



**PORT COLBORNE**

**Subject: 2025 Proposed User Fees and Charges**

**To: Committee of the Whole - Budget**

**From: Corporate Services Department**

Report Number: 2024-183

Meeting Date: October 16, 2024

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### **Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommend to Council:

That Corporate Services Department Report 2024-183 **BE RECEIVED**;

That the 2025 Proposed User Fees and Charges schedules attached as Appendices A to P of Corporate Services Report 2024-183 **BE APPROVED**; and

That the draft by-law attached as Appendix Q of Corporate Services Report 2024-183 be brought forward to Council for consideration.

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to amend and replace schedules from the previously approved user fees and charges (Report 2023-162) by-law with the 2025 Proposed User Fees and Charges Schedules identified in Appendices A to P of Corporate Services Report 2024-183.

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### **Background:**

As part of the annual budget process, user fees and charges are reviewed to ensure that previously approved or new user fees and charges are complete and included in this user fee bylaw, account for changes in service, and consider market rates and cost recovery.

Section 391 of the *Municipal Act* and section 69 of the *Planning Act* provide the authority for a municipality to establish fees and charges. The fundamental principle behind user fees and cost recovery price setting is that those who actually consume and benefit from the good/service pay for it and those who do not use the good/service or

receive any benefit from it should not be obligated to pay for it. A key element is that the benefit of the service is to the individual, not the general taxpayer. The main economic reason why user charges should be levied on the direct recipient of benefits is that this improves the efficiency of the government in allocating resources in a way which creates the largest bundle of possible services demanded by the public.

The fees proposed are effective January 1, 2025, except for arena rental fees which are effective May 1, 2025.

## Discussion:

User fees and charges were reviewed as part of the annual budget process. This review is occurring as per the approved User Fee Principles and Framework approved by Council at the May 9, 2023, meeting.

Financial Services continues to work with departments in their review of user fees:

Category	Model	Model Reviewed by Finance
Engineering and Operations	1	In-progress
Dog Licensing	2	Yes
Fire and Emergency	2	In-progress
Vale Health and Wellness Centre	2, 3	Yes
Parks and Pavilions	2	In-progress
Playing Fields and Sports Courts	2	In-progress
Beaches	1, 3	Yes
Roselawn Centre	2, 3	In-progress
Sugarloaf Marina	1, 3	Yes
Procedures for Tax Registration and Tax Sales	1	Yes
Corporate Services and Clerks	1	Yes
By-Law Enforcement	2	Yes
Cemeteries of the City of Port Colborne	1, 2, 3	Yes
Planning and Development	1	Yes
Permits for Construction, Demolition, Occupancy and Change of User, Transfer of Permits and Inspections	1	In-progress

Model 1 – Full Cost Recovery; Model 2 – Subsidized (Partial cost recovery); Model 3 – Differentiated

Some of the salient changes included in this proposed bylaw are as follows:

- Fees and charges are recommended to change, where applicable, by amounts that are driven by associated costs with consideration to charges of other

municipalities. The most significant changes are with respect to planning activities at the recommendation of the City's former Chief Planner and a review of fees by BMA Consulting. The fees proposed support the proposed budget.

- Added language to the by-law that provides staff the opportunity to charge on a cost recovery basis for services incurred during the year that are not referenced in the user fee by-law.
- A resident and non-resident marriage ceremony fee is proposed. Resident to pay \$325 with non-resident to pay \$650 for ceremonies within work hours at City Hall, ceremonies within work hours but not at City Hall are proposed at \$425 for residents and \$850 for non-residents. Going forward, ceremonies performed after hours will be considered on a case by case basis as available with additional fees charged as incurred.
- Tax sale fees have been split between administrative and the actual proceeding to finalize the tax sale. Each have been set at \$750 based on actual experience of time required.
- Changes to beach parking are proposed to provide greater parking flexibility:
  - Zone 2 and 3 hourly parking Monday to Thursday \$4 per hour during Prime season
  - Zone 2 and 3 hourly parking Friday to Sunday \$5 per hour during Prime season starting at 4pm
  - Removed Platinum pass – guaranteed parking in Zone 2
  - Enhanced Gold pass, price moved from \$150 to \$200
    - Current: Zone 2 and 3 parking from Monday to Thursday sunrise to dusk year around
    - New: Zone 2 and 3 parking Friday to Sunday 4pm to dusk
    - New: Prime season access to Zone 1 from sunrise to 8:30 am
    - New: Offseason access to Zone 1 from sunrise to dusk
  - Enhanced PORTicipate pass
    - Current access to Zone 2 and 3 year-round
    - New: Prime season access to Zone 1 from sunrise to 8:30 am
    - New: Offseason access to Zone 1 from sunrise to dusk
  - Introduce “Sunrise pass”, price of \$120
    - New: Year-round access to Zone 1 from sunrise to 8:30 am
  - Removed reckless driving/environmental impact fine
  - Removed the 7 day a week guaranteed spot pass
  - Removes many parking spots from inventory vs. usage
  - Note 1 to changes: Prime season = Victoria Day to Thanksgiving and Offseason = All other days, although the City notes these lots will not be plowed during the winter period and therefore may not be available.

- Note 2 to changes: Passes purchased after Thanksgiving 2024 will be valid until December 31, 2025
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### **Internal Consultations:**

Internally, user fees and charges have been discussed through the development of the 2025 Levy Budget.

Financial Services would like to thank City departments for their leadership and cooperation in updating certain user fees and charges in this report and look forward to working with others to update their user fees and charges going forward.

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### **Financial Implications:**

User fees and charges are a significant source of revenue for the City. The City will rely on \$4.63 million generated through user fees and charges to deliver the wide range of services offered in the 2025 Levy Budget. This represents a \$230 thousand increase over the \$4.4 million projected in the 2024 Levy Budget. This year-over-year change is primarily driven by planning and building. This increase will be realized through the changes in this bylaw.

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### **Public Engagement:**

User fees and charges take into account cost recovery and for significant or material user fees and charges market rates are considered when available.

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### **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Environment and Climate Change
  - Welcoming, Livable, Healthy Community
  - Economic Prosperity
  - Increased Housing Options
  - Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure
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## **Conclusion:**

Staff recommend Council approve the proposed user fees and charges outlined in this report.

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## **Schedules**

- a. Schedule A - Engineering and Operations
- b. Schedule B - Dog Licensing
- c. Schedule C - Fire and Emergency
- d. Schedule D - Vale Health and Wellness Centre
- e. Schedule E - Parks and Pavilions
- f. Schedule F - Playing Fields and Sport Courts
- g. Schedule G - Beaches
- h. Schedule H - Sugarloaf Marina
- i. Schedule I - Procedures for Tax Registration and Tax Sales
- j. Schedule J - Corporate Services and Clerks
- k. Schedule K - Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum
- l. Schedule L – By-Law Enforcement
- m. Schedule M - Cemeteries of the City of Port Colborne
- n. Schedule N – Planning and Development
- o. Schedule O - Permits for Construction, Demolition, Occupancy and Change of Use, Transfer of Permits and Inspections
- p. Schedule P - Filming
- q. Schedule Q - Draft By-law to Establish User Fees and Charges

Respectfully submitted,

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**Report Approval:**

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.