



Staff Report to Community Advisory Committee

DATE: Tuesday, November 26, 2024

DEPARTMENT: Administration

SUBJECT: 20241126 - Bylaw No. 2123 - Fees and Charges Bylaw Amendment Report.docx

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff have prepared an amendment to the Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 113, 1995 for Council's consideration. Many of the changes are to adjust the current fees to account for inflationary adjustments. Staff are also recommending additional charges to offset the cost of providing these services.

BACKGROUND:

Last updated in 2022, the Fees and Charges Bylaw is an important document for the City. This bylaw is readily available on our website and can help inform residents and customers of fees the City charges for various goods and services.

Staff are proposing many changes to the bylaw to refresh this document and charge rates that are truly reflective of the work and time spent by staff to prepare and produce documents and various other goods.

Staff have reviewed many other similarly sized municipalities' bylaws while preparing this amendment and it was noted that Langford charges significantly less for the same undertakings.

COMMENTARY:

The Fees and Charges Bylaw is divided into Schedules based on the department that will likely fulfil these requests. Staff are recommending changes to these fees to reflect the cost of providing the services. Included in the Bylaw is also a provision to automatically adjust the fees in accordance with the All Items Consumer Price Index for Greater Victoria effective May 1 of each year. The RCMP fees are not included in the annual adjustment as the City tries to align these fees with those charged by our partner municipalities at the detachment.

Schedule A – Administration

Photocopies:

| Currently Reads: | Proposed Amendment: |
|---|---|
| Single Sided \$0.37 per page Double Sided \$0.69 per sheet | Single Sided \$0.50 per page * Double Sided \$0.80 per sheet * |

**For materials not provided under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Bylaw of the Municipality.*

Staff Time to Obtain, Photocopy, Produce, and Research Documents:

| Currently Reads: | Proposed Amendment: |
|--|---------------------|
| Not currently in Bylaw. \$11.33 per ¼ after the first three (3) hours. | \$15.00 per ¼ hour |

~~This proposed fee is a new addition to the bylaw.~~ Staff have noted an increase in requests that are not necessarily a Freedom of Information Request but do take a considerable amount of time to create, locate, and provide materials to the requester. Many other municipalities have a fee like this written in their bylaw, below is a table outlining the applicable fees charged by some other municipalities in BC. As can be seen in the table below, the fees vary by municipality with an average of approximately \$13.66 per 15 minutes. Staff believe the recommended rate accurately captures the cost of providing the service.

| Municipality: | Fee: |
|-----------------------------|---|
| City of Campbell River | \$75.00 per hour, \$10.00 per ¼ hour after 1 st hour |
| Township of Langley | \$63.00 per hour |
| City of Nanaimo | \$7.50 ¼ hour |
| District of North Saanich | \$12.50 per ¼ hour |
| District of Central Saanich | \$15.00 per ¼ hour |
| Town of Sidney | \$12.50 Per 15 minutes or portion thereof after the first 15 minutes. |

Property Records Request/File Search:

| Currently Reads: | Proposed Amendment: |
|-------------------------|--|
| Not currently in Bylaw. | \$25.00 plus GST (\$26.25 after tax) * |

** For property owners requesting their own information, there is no fee. Occupancy certificates (if available) will also have no charge.*

This proposed fee is a new addition to the bylaw. Annually, the City completes over 500 property records requests for property owners, real estate agents, and other interested parties. Many

municipalities charge for such a service. Currently, the City does not charge for this service. Staff have recommended \$25 plus GST to reflect the average processing time of 30 minutes per request. Below is a table outlining the fees throughout the CRD municipalities:

| Municipality: | Fee: |
|----------------------|--|
| Colwood | \$15.00 |
| Sooke | \$30.00 |
| Metchosin | \$15.00 |
| Esquimalt | \$50.00 plus GST (\$52.50) |
| Highlands | \$15.00 |
| View Royal | Fees and Charges Bylaw notes there may be a charge (\$40.00 if more than 4 hours of staff time). |
| Victoria | \$25.00 |
| Central Saanich | \$25.00 |
| North Saanich | \$75.00 |
| Sidney | Cost per page from Island Blue Print |
| Oak Bay | \$10.00/ page for building plans, but no charge for permit history. |

Schedule B – Finance

Mortgage Company Tax List:

| Currently Reads: | Proposed Amendment: |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| \$8.00 per folio | \$10.00 per folio |

Staff note there is a significant amount of staff time involved in generating and administering the mortgage company tax lists and with rising costs, recommend increasing this fee accordingly.

Schedule C – Planning and Development

Documents:

| Currently Reads: | Proposed Amendment: |
|-------------------------|---|
| Not currently in Bylaw. | Official Community Plan \$50.00 per printed document Zoning Bylaw \$75.00 per printed document |

Staff wish to note that by charging a flat rate for these highly requested documents rather than a by

page photocopy fee as outlined above, the requester will save money. Both the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw are available in their entirety on our website for use or viewing.

Schedule D – Mapping

There are no proposed amendments to this Schedule at this time.

Schedule E – RCMP

We are proposing some increases to these fees, with totals rounded to the nearest dollar as many applicants pay by cash. As well, staff are recommending an addition to this Schedule to allow staff to waive the fees for Police Information Checks and Fingerprints for instances of hardship.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

While fees collected are generally captured in General Revenue, the City does not collect a significant amount of money annually. While we do not expect to have any significant increase to revenues with these amendments, the fees do help in offsetting the additional costs of providing the services. Many of the changes are to adjust the current fees to account for inflationary adjustments, going forward these adjustments will occur automatically.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Pursuant to the *Community Charter*, a council may be bylaw impose fees for all or part of a service of the municipality, including imposing charges for obtaining copies of records that are available for public inspection.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES:

5 - Good Governance

OPTIONS:

Option 1

THAT the Committee recommend that Council give first, second, and third reading to Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 113, 1995 Amendment No. 16, Bylaw No. 2123, 2024.

OR Option 2

THAT the Committee recommend that Council direct staff to remove or update the following in the Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 113, 1995 Amendment No. 16, Bylaw No. 2123, 2024:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Option 3

THAT the Committee recommend that Council take no action regarding Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 113, 1995 Amendment No. 16, Bylaw No. 2123, 2024 at this time.

SUBMITTED BY: Marie Watmough, Director of Legislative and Protective Services

Concurrence: Melisa Miles, Manager of Legislative Services

Concurrence: Donna Petrie, Senior Manager of Communications & Economic Development

Concurrence: Yari Nielsen, Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities

Concurrence: Matthew Baldwin, RPP, MCIP, Director of Development Services

Concurrence: Leah Stohmann, RPP, MCIP, Director of Community Planning and Climate Change

Concurrence: Katelyn Balzer, P.Eng., Director of Engineering and Public Works

Concurrence: Michael Dillabaugh, CPA, CA, Director of Finance

Concurrence: Braden Hutchins, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Concurrence: Darren Kiedyk, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments: Bylaw No. 2123