

Date: 2023-11-03

Subject: **2024 User Fees – Community Services, Corporate Support Services, Fire & Emergency Services, Legislative Services, Public Works & Engineering, Planning, Building & Growth Management, and the Office of the CAO**

Contact: Nash Damer, Treasurer, Finance

Report Number: Corporate Support Services-2023-963

Recommendations:

1. That the report from Nash Damer, Treasurer, Finance to the Council Meeting of November 22, 2023, re: **2024 User Fees – Community Services, Corporate Support Services, Fire & Emergency Services, Legislative Services, Public Works & Engineering, Planning, Building & Growth Management, and the Office of the CAO**, be received;
2. That the user fee charges proposed for 2024, as set out in Appendix 1 to 6 of this report, be approved; and
3. That the respective schedules to User Fee By-Law 380-2003, as amended, as set out in Appendix B1 to B7 to this report, replace the existing schedules and that the appropriate by-law amendment be presented to Council for enactment.

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 recommended user fee adjustments 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 applies a dynamic pricing strategy based on inflation, cost recovery, and benchmarking instead of the traditional standard blanket fee increase approach. Program, membership, and rental pricing were evaluated in

greater detail, translating into the majority of fee increases in the range of 3.0% to 5.0%.

- Cultural Services proposes user fees based on inflation, cost recovery, and benchmarking while considering the unique needs of the local artists and arts organizations. Service fees, including operational and technical support, and rental pricing were evaluated in detail translating to a range of fee increases from 3.0% (inflationary) to 21.0% (cost-recovery).
- Parks rental fees are increasing due to the increase in cost to replace the rental items. The proposed increase in the Parks extra rental fees is approximately 3%. Consistent with local private cemetery service providers, the proposed increase in the other cemetery supplies and services is approximately 3%.
- Corporate Support Services fees remain largely unchanged outside of Property Tax and Corporate Collections fees. Increases are primarily to align fees closer to those charged by other municipalities.
- Brampton Fire and Emergency Services (BFES) performed a full cost analysis of responses to false alarms (which represent 77% of user fees collected). A recommendation to increase the false alarm user fee to \$1,400 (includes inflation) so that it reflects the full cost of responding to a false alarm has been included. This is an increase of approximately 36% over 2023. BFES is also proposing a new user fee to recover costs associated with repeated responses to unauthorized open-air burns. The balance of user fees is proposed to increase by 3%.
- Legislative Services fees remain largely unchanged outside of increases to Animal Services cremation fees, and the introduction of Education Sessions/Shelter Tour fees and Emergency Boarding fees. A new Temporary Outdoor Patio Expansion Permit fee has also been added.
- The Public Works and Engineering Department proposes adjustments in user fees for rentals and services under Facilities, Operations, and Maintenance. This proposal aims to strike a balance between addressing inflationary pressures and market-based factors while ensuring accessibility and fairness for our community members. The key changes include a 5% increase in certain user fees, elimination of specific fees (primarily related to storage cabinets at the Civic Center), and the introduction of new fees for facility rentals.
- Planning, Building & Growth Management is proposing an increase in the administration fees collected for site alteration permits (topsoil stripping permits). The current administration fees have not increased in over 25 years and are outdated compared to other municipalities. The new administration fees will be \$1,800 for plans of subdivision and \$750 for site plans.
- User fee increases result in \$1.4M of additional revenues in the 2024 budget.

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.

The Transit department will bring a separate User Fees Report 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

Recreation applies a dynamic pricing strategy instead of the traditional standard blanket fee increase approach. Program, membership, and rental pricing were evaluated in greater detail, translating into the majority of fee increases in the range of 3.0% to 5.0%. These increases address inflationary impacts, cost recovery, and reflect thorough benchmarking completed by staff. In addition, cricket field rentals are proposed to be

separated from Field Major rates to better reflect cost recovery for the larger cricket field requirements.

Parks and Forestry

Parks rental fees have an increase of 3% and the fees for cemetery services and dedication trees and benches have an increase of 3% to cover for inflationary costs, with the exception of the inscriptions rates with an increase of 29% and 51% to cover costs charged for the service by the vendor.

Cultural Services

In line with the 2022-2027 Performing Arts Strategic Plan, a thorough review of user fees has been conducted, with a focus on expanding revenue sources and supporting Brampton's artists and arts organizations.

Facility Rental Rates for Brampton Artists and Arts Organizations, previously referred to as "Community Rates," will remain unchanged in 2024 to ensure continued affordability for arts and culture spaces in the city. New Facility Fees have been added for Snelgrove Community Centre to support Arts & Culture users.

A 3% increase is proposed for all other facility rental rates for Commercial, Dance, and Not-for-Profit organizations to address inflationary costs.

There is a planned 3% increase in fees for part-time staffing positions to cover costs and align with part-time wage increases, and a more substantial average increase of 12% for unionized positions to match current negotiated hourly rates, ensure cost recovery, and align with industry benchmarks.

The following services and associated user fees have been removed: Dance Studio and Music Room at the former Civic Centre and mobile stage rental and event production services outside of Garden Square.

CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

Increases are proposed for several Property Tax and Corporate Collections fees to align fees closer to those charged by other municipalities.

A new Tax Sale Tender Package Application fee has also been added.

The Final Notice Before Tax Sale and Bailiff Action fee has been split into two separate fees.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

A full cost analysis of responding to false alarms (which represent 77% of Brampton Fire and Emergency Services user fees collected) was completed. A recommendation to increase the false alarm user fee to \$1,400 (includes inflation) so that it reflects the

full cost of responding to a false alarm has been included. This is an increase of approximately 36% over the 2023 user fee rate.

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.

Brampton Fire & Emergency Services is also proposing a new user fee to recover costs associated with repeated responses to unauthorized open-air burns. The first occurrence of a response to an unauthorized open-air burn at a property will not be charged, however each subsequent occurrence within the same calendar year will be subject to cost recovery at \$543.03 (MTO rate) per occurrence.

The remaining user fees have been adjusted with a 3% increase to keep pace with inflationary impacts.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

Legislative Services fees remain largely unchanged.

Animal Services is proposing an increase to fees for select cremation services as a result of increasing costs charged to the City by the external service provider. New fees are also proposed for Education Sessions/Shelter Tours and Emergency Boarding. A new Temporary Outdoor Patio Expansion Permit fee has also been added. Some fees are recommended for removal as the services are no longer available.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING

Facilities Operations and Maintenance

The proposal under consideration entails necessary adjustments to user fees for rentals and services across various municipal facilities. These adjustments are crucial to addressing the impact of inflation and market-based factors on our operational costs. Hence, it is proposed to increase user fees for most rentals and services by 5%, and by 10% for City Hall Atrium, in addition to the following new rental fees:

- City Hall Atrium – Meetings Category 2 (1 HR)
- West Tower - Daily Times Square Photos (1/2 HR)
- West Tower - Daily Times Square Photos (1 HR)

User fees for the following facilities are proposed to be removed:

- Alderlea Community Groups - Friday - up to 6 hours
- Civic Storage 7 Cabinet
- Civic Storage 8 Cabinet
- Civic Storage 9 Cabinet
- Civic Storage 10 Cabinet

- Civic Storage 11 Cabinet
- Civic Storage 12 Cabinet

PLANNING, BUILDING & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Environment & Development Engineering are proposing to increase the administration fees collected for Site Alteration Permits (Topsoil Stripping Permit) to a flat fee of \$1,800 for plans of subdivision and \$750 for site plans due to the current administration fees not increasing in over 25 years and are outdated compared to other municipalities.

OFFICE OF THE CAO

Office of the CAO fees remain unchanged.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

The 2024 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 \$1.4M, which represents a 0.1% relief on the overall property tax bill. This impact will be captured as part of a “revenue adjustment” in the 2024 budget.

Strategic Focus Area:

This report achieves the Government & Leadership strategic focus area by 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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Appendices:

The following Appendices only include fees that are changing:

- Appendix 1 – Community Services Rates and Fees (for Report)
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Support Services Rates and Fees (for Report)
- Appendix 3 – Fire and Emergency Services Rates and Fees (for Report)
- Appendix 4 – Legislative Services Rates and Fees (for Report)
- Appendix 5 – Public Works and Engineering Rates and Fees (for Report)
- Appendix 6 – Planning, Building & Growth Management Rates and Fees (for Report)

The following Appendices are the complete set of fees:

- Appendix B1 – Community Services Rates and Fees (for By-Law)
- Appendix B2 – Corporate Support Services Rates and Fees (for By-Law)
- Appendix B3 – Fire and Emergency Services Rates and Fees (for By-Law)
- Appendix B4 – Legislative Services Rates and Fees (for By-Law)
- Appendix B5 – Public Works and Engineering Rates and Fees (for By-Law)
- Appendix B6 – Planning, Building & Growth Management Rates and Fees (for By-Law)
- Appendix B7 – Office of the CAO Rates and Fees (for By-Law)