



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:
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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