

March 26, 2025

Mayor Clark and Members of City Council
City of Medicine Hat
580 1 St SE
Medicine Hat, AB T1A 8E6

Dear Mayor Clark and Members of City Council:

SUBJECT: Development and Infrastructure Division Fees and Charges

On behalf of the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce, we are requesting the opportunity to gain clarity on the recent increases within the Development and Infrastructure Division Fees and Charges, approved by City Council in December 2024.

In 2011, Development & Infrastructure Division Fees and Charges were proposed to increase by as much as 185%. At that time the Chamber of Commerce put forward recommendations to re-evaluate the increases and subsequent changes and concerns were addressed at that time. On December 16, 2024, City Council approved planning and development services fees and charges for 2025 and 2026 with limited feedback from the development community, resulting in concerns once the fees and charges were implemented.

Our [recently adopted policy](#) highlights several key areas of concern, including the impact of these fees on small businesses and the overall economic growth of our region. As a result, the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce is recommending that the City of Medicine Hat:

1. Re-evaluate the increases in fees and charges and consult with industry, key stakeholders and organizations for reasonable fee structures that are implemented over a period of time.
2. Base any fees and charges on the current baseline structure, with incremental percentage increases over a period of time, in line with the cost of service delivery and taking into consideration natural inflationary costs.
3. Revert back to the 2024 fee structure until more research and municipal comparisons can be gathered and referred back to the Development & Infrastructure committee for reconsideration, evaluation, consultation and resubmission.
4. Communicate the justified "Fee for Service" per unit cost, including the distinction between one-off services such as open houses, bylaw enforcement, and formal appeals.
5. Compare fees with other comparable-sized cities for reference and research purposes to align with other fee structures charged.
6. Ensure any future fee proposals include the percentage increase comparable to prior years.
7. Ensure that public engagement and appeals do not adversely impact the cost of fees to develop.

We are interested in working further with the City to better understand the fees and charges and any possible implications of these fees and charges on our local economy and community development. We know that the City is undertaking a review of the current fee structure, and we hope the goal will be to identify potential adjustments that could alleviate some of the financial pressures on small businesses, while still ensuring continued development and financial sustainability. Collaboration between the city and the business community is essential to fostering a thriving economic environment.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to any opportunities for further discussion or involvement in the review process. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Steven Pudwell
2024-2025 President of the Board of Directors

cc: Ann Mitchell, City Manager
cc: Pat Bohan, Managing Director, Development and Infrastructure



Lisa Dressler
Executive Director

Resource: <https://chamber.southeastalbertachamber.ca/active-policies/Details/development-and-infrastructure-division-fees-and-charges-257582>