

Wasaga Beach NEWS

September 2024



Ellen Timms
Councillor



Richard White
Councillor



Tanya Snell
Deputy Mayor



Brian Smith
Mayor



Faye Ego
Councillor



Joe Belanger
Councillor



Sasha-Rose Dileo
Councillor

Message from the Mayor

As the sun sets on another incredible summer in Wasaga Beach, we reflect on a season filled with celebration as we continued to mark our 50th anniversary with outstanding live music, entertainment, and the biggest increase in tourism we have seen in over a decade.

Throughout the summer, we also continued to advocate at the provincial level to further support and promote the world's longest freshwater beach. Council and Town staff wrapped up the season at the annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference in Ottawa. We held productive meetings with Premier Doug Ford and key ministries, including Infrastructure, Tourism, Sport, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Transportation.

These discussions were followed by Council passing a motion for the Province and Town to come together to review the guiding principles under which the world's longest freshwater beach was originally expropriated and turned into a Provincial Park: To provide outdoor recreation opportunities for the people of Ontario, together with year-round tourism and economic opportunities for the Town of Wasaga Beach.

The motion also calls for a provincial task force to be formed with representatives from the Town, The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and the Ministry of Infrastructure to

Our new Vision Statement is supported by five **Strategic Pillars for Change** and eighty-four **Implementation Actions**.

MAY 2024 UPDATE: OVER 80% OF THESE ACTIONS ARE COMPLETE OR CURRENTLY UNDER WAY.

COMPLETE

Pursue complete neighbourhoods

INCLUSIVE

Build a community where residents are happy, healthy & safe

OPPORTUNITIES

Diversify the economy & create jobs

WELL-RUN

Strive for excellence in customer service & corporate culture

GREEN

Demonstrate leadership in responding to climate change

Continued on page 2

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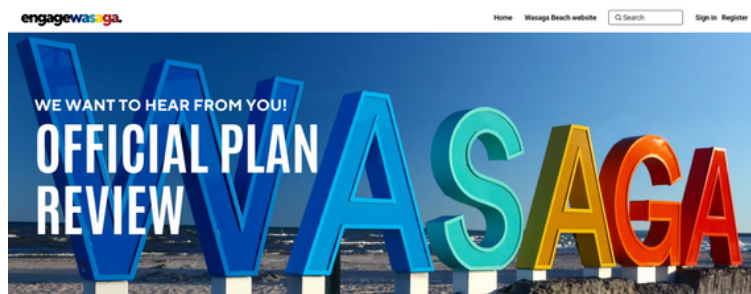
review all provincial landholdings within Wasaga Beach and determine which lands should be transferred out of the Ministry of the Environment portfolio and put into either the Ministry of Tourism, Infrastructure Ontario, or the Town's portfolios. This is a critical step in strengthening our economy and achieving our goals of becoming a complete community, and a world-class, year-round Ontario destination.

We know there is a better way to protect and promote the unique aspects of the world's longest freshwater beach and Nancy Island historic site. Unfortunately, both assets have been underfunded for decades. We believe they belong with a ministry who has the expertise and resources to collaboratively oversee and inspire the development of world-class attractions and destinations.

As we head into the fall, we welcome students to the brand new Wasaga Beach Public School located at 42 Union Boulevard. Council also welcomes the dramatic shift by the Simcoe County District School Board who has recently made a high school for Wasaga Beach their #2 capital priority. Wasaga Beach's advocacy is paying off! If approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education, the new project will be the second high school approved for the Town in just over one year. Wasaga Beach's first high school, which received \$57.7 million in funding earlier this spring, will be built by the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board in partnership with the Town.

Fall is also busy time at Town Hall with staff preparing the 2025 Budget to be presented to Council and we want to hear from you! Your input is critical in shaping the services and projects that matter most to our community. Please join us for the Budget Public Meeting on **October 24th, from 7:00–9:00 p.m.** in the RE/MAX Room at the Wasaga Beach Stars Arena. If you can't attend in person, we welcome your feedback online at engagewasaga.ca.

Mayor Brian Smith



The Official Plan, will modernize land use planning policies to responsibly and sustainably guide our community's growth until 2051. We invite you to participate in the **October 10 public meeting** and provide feedback either in person, in writing, by e-mail, or online.

Visit wasagabeach.com/engage.



Wasaga Beach presents

FALL & WINTER

festivals & events lineup 2024

- SEPT 27-28** **Rocktoberfest** featuring **David Wilcox, Ashley Maclsaac, and more!**
- OCTOBER 12** **Hootenanny** a rootin', tootin', good time at the RecPlex
- NOVEMBER 1** **Pumpkin Trail** featuring hundreds of jack-o-lanterns on the **Oakview Woods** trail
- NOVEMBER 11** **Remembrance Day Ceremony** recognizing those who served
- NOVEMBER 23** **Christmas Market, Santa Claus Parade & Tree Lighting**
- NOVEMBER 24** **Christmas Market & Funderland** at the RecPlex

See more: 50YearsofSunshine.ca

Follow us on social

- Town of Wasaga Beach Recreation & Facilities Explore Wasaga Beach WB Youth Centre
- @explorewasagabeach @wasaga_beach_rec_facilities @wb youthcentre
- Town of Wasaga Beach @wb_media

NEWSROOM

Catch up on all Town news you might have missed at WASAGABEACH.COM/NEWS

Latest headlines:

David Wilcox and Ashley MacIsaac to Headline First Annual Rock-toberfest Celebration in Wasaga Beach

Two-day celebration takes place September 27 & 28; Tickets available now!

Simcoe County District School Board to Make a High School for the Town of Wasaga Beach its #2 Capital Priority

The Simcoe County District School Board has elevated a high school for Wasaga Beach to its #2 capital priority, following the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board's approval of a similar project, positioning Wasaga Beach to potentially gain two high schools by 2029, pending provincial approval.

Town Calls On Province to Place Wasaga Beach and Nancy Island Under the Ontario Ministry of Tourism

Wasaga Beach is urging the Province to transfer the World's Longest Freshwater Beach and Nancy Island from the Ministry of the Environment to the Ministry of Tourism to better align with the Town's goal of becoming a year-round tourism destination.

Wasaga Beach Launches Re-branded, Beach-Themed Transit Fleet

In celebration of its 50th anniversary, Wasaga Beach has partnered with BluWave to launch a newly-branded, beach-themed transit fleet featuring surfboards and SUPs, as part of the town's new tourism brand.

Bold New Destination Management Plan and Tourism Website Launches

With tourism at its highest levels in nearly a decade, Wasaga Beach has launched a new Tourism Destination Management Plan and website to further boost local tourism and enhance resident quality of life and economic prosperity.

Town Adopts New Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

The Town of Wasaga Beach has adopted a new Indigenous land acknowledgement to honour local Indigenous communities and promote inclusivity and reconciliation as part of National Indigenous Peoples Day and History Month.



WASAGA
are you a local
tourism operator?
we want you on
our new tourism
website!

PUBLIC MEETINGS

#happeningsoon #savethedate

OCTOBER 10

New Wasaga Beach Official Plan Open House

🕒 7:00 - 9:00 PM

📅 October 10, 2024

📍 Re/Max Room, Wasaga Stars Arena
544 River Road West, Wasaga Beach

OCTOBER 24

Proposed 2025 Operational and Capital Budgets

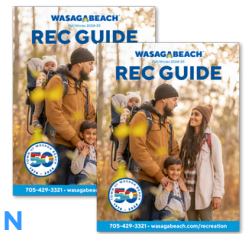
🕒 7:00 - 9:00 PM

📅 October 24, 2024

📍 Re/Max Room, Wasaga Stars Arena
544 River Road West, Wasaga Beach

Fall/Winter Rec Guide

AVAILABLE
NOW



WASAGABEACH.COM/RECREATION



MyWasaga

The Town of Wasaga Beach is making it even easier to manage your property tax and utility accounts. The new **MyWasaga** customer service portal will give you access to detailed account information for your property taxes and utility bills. It also provides links to valuable services including pet licensing, bus passes, facilities bookings, property searches and building permits.

MyWasaga also provides residents the ability to:

- view detailed account information
- make payments to both property taxes and water accounts instantly
- manage preauthorized payment plans
- sign up for ebilling

Learn more: wasagabeach.com/mywasaga

The longest freshwater beach in the world.



COUNCIL ADVOCACY

Council continues to advocate at all levels of government on the issues that matter most to Wasaga Beach residents, including infrastructure funding, attainable housing, redeveloping the beachfront, strengthening tourism and the local economy, more funding and better management of Wasaga Beach Provincial Park and Nancy Island, and more.

Most recently, Mayor Smith and members of Council met with Ontario Premier Doug Ford, cabinet ministers and officials at the Association for Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference in Ottawa from August 18 - 21, 2024. Delegations were well received and follow-up continues.

Following meetings with the Premier and six cabinet ministers, the Mayor and Council returned to Wasaga Beach where they introduced and passed a motion calling on the Province to form a task force in collaboration with the Town to move the world's longest freshwater beach and Nancy Island out of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and into the Ontario Ministry of Tourism. This was one of the Town's main asks at AMO - for the Province to recognize the impact that issues and operations at the Provincial Park have on the tourism economy of Wasaga Beach, and to invest more in Wasaga Beach Provincial Park and Nancy Island historic site, which have been chronically underfunded for decades. The issue has garnered regional and national interest, and Mayor Smith continues to speak to the media about why the Town of Wasaga Beach is calling on the province for a new deal.



Premier Doug Ford delivering his speech to municipalities and delegates at AMO



MPP Brian Saunderson, Premier Doug Ford, Mayor Brian Smith

Council and staff met with Ontario Minister of Infrastructure, Kinga Surma to discuss infrastructure priorities and the issue of millions of dollars of vacant, underutilized, provincially owned parcels of land in the Town of Wasaga Beach. The Minister acknowledged that the government is working on a solution to better understand what lands the province owns and where possible, free up provincially owned land for higher and better uses in municipalities, including the Town of Wasaga Beach.



Council and staff met with Ontario Minister of Sport, Neil Lumsden.



Council and staff met with Ontario Minister of Tourism, Stan Cho.



Next up, Council and staff are preparing to attend:

- **Town of Wasaga Beach Queen's Park Lobby Day: November 7, 2024**
- **Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference: January 19-21, 2025**

WORKING FOR A FAIR DEAL FOR WASAGA BEACH - REGIONAL UPLOADING OF WATER/SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

On July 7, 2024 following meetings at the regional level, Deputy CAO Gerry Marshall presented on behalf of the Town and Council to the Provincial Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy, to advocate for a fair deal for the rate payers and residents of Wasaga Beach.

For decades, the Town has made significant investments in our water and wastewater infrastructure. We have 50% capacity to support new homes and businesses for years to come. Any regional uploading of water and wastewater infrastructure will have the unintended consequence of penalizing the Town of Wasaga Beach for doing the right thing, making the hard choices, and investing in water and wastewater infrastructure while other municipalities did not.



The longest freshwater beach in the world.