

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: Board of Directors

FROM: B. Newell, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 6, 2021

RE: Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Electoral Area ‘D’, ‘E’, ‘F’, & ‘I’
Regulation of “Solar Energy Systems”

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT Bylaw No. 2911, 2021, Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen Solar Energy Systems Regulation Zoning Amendment Bylaw be read a third time.

Proposed Development:

The purpose of Amendment Bylaw No. 2911 is to introduce zoning regulation governing the use and placement of solar energy systems in the Okanagan Electoral Area zoning bylaws ‘D’, ‘E’, ‘F’ & ‘I’.

Background:

At its meeting of October 1, 2020, the Planning and Development (P&D) Committee of the Board resolved that Amendment Bylaw No. 2911 (Solar Energy Systems Amendment Bylaw) be initiated and applied only to Electoral Areas ‘D’, ‘E’, ‘F’, & ‘I’.

Community consultation, including referral to external agencies and consideration by the applicable Electoral Area Advisory Planning Commissions (APCs) occurred between November of 2020 and March of 2021.

At its meeting of March 18, 2021, the P&D Committee considered the public feedback received on Amendment Bylaw No. 2911, and resolved that the bylaw be brought forward for consideration of first reading, subject to the following changes being implemented:

- *the minimum parcel size for a ground mounted system be reduced from 1.0 ha to 0.25 ha; and*
- *ground mounted solar systems less than 1.2 metres in height on parcels less than 0.25 ha in area be exempted from parcel line setback requirements.*

Approval from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) is required prior to adoption as the proposed textual amendments will affect lands within 800 metres of a controlled access highway (i.e. Highway 97 & 3).

At its meeting of April 1, 2021, the Regional District Board resolved to approve first and second reading of the amendment bylaw and scheduled a public hearing ahead of its meeting of May 6, 2021.

All comments received to date in relation to this application are included as a separate item on the Board Agenda.

Approval from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) is required prior to adoption as the proposed amendments involve lands within 800 metres of a controlled access highway (i.e. Highway 97/3).

Analysis:

Administration supports the zoning regulations contained in Amendment Bylaw No. 2911 as these will provide direction to residents, property owners and staff regarding the placement of Solar Energy Systems within the Okanagan Electoral Areas "D", "E", "F", & "I".

Administration notes that the regulations contained within the amendment bylaw reflect the direction provided by the Board at the March 18, 2021, meeting of the P&D Committee.

Alternatives:

1. THAT Bylaw No. 2911, 2021, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Solar Energy Systems Regulations Zoning Amendment Bylaw be deferred; or
2. THAT first and second readings of Bylaw No. 2911, 2021, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Solar Energy Systems Regulations Zoning Amendment Bylaw be rescinded and the bylaws abandoned.

Respectfully submitted:

C. Garrish, Planning Manager