

Meeting Date: April 15, 2024
Department: Building and Planning
Report No.: BBP-2024-36
Submitted by: Jennifer Huff, Director of Building and Planning
Approved by: Trisha McKibbin, Chief administrative Officer
SUBJECT: **Planning Fees Refund Policy**

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Report BBP-36-24 be received for information, and further;

THAT: Council approve the Planning Fee Refund Policy, and further;

THAT: the by-law enacting the Planning Fee Refund Policy be referred to a future Council meeting.

BACKGROUND:

On May 1 2023, Council directed staff to prepare a planning fees refund policy via the following motion:

Moved by: Councillor Brennan

Seconded by: Mayor Grantham

That: Council direct staff to prepare an “Application Refund Request Policy” for Council’s future consideration (re: planning applications)”

Carried

COMMENTS:

Staff have drafted a planning refund fee policy [similar to the Committee of Adjustment fee policy \(LINK\)](#). It covers requests for refunds due to an applications being withdrawn, a disagreement with the policy, or in the event an application wishes the fees be waived. It is important to note that this policy would allow staff to administratively issue fee refunds in accordance with the policy. However, when an applicant disagrees with how this policy is applied or requests that fees be waived, these requests will continue to be directed to Council for a decision.

This policy also requires the completion of an annual report on how many fees were waived.

The policy covers zoning, subdivision/condominium, official and site plan application fees.

CONSULTATION:

A similar policy has already been introduced to guide waiving of Committee of Adjustment fees (severances and minor variances) without issues.

Typically, staff receive interest in fee refunds from a few applicants per year related to withdrawals or where an application was refused. It would be helpful to staff if there was a Council approved policy that could help guide these discussions and provide a fair and transparent approach to refund requests. Presently, all applicants are directed to submit a request to Council with very few actually doing so.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No negative impacts are anticipated by this policy as this policy is not anticipated to encourage or discourage fee refunds.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

- Growth Management: Strathroy-Caradoc will be an inclusive community where growth is managed to accommodate a range of needs and optimize municipal resources.

ATTACHMENTS:

Planning Fee Refund Policy