



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Melissa Ryan, CPA, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Subject: Proposed Revisions to Fees and Charges By-law for 2026

Report #: 2026-0218-FIN-R06-MR

Purpose

To recommend amendments to the County of Essex Fees and Charges By-law for 2026.

Background

In accordance with the By-law, which establishes the fees and charges for the County of Essex, an annual review is undertaken by Administration to determine if there is a need to amend any of the approved fees and charges.

The fees and charges were last amended in February 2025. In 2025 some minor Infrastructure and Planning Services charges were updated, and all other charges remained status quo.

Discussion

As part of the development of the 2026 Budget, Administration reviewed all applicable fees and charges across departments and service areas to determine whether revisions were warranted.

For 2026, Administration is recommending two minor updates to Council Services fees, as well as the introduction of Green Bin user fees.

The recommended amendments are reflected in By-law 2026-04, Schedules A-H, and are summarized below.

Council Services

Commissioning Documents

The fee for commissioning documents is proposed to increase from **\$20 to \$25**. This adjustment better reflects the actual cost of providing the service, including staff time and administrative overhead, while remaining modest and consistent with comparable jurisdictions.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Ambulance Call Report (ACR) Requests

The fee for submitting an ACR request is proposed to increase from **\$75 to \$100**. This increase reflects the administrative effort required to process these requests, which can vary significantly in complexity. While some ACR requests are straightforward, others require additional review, research, and follow-up. Administration notes that the true cost of providing this service exceeds the proposed fee; however, a phased approach is preferred to avoid a significant one-time increase. Administration may consider incremental adjustments in future years to ensure the fee continues to reasonably reflect service costs.

There is no fee charged when an individual submits an ACR request related to their own care, consistent with current practice.

Green Bin User Fees

Green Bin user fees are presented in **Schedule H** of the Fees and Charges By-law.

In accordance with Section 391 of the Municipal Act, 2001, municipalities are authorized to impose fees or charges for services provided, including solid waste services, on a cost-recovery basis.

As previously approved by Council, Green Bin program costs are being recovered through a County level user fee funding model. Under this approach, eligible residential properties are charged a Green Bin user fee through their Local municipality's property tax bill, with revenues collected on behalf of the County.

The Green Bin user fee is not a tax and does not form part of the County levy. It is a service-specific charge intended to recover the cost of providing the Green Bin program from eligible households.

In accordance with Council direction and as outlined in Report #2025-1217-FIN-R35-MR-Green Bin Program Billing Updates, the Green Bin user fee will first appear on the 2026 final tax bills issued by participating (Phase 1) local municipalities. The 2026 billing reflects approximately 15 months of service, covering the program launch in October 2025 through December 2026.

Billing in 2026 reflects the timing of program launch and available County billing mechanisms and aligns costs with service delivery while providing residents advance notice before charges appear on their tax bills.

User fees vary by municipality and are based on actual program costs, including tonnage collected and fixed operational expenses. Only residential properties eligible for the service are subject to the charge.

This approach ensures the user fee is tied as closely as possible to the cost-of-service delivery within each municipality, consistent with the user-pay principle.

Additional details, including household costs by municipality are shown in the Table below:

Table 1: Total 2026 Green Bin Costs per Household

Municipality	Number of Eligible Households	2025 Budgeted Costs to be Recovered	2026 Budgeted Costs to Be Recovered	Total Amount to be Recovered (2026 Tax Bill)	Green Bin User Fee Per Household
Town of Essex	8,478	\$254,231	\$1,323,577	\$1,577,808	\$186.11
Municipality of Lakeshore	15,168	\$459,421	\$2,389,693	\$2,849,114	\$187.84
Town of LaSalle	11,307	\$342,176	\$1,782,097	\$2,124,273	\$187.87
Town of Tecumseh	8,410	\$248,772	\$1,295,642	\$1,544,414	\$183.64

Detailed program information, including background reports and frequently asked questions, is publicly available on the County’s Green Bin billing webpage.

Financial Implications

As a non-profit municipality, the County establishes fees and charges in accordance with the Municipal Act, at rates intended to recover up to the actual cost of providing the service.

Revenues generated through the Fees and Charges By-law are allocated to the corresponding departmental revenue budgets and are used to offset operating costs. The proposed adjustments support the user-pay principle by ensuring that services used by a limited number of individuals are appropriately funded, while minimizing reliance on the general tax base.

Overall, the recommended updates ensure that the County’s fee structure remains fair, transparent, and aligned with current operational and service delivery realities.

Consultations

- Senior Leadership Team
- Heidi McLeod, Manager of Accounting – Administration / Deputy Treasurer

Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Focusing “Team Essex County” for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County’s Fair Share	<input type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That Essex County Council approve report number 2026-0218-FIN-R06-MR, Proposed Revisions to Fees and Charges By-law for 2026 and direct administration to charge the updated deposits and fees from the date of approval of the By-law.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Ryan

Melissa Ryan, CPA, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

Concurred With,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
A	Schedules A-H to By-law 2026-04