



Bylaw 6511 – Downtown Business Improvement Area Tax Bylaw

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Summary

Bylaw 6511 authorizes City Council to impose a tax on all businesses within the Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA) to fulfill the budget set by the Downtown Lethbridge BRZ board. The budget will be presented to Council in March, as Council's approval by March 30 each year is required for the preparation of the DBIA Tax Rate Bylaw, which is presented in April.

This bylaw establishes the following for all business in the DBIA:

- Business classes and directs the City Assessor to prepare annual business assessments;
- Exemptions from the DBIA levy;
- Authorization for the City Assessor to create the DBIA assessment and tax roll for a Business Improvement Area tax levy; and
- A minimum tax of \$150 per year.

City Council's adoption of this Bylaw is a requirement under section 20(1) of the *Business Improvement Area Regulation*, Alta. Reg. 93/2016, ("AR 93/2016") (Link 1).

Recommendation(s)

That City Council give first reading to Bylaw 6511, establishing the Downtown Business Improvement Area Tax Bylaw, as presented in Attachment 1.

Financial

City administration costs for business assessments are recovered through the DBIA and are included in its annual budget.

Background and Prior Decisions

- **Section 32, Business Improvement Area Regulation (AR 93/2016)** (Link 1) – Deems the existing City of Lethbridge Bylaw 6338 (Link 2), which establishes the Downtown

Lethbridge BRZ's area, as a Business Improvement Area (BIA) Bylaw under the updated Business Improvement Area Regulation.

- **Section 20(1), Business Improvement Area Regulation (AR 93/2016)** (Link 1) – Requires Council to pass a Business Improvement Area Tax Bylaw if a BIA exists within the municipality.
- **Annual Practice** – Assessment and Taxation presents an annual BIA Tax Bylaw to Council to establish the Downtown Lethbridge BIA (DBIA) assessment roll, a requirement for setting the DBIA mill rate for the Tax Rate Bylaw presented in April.
- **City of Lethbridge Bylaw 6511** – Includes establishing a minimum tax on BIA rolls. The minimum tax was \$138, with a proposed increase to \$150. It applies to all businesses within the DBIA that operate or lease space for business purposes for at least one month during the calendar year.

Engagement

Discussions with the Director of the DBIA confirm their support for the current methodology of establishing the DBIA's assessment roll and have requested to increase the minimum tax from \$138 to \$150. Public engagement will be conducted as necessary with business owners and assessors if additional information is required for business assessments.

Recommendation and Option(s) Analysis

1. Recommendation: Approve Bylaw 6511 to Establish DBIA Assessments

Approval of Bylaw 6511 will establish the tax classes and authorize the City Assessor to compile the annual business assessment roll for taxation purposes. All businesses operating within the DBIA will be assessed accordingly.

- *Community/Citizen:*
 - Social – Ensures all DBIA members are assessed fairly and consistently as the basis for calculating future DBIA taxes.
 - Economic – The DBIA was established through a petition process to promote a vibrant downtown area that showcases local businesses and supports economic growth in the area.
 - Environmental – None.
- *Risk:* BIA Regulations mandate that Council pass the Business Improvement Tax Bylaw; any delay would prevent finalizing the assessment roll, setting the mill rate, and mailing DBIA tax notices in time for the June 30 collection deadline.
- *Implementation and Communication Plan:*
 - Upon approval of Bylaw 6511, Assessment and Taxation will update the DBIA assessment roll; completion expected by the end of February.
 - The DBIA will communicate the dates of its annual budget and general membership meetings to its members.
 - The City will notify DBIA members of the Council Budget meeting.

- The finalized assessment roll, together with the DBIA's budget approved by Council in March, will determine the mill rate for the DBIA Tax Rate Bylaw.
- The DBIA Tax Rate Bylaw will be presented to Council in April.
- DBIA's Assessment and Tax notices will be mailed out in May for the end of June collection.

Attachment(s)

1. Attachment 1: *Bylaw 6511 – 2026 Downtown Business Improvement Area Tax Bylaw*

Link(s)

1. Link 1: [Alta Reg 93/2016 | Business Improvement Area Regulation | CanLII](#)
2. Link 2: [bylaw-6338-establish-a-downtown-business-improvement-area-bylaw.pdf](#)