



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information X	Recommendation X	Decision Request ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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To: CoTW

Submitted by: John A Smith, Councilor District 9 Falmouth

Date: Sept 2, 2026

Subject: Street Light Policy

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act

PART III

POWERS Resolutions, policies, by-laws

Section 47 (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION or DECISION REQUEST

Committee of the Whole recommends...

That Council direct staff to amend Street Light Policy RCPOW-002.00 to provide that all streetlights within West Hants Regional Municipality, including those on Clover Lane and any future municipal streetlight installations, be funded through general taxation effective April 1, 2027.

BACKGROUND

Property X ☐	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social ☐	Economic X ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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I have had two inquiries about the approval process and payment method for new streetlights in Falmouth and on both occasions, it was because the residents couldn't discern what the payment method would be. After reviewing the policy, it appears the costs would be decided by Council, they could general rated or area rated. To date there is only one street in the whole municipality that pays for its own streetlights. These residents also pay their fair share of property tax so in effect they are paying for their streetlights twice. I would like to see this rectified so that the streetlights are paid with the general rate just like the rest of the municipality. Further, I think in the future, all new streetlights should be paid with the general rate so that we have fairness in the municipality. I think it would be more straightforward for residents to understand the policy and more fair for our residents to have one payment method since the vast majority of streetlights are already general rated.

DISCUSSION

NEXT STEPS

Amend the Street Light Policy RCPOW-002.00 and make the necessary financial adjustments.

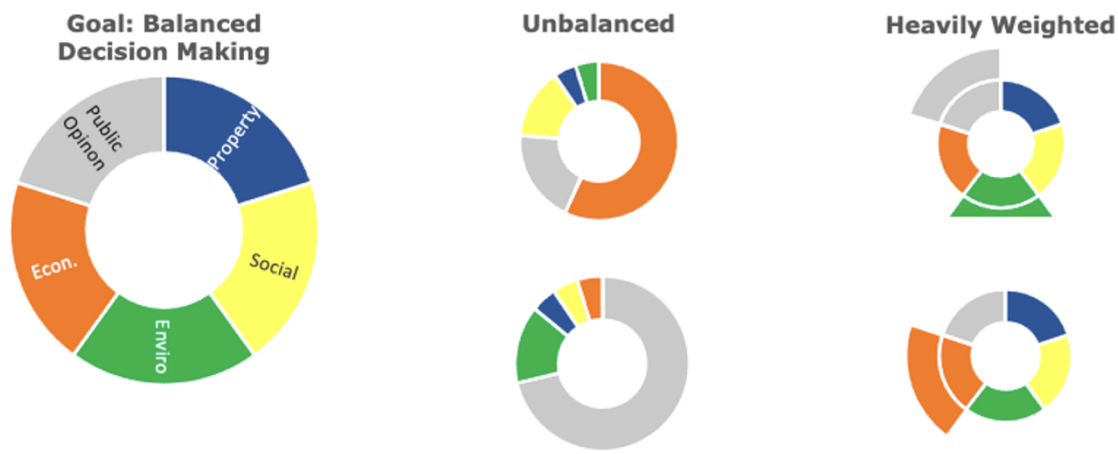
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Very minor implications because the vast majority of streetlights are general rated.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

(Inform of any material DEIA implications it may have on the Municipality, or to residents, if anything.)

Council has been provided with a reference taken from the Meeting and Committee Procedural Policy , Appendix C “Decision Making by Council and Committee of the Whole” as a reminder of the principles highlighted for good decision making.



Report Prepared by: _____
John Smith, Councillor, District 9

Report Reviewed by: _____
Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

Report Approved by: _____
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer



1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines, procedures and criteria for the initiation, investigation, and implementation of streetlighting measures for Municipal controlled streetlights that are provided for traffic and pedestrian safety, not property security and may be located on Municipal-owned, Provincial or Private streets.

This policy presents budgeting, financial and operating guidelines for all municipally owned or leased streetlights. In addition, provides the criteria for reviewing requests for new streetlight installations and/or removals.

This policy attempts to provide a balance such that the improvements recognized exceed the negative impacts of added costs and potential inconvenience for street users.

This policy **does not** apply lighting outside of facilities or structures owned by the Municipality such as: Parking Lots, Parks, Depo's, Community Centers, Sports Facilities, Fire Departments, Water and Wastewater Facilities etc.

2. OBJECTIVES

The follow objectives will be taken into consideration when investigating, selecting, and implementing Street Lighting:

- 2.1 Provide policy direction with respect to street light administration.
- 2.2 Provide Planning & Development with direction on Developer installation standards and service area fees.
- 2.3 Provide direction on how to request changes to the street light service.
- 2.4 Provide the direction on repairing and replacing malfunctioning streetlights.
- 2.5 Provide the direction for developer installation standards and fees.

3. INTENDED USE

- 3.1 The streetlight asset is intended to provide safe and secure travel for vehicular and pedestrian traffic throughout the Municipality where these two have cause to share roadways and walkways in sufficient number and frequency so as to warrant an investment in streetlight infrastructure. It is also intended that the installation of a streetlight would aid in the accessibility and efficient use of municipal infrastructure.



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STREET LIGHT POLICY

RCOPW-002.00

- 3.2 The Municipality does not provide streetlights for personal or commercial convenience or as a measure of security. The Municipality considers these objectives to be beyond the scope of its responsibilities.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to Municipal-owned and operated or Municipal-leased streetlights. Municipal controlled streetlights are provided for traffic and pedestrian safety, not property security and may be located on Municipal-owned streets or on Provincial streets. Streetlights can also enhance the aesthetics of a neighbourhood and improve streetscapes. This policy does not apply to street or overhead lights owned or operated by any other governmental or commercial body or private person(s) (unless by written agreement).

- 4.1 Private roads, laneways and driveways **will not** be serviced.
4.2 Streets and roads in other municipal jurisdictions **will not** be serviced.
4.3 100-series highways and interchanges **will not** be serviced.

5. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Area Rated or General Rated Service Area	An area where streetlights are located throughout the entire area and paid for by an area or general rate; on Municipal-owned streets only.
Street Funded Service Area	An area serviced or partially serviced with streetlights where an annual charge is applied to each property within the service area; on Municipal-owned streets only.
Un-serviced Area	An area where no streetlights or charges exist on behalf of WHRM.
Private Road	A road not owned by a Municipality or by the Province of Nova Scotia
Provincial Road	A road owned by the Province of Nova Scotia

6. POLICY

The West Hants Regional Municipality (WHRM) is responsible for all costs associated with the ownership of its streetlight assets, as well as leased costs of the Nova Scotia Power (NSP) owned streetlights which are approved for management by WHRM.

These costs include but are not limited to, the installation, maintenance, operation and rental costs of streetlight fixtures, arms, and poles. Installation and maintenance of streetlights may be contracted to an external service company.

This policy presents budgeting, financing, and operating guidelines for municipal owned and leased streetlights, describes the criteria for reviewing requests for new streetlight installations and outlines subdivision/developer installation standards and fees.

6. POLICY STATEMENTS

The following policy statements are the directives and rules by which the WHRM personnel shall follow.

- 6.1** WHRM shall recover streetlight-related costs, by one of the following methods, as specified in the terms of an area: a) uniform amount per property; b) uniform amount per dwelling unit; or c) area rate as per assessment.
- 6.2** This charge will be included on and become part of the total taxes due on the annual final tax billing.

7. STREETLIGHT AREAS

WHRM sets various area rates for street light charges. Areas throughout the Municipality are defined as General Rated Services, Area Rated Service Areas, Street Funded Service Areas, or Un-serviced Areas; see definitions.

8. GUIDELINES FOR STREETLIGHT INSTALLATIONS AND REMOVALS

8.1 GENERAL

Streetlights are provided for traffic safety, not property security. WHRM reserves the right to make streetlight servicing decisions in a manner that allows for control of the billing structure. Petition shall be reviewed and approved or denied by Public Works Engineering Division after staff have investigated.

8.2 DEVELOPER STREETLIGHT REQUESTS

Streetlights which are required for installation for all new WHRM-owned streets, with the installation to be coordinated and paid by the Developer. New installations may be either:

- a) Municipal-owned underground electrical infrastructure type, with (decorative) pole/lamp configuration, or
- b) Municipal-leased infrastructure, owned and installed by Nova Scotia Power on NS Power poles.

Developer(s) shall make application directly to WHRM for each new streetlight installation, indicating if the streetlights will be proposed to be an area-rated service contract or a street-rated service. This will ensure that the appropriate measures are considered.

8.3 NEW STREETLIGHT SERVICE AREA REQUESTS

A new streetlight service may be requested by an area resident, or Developer. In such cases where a new pole is required for a requested streetlight, it is the responsibility of the new area-rated or street-rated service group to cover all costs for any required pole installations in their proposal.

Petitions for new streetlights on existing Municipal, Provincial or Private streets shall be performed by petition by the property owners within the proposed charge area. Streetlights on Provincial or Private streets shall be Municipal-leased Infrastructure, owned and installed by Nova Scotia Power on NS Power poles. The focus of the petition will center on whether or not there is neighbourhood support for WHRM to initiate an investigation.

A key component of the process is residential engagement with the neighbouring properties to establish buy-in. The following process will be used when proceeding with a petition:

- a) clearly map the charge area to which the petition pertains.
- b) accurately indicate the proposed location of the streetlights to be installed.
- c) indicate each property that is located within the charge area.
- d) indicate the proposed cost impact of installation and the estimated area rate; this can be estimated by the Director of Finance (charged per property, charge per dwelling unit or charge as per assessment); and
- e) petition must clearly indicate that owners representing at least (67%) of the properties in the proposed charge area, attest that they are in favour of street lighting for the request to be considered. Each household is represented by one signature, regardless of the number of people in the household. This step is crucial in determining the level of concern from the residents.
- f) if the requested location meets the initial criteria and the petition results indicate that there is at least 67% support, data collection and analysis will commence.

8.4 REMOVAL OF STREETLIGHT SERVICES

Removal of existing streetlights may be requested by residents or developer. Petitions for removal of streetlights on existing Municipal, Provincial or Private streets shall be performed by petition by the property owners within the proposed charge area. The focus of the petition will center on whether or not there is neighbourhood support for WHRM to initiate an investigation. Removal of streetlights will not be approved until Council approves the omission of the new area-rated or street rated service.

The petition shall:

- a) clearly map the charge area to which the request pertains.
- b) accurately indicate the exact proposed streetlight(s) to be removed.
- c) indicate each property that is located within the charge area.
- d) indicate the proposed cost impact for the streetlight (s) removal; this can be determined by the Director of Finance (charged per property, charge per dwelling unit or charge as per assessment).
- e) indicate the estimated annual savings of removing the lights; this can be determined by the Director of Finance (charged per property, charge per dwelling unit or charge as per assessment); and
- f) petition must clearly indicate that owners representing at least 2/3 (66.7%) of the properties in the charge area are in favour of the removal of the street lighting for the request to be considered. Each household is represented by one signature, regardless of the number of people in the household. This step is crucial in determining the level of concern from the residents.

9. DECISION CRITERIA FOR AREA RATED & FUNDED SERVICE AREAS REQUESTS

WHRM does not have a comprehensive street lighting design/layout/location strategic plan. In the absence of this plan, the installation of streetlights will be reviewed and approved or denied based upon the following applicable street lighting policy guidelines:

- a) Procedures set out by the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) will be the guiding documentation as it relates to standards.
- b) The streetlight operating, and capital and or operating budgets can accommodate the new request.
- c) The streetlight type requested follows the established pattern, suitable for the service area.
- d) The streetlight is deemed to be classified as safety lighting; with priority given on roadway:
 - i. intersections.



- ii. pedestrian crosswalks.
- iii. areas with high night-time traffic or areas with identified hazardous road conditions; and
- iv. areas of heavy pedestrian or vehicular traffic, such as public or community buildings, (i.e., schools, community centers, etc.).
- e) There is an existing utility pole at the requested location.
- f) The streetlight is roadway facing; and there is sufficient electrical equipment, wiring and pole space clearance available at the requested location for the addition of a streetlight.

10. REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENT OF MALFUNCTIONING STREETLIGHTS

The Public Works Department is responsible for coordinating the maintenance, and replacement of all streetlights on an as-required basis. WHRM will become aware of malfunctioning streetlights by reports received from the public or by periodic road inspections.

- a) NSPI, or their designee will be responsible to perform repairs, maintenance and/or replacement to all Municipal-leased (NSPI-owned) streetlights.
- b) WHRM will submit requests for repairs, maintenance and/or replacement of malfunctioning streetlights from its designated maintenance contractor to all Municipal-owned streetlights; and
- c) If there is a clear and imminent severe threat to public safety, repair or replacement will be requested immediately. Otherwise, the WHRM will request repair/replacements to streetlights when it is cost-effective (will be scheduled for annual or semi-annual repair).

Schedule B: Subdivision/Developer Installation Standards and Fees

All Developers and private road owners are required to provide all capital, installation, and commissioning costs of Municipal-approved streetlights in their developments per the WHRM development agreement or as-of-right.

The standard placement will be one streetlight at every intersection and one at every second utility pole, or as determined necessary by the Municipal Engineer. Standards for all private (decorative) poles and fixtures is detailed per the West Hants Regional Municipality's Municipal Standards Specifications.

The Developer is responsible to install streetlights as part of the development; in accordance with NS Power's standards, permissions, and regulations and with the light specifications approved by the development engineer of record. The standard fixture will be a 43W fixture, except at intersections, which may require higher illumination, at the Municipality's discretion.



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STREET LIGHT POLICY

RCOPW-002.00

I, Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk of the West Hants Regional Municipality, in the Province of Nova Scotia, do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Policy as adopted by the Council of the West Hants Regional Municipality at a meeting duly called and held on the **28th** day of **January, 2025**.


Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

Adoption	
Notice to Council:	January 14, 2025
Approval:	January 28, 2025
Description: Initial approval of the Regional Streetlight Policy RCOPW-002.00	