

# Wasaga Beach NEWS

January 2026



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

Happy New Year, Wasaga Beach! What a year it has been! As we step into 2026, there is a real sense of momentum across our community. This is when the past three years of this Council's long-term planning, strong advocacy, and key partnerships begin to translate into visible progress. From our beachfront to new schools, new businesses, and major infrastructure investment, Wasaga Beach is entering an exciting new chapter - and the best is yet to come.

A major foundation for this progress was laid last spring with Premier Ford's first visit to Wasaga Beach and announcement of Destination Wasaga. Funded by the Province of Ontario and shaped directly by local voices, the Destination Wasaga Master Plan will guide redevelopment, public spaces, infrastructure, and investment in our community for decades to come. In November, more than 500 residents, business owners, community groups, and partners from across the province participated in "Visioning Week", sharing ideas and priorities to ensure growth reflects our community values while positioning Wasaga Beach as a vibrant, four-season destination.

We are already seeing the Destination Wasaga vision beginning to take shape on the ground. With more than \$10.9 million in provincial funding to rebuild Beach Drive and make it flood and climate-resilient, and over \$135 million in private investment from partners such as Stonebridge and Sunray, residents will soon see shovels in the ground on the Marriott Hotel and the next phases of The Breakers. These anchor investments and key public realm improvements will transform how residents and visitors experience our shoreline and generate new opportunities for businesses across our community.

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Our Vision Statement is supported by 5 **Strategic Pillars for Change** and 84 **Implementation Actions**.

**JANUARY 2026 UPDATE: OVER 95% 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

Brian Smith, Mayor  
 [mayor@wasagabeach.com](mailto:mayor@wasagabeach.com)

Tanya Snell, Deputy Mayor  
 [deputymayor@wasagabeach.com](mailto:deputymayor@wasagabeach.com)

Joe Belanger, Councillor  
Sasha-Rose Dileo, Councillor  
Faye Ego, Councillor  
Ellen Timms, Councillor  
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Beyond the beachfront, 2026 will be a year of significant community-building milestones. We are preparing for shovels in the ground on two long-awaited new high schools, supporting families and accommodating future growth. We're also eager to welcome Costco to Wasaga Beach, a major employer and economic driver that will create jobs, expand shopping options, and strengthen the Town's long-term tax base.

Council also recently adopted a new Municipal Accommodation Tax, projected to generate over \$1 million annually, ensuring that tourism helps fund destination events, marketing, and visitor experiences – not residents.

This momentum has been matched by this Council's strong focus on fiscal responsibility. Through direct advocacy, Council has successfully secured over \$156 million in provincial funding – more than any other Council in the history of Wasaga Beach. This influx of funding helped Council support a balanced, responsible 2.99% "status quo" budget. Status quo does not mean standing still; it means protecting the services our community relies on while strengthening tourism, building our commercial tax base, and investing in projects that support sustainable and responsible growth.

Another major milestone accomplished this past fall was the adoption of a new Official Plan, including the Town's first-ever West Wasaga Secondary Plan. This plan provides a modern, long-term framework to guide responsible growth while protecting what makes Wasaga Beach unique.

Community pride and giving back have remained at the heart of our work. In October, we hosted the First Annual Mayor's Charity RAM Rodeo & Hootenanny Fall Festival, raising over \$55,000 in support of a new regional hospital and end-of-life care through Hospice Georgian Triangle. Planning is already underway for the 2026 Mayor's Charity RAM Rodeo, which will be even bigger and better.

To kick off the New Year, the Town has also launched a new website. I encourage you to check it out, stay informed, get involved, and subscribe to receive Council news and updates delivered straight to your inbox: [wasagabeach.com/subscribe](http://wasagabeach.com/subscribe).

This update is just a snapshot of the important work taking place at Town Hall and across our community every day.

Here's to a year of progress, partnership, and big wins for Wasaga Beach - bring on 2026!

**Mayor Brian Smith**

**211® can help**

Need help and don't know where to turn? 211 is a helpline that connects people to the social services, programs and community supports they need.

Dial 2-1-1 or visit [www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca)



OUTDOOR FUN • CHILI COOK-OFF • SUPERDOGS

## VISIT SNOWMANMANIA.COM

FEBRUARY  
**13**

**Trivia Night | RecPlex**  
Doors open at 6:00 PM  
Game 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM  
Tickets at [snowmanmania.com/trivia](http://snowmanmania.com/trivia)

FEBRUARY  
**14**

**Inflatables, face-painting, ice sculptures, live music and more!**  
**RecPlex & Wasaga Stars Arena**  
11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

FEBRUARY  
**14**

**Nancy Island x Snowman Mania**  
Get ready for winter fun in this first-ever Nancy Island collaboration. Details to come!

FEBRUARY  
**14**

**Chili Cook Off | RecPlex**  
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM

FEBRUARY  
**15**

**Superdogs | RecPlex**  
Three shows:  
11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, 3:00 PM

FEBRUARY  
**16**

**Rock Solid Wrestling | RecPlex**  
1:00 PM

## AND MUCH MORE ...

### PLAY ALL WEEKEND | \$3 ALL ACCESS PIN

- Ice Skating
- Kids Igloo Building
- Family swimming

- Hot Chocolate Hut
- Face Painting & Crafts
- Free Transit All Weekend



## Fall/Winter Rec Guide

[WASAGABEACH.COM/RECREATION](http://WASAGABEACH.COM/RECREATION)



The longest freshwater beach in the world.

## NEWSROOM

Catch up on all Town news you might have missed at [WASAGABEACH.COM/NEWS](http://WASAGABEACH.COM/NEWS)

### Latest headlines:

#### **Town of Wasaga Beach Recruiting 60+ Summer Positions for 2026**

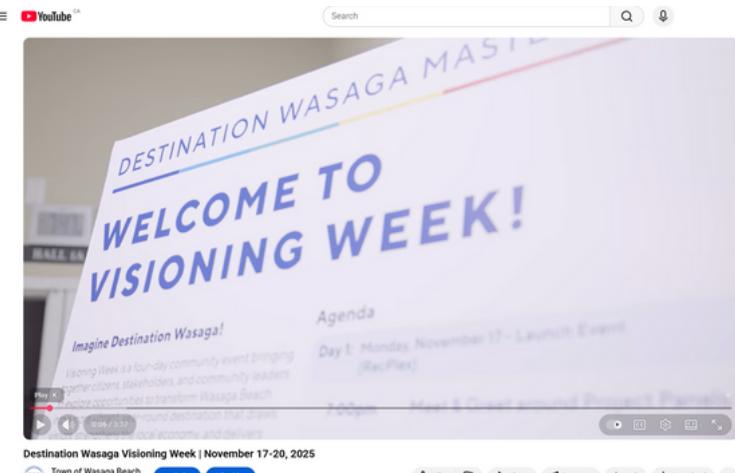
The Town of Wasaga Beach is recruiting more than 60 summer student jobs for the 2026 season, providing hands-on experience in parks, recreation, by-law services, public works, and other municipal departments.

#### **Council Supports 2026 "Status Quo" Mayor-Proposed Budget Focused on Protecting Services and Affordability while Investing in the Future**

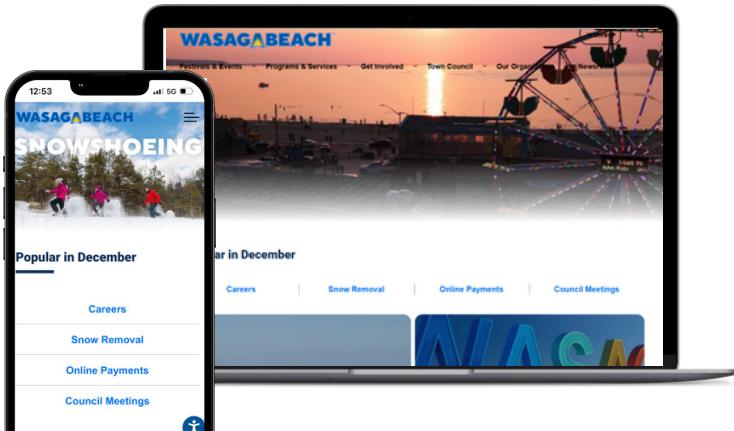
The mayor-proposed budget addresses affordability, rising costs, and inflation while investing in infrastructure and protecting municipal programs and services. Council continues to prioritize long-term financial sustainability over short-term cuts.

#### **Wasaga Beach Wraps Up First Phase of Community Engagement for Destination Wasaga**

This extensive community input is helping establish a shared vision for the future of Wasaga Beach—one that celebrates the town's natural beauty and heritage while embracing new opportunities to enhance the waterfront, strengthen the local economy, and create a vibrant, four-season destination.



**Watch the full Visioning Week Recap on YouTube: [@townofwasagabeach.official](https://www.youtube.com/@townofwasagabeach.official)**



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

#happeningsoon #savethedate

### **2026 BALLOT QUESTION PUBLIC MEETING**

⌚ 6:00 - 8:00 PM

📅 January 26, 2026

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

[Learn more: wasagabeach.com/engage](http://wasagabeach.com/engage)

### **MYWASAGA DAYS**

⌚ 4:00 - 8:00 PM

📅 April 22, 2026

📍 RecPlex, 1724 Mosley Street, Wasaga Beach

### **TOWN HALL PUBLIC MEETING**

⌚ 7:00 - 9:00 PM

📅 April 22, 2026

📍 RecPlex, 1724 Mosley Street, Wasaga Beach

### **TOWN LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE**

The Town of Wasaga Beach has launched a newly redesigned municipal website, offering a modern, user-friendly experience for residents, businesses and visitors.

Built with community feedback and best practices in mind, the new site improves access to information, enhances transparency around major projects, and introduces new ways to stay informed, including SMS alerts.

The mobile-friendly, accessible platform makes it easier than ever to find services, news, events and Town updates—all in one place. Check it out: [wasagabeach.com](http://wasagabeach.com)

"Town staff and Council continue to focus on improving how we communicate and connect with our community. Through our new and improved website, we're providing easier access to information, improving transparency around major projects, and introducing new ways to stay informed in real time."

*- Mayor Brian Smith*

## DESTINATION WASAGA



Destination Wasaga is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine the Town's beachfront and surrounding areas - guided by the voices of the community. This comprehensive, community-led master planning process will set a long-term vision for how our waterfront evolves. The goal is to create a vibrant, accessible, four-season destination that supports local businesses, enhances public spaces, protects the environment, and improves quality of life for residents, while restoring Wasaga Beach's status as one of Ontario's premier destinations.

The process reached a major milestone during Visioning Week in November, led by Canadian-based, award-winning planning firm Urban Strategies. Over four days of intensive workshops, open houses, and public meetings, more than 500 residents, business owners, organizations, and partners shared ideas and perspectives through hands-on and interactive sessions.

Community feedback highlighted key priorities, including improved public access to the beach, more year-round attractions, stronger connections between the waterfront and downtown, and development that reflects the unique character of Wasaga Beach.

This input will directly inform future planning, investment decisions, and partnerships - ensuring growth is intentional, sustainable, and community-driven. Learn more and stay involved at [wasagabeach.com/IMAGINE](http://wasagabeach.com/IMAGINE)

**"The future of Wasaga Beach belongs to the people who live, work, and play here - every conversation, every idea, and every perspective will help shape what Destination Wasaga becomes. Together, we're building a bright future for Wasaga Beach, ensuring the beach remains publicly owned and open for everyone in Ontario to enjoy while creating a legacy that reflects who we are as a community and what we value most."** - Mayor Brian Smith



### What's Next

Phase 2 of the Destination Wasaga Master Plan is now underway. Urban Strategies will begin developing concept plans and technical studies based on the community's feedback. These materials will be shared with residents in early 2026 for a second round of public engagement.

## ASK MAYOR BRIAN SMITH

Accountability, transparency, and communication are priorities for this Council. That's why, in February 2025, the Town introduced a new initiative: **Ask Mayor Brian Smith**. Building on the success of **Ask Andrew Anything**—the weekly, drop-in style Q&A sessions that the Town's CAO launched in 2024 – these clips will feature Mayor Smith answering residents' most **frequently asked questions**. They are produced and shared on all of the Town's communications channels on a regular basis. Get involved! Ask a question and see what you may have missed: [wasagabeach.com/AMA](http://wasagabeach.com/AMA)

