FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Council approves next step for Nelson Hydro AMI metering

Nelson, BC (July 13, 2026) – Nelson City Council has approved the next step in Nelson Hydro's plan to replace its aging electric meters with a modern Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system.

Nelson Hydro presented its business plan to Council at a Special Meeting on June 23, outlining the benefits of upgrading to AMI. The City's current Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system has been in use for more than 20 years and is nearing the end of its useful life. Rather than replacing it with older technology that could soon become obsolete, Nelson Hydro is proposing a modern AMI system. Most electric and gas utilities across British Columbia have already made this transition.

Council approved funding for the project through its 2026–2030 Financial Plan and directed staff to submit an application to the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) for approval of the rural portion of the project. The application was submitted on June 30, 2026.

As part of the application process, Nelson Hydro is inviting public feedback. Residents can learn more about the project, ask questions, and share their comments through the Let's Talk Nelson website at letstalk.nelson.ca/AMI-Project. Town hall meetings will also be held in September (times and locations to be announced later this summer).

AMI is now the standard for electric utilities across North America. It will help Nelson Hydro provide more reliable service, improve efficiency, and meet the community's future needs. Unlike the current system, AMI allows two-way communication between meters and the utility. This means meter readings can be collected automatically, eliminating the need for drive-by readings. The system can also quickly identify power outages and help crews respond faster.

Other benefits include:

- More accurate and timely information about electricity use.
- Better monitoring of the electrical system.
- Improved planning and maintenance of utility equipment.
- New opportunities for energy-saving programs in the future.

AMI is also expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 180 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent through fewer truck trips and improved utility operations.

The project will support Council’s goal of ensuring City services and infrastructure are ready for the future while improving the reliability and efficiency of Nelson Hydro’s operations.

More information about AMI and opportunities for comment can be found at letstalk.nelson.ca/AMI-project. If the application is approved by BCUC, work would begin in January 2027.

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