 in 3 residents) and the needs and expectations have changed since the 2017 Plan. Council accepted the recommendation. Item D.2.1.\*

**Recreation and Special Events Department, Fourth Quarter 2025 Update Report,** outlining upcoming events, registration statistics, special events, environmental initiatives and more, was received as information. Item D.1.1.\*

**By-law 3rd Quarter Activity Report for 2025 and Comparative Departmental Activities (October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025)** compares departmental activities over the past five years to assist with budgeting and planning. This report contains details on by-law enforcement activities by category. Item D.1.2.\*

**Alcohol in the parks:** staff noted that regional parks allowing alcohol deny that permission at beach-front parks. Enforcement of the *Liquor Licence Act* remains with a police officer; by-law officers lack authority to enforce the act. Policing capacity is a concern. Item D.1.3.\*

**TTAC project and financial update report:** a construction update indicates 1) completion of site clearing and grubbing, and all site studies (hydrogeological, traffic impact, environmental impact and archaeological), 2) installation of a new construction road, which will be the base for the final road into the site, perimeter silt fencing to protect identified species at risk and ensure construction area is controlled, and foundation aggregate, and 3) approval for foundation installation and rapid compaction of the area. Foundation concrete works is beginning. **Tenders** have been approved for mass timber, foundation, concrete work, rapid compaction, site clearing/grubbing, below grade vertical insulation, and aggregate works. An ad hoc committee will assist with public space planning and content. Additional EIS and archeological studies are ongoing for the hydro line. **A financial update** notes that no final borrowing structure has been selected. The current financing in place, an interest-only construction loan, was approved by Council in 2025 for \$28M. Staff are applying for an initial Federation of Canadian Municipalities grant, anticipated to be \$148,490. On approval, staff will apply for a \$1.5M grant. The total annual cost including interest is estimated to be \$38.14/year (\$3.18/month) for every \$100,000 in residential MPAC assessment based on a 30-year loan/debenture. Residents can use this amount to estimate what the total municipal tax implication would be for their property by taking their MPAC Assessment and using the following formula: (MPAC Assessment ÷ \$100,000) x \$38.14. Item D.1.4.\*

**County Road 6 (CR6) and Concession 5 intersection review:** following a deputation in August and direction from Council,

Public Works conducted a site review that recommends 1) repainting the faded crosswalk, 2) relocating poorly placed signs, 3) improving visibility by increasing no parking near intersection, and 4) considering 4-way traffic lights, hiring a traffic guard, reducing the speed limit, and improving lighting. Council approved the recommendations. Item D.2.2.\*

**Concession 5 West beach access:** Director Leitch gave an overview of a traffic and safety study looking at creating safer beach access. The majority of Council agreed that a design proposal for a 4-way stop at Concession 5 and Tiny Beaches Road South, plus a beach access path, be brought to Council. Item D.2.3.\* In the public comment period, resident James Brown outlined the negative impacts on neighbours of installing the 4-way stop and pathway.

**Second entrance policy:** Public Works has revised an entrance by-law in response to an increase in requests for second entrances onto residential properties. Council approved proceeding with the revised by-law. Item D.2.4.\*

**Toanche Dog Park update:** Director Leitch advised that an abandoned ball diamond has been converted to a dog park, although no winter maintenance takes place. Item D.2.5.\*

#### JANUARY 7 COUNCIL MEETING

**Provincial assistance related to March 2025 ice storm:** The Minister of Municipal Affairs has advised that Tiny is eligible. **Seniors Program - Ducks in a Row:** lawyers, bank representatives and funeral directors will be available May 20 to help seniors plan for the challenges of aging.

**Church in the Pines restoration bridge repairs:** Council approved using surplus funds (\$16,500 including HST) from the Balm Beach Walkway capital budget to repair the pedestrian bridge at the Cawaja Beach church.

**Rural municipalities' access to health care:** Mayor Evans reported success in scheduling a deputation with the Minister of Health at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference, January 18-20, 2026.

#### JANUARY 7 CoW MEETING

**Selection of an internet and telephone voting system provider:** Intelivote Systems Inc. has been selected to provide voting services for the October municipal election for \$56,753.10 +HST.

**Remuneration for elected officials' 2026 to 2030 term:** Council did not support several aspects of the remuneration committee's report, thanked the committee, and moved further discussion to Q2. The committee is now dissolved.

**Septage treatment:** FoTTSA argued that the final deal between Midland and Tiny must include a provision ensuring the plant will treat all Tiny septage waste, not just waste collected in the winter, to drastically improve water quality in the creeks that empty into Georgian Bay and other water bodies. Mayor Evans commented on the strict criteria MECP uses to approve septage field sites and noted that this option will remain as long as allowed by MECP.

— continued on page 6



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... continued from page 5

**Petition regarding safety concerns at Woodland Beach:** a 13-page petition requested Township approval of safety improvements at three locations.

**AMO - OMERS governance:** changes in Bill 68 could allow pension decisions affecting municipal employers and employees be made without meaningful municipal oversight, increasing financial risk for municipalities and local taxpayers. Council moved to oppose the changes. In a public comment period, **Jessie Garland** supported removing the OMERS pension (defined benefit) for council members as outlined in the remuneration report, noting that many Canadians do not have defined contribution plans and council members should follow what these Canadians have.

#### JANUARY 28 COUNCIL MEETING

Council held a confidential/closed session to address matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees, as well as receive advice on the Goessman Reserves by Jim McIntosh, Barriston Law LLP, that are considered subject to solicitor-client privilege.

**\$4.6M government grant to replace a Lafontaine water-main:** **Director Leitch** advised that this \$5.7M project, completing the upgrades to the lower Lafontaine water system, including Tall Pines, Forest Circle and Wolfe Trail, will increase lines from 2" to 6" plus hydrants. Construction will take place in summer 2027. Anticipated completion: no later than 2029.

**ROMA delegation on physician recruitment:** **Mayor Evans** summarized the results of a delegation to the Ministry of Health. Tiny has no medical practices despite having 21,000 voters. There was no positive outcome but discussions will continue regarding different levels of support by the municipality. However, as of April 1 residents will be able to apply for a local primary physician without giving up their current doctor.

**TTAC update:** **Director Leitch** advised structural work will begin after May 1 when half load restrictions have ended. The foundation is 50% complete.

**Winter driving conditions:** a resident's questions regarding mitigation strategies prompted Councillor Walma to inquire about the snow fence initiative. Concession 6 and Baseline Rd., and Concession 11 E have been successful. More and taller fences are being considered going forward. Plow drivers' feedback is important. Planting trees along roadsides reduces farmers' available agricultural land.

#### JANUARY 28 CoW MEETING

**Snowplow replacement:** **Director Leitch** advised that due to custom fabrication required for plow trucks, the lead time for purchasing these vehicles has been 18 months on average. Staff recommended ordering replacements for R104 and R105 in 2026 so as to receive these vehicles in 2027 and 2028. Council instructed staff to start the procurement process. The Township is not obliged to commit to the purchase until later in the process.

**Pickleball strategy update:** Council approved a staff request that Council endorse and direct staff to 1) continue implementing the township pickleball strategy as refined through community feedback and the recommended updates provided in the council report, 2) incorporate the recommended strategy updates identified in the report to strengthen inclusivity, transparency, and phased implementation, including protections for open play and seasonal access, 3) prioritize exploring options for additional facilities in underserved areas, including Lafontaine, Woodland Beach and Wyevale, 4) treat indoor and winter pickleball opportunities as a near-term priority by exploring partnerships, shared-use agreements, and short-term facility solutions, and 5) maintain a phased, fiscally responsible approach to pickleball growth by prioritizing maintenance of existing facilities, leveraging user fees, grants, and partnerships, and enhancing transparency in reporting community engagement data and financial impacts.

**Pickleball Working Group:** staff recommended establishing

a voluntary, advisory pickleball working group as a strategic, low-risk, and cost-effective step toward implementing the pickleball strategy. Its role would be to provide community insight, assist with communication and volunteer coordination, and help identify emerging programming needs and opportunities. Terms of reference have been completed. Council approved proceeding.

**Care Partner Respite Program - funding opportunity:** **North Simcoe Muskoka Specialized Geriatric Services** is offering one-time seed funding to pilot programs that would reduce caregiver stress, promote social engagement, and provide safe, therapeutic activities to older adults living with frailty. The Township's proposed program — therapeutic gardening at Perkinsfield Park Community Garden — aligns with the 2025 Age-Friendly Community Plan. Staff have applied for \$7,000 in seed funding to cover start-up costs. No additional municipal funding is required at this time. Council approved moving forward.

**Canada Day Celebration at Balm Beach:** The Township of Tiny Events and Charities Committee recommends staff look into having the Township host a first annual Township of Tiny Canada Day Celebration at Balm Beach on Wednesday July 1, 2026. This would replace the community barbeque event previously held at Perkinsfield Park and reallocate its \$24,000 budget to the Canada Day celebration. Staff discussed having a drone light show instead of fireworks and have applied for a Heritage Canada grant to offset costs. Local MP Adam Chambers supports the grant application, and the Balm Beach Business Association supports this all-day, family-friendly event. Council approved staff preparing a feasibility report.

**Volunteer involvement in rink operations:** updated standards and public liability requirements now apply to rink operations. The plan is to involve volunteers next year with proper training. A discussion took place re: installing temporary roofing. Concern was expressed that the Wyevale rink has not opened yet this year.

#### FEBRUARY 18 COUNCIL MEETING

**Half load restrictions:** will be in place from March 1 to April 30 (later changed to March 9).

**TTAC update:** **Director Leitch** reported that 65-70% of foundation pouring is complete. The hydro corridor feed from Concession 8 will require cutting down trees and storing on site for future use. Grubbing of hydro corridor and mass timber erection will take place after half loads are lifted.

**Joel Rubinovich** outlined concerns with winter fog and snow conditions making driving at night unsafe and requested the Township look into signage, lighting, sanding, blowing snow barriers, and better guidance during road closures.

#### FEBRUARY 18 CoW MEETING

**Dust suppressant tender results:** Council approved awarding a three-year contract to Da-Lee Dust Control for \$180,625 +HST in 2026, \$189,725 +HST in 2027, and \$199,230 +HST in 2028.

**Microsurfacing tender:** Council approved awarding a contract for micro surfacing Balm Beach Rd. West from Perkinsfield to Balm Beach to Duncor Enterprises for \$119,106.00 +HST.

**Water metering program:** Council awarded a contract to Neptune Technology Group at a proposed cost of \$144,520 +HST and the purchase of the meters from Evans Utility and Municipal Supply for \$270,437.86 +HST to complete Phase 2 of the Lafontaine and Vanier Woods systems.

**Proposed Canada Day event:** options proposed were 1) Canada Day Event at Balm Beach, 2) the status quo community BBQ event, or 3) an enhanced version of the BBQ event. Councillor Brunelle raised concerns about the Balm Beach event, including parking, conflict with neighbouring municipality activities, limited space, beer gardens competing

with licenced establishments at Balm Beach, liability insurance, and no rain alternative. He suggested a fourth option: a Canadian multiculturalism, enhanced BBQ event at Perkinsfield on June 27, which was rejected by Council (4-1). Council supported moving forward with the Canada Day at Balm Beach option, allocating \$40,000 from operating reserves in addition to the \$24,000 designated for the BBQ. If the \$81,000 federal grant comes through, operating reserves will be replenished. Council also directed staff to develop a traffic management plan and report back.

**Advocacy for additional funding for local schools:** **Councillor Walma** moved that Council support and advocate provincially and federally for additional school funding to better cover classroom supplies, sports and playground equipment, as well as a tax credit for donations. Council supported the motion.

#### MARCH 11 COUNCIL MEETING

**TTAC Update:** **Director Leitch** advised that foundation pouring is 98% complete, hydro corridor clearing is almost complete, and structural framing will begin in early May.

**Cheque presentation:** Council presented cheques to Georgian Bay General Hospital (\$20,000) and Georgian Bay Physician Recruitment (\$12,000).

**Frieda Baldwin**, President of the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association Inc., requested assistance with creating more off-road parking spots, snowplowing existing parking areas, or allowing a parking exception on Township roads in the winter. Council directed staff to report on potential solutions.

#### MARCH 11 CoW MEETING

The reports referred to below are available through the meeting agenda: <http://www.tinyurl.com/5z982y8s>.

**Council remuneration report:** overall salaries will increase 2.4%. Eligible council members will be enrolled in the Ontario Municipal Employment Retirement System (OMERS). Ineligible council members will receive a payment in lieu of OMERS. Council members are partially compensated for mileage, high speed internet connection, monthly internet, and cellphone charges.\*

**Water meter billing report:** staff provided details around water meter billing and some local comparative rates, followed by a presentation of the 2025 Annual Summary Report and QMS Management Review.\*

**Emergency Services report - replacement of two fire tankers:** The fire chief advised Emergency Services will be tendering for the purchase of two fire tankers.\*

**Public Works Report (PWR) - Water By-law Amendment:** the amendment will make installing water meters mandatory in residences on the south half of the Lafontaine system and the Vanier Woods system.\*

**PWR road reconstruction program tender results:** the project involves 15.9 km of roads that will be pulverized, have old culverts replaced, have gravel added to the base, and be repaved, plus other safety and storm control items. Since the accepted tender from Georgian Paving of \$2,662,962 +HST was under budget, additional projects were added so long as funds are not required for unforeseen circumstances.\*

**PWR hot mix patching program award:** work was awarded to Springside Paving Inc. for \$98,450 +HST.

**PWR grader purchases:** Staff recommended purchasing a John Deere 772P 6WD motor grader and snow wing through the Association of Municipalities Ontario Canoe Procurement Group for \$623,619.21 +HST, plus a 5-year/6,000-hour warranty for \$53,906.25 +HST.

**Potential for bringing new South Georgian Bay OPP detachment centre to Tiny:** **Councillor Brunelle** requested Council approve these locations for assessment by the OPP: 130 Balm Beach Road West, 35 County Road 6 South, 43 County Road 6 South, 340 Concession 9 East and 91 Concession 8 East. Further discussion was deferred to the April 1 CoW meeting.

## TinyTRA Launches a Community Platform for a Fairer Municipal Election

By ERIK SCHOMANN



As the 2026 municipal election approaches, the Tiny Township Residents' Alliance (TinyTRA) is making its position clear: it will not be organizing or endorsing a slate of candidates. Instead, TinyTRA has launched <http://tiny2026.com>, a transparent, community-driven platform open to all residents of Tiny Township — no membership required.

TinyTRA is a volunteer-based, community-driven organization that empowers local residents with a voice to influence municipal policy, promote fiscal transparency and respon-

sibility, and actively engage in shaping the future of Tiny Township. TinyTRA is non-partisan and does not endorse parties or candidates.

### Why TinyTRA is not running a slate

Some in the community have suggested that the only way to "win back" Tiny Township is to run a coordinated slate of candidates — one team to replace another. TinyTRA believes this approach would deepen the very problems it seeks to solve.

Municipal politics in Ontario are meant to be non-partisan. Councillors are supposed to serve their community — not a party, not a bloc, and not a prearranged agenda. When a slate takes power, council ceases to be a forum for deliberation and becomes a voting machine. This is what happened with the Township Administration Building project. Instead of an open debate about costs, location, and community priorities, decisions were made by a majority of council members acting in concert, and public input was treated as an inconvenience or obstacle rather than a cornerstone of democracy.

When four of five councillors are elected on the same

platform, independent voices are drowned out. The result is not better governance, but less of it — fewer questions asked, fewer perspectives considered, and fewer opportunities for compromise. Running another slate in opposition would simply repeat this pattern. The names might change, but the democratic deficit would remain.

What Tiny Township needs now is a council dedicated to consensus building — among its members and with the people it represents. Leaders who are willing to disagree respectfully, listen openly, and find common ground. True leadership doesn't come from coordination behind closed doors. It comes from participation in open ones.

TinyTRA believes in participatory democracy — in citizens who speak up, candidates who stand on their own convictions, and a council that governs by collaboration, not calculation. Our township deserves a council that listens to its residents, not just to itself.

### What TinyTRA is doing instead

TinyTRA has launched <http://www.tiny2026.com>, a civic engagement platform designed to strengthen democratic

— continued on next page

participation ahead of the October 26, 2026 election. The platform provides independent candidates with early public visibility, a structured way to present their values and priorities, and access to engaged voters — all without TinyTRA directing or managing any campaign.

Any resident of Tiny Township is welcome to participate — as a potential candidate or as an engaged voter. TinyTRA membership is not required.

The platform's process includes candidate applications and interviews, published candidate profiles and report cards, and community Entrance Polls that allow residents to signal their support before the formal campaign period begins.

Residents who register through <http://www.tiny2026.com> as potential candidates should note that this is separate from the official Township of Tiny candidate registration process. Formal candidate registration with the Township opened when the official election period began after May 1, 2026.

**Governance and compliance**

TinyTRA is a registered not-for-profit community organization operating in full compliance with the *Ontario Elections Act* and the *Election Finances Act*. Its activities are overseen by an independent electoral authority, and all communications are transparent, accountable, and publicly accessible. Learn more about TinyTRA at <http://www.tinytra.ca>.



## Dear Tiny Township Neighbours,

As you know the Federation of Tiny Township Shoreline Associations (FoTTSA) has established a "Community Action Fund" to access professional expertise as we navigate complicated issues impacting township residents.

Our current priority is the Shoreline By-law, which Tiny Council approved last May despite broad community opposition. This by-law would impose excessive restrictions on exterior site alterations to all private property within 45 metres of the shoreline, and could also add thousands of dollars in compliance costs for property owners seeking to make alterations. Read more about our concerns in this issue's page one article.

Council's actions affect all of us, not just shoreline owners. Council has already spent tens of thousands of our tax dollars on drafting this ill-conceived by-law, without any scientific data to justify it.

On behalf of our member beach associations and their homeowners, FoTTSA will be challenging Council's plans a year from now at the Ontario Land Tribunal. However, our defence of homeowner rights comes with significant legal and other costs.

**We need to build up the Community Action Fund NOW so that we can continue challenging this punitive and unnecessary by-law.**

Please ACT NOW by sending your personal contribution to [fottsatreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fottsatreasurer@gmail.com) or to FoTTSA, 53 Charlton Blvd., Toronto M2M 1C1. Be sure to include your current email address and the name of your beach association, if applicable, with your generous contribution.

We will continue responding to developments with this unnecessary and overreaching Shoreline By-law, and will keep you informed through email, *The Tiny Cottager*, the monthly FoTTSA Flash e-newsletter, and our website.

If you do not receive FoTTSA Flash, our digital newsletter, please take a moment to subscribe at <http://www.tinycottager.org>. It's fast and easy, and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Sincerely,

*The Board of Directors, Federation of Tiny Township Shoreline Associations.*

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Canoeing on Awenda's Kettle Lake, by Dave Rose, 1st place winner in the 2022 photo contest

## Awenda: Explore This Green Oasis on Tiny's Doorstep

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach

Located on Tiny's pristine north shore, this 3,000-hectare provincial park offers an abundance of landscapes and activities to engage visitors all year long.

In this natural setting, day-trippers and campers.<sup>1</sup> You can even rent a stone cottage sleeping six.

"Awenda is a green oasis with 65 different distinct habitats," says Tim Tully, Chief Park Naturalist. "The park's mature and old growth forests, beaches, swamps, fens, bogs, marshes and swamps host a remarkable diversity of species, including 33 species of identified reptile and amphibian, 209 species of bird, 203 species of lichen, 220 species of fungi, 52 species of mammal and over 740 vascular plants.

Tully often hears from visitors that they had no idea that all this was here.

"It's safe to say that a visitor will make a new discovery or develop a new appreciation with each visit, whether you're a birdwatcher, a nature enthusiast, or pursuing a challenging or fun recreational experience. After 35 years here, I'm still making new wildlife discoveries."

### Connections to the past

The park's natural setting offers a window into the pre-settlement landscape and an opportunity to experience a large natural area not seen elsewhere in southern Ontario.

Awenda's predominantly mature deciduous forest is 70 to 120 years old. Within this forest are 285 hectares of old growth Sugar Maple, ranging from 150 to 290 years old. Elsewhere in southern Ontario, only small old-growth pockets remain in protected areas.

With the exception of selective logging and a few cleared homesteads, the natural system has remained relatively intact through time. "The scale of unbroken forest makes Awenda the largest forested area in Tiny and one of the largest remaining forested areas in southern Ontario," says Tully.

### Awenda's human history

Archeologists have found evidence of a pre-ceramic culture of hunters and gatherers living here from 9000 to 1000 BC.

"The park is also the traditional homeland of the Bear Nation of the Wendat Confederacy," explains Tully. "Evidence of their occupation, from 1480 AD to 1650 AD, has been found in 13 of 17 archaeological sites in what is now the park."

Archeologists believe the park previously supported at least two Wendat villages. The Kettle Lake area offered them fresh water, fish, game, and soil suitable for growing crops. The park's two-kilometre Wendat Trail, which circles Kettle Lake, honours these early inhabitants.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the Wendat occupation, villages host-

ed early French explorers, including Samuel de Champlain, fur trader Etienne Brûlé, and four of North America's eight martyred saints.

Brûlé in particular played a significant role during the time he spent at what is now Awenda Provincial Park, says Tully. "He was able to immerse himself fully in the lifestyle, cultural traditions, language and heritage of the Wendat people." The park has installed a plaque honouring Brûlé on one of its five beaches on Georgian Bay.<sup>3</sup>

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Métis settled and farmed throughout North Simcoe's northern peninsula. Three of the four known historic farms identified within the park are Métis in origin.

### How you can contribute to Awenda

Support the park's naturalist department, including its research and educational activities, by becoming a member of the Friends of Awenda. This membership-based not-for-profit charitable organization has supported the naturalist department and park research in critical ways since 1991.

The group has provided more than \$500,000 in financial and in-kind support to help construct park facilities, fund student naturalists, purchase equipment and supplies, and sponsor natural heritage research, including the 2025 Red-headed Woodpecker Nest Study and Awenda Turtle Conservation projects.

Making a tax-deductible charitable donation will help ensure these activities continue. Visit <http://www.awendapark.ca> for information on membership, donating and volunteering. Activities include annual butterfly counts, endangered bat surveys, helping out at special events, and ridding the park of invasive species.

While you're on the website, view past photo competition winners and key dates for this year's competition

### How to get there

Awenda Provincial Park, 60 Awenda Park Rd., proceeds north from Concession 16 E, just east of Macavally Rd.

Watch for more on winter activities in our fall/winter issue.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Find out more about program offerings, available to anyone with a day pass or seasonal pass:

<http://www.awendapark.ca/programs-events>.

<sup>2</sup> "The Wendat Trail," The Friends of Awenda Park; <http://www.tinyurl.com/5n84u2uj>.

<sup>3</sup> "Étienne Brûlé Historical Plaque — Awenda Provincial Park," published online by Route Champlain, a 1,500-kilometre Ontario tourism itinerary that traces Samuel de Champlain's 1615-1616 expedition; <http://www.tinyurl.com/2pn6uptj>.

## TC Energy Project: Environmental Disaster or Economic Engine?

By KAREN BOWLES, Thunder Beach



Source: TC Energy

One of the pressing issues facing Georgian Bay is a proposed energy storage and distribution project by TC Energy being considered for the Meaford area. Opponents say the project poses irreversible harm to Georgian Bay, while proponents describe it as an economic engine that will create jobs and help build a resilient electricity system for Ontarians.

Briefly and simply put, this project would pull 23 million cubic metres of water from the bay in low energy demand hours, pump it up to a purpose-built 140-hectare (345-acre) reservoir on escarpment lands owned by the Department of National Defence, and release it back down into the bay during peak hours, creating 1,000 megawatts of electricity when they are most needed. TC Energy says this is enough to power a million homes for up to 11 hours.

Using gravity and water to create electricity sounds good in theory but since the project was announced many areas of concern have been raised by Save Georgian Bay, a volunteer-led group created to oppose this project. These include

reservoir failure, damage to the escarpment, habitat loss for endangered and at-risk species, risk to water quality and fish habitat, the high cost of the build to taxpayers (estimated at \$7 billion), net energy inefficiency, and increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Tiny Council passed a resolution in 2025 opposing the build after hearing from SGB and TC Energy and consulting the Severn Sound Environmental Association.

### What you need to know

The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) forecasts that by 2050 electricity demand will be 65% greater than 2026 levels. The Minister of Energy and Mines has directed the IESO to undertake procurement programs seeking both new generation and storage capacity. TC Energy's project is just one proposed project.

Since environmental concerns were first raised, TC Energy has modified aspects of the project to reduce the environmental impact. However, opposition remains.

This would not be Canada's first pumped storage facility. Ontario Power Generation's Sir Adam Beck Pump Generating Station pumps water from the Niagara River into a 300-hectare reservoir, from which it is later released back into the river.

A series of checks and balances are in place to ensure all aspects of the project are taken into consideration before approval is granted. Among them:

- oversight by the Municipality of Meaford to monitor the project, ensure community engagement, and manage

information flow.

- ongoing engagement with Saugeen Ojibway Nation and other interested Indigenous rights-holders and groups. TC Energy and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation would share ownership of the project.
- a federal impact assessment process that is already underway, evaluating environmental, social and economic impacts. The process enables the public, interested groups, and Indigenous rightsholders to participate in assessing effects and developing appropriate direction, conditions and mitigation.
- IESO reviews to validate the project's role in the electricity system. Previous IESO reports have expressed cost concerns, and the IESO must still conduct a final analysis.
- a final cost assessment conducted by the Province to determine whether the project is in the best interest of ratepayers.

### How you can learn more

Read TC Energy's *Initial Project Description*, a comprehensive report on the project required by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC): <http://www.tinyurl.com/2tss7f5u>.

IAAC held a public session in Meaford in February. Read comments received to date here:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/354fczct>. Additional comments may still be filed here: <http://www.tinyurl.com/2s36rky5>.

Visit <http://www.savegeorgianbay.ca> to understand the organization's objections. The health of Georgian Bay concerns us all. Whether yea or nay, get informed and have your say.



## FoTTSA Lake Water Testing 2026

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach

Once again a group of dedicated volunteers will be taking part in FoTTSA's biennial testing program for E. coli in lake water up and

down the Georgian Bay shores of Tiny during July and August.

Lake water samples are analyzed for E. coli, which is considered the single best indicator of the health of swimming water. Excessive levels of the E. coli bacteria increase the risk

of ear, eye, nose and throat infections, or gastrointestinal or stomach illnesses if water is swallowed. The testing assesses water quality for recreational purposes only (e.g., swimming).

### Conditions that affect water quality

While our lake water typically has low levels of E. coli, certain conditions may temporarily raise the bacteria count:

- rain — heavy rain can wash contaminants into creeks and streams that flow into the bay. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit advises against swimming for 24-48

hours after heavy rains, especially if you swim near a stream.

- heat waves — warmer water temperatures promote faster growth and reproduction of E. coli.
- wind — strong winds can stir up sand and silt. If you can't see your feet in waist-deep water, bacteria levels may be high.
- birds and animals — feces from shoreline wildlife can increase bacteria levels.

— continued on page 10

# Natural Remedies for Bugs and Pests By IRENE WILSON, Wendake Beach



Photo by Kwangmoop on Magnific

## Ticks

With climate change, ticks have migrated north to Canada in alarming numbers, spread by deer and mice. They can be extremely small and difficult to detect until they have a blood meal, expanding multiple times in size.

The common black legged or deer tick is found throughout Ontario, and may carry Lyme Disease, Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis and Powassan Virus. Ticks are most active in the spring and fall, so check yourself and pets after working in the yard or walking in wooded areas. Here are three tick deterrents:

- garlic spray is effective used on shoes, gardening gloves and clothes before doing yard work.

- neem oil, an organic, naturally occurring pesticide derived from the seeds of the neem tree, a tropical evergreen, can be used safely when diluted. Cold pressed neem oil, which has a strong smell, is available online or in health food stores. Use sparingly as it could also kill beneficial insects. Mix 1 tablespoon of neem oil, ½ teaspoon of dish soap and a litre of water in a spray bottle and shake well.
- tick tubes, placed strategically around your property, can be purchased at hardware stores. These tubes have cotton balls saturated with permethrin, a natural pesticide derived from chrysanthemums, which mice use to line their nests. Permethrin kills any ticks the mouse is carrying by damaging their nervous system. Permethrin-treated clothes and repellent sprays are also available. They work by incapacitating insects before they bite.

Working with Mother Nature on solutions to harmful pests helps keep us safe from man-made chemicals and can reduce the loss of beneficial insects, such as pollinators.

We look forward to the longer days and warmth ahead of us, but not to the hungry bugs and pests searching for food sources. The good news is that you do not need to resort to chemical warfare to protect yourself or your property. Many pests can be managed and often prevented with simple, natural remedies that focus on making your property less attractive to them.

## Exterior maintenance

Start with damp and wet areas, as many bugs follow moisture. Musty basements, leaking pipes, wet wood, rain barrels and standing outdoor water attract insects and rodents alike. Clean eavestroughs, maintain proper drainage away from your house, and fill in soggy areas of your property. Store firewood off the ground, away from the house and sheltered to keep it dry. Refresh bird baths every 2-3 days and put fine screening on rain barrels. Remove or drain any items that can collect rainwater, such as pails, children's toys and clutter.

## Landscaping

Ticks and many other bugs thrive in shady, overgrown areas. Make your yard inhospitable by keeping a clean, dry, sunny perimeter around your house and outbuildings. Remove leaf litter and brush, and keep your lawn short. Avoid or reduce dense ground covers, ivy-type creeping plants, tall grass, and overgrown hedges and shrubs.

Ticks like to sit on leaves, tall grass and branches, waiting for a human or pet to brush by so they can grab on. Ticks migrate from wooded areas into lawns, so keep a 30-100 cm (1-3 ft.) barrier of wood chips, mulch or pea gravel/stone to deter them, as will hardscaping with interlocking pavers or stone and gravel around patios and decks. Prune low branches, shrubs and hedges to let more sun and air in to avoid damp areas.

Plant flower beds with marigolds, chrysanthemums, lavender, bee balm, lemon balm or citronella, all of which give off scents that detract mosquitoes and ticks and attract pollinators and butterflies. Plant an herb garden with rosemary, basil, thyme, sage and garlic strategically around your patio, or put herb pots on your deck. Lightly brush your hand against the herbs to release their scent when using the area.

## Ants

Ants are organized, persistent, and create elaborate nests. Carpenter ants deserve extra attention, as they are drawn to damp or rotting wood, leaving small sawdust piles as they tunnel in wood to create their nests.

A natural remedy involves mixing equal parts sugar and borax or baking soda and leaving it in shallow jar lids, out of the way of pets and children. The ants take it back to the nest for food, and consuming it destroys their digestive systems. Wiping down surfaces with vinegar and water helps erase scent trails. Cinnamon powder or peppermint oil placed near entry points can also deter them. Annoying ant hills in your patios can be 30-60 cm (1-2 ft.) deep and can be destroyed with a steady stream of boiling water, repeated daily until you do not see any activity.

## Mosquitoes

Garlic spray is an effective deterrent. Crush 6 cloves of garlic into a litre of water and let stand for 24 hours. Strain enough to fill a spray bottle, add a squirt of dish detergent to help it adhere to surfaces, and shake well. We used this last summer on our decks, chair bottoms, table legs and adjoining wall with good results and no noticeable garlic smell. It can also be sprayed on screens and clothing. I repeated a light spraying weekly for a couple of weeks and then after a heavy rainfall.

For a personal repellent, replace the dish detergent with a teaspoon of light olive oil.

The garlic solution stores well in a sealed glass jar. A commercial version exists for larger areas, which uses a garden hose attachment. It's available in hardware stores.



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**Tiny cottager website: www.tinycottager.org**

... continued from page 8

You can help maintain the quality of our water by keeping your septic system in good working order and scooping and scooping after pets.

**What's being done about E. coli**

Each summer the Health Unit tests lake water samples for E.coli bacteria weekly at five public beaches in Tiny: Woodland Beach, Bluewater Beach, Jackson Park, Balm Beach and Lafontaine Beach. When sampling results exceed 200 E. coli bacteria per 100 ml of water, health advisories are posted on the unit's website and released through Tiny Connect, the Township's emergency alert service.

Since 2001, FoTTSA has been supplementing this sampling every second summer with a more comprehensive program. Trained volunteers take samples waist deep at the same time and location every Monday, noting the conditions under which the samples were taken: rainfall, wind direction, sunlight, waterfowl presence, wave action, water clarity, and presence of algae. Participating beach associations help offset the laboratory costs of testing the water in their area. FoTTSA informs participating associations by end-of-day Tuesday if the sampling found high levels of E. coli.

Results from the 2024 water sampling program, in multiple locations across 15 beaches, reveal that E. coli counts are consistently high in and close to streams along the shore but that otherwise most samples contained E. coli levels of 10 or less per 100 mL, the lowest level for which the samples are measured.

- A few exceptions occurred. For example:
- July 15 — 3 beaches had counts ranging from 220 to 330 units of E. coli
  - August 12 — 3 beaches had counts ranging from 380 to 660 units

- August 19 — 5 beaches had counts ranging from 230 to 2000 units

FoTTSA's water sampling web page has all historical results up to 2024, and useful information on the water testing process: <http://www.tinyurl.com/cbtsn5m4>.

**How FoTTSA's sampling program has helped improve water quality**

FoTTSA undertook this comprehensive water sampling program to

- provide more comprehensive monitoring of lake water quality
- create an ongoing record of the township's recreational water quality, including streams entering the bay at the shoreline
- encourage remedial action in areas with repeated high E. coli counts.

Since the program began in 2001, much has been learned about environmental conditions that cause high E. coli counts. For example, early results persuaded successive Tiny councils to fund investigations by the Severn Sound Environmental Association of streams entering the bay at Woodland Beach, Jackson Park, Balm Beach, and Lafontaine Creek.

These investigations led to the installation of two catch basins with oil/grit separators at Balm Beach, and the promotion of natural vegetation buffers along watercourses. Buffers help prevent erosion and reduce the amount of pesticides, fertilizers and livestock fecal material entering water courses. The results also reinforced the value of Tiny's annual sewage system re-inspection program.

**Simcoe County Forest: 100 Years of Regreening**

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Wendake Beach



A consequence of local clearcutting, from the collection of E.J. Zavitz. Photo source: Archives of Ontario.

Sawmills sprang up wherever there was a good supply of timber and water to float the logs and generate power for the mills. The number of active sawmills in the county peaked around 1873, with 114 producing a third of all sawn timber in Ontario.

The demand for wood drove the earliest settlement patterns, developing such infrastructure as water mills, tramways, rail lines, roads, and bridges.

Harvested white pine was first shipped to Britain for use by the navy. These trees were massive. "One white pine harvested in Innisfil required 14 teams of horses to haul it," said Davis.

Within a few decades much of the pine had been harvested, so the industry turned to other species and products — wood for bridges, homes, furniture, crating, bark for tanning, and fuel wood.



Photo source: Archives of Ontario.

It's the early 1900s. You're standing on a slight rise in the Simcoe Uplands. Ahead of you, a hostile desert environment as far as you can see. On windy days, sandstorms obliterate the view. In summer, plows are brought in to clear the sand from local roads.

This was Simcoe County after timber barons and settlers had clearcut the land. Light, sandy soil that had previously supported forests of majestic white pine was now barely usable for pasture. In some places, not even that.

Then came two visionaries: Edward Zavitz, a government employee documenting the degradation, and Premier E.C. Drury, a Simcoe County farmer with first-hand knowledge of how the loss of forest cover was affecting the land.

In 1909, E.J. Zavitz told members of the Ontario Legislature that putting land under forest management "has many arguments in its favour. It will pay as a financial investment, assist in ensuring a wood supply, protect the headwaters of streams, provide breeding ground for wild game, provide object lessons in forestry, and prevent citizens from developing under conditions which can end only in failure."

Zavitz' evidence and Drury's political will led to the Agreement Forest Program, which ran from 1922 to the mid-1990s. Under the program, participating municipalities acquired land for reforestation, which was overseen by the province.

Simcoe County was the first jurisdiction to step up, within a few years planting 1.3 million seedlings in what became known as the Hendrie Tract in the Anton Mills area. What started with 400 hectares (1,000 acres) has since expanded to 13,760 hectares (34,000 acres) across the county, and is still growing.

In a fascinating and fact-filled online talk hosted by the Orillia Museum of Art and History, Graeme Davis, Registered Professional Forester, County of Simcoe, explained how over a hundred years of continued effort the County turned a devastated landscape into Ontario's largest "community forest."\*

**First, the timber barons**

Simcoe County is the ancestral homeland of the Huron-Wendat Nation, traditional territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, home of the historic Métis community in Penetanguishene, and within the traditional harvesting territory of the Georgian Bay Traditional Territory Métis.

Prior to settlers' arrival in the 1800s, the area was all mature forest, mostly white pine with areas of maple, beech, oak and other species. "Timber barons saw the forest as an inexhaustible supply of timber," said Davis.

**Then, the settlers**

By the 1850s, clearcutting and railway expansion had opened up the area to settlers, who saw any remaining trees as obstacles. In the final decades of the century, settlers razed thousands of acres for agriculture. They piled and burned whatever timber remained, eventually harvesting stumps to make turpentine, and bundling tree roots to sell as firewood.

In many places, soil that was already thin and sandy could not sustain intensive agriculture, leaving large tracts of land barren. The degraded landscape also caused other problems. Prevailing winds whipped the sand into inland dunes. While rivers would flood in springtime, headwater streams would dry up in summer. These were the consequences Edward Zavitz began documenting, and which led to the Agreement Forest Program.

**Restoration begins**

In the first three decades of the program, from the 1920s to 1950s, Simcoe forestry workers planted 10 million seedlings. The primary goal was to stabilize the soil.

Land acquisition and tree planting continued from the 1950s to 1970s, but at a more measured pace as the cost of land increased and available properties were smaller and more scattered. The County expanded its focus to include the forest's long-term economic viability.

As seedlings matured in the 1980s and 1990s, and markets increased, Simcoe County timber grew in value. In the 1980s revenues exceeded expenditures.

When the Agreement Forest Program ended in 1996, the County assumed full responsibility, reinvesting all revenues into its forest.

— continued on page 12

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...continued from page 10

### Simcoe County Forest today

Forestry practices now are designed to mimic natural disturbance patterns, said Davis, including the way forests are planted, harvested and tendered.

Thinning a forest improves its health and promotes diversity. About 800 hectares (2000 acres) are harvested annually and processed locally. Employment is another benefit of the County's forest management activities — 150 to 200 direct jobs from annual timber harvesting. Indirect employment adds another 250 to 300 jobs.

The County also conducts controlled burns. Fire was originally a big problem but today it offers many ecological benefits:

- removes accumulated dead vegetation, such as leaves, pine needles, and woody debris, which are highly flammable materials that feed and intensify wildfires
- releases essential nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, back into the soil
- promotes plant diversity and regeneration.

In 2022, the 100-year anniversary of Simcoe County Forest, the County received national recognition for its efforts. The

Canadian Institute of Forestry recognized it as that year's forest capital of Canada for the "role forests play in the socio-economic and environmental health of our communities — past, present and future."

With continuing population growth comes continuing challenges and a broader set of objectives, said Davis. "Things we need to consider today is our management decisions are becoming more complex as we consider potential impacts from a changing climate. We have increasing threats from extreme weather conditions — ice storms, drought, etc. And we have an ever-increasing threat from invasive exotic species, which threaten the long-term sustainability of our county forest.

"Despite all these challenges," Davis concluded, "I think the future of our county forest system is really bright."

\* Learn more about the history of Simcoe County Forest by listening to Graeme Davis' online presentation, "The Simcoe County Forest — A Century of Growth and Renewal" at [www.orilliamuseum.org/project/2-24](http://www.orilliamuseum.org/project/2-24). Listen to other recorded presentations in the museum's history speaker series at [www.orilliamuseum.org/history-speaker-series](http://www.orilliamuseum.org/history-speaker-series).

### Tiny Cottager Challenge Cup 2025



The Tiny Cottager Challenge Cup is a friendly competition between FoTTSA member associations to promote and recognize the shoreline communities' support of local charitable organizations. Results for 2025 were encouraging and we thank everyone who participated.

Bluewater Georgina Wendake Beaches and Ratepayers Association "won" the highest overall donation as well as the highest donation per capita for a large association and The Nottawaga Beach Association "won" the highest per capita donation for a small association.

**Congratulations to all!** We all win when we work together to support the worthwhile local charitable organizations that benefit our community.

### Great Lakes Water Levels: An Appeal to Mark Carney



Persistent concerns with ongoing low water levels recently prompted the Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation to write to Prime Minister Mark Carney drawing attention to their concerns and encouraging structural solutions, as proposed by the International Joint Commission in 2013. The foundation works to protect the environment of Georgian Bay as part of the Great Lakes' ecology. In partnership with experts, the foundation commissions scientific research and solutions supporting water levels, water quality, wetlands, the fishery, and aquatic invasive species control.

March 20, 2026

To Prime Minister Carney,

There is another ecological and economic disaster unfolding on Georgian Bay due to the declining water levels. Now on a downward cycle the levels declined 1 foot (0.3 m) last fall and are now declining another foot by spring. Worse ECCC (Environment and Climate Change Canada) do not understand their own climate change impacts on Great Lakes water levels despite \$\$\$M research. Yet another new record low is very likely to be set by 2030. This will result in:

1. Deteriorating water quality along shorelines with toxic blue green algal blooms such that the Ontario Ministry of Health issues "advisories" telling shoreline property owners that the water is not safe for any use and to stay away from the water — this includes pets. Local municipalities delivered bottled water but most left their cottages. They could not sell their cottages and property values declined, impacting local municipalities.
2. Waterfowl will be able again to access the invasive zebra and quagga mussels contaminated with botulism. Local municipalities will again have to bring in staff on the extensive beach areas west of Midland. Staff will again wear hazmat outfits to remove the dead waterfowl using front

end loaders and dump trucks. The dead large birds including loons have to be buried so that no wildlife can eat them.

3. During the most recent record low in 2013 ships had to "light load" at about half load through the "rock cut" south of the St. Mary's River locks. At a metre below that record low it is likely ships would not be able to transit through the middle Great Lakes. These are U.S. and Canadian ships that move goods from Thunder Bay and Duluth to Montreal.
4. The boating channel for water access only properties will again be unsafe for most powered boat including the U.S. and Canadian large cruiser boats. That will impact the local economy for towns like Midland, Penetang, Honey Harbour, Parry Sound, Little Current, etc.
5. Marinas will again have to dredge at great costs likely with Transport Canada funding support.

6. The highest quality, most extensive, most diverse wetlands in all the Great Lakes are scattered on glacial till sediments among the complex 30,000 islands and shorelines. They will again dry up due to the impending low water. This will again impact the nursery habitat for fish, turtles, frogs and snakes. Many are species at risk.

7. The recreational fishery, including local competitions, will decline.
8. It may already be too late to prevent this impending disaster but at least we should try.

There is a solution to preventing this disaster from happening again. It is to respond to the IJC's 2013 *Advice to Governments*:<sup>1</sup> "The Commission recommends that the Governments undertake further investigation of structural options to restore water levels in Lake Michigan-Huron by 13 to 25 cm (about 5 to 10 in) ... etc."

When the Seaway was designed locks and control gates were designed for all the Great Lakes connecting channels. But they were not built for the St. Clair River — the outflow control for the middle Great Lakes including the "Crown Jewel" Georgian Bay.

The St. Clair River has a 160-year history of dredging for navigation with no compensation for the permanent lowering of the lake levels upstream. The time to act to address this is now. Each year ice jams develop in the St. Clair River, the riverbed erodes, and the USACE dredge to remove the sediments where they accumulate downstream. The outflow was dredged to 30 feet in the early 1960s but in 2002 the USACE reported that the channel was now 50 feet deep and in places over 70 feet deep. When will this end?

The Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation applied two years in a row for \$2M of the \$30M federal funds approved for Great Lakes research. Both times the application was rejected. In conversations with senior ECCC staff they simply do not have enough knowledge to understand this complex

— continued on page 14



## A New Way to Stay Informed

FoTTSA is now supplementing its monthly *FoTTSA Flash* e-newsletter with special editions that alert readers to developments on key issues.

Recent issues have covered the unnecessary and overreaching Shoreline Management By-Law and the exorbitantly expensive — \$50 million!!! — administrative building, among other topics.

*FoTTSA Flash Special Edition* is distributed automatically to all *FoTTSA Flash* subscribers at no cost.

If you have not yet subscribed to *FoTTSA Flash* and would like to receive it and *FoTTSA Flash Special Edition*, please take a moment to sign up on FoTTSA's website: [www.tinycottager.org](http://www.tinycottager.org).

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...continued from page 12

need to comply with the IJC's 2013 *Advice to Governments*. Recent work (funded by GBGLF) by the internationally respected coastal consulting engineering firm based in Ottawa and Oakville ON, W.F. Baird and Associates, not only determined that the conveyance capacity of the St. Clair River has continued to increase but also that the USACE (United States Army Corps of Engineers) bathymetric data are flawed and cannot be used and that the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) St. Clair River flow data are incorrect and report flows that are 2,000 m<sup>3</sup>/second higher than they actually are. These numbers are used by both Canada and the U.S. government agencies and the IJC. Canada needs to correct the USACE and USGS flawed data. Given that President Trump thinks he can put a "spigot" in Lake Michigan that could further lower the levels,<sup>2</sup> there could not be a better time for Canada to step up and devel-

op a response to the IJC's 2013 *Advice to Governments*. The Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation has the experts to be able to undertake this research and develop a model to show the possible benefits of the submerged foil wings designed by our hydraulic control engineer that would not interfere with shipping or fish habitat ... if the government of Canada provides GBGLF with the needed \$2M funding. Thank you for your consideration.

*Mary Muter*

Mary Muter, Chair, Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation

Learn more about how the foundation has been working to protect and enhance Georgian Bay and its shoreline: <http://www.georgianbaygreatlakesfoundation.com>.

<sup>1</sup>International Joint Commission's *Advice to Governments on the Recommendations of the International Upper Great Lakes: A Report to the Governments of Canada and the United States*, April 15, 2013; <http://www.tinyurl.com/2shafxn5>.

<sup>2</sup>President Trump made this remark during a 2025 White House briefing on the Great Lakes St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. He has been reported as saying he wants to tear up the agreement, which lays out how the two countries share and do not allow transfer of Great Lakes water outside of the Great Lakes basin.

## New Kind of Museum comes to Georgian Bay By DAN TRAVERS



Photo by Christine Wilkie

A new museum has arrived on Georgian Bay with an ambitious goal: to change the way Canadians think about water. Now located at the Midland Cultural Centre, the Canadian Museum of Water is not a traditional museum. Skipping the focus on artifacts behind glass, the organization is dedicated to shifting perspectives particularly among young Canadians about something which we, as cottagers, can all connect with. The central idea is simple but powerful: water is not a resource to be used, but a relationship to be understood and cared for. This philosophy is deeply rooted in Indigenous teachings, which view water as a living entity to be respected and honored, a perspective the museum has woven into its culture and programming.

but also the cultural, historical, and emotional ways humans connect with it. In this way, the Canadian Museum of Water sits at the intersection of science, culture, and environmental stewardship. The museum also celebrates local culture and history through exhibitions and collaborations. Its inaugural exhibition featured many resurfaced photographs by Budd Watson, including his iconic images of Georgian Bay and a retrospective of Canadian waterscapes, curated with support from the Friends of Budd Watson. In conjunction with the Huronia Players and the Midland Cultural Centre, CMW presented "Waves of Valour," showcasing historic shipbuilding contributions in Midland's harbour during the war, alongside artifacts on loan from local Royal Canadian Legion branches and private collections. Nearby, Quest Art has hosted gallery shows, including the Ontario Artist Society's "Standing Up for the Alliston Aquifer," with further collaborations in development.

This concept sits at the heart of the museum's mission. Across Canada and around the world, water is often discussed in technical terms: supply, treatment, infrastructure, or conservation targets. Within these conversations, the Canadian Museum of Water believes that something essential is missing: a deeper cultural understanding of water and the role it plays and has played in human life. Instead of simply learning facts about lakes, rivers, and oceans, visitors are encouraged to think about how water shapes communities, ecosystems, cultures, and personal experiences.

The museum is also the only Canadian member in a global network dedicated to water education. The UNESCO-endorsed World Water Museum Network, which now consists of over 120 water-related museums in 44 countries, is a group of institutions with the same mandate: promoting understanding of water's importance to society. In this way, the Canadian Museum of Water adds a uniquely Canadian voice to an international chorus for change. In a region like Georgian Bay, where water defines the landscape and daily life, the museum sees the surrounding environment as part of the experience. The shoreline, rivers, wetlands, and open waters of the bay all serve as living classrooms. The museum has also partnered this year with Atlantic Challenge, and is providing its 38 ft. (12 m) Bantry Bay gig *Diversité*, in an effort to send a team of young people to compete in this summer's international competition in Roskilde, Denmark.

For children growing up in Canada today, this shift in perspective is particularly important. Canada holds roughly 20% of the world's surface fresh water, yet many Canadians assume that water is limitless. At the same time, communities across the country and around the world are facing increasing challenges related to water availability, plastic contamination, and climate change.

Those of us who live on the bay, or near it, already understand how water shapes our lives: summers revolve around it. Children swim in it. Early mornings and late evenings are spent watching the sunrise or sunsets across its surface. These experiences form powerful memories, and for us also create opportunities for learning. The Canadian Museum of Water hopes to build on those experiences by offering programs and events that deepen the public's understanding of the waters around them. By working with schools, families, and community organizations, it aims to inspire the next generation to think critically and creatively about water stewardship and its multiple threats and vulnerabilities.

The Canadian Museum of Water believes in advocacy for water through education. When young people see water as something they have a relationship with, something that sustains their communities and daily lives, they are much more likely to value and protect it. One of their programs, "I Am Water," emphasizes water's humanlike qualities — giver of life, taker of life (shipwrecks, storms), conveyer, sage, teacher, artist, and friend.

It is so easy to turn on a tap, flush a toilet, set a sprinkler without thinking much about it. We want people to understand the processes behind this, water's impact on us and our impact on water. With all the multiple threats to water in 2026, it is essential that water awareness becomes a kitchen-table topic. As the Canadian Museum of Water settles into its new home on Georgian Bay, its mission remains clear: to help Canadians rediscover their connection to water, and to inspire a new generation to care for it. In a place like Tiny Township, where life at the cottage is shaped by the rhythms of the bay, that message may feel both familiar and meaningful.

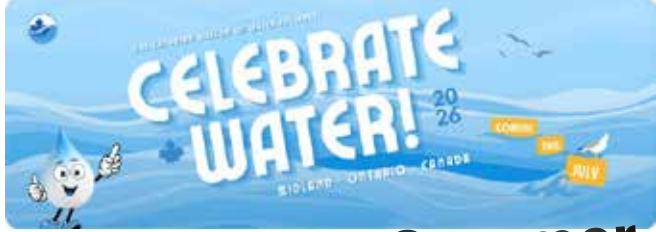
The concept actually stemmed from one of our directors seeing someone throw a coffee cup into Georgian Bay. But would that person throw that into someone's face? If we can instill within people, especially young people, a human-like respect for water, then we know that it will be sustainably looked after for generations to come.

After all, water is not simply something we use. It is something we live for. The Canadian Museum of Water is open 10-4 Tuesdays to

This philosophy shapes everything the museum does. The museum emphasizes interactive learning, storytelling, art, and community engagement. Its programs, for example the Water We Want, which is to feature in schools in Simcoe County and across the country, explore the science of water,

Saturdays at the Midland Cultural Centre, 333 King Street, Midland. To learn more about the museum, visit [www.canadianmuseumofwater.org](http://www.canadianmuseumofwater.org) or email [info@canadianmuseumofwater.org](mailto:info@canadianmuseumofwater.org).

Dan Travers is Executive Director of the Museum of Water.



## Splash into Summer with Celebrate Water!

This month-long, community-wide festival organized by the Canadian Museum of Water, will fill Midland with art, science, music, hands-on activities, and family fun — all inspired by water. Throughout July, events, activities and performances, including a floating art installation in Little Lake Park, "It Comes in Waves," will highlight the importance of water in everyday life.

Family fun and kids activities include:

- kids' activities at the Canadian Museum of Water
- kids' water-themed programs at the Midland Library
- Find Adrian!™ mobile scavenger hunt
- hands-on workshops and interactive experiences
- water-themed fun with CMW volunteers in local summer camps

Find out more about these and other special events:

<https://tinyurl.com/2bmsecnw>.



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We are heavily invested in our community as well. From the beginning Midland Toyota has believed in the "Shop Midland" culture. It's our aim to use local trades, local goods and services with the long term view that the relationships we build will be of value to the community. Still today, we have relationships that have lasted more than 30 years from local businesses that helped us build our store to our first customers that purchased vehicles from us.

From our owner Jim Koch on down our goal at Midland Toyota is to make sure you have the best new or used vehicle experience possible. After all you have invested your money with us and we believe it is our responsibility to look after you to the best of our abilities.

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## Why You Need to Vote in This Year's Municipal Election



Photo by Anna Shvets on Pexels

Voter turnout in municipal elections tends to be lower than in provincial and federal elections even though municipal decisions can have the greatest effect on our daily lives.

How so? Municipalities and their elected officials are responsible for delivering local services, such as road-works, snow removal, building permits, parks, recreation, and library access. They are also responsible for setting property taxes.

Who you vote for can influence how much we are taxed,

how land around us is used and developed, what services are provided, and how well the job is done. Furthermore, long-term planning decisions made now can affect us for decades to come.

Mark this year's municipal election day in your calendar: Monday, October 26. Eligible voters will be able to vote by internet or telephone starting Tuesday, October 13, 2026. It's fast, easy and convenient.

### Who can vote

You can register to vote in Tiny if you are

- 18 or older
- a Canadian citizen and a resident, owner or tenant of land in the township
- the spouse of an owner or tenant of property in the municipality
- on the voters list.

If you are an eligible student voter, you can vote in more than one local election if your permanent home and temporary student home are in different municipalities.

Temporarily living outside of Ontario? You may be able to vote by adding yourself to the register of absentee voters.

### Are you on the voters list?

Elections Ontario maintains an online list of who can vote in municipal and provincial elections. On this site you can con-

firm your information, or update, add or delete it if you

- have changed your name or address
- own or rent a new property
- no longer own or rent a property
- want to remove your information

Visit: <https://www.registertovoteon.ca>.

### How to vote

In September, voters will receive a voter instruction letter (VIL) by mail that contains the address for the voting website and their personal voter ID or voting PIN. More information will be available closer to September.

For voters who require assistance, the Township will set up a voter assistance centre in its offices two weeks prior to voting day.

### How to stay informed

Between now and October 26,

- read, listen to and watch pre-election coverage of local issues
- attend pre-election events
- use candidate literature and websites as a starting point, not an end point
- talk to candidates if you have the opportunity
- talk to your friends and neighbours
- encourage every eligible person you know to vote.

## Meet Our Cartoonist: Lawrence Sagar By LYNNE ARCHIBALD, Nottawaga Beach



Lawrence Sagar loves cartooning and, as executive director of Quest Art in Midland, his other passion is being an "art motivator."

Sagar became the director of Quest Art in 2023 and, since COVID, he is thrilled to see new projects bearing fruit. Sagar sees Quest Art, a not-for-profit, as a community builder focused on developing partnerships across North Simcoe, from schools, local businesses and other arts organizations through to all levels of government.

Sagar has self-published several comic books and has been

commissioned to draw cartoons and illustrations over the years. He responded enthusiastically when *The Tiny Cottager* asked if he would be interested in drawing cartoons for them, with the caveat that he would need detailed briefings. With all that Sagar and Quest Art have going on in every North Simcoe township and beyond, Sagar confesses that he just can't keep up with all the local issues. He's what you could call "an apolitical political cartoonist."

Originally from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Sagar went to Concordia University in Montreal for a Bachelor of Fine Arts and then came back to Toronto and began his career where art and education intersect. Although over the years he set up and ran many innovative art courses, camps and programs for kids and teens in the GTA, Sagar doesn't think of himself as an art teacher. He wants to motivate people to connect with art. His philosophy is that art needs to be tried — all kinds of art, all the time — which is how you find what you love and how you grow as an artist and as a person. This thinking can be seen in action at Quest where art is a big tent in terms of course offerings and exhibitions — for all ages and all skill levels, and in many media.

As Sagar's parents live in Tiny Township, he leapt at Quest Art's offer to work in North Simcoe. He and his family were determined to live as close to Georgian Bay as possible, so now Sagar commutes from Wasaga Beach, which he says is a beautiful journey and a great chance to listen to podcasts — except for this past winter which was a snowy challenge.

For Sagar, in art and life, one can't be afraid to experiment and maybe fail. Failure isn't a negative; it's part of the process. His favourite quotation is from Samuel Beckett: "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better."



### More About Quest Art

There is always something new to see and do at Quest Art School + Gallery in Midland. The centre offers accessible and inclusive art education, encouraging individuals of all ages and backgrounds to explore their artistic potential. In a supportive environment, aspiring artists and art enthusiasts can discover, learn and grow through a diverse range of creative programs, workshops and exhibitions.

Classes and workshops running throughout the year appeal to everyone from novices to experienced artists: <http://www.questart.ca/programming>. For summer and fall exhibitions, see the calendar of events on page 18 of this issue.

This summer Quest Art is offering a series of one-day camps for children and teens. Camp Quest blends skill-building with imagination, offering guided projects, collaborative exploration, and plenty of room for self-expression: <http://www.questart.ca/camps>.



## Interested in Beach Histories?

FoTTSa has posted almost 30 different beach histories on its website: <http://www.tinycottager.org/histories>. We also welcome additional beach histories.



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# SPRING/SUMMER EVENTS

Before attending an event, please visit the event website for possible updates.

## MAY

**From Hand to Heirloom: The Art of Craft (exhibit)**, now to January 8, 2027  
[www.orilliamuseum.org/project/hand2heirloom](http://www.orilliamuseum.org/project/hand2heirloom)

**Made in Orillia: The Toys that Built Childhood (exhibit)**, now to August 29 <https://tinyurl.com/bdf4jac5>

**Bosun's Brig Escape Room: daytime slots**, now to September 6, Discovery Harbour, Penetanguishene <https://discoveryharbour.on.ca/events/escape-room/>

**And/or Watercolour Painting Workshop**, May 16, Wye Marsh [www.wyemarsh.com](http://www.wyemarsh.com)

**Jacob Moon Plays RUSH - and More**, May 22, Midland Cultural Centre\* <https://tinyurl.com/4jfjvm8f>

**The British Home Children: Canada's Forgotten Legacy**, May 23, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum <https://tinyurl.com/3xpnjkue>

**Vintage Bike Swap Meet and Fly-In**, May 23, Huronia Airport <https://tinyurl.com/59rktze9>

**Georgian Bay Gals Give Spring Social**, May 25, Brooklea Golf and Country Club <https://tinyurl.com/249cr5tb>

**Midland Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament**, May 29, Brooklea Golf Club <https://tinyurl.com/26vk5hes>

**Hearth to Table: Dinner in 1648**, May 30, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/mwht7357>

**Midland District Railroad Club's Annual Train & Hobby Show**, May 30-31, North Simcoe Sports & Rec Centre <https://tinyurl.com/36wuvpvn>

**Bay Sound Choir Concert**, May 31, Midland [www.baysound.ca](http://www.baysound.ca)

**Hospice Huronia Hike for Hospice**, May 31, Little Lake Park <https://hospicehuronia.ca/events>

## JUNE

**Introduction to Beading**, June 6, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum <https://tinyurl.com/3xpnjkue>

**Kids Fishing Derby**, June 6, Midland Harbour <https://tinyurl.com/yck79brk>

**Music in the Park - Wasaga Beach**, Tuesdays June 9 through August, Oakview Woods Gazebo <https://tinyurl.com/3wbrhc8z>

**Sister Act**, June 10-27, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene <https://tinyurl.com/342bwzub>

**Tiny Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament**, June 11, Orr Lake Golf Club <https://tinyurl.com/mr2u74ma>

**Georgian Bay Festival**, June 13, 4230 Crossland Road, Tiny <https://georgianbayfestival.com>

**Ontario's Best Butter Tart Festival**, June 13, Midland <https://tinyurl.com/5yjdawwd>

**Senior Symposium**, June 17, Township of Tiny Community Centre <https://tinyurl.com/3bjhnbdw> **Event Sold Out**

**National Indigenous People's Day**, June 18, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/nhdm5ucm>

**Wasaga Beach Cruisers Cruise Fest Weekend Poker Run and Fun Run**, June 19-20 <https://wasagabeachcruisers.ca/cruise-fest-weekend-2026>

**Coldwater & Area Studio Tour**, June 20-21 <https://coldwaterstudiotour.com>

**Rotary Champlain Wendat Park Walking Tour**, June 24, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum <https://tinyurl.com/3xpnjkue>

**Tay Canada Day Celebration**, June 26-27, Oakwood Park, Victoria Harbour <https://tinyurl.com/y26ytrdk>

**Hearth to Table; Dinner in 1648**, June 27, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/mwht7357>

## JULY

**Busk 'til Dusk**, Thursday evenings July/August, Balm Beach [www.tiny.ca/node/2433](http://www.tiny.ca/node/2433)

**Music in the Park**, July 5-August 30 (Sunday evenings), Little Lake Park, Midland [www.tinyurl.com/3xjtkbm](http://www.tinyurl.com/3xjtkbm)

**Canada Day**, July 1,  
• Balm Beach, <https://tinyurl.com/643vypwb>  
• Little Lake Park, <https://tinyurl.com/44kucy53>  
• Penetanguishene Centennial Museum, <https://tinyurl.com/58za93k3>

**Quest Project Gallery Members Exhibition: Abstraction, It Comes in Waves (art installation)**, July 1-31, Little Lake Park <https://tinyurl.com/38smfbbx>

**Shadows & Stone**, July 2-September 3 (Thursday evenings), Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/3prh2zwk>

**Nashville Music City**, July 2-18, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene <https://tinyurl.com/5x9ck4w4>

**Summer Sets Music**, July 3 through August 29 (Friday evenings), Wasaga Stonebridge Gazebo <https://tinyurl.com/3wbrhc8z>

**Ghost Tours, Bosun's Brig Escape Room and/or Secrets of Séance**, July 4-September 5 (Saturday evenings) Discovery Harbour, Penetanguishene <https://discoveryharbour.on.ca/events/ghost-tours>

**Church in the Pines** (interdenominational gathering on Sundays at 10:30am), July 5-August 30 Cawaja Beach [churchinthepines.tiny@gmail.com](mailto:churchinthepines.tiny@gmail.com)

**Movies Under the Stars**, Wednesday evenings July 8-August 26, behind Wasaga RecPlex <https://tinyurl.com/3wbrhc8z>

**Quest Project Gallery Members Exhibition: Warmth**, July 10-September 8 [www.questart.ca/exhibitions](http://www.questart.ca/exhibitions)

**Festival du loup**, July 18, Lafontaine [www.festivalduloup.ca](http://www.festivalduloup.ca)

**Downtown Historical Walking Tours**, July 23, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum <https://tinyurl.com/3xpnjkue>

**Over the River and Through the Woods**, July 23-August 8, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene <https://tinyurl.com/3xzxnry5>

**Georgian Bay Garden Tour**, July 25 [www.facebook.com/gbgardentour](http://www.facebook.com/gbgardentour)

**Hearth to Table: Dinner in 1648**, July 25, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/mwht7357>

## AUGUST

**Georgian Bay Waterfront Festival**, August 8-9, Downtown Midland and Harbourside Park <https://tinyurl.com/yj5hx4p>

**Rotary Champlain Wendat Park Walking Tour**, August 13, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum <https://tinyurl.com/3xpnjkue>

**Barrie Dragon Boat Festival**, August 15 <https://tinyurl.com/22ymvhv7C>

**Return to Grace**, August 13-30, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene <https://tinyurl.com/y2ukd5th>

**Midland Ribfest**, August 14-16, Harbourside Park <https://northernheatribseries.ca/midland>

**Georgian Bay Cycle for Hope**, August 15, North Simcoe <https://tinyurl.com/ynhumxkr>

**Hearth to Table: Royal Court**, August 22, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/mwht7357>

**Canadian Festival of Old Cars**, August 22-23, Simcoe County Museum <https://tinyurl.com/y57sm3eu> **Simcoe**

**Tiny Township Charity Pickleball Tournament**, August 27-30, Balm Beach Parkside Park <https://tinyurl.com/5hzna8zy>

**Wasaga Triathlon**, August 29 <https://tinyurl.com/y9axy8cc>

## SEPTEMBER

**Quest Project Gallery Members Exhibition: FALLing in Love**, September 8 - November 3 [www.questart.ca/exhibitions](http://www.questart.ca/exhibitions)

**Stonebridge Wasaga Beach Blues Festival**, September 18-20 <https://wasagabeachblues.com>

**County Quilt, Rug and Artisan Fair**, September 18-20, Simcoe County Museum <https://tinyurl.com/y57sm3eu>

**Hearth to Table: Dinner in 1648**, September 19, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/mwht7357>

**Coldwater Fall Fair**, September 25-27, Coldwater Community Centre <https://tinyurl.com/3h3w68uf>

**National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**, September 30, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/4uyepysx>

## OCTOBER

**The Bay Studio Tour**, October 3-4, Tiny Township and Penetanguishene <https://tinyurl.com/ya4uey86>

**Seniors' Social: Let's Predict the Future**, October 7, Simcoe County Museum <https://tinyurl.com/y57sm3eu>

**Elmvale Fall Fair**, October 9-10, Elmvale Fairgrounds [www.elmvalefallfair.com](http://www.elmvalefallfair.com)

**Hearth to Table: Dinner in 1648**, October 10, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/mwht7357>

**Hometown Harvest Festival**, October 10-12, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons <https://tinyurl.com/ye29cfff>

**Snow White and the Seven Tenors: A Panto**, October 21-November 14, King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene <https://tinyurl.com/y53248xp>

\* The Midland Cultural Centre hosts tribute band performances and other cultural events throughout the year. See who's performing at <https://www.midlandculturalcentre.com>

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## Save \$\$\$ with FoTTSA's Retail Discount Card



Photo by Dany Kurniawan on Pexels

Show your 2026 FoTTSA discount card to save! Thirteen local retailers and service providers, including all RONA outlets across Canada, provide exclusive offers available only to holders of FoTTSA's discount card.

This year FoTTSA welcomes three new participating merchants: Blue Moon Marine, Cottage Country Pest Control, and Georgian Edge Equipment.

The card is available at no cost to members of shoreline associations that belong to FoTTSA, as well as any Tiny resident who makes a contribution of \$20 or more.

It's a win for everyone. You save, and local businesses have an opportunity to build customer loyalty and gain a competitive advantage through greater visibility.

Here's the list of participating businesses:

- Aim Chimney Sweep
- Blue Moon Marine
- Christine Marshall Wildlife Galley
- Cottage Country Pest Control
- G & S Computer Services Inc.
- Georgian Edge Equipment
- Grandma's Beach Treats
- JenniFER's Grooming
- Midland Furniture
- Peggy Worthen, Broker, Re/Max Georgian Bay Realty Ltd.
- RONA

- Templeton Windows
- Wasaga Adventure Park Home of Wasaga Paintball

This list is subject to change, so check the Tiny Cottager website for program details, including a list of all participating merchants and the nature of the available discounts: [www.tinycottager.org/retailers-discounts](http://www.tinycottager.org/retailers-discounts).

Discount cards are distributed by each FoTTSA member association to its own members. If you're not an association member and wish to receive a discount card by making a \$20+ contribution to FoTTSA, send an email to [secretary.fotts@tinycottager.org](mailto:secretary.fotts@tinycottager.org). Shop local, show the card, and let business owners know we appreciate their involvement.

If you are a business serving Tiny Township residents and interested in participating in the program, contact us today: [secretary.fotts@tinycottager.org](mailto:secretary.fotts@tinycottager.org).

## Regrouping to Study Tiny's Pristine Groundwater By MIKE POWELL



The inception of the Groundwaters of Huronia (GOH) project began decades ago, when Professor Bill Shotyk became curious about the quality of the water that bubbles up through the ground at his small farm just north of Elmvale. This is the same water

available to everyone at the Elmvale Kiosk.

For over 35 years, Bill analyzed the water for trace and minor inorganic contaminants that might suggest human impact on water quality in his various university laboratories, and he also had it analyzed by top labs in Europe for organic contaminants, but no imprint of human intervention was ever found.

As time went on, Bill and colleagues began talking about how this water could have evolved into its current state, a scientific curiosity. In 2018, the first stakeholders engagement meeting took place at the Elmvale Public Library to publicize the water quality, which was initially brought to

the public forefront during Site 41 activities. Subsequently, a 3-university, 5-academic, and 11-partner project was planned.

A funding application was submitted to the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) in October 2025. However, the project was not found suitable for funding because it did not meet NSERC's "societal benefits" criteria.

Currently, project proponents are lobbying NSERC to reconsider, believing the potential findings of the work would apply to all aspects of society, and could be transferred to other organizations throughout Canada: the 11 partners are associated with over 300 similar organizations, and the project will provide the best scientific results possible to unravel the natural processes responsible for the water's pristine quality.

These data are important, because without them and the new scientific knowledge that will result, it is almost impossible for any government sector to develop informed policy about water use, protection and conservation. Each sector has its own perception of how and why the Huronia ground water is pristine, but none has any rigorous science to back up their claim.

The GOH project would have provided the first empirical data for all stakeholders to support or deny judgements about water extraction and use. The resulting findings could have affected human physical and mental well-being, and influenced financial, ecological, environmental and technological decisions related to water extraction. Governments and authorities (conservation and environmental) would have had the new science knowledge to adjust regulations and policies to foster stronger water stewardship. The private sector would have information to improve their business models and avoid public and legal conflicts, or to build water filtration systems. The GOH project would also have informed all end-users how to manage the water as a valuable resource, rather than as just "water."

We will find another way to get the funding. The team has met, and we are committed to moving forward. It may be through charitable donations, responsible private sector companies, or in-kind contributions. We trust that our 11 partners, who are tremendously important for helping disseminate the societal benefits, will stay with us.

*Dr. Mike Powell, PhD (geochemistry), is Adjunct Professor, University of Alberta, Department of Renewable Resources.*

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