

## Staff Report

**To:** Mayor Bazinet and Members of Council  
**Report From:** Deanna Hastie, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer  
**Meeting Date:** April 13, 2026  
**Subject:** Proposed Purchase of Cemetery Management Software  
**Attachment(s):** 1) None

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### **Recommendation:**

That Goderich Town Council approve the procurement of new Cemetery Management Software with an estimated cost of \$35,000;

And Further That the funding be provided by the Contingency Reserve.

### **Report Summary:**

The Maitland Cemetery is managed by the Clerk's Department. Keeping permanent records for cemetery documents is essential for:

1. Ensuring burial accuracy.
2. Preserving historical and genealogical information.
3. Meeting legal requirements.
4. Providing reliable and efficient public service.

Accurate records prevent issues like double-selling plots or misidentifying graves, which can cause legal problems and distress for families.

The report seeks Council's approval to upgrade to new cemetery management software to fill service gaps, meet legal requirements, reduce administrative tasks, and enhance service delivery.

The financial request from the Clerk's Department for this project was omitted by Treasury in the preparation of the 2026 budget in error. As a result, if Council approves the purchase, funding would be provided from the Contingency Reserve.

The estimated cost to implement Cemetery Management Software is \$35,000, with an annual ongoing cost estimated at \$3,000 to \$5,000.

### **Background and Analysis:**

The following information is provided by the Clerk's Department to support the need to modernize and support the services provided:

The new software will encompass the following key components:

**1. Work Orders:**

- **Capabilities:**
  - Assign tasks to the Cemetery Foreman and Monument suppliers.
  - Automatically monitor progress and updates from the field.
  - Upload photos and record the complete work.
  - Communicate progress to families or suppliers who requested services.
- **Justification:**
  - Legislatively mandated to provide general maintenance, including:
    - Groundskeeping
    - Landscaping
    - Structural Preservation.
    - Headstone and marker care.
  - Monument suppliers request orders for markers and foundation installations.
  - The current process via email lacks completion notifications to Town Hall or requesters. The new system allows timely, effective responses, confirming task completion.

**2. Mapping:**

- **Capabilities:**
  - Identify property status and availability effortlessly.
  - Visualize layouts to plan for future growth.
  - Walk-to-grave features for families to locate loved ones.
  - Printable maps and a public interface on the Town's website for visitors to search burials and navigate using GPS.
- **Justification:**
  - Currently, plot selection requires physical visits. New features allow selections from home.
  - Only one general map is available; enhanced features allow specific plot maps.
  - No current public search portal; new system reduces inquiry calls.
  - Digital map updates quarterly; new features offer real-time updates.
  - Legislative responsibility to provide free access to the cemetery registrar; mapping features facilitate this.

**3. Payment Processing:**

- **Capabilities:**
  - Secure online payments.
  - Manage payment records and receipts.
- **Justification:**
- The new system supports credit cards and online payments in addition to the current options, easing the process during difficult times.

**4. Digital Agreements:**

- **Capabilities:**
  - Digital agreement creation.
  - Remote signing.
- **Justification:**
  - Current agreements require manual processing and storage in multiple formats. Digital agreements streamline processes into one location, enhancing efficiency.

**Current Software Limitations:**

- Lacks functionality for:
  - Multiple plot owners.
  - Multiple interment orders per plot.
  - Work orders, mapping, payment processing, and agreements.
- Only a few clients use it; support is inadequate.
- Primarily used for records management.

**Information regarding the level of activity at the Cemetery:**

The Maitland Cemetery has 20,450 surveyed plots. The Cemetery includes 4 columbariums, an urn garden section, a baby land section, a veterans section, crypts and a mausoleum. The following chart provides details of the level of activity related to this service:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Monument/Marker Installations	34	22	13
Interment Rights Sales	24	29	30
Interments Orders (burials – in ground or in columbarium)	30	24	30

**Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan (Choose all that apply):**

- No. 1 Safe and Reliable Infrastructure
- No. 2 Welcoming and Caring Community
- No. 3 Strong Local Economy
- No. 4 Good Government
- No. 5 Environmental Stewardship

**Linkage to Asset Management Plan:**

This staff report is related to the following within the Town's Asset Management Program (Choose one):

And directly impacts (Choose all that apply):

- Road Network
- Water Network
- Sanitary Network
- Storm Network
- Fleet
- Facilities
- Land Improvements
- Machinery and Equipment

- State of Good Repair/Replacement
- Municipal Levels of Service
- Risk Management
- Growth Impacts
- Financial Strategy

**Financial Impacts and/or Source of Funding:**

Is this cost budgeted for? Yes:  No:

Budget:

Actual: \$35,000

Difference: \$35,000

Proposed funding source for unbudgeted costs: Contingency Reserve

**Consulted With:**

Andrea Fisher, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk

Amanda Banting, Deputy Clerk/Records Management Clerk

**Approved By:**

Janice Hallahan, Chief Administrative Officer

Andrea Fisher, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk