

CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER - AGENDA ITEM DATA SHEET

Agenda Item: Private Use of Public Barricades

Requested & Presented by: Jasen Glasbrenner

Meeting Date: Public Works Committee on 01-15-2026
Finance Committee and Common Council on 02-03-2026

Committee Review:

Background: The Public Works Department routinely receives informal requests from residents, churches, and local groups seeking to borrow City-owned barricades for a variety of private needs—ranging from church functions and block parties to dumpster placements and parking management.

Historically, the City has allowed such use without a formal rental agreement, event permit, or fee structure in place. However, as budgetary constraints increase, staff is raising the question of whether this practice remains appropriate or sustainable. Providing these barricades involves equipment inventory tracking, scheduling, risk management, and occasionally staff time for drop-off or pick-up.

Additionally, there is concern that allowing free or unregulated use of this resource may unintentionally compete with private businesses that could otherwise fill this service gap.

Discussion Points for Committee Consideration:

- Should the City continue allowing private use of barricades without an event permit or rental fee?
- Should the City develop a formal rental or user fee structure, including deposit and liability terms?
- Is there value in encouraging the private sector to provide this service as a business opportunity instead?
- What role does the Special Event Permit process play in regulating or facilitating this use?

Department Recommendation: Staff recommends discussion and Committee direction on whether a formal policy or fee system should be developed for private-use barricade requests. If supported, staff can return with a draft policy, rental agreement, and proposed fee schedule.

Financial Impact: The City currently provides barricades for private use at no cost, resulting in untracked equipment wear, potential loss or damage, and indirect staff time—especially if delivery or pickup is requested. Formalizing a policy could reduce this strain by:

- Generating modest revenue through a rental or deposit-based fee structure
- Reducing staff workload by establishing clearer expectations and responsibilities
- Minimizing equipment loss or replacement costs due to unregulated use
- Creating a potential business opportunity for local vendors to meet demand outside City services

At the same time, implementation of a fee system would introduce minor administrative overhead in the form of scheduling, invoicing, and tracking—unless fully delegated to the Special Event Permit process or replaced by private alternatives.

Requested Action:

PUBLIC WORKS: Motion to direct staff to explore and present options for a formal barricade use policy and/or fee system for private, non-City-sponsored events.