

Report to Council

Report Title: Community User Group Budget Requests – 2026 Budget Consideration

Prepared By: Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Department: Finance

Date: September 23, 2025

Report Number: FIN2025-25

File Number: C11FIN, F05

Attachments:

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number FIN2025-25 – Community User Group Budget Requests – 2026 Budget Consideration, prepared by Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer, for information purposes; and further, that Council provide direction on which, if any, of the submitted requests should be considered for inclusion in the 2026 Municipal Budget:

Report:

Background:

Historically, the Municipality's budget process has followed the guidelines set out in Budget Process Policy F05-0500-17. Under this policy, staff began developing departmental budgets and business plans in August, with the draft consolidated budget presented to Council in December or January for review and approval.

Effective May 1, 2025, the Province granted Strong Mayor Powers to the Municipality of Brockton's Head of Council under Part VI.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. These powers significantly changed the process of developing and approving the municipal budget. Under Section 284.16 of the Act, the Mayor is now primarily responsible for proposing and adopting the budget, subject to Council's amendment, veto, and override provisions.

As part of this new framework, **Community User Groups were asked to submit budget request forms by September 10, 2025**, to ensure their proposals are properly reviewed and considered as part of the Mayor's proposed 2026 budget

Analysis:

The total value of the requests is \$1,950,500, which represents a 15.06% increase to the municipal tax levy if all items were to be approved and funded through taxation. Such an increase would not be sustainable within the Municipality's financial framework and would create a significant burden on ratepayers.

Large-scale projects continue to drive the majority of the total. The Walkerton Minor Ball request for a new baseball diamond (\$1,000,000) and Victoria Jubilee Hall's fire inspection compliance (\$500,000) together account for more than 84% of the total requested. These projects, while important, would create significant tax pressures if approved in full. Council may wish to consider deferring, phasing, or encouraging external funding for these large capital projects.

Several smaller requests represent modest investments with community benefit. Walkerton Lawn Bowling's air quality and shed improvements (\$18,500 combined), Walkerton Minor Ball's pitchers' mound and batters' box repairs (\$10,000), Bruce Grey Mentorship's youth program request (\$2,000), and Elmwood Community Centre's facility improvements (ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000) would enhance recreational, cultural, and community facilities at a limited cost to taxpayers. Collectively, these smaller items provide tangible value with less than a 1% tax impact

Other requests relate to health and safety priorities. The Walkerton and District Hospital Foundation's request for \$200,000 toward an X-ray machine supports critical healthcare services for the broader community, while Victoria Jubilee Hall's request for \$500,000 to meet fire code requirements support public safety and the preservation of a key cultural facility. While these items fall outside the Municipality's direct jurisdiction and there is no formal obligation to provide support, they play a vital role in sustaining essential services and amenities within Brockton. To assist with affordability, Council may wish to consider a phased-in approach to any financial contribution rather than full funding in a single budget year. It is also important to note that between 2022 and 2025, Brockton contributed a total of \$80,000 (\$20,000 per year) toward the Hospital Foundation's mammogram machine purchase, demonstrating the Municipality's past commitment to supporting community health initiatives in a measured and sustainable way.

The following table summarizes the community user group budget requests received for consideration in the 2026 budget:

Community User Group Budget Requests:

Organization	Project	Amount	Increase
Walkerton Minor Ball	Ball Diamond Lighting	\$200,000.00	1.54%
Walkerton Minor Ball	New Pitchers Mound/Fix Batters Boxes	\$10,000.00	0.08%
Walkerton Minor Ball	New Baseball Diamond	\$1,000,000.00	7.72%
Walkerton Minor Ball	Higher fences on infield on D1, D2 and D3 / New back stop on D1	\$20,000.00	0.15%
Walkerton Lawn Bowling Club	Clubhouse Air Quality Improvement	\$6,000.00	0.05%
Walkerton Lawn Bowling Club	Shed Replacement	\$12,500.00	0.10%
Victoria Jubilee Hall	Fire Inspection Orders	\$500,000.00	3.86%

Organization	Project	Amount	Increase
Bruce Grey Mentorship	Empowering Young People Through Positive Mentorship	\$2,000.00	0.02%
Greenock Senior Citizens	Reduced Fee Rental Request	Unknown	0.00%
Walkerton and District Hospital Foundation	X-ray	\$200,000.00	1.54%
Elmwood Community Centre	Stairway Improvements	\$3,300.00	0.03%
Elmwood Community Centre	Pavillion Drainage Repair Estimated cost \$5,000.	\$2,500.00	0.02%
Elmwood Community Centre	Coolers Estimated cost \$8,000	\$4,000.00	0.03%
Elmwood Community Centre	Main Door Replacement Estimated cost \$20,000.	\$10,000.00	0.08%
Total		\$1,970,300.00	15.21%

Brockton’s share of these requests has been presented at 50% of the total project costs, with the remaining share belonging to the Municipality of West Grey. Any decision to proceed would therefore need to be coordinated with West Grey for cost-sharing and project delivery.

In addition, Walkerton Minor Ball’s request for \$200,000 in ball diamond lighting has already been successfully supported through a grant and will form part of the 2026 capital program. As a result, this project is fully funded and does not require additional municipal tax levy contributions.

In conclusion, the Community User Group budget requests reflect a wide range of priorities, from recreation to cultural preservation and health initiatives. The total amount requested cannot be fully supported in a single budget year; however, each project contributes to the strength of the community. Council will need to balance benefits with fiscal realities by setting priorities, considering phased-in contributions, and encouraging external funding. This approach allows Brockton to provide meaningful support while maintaining financial sustainability and managing tax impacts responsibly.

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 Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment N/A
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance Yes

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective?
N/A

The total financial impact from the requests received are outlined within the chart and how they would impact the total 2026 Budget.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer