

**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Paul Gipps, CAO

**Meeting Date:** July 15, 2025  
**Meeting Type:** Regular Council Meeting

**Prepared by:** Reyna Seabrook, Director of Corporate Services  
**Department:** Corporate Services

**Title:** Alternative Means of Public Notice | Bylaw 1293, 2025  
**Description:** To consider providing public notice by other means than in a newspaper distributed at least weekly

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## RECOMMENDATION

THAT Alternative Means of Public Notice Bylaw 1293, 2025 be read a first, second and third time.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

In February 2022 changes to the *Community Charter* provided an opportunity for local governments to continue to use the default requirements for publishing public notices in a local newspaper once each week for two consecutive weeks or to adopt a bylaw that provides for alternate methods of publication in accordance with section 94.2. The changes were introduced to provide flexibility for communities that were regularly using alternative means because newspaper was not practical. Establishing standard posting locations other than in the newspaper provided consistency on where the public could find public notices.

In accordance with section 94 of the Community Charter, notice is required to be given or published in accordance with section 94.1 or 94.2 **and** by posting in the public notice Posting Places. Public notice Posting Places are defined in Council Procedure Bylaw as “*the notice boards located in the main floor foyer at the Municipal Hall and the District Web Site*”. If a section 94.2 bylaw has not been adopted, notice must be published once a week for two weeks in a newspaper distributed weekly in the affected area. If this isn’t practical, alternative methods may be used if they follow the same timing and are similarly effective.

A bylaw under section 94.2 must specify at least two methods of notice, not including public notice Posting Places. The bylaw can specify any means of publication so long as Council considers the notice to be reasonably equivalent to notice in a newspaper and that, prior to adoption, Council considers if the alternative means meet the following principles of the [Public Notice Regulation](#): *Reliable* – the publication methods are dependable and trustworthy; *Suitable* – the publication methods work for the purpose for which the public notice is intended; and, *Accessible* – the publication methods are easy to access and have broad reach. A bylaw under section 94.2 is not permitted to specify different means for different types of notice or geographic areas.

If a bylaw under section 94.2 is adopted, notice must be published by **all** means identified in the bylaw and posted in the Posting Places. Section 94.2 requires notice to be posted at least seven days before the date of the matter to be considered, unless a specific timeframe is set out in legislation, for example, not less than 3 days and not more than 10 days before a public hearing. Where legislation sets out a specific timeframe and a bylaw under section 94.2 has been adopted, one means of notice must be published during the specified timeframe (i.e. not less than 3 not more than 10) and the other means of notice must meet the seven-day requirement. Local governments can also provide any additional notice as they consider appropriate.

An alternative means of public notice bylaw was not presented in 2022 and the legislated notice requirements therefore default to two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper. The District currently reserves one full page each week in the Lake Country Calendar for publishing legislated public notices, where required, and otherwise for general District information. Second or third pages are purchased where one page does not accommodate the required notices.

A bylaw under section 94.2 is being presented to provide increased flexibility in meeting publishing deadlines and ensuring dependable, accurate notices. Publishing through a third party creates a possible risk of missed or inaccurate information and electronic notification is more accessible with a broader reach. The majority of news and information is now consumed electronically and although the use of print media has declined, staff recommend retaining the one-page print media in the Lake Country Calendar as an alternative source for information.

As previously identified, an alternative means of public notice bylaw must identify at least two methods of notice not including the Posting Places (foyer and website). Only one of the means of notice in the bylaw is required to meet timelines established by legislation (i.e. at least 3 days and not more than 10) and the other means of notice must meet the default notice of at least seven days before the matter is considered.

The bylaw presented for Council's consideration identifies a specific "Public Notice" page on the District's website as one of the means of notice and distribution via the existing email subscription service as the second means. The following table provides other communities alternative means for public notice:

MUNICIPALITY	LOCATION 1	LOCATION 2	POSTING PLACES (Council Procedures Bylaw)
Central Saanich	Public Notice Page	Social Media	Digital display at City Hall and website
CSRD	Website	Email subscription	Notice Board and website
Fort St. John	Website	Social media	Notice Board
Hudson Hope	Website and Facebook	Email subscription	Notice Board and website
Kelowna* no bylaw	Website	Newspaper	Notice Board
Nanaimo	Website	Newspaper	Notice Board
Penticton	Online news	Newspaper	Notice Board and website
RDCO	Website	Email subscription	Notice Board
RDOS	Website	Email subscription	Notice Board
Spallumcheen	Website	Newsletter	Notice boards and website
Surrey	Website	Email subscription	Notice boards
Victoria* no bylaw			Notice Board and Council Chambers
West Kelowna	Website	Newspaper	Notice Board

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no additional costs for providing public notice on the District's website or the email subscription service.

#### **ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. THAT Public Notice Bylaw 1293, 2025 not receive any readings and the Districts public notice requirements remain as required in accordance with the Community Charter.

Respectfully Submitted.

**Reyna Seabrook, Director of Corporate Services**