

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: August 11, 2025
To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Report Number: COU25-102
Attachments: 1) Current 2025 Fees and Charges By-law
2) Draft 2026 Fees and Charges By-law

Title: Fees and Charges For 2026

Objective: This report is intended to summarize the changes being proposed to the 2026 fees and charges and is accompanied by the 2025 By-law for comparison purposes. All schedules have been updated in the draft 2026 By-law to reflect these proposed changes.

Background: It is best practice for a municipality's fees and charges to be determined prior to budget consideration. This ensures that revenue estimates are based on any approved rate levels. This is typically done pre-budget to assist with estimating revenues into the budget year, but any changes to any of the fees and charges can be updated at any time, should a further review be deemed prudent or new information become available.

There are some exceptions where review occurs out of this cycle, where governed by other indices for inflation or are tied to other by-laws. When these are next reviewed, they may be considered as additional schedules for the consolidated by-law.

Analysis: The fees and charges are separated into schedules to reflect the functional areas to which they apply. The intent is to assist with navigation through the document, but also to allow for modification of specific schedules in between full reviews if required, without opening the entire by-law.

Some services provided by the City are intended to be full user-pay (full cost recovery), while others are intended to pass along some of the costs to the user but are subsidized to varying degrees by the tax levy. This just means that costs are covered in part by fees and in part by the net impact on the tax levy. Staff continue to assess the appropriate mix for each type of service. Existing rates and fees have been reviewed to ensure they remain:

- Reflective of the desired split between user-pay and tax-supported services
- Market competitive (looking at other comparable centres)
- Where applicable, have included inflationary pressures
- Valid and appropriate

Rates are analyzed and proposed at the department level and compiled into this report and the attached proposed by-law. Each Director and Manager can respond to questions related to the rates and fees for the specific divisions.

Where Consumer Price Index (CPI) was used as the basis for increasing fees, a modest 2.5% inflator was chosen, based on 2024 and 2025 CPI indicators.

Annual inflationary indices have been decreasing and are expected to remain low, as the federal government uses CPI to inform other monetary policies to stimulate the economy and consumer behaviour. At the time of this report, the CPI indicators are slightly below 2%, but staff are proposing a slightly higher price increase factor as the impact is nominal in most cases and in recognition of lower-than-CPI increases during the pandemic to assist those paying the fees during that difficult period.

Using 2.5% ensures some recognition of increasing costs but will not result in a large increase for most fees. In some cases, to keep the fees schedules simple, as in the case of a transit fare or a public skating admission for example, the fees have been rounded so that the figures used inclusive of HST are easily communicated. These may vary from the 2.5% but the intent is to approximate this inflator unless otherwise noted. In many cases, there is a rounding effect to minimize the penny-factor so this could slightly impact the 2.5% incremental increase.

Where an increment other than 2.5% was used, further explanation is noted below.

The sections below by Schedule to the By-law indicate which fees are being proposed amended and where wording clarifications are added. The fees that are not being amended are not part of this report but can be viewed on the drafted schedules. In most cases, a fee is not included in this report if it was recently increased and/or the department staff do not feel another increase is warranted based on market research or field knowledge.

Schedule "A" Corporate-Wide Fees and Charges

The proposed changes are primarily a result of shifts in how services are delivered, CPI or clarification based on feedback received. All other fees in the schedule are proposed to remain status quo.

- NSF Fee increase from \$40 to \$45, based on comparators and the City's bank's NSF fee
- Application Fee for Area Openings or Encroachment increase from \$596.67 to \$612.00

- Application Fee for Release of an encroachment agreement increase from \$25.45 to \$36.00
- Fee to Register and to Release Liens on property increased from \$425 to \$564.48 based on Land Registry fees and inclusive of HST
- **Change:** Retail Business Holidays Act Exemption Application previously was \$560 per or \$688 for shopping mall/3 or more stores. Recommended change to base fee on square footage: under 2,400 sq ft now \$574 and for businesses more than 2,400 sq ft now \$705.
- Tax sale registration fee increase from \$250 to \$300 based on comparators
- **Change:** Registration of Death-no change (\$20) if issued by Clerks office during business hours, but if after-hours is required (to be issued by the Transit office now and no longer the Fire Department) \$40

Schedule “B” Planning Fees and Charges

In preparing the 2025 fees, for the more complex application processes that increasingly require senior-level expertise and involvement, an interim adjustment of 15% was adopted as recommended by the Director of Building and Planning Services. This adjustment was considered moderate and necessary to acknowledge recent staffing investments in the Division, and to mitigate the financial burden on the tax base that has been increasing over time. For 2026, staff are mainly recommending CPI increases to fees based on the current state of City processes and the best available evidence, ensuring fairness and equity.

Pre-Application Construction (“Formal Consultation”)

- **New** Application for Pre-Application Consultation increase from \$0 (no fee) to \$750.

This new fee is recommended for the City to collect revenue on Formal Consultation requests that do not result in a formal application submission. Anticipated annual fees based on historic volumes is \$10,500, which would be recognized after the two-year mark, and which will assist with 2026 and future budget pressures. This fee is intended to be credited towards an applicant’s future formal application fee, should they pursue within two years. This approach generally aligns with similar sized cities in the region.

Official Plan Amendment

- Amendment to the Official Plan increase from \$6,925 to \$7,100
- Concurrent applications increase from \$7,644 to \$7,840
- Recirculation requiring technical re-review increase from \$1,251 to \$1,280
- Recirculation not requiring technical re-review increase from \$626 to \$640
- Zoning By-law Amendment – (Major) increase from \$5,699 to \$5,840
- Zoning By-law Amendment – (Standard) increase from \$3,717 to \$3,810
- Removal of holding provision increase from \$2,112 to \$2,170

- Extend a temporary use increase from \$1,527 to \$1,570

Committee of Adjustment (Minor Variances and Consents)

- Minor variance increase from \$1,368 to \$1,400
- If application requires recirculation increase from \$753 to \$770
- Consent of one additional lot increase from \$1,756 to \$1,800
- Each additional lot increase from \$260 to \$270
- If application requires recirculation decrease from \$800 to \$770
- Request for change to conditions of approval increase from \$569 to \$580
- Concurrent applications to the Committee of Adjustments increase from \$2,092 to \$2,140
- Development Agreement Major review increase from \$500 to \$510
- Development Agreement Minor review increase from \$300 to \$310
- **New** Development Agreement Certificate of Consent \$300 per provisional consent granted
- **New** Certificate of Validation \$900
- Site Plan Approval increase from \$3,639 to \$3,730
- Additional fee increase from \$1,138 to \$1,170
- Amendment to Site Plan Agreement increase from \$2,445 to \$2,510
- Minor Amendment to Site Plan Approval increase from \$451 to \$460
- Letter of conformity increase from \$105 to \$110

Plan of Subdivision, Vacant Land Condominium and Common Element Plans

- Up to fifty (50) lots increase from \$9,413 to \$9,650
- Additional if greater than fifty (50) lots increase from \$1,309 to \$1,340
- Revisions to conditions requiring recirculation increase from \$1,439 to \$1,480
- Revisions to conditions not requiring recirculation increase from \$519 to \$530
- Issuance of final approval increase from \$802 to \$820
- **Delete:** Registration of final plan (included in above)
- Extension of Draft Approval (recirculation required) increase from \$1,439 to \$1,480
- Extension of Draft Approval (no recirculation required) increase from \$519 to \$530

Standard, Amalgamated, Phased and Leasehold Condominium

- Up to fifty (50) units increase from \$5,364 to \$5,500
- Additional if greater than fifty (50) units increase from \$1,309 to \$1,340
- Revisions to conditions requiring recirculation increase from \$1,439 to \$1,480
- Revisions to conditions not requiring recirculation increase from \$519 to \$530
- Issuance of final approval increase from \$802 to \$820
- **Delete:** Registration of final plan (included in above)
- Condominium Exemption increase from \$1,597 to \$1,640

Miscellaneous

- Deeming by-law application increase from \$1,138 to \$1,170
- Driveway Widening Review increase from \$120 to \$123
- Telecommunications Tower review increase from \$1,138 to \$1,170
- Application for Part lot Control increase from \$1,838.85 to \$1,890
- **Change:** For each additional new lot increase from \$135.56 to \$140 <addition to include each new easement created>
- Registration of Secondary Suite increase from \$270 to \$280
- Renewal of previously registered Secondary Suite from \$165 to \$170

General

- **Change:** Renamed Letters of Conformity and removed with/without survey to combine with Zoning/Building Information report (7-10 business days) increase from \$105 to \$110
- **Change:** Renamed Letters of Conformity and removed with/without survey to combine with Zoning/Building Information report (within two business days) increase from \$170 to \$400
- Full size registered plans increase from \$35 to \$40
- Custom plots increase from \$60 to \$65
- Change of Municipal Address increase from \$160 to \$175
- AGCO Agency Approval Letter increase from \$85 to \$90
- **Change:** Accommodation Licensing (renamed from Short-Term Accommodation)
- STR License Application Fee per application and for first room increase from \$412 to \$420
- Additional room increase from \$125 to \$130
- **Change:** Replaces Licensing fees in the B&B By-law (180-2004, Schedule A, as amended) increase to B&B License Application Fee per application, and for first room \$210
- **Change:** Replaces Licensing fees in the B&B By-law (180-2004, Schedule A, as amended) increase to Fee per Additional room \$130
- Late Filing Fee increase to \$75
- Transfer processing fee increase to \$70
- Appeal fee increase to \$190

Schedule "C" Community Services Department Fees and Charges

Arenas:

Summer Ice Rates (April 1 to September 30) (all rates include tax):

- Standard Rental increase from \$210.00 per hour to \$250.00 per hour to reflect higher energy costs to maintain ice in the summer months

- Last minute ice increase from \$60.00 per hour to \$70.00 per hour to reflect higher energy costs to maintain ice in the summer months

Winter Ice Rates (October 1 to March 31) (all rates include tax):

- Last minute ice increase from \$60.00 per hour to \$70.00 per hour to reflect inclusive of HST.

Arena Floor – No Ice Rentals (all rates include tax):

- **Change:** Removal of ice surface cover \$1,500/event – moved this to the Installations Section

Hall and Meeting Space

- **Change:** Modified definition to include Sports Lounge at Agriplex (no changes to fees proposed at this time)
- **New:** Event Halls – Community Halls A/B/C/D (Rotary Complex) added Single Hall Half Day (Up to Maximum 3 Hours) to allow for shorter rental periods \$218.75

Audio Visual – Removal of these fees as they are part of the space rental fees

- **Delete:** Audio Visual fees \$67.80/day
- **Delete:** Wireless Microphone \$29.38/day
- **Delete:** Portable TV/VCR/DVD player \$20.34

Bar Charges

- **Change:** 'ice' to 'draft fee' and increased fee from \$47.46 per day to \$85.88 per unit per day

Multi-Use Sports Fields:

Stratford Agriplex – Indoor

- All 4 courts for tournament use increased from \$988.75 to \$1,446.40 to move towards higher cost recovery for Sport Tourism initiatives. This represents 20% less than full cost, and is like what other users in sport agreements would pay
- Last minute ice increase from \$60.00 per hour to \$70.00 per hour to reflect inclusive of HST.

Fields/Diamonds-Outdoors

- Minor Sport Use – added 'per participant fee' for clarity. No change to fee.
- **New:** Artificial Turf-Half field (Maximum 1 hour) \$39.90 to provide additional options to longer rentals

Transit

Single Ride/Tickets increased to match the cash fare fees.

- Student increased from \$2.25 to \$2.50
- Adult increased from \$2.75 to \$3.00
- Senior increased from \$2.50 to \$2.75

Aquatics

- **Delete:** Sponsored Swim \$197.75 as it is covered under the next item
- **Reduced:** Sponsored Free Swim from \$627.15/hour to \$440.70 per hour based on comparable, and ideally to stimulate additional demand for sponsoring

Day Camps

- 5-day week increase from \$172.50 to \$190.00 for consistency with 4-day week and single day rates

New: Birthday Party Package (Agriplex)

- Birthday Party (20 youth, maximum) \$240.00 for 3-hour program 1:30pm-4:30pm and is a combination of gym and room rentals

Digital Advertising – Indoor Displays

A review of comparable municipalities indicates that we are the highest, resulting in very minor rate decreases being proposed. This is to recognize relationships with long-standing customers and to remain competitive.

- 8" Advertisement 1 month reduce from \$144.64 to \$135.60
- 8" Advertisement 3 month reduce from \$412.45 to \$386.46
- 8" Advertisement 6 month reduce from \$819.25 to \$772.92
- 8" Advertisement 9 month reduce from \$1,226.05 to \$1,159.38
- 8" Advertisement 12 month reduce from \$1,638.50 to \$1,545.84
- 18" Advertisement 1 month reduce from \$288.15 to \$271.20
- 18" Advertisement 3 month reduce from \$819.25 to \$772.92
- 18" Advertisement 6 month reduce from \$1,644.15 to \$1,545.84
- 18" Advertisement 9 month reduce from \$2,463.40 to \$2,318.76
- 18" Advertisement 12 month reduce from \$3,277.00 to \$3,091.68
- 26" Advertisement 1 month reduce from \$431.66 to \$406.80
- 26" Advertisement 3 month reduce from \$1,226.05 to \$1,159.38
- 26" Advertisement 6 month reduce from \$2,463.40 to \$2,318.76
- 26" Advertisement 9 month reduce from \$3,689.45 to \$3,478.14
- 26" Advertisement 12 month reduce from \$4,921.15 to \$4,637.52

Niches:

- Level above the bottom increase from \$56.14 total to \$57.89 to correct minor error in previous rate.

Delete: Scattering Garden- Due to thefts of bronze memorial plaques these are being discontinued

- Single Memorial Plaque \$314.25
- Double Memorial Plaque \$372.45
- Double Plaque with Text \$430.64

Schedule “D” Infrastructure Services Fees and Charges

Miscellaneous:

- Land Transfer Inquiries increase from \$65 to \$70 per inquiry
- Street Permit increase from \$65 to \$70
- Single Trip Oversized Load Permit increase from \$65.00 to \$70
- Hydration Station Rental increasing from \$25 to \$30 per day.

Administrative:

- New Sewer and/or Water Connections increase from \$190 plus actual costs to \$200 plus actual costs
- Sewer and/or Water Repairs increase from \$85 plus actual costs to \$90 plus actual costs
- Private Sidewalk and Curb increase from \$85 plus actual costs to \$90 plus actual costs
- Sidewalk or Curb repair increase from \$42.50 per location plus actual costs to \$45.00 plus actual costs
- Miscellaneous Invoices for Service minimum fee increased from \$85 to \$90
- Temporary Access Across Municipal Property (Policy P.3.6) increase from \$85 per application to \$90 per application and increase damage deposit from \$105/m to \$110/m
- **Change:** Supplying as-built drawings and PDFs previously was flat rate per sheet/file changed to same cost for first 15 minutes of staff time, and additional fee of \$20 per additional 15 minutes of staff time. This is based on comments received from developers.

Water Rates and Sanitary Sewer Rates

All fees are consistent with Year 2 in the 10-year Water Rate Plan previously adopted by Council on December 16, 2024. These are not outlined in this report but can be found in Appendices H and I in the rate study and on the Infrastructure Services Appendix in the City’s drafted by-law attached to this report.

Development, Subdivision, Pre-Servicing, Condominium Servicing Agreements:

- Administrative fees to prepare agreement increase from \$2,337 to \$2,355
- Review Fees for Engineering submissions (single) increase from \$57.40 to \$58.85 and (block) increase from \$114.00 to \$116.85

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) Consolidated Linear Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) and Water System Review and Approvals

- Watermain review and approvals increase from \$1,200 to \$1,230
- Sanitary and Storm Sewer Reviews and approvals increase from \$1,100.00 to \$1,127.50
- Stormwater Management Systems Reviews and approvals increase from \$1,800 to \$1,845

Waste Management

- Bag Tags increasing from \$3.86 to \$3.90
- Bags or Cans at landfill increasing from \$5.06 to \$5.10
- Tip Fee regular (all categories) increase from \$94.00 to \$94.94
- **Delete:** Recycle box \$8.25 removed due to the changes in the blue box program

Site Alteration:

- Site Alteration Permit Fee increase from \$510 to \$522.75
- Site Alteration Permit Alteration increase from \$510.00 to \$522.75
- Site Alteration Transfer Fee increase from \$265.00 to \$261.40
- Preparation of Site Alteration Agreement increase from \$920 to \$945

Schedule "E" Fire Department Fees and Charges

- Fire Extinguisher Training clarification language around number of participants added
- Several rates updated to reflect current MTO rates that changed from \$543.03 to \$571.52 per hour per vehicle

Schedule "F" Social Services Department Fees and Charges

Anne Hathaway Daycare

There is an anticipated reduction in fees coming in 2026 that is a direct result of participation in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Program. Specific guidance has not yet been received from the Ministry of Education. Once received a report will be brought forth to Council to open the by-law to adjust fees accordingly. Any fee reduction for users will be offset with increased Provincial funding resulting in no anticipated change to the tax levy

Affordable Housing

Change: Section previously referred to as Britannia Street; relabeled as Affordable Housing to capture all affordable units the City is responsible for.

A review was undertaken of actual costs and the following have been updated accordingly.

- Screen replacements changed to reflect minimum charge of \$50 per screen, regardless of size, and removed 'small', 'large' and 'door'
- Window replacements change to reflect minimum charge depending on nature of damages of \$100
- Window repair change to reflect minimum charge of \$100
- Replacement of main building door changed to reflect minimum charge of \$100
- Replacement of exterior doors changed to reflect minimum charge of \$100
- Wallpaper/border removal (includes shelf/drawer liner) changed from per wall to a per hour charge of \$49.75
- Damage to flooring increased from \$10 per square foot to \$11
- Installation of new toilet increase from \$350 to \$400
- Plugged toilet or drain changed to reflect minimum charge of \$100
- Replace missing light fixtures increase from \$50 to \$55
- Repair broken or damaged receptacles changed to \$5 per receptacle
- Repair broken thermostat increase from \$75 to \$100
- Respond to 'no heat' call with no issue increase from \$75 to \$100
- Replace missing/broken light shade increase from \$50 to \$110
- **Change:** Replacement fob from \$75 to actual costs, minimum charge \$50
- **Change** Replace unit door lock from \$150 to actual costs, minimum charge \$50
- **Change:** Replace door handle from \$75 to actual costs, minimum charge \$125
- **Change:** Replace mailbox key from \$75 to actual costs, minimum charge \$50
- Respond to obligation to comply with pest treatment plan changed from case-by-case basis to \$25 for all pests besides bed bugs and \$50 for bed bugs
- Fridge replacement due to damage increased from \$850-\$925 to \$1,000
- Stove replacement due to damage increase from \$699 to \$840

Schedule "G" Airport Fees and Charges

The Fire Chief and Airport manager continue to seek ways to increase revenues and contain costs associated with Stratford Municipal Airport. Not included in the proposed changes but being currently explored is whether a fee for 'touch and go' landings performed by student pilots could be implemented. Further information will follow as it becomes available.

Fees for fuel and other landing fees are currently comparable or higher to neighbouring airports and therefore no changes are being proposed for those.

- Hangar Rental Fee header has been added (housekeeping change) and language has been updated to reflect that they are based on agreement. These are also under review.
- Airport Terminal Building Rental Fees increase from \$9,000 annually to \$12,000 annually
- Farmland lease rates changed to reflect 'by agreement' but noting that in 2025, per acre pricing was increased to better reflect market rates of \$260 per acre.

Building Permit Fees

Proposed rate changes for 2025 were intended, however have been deferred until the Chief Building Official can review. These will be reviewed in 2026 and brought forward under a separate report. Currently these fees are not part of the consolidated fees and charges, but once brought forward, may become incorporated into this By-law.

By-law Enforcement

Currently, fees relating to by-law are captured in a separate by-law and are reviewed later in the fall. Incorporating these fees into the consolidated fee by-law will be considered when that review takes place.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

Not applicable as this report relates to future 2026 revenues for the City.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

The 2026 budget process is currently underway, and the approved fees and charges will inform the estimated budgeted revenues to come from fee sources.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Not applicable: This report does not directly align with the Strategic Priorities as it is a financial/administrative report.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Not applicable: One Planet Principles do not apply to this financial/administrative report.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the 2026 Fees and Charges By-law to set the fees and charges for services performed by the City in 2026 be approved as presented in Report COU25-102 with an effective date of January 1, 2026;

THAT the Fees and Charges By-law 99-2024, as amended, be repealed upon the new Fees and Charges By-law coming into force and effect;

AND THAT direction be given to the City Clerk to list the 2026 Fees and Charges By-law on a future agenda for consideration by Council.

Prepared by: Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer

Recommended by: Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Adam Betteridge, Interim Chief Administrative Officer