

Report to Council

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| Report Title: | Planning Fees Review 2026 | | |
| Prepared By: | Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk) | | |
| Department: | Planning | | |
| Date: | October 14, 2025 | | |
| Report Number: | PLN2025-07 | File Number: | C11PLN |
| Attachments: | Draft Planning Fees | | |

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number PLN2025-07 – Planning Fees Review 2026, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk) and in doing so approves a By-Law coming forward accepting the Municipality of Brockton Planning Fees Review prepared by B.M. Ross and Associated Ltd., and further approves a By-Law coming forward to amend the 2026 Fees and Charges By-law to adopt the amended planning fees for a 20% cost recovery level.

Report:

Background:

As part of the Municipality of Brockton’s Housing Action Plan, developed under the Housing Accelerator Fund, the Municipality committed to several initiatives designed to streamline development processes and improve housing affordability and supply. One of these initiatives was the completion of an external review of planning, development and building permit fees to ensure that the Municipality’s cost structure supports efficient and sustainable planning services.

To fulfill this initiative, B.M. Ross and Associates Limited was retained to undertake a comprehensive review of Brockton’s planning fees and planning reserve fund. The purpose of the review was to evaluate current fee levels against expenditures, assess cost recovery, and compare Brockton’s fees with those of neighbouring municipalities within Bruce County and surrounding regions.

The study confirmed that the Municipality currently recovers only about 12% of its annual planning costs through fees. This low recovery rate reflects that most staff and consultant costs related to planning activities are subsidized by the general tax base.

The consultant presented a range of alternative fee structures that would improve cost recovery to varying degrees, while remaining competitive within the local market. The analysis concluded that achieving 50% or

full cost recovery would likely set Brockton’s fees well above comparable municipalities, potentially discouraging development activity.

Analysis:

B.M. Ross and Associates recommended that Brockton implement moderate fee increases aimed at achieving approximately 20% cost recovery. This approach strikes a reasonable balance between financial sustainability and continued encouragement of local development.

The proposed fee adjustments include moderate increases to site plan application fees, zoning compliance certificates, deeming by-law applications, encroachment and servicing agreement fees, and removal of holding provisions.

Additionally, new fees are recommended for Development Agreements (for projects not requiring site plan or subdivision approval); and Battery Energy Storage System applications, which are becoming more common and require significant staff and consultant review time.

These changes would ensure that Brockton’s planning fees more accurately reflect the actual effort and resources required to process applications, while keeping rates in line with neighbouring municipalities. Importantly, this initiative aligns with the goals of the Housing Action Plan by creating a clearer, fairer, and more transparent planning process that supports timely housing development while maintaining fiscal accountability.

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 N/A
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment Yes
- 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? Yes

Based on recent expenditure patterns and the forecast prepared by B.M. Ross and Associates, implementation of fees at the 20% cost recovery level would generate sufficient additional revenue to reduce reliance on the general levy, without placing an undue financial burden on applicants. The proposed structure remains compliant with the Planning Act and Municipal Act, 2001.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Fiona Hamilton, Director of Legislative and Legal Services (Clerk)

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer