



The Corporation of The Township of The Archipelago  
Council Meeting

**Agenda Number:** 15.4.

**Resolution Number**

**Title:** Opposition to the Georgian Bay Aspiring Geopark

**Date:** Friday, September 19, 2025

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**Moved by:** Councillor Frost

**Seconded by:** Councillor Barton

**WHEREAS** the Township of The Archipelago is the steward of approximately 26% of the total shoreline of Georgian Bay, representing one of the most significant municipal responsibilities for conservation, planning, and sustainable management of this unique and fragile ecosystem; and

**WHEREAS** the proponents of the “Georgian Bay Aspiring Geopark” have advanced a proposal encompassing 48,000+ square kilometres, by far larger than any existing Canadian geopark, without adequate consultation with municipalities, Indigenous communities, or conservation organizations within its proposed boundaries; and

**WHEREAS** the proponents have unilaterally identified at least five sites within the Township of The Archipelago (Sans Souci, Wreck Island, Massasauga Provincial Park, Woods Bay Marina, and Pointe au Baril) as “signature geosites” for inclusion in the Geopark, without consultation with Council, staff, or the community, and with the presumption that the Township and other site managers will provide maintenance, oversight, and stewardship of these promoted sites without any discussion of capacity, appropriateness, or resources; and

**WHEREAS** the Township of The Archipelago is concerned that the Geopark initiative primarily advances tourism marketing objectives while lacking meaningful mechanisms for environmental protection, land-use management, or safeguarding of sensitive ecological and cultural sites; and

**WHEREAS** the Government of Canada has already provided funding to the Georgian Bay Geopark to develop interpretive tourism programming that does not protect the environment and diverts scarce public resources away from urgent priorities such as shoreline protection, habitat restoration, and climate resilience in Georgian Bay; and

**WHEREAS** Georgian Bay Forever, a leading conservation organization, has formally stated its opposition to the Geopark, citing the absence of a visitor management plan for over 200 identified geosites, the risk of pollution, vandalism, and desecration of sacred Indigenous sites, and the diversion of scarce conservation funding to tourism-first branding initiatives; and

**WHEREAS** United Chiefs and Councils of Mnídoo Mnísing and multiple municipalities (including the Town of Gore Bay, the Municipality of Huron Shores, Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands, and others) have already passed or indicated intent to pass motions opposing inclusion in the Geopark, citing lack of consultation, diversion of scarce public funds, and inappropriate claims of representation; and

**WHEREAS** the Township of The Archipelago has consistently emphasized that its land use policies, shoreline stewardship, and conservation initiatives, developed in partnership with residents, cottagers, conservation groups, Georgian Bay Biosphere, and Indigenous neighbours, are best managed through local governance.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Township of The Archipelago will issue a *Letter of Opposition* to the Georgian Bay Geopark initiative, and will not provide endorsement or participation in its activities; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** the Council formally opposes the inclusion of Township of The Archipelago within the boundaries of the proposed Georgian Bay Geopark; and

**FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution and the Township's letter of opposition be circulated to the Canadian Geoparks Network, Aspiring Georgian Bay Geopark, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the Federal Economic Development Agency, the Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency, Graydon Smith, Member of Provincial Parliament for Parry Sound–Muskoka, Scott Aitchison, Member of Parliament for Parry Sound–Muskoka, Chief Adam Pawis of Shawanaga First Nation, Chief Shane Tabobondung of Wasauksing First Nation, Indigenous governments of the region, all member municipalities of the West Parry Sound and Simcoe Areas, and neighbouring municipalities around Georgian Bay, the Georgian Bay Association, Georgian Bay Biosphere Mnídoo Gamii, Georgian Bay Forever, Georgian Bay Land Trust, Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation.

**Carried**