

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** City Council  
**Report From:** Christine Gilbert, Deputy Treasurer  
**Meeting Date:** May 26, 2025  
**Report Code:** CR-25-072  
**Subject:** 2025 Fees and Charges Update - Council

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-072 respecting 2025 Fees and Charges Update - Council, City Council directs staff to:

1. Provide notice of the City's intention to repeal Fees and Charges By-law No. 2024-078 and replace it with a revised by-law as outlined in the report; and
2. Bring forward the 2025 Fees and Charges By-law for Council's consideration.

### Highlights:

- Fees and charges are reviewed annually in the spring, with any changes taking effect July 1.
- New for 2025 and in accordance with Council direction, Standing Committees reviewed departmental fees and charges prior to Council consideration, and any feedback has been incorporated into the proposed fee schedules.
- 2025 is a transition year under Service Review project 4c.3, which seeks to standardize and improve the annual fees and charges process.
- User fees and charges will generate approximately 22% of the revenue considered in the City's 2025 operating budget.

## **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: This report supports the delivery of Core Service.

## **Climate and Environmental Implications:**

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

## **Previous Report/Authority:**

- [Council Resolution R-230612-008](#) to bring Fees and Charges updates to Standing Committees.
- [By-law No. 2024-078 – 2024 Fees and Charges](#)
- [CR-25-043 2025 Water Rate and Sewer Surcharge Update](#)
- [CR-25-055 – 2025 Fees and Charges Update – Corporate Services](#)
- [CR-25-062 – 2025 Fees and Charges Update – Operations](#)
- [CR-25-063 – 2025 Fees and Charges Update – Community Services](#)

## **Background:**

In June 2023, Council passed a resolution which directed that the annual fees and charges updates be presented to the applicable Standing Committees, prior to Council final approval. This change was implemented to increase transparency and provide additional opportunity for Committee input.

The Corporate Services Committee reviewed the following fee schedules:

- A. – Animal Control
- D. – Clerks
- F. – Fire and Emergency Services
- G. – Parking & By-law
- K. – Tax, Water, Finance

The Operations Committee reviewed the following fee schedules:

- E. – Engineering
- J. – Public Works
- L. – Transit
- M. – Waste Management
- K. – Water/Wastewater Rates (procedural update only)

The Community Services Committee reviewed the following fee schedules:

- B. – Building
- C. – Cemetery
- H. – Parks and Recreation
- I. – Planning

The revised process aligns with Service Review project 4c.3, which aims to:

- Streamline and improve the efficiency of the annual fees and charges process;
- Standardize the review process and ensure fees accurately reflect the cost of service delivery and opportunities for revenue generation;
- Improve transparency and communication with stakeholders regarding fees;
- Introduce standardized templates that document fee rationale, including total service cost, estimated volumes, comparator fees, and any rationale for fee subsidies; and
- Implement a rolling schedule to ensure comprehensive, phased-in fee reviews across all departments.

As part of this update, responsibility for the annual fees and charges review has been realigned to the Finance division, as responsibility was previously under the Clerks division.

As a transitional step, departments were asked to divide their fee schedules into three-year cyclical review cycle, beginning in 2026. This approach ensures every fee is reviewed at least once every three years while also considering staff capacity and allowing for more in-depth review of fees. For 2025, the full annual review model remains in place as it has in previous years.

The three-year cycle is intended to establish a minimum review frequency, not a fixed limit. Fees may still be identified by staff or Standing Committees for a more fulsome review at any time due to operational changes, new service offerings, Council direction, or changes in legislative requirements.

## **Analysis:**

The 2025 fee schedules are attached to this report. For greater clarity while reviewing proposed changes in the fee schedules:

- Any proposed fee additions have been highlighted in green.

- Any proposed fee deletions have been highlighted in red.
- Administrative changes have been redlined.

In addition, a summary of the proposed fees and charges, additions and deletions for approval has been provided as an attachment.

Any feedback received from the standing committees has been incorporated into the proposed fee schedules and the summaries of proposed changes, as attached.

### **Financial Implications:**

User fees and charges (not including water and wastewater rates) are anticipated to generate \$10,685,010 or approximately 22% of the City of Owen Sound's 2025 Operating Budget.

### **Communication Strategy:**

This Fees and Charges Council report communicates recommended fees to Council and the public. Notice will be provided on the City's website that the by-law to adopt the fees will be considered by Council on June 16, 2025.

After adoption, the by-law will be available on the City's website. Additionally, any changes in the fees will be communicated as required by the affected division and in the best method for type of fee, which may include: public notice, posting of rates, communication at the point of sale and other methods.

### **Consultation:**

Directors, Managers, Supervisors and Departmental Staff

### **Attachments:**

1. Summary of Fee Changes – Community Services
2. Summary of Fee Changes – Corporate Services
3. Summary of Fee Changes – Operations
4. 2025 Fees and Charges By-law – Proposed Fee Schedules

### **Recommended by:**

Christine Gilbert, Deputy Treasurer

**Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Christine Gilbert, Deputy Treasurer at [cgilbert@owensound.ca](mailto:cgilbert@owensound.ca) or 519-376-4440 ext. 1223.