

Decision Note

Title:	Commemorative Program Fee Adjustment
Date Prepared:	March 24, 2026
Report To:	Committee of the Whole
Councillor and Role:	Councillor Greg Noseworthy, Public Works
Ward:	N/A

Decision/Direction Required:

Commemorative Program fee adjustments.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

The Commemorative Tree and Bench Program in St. John's allows residents to honour loved ones, celebrate special occasions, and support the City's natural environment through the donation of a tree or the installation of a bench in a public park.

The program provides a meaningful and lasting way for the community to engage with green spaces while contributing to environmental sustainability and promoting active, healthy living.

The current fee for a commemorative tree is set at \$350, which covers the cost of nursery stock and program administration. Fees for community and commemorative benches are set at \$1,600 and \$5,000, respectively, reflecting the model selected.

A review of best practices from comparable and larger municipalities has determined that the current fees for commemorative trees and benches no longer reflect the full cost of materials, installation, and ongoing maintenance. To address these increases, it is proposed that the fee for commemorative trees be raised to \$800 per tree and the fee for Community benches be increased to \$2,000. The fee for Heritage-style benches would remain unchanged at \$5,000. These proposed adjustments align with fees charged in local and similarly sized Canadian municipalities, as outlined in the accompanying summary.

Commemorative Tree and Bench Program

Municipality	Tree Cost	Bench Cost
St. John's, NL	\$350	\$1,600/\$5,000
Gander, NL	\$300	TBD
Mount Pearl, NL	\$930/\$985	\$2,090/\$3,052
Portugal Cove/ St. Phillips, NL	\$700/\$900	\$2,000
Windsor, ON	\$700	\$3,708/\$4,994
Ottawa, ON	\$995	\$5,000
Toronto, ON	\$738	\$2,530
London, ON	\$550	\$4,500
Regina, SK	\$500	\$3,000/\$6,000
Calgary, AB	\$800	\$4,500/\$5,500
Victoria, BC	NA	\$3,500

Adjusting the fees ensures the program remains sustainable, affordable, and meaningful for the community.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications:
No additional budget allocation is required.
2. Partners or Interested Parties:
Primary stakeholders include the City of St. John's and its residents.
3. Is this a New Plan, Master Plan, Strategy, Report, or Framework: No
4. Alignment with Strategic Directions:

A Sustainable City: Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.
5. Alignment with Adopted Plans:
Urban Forest Management Master Plan

6. Accessibility and Inclusion:
NA
7. Legal or Policy Implications:
NA
8. Privacy Implications:
NA
9. Engagement and Communications Considerations:
This will be communicated with interested parties and posted online
10. Human Resource Implications:
NA
11. Procurement Implications:
NA
12. Information Technology Implications:
NA
13. Information Management Implications:
NA
14. Other Implications:
NA

Recommendation:

That Council consider the Commemorative Program fees be increased as follows:

- Trees increase from \$350 to \$800
- Community benches increase from \$1,600 to \$2,000

Prepared by: Keith Bessey, Municipal Arborist

Approved by: Lynnann Winsor, Deputy City Manager Public Works

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Commemorative Program Fee Adjustment.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Mar 26, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Edmundo Fausto - Mar 25, 2026 - 3:49 PM

No Signature - Task assigned to Lynnann Winsor was completed by workflow administrator Theresa Walsh

Lynnann Winsor - Mar 26, 2026 - 4:20 PM