



Staff Report

Community Services – By-law Enforcement

Report To: COW- Admin, Corp and Finance, SI, Comm. Services
Meeting Date: April 13, 2026
Report Number: CS.26.016
Title: Follow-up Report to the Request of Georgian Hills Vineyard, to Amend Noise By-law Relief for the 2026 Year
Prepared by: Debbie Young, Manager of By-law and Licensing

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report CS.26.016, entitled “Follow-up Report to the Request of Georgian Hills Vineyard, to Amend Noise By-law Relief for the 2026 Year”.

AND THAT, in response to the requested amendment, Council selects Option #___ as further described in the within Staff Report CS.26.016.

B. Overview

The purpose of this report is to present Council with an amended application for relief from the Municipal Noise By-law to permit outdoor amplified sound beyond standard permitted hours for scheduled events at Georgian Hills Vineyard, and to provide analysis and recommended conditions.

C. Background

At the February 17, 2026, Council Meeting, staff were directed by Council as follows:

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains receives the Deputation of Robert Ketchin, Georgian Hills Vineyard, regarding Request for Amendment;

AND THAT Council direct staff to provide a report in response to the February 2, 2026, deputation of Mr. Ketchin, Georgian Hills Vineyard requesting an amendment to the March 10, 2025 Council resolution that provided an exemption for events at Georgian Hills Vineyard scheduled for 2026 events between the first week of June to the first week of September.

The following are 3 amendments requested by the Georgian Hills Vineyard:

1. The maximum number of guests be increased from 90 to 130 with the majority of events expected to have approximately 90 guests;

2. Outdoor wedding activities will be shut down by 12 midnight; and
3. The event period is from the first week of June to the second week of September. Georgian Hills Vineyard advises that there may potentially be 6 to 7 events for 2026.
4. Georgian Hills Vineyard has noted that they are content with a maximum number of 15 event dates moving forward in subsequent years during the noted time frame of first week of June to the second week of September.

Georgian Hills Vineyard will continue to deploy noise monitoring devices. The maximum sound level will remain below 45 decibels at the property line.

Noise By-law 2002-9 establishes a general prohibition on noise likely to disturb and includes sound from music or electronic devices operated at a volume likely to disturb residents' peace, quiet, comfort or repose. The By-law further recognizes that certain noises may be authorized by the municipality and is enforceable through Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and or the OPP under the Provincial Offences Act. As such, where Council considers authorizing relief for scheduled events, conditions should be clear, measurable, and operationally enforceable.

D. Analysis

On March 4, 2026, notice of the requested amendment to the noise by-law relief was sent to neighbouring properties within 120 meters of Georgian Hills Vineyard, consistent with Town practice for Noise By-law relief requests.

Staff received two responses from neighbouring properties, summarized below:

PETER FRANKLYN (Per correspondence of January 27, 2026)

1. Georgian Hills Vineyard is requesting the removal of key provisions implemented in the relief from the Noise By-law. These conditions resulted in controlling the previous problem (i.e. limiting events to 90 participants and moving dancing indoors after 9:30 p.m.
2. The removal of these conditions would effectively render the previous exemption meaningless.
3. Georgian Hills Vineyard should provide convincing evidence that removing these requirements will not result in a return of the noise problem and why a modification of the restrictions (e.g., a modest increase in attendees and a later indoor time such as 10:00 p.m. or 10:30 p.m.) would not be adequate.

LINDSAY SQUIRE (Per correspondence of March 12, 2026)

1. Why is this matter being revisited? Robert assured us that the indoor dance floor and times of use would be in effect for the 2026 season.
2. We are upset to find out that the outdoor music might play until midnight throughout the summer.
3. They are the closest and most affected property.
4. We object to Georgian Hills Vineyards request for the amendment.

Noise By-law framework and Council authority

The Town's Noise By-law prohibits noise that is likely to disturb inhabitants and identifies, among other examples, sound from radios, electronic devices, musical instruments when operated in a manner or volume likely to disturb residents' peace, quiet, comfort, or repose. The By-law also states it does not affect noises or sounds authorized by the municipality, which provides the basis for Council to grant time-limited relief subject to conditions.

Assessment of the requested amendments and considerations for a balanced approach

Georgian Hills Vineyard is requesting amendments to the existing relief to:

- (1) increase maximum guests from 90 to 130 (noting most events will be 90),
 - (2) permit outdoor wedding activities until 12:00 a.m., and
 - (3) extend the event period from the first week of June to the second week of September.
- Georgian Hills Vineyard also indicates it will continue to use sound monitoring devices and remain under 45 decibels.

Council has received both (a) an operational/business rationale for greater flexibility (including a preference for dancing outdoors under the tent and the desire to extend the end of the season) and (b) neighbour concerns focused on the potential loss of the conditions that were perceived as central to achieving a complaint-free outcome.

Given these competing interests, Council may wish to consider authorizing relief between the two positions by approving the requested amendments in principle, but attaching additional conditions that:

- clarify what is permitted outdoors (e.g., "outdoor amplified music" versus "outdoor activities");
- set an enforceable time transition for outdoor amplified music/dancing (rather than an unrestricted allowance to 12:00 a.m.); and
- manage frequency and intensity impacts through event limits and operational requirements (responsible person protocol, monitoring, and complaint response).

This approach aligns with the by-law's intent to regulate noise that is likely to disturb while allowing Council to authorize limited relief where appropriate and where impacts can be mitigated through clear, enforceable conditions.

Council may consider the following options:

Option 1 – Approve the Requested Amendments

Council may approve the requested amendments to the previously granted Noise By-law exemption for the 2026 season which exempts Georgian Hills Vineyard from requesting exemptions for events, which events could be held on consecutive days (ex. Friday and Saturday, or any other day of the week). Additionally, this would include the following amendments:

- Increasing the maximum number of guests from 90 to 130;
- Permitting outdoor wedding activities until 12:00 a.m.; and
- Extending the event period from the first week of June to the second week of September.

Council may also choose to maintain the condition that Georgian Hills Vineyard continue to monitor outdoor sound levels and ensure they remain below 45 decibels and keep the responsible person process in place.

Option 2 – Approve the Amendments with Additional Conditions

Council may approve the requested amendments with additional conditions intended to address concerns raised by neighbouring properties. Such conditions could include, but are not limited to:

- Maintaining the requirement for Georgian Hills Vineyard to use sound monitoring during events and operate at or below 45 dB (as a condition of authorization), and to continue the “responsible person” protocol for addressing concerns during events.;
- Limiting the number of events permitted during the exemption period;
- Limiting the maximum number of guests to 110-120 guests;
- Outdoor amplified sound end time (standard + limited exceptions): Requiring outdoor amplified music/sound to end and move indoors by 11:00 p.m., with outdoor amplified music/sound permitted until 12:00 a.m. on no more than 15 dates during the exemption period.

Option 3 – Maintain the Existing Council Resolution

Council may choose to maintain the existing conditions established through the March 10, 2025, Council resolution, which limits events to 90 participants and requires outdoor amplified music to cease earlier in the evening.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

None

G. Financial Impacts

There are no financial impacts to the Town associated with this request.

H. In Consultation With

Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services

Robert Ketchin, Georgian Hills Vineyard

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, in accordance with the Noise By-law Exemption practice, Notice was circulated to all properties located within 120 meters of the Georgian Hill Vineyard.

Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Debbie Young, Manager of By-law and Licensing, bylawadmin@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Notice
2. Attachment 1 – Comments from neighbours
3. Noise By-law

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Young
Manager of By-law and Licensing

For more information, please contact:
Debbie Young, Manager of By-law and Licensing
bylawadmin@thebluemountains.ca
519-599-3131 extension 242

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	CS.26.016 Follow-up Report to the Request of Georgian Hills Vineyard, to Amend Noise Bylaw Relief for the 2026 Year .docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 Notice GHV.docx - Attachment 2 Comments.pdf - Attachment 3 Noise By-law 2002 – 9.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Apr 1, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Ryan Gibbons - Apr 1, 2026 - 5:16 PM



Enforcement Services Department
By-Law Division
32 Mill Street
Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0
Tel.: (519) 599-3131, ext. 258
bylawinfo@thebluemountains.ca
www.thebluemountains.ca

Date: March 4, 2026

NOTICE OF BY-LAW RELIEF REQUEST

VIA: Regular Mail

RE: Noise By-law Exemption Request
496350 Grey Road 2 – Georgian Hills Vineyard

Please be advised that the Town is in receipt of a request from the owner of the above-noted property for a revision to their current exemption to the Town's Noise By-law.

Currently, Georgian Hills Vineyard has a blanket exemption for events that are scheduled from the first week of June through first week of September, with a maximum attendance of 90 people, indoor dancing after 9:30pm and onwards, provided that noise monitoring continues and remains at or below the Ontario Environmental Noise Guidelines of 45 decibels.

Georgian Hills Vineyard has requested the following revisions to their exemption:

- Events that are scheduled from the first week of June through *second* week of September
- maximum attendance of *130 people* (though they have noted that most events will be 90 people or less)
- Removal of the requirement to move dancing indoors at 9:30pm. Outdoor wedding activities will be shut down by 12:00am

If you wish to provide written comments related to this request, you can do so by:

1. delivering a letter to the Town's By-law Department clearly marked "Noise By-law Exemption Request – Georgian Hills"; or
2. by email to bylawinfo@thebluemountains.ca

Submitted comments will be summarized in a Staff Report to Council on April 13, 2026.

Written comments must be received no later than March 18, 2026.

If you have any questions, please contact the By-Law Services Division at (519) 599-3131, extension 258 or bylawinfo@thebluemountains.ca.

TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS
Enforcement Services

Carrie Fairley

Subject: deputation regarding Georgian Hills Vineyards 2026 request for amendment to Noise Bylaw exemption

Sent: January 27, 2026 1:31 AM

To: Corrina Giles <cgiles@thebluemountains.ca>

Subject: deputation regarding Georgian Hills Vineyards 2026 request for amendment to Noise Bylaw exemption

Dear Madam Clerk

Please provide to Council and read into the record at the public meeting the following comments in response to the deputation by Robert Ketchin/Georgian Hills Vineyard contained in item B.11 of the COW Agenda for the Feb 2/26 COW meeting.

Mr Ketchin seeks the removal of key provisions that were wisely required by Council as a condition of granting Mr Ketchin /GHV broad relief from the TBM Noise Bylaw which effectively provides them a multi-year exemption from that bylaw.

GHV is to be commended for effectively controlling and monitoring noise from its venue over the 2025 season. This has resulted in a lack of complaints since the 2025 exemption was granted.

However what they are now requesting is the complete removal of two of the key conditions which resulted in controlling the previous problem (ie limiting events to 90 participants and moving dancing indoors after 930pm).

The removal of these conditions would effectively render the previous exemption meaningless.

Before Council considers granting the requested relief it should:

(i) require GHV to provide convincing evidence that removing these requirements will not result in a return of the noise problem.

(ii) require GHV to explain why the complete elimination of these conditions is required rather than a modification of the restrictions (eg increasing the permitted number of participants to say 100 or 110 and changing the time for moving dancing inside to 10 or 1030pm) is not adequate.

Regards

Peter Franklyn

Debbie Young

From: Lindsay Squire [REDACTED]
Sent: March 12, 2026 10:18 AM
To: Bylaw Info
Subject: Noise By-law Exemption Request 496350 Grey Road 2 - Georgian Hills Vineyard

Dear Town of the Blue Mountains Enforcement Services,

In response to the above- mentioned request, we would first ask why this matter is being revisited?

We are the closest and most affected property to the vineyard and have been as accommodating and patient as we could: Robert assured us that the indoor dance floor and its times of use would be in effect for the 2026 season.

Now we are upset to find that assurance is false and that outdoor music will play until midnight throughout the summer.

Therefore we strongly object to the request.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Squire and Meredith Scourfield -Thomas

Sent

from my iPhone

CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

BY-LAW 2002 – 9

Office Consolidation
(By-laws 2002-60 & 2004-16)

Being a By-law to prohibit or regulate noises within the municipality likely to disturb.

WHEREAS Section 210 (138) of the *Municipal Act*, chap. M.45, R.S.O. 1990 and amendments thereto enables the councils of local municipalities to pass by-laws for prohibition or regulation within the municipality of noises likely to disturb the inhabitants;

AND WHEREAS section 61 of the *Provincial Offences Act*, chap. P.33, R.S.O. 1990 and amendments thereto provides for a general maximum penalty upon conviction not to exceed \$5,000.00;

AND WHEREAS it is deemed expedient to pass a by-law for the prohibition or regulation of noise within the municipality in a format that would allow enforcement by both a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer and the Ontario Provincial Police;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains hereby enacts as follows:

1. THAT no person shall make noise or cause noise to be made or permit noise to be made that would be likely to disturb the inhabitants of the municipality.
2. THAT for the purposes of Section 1, the following noises or sounds, among others, shall be deemed likely to disturb the inhabitants of the municipality:
 - (a) The sound or noise from, or created by, any radio, television, phonograph, or any other electronic device, or any musical or sound producing instrument of whatsoever kind when such radio, television, phonograph, device or instrument is played or operated in such a manner or with such volume likely to disturb the peace, quiet, comfort or repose of any inhabitant within, or having quiet enjoyment of the lands upon which is located, any dwelling unit, apartment building, hotel, motel, or any other type of residence.
 - (b) The yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling, singing, or any other sound made by an individual in such a manner which is likely to disturb the peace, quiet, comfort or repose of any other inhabitant within, or having quiet enjoyment of the lands upon which is located, any dwelling unit, apartment building, hotel, motel or any other type of residence.
 - (c) The operation of construction vehicles or the act of construction between the hours of 19:00 hours of any weekday to 07:00 hours of the next weekday save and except Saturday from 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours which is likely to disturb the peace, quiet, comfort or repose of any other inhabitant within, or having quiet enjoyment of the lands upon which is located, any dwelling unit, apartment building, hotel, motel or any other type of residence, unless written permission to specifically extend or alter the hereinbefore mentioned time periods has been given in writing by Council.

- (d) The sound from the operation of any powered or non-powered tool, for domestic purposes (other than snow removal) which is operated in such a manner likely to disturb the peace, quiet, comfort or repose of any inhabitant within, or having quiet enjoyment of the lands upon which is located, any dwelling unit, apartment building, hotel, motel or any other type of residence, between the hours of 23:00 hours of one day to 07:00 hours of the next day (09:00 hours on Sundays).
- (e) The persistent noise made by any domestic pet, or any animals kept for commercial purposes, likely to disturb the peace, quiet, comfort, or repose of any inhabitant in the same building or in the neighbourhood, at any time.
- (f) The grating, grinding, rattling noise or any other noise caused by a condition of disrepair or maladjustment of any motor vehicle or other vehicle whatsoever or part or accessory thereof likely to disturb the peace, quiet, comfort or repose of any other inhabitant within the municipality.

3. THAT this By-law does not affect:

- a) Any bona fide agricultural use or practice engaged in by a bona fide farmer or employee thereof.
- b) The operation of snow-making machinery or snow-grooming vehicles.
- c) The operation of snow-removal equipment.
- d) Noises or sounds authorized by the municipality. (By-law No. 2002-60)
- e) Noises or sounds related to the non-residential use of land that is permitted by a by-law enacted by the municipality pursuant to Section 34 of the *Planning Act* between the hours of 07:00 hours and 19:00 hours. (By-law 2002-60)
- f) Noises or sounds related to the non-residential use of land that is permitted pursuant to the regulations made under the *Niagara Escarpment Planning And Development Act* between the hours of 07:00 hours and 19:00 hours. (By-law 2002-60)
- g) Noises or sounds authorized by the Blue Mountain Village Association originating within the "Village at Blue Mountain" (Parts 1-40, 16R-7451) between the hours of 07:00 hours and 23:00 hours. (By-law No. 2002-60)
- h) Noises or sounds related to the use of lands known as Part of Lot 5 and Part of Lot 6, Concession 8, Roll No.: 7-046-02, by the Blue Ridge Sportsmen's Club Inc. between the hours of 08:00 and 21:00 on any day, subject to any Provincial or Federal Statute or Regulation with regard to the discharge of firearms and/or weapons. (By-law 2004-16)

4. THAT every person who contravenes any provision of this By-law is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a penalty as provided in the *Provincial Offences Act*.

5. THAT should any section, clause or provision of this By-law be declared by a court of a competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the same shall not affect the validity of the By-law as a whole or in part hereof, other than the part which was declared to be invalid.

6. THAT Township of Collingwood By-laws No. 92-28, 95-37 and 96-9, Town of Thornbury By-law No. 20A-1983 and Town of The Blue Mountain By-law No. 2000-44 are hereby rescinded and repealed.

Read a first and second time this 28 day of January, 2002.

Read a third time and passed this 28 day of January, 2002

.....
Ross Arthur, Mayor

.....
Stephen Keast, Clerk