

To the Mayor and Town Council of Cobourg:

The newly imposed Storm Water Fees are inequitable for Cobourg property owners, and are having an adverse impact on people's budgets. While we were not sent individual notice of assessments, the pamphlet sent with our Lakefront Utility Bill suggests that the average property will be charged \$75 yearly for storm water management. Additionally, it states that residents had been paying \$150 yearly through property taxes for this service, which the Town suggests was unfair. As a result, many of us were shocked to have **up to several hundred extra dollars** added on to our current bills. Even worse, we will receive up to 3 more payments of this amount for 2023. This untimely fee has caused great stress to people who are already struggling to balance their budgets in these hard times, especially at the Holiday season.

As we move forward to 2024 and the fee is divided over 12 months, Cobourg property owners will continue to carry this unfair cost for storm water. There are residential and rural/agricultural property owners who will pay **\$1000, \$2000, even up to \$15,000** for storm water management each year, on top of their already increased property taxes. However, these same properties have natural vegetation and soil types that absorb rainwater rather than use the Town's storm water management system.

Cobourg's pamphlet also suggests that business and industry would be assuming greater financial responsibility for storm water fees. This makes sense as they tend to have large surface areas of pavement which directly create run-off into the storm water management system. **In fact, their charges have decreased**, causing homeowners to have a disproportionate responsibility for storm water management fees.

The Town's method of calculation based only on property size is grossly unfair and needs to be fixed immediately.

We the undersigned citizens of Cobourg, call upon the Town of Cobourg Council to amend the existing Storm Water Fee Bylaw to immediately establish a cap of \$200 for larger residential and rural properties for 2023 and 2024.

Moving forward, we call upon Cobourg Town Council to consider the following to create an accurate and sustainable Storm Water Management budget by considering the following:

1. Send out individual and transparent notice of assessments for future fees.
2. Consult with other municipalities who have more equitable billing formulas.
3. Stop using only property size to calculate fees. Instead, use accurate technologies to calculate the run-off coefficient of individual properties.
4. Incentivize storm water management practices for all properties in Cobourg.
5. Revisit this Bylaw after the Province of Ontario completes its audit of how the Ontario Government's Build More Homes Faster legislation is impacting municipalities.
6. Remember that times are already financially hard for people!

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