

**Date:** 2020-11-12

**Subject:** **2021 User Fees – Community Services, Corporate Support Services, Fire & Emergency Services, Legislative Services and Public Works & Engineering**

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**Report Number:** Corporate Support Services-2020-389

**Recommendations:**

1. That the report titled: **2021 User Fees – Community Services, Corporate Services, Fire & Emergency Services, Economic Development & Culture and Public Works & Engineering** to the Budget Committee Meeting of November 23, 2020, be received;
2. **That** the user fee charges proposed for 2021, as set out in appendices of this report, be approved; and
3. **THAT** the respective schedules to User Fee By-Law 380-2003, as amended, be further amended to include the approved fees for 2021.

**Overview:**

- The City's user fees are reviewed annually to ensure appropriate cost recovery, sustainability of programs/services, preservation of service quality, affordability, consistency, and, customer satisfaction.
- The 2020 approved budget included various user fee adjustments based on the pre-pandemic review of rates and services and amounted to a revenue budget increase of \$2,110,000.
- However, given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on residents, Council approved financial relief for residents at its May 27, 2020 meeting by reverting they City's user fee rates to 2019 budget levels. This decision was effective June 1, 2020 until December 31, 2020.

- Effective January 1, 2021, the user fees will revert back to rates approved as part of the 2020 User Fees Report and through this report, staff are recommending these rates be maintained in the 2021 Budget, with the exception of a few adjustments as highlighted in this report and summarized in Appendix 1 through 5.
- The recommended user fee adjustments included in the 2021 budget result in a revenue budget increase of \$430,000 and have been proposed to help alleviate the impact on the property tax rate, while also ensuring that programs are priced appropriately in relation to market comparators.
- Recreation fees remain largely unchanged with the exception of select Non-Resident program surcharges. In addition, 2020 program rollover dates have been deferred from January 1, 2021, in order to align with their original timing (i.e. fee changes with Effective Dates of September 1, 2020 will now take effect September 1, 2021).
- Performing Arts fees remain unchanged, with the exception of the removal of fees no longer in use
- Parks fees remain unchanged, with the exception of an increase of 2.5% in user fees for Cemetery Services
- Corporate Support Services fees remain largely unchanged with the exception of Land Title Searches due to increased cost per search from external vendors.
- Brampton Fire & Emergency Services is proposing to increase the majority of its user fees by 2% to keep pace with the increasing internal and external costs of providing services to the public.
- Legislative Services fees remain largely unchanged with the exception of select fees within City Clerk and Animal Services to reflect demand and need.
- Public Works and Engineering is proposing new user fee to recover costs associated with administrating Blanket Utility Permits with participating utility companies. Additionally, increase in user fees for Road Occupancy and Access Permits from \$250 to \$450 is proposed to better reflect the actual costs to manage the permitting process and construction activity within City of Brampton right of way.
- Facility Operations and Maintenance user fees are proposed to increase for rentals and services by 2.5% to 5.0%, with a addition of new fees for facility rentals for Film Production, Set up, etc.

### **Background:**

On an annual basis, staff review program and service user fees and recommend changes for Council approval. Pursuant to the Municipal Act, 2001, public notice must be given when Council is considering amendments to rates and fees.

Service fees associated with food/beverage products and merchandise are not considered to be user fees and therefore are not included as part of this report.

Transit department will bring separate User Fee reports for Council approval at a future date.

### **Current Situation:**

The City is committed to providing numerous programs and services to residents, which are both affordable and deliver value for money. User fees help recover costs while reducing the burden on the property tax rate, and the delicate balance of cost recovery, affordability, and property tax reduction are the central goals when pricing programs and services.

All operating areas review user fees periodically and recommend amendments to the User Fee By-law as required. In reviewing user fees, staff consider a number of factors, including:

- the cost to provide a service;
- current demand and market conditions;
- comparison and benchmarking of user fees with other services available in and around Brampton;
- consistency of fees for similar services within the department; and
- responsiveness of fee structures and options with user needs and preferences.

User fees are charged on a variety of the City's services and are included in the City's User Fee By-Law. Based on this information, staff recommend changes to user fees, keeping in mind the general objective of affordable, accessible service and administrative efficiency. Efforts have been made to compress, categorize, and streamline the inventory of user fees associated with programs and services in order to make user fees more transparent, consistent and easier to understand to the resident.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **Recreation**

The majority of programs and services within the Recreation division will remain unchanged, with the exception of select Non-Resident program surcharges such as:

- Flower City Senior Events (30% increase)
- Full Year programs, including ADAPT, Preschool, Dance (30% surcharge limited to \$100)

All other changes are minor and administrative in nature (rounding, interim fee approvals). In addition, 2020 program rollover dates have been deferred from January 1, 2021, in order to align with their original timing (i.e. fee changes with Effective Dates of September 1, 2020 will now take effect September 1, 2021).

## **Parks and Forestry**

Consistent with local private cemetery service providers, the proposed increase in the other cemetery supplies and services is approximately 2.5%.

## **Performing Arts**

Facility fees for AC – School Workshops have been removed as these are no longer in use. Other minor changes consist of administrative/clerical revisions (i.e. fee titles).

## **CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Corporate Collections Fees**

The proposed fee for Land Title Searches is increasing from \$120 to \$130 to match the fee charged to the City by the external search provider.

## **FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Brampton Fire & Emergency Services is proposing to increase the majority of its user fees by 2% to keep pace with the increasing internal and external costs of providing services to the public. Motor Vehicle Collision User Fee rates will continue to be adjusted at a later date based on the most recent remuneration rate approved by the Ministry of Transportation. No new user fees are being proposed this year as it relates to fire and emergency services.

## **LEGISLATIVE SERVICES**

### **Animal Services**

Animal Services acknowledges that there is more work involved in an initial inspection related to the keeping of hens, pigeons and/or rabbits than in subsequent inspections for renewal of an existing license. As such we propose to implement a new and lower fee for renewal inspections.

## **PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING**

### **Facility Services**

Facility Operations and Maintenance user fees are proposed to increase for rentals and services by 2.5%, in addition of following two new facility rental fees:

- Additional FOM Properties- Film Productions - Film Shoot days

- Additional FOM properties-Film Productions Set up/dismantle plus additional expenses (eg. janitorial, security, etc.)

## **Road Maintenance, Operations and Fleet**

An increase in user fees for Road Occupancy and Access Permits is proposed to reflect the actual costs to manage the permitting process and construction activity within City of Brampton right of way. Utility companies will also no longer be exempt from permit fees, as these applications required an extensive detailed review. A change in permit fees from \$250.00 to \$450.00 will ensure Brampton is comparable to surrounding municipalities' fees based on the benchmarking completed.

A new user fee of \$1,000.00 per month, per agreement, is being proposed to recover costs associated with administrating Blanket Utility Permits with participating utility companies. The Blanket Utility Permit agreement allows for unlimited minor boulevard surface dig locations that are typically less than one day to complete.

## **Corporate Implications:**

### Financial Implications:

The 2021 recommended operating budgets for all departments (excluding Transit) will include the proposed user fees recommended in this report, resulting in an anticipated revenue growth (excluding the impact of volume growth) of approximately \$430,000.

## **Strategic Plan:**

This report achieves the Strategic Plan priority of "Good Government" by ensuring continued financial stability and value for taxpayers through effective program/service delivery with appropriate cost recovery through user fees.

## **Term of Council Priorities:**

This report achieves the Well-Run City priority providing an alternative non-tax funding source to enhance the quality of life of Brampton residents.

## **Conclusion:**

The City continues to review user fees on an annual basis, keeping in mind the objectives of affordable and accessible services while balancing user fees with implications for property taxes. Staff will continue to conduct costing, benchmarking, and customer surveys to support user fee recommendations. The proposed rate

adjustments have been made for those programs/services that can absorb the increase or decrease without negatively affecting resident participation or revenue.

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**Attachments:**

- Appendix 1 – Community Services Rates and Fees
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Support Services Rates and Fees
- Appendix 3 – Fire and Emergency Services Rates and Fees
- Appendix 4 – Legislative Services Rates and Fees
- Appendix 5 – Public Works and Engineering Rates and Fees

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