

Report to Council

Report Title:	2026 Proposed Fees and Charges		
Prepared By:	Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer		
Department:	Finance		
Date:	August 26, 2025		
Report Number:	FIN2025-23	File Number:	C11FIN
Attachments:	2026 Proposed Fees and Charges		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number FIN2025-23 – 2026 Proposed Fees and Charges, prepared by Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer and in doing so approves a By-Law coming forward to adopt the 2026 Fees and Charges.

Report:

Background:

Municipalities have various statutes granting them the authority to set user fees, each with its own specific requirements:

Building Permit Fees: These are regulated by Section 7 of the Ontario Building Code Act, 1992. This section outlines how municipalities can establish and manage fees for building permits, including the necessary conditions for fee structures.

Planning Application Fees: Governed by Section 69 of the Planning Act, R.S.O 1990, this section permits municipalities to impose fees for planning applications, ensuring costs related to planning are covered.

Other Municipal Services: For services not specifically addressed by other statutes—such as community services and licensing—municipalities can levy fees under Part XII, Section 391 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. This allows municipalities to charge for various services, aiding in cost recovery and reducing the reliance on property taxes.

User fees and service charges are a crucial revenue source for the municipality. They help mitigate the pressure on property tax rates by ensuring that those who use services contribute to their costs.

Each year, the municipality reviews and adjusts fees to reflect inflation, legislative changes, and market conditions. For 2026, staff received Mayoral direction to prepare the 2026 Fees and Charges with an increase based on the cost of living. This ensures that user fees remain aligned with actual inflationary pressures and

continue to support the municipality's financial sustainability. For the attached proposed 2026 Fees and Charges, staff used an increase of 2% as the August inflation rates are not posted yet but the annual average for Ontario was 1.914% as of July. In 2025, staff increased the rates by 3% as per Councils direction.

Attached is the draft Consolidated Fees and Charges By-law for 2026 for Council's review and approval. Approval of the updated fee schedule is necessary for Department Heads to finalize their 2026 budget estimates, ensuring that revised fees are in place before the budget process is completed.

Analysis:

The initial 2% increase was applied to all departments fees and rounded to the nearest \$0.50 for simplicity. Staff have reviewed their departments fees and charges, completed a review of the neighbouring municipalities rates and have recommended increases in multiple areas.

Increasing user fees assists with funding the municipalities operations trying to avoid significant increases on the tax rate.

Attached is the full listing of all Fees and Charges, with the recommended changes highlighted in red for each department

Administration

To continue to deliver high-quality services and address rising costs, a 2% cost of living increase to fees, rounded to the nearest \$0.50 was applied. This modest adjustment ensures fees remain practical for billing and accounting while supporting cost recovery for municipal services.

Taxation and Revenue and Property Search

Most fees in this category are subject to the standard **2% increase (rounded to the nearest \$0.50)**.

The following fees, which have historically been applied through by-laws, are now formally included in Schedule A:

- **Water Final Meter Read** – increasing from **\$50.00 in 2025 to \$60.00 in 2026**, aligned with the Tax Certificate fee, as these tasks are typically performed together.
- **New Account Set-up Fee – Utilities** – increasing from **\$40.00 in 2025 to \$63.00 in 2026**, consistent with the Tax New Account Set-up Fee.
- **New Ownership Change – Utilities** – set at **\$26.50**, ensuring consistency with tax-related ownership changes and supporting administration of new accounts.

The previous allowance of **one no-charge transaction per calendar year** has been removed for the following:

- Refund Requests
- Account Transfer Fees

Administration

To implement the 2% fee increase, some rounding adjustments were necessary, resulting in a few fees increasing slightly more than 2%. These adjustments help ensure that fees remain practical for billing and accounting purposes. While individual fee changes may vary marginally above the 2% mark, the overall additional revenue generated from these differences is minimal. The impact on users remains modest, and the approach supports consistency and simplicity in fee structuring.

East Ridge Business Park Sign Fees

The proposal is to keep the fees for advertising on the East Ridge Business Park sign the same as in 2025 to align with the long-term contracts that were signed and recognizing there may be little justification to increase fees when many spaces have not yet been sold.

Planning and Building Fees

Currently, there are no increases to Building or Planning Fees reflected in the 2026 Fees and Charges update. A detailed report will be brought forward in the near future with recommendations for increases to Planning Fees as part of our Housing Accelerator Fund initiatives and a full fee comparison report and review.

With respect to Building Fees, changes are governed by the **Ontario Building Code Act, 1992 (Section 7)**, which requires a specific legislative process before any fee adjustments can be approved. This process includes:

- **Preparation of a Detailed Report** – Municipalities must prepare a report that outlines the basis for the proposed changes, including anticipated costs of delivering building services and the rationale for the fee structure.
- **Public Notice** – A formal public notice must be given at least **21 days prior** to Council's consideration of the fee change. This ensures transparency and provides stakeholders with an opportunity to review the proposed amendments.
- **Opportunity for Public Input** – Members of the public must be given the chance to make submissions or comments regarding the proposed fee changes before Council adopts them.
- **Council Approval** – Only after these requirements have been met can Council pass a by-law to implement the revised building permit fees.

This legislated process ensures that Building Fees are set in a way that is fair, transparent, and reflective of the actual cost of administering and enforcing the Building Code. This review is also underway as part of a Housing Accelerator Fund initiatives with a full fee comparison report and review to be provided in accordance with the Act.

Materials Management

As part of the upcoming transition to the new provincial Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework for recycling, the Blue Box fee has been removed from the Fees and Charges schedule. Under this new system,

recycling services will be managed and funded directly by producers, and blue boxes will be provided free of charge by Circular Materials, the producer responsibility organization.

In addition, staff are highlighting a change to the cost of bag tags. The fee will increase by **\$0.50**, bringing the 2026 rate to **\$3.00 per tag**. This adjustment reflects increasing program costs and ensures continued cost recovery for waste management services.

Recreation

Ice Rental

a) Arena (September 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027)

- **Last Minute Ice within 24 Hours:** Introduced in 2025 as a new fee. The rounded rate of **\$80.00** is a pricing and marketing strategy.
- **Drop-in Ice Program (per person):** Fee amended in September 2025. Too soon to increase. Rate remains an even number to facilitate cash handling.
- **Drop-in Ice Program 10-Pass (per person):** Fee amended in September 2025. Too soon to increase. Rate remains an even number to facilitate cash handling.
- **Drop-in Shiny Hockey (per play):** Fee amended in September 2025. Too soon to increase. Rate remains an even number to facilitate cash handling.
- **Huff n' Puff (per play):** Senior program pricing aligned with other area municipalities.
- **Huff n' Puff 10-Pass:** Fee aligned with the single admission rate.
- **Public Skating Admission Fees (all categories):** Newly implemented in January 2025. Too soon to increase. Industry standard is to review admission fees every 3–5 years. In addition, many public skates are supported through sponsorships.
- **Public Skate Special Event Sponsorship (per skate, 30% premium):** *New Fee*. Provides a premium sponsorship opportunity for special events or holiday skates, which typically attract higher attendance and provide greater advertising exposure.
- **Off-Season Main Floor Rental – Special Event (Per Day Setup/Tear Down Fee):** *New Fee*. Applies to large-scale events requiring full-day setup or teardown. Replaces previous hourly charges to simplify billing for both the user and the municipality. Aligned with the Cargill Hall setup fee structure.

2) Centennial Park Swimming Pool – Service and Rental Fees

a) Admission Fees

- **Preschool (ages 2–4) – Single Visit:** Increased in 2025. Industry standard is to adjust admission fees every 3–5 years. Rates remain competitive with comparable municipalities to ensure affordability.

b) Pool Sponsorship

- **Public Swim Sponsorship (1.5 hours):** Incremental increase recommended. A market comparison showed previous rates were well below those of other municipalities.
- **Special Event Swim Sponsorship (1.5 hours, 30% premium):** *New Fee.* Provides a premium sponsorship opportunity for holiday or special event swims (e.g., Canada Day), which attract higher attendance and generate greater advertising exposure.

c) Swimming Lessons

- **Private Swimming Lessons (per lesson):** Incremental increase recommended. Previous rates were well below comparable municipalities.
- **Semi-Private Swimming Lessons (per swimmer, per lesson):** Fee consistent with private single lesson pricing structure.

3) Community Parks – Rentals and Service Fees

- **Extra Garbage Cans and Disposal (per garbage):** *New Fee.* While there is no charge for standard park rentals, the addition of extra garbage bins requires staff time and resources that need to be cost recovered.

4) Ball Diamond and Soccer Field Rental Fees (excluding lining)

- **BPR Soccer Park – Youth Minor Soccer:** Incremental increase recommended. A price comparison revealed that rates were previously well below those charged by other municipalities.

5) General Recreation and Leisure Program Fees

- **Indoor Pickleball Seasonal Membership:** *New Fee.* Aligns with the existing outdoor pickleball seasonal pass to provide consistency across programs.

Facility – Schedule H

1) Cargill and District Community Centre and Ball Diamonds

- **Drapery Rental (per linear foot, 10' section, staff setup, in conjunction with facility rental):** *New Fee.* Introduced to recover costs of newly purchased drapery. Priced comparable to private rental service providers.
- **Event Overnight Campsite – Un-serviced:** Fee consistent with Lobies Campground pricing.
- **Event Overnight Campsite – Serviced with Hydro:** Fee consistent with Lobies Campground pricing

Other changes:

The Child Care Centre is limited in the areas in which they can increase. Given the constraints imposed by the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program, the Child Care Centre faces limitations in adjusting fees for programs serving children under 72 months (6 years). The CWELCC program provides significant funding and subsidies aimed at reducing the cost burden on families, which in turn restricts the

extent to which fees can be increased. Consequently, while the overall fee structure will be adjusted to reflect an increase where possible, however, any changes to fees for early childhood programs must comply with CWELCC guidelines.

The following fee adjustments have been made to align more closely with industry standards:

- **Registration Fee:** Staff have increased this fee to \$25.00. There is a great deal of staff time and resources used to assist families with a smooth transition into the centre. Including staff time to provide a tour of the facility, review the policies and family hand book, as well as completing the onboarding information.
- **Late Fee:** There were no changes to this fee, however staff felt it was important to note that we are well below industry standard of \$5.00 plus \$1/minute after centre closes.

In conclusion, the adjustments to the fees and charges reflect a balanced approach to aligning with industry standards, managing inflationary pressures, and ensuring the sustainability of our services. The new and revised fees are designed to maintain consistency, support operational needs, and enhance service delivery while minimizing the financial impact on our community. These changes will help the council continue to provide high-quality services and facilities, while also ensuring that the revenue generated adequately supports the associated costs. Although some fees have not been increased due to economic considerations or legislative requirements; overall, these changes are designed to maintain service quality and financial stability while addressing community needs and maintaining our service levels within the community. Staff will continue to monitor the impact of these adjustments and remain responsive to feedback to ensure that our approach remains fair and effective.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | N/A |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes


Presented fees are to assist with cost recovery for operations within the municipality.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Reviewed By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sonya Watson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer