



Legislation Text

File #: RFD 18-049, **Version:** 1

Administrative Review of Street Lighting Policy EN-016

Proposed Motion

That Council direct Administration to update Street Lighting Policy EN-016 and to bring the updated policy forward to a future Council meeting for consideration.

Administration Recommendation

Administration supports the proposed motion.

Purpose

Street Lighting Policy EN-016 has been in effect since June 13, 2006. This policy determines where street lighting may be considered for installation within the County and who is responsible for costs. The existing policy is greater than 10 years old and a review with possible updates is appropriate to ensure it aligns with Council's objectives.

Summary

There are two main costs associated with street lighting; upfront capital cost and ongoing operating cost (electricity). Annual electricity costs of street lighting in 2018 are estimated to be \$300,000. All industrial areas and hamlets within Parkland County have street lighting and they account for roughly 73% of all costs. A small number of existing County Residential subdivisions have street lighting and these areas account for roughly 26% of all costs. The other locations account for less than 1% of the total cost. The current electricity costs paid by the County for street lights are summarized in the following table:

Zoning	Percentage	Proportional Annual Cost
INDUSTRIAL	54.68%	\$164,053.72
COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL	26.24%	\$78,708.36
HAMLET	18.26%	\$54,785.54
AGRICULTURAL	0.41%	\$1,241.53
LOCAL COMMERCIAL	0.17%	\$495.36
RESOURCE EXTRACTION	0.10%	\$313.11
HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL	0.07%	\$215.51
DIRECT CONTROL	0.06%	\$186.88
TOTAL	100.00%	\$300,000.00

In total, there are 15 Country Residential subdivisions with street lighting paid for by the County, representing close to 5% of the 327 Country Residential subdivisions. The average annual cost per subdivision is approximately \$4,000. All new subdivision street lighting requests require Council approval prior to installation. The current practice is that all new subdivisions with street lights will not be energized until 50% of the subdivision is occupied. This is not defined within the policy but is conditioned in the development agreements for the subdivisions that include street lights. At the time when a policy update is brought forward, this would be included as a requirement for Council's consideration.

The subdivisions that currently have street lighting are as follows:

Country Estates
Estates at Blackhawk
Helenslea Heath
Lakeshore Estates
Southview Ridge
Country Squire Estates
Green Briar Estates
Highland Estates
Roslaire Estates
Walker Lake Estates
Countryside Ravines
Graminia Country Estates
Lake Ridge Estates
Royal Road
Winter Ridge

Street lighting and electricity are considered public utilities, as such the County has the ability to enact a Bylaw to recover the cost of street lighting through a utility charge or could consider a Special Tax Bylaw. Legislative Services has considered the ability of the County to implement a Special Tax Bylaw provision and notes that this was in place prior to 2006 and could be implemented in similar fashion. Under Section 382(1)(f) of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Special Tax would be applied as a component of covering the cost of repair and maintenance of a road.

With the existing policy, Council must approve the installation of all street lights in any new subdivision and at that point the expansion of the street lighting annual cost is indirectly determined by the approval granted. Existing Country Residential street lighting operating costs are approximately \$80,000 annually. Since 2006, no existing Country Residential subdivisions have petitioned for street lights to be installed through a local improvement.

Capital costs to install street lights are currently funded by developers, by local improvements or by capital construction projects. Long term maintenance and replacement costs are paid for through utility charges.

Recovery of electricity costs through a utility charge could include subdivisions, hamlets, and industrial areas to reduce annual operating costs across the County. This consideration would remove the operating cost of street lighting from all taxpayers and assign costs to serviced lots that receive direct benefit from the street lights.

An added consideration in the costs of energy are the attributed costs from roadside signage that have lights (Acheson Zone signs, Parkland County entrance signs). These costs are isolated on the network and we are able to determine their individual operating costs. Their costs are currently a minor component of the overall energy costs throughout the County, approximately \$200 per year for 2018. Administration recommends these costs continue to be isolated and paid for by the County. Also to consider is the Street Light conversion program in place by Fortis. In 2018, Fortis is expected to begin converting all existing street lights from High Pressure Sodium (HPS) to Light Emitting Diode (LED). This will significantly reduce energy consumption from the street lights however, the capital costs for the transition is funded through the offset from current energy consumption so no real cost saving as present time.

Administration did review possible impacts to assessed value of homes as a result of street lights being present. There is no indeterminate factor that suggests a homes assessed value is directly linked to the presence of street lights, or not, but there is some consideration that if there were street lights and additional

urban service amenities that the assessed value of the home was likely higher as a result. In turn, a higher assessed value may be considered to indirectly contribute to the annual operating costs of street lights. There is greater consideration of the location of the subdivision and the vicinity to amenities that has the greater impact to assessed value.

In order to prepare a revised policy for Council's consideration, Administration requires clear direction from Council on cost recovery expectations and any other additions or amendments to the policy. Additional information that is not provided above can be obtained and summarized in future reports to assist with any decisions. If there is any specific direction that Council would prefer, those could be put into motions and developed as a policy update for Council's consideration.

Strategic Plan/Policy/Legal/Staff Implications:

This is aligned with Guiding Principle 4.1 of Parkland County's Strategic Plan: We are recognized leaders in municipal governance, managing our resources responsibly and sustainably, ensuring we leave a vibrant and resilient community legacy to those that follow us.

This potentially changes Policy EN-016.

Financial Impact:

Cost: n/a

Source of Funding: n/a