

REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT

Sewer Charge Adjustment Policy

RECOMMENDATION

That Council for the Town of Vermilion approve the Sewer Charge Adjustment Policy No. 26-05 as presented.

BACKGROUND

The Town currently applies sanitary sewer charges based on the assumption that all water supplied to a property is discharged into the municipal sanitary sewer system. In certain limited circumstances, water use may be permanently and verifiably isolated from the sanitary system.

The proposed Sewer Charge Adjustment Policy establishes criteria under which sanitary sewer charges may be adjusted or waived for water that does not enter the sanitary sewer system. The policy is intended to provide transparency to Property Owners while ensuring that any adjustments are applied fairly and only in appropriate circumstances.

As reviewed by Committee of the Whole on April 7, 2026, the policy includes provisions to:

- Define eligibility requirements, including the requirement for dedicated metering and verified non-discharging water use
- Establish a formal application and review process, with final approval by Council
- Clarify inspection, verification, and ongoing compliance requirements
- Identify exclusions, including residential properties, irrigation systems, and incidental water losses
- Ensure that any approved adjustments do not negatively impact the financial sustainability of the Town's sanitary system

The policy supports consistent decision-making, improves administrative clarity, and aligns with municipal best practices for utility billing governance.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Approval of this policy may result in some reduction in sewer charge revenue where adjustments are approved. However, adjustments are limited to specific, verified cases, require dedicated metering, and are subject to Council approval and ongoing compliance requirements.

Operational Implications

The policy provides Administration with clear direction for reviewing applications, conducting inspections, and administering sewer charge adjustments in a consistent and transparent manner.

Risk / Liability Implications

Adoption of the policy reduces risk by establishing clear eligibility criteria, documentation requirements, and approval processes, thereby minimizing disputes and ensuring equitable treatment of Property Owners.

OPTIONS

Option 1 (Recommended):

Approve the Sewer Charge Adjustment Policy as presented.

Option 2:

Approve the Sewer Charge Adjustment Policy with additional revisions as directed by Council.

Option 3:

Defer approval of the Sewer Charge Adjustment Policy.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This policy supports the Town's Strategic Plan by aligning with infrastructure cost recovery objectives and promoting transparent, consistent decision-making in utility billing.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Sewer Charge Adjustment Policy