

## Update on Building, Planning, Board of Variance and Engineering Fees for 2025

### Recommendation:

**THAT Council receive the report titled “Update on Building, Planning, Board of Variance, and Engineering Fees for 2025” dated April 15, 2025, for information.**

### Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

This report provides an overview of proposed updates to fees in the core service areas of building, planning and engineering. These fees relate to administrative and professional services provided by these departments to support development applications, permitting and other activities.

### Previous Council Action:

Council adopted the *Maple Ridge (Consolidated) Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7575-2019* in 2020 to bring many departmental fees under one bylaw. Council received a staff report on fees for Police Services and General Administration services on March 4, 2025, a report on Recreation Services Fees on March 25, 2025, and a report on Filming Fees on April 1, 2025. These reports provided updates to fees and noted that an omnibus bylaw amendment would be brought forward after Council received updates on fees for each departmental area under consideration in 2025.

### Financial Impact:

The cost to deliver building, planning and engineering services have traditionally been heavily subsidized by the City to incent development. These fee updates will continue to encourage development while improving cost recovery given rising costs to the City to maintain service levels.

### Strategic Alignment:

Governance & Corporate Excellence, Liveable Community

### Applicable Legislation/ Bylaw/Policy:

*Maple Ridge Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7575-2019, Maple Ridge Building Bylaw No. 6925-2012, Maple Ridge Highway and Traffic Bylaw No. 6704-2009, Maple Ridge Drinking Water Conservation Plan Bylaw No. 7425-2018, Maple Ridge Soil Removal Bylaw No. 6398-2006, Maple Ridge Fees Imposition Bylaw No. 6748-2010, Maple Ridge Board of Variance Bylaw No. 6290-2005.*

**To:** Mayor and Council

**File number:** [01-0685-01]

## **Update on Building, Planning, Board of Variance and Engineering Fees for 2025**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Council consolidated fees and charges for several areas of city operations under *Maple Ridge Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7575-2019*. In July 2021, schedules were added to the consolidated bylaw for Planning fees. *Bylaw No. 7575-2019* was last updated in January 2024 to add a schedule for Filming Fees.

*Maple Ridge Building Bylaw No. 6925-2012* was first enacted in 2012 and was last amended in November 2024. The bylaw currently contains schedules relating to fees for certain building services. In March 2025, the City brought together the building and planning functions under one department, the Planning and Building Department, and in line with consolidation of other fees into the *Maple Ridge Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7575-2019*, this report signals proposed amendments to remove references to fees from the following bylaws:

- *Maple Ridge Building Bylaw No. 6925-2012*
- *Maple Ridge Highway and Traffic Bylaw No. 6704-2009*
- *Maple Ridge Drinking Water Conservation Plan Bylaw No. 7425-2018*
- *Maple Ridge Soil Removal Bylaw No. 6398-2006*
- *Maple Ridge Fees Imposition Bylaw No. 6748-2010*
- *Maple Ridge Board of Variance Bylaw No. 6290-2005*

Proposed amendments for these bylaws will be brought forward as part of the omnibus update for Council consideration.

### **ANALYSIS:**

#### **Discussion:**

Staff have undertaken a review of fees and charges across City departments in late 2024-early 2025. Considerations have informed adjustments to fees and charges in several areas including inflationary adjustments and adjustments related to improved cost recovery.

Staff have sought to maintain a balance between equity and accessibility of City services while also ensuring that cost recovery occurs at a reasonable level appropriate for each service area. For example, some services are more heavily subsidized because of the public benefit provided, such as recreation services where provision of these services ensures an engaged and healthy community in line with Council's priorities for its Strategic Plan. In other areas, individuals receiving services benefit financially and directly from the services e.g., development permit fees

that enable profit from the sale or rental of developments, and as such services may have a higher ratio of cost recovery.

This report brings together services within the City's building, planning and engineering service areas. Consolidating all fees related to these services within the *Maple Ridge Fees & Charges Bylaw No. 7575-2019* will improve transparency and coordination of fee updates over time. Holding fee schedules in multiple bylaws can create confusion and make it difficult for applicants to understand which services carry fees and which may not. This change will require amendments to both *Bylaw No. 7575-2019*, and *Maple Ridge Building Bylaw No. 6925-2012*, to remove the fees from the Building Bylaw and update the schedules for the fees and charges bylaw.

It is important to note that staff are also undertaking two related areas of work in 2025 that will improve and streamline setting and updating of fees in the future. First, is the development of a One City approach and methodology that will create foundational principles consistent across all departments. Secondly, staff in the Planning and Building and Finance Departments are working on a review of Development Cost Charges (DCCs) and Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) that will adjust these charges in the future. Changes to the City's DCC and ACCs will not be included in the omnibus updates to *Bylaw No. 7575-2019* discussed in this report.

Changes to DCCs and ACCs will be brought forward separately to Council for consideration to enable infrastructure improvements that support growth to be funded by new development rather than from the existing tax base. The DCC and ACC review is also related to the Development Services Optimization project which is streamlining processes for development applications and digitizing services. That project will inform the DCC and ACC review.

#### *Changes and Updates to Fees Proposed for 2025*

The following changes are proposed in the updated schedule outlined in Attachment A - Building, Planning, Board of Variance, and Engineering Fees for 2025.

1. Inflationary adjustments for all fees at the rate of 3% unless otherwise indicated.
2. Increase of the pre-application meeting fee to \$1,000.00 as one flat fee and removing a separate fee for meetings attended by engineering staff. This removes an artificial distinction between meetings held with and without engineering staff as meetings routinely involve staff from building, planning and engineering. The increase to this fee is also intended to disincentivize applications that are not likely to progress to increased housing capacity.
3. Removed specific towing fees in favour of reference to standardized rates set by Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.
4. Increases over the 3% inflationary adjustment to reflect higher costs for removal of chattels and update to highway use permits and residential parking permits as these have not been changed for several years. The new rates for these items are highlighted in Attachment A.
5. Making administrative fees for engineering services consistent with other departments (e.g., photocopying fees).

6. Removing repetition in fee schedules to make these easier to understand where multiple permit and fee types have identical rates.
7. Updating the Board of Variance fee with inflationary increase and changes will be brought forward to *Maple Ridge Board of Variance Bylaw No. 6920-2005* to remove the reference to fees which are not aligned with the existing *Maple Ridge Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7575-2019*.

**Strategic Alignment:**

This update is provided as part of a series of information reports to Council to support improved governance and corporate excellence in line with Council's Strategic Plan. There are four initiatives related to the key result "*Review and consolidate City fees and charges into a single bylaw with annual review dates*" in the Strategic Plan.

**Financial Impact:**

Updating fees and charges ensures cost recovery aligns with service delivery costs, labour rates, inflation, and sector trends, reflecting best practices in local government. These fees are levied against users benefiting from the services provided and as such a higher degree of cost recovery is warranted. Bringing Maple Ridge into line with similar cities in the lower mainland is a reasonable measure and will ensure that City staff focus time on developments that will benefit the community and improve access to housing and other amenities.

**Applicable Legislation/Bylaw/Policy:**

Engineering and planning fees are included in the schedules for *Maple Ridge Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7575-2019*. Building fees are currently included in schedules for *Maple Ridge Building Bylaw No. 6925-2012*. Other fees charged by engineering services sit across multiple bylaws noted above. Subsequent amendments as part of the omnibus bylaw update will bring all impacted bylaws into concordance.

**CONCLUSION:**

This report presents proposed changes to building, planning and engineering services for 2025. It forms part of a series of reports to update the *Maple Ridge Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7573-2019*, ensuring that departmental fees and charges are aligned, transparent and support improved cost recovery.

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**Attachments:**

(A) Building, Planning, Board of Variance, and Engineering Fees for 2025

## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Update on Building, Planning, BOV and Engineering Fees for 2025.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment A - Planning, Building BOV and Engineering Fees for 2025.xlsx
Final Approval Date:	Apr 10, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Zvi Lifshiz, Director Strategic Development, Communications & Public Engagement

Steven Faltas, Director of Engineering

Walter Oleschak, Director of City Operations/Acting Chief Operating Officer

Hasib Nadvi, Deputy Director of Planning and Building

James Stiver, Director of Planning and Building

Carolyn Mushata, Director of Legislative Services and Corporate Officer

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer