

# Planning and Building Services Department Accessible Housing Fee Reimbursement Policy

## 1. Authority

The Planning and Building Services Department (PBS) Accessible Housing Fee Reimbursement Policy (hereinafter “Policy”) for the City of St. Catharines was approved by Council on November 18, 2024, as recommended in Report CAO-183-2024.

## 2. Definitions

The following definitions apply in the context of the Policy.

**Accessible Dwelling Unit** means a dwelling unit, as described in the City of St. Catharines Zoning By-law 2013-283, that meets Ontario Building Code requirements under Division B, Section 3.8.

**Accessible Path** means a continuous unobstructed path connecting accessible elements and spaces at the exterior of a building and within the interior spaces of a building. Interior accessible paths include corridors, floors, ramps, elevators, and clear floor spaces at fixtures. Exterior accessible paths include parking access aisles, curb ramps, crosswalks, etc. Accessible Paths shall meet Ontario Building Code requirements under Division B, Section 3.8.

**Parking Area** means an area maintained with a hard surface that is designed and/or used for the temporary parking of vehicles, including driveways and drive aisles. Parking Areas shall meet Ontario Building Code requirements under Division B, Section 3.8.

**Accessible Parking Space** means a parking space that is maintained with a hard surface and complies with accessible parking space dimension requirements described in the City of St. Catharines Zoning By-law 2013-283.

**Eligible Project** means a development or redevelopment project containing an accessible dwelling unit that qualifies for fee reimbursement under this Policy.

**Proponent** means the entity providing an accessible dwelling unit that is requesting reimbursement of fees under this Policy.

**Subject Property** means a property in the City of St. Catharines where an eligible project is located.

## 3. Policy Contents

### 3.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish appropriate circumstances under which the City may reimburse PBS building permit fees to encourage the development of new accessible dwelling unit(s).

### 3.2. Scope

Eligible projects must provide at least one new accessible dwelling unit beyond what may be required under the Ontario Building Code. For example, the Ontario Building Code requires no less than 15% of all dwelling units within a multi-unit residential building (e.g., apartment building) be accessible per Division B, Section 3.8 of the Code.

Eligible projects include the expansion or conversion of existing buildings and/or dwelling units that result in new accessible dwelling unit(s).

To clarify, this Policy does not facilitate financial assistance for renovations or upgrades to existing facilities that do not result in any new accessible dwelling unit(s).

### 3.3. Financial Provisions

Notwithstanding the current City of St. Catharines Rates and Fees By-law, which sets out fees for various applications and services administered by PBS, the City may reimburse PBS building permit fees for eligible projects, subject to the terms of this Policy, including the following financial provisions:

- a) Reimbursement per accessible dwelling unit eligible under this Policy will equal up to \$2,000 or 100% of the building permit fee cost, whichever is less.
- b) Reimbursement under this Policy is subject to funding availability.
- c) The amount, duration, and provider of any incentives or grants from other agencies secured by the proponent of an eligible project must be declared to the City as a condition of reimbursement. Where other incentives, combined with the reimbursement amount authorized under this Policy, is greater than total project costs incurred, the value of the reimbursement amount will be decreased accordingly to ensure that all incentives provided do not exceed total project costs incurred.

### 3.4. Fee Types

Schedule A, attached to this Policy, highlights PBS fees that are reimbursable. Any fee not highlighted in Schedule A shall remain payable for an eligible project, if applicable. This Policy does not pertain to any

other development-related fees payable to other agencies involved in the development review process.

### **3.5. Eligibility Criteria**

A development or redevelopment project is considered an eligible project if all the following criteria are satisfied, as applicable:

- a) The project will facilitate at least one new dwelling unit that meets the definition of accessible dwelling unit.
- b) The accessible dwelling unit must have an accessible path through the dwelling unit from the public sidewalk or municipal right-of-way and where provided the parking area and/or accessible parking space.
- c) Any accessible dwelling unit(s) required under Division B, Section 3.8 of the Ontario Building Code shall not be eligible for reimbursement under this Policy.
- d) PBS fees have not been paid prior to the effective date of this Policy.
- e) The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears.
- f) The proponent is in good standing with the City.

### **3.6. Process**

Fee reimbursement requests shall be subject to the following process, which will be conducted at no cost to the proponent:

- a) A request form will be made publicly available, and proponents will make requests by submitting a completed request form to PBS.
- b) Requests are to be submitted concurrently with the building permit application.
- c) Staff will review the request for completeness and request additional information if necessary. Once the request is deemed complete, staff will review the request against all relevant terms of this Policy to determine if the project is an eligible project. Requests will be processed in the order received. Requests that are deemed complete will be processed before incomplete requests submitted earlier.
- d) If staff determine that the project is an eligible project, provided funding is available as per Section 3.3 b) of this Policy, a confirmation letter from the Director of Planning and Building Services will be provided to the proponent confirming formal approval and details of reimbursement.
- e) To ensure the constructed dwelling unit is accessible, occupancy will not be granted until the final inspection confirms the unit was constructed in accordance with Division B, Section 3.8 of the Ontario Building Code.

## **4. Administration**

### **4.1. Date of Effect**

This Policy is in effect as of November 18, 2024.

### **4.2. Authorization of Reimbursements**

In accordance with the approval of Report CAO-183-2024, PBS staff will administer this Policy, and the Director of PBS may authorize fee reimbursements for requests that meet all applicable terms of the Policy.

### **4.3. Amendments**

Regular minor amendments to this Policy may be necessary to ensure consistency with the City of St. Catharines Rates and Fees By-law. Any amendments to the Policy are subject to Council approval. Council may direct staff to amend or discontinue this Policy at any time.

## **5. Schedules**

### **A. Reimbursable PBS Fees**

# Schedule A - Reimbursable PBS Fees

Fee Title	Unit of Measure	2024 Fee Paid by Customer before Surcharges	2025 Fee Paid by Customer before Surcharges	2026 Fee Paid by Customer before Surcharges
<b>Group C - Residential</b>				
Single, semi, duplex, triplex, row house and multiple dwelling	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.69	\$ 1.74	\$ 1.78
Accessory Dwelling Unit	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.55	\$ 1.60	\$ 1.64
Each attached garage or carport, shed, decks, open porch, balcony	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.55	\$ 1.60	\$ 1.64
Miscellaneous Residential Work - addition to existing	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.50	\$ 1.55	\$ 1.59
Miscellaneous Residential Work - finish basement	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.50	\$ 1.55	\$ 1.59
Apartment building - six (6) storey building or less	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.69	\$ 1.74	\$ 1.78
Apartment building more than six (6) stories	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.51	\$ 1.56	\$ 1.60
Hotel/motel building - 2 storey building or less	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.60	\$ 1.65	\$ 1.69
Hotel/motel building - more than 2 stories	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.50	\$ 1.55	\$ 1.59

**Group D - Business and Personal Services**

Building (Shell Only)	Per Square Foot	\$ 2.40	\$ 2.47	\$ 2.53
Building (Finishing Only)	Per Square Foot	\$ 0.90	\$ 0.93	\$ 0.95
Building (Finished)	Per Square Foot	\$ 2.90	\$ 2.99	\$ 3.07

**Group E - Mercantile**

Building (Shell Only)	Per Square Foot	\$ 2.40	\$ 2.47	\$ 2.53
Building (Finishing Only)	Per Square Foot	\$ 0.90	\$ 0.93	\$ 0.95
Building (Finished)	Per Square Foot	\$ 2.90	\$ 2.99	\$ 3.07

**Group F - Industrial**

Building up to and including 10,000 sq. ft.	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.80	\$ 1.85	\$ 1.90
Building up to and including 50,000 sq. ft.	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.71	\$ 1.76	\$ 1.80
Building over 50,000 sq. ft.	Per Square Foot	\$ 1.48	\$ 1.52	\$ 1.56
Parking Garage (Open)	Per Square Foot	\$ 0.73	\$ 0.75	\$ 0.77
Parking Garage (Enclosed)	Per Square Foot	\$ 0.97	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.03

**NOTES:**

- HIGHLIGHTED FEES ARE REIMBURSABLE
- RATES, FEES AND FEE TYPES ACCURATE AS OF NOVEMBER 18, 2024