

District of Barriere

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Request for Decision

Date: November 17, 2025	File: 5c
To: Council	From: Chief Administrative Officer
Re: Repeal Street Lighting Service Bylaw – 3 Readings	
Recommendation: THAT Council gives first three readings to Street Lighting Utility Billing Service Repeal Bylaw No. 264.	

Purpose

For Council to consider repealing the current Street Lighting utilities bylaw and utility billing service, and aligning future related revenues to property taxation from utility billing.

Background

As part of the ongoing review of our utility bylaws and processes, District staff have been working on new and updated bylaws to ensure compliance with legislation is achieved and best practices are codified.

At the October 6, 2025, Regular Meeting, Council already adopted a new Utility Billing Bylaw No. 260 which now provides regulations regarding the overall customer accounts. The following bylaws are also being worked on at this point and will be presented to Council over the next few months to ensure alignment across all utility related functions of the District exists:

1. Solid Waste Regulation Bylaw – needs to be updated and greatly expanded upon.
2. Wastewater Regulations Bylaw – there is currently no bylaw in place that governs wastewater. A bylaw is needed to appropriately regulate our wastewater utility, especially as the service area is expanded further in the future.
3. Water Regulations Bylaw – Draft updated Bylaw and Report included on this agenda.

Instead of simply amending, adding, or repealing the bylaws, staff used a holistic approach to review other strategies to reduce potential long-term challenges when working with the public in regard to utility billing, account setup, disconnects, etc. For example, there would be sections in each of these individual bylaws that are related, and which should be identical throughout and apply to all rate payers alike.

Street Lighting Service – Background

The District's street lighting service and related fees and charges were established in May of 2009 after the incorporation of the District in December of 2007 through the "District of Barriere Street Lighting Bylaw No. 45" (see attached). This Bylaw No. 45 transitioned the previous improvement district's bylaw No. 190, from 1999 into a municipal one.

Since incorporation all fees and charges for street lighting have been charged to individual properties through the District's quarterly utility bills.

In November of 2013, Council adopted Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 73 which incorporated all fees and charges related to streetlighting since that time.

The current charges for Street Lighting are:

Residential: \$5.78 per month (so, \$17.34 per quarter, or \$69.36 per year)

Commercial: \$7.04 per month (so, \$21.12 per quarter, or \$84.48 per year)

Across the District, this equates to roughly \$70,000 per year collected in revenue through utility bills dedicated to the street lighting service.

Proposed Alignment

As Council is aware, the fees recovered for the purpose of street lighting are in need to be aligned with current legislated requirements. Although the *Community Charter* provides some flexibility to Council to establish certain fees and charges for specific services to properties such as water, wastewater, or solid waste rates, the same is not true for general services that are not attached to individual properties. So, as the District's street lighting service is not attached to individual properties but rather serves the community as a whole by providing for the lighting of the public roadway system it should not be considered as a utility service for individual properties.

Compared to these utility services that are attached to individual properties, a street lighting service is commonly attached to the general roads service and as such should be handled the same way as the road service when it comes to revenue collection from the community to fund such a service.

These general services are primarily funded by general taxation through the property tax bills issued once a year, generally in May.

So, what does this mean?

At this point, a shift from utility bills to property taxes for the street lighting service is required to remain within the compliance of the Community Charter, which would be effective as of the March 2026 Utility Billing cycle. By making this change early in 2026, there will be no impact to the 2025 finances and utility cycles for the District and its residents and provides reasonable timelines for staff to adjust the systems and to communicate these changes to the rate and tax payers.

The following impacts would be recognized in 2026 however:

1. Budget 2026: a shift of roughly \$70,000 from street lighting revenue to taxation revenue.
2. Utility Bills: As of the March 2026 billing cycle, a reduction for residential properties on their quarterly billing of \$17.34 per quarter. In total \$69.36 reduction over the year. For commercial properties, \$21.12 reduction per quarter or \$84.48 reduction per year.

3. Property Taxes: under the 2025 tax rates and percent of burden distribution, this would result in the following changes to the different rate classes:

Class	Category	2025 - % of Burden*	2025 - Current Yield*	Additional Yield based on 2025*	Total Yield based on 2025 rates*
1	Residential	75.88%	\$878,503	\$53,114	\$931,617
2	Utilities	0.95%	\$10,976	\$664	\$11,640
4	Large Industrial	2.66%	\$30,834	\$1,864	\$32,698
5	Small Industrial	2.95%	\$34,192	\$2,067	\$36,259
6	Business	17.43%	\$201,833	\$12,203	\$214,036
8	Rec/Non-Profit	0.11%	\$1,256	\$76	\$1,332
9	Farm	0.02%	\$198	\$12	\$210
TOTAL		100.00%	\$1,157,792	\$70,000	\$1,227,792

*Does not include any other adjustments Council may make in 2026 during the budget process to tax rates or % of Burden allocation.

If the tax rates and burden allocation remained the same in 2026, per \$100,000 of assessed residential property value, the increase per year would be roughly \$14.61. The average residential property in Barriere in 2025 was assessed at \$383,000, which would result in a \$55.95 tax increase for the year. This is effectively a reduction of \$13.41 per year for the average residential property per year when considering the previous utility bills.

For a business class property, for \$100,000 assessed value, the increase would be \$35.79 in taxation. The average business class property in 2025 was assessed at \$467,000, and as such, the average property would see an increase of \$167.13 per year under the same rates and burden allocation as in 2025. This is effectively an increase of \$82.65 per year for the average commercial property per year when considering the previous utility bills.

For industrial properties, for \$100,000 assessed value, the increase would be roughly \$49.81 per \$100,000 of assessed value. Large Industry had an average value of \$1,248,000, and as such would see an increase of \$621.65 (\$537.17 above current utility bills); while Small Industry had an average assessed value of \$1,038,000 and as such would see an increase of \$517.05 (\$432.57 above current utility bills).

Summary

Council is asked whether to provide first 3 readings to the Street Lighting Utility Billing Service Repeal Bylaw at this time. If Council provides these readings, the bylaw could be presented for adoption at the December 15, 2025, meeting.

An effective date has been added to the bylaw of January 31, 2026, which would end the street lighting service on that date. As utility bills are prepared over the winter holiday season and will be dated December 31, 2025, by providing an extra month to adjust for any last-minute billing challenges that may occur, this late January date will provide staff with some flexibility to close out the billing for the utility accounts.

Staff will provide updates to rate payers through the utility billing cycle at the end of 2025 as well as in the first billing cycle of 2026. Other communication channels may also be used on an as needed basis.

Benefits or Impact

General

The proposed repeal bylaw would allow the District to align the street lighting service and charges with legislation.

Finances

If adopted, there would be a shift of roughly \$70,000 in utility billing revenue to general taxation revenue in 2026. Further financial changes for rate and tax payers are outlined in the report. Council may adjust property tax rates and burden allocation as part of the 2026 budget process. Currently, \$55,000 of regular hydro charges are allocated as expenses in the 2025 budget. In addition, there are other administrative costs and costs of new lights as needed. BC Hydro is also working on a rate review which has indicated some additional costs to the District are possible.

Strategic Impact

Priority #3: Create Opportunities for Community Growth

Goal 3. Complete critical Utility Bylaw and Utility Master Plan revisions

Risk Assessment

Compliance: Community Charter, specifically S. 194 and S. 12

Risk Impact: Low

Internal Control Process:

Thorough review and collection of best practice in relation to the overall utility related bylaws being proposed for updates.

Next Steps / Communication

- If given first three readings, the bylaw would be presented for final reading on December 15.
- Most of the utility-related bylaws should be adopted by early 2026 to align with the budget cycle.
- The Fees and Charges bylaw will be formally amended in 2026 to remove the Street Lighting fees and references.

Attachments

- Draft Bylaw No. 264 – Street Lighting Utility Billing Service Repeal Bylaw
- Current Bylaw No. 45 – Street Lighting Bylaw

Recommendation

THAT Council gives first three readings to Street Lighting Utility Billing Service Repeal Bylaw No. 264.

Alternative Options

1. Council could amend the bylaw.
2. Council could choose not to select general taxation as a method of cost recovery and for example ask staff to shift towards flat fee parcel taxes.
3. Council could choose not to repeal the Street Lighting Bylaw at this time. This is not recommended as the current bylaw and practices are not aligned with the *Community Charter*.

Prepared by:

D. Drexler, Chief Administrative Officer

DISTRICT OF BARRIERE
DRAFT BYLAW NO. 264

**A BYLAW TO DISSOLVE THE DISTRICT OF BARRIERE STREET LIGHTING UTILITY
BILLING SERVICE**

The Council for the District of Barriere, in open meeting lawfully assembled, **ENACTS** as follows:

1. Title

- 1.1 This bylaw may be cited as the “*Street Lighting Utility Billing Service Repeal Bylaw No. 264*”.

2. General

- 2.1. Any enactment referred to herein is a reference to an enactment of British Columbia and regulations thereto, as amended, revised, consolidated or replaced from time to time.
- 2.2. If any section, paragraph or phrase of this bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by a decision of a Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this bylaw.

3. Repeal, Effective Date, Authority, and Amendment

- 3.1. The *District of Barriere Street Lighting By-law No. 0045, 2009* and all amendments hereto shall be repealed as of January 31, 2026.
- 3.2. The Street Lighting Utility Billing Service shall be dissolved as of January 31, 2026.
- 3.3. Effective February 1, 2026, the *District’s Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 73*, as amended, hereto shall further be amended by removing any references to Street Lighting charges and schedules.
- 3.4. The District’s Chief Administrative Officer, or designate, is directed to reallocate any annually collected street lighting related utility billing revenue to general taxation for 2026 and for any future years, and is further directed to no longer issue any Utility Billing notices that include Street Lighting fees and charges for utility bills issued after January 31, 2026.

Read a first, second, and third time this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Finally adopted this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Mayor – Rob Kerslake

Corporate Officer – Tasha Buchanan

THE DISTRICT OF BARRIERE

BY-LAW NO. 0045

A By-law to regulate street lighting and levy a fee for the street lighting service

WHEREAS pursuant to the provisions of the *Community Charter*, S. BC is empowered to impose fees and regulate a local service;

AND WHEREAS the District Council deems it expedient to impose fees and regulate the street lighting services;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the District of Barriere in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law may be cited for all purposes as "District of Barriere Street Lighting By-law No. 0045, 2009.
2. Definitions:
 - 2.1 In this by-law, unless the context requires otherwise, the following terms have the following meanings:
 - a) Dwelling Unit, means a self-contained set of habitable rooms used or intended to be used as the residence of one family.
 - b) Trade Premise, means any warehouse, factory, store, café, restaurant, wholesale or retail business place, hotel, motel, auto court and any building other than a dwelling unit.
3. The fees shall be as follows:
 - a) Dwelling Unit: \$3.75 per month
 - b) Trade Premise: \$4.95 per month
4. In the event that any account in respect of fees under this by-law remain unpaid by the owner or occupier of the real property to which the service was provided

by the District as of the 31st day of December in any year, such fees shall be deemed by the District to be taxes in arrears in respect of the property and shall be placed on the tax roll for collection by the District in the following year.

5. Street Lighting By-law No. 0190, 1999 is hereby repealed.

Read for a first time this 20th day of April, 2009

Read for a second time this 20th day of April, 2009

Read for a third time this 20th day of April, 2009

Adopted this 4th day of May, 2009

Original Signed by Mayor Fennell
Mike Fennell, Mayor

Original Signed by Wayne Vollrath
Wayne Vollrath, CAO