



**Corporation of the County of Bruce
Planning and Development**
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Planning Fees:

Update, FAQs and Highlights - 2021

Bruce County is updating its land use planning application fees to recover the full cost for planning applications and service delivery. The new fees are effective starting May 10, 2021.

A [complete list of up-to-date planning application fees](#) is available on the County website.

About Bruce County Planning

The Planning team works with municipalities to be “development ready.” We help guide people through the [planning and development approval process](#).

[Learn more about community planning and why it matters in Bruce County.](#)

About Planning Applications

To make a change to permitted land uses or to create new lots within Bruce County, an applicant (e.g., a homeowner or developer) must make a planning application and seek approval from the appropriate decision maker.

Bruce County provides professional planning advice, assistance, and land use planning functions to the County and each of the eight local municipalities.

About Fees

Application fees are intended to charge costs directly to the benefiting party (i.e., applicant), while eliminating or minimizing the burden on the property tax base for the parties that do not benefit directly from the service.

Planning fees are paid at the time an application is filed. For applications for Consents, Subdivisions and Condominiums, another fee is paid at the time of final approval.

Fees are assessed per the [Fees and Charges By-Law](#).

Why Fees are Changing

Application fees have historically been lower than the cost of processing applications. To recover the full cost for planning applications and service delivery, updated fees are needed.

In 2020, Strategy Corp. completed a [Development Fees Review for Bruce County](#). The review identified and recommended to Council various ways to improve cost recovery. The Fees and Charges By-Law was amended to reflect these recommendations.

We're committed to greater transparency in our fees. It's not just about making sure the fees fully reflect processing costs; It's also about recognizing savings that come from joint applications (two or more) and from multi-unit applications.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1 I was quoted the 2020 fee for my application and am now being charged the 2021 fee. There's a significant difference. Do I have to pay the updated 2021 fee?**

For applications submitted after May 10, you will have to pay the updated application fee. Bruce County Planning staff have been advising prospective applicants that application fees will be increasing well in advance of May 10 to give them time to accommodate the fee increase.

- 2 Some fees are going up substantially. Why didn't the County phase the increases over time to give applicant time to adjust?**

While County Council was sensitive to the impacts on prospective applicants, they decided to implement the full fee increase in 2021 to achieve the objective of full-cost recovery for planning applications. Without the full fee increase, County rate payers would continue to contribute towards the cost of planning applications.

- 3 Why is there a new fee for planning inquiries and application pre-consultations?**

There is a substantial amount of Planning staff time dedicated to providing prospective applicants with advice and guidance prior to an application being submitted. This ensures prospective applicants can make an informed decision on their proposal. The time required by staff to research and respond to development proposals is currently not recovered by a fee. The new fee structure aligns with County Council's objective of full-cost recovery for planning services.

- 4 How can I pay for fees?**

At this time, fees are payable by cheque, money order or cash. Bruce County is actively working on a solution for online payment, however, it is not available at this time.

- 5 How will fees be kept up-to-date going forward?**

Starting in 2022, all planning application fees will increase annually by the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

All planning application fees will be reviewed every five years to ensure alignment for recovery.

Highlights of Fee Changes

The Bruce County Planning department is introducing four new fees, and updated and restructured fees, to recover 100 per cent of activity costs and overhead.

NEW FEES <i>New charges for activities we did not previously charge for.</i>	RESTRUCTURED FEES <i>Existing fees are hanging in structure.</i>	REVISED FEES <i>Existing fees updated to reflect activity costs and overhead.</i>
General inquiries: \$50 for non-property owners	Minor Variance: Flat fee for two variances of provisions of zoning by-law. And increased fee for an application involving three or more variances.	Review the up-to-date planning application fees on the Bruce County website. The majority of fees are increasing.
Pre-consultations: \$200	Consents: For multiple consents, the fee of each additional lot in the same application is reduced to 50%, after the first one.	
Review of Supporting Application Studies: \$40 per additional hour over five hours of staff time	County Official Plan Amendments (COPA): Flat fee for major COPA (requiring 3 or more technical studies) and flat fee for minor COPA. Major COPA applications requiring more than 3 technical studies will have an 8% increase in base fee per additional study required.	
County Official Plan Amendments (COPA): Standard Pit or Quarry COPA: \$21,730 Complex Pit or Quarry COPA: \$52,530		
A \$5,000 deposit is required when peer reviews, site-specific reports or technical studies need to be completed to support the application.		