

## Small increase in user fees for 2023

By Mark PavilonsEditor

User fees in King Township are going up this year, to help offset the costs of delivering services. As part of the 2023 budget process, adjustments were made to fees and charges for municipal facilities and programs, with some rising by between 2% and 3%. According to staff, the increased fees will generate an estimated \$328,000, to help reduce pressure on local property taxes. Staff pointed out that municipalities are constantly facing increasing costs to deliver essential services that residents require. Fees and charges assist the Township to cover all or a portion of the cost of delivering certain municipal services therefore alleviating the financial impacts on tax and water/wastewater rates. Although full cost recovery is not always achievable, all budgeted user fee revenue are applied against the total cost for the service area prior to the calculation of property tax or water and wastewater user rates. Any increases or decreases to the fees and charges have a direct impact to the respective rates. Traditionally, fees and charges have been developed and recommended using a combination of assessing the adequacy of direct costs to deliver the service and in some instances the inclusion of overhead and administrative cost components. In addition, consideration has also been given to market comparison with neighbouring municipalities. Along with the general 2% hike, some new fees were added this year. Fees for development applications are going up, ranging from \$130 to \$1,565, based on the number of staff hours needed to review the bids. Many new fees are being added for processing planning documents. Some additional fees are proposed within Municipal Consents and Road Occupancy Permits to give some flexibility with the billing for different circumstances. Within Environmental Services they have added some fees related to works surrounding Water and Sanitary levels to provide some flexibility with the administration fee to have a maximum of \$1,200 as opposed to a maximum of 15% of the fee. This will assist property owners with the cost of construction and implementation of certain infrastructure. Building permit fees, and those associated with pools and accessory buildings, are also up. The fees impact local groups such as hockey clubs, the curling club, etc. Ice time rates are increasing by 3% at King arenas. Rental fees are also up at all local halls and community centres. Using the King Heritage and Cultural Centre is costing more this year, and fees are up slightly across the board for summer camp programs. For the full list of new charges, visit [king.ca](http://king.ca)