

COUNCIL MEETING
FINANCE DEPARTMENT

REPORT FIN-2024-29
November 26, 2024

SUBJECT: Referral - 2025 Fees and Charges

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Treasurer

APPROVING: Elizabeth Pankoff, CPA, MBA
City Treasurer

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council approve the updated Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix I; and further

That Council approve the amendment to By-law 2006-193 to reflect the updated fees and charges effective January 1, 2025, or such other dates as set out in Appendix I; and further

That Council approve the amendment to By-law 2021-188 to reflect the updated fees and charges effective January 1, 2025.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This recommendation is aligned to Council's strategic priority of ensuring "Economic Growth" for creating a diverse economy through partnerships and emerging markets to ensure sustainable growth and quality employment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The 2025 Fees and Charges Report came to Council October 29, 2024: <https://pub-welland.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=3181>. The report, FIN-2024-25 was referred to staff to update certain sections of the fees and charges appendix and provide some clarification. Staff are bringing this forward to ensure the updated 2025 Fees and Charges are in place for January 1, 2025.

BACKGROUND:

All fees and charges by the various City departments are outlined in Appendix I. The schedule of fees contains many fees that the City is permitted to charge under the Municipal Act, Building Act, and Planning Act. Any applicable fees and charges that require public consultation, or statutory meetings will be held in accordance with the applicable timelines as required and subsequently updated through those applicable By-laws. Fees and charges are based on the costs of providing services/ activities for the municipality and are inclusive of labour, supplies, overhead costs, and operational costs.

Fees are reviewed annually by each department to ensure that the amounts charged are reflective of the service/ activity being provided.

For the 2025 Fees and Charges update, the fees outlined in Appendix I have been indexed for inflationary pressures using a minimum of 3% in some areas (rounding to the nearest integer) or have remained status quo to align with other local area municipalities that offer a similar service/ activity. Staff are continuously monitoring the CPI and notice that inflation is decreasing however, the underlying cost in the fees and charges to deliver these various services and activities are increasing and averaging more than 3%, such as wages, benefits, supplies, etc.

DISCUSSION:

The 2025 Fees and Charges: FIN 2024-25 was referred to staff on October 29, 2024, to update and clarify the following:

- Separate Not-for-Profit rates within the Fees and Charges schedule for Premier Venue/ Community Centre/ Meeting Room rentals, presenting the 50% reduced rate vs the full rate (Community Services).
 - Staff have added separate fees for Not-for-profit rates for Premier Venue/ Community Centre/ Meeting Room rentals; these can be found on page 34 of Appendix I.
 - Not-for-profit groups have always received a reduced rate for rentals.
- A Council motion was passed during the meeting on October 29, 2024 to update the Market Fees for 2025 to the 2024 rates (Community Services).
 - Staff have updated all Market Fees for 2025 as per the approved motion.
 - This update can be found in the Fees and Charges schedule starting on page 35 of Appendix I.
- Inclusion of Rink Board Advertising fees (Community Services).
 - Rink board advertising has been managed through various contracts and vendors, with the last contract ending in 2022.

- As a result, the associated rates were not previously included in the fees and charges schedule. With rink board sales no longer handled through contracted services, staff will be incorporating the relevant fees in the 2025 fees and charges schedule.
- These updates can be found on page 38 of Appendix I.
- Eliminate Tax/ Water Reprint Fees (Finance).
 - Staff have been asked to review the Tax/ Water Reprint Fee for 2025 at \$10.00. It was proposed to either eliminate the fee or to waive an owner's first occurrence.
 - As of October 2024, Staff have issued a combined 221 reprints. Staff are recommending keeping this fee status quo for 2025 and waive an owner's first occurrence if they sign up for e-billing.
 - The City has recently installed e-billing services for both tax and water billings.
 - City staff will continue to promote and encourage property owners to enroll in the service for electronic delivery of property tax/ water bills without relying on Canada Post for delivery.
 - Staff will provide relief on the first occurrence of a tax reprint/ water reprint if the property owners sign up for e-billing.
 - This fee update can be found on page 6 of Appendix I.
 - Currently, there are 1274 property owners signed up for tax e-billing (Approx 2.4 % of accounts).
 - Currently, there are 495 property owners signed up for water e-billing (Approx 5.4% of accounts).
 - E-billing can be signed up through the City's website: <https://www.welland.ca/Finance/EBilling.asp>.

FINANCIAL:

All updates to the Fees and Charges schedule can be found in Appendix I. These fees have been incorporated within the 2025 Proposed Budget.

CONCLUSION:

Staff are recommending the approval of the updated 2025 Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix I and all applicable By-Laws.

ATTACHMENT:

Appendix I – 2025 Fees and Charges