



Georgian Hills Vineyards
April 13, 2026
Robert Ketchin
Response to Report CS. 26.016
Amendment Request CS 25.015



RECAP: Deputation on Feb 2, 2026, requested an amendment to what was granted in Staff Report CS.25.015 March 10, 2025

- ENTITLED: “Georgian Hills Vineyard Amended 2025 Noise By-law Relief Requests” and exempts Georgian Hills Vineyard from requesting exemptions for events scheduled the first week of June **through first week of September** during 2026 and subsequent years with a **maximum attendance of 90 people, indoor dancing after 9:30pm and onwards** providing that noise monitoring continues and remains at or below the Ontario Environmental Noise Guidelines of 45 decibels;
- THE AMENDMENT REQUEST WAS TO DEAL WITH THREE KEY ISSUES:
 - **a maximum limit of attendance to 90 people**
 - **the intention to move to indoor dancing after 9:30pm**
 - **event schedule ended at the first weekend of September**

Issue #1 - Amendment request to CS 25.015

- **ISSUE #1: People Limitation:** A maximum attendance of 90 people was stated in the exemption because Georgian Hills owns the “crush pad” tent 30 x 60 which has a capacity of 90 people
- **FACT** - (1 in 10) couples request a larger peaked tent, just for dinner (not for dancing). The larger peak dinner tent is erected in the meadow on grass ideal for 110 – 130 people
- **Rationale for Amendment:** Increasing the maximum attendance stated to go from 90 to 130 means we do not have to come back to council and neighbours for permission for the one time a year we have a large dinner tent wedding.

Issue #2 - Amendment request to CS 25.015

- **ISSUE 2: Indoor Dancing:** The intention was to market and promote “dancing inside” the winery after 9:30. NOTE the space would have been limited to 50 people and had not been tested at the time of submission. It was still in concept.
- **FACT:** We quickly learned that indoor dancing was a BIG deterrent especially if limited to 50 people. Outdoors was the key feature for choosing Georgian Hills for the ceremony, reception, dinner and especially the après dinner socializing and dancing under a tent and the night sky.
- **Rationale for Amendment:** We have had ZERO COMPLAINTS the past two years (22 events) while everyone has been dancing outdoors.
- Based on staff’s Report CS. 26.003 and review and the **absence of complaints** or enforcement issues, **the noise exemption was implemented in a responsible manner.** The proactive designation of a responsible person to address concerns **contributed to effective communication and compliance.**

Issue #3 - Amendment request to CS 25.015

- **ISSUE 3: Event Schedule is 1 week Short:** In the initial discussions the outcome of the Staff report CS 25.015 on March 10, 2025, we would like to bring to the attention of staff and council there was a misunderstanding in the transcript, it should have read “first week June through to second week September”.
- **FACT:** If you take a look at our past event dates 2024 / 2025 and now 2026 you will see the 2nd weekend of September is always booked.
- **Rationale for Amendment:** It just makes good business sense going forward to include 2nd week September as fall dates are very popular.

SUMMARY – THE FACTS

- Georgian Hills has demonstrated proven accountability over the past two years. By hosting over 22 wedding events on weekends, we have demonstrated compliance in all ways requested by the town WITH ZERO COMPLAINTS.
- We have implemented best practices on sound management through the assigned onsite manager, along with visual desk top decibel monitoring equipment required of approved DJ's, with clear decibel limits set for each stage through out the evening.
- By using Noise Aware remote decibel sensor readers, the owner is also kept informed around the clock of onsite decibels and is warned immediately of any noise exceeding the set target thresholds. If exceeded this results in an immediate call to the site manager.
- Note as required by Town By Law we monitor and record all events with Reid 8080 equipment on the property line 6 pm – 12 am, the digital decibel readings are available for By Law on request.
- **MOST IMPORTANT FACT:** All 22 weddings over the past two years the dancing and evening socializing was held outdoors under tent, this included three large tent dinners with 130 people in attendance, and all events ran till midnight. WITH ZERO COMPLAINTS.

Ontario Winery Thesis Statement: Compliance, Accountability, Self Governance

The following thesis statement best captures the outlined responsibilities:

"To maintain operational legitimacy, an Ontario winery holding both a manufacturers and liquor sales license must act as its own primary gatekeeper, accepting full accountability for consistent, at-all-times compliance with AGCO, LCBO, and VQA regulations, as well as local municipal bylaws, thereby acknowledging that the responsibility for lawful conduct rests with the licensee and inviting periodic, rigorous inspections to verify such adherence."

The core idea is that compliance is not just about avoiding penalties, but about governing the business with integrity to maintain the right to operate in Ontario.

This includes Noise By Law compliance, accountability and self governance.

Georgian Hills Update on Bookings (to date)

- BOOKINGS 2026 – Only 3 in comparison to 10 in 2024 and 12 in 2025
 - July 11th for 25 people
 - August 22nd for 65 people
 - Sept 12th for 70 people
- BOOKINGS 2027 – Only 1
 - June 12th for 100 people
- SUMMARY:
 - Bookings are down for several reasons – economy, demographics
 - However, we have lost sales due to the restrictions on the issues being discussed and the uncertainty of getting TBM approval for the coming years.

Georgian Hills request of Council move to amend CS.25.015

- AMENDMENT REQUEST HAS BEEN ADJUSTED TO READ:

“Georgian Hills Vineyard Amended 2025 Noise By-law Relief Requests”
..... and exempts Georgian Hills Vineyard from requesting exemptions for events scheduled the first week of June through second week of September during 2026 and subsequent years ***with a maximum attendance of 130 people***. Providing that noise monitoring continues and remains at or below the Ontario Environmental Noise Guidelines of 45 decibels;

* If the above proposed amendment still does not meet your approval or due to protocol and procedure. Then I ask that Council Approves Option 1 proposed by Staff in report CS 26.016 Note we have always had exemption till 12:00am.



Agri-Tourism (Just a reminder)

Opportunities/Benefits

- Increase partnership with agriculture community and growth of agri-tourism
- Tourism-supportive land-use policies and by-laws
- Create welcoming environment for businesses and newcomers
 - Reducing bureaucratic red tape: including simplifying the permitting processes and bylaws that impact operations, innovation, enhancement, and diversification of local businesses (i.e., business signage, and agritourism development).
- Increase awareness of the area and heads in bed = MAT \$s



Municipal Accommodation Tax

Craft Ontario Wine & Cider FACT: Every dollar sold on site at the farm has a multiplier impact of 3.25 to the local economy in the region e.g. \$20 = \$65

Thank you
from
The Owners and Staff at
Georgian Hills Vineyards