



Georgian Bluffs

DEEPLY ROOTED. SUSTAINABLY GROWING.

Year-End Report 2024



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge with respect, the history and living culture of the Anishinaabek: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomi Nation, who have inhabited this land from time immemorial.

We recognize that these lands are the territories of the Chippewas of Saugeen and the Chippewas of Nawash, collectively known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, the keepers of this land.

Georgian Bluffs is located on lands encompassed by Treaties 45 ½, 67, 72, 82 and 93. We reflect on our role as Treaty People and, the need to live in respect and peace and show respect to the first peoples who inhabit these lands and waters.

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This document is available in alternate accessible formats upon request.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CAO

This year has been one of significant growth, remarkable change, and notable success for Georgian Bluffs.

A key focus has been on infrastructure, where new sidewalks have been installed, an extensive hard surface preservation program has been implemented, and engineering work on several bridges has been completed. These projects not only address pressing immediate needs but also lay the groundwork for the development of essential infrastructure in the years to come.

In addition to infrastructure, the team has placed renewed emphasis on operations. Essential activities such as ditching, culvert replacement, and a robust focus on grading and brushing have been prioritized to maintain and improve the transportation network. These core services are critical to ensuring safety and accessibility for residents, reinforcing the Township's commitment to operational excellence.

Community support has been another area of significant achievement this year. The Kemble Arena has become a hub of activity, the Shallow Lake Arena experienced its busiest season ever, and Junior Baseball made a welcome return. More than 1,500 residents participated in community events and activities, demonstrating the vibrancy and engagement of our population.



Niall Lobley

Chief Administrative Officer



The true measure of these plans' success will come as staff, Council, and the community work together to meet future challenges and pursue the shared goal of Deep Roots, Sustainable Growth in 2025 and beyond.

These initiatives reflect the Township's dedication to fostering opportunities for connection, recreation, and celebration. Efforts to improve communication and engagement have also taken center stage. Residents have been offered numerous ways to connect with municipal operations, both formally through meetings and consultations and informally through events and community initiatives. The Township has invested in customer service channels, enhancing communication through an updated website, expanded social media outreach, and informative newsletters.

Behind the scenes, the accomplishments of 2024 would not have been possible without the dedication of human resources, administrative staff, and finance teams. Their efforts often go unrecognized, yet they are critical to the smooth operation of the Township. Their work has provided the backbone for this year's successes, from planning and budgeting to ensuring seamless day-to-day operations.

Strategic planning has been another cornerstone of 2024. The Township's Asset Management Plan is coming together and will play a pivotal role in fostering sustainable growth and effective management for years to come. Similarly, the development of "View from the Top" has provided a guiding vision, offering a clear direction for what Georgian Bluffs aspires to achieve.

The true measure of these plans' success will come as staff, Council, and the community work together to meet future challenges and pursue the shared goal of Deep Roots, Sustainable Growth in 2025 and beyond. This year has also marked the beginning of a cultural reset within Georgian Bluffs. After several years of higher-than-desired staff turnover, Council and staff have collaborated to build greater stability within the team. Efforts have included reviewing staff policies, fostering a supportive workplace culture, and engaging employees in identifying core corporate values to guide the organization in the coming years. Building a stable, cohesive staff team is essential to preserving corporate memory, delivering consistent customer service, and achieving the priorities outlined in the emerging strategic plan.

As we prepare for 2025, I am excited to see these values come to life in everything we do. Together, we will continue to focus on delivering services to residents while aligning with our new Strategic Pillars. To every member of the community, staff, and Council who contributed to the momentum of 2024, thank you for helping us achieve the successes reflected in this report. Your dedication and hard work have been instrumental in shaping a stronger, more vibrant Georgian Bluffs.

Niall Lobley

A YEAR OF SUCCESS

View from the Top: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

Following an in-depth engagement process, including staff, Council and the Georgian Bluffs community, the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan and Vision2050 was presented to Council at their meeting on November 19, 2024. We thank Council, the staff team and community for their efforts in informing the elements of the Plan and assisting in its development.

The Plan, Vision and defined pillars will guide Council, staff and the broader community through the next five years, and well into the future

OUR VALUES

COMMUNITY



RESPECT



SERVICE



INTEGRITY



OUR VISION: DEEP ROOTS. SUSTAINABLE GROWTH.

Welcome to Georgian Bluffs.

A place of astonishing beauty carved by glaciers into the Niagara Escarpment and inhabited for thousands of years.

Today, the people of Georgian Bluffs enjoy friendly and welcoming communities surrounded by a lush natural landscape, rich soil, famed hiking trails and beaches, and an atmosphere of serenity.

The future looks bright from here, with careful stewardship of our resources, events and activities to connect people at every stage of their lives, and economic development supporting local businesses and new investors. An inclusive, diverse, and vibrant community that looks ahead while honouring our shared histories and responsibilities to one another.

This is the place we choose to call home. A place where you're welcome to put down deep roots, or just stay awhile to enjoy the view.

This is a place that values sustainable growth, investing in the infrastructure, opportunities, and people who will carry this vision forward.

This is Georgian Bluffs.
Deeply rooted. Sustainably growing.
And a bright vision for the future of our community.

A YEAR OF SUCCESS

View from the Top: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

This report, and all future year-end and mid-year reports will gage progress to Council’s identified pillars through tying all projects to their identified pillar.

These pillars are key areas of focus that support the overall vision for Georgian Bluffs. They represent the fundamental priorities or themes that guide our actions, providing structure and direction for achieving long-term goals.

OUR PILLARS

SERVICE

Enhancing Service Delivery: Excellence in Every Interaction



OPPORTUNITY

Empowering Communities: Creating Social & Economic Opportunity



INFRASTRUCTURE

Enhancing Environment & Infrastructure: Building for Today & Tomorrow



PEOPLE

Workforce Development: Investing in People



DEPARTMENTAL Overview



Corporate Services

The Corporate Services team supports the Township's day-to-day operations, including customer service, IT, finance, communications, clerks, and by-law enforcement. They handle payments, records, cemetery services, council support, and strategic planning. This team ensures the Georgian Bluffs corporation operates smoothly and efficiently, providing seamless services that meet the needs of the community.



Community and Environmental Services

The Community and Environmental Services Department manages the Township's assets, including parks, roads, and water systems. From snow clearing to grass cutting and renting ice at Shallow Lake, the Operations, Fleet, Waste, and Facilities teams provide recreation opportunities while ensuring safe roadways, helping residents and visitors enjoy all that Georgian Bluffs has to offer.



Development & Infrastructure Services

The Development and Infrastructure Services Department shapes the Township's future by facilitating development and providing building, planning, and engineering support. From pouring foundations to creating site plans and drainage works, this team supports every stage of building and development, ensuring Georgian Bluffs continues to grow sustainably and meet the needs of the community.



Office of the CAO

The CAO, and officers within their office, work collaboratively with Council to ensure delivery of Township services while pursuing the strategic priorities and directions of Council. While all departments are overseen by the leadership of the CAO, the Human Resources, climate and Environment, and the Fire Department directly form part of the Office of the CAO.



A YEAR OF SUCCESS:

Enhancing Service Delivery: Excellence in Every Interaction

Public service is the heart of what we do. Community should clearly understand the role of the township and what it does. Every interaction with us should exemplify service delivery, and we should establish clear expectations around that service, and meet or exceed them. Communication is a critical role for Georgian Bluffs, and we should provide as many opportunities as possible for you to engage and build relationships.

Throughout 2024, the Georgian Bluffs staff team worked to support and enhance customer service excellence, including completion and roll-out of the following projects.

01

Website Refresh / Citizen Portal

- Classification - Capital Project
Budget: \$35,000
Status: Complete

The new version of the Township's website soft-launched on December 9th, with introduction of the Citizen Portal, a carry-over project from previous budget cycles. The new website integrates the Township's updated branding schemes, while achieving compliance with provincial accessibility standards. As a grant funded project through the Municipal Modernization Fund, the Citizen Portal streamlines availability of information to residents, with opportunities for online payments, including the ability to view and pay tax statements.

Completion of this project supports multiple goals associated with the Service pillar, included in the Township's Strategic Plan.

Website was viewed
138,141
times by 42,143 active users

Increased social media followers by
672 users,
a 21% jump over 2023.



Engaged
3,598
participants on Engage GB.

02

Council Chamber Technology Upgrades

- Classification – Capital Project

Budget: \$25,000

Complete

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Township did not livestream meetings, nor provide virtual meeting opportunities. Upon moving into the first lockdown, the Township pivoted, quickly and vastly, to shift to virtual meetings, also livestreaming all Council content. To date, all meetings continue to be livestreamed, with hybrid meetings remaining as an option for the public and Council. Throughout the course of these IT shifts, Council and staff reworked existing equipment, with little financial investment to accommodate the changes.

The upgrades completed in 2024 improved overall user experience with Council and Committee participation and streamlined tech processes observed in administering said meetings.

03

Development of a Records Management Program

- Classification - Pressure

Status: In Progress

Dubbed “The Year of Records”, 2024 brought a significant shift and enhanced commitment to managing the Township’s records in development of records management program. This project will transition the Township’s records library to SharePoint for improved access to and retention of Township records, while also ensuring compliance with applicable legislation. While this project is not a budgeted capital project, it will require significant staff time from our Legislative Services team and buy-in from the organization as a whole. In 2024, our Legislative Services team digitized and classified over 4000 documents, while developing an in-house file storage system through SharePoint. The same structure has been applied to a user-friendly public information portal, soft-launched for public use on December 9th.

Complete digitization of the Township’s records and roll files is an identified goals in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

Digitized and Uploaded
1,801
documents to the Public
Information Portal



Received and responded to
1,204
service requests
through Contact GB.



Digitized and verified
1,392
by-laws.

- Classification - Pressure
Status: In Progress



To improve the Township's service delivery and levels of service, many departments leant-in to updating the Township's policy framework from a service perspective. The following policies were created and/or renewed in 2024:

- Reserves and Reserve Funds
- Donation Policy
- Procedure By-law
- Commissioning Policy
- Communications Policy
- Social Media Policy

Internally, the staff team has created a Customer Service Working Group, formed of representation from each service area, focused on improving customer experiences with the Township. This group meets to generate materials, including customer service standards, communications, including newly refreshed website and streamline internal processes and procedures, including call queues and their effectiveness.

Policy work, with an emphasis on customer service, works towards accomplishing service specific goals in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.



Project Name	Current Status	Budget	Notes
Mount Pleasant Cemetery - Columbarium		\$30,000	Awaiting installation of unit at cemetery site. Anticipated to be delivered and installed prior to the end of Q2 2025.
Software Upgrades - Budget and Cemetery		\$95,000	Initial onboarding has occurred, with staff working to integrate the programs to existing Township services and processes. Anticipated to be complete prior to the end of Q3 2025.





A YEAR OF SUCCESS:

Empowering Communities: Creating Social and Economic Opportunity

The Township is one part of a complete community. Georgian Bluffs has a key role to play in helping to foster the social connections and economic opportunity that shape the place that we call home. Through seeking to support and grow community services to understanding our role in economic development, the Township as a facilitator and enabler of community activity is a priority.

Throughout 2024, the Georgian Bluffs team prioritized social opportunities, to define and create a feeling of community. We did so by creating opportunities for connection through improved park spaces and enhanced community events.

01

Community Events

- Classification – Operating Project
Budget: \$20,000
Complete

For the first time in its history, Council committed dedicated funds through the 2024 Budget cycle to host and increase the frequency of community events offered throughout the Township.

In 2024, the Township hosted multiple community events, including movie nights at the Shallow Lake Community Centre and Kemble, Connect and Collaborate, Canada Day at Big Bay, and Sparkle and Skate at the Shallow Lake Community Centre, just to name a few.



Georgian Bluffs has a key role to play in helping to foster the social connections and economic opportunity that shape the place that we call home.



Hosted **14**
community events attended by
over **1,500** people.

02

Sarawak Family Park and Kilsyth Walkway

- Classification – Capital Project
Budget: \$221,800
Complete

Parks and communal spaces are central to the Township’s commitment to developing community. Improvements to the Sarawak Family Park and Kilsyth Playground Walkway enhanced the community’s enjoyment of the spaces, including installation of a Mobi-mat at Sarawak Family Park, to create an accessible beach area for people of all abilities. Installation of benches and trees at the Kilsyth Playground Walkway beautified the space, creating an enjoyable experience for community members. A grand opening of the Sarawak Family Park, also recognizing the accessible washroom project completed by the Scenic City Order of Good Cheer, was held on September 11, 2024.



- Classification – Pressure
In progress

The draft Community Improvement Plan (CIP) was presented to Council in July of 2024. While the plan remains in draft form, immense efforts have been made to complete the plan and create opportunities to further the economic development of our community through a lens of cultural and environmental sustainability.

An open house to welcome comments regarding the CIP was held at the Township Admin Office on November 7, 2024, and was attended by 45 people.

The final plan is scheduled for final presentation to Council prior to the end of Q2 of 2025. The development and maintenance of the Township's CIP directly accomplishes goals tied to the Opportunity pillar included in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.



04

Short Term Rental Accommodations

- Classification – Operating Project
Budget: \$65,000
Complete

The Township began exploring opportunities to observe and implement a Short Term Rentals Accommodations licensing program in 2022. In accordance with Council’s identified priorities and direction, staff developed a licensing program, by-law, enforcement mechanisms and application portal to licence Short Term Rental Accommodations throughout the Township. Licences have begun being collected for the 2025 season, with regular and consistent communications to local business owners and operators.

05

Additional Projects

Project Name	Current Status	Budget	Notes
Shallow Lake Community Centre Brine Pump Replacement		\$30,000	Complete



Hosted

219.5 hours

of public skating as the Shallow Lake Community Centre.



Hosted

451 hours of

Pickleball Drop in Sessions with **3,065** participants.

Realized an

800%



increase in paid rentals at the Kemble Arena over 2023.



A YEAR OF SUCCESS:

Enhancing Environment & Infrastructure: Building for Today and Tomorrow

Infrastructure supports our ability to connect and move through the municipality. The core services of the Township include looking to maintain bridges, roads and facilities, and to look to the future in managing stormwater, water and wastewater, as well as plan and support sustainable growth. All of this must be done with a focus on the unique landscape and environment within which we operate.

In 2024, the Township worked through the initial phases of Asset Management Planning, identifying and quantifying the Township's infrastructure gaps. While the draft has not yet been finalized, the projects completed in 2024 inform the Township's strategy in addressing infrastructure challenges into the future.

01

Biennial Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM)

- Classification – Capital Project
Budget: \$50,000
Status: Complete

The Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM) is a manual that sets standards for detailed visual inspection and condition rating of structures and their components. It provides a uniform inspection approach for all structures in Ontario.

The OSIM, completed in 2024, evaluated the health of 37 bridges and culverts throughout the Township, and prioritized structural needs ranging from rehabilitations and replacement recommendations in a 10-year capital forecast. The metrics defined within the report assisted in creating the draft Asset Management Plan, for presentation to Council in Q1 of 2025.

With a focus on long-term financial planning, completion of the OSIM supported multiple goals, included in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

Issued
274



Building Permits with a combined construction value of **\$25,985,397.**



Maintained
36 km hard surface,
and **114.5** km of gravel roads.



28 New homes
built with a construction
value of **\$10,649,000.**



Processed
38
Planning Applications.

02

Traffic Count Program

- Classification – Capital Project
Budget: \$50,000
Status: Complete

Traffic counts are used to determine average daily traffic counts, which are then used to inform Township policies, including maintenance levels, speed limits, growth rates and traffic scores as they apply to planning and building processes. Work completed in 2024 on Functional Road Classification, OSIM inspections and our Traffic Count program as well as past work on Road Condition surveys are soon to be shared publicly via a new GIS app on the Townships website.

As a capital project completed in 2024, the traffic count program assisted in informing the conclusions of the Township's draft Asset Management Plan.

In highlighting the use of Township's roadway assets and scaling the use from a policy perspective, completion of the traffic count program supported multiple goals, included in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.



03

Surface Treatment – Concession 21

- Classification – Capital Project
Budget: \$300,000
Status: Complete

In 2024, staff and Council worked with Miller Paving Group, to rehabilitate Concession 21 from Thompson Sideroad to Zion Church Road. The road was rehabilitated using single and double surface treatment techniques, including pulverization and granular A to reshape the road base. This project extended the works completed on Elm Street, jointly by the Township and South Bruce Peninsula.

The roadway was rehabilitated given its relative scoring in the Township's asset management tool, Streetlogix, having a poor pavement condition index. Extrapolating this methodology outward to the remaining Township's road network will serve in support of Council's Infrastructure strategic pillar, continuing to be fiscally and strategically responsible when investing in Township infrastructure.

04

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

- Classification – Capital Project
Budget: \$160,000
Complete

The Township has committed to planning for and addressing the impacts of Climate Change, by investing in renewable energy and being a leader in the community's response to climate impacts. Installation of Electric Vehicle Charging station directly supports this commitment, while also making significant strides in achieving Council's third strategic pillar: Enhancing Environment and Infrastructure.

Installed at the Sarawak Family Park and awaiting installation at the Township Administration Office and Shallow Lake Community Centre, the EV chargers are available for public use. The project did not have any budgetary impact, as grants and private sector investments were secured for their installation.

05







Sidewalk Improvements – Shallow Lake

- Classification – Capital Project
Budget: \$140,000
Complete

Awarded to C&G Concrete in the spring, works to repair and enhance the useability of sidewalks in Shallow Lake have been completed. The project replaced sidewalks on First, Second and Noble Street, completing repairs to approximately 500m of dilapidating sidewalks. The repairs improved the walkability of the area while creating more safe and accessible spaces for all.

06

Additional Projects

Project Name	Current Status	Budget	Notes
Asset Management Plan / Maintenance Manager Implementation		\$116,000	Draft has been completed. Anticipated presentation to Council in Q1 of 2025
Facilities Master Plan		\$100,000	As a phased in project, works are anticipated to be completed in 2025.
Urban Asphalt Rehabilitation - 7th Street South-West		\$150,000	Complete
Emery Bridge Replacement (background study and preliminary design work)		\$427,300	Preliminary design work remains underway, with anticipated presentation to Council by the end of Q1 in 2025.
Sideroad 3 Bridge Replacement (Background Studies)		\$50,000	RFP for background studies has been awarded. Background studies remain ongoing.
Fire Services Master Plan		\$75,000	RFP issued in October 2024.



A YEAR OF SUCCESS:

Workforce Development: Investing in People

Delivering on these commitments requires a team effort. In order to meet these commitments and rise to the challenges that face a small municipality, we must commit to stability into the staff team, and attract and retain a skilled workforce. The municipality will seek to enhance its team, focus on sustainability through succession planning, and seek to provide a supportive, safe and engaging place to live and work.

Our people are our greatest resource. In the words of others, “Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast”. In the absence of a dedicated and collective team, efforts in achieving strategic success falter. 2024 brought significant shifts in the Township’s employee culture, leaning-in to a team-centric culture, driving the successes highlighted in the previous pages of this report.

In pulling staff together, the Georgian Bluffs team has been welcomed to influence our employee culture, shaping the workplace to a positive, welcoming space for all. As a marker of this success, the Township’s staff turnover rate fell a remarkable 26% in 2024, resting at 26%, over that of 52% in 2023. The Township’s 2024 turnover rate is the lowest since 2020.

Throughout 2024 the Township recruited for 22 vacancies, receiving a total of 457 applications for employment and ultimately onboarding 12 members to the team. These vacancies were attributed to both internal staff turnover and new positions approved through the 2024 Budget process.

To support our team, the following policies were reviewed and updated:

- Parental Leave Policy,
- Hybrid Work Policy,
- Personal Leave Policy,
- Hours of Work and Overtime Policy.

Staff turnover dropped
 **26%**
down from 52% in 2023.

2024 also saw commencement of an internal Health and Safety review, initiated to ensure and prioritize the health and safety of our team in the workplace. This work will continue into 2025, with a focus on training, policy work and ensuring our teams are prepared to serve our community in the most efficient, safe manner.

The achievements completed through 2024 directly support and achieve the goals associated with Workforce Development included in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.



GET IN TOUCH

Council generally meets on Wednesday evenings at 5 p.m. three times per month. Meetings are held at the Township Council Chambers at 177964 Grey Road 18 in Springmount. You can attend meetings in person, or participate online.

Council and Committee meetings are open to the public, and are livestreamed to our youtube channel so you can watch from the comfort of home. Meeting Agendas are posted the Friday prior to the meeting date.

You are also welcome to speak at Council by making a delegation. Please register with our Clerk's Department by the Thursday prior to the meeting you wish to speak at for items not on the agenda.



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Georgian Bluffs

DEEPLY ROOTED. SUSTAINABLY GROWING.

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