

of Fraser-Fort George

Development in Valemount, McBride and Electoral Area H

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# INTRODUCTION

Whether you're starting a new business, expanding an existing one, or planning for land development, understanding local government requirements can be challenging - we can help. This guide is intended to help you understand the steps involved for business development in Valemount, McBride and Electoral Area H. It will assist you to better plan for and anticipate community requirements, providing for a more seamless and efficient process on your way to success.

**Understanding Local and Regional Government'** Valemount, McBride and Electoral Area H are in the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. (Map 1: Regional District Area).

The Villages of McBride and Valemount are incorporated municipalities governed by an elected Mayor and Council. These two villages are nestled in the Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H, but are separate municipalities. Within municipal limits, like most municipalities, the Villages exercise a range of management tools to ensure compliance with provincial statutes and community plans.

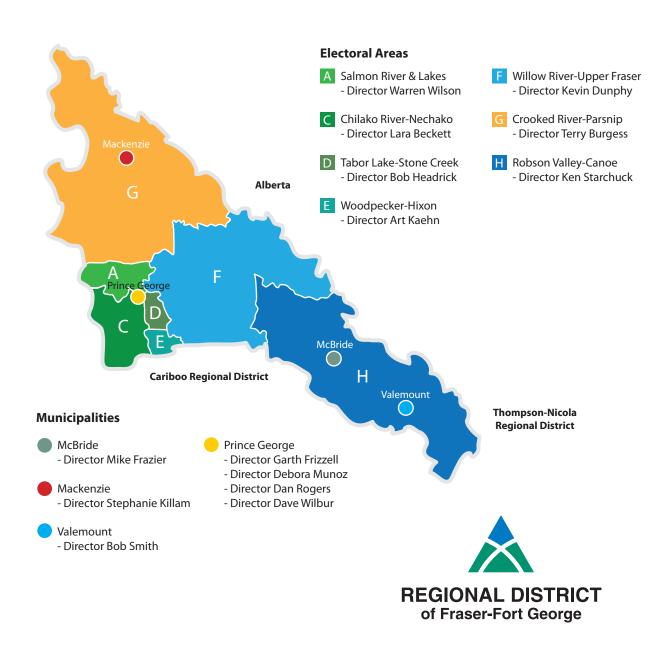
The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George governs the surrounding rural area, delivering services in varying areas with common needs. The Regional District typically provides municipal-style services

to unincorporated communities, and wide-ranging services, like 911 and solid waste management, to extensive areas covering thousands of square kilometres.

All businesses moving to or setting up in Valemount, McBride and Electoral Area H should notify the McBride and District Chamber of Commerce and/or Valemount and Area Chamber of Commerce for inclusion into the local business database and community business listings, which are published on the web and in hard сору.

*In addition, all business owners expanding into McBride* or Valemount should notify the respective economic development officer as he/she may be able to assist you during the expansion process.

# **MAP 1: REGIONAL DISTRICT AREA**



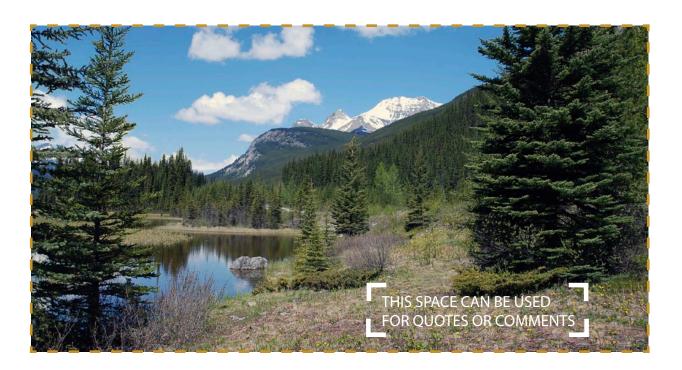
Source: Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, www.rdffg bc.ca/Board/Electoral\_areas/, 2010.

# NDARD BUSINESS START-UP LIST

- Complete your market research.
- Develop a business plan.
- Obtain financial commitments before proceeding with start-up expenditures. Contact Community Futures Fraser-Fort George for small business startup advice, business plan review and arranging financing (if necessary).
- If you intend to operate as a sole proprietor or partnership, register your business with the Corporate Registry (www.onestopbc.ca). This Corporate Registry will walk you through registering your business with the Canada Revenue Agency and WorkSafeBC.
- Contact the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George or Villages for land use requirements, appropriate permits, inspections and licences. The remainder of this document outlines applicable municipal government processes. The Regional District's

website is www.rdffg.bc.ca.

- Obtain appropriate insurance and leases.
- Understand the applicable labour regulations (www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb/esaguide).
- Ensure all health regulations relating to your business have been investigated.
- Ensure all environmental issues affecting your business have been investigated.



# **VALEMOUNT, MCBRIDE AND ELECTORAL AREA H** - GUIDING DOCUMENTS

# **Village of Valemount Official Community Plan**

The Official Community Plan (OCP) gives direction and guidelines for the future of Valemount. It provides a framework for future growth through planning objectives and policies and provides direction for the future form and character of the village. The Village will evaluate development proposals to ensure that they are consistent with the vision of the Plan. The OCPs also establish the basis for more specific bylaws and programs such as the Zoning By-law and Downtown Revitalization Program.

# **Village of McBride Official Community Plan**

The purpose of the Official Community Plan is to state the broad land use objectives and policies of the Council of the Village of McBride to guide decisions for planning and land use management for the Village. The Plan consists of statements of Council's objectives and development policies and maps of existing and future conceptual land uses for the Village. The Plan is intended to be a relevant guide to future land use in the area for a period of at least five years, but up to ten years depending on conditions or events that occur to influence land use.

# **Electoral Area H - Upstream and Downstream Official Community Plans**

Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H has two Official Community Plans (OCP) that provide blueprints for future development. These two OCPs are the Robson Valley-Canoe Upstream and Robson Valley-Canoe Downstream OCP. They identify different types of land uses – agriculture/resource residential, commercial, industrial and institutional (schools and parks, for example), and the objectives and development policies of the land uses.

The plan also describes the objectives of development permit areas, hazard lands and special management areas. Land use maps are provided that indicate designated uses.

The Regional Board considers the protection of the environment, protection of riparian areas and viewscapes and the threat of wildfire are significant issues in the area. Development permit areas have been designated in the Plan to protect watercourses and adjacent habitat.

The OCPs are intended to be relevant guides to future land use in the area for a period of at least five years.

# The Zoning By-law

The Zoning By-law is the major tool by which the Village of Valemount, Village of McBride and Regional District of Fraser-Fort George use to implement OCPs by regulating the use, size and siting of land and buildings. Each municipality has its own zoning by-law. Zones identified on Zoning By-law maps are more detailed than those of the OCPs and describe permitted uses, densities, siting and building form. The purpose of the zoning is to provide for the orderly development of the community, and to avoid conflicts between incompatible land uses.

The Zoning By-law is a living document that can be amended; either to implement future land uses in keeping with the direction provided in the OCPs or in response to a particular situation not contemplated when the By-law was written.

Please contact the respective municipality directly or visit the website for a copy of the Zoning By-law.

# VELOPMENT PROCESS

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George's Development Services department facilitates development while protecting property rights, community standards and the environment as represented by Regional Board policy.

**Development Services includes:** 

- Land Use Planning and By-law Compliance; and
- Building Inspections.

If you are planning to develop a site within the Village of Valemount, Village of McBride or Robson Valley Electoral Area H, you should first discuss your proposal with the appropriate municipal staff member before you invest a lot of time and money in your project.

Where applicable, some of the by-laws that you will need to consult include:

- Village of Valemount or Village of McBride Official Community Plan;
- The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George's Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H Downstream and Upstream Official Community Plans; and
- The respective municipal or regional zoning by-law and requirements.

# **Key Documents** VILLAGE OF VALEMOUNT

- Zoning By-law

# **VILLAGE OF McBRIDE**

# **ROBSON VALLEY ELECTORAL AREA H**



# **Developing in the Village of Valemount**

The Village of Valemount requires amendment and permit application to be addressed to the Chief Administrative Officer.

The processes to apply for changes, or amendments, to the OCP and Zoning by-law are clearly defined at the Village of Valemount's website. In addition, the process to apply for a temporary commercial or industrial use permit is clearly defined at the Village's website. Please visit www. valemount.ca online and click on "Zoning" for the stepby-step processes of an OCP amendment, Zoning By-law amendment and commercial or industrial use permit.

The processes to apply for a development variance permit and development permit are clearly defined at the Village of Valemount's website. Please visit www.valemount. ca online and click on "Permits" for the step-by-step process of obtaining a development variance permit and development permit.

# **Developing in the Village of McBride**

The Village of McBride recently completed a development guide, entitled Starting Your New Business in McBride. Please refer to this document for guidance regarding development processes. Please visit www.mcbride.ca/ edo online and click on "Business Resources" and "Business Information Guides". This document provides key questions for prospective developers to ask prior to developing property in the Village.

# Developing in Robson Valley Electoral Area H

The principal functions of Land Use Planning are:

- to prepare land use plans and policies to promote the allocation of resources in support of planned and orderly development for Regional District Board consideration:
- to serve the community by responding to a wide range of inquiries and applications related to the use and development of land;
- to administer Regional land use by-laws, standards and policies;

- to provide the opportunity for meaningful public consultation which respect to policy and the law;
- to guide to the Regional Board on planning and development matters.

Policies of the Regional Board concerning land use are expressed in the Robson Valley-Canoe Downstream and Upstream Community Official Plans, and regulations are adopted in the form of by-laws.

# Changes to the OCP and Zoning By-law

The OCP and the Zoning By-law generally deal with issues concerning land use and density. An application for a change to the OCP and Zoning By-law will require significant consideration by the Regional Board, as the application may represent a change in Board policy or direction. However, if the request for a Zoning By-law amendment is consistent with what the Board, through the OCP, has already identified as an appropriate land use, the process may be considerably shortened as an OCP amendment will not be required.

Prospective developers must complete an application form, supplied by the District. It is recommended by Planning staff that prospective developers meet to discuss their proposal before they make an application. There are often issues that can be dealt with prior to making the application.

Submit your application to the District a minimum of two weeks before the application formally enters the approval process, in order to allow staff to identify any issues associated with the proposal. A change to the OCP or Zoning By-law is accomplished by an amendment by-law.

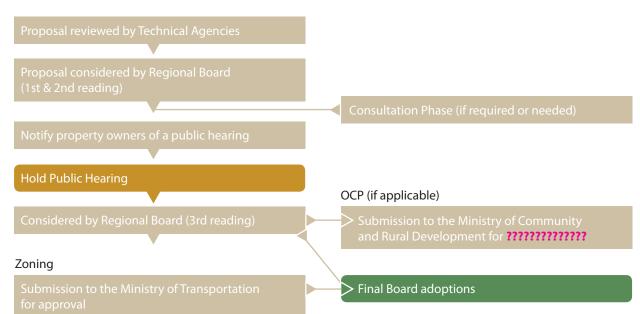
The process is as follows:

- The proposal and amending by-law(s) will be reviewed by outside technical agencies for comment.
- The proposal and amending by-law(s) will then

- be considered by the Regional District Board. If the Board decides that your application should proceed, they will give first and second readings of the by-law to amend the OCP (if required) or Zoning By-law. If the proposal requires an OCP amendment, there may be a need for additional consultation prior to the formal public hearing process.
- The District must hold a public hearing for the by-law, advertising the proposed amendment in the newspaper, notifying surrounding property owners and tenants, and allowing others affected by the amendments to express their views.
- A public hearing is held as soon as the statutory provisions allow, as prescribed under the Local Government Act - typically, about three weeks after the Board has given first and second readings to amend the OCP (if necessary) or Zoning By-law.
- Third reading of the amending by-law(s) follows the public hearing.
- Submission to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for approval of a zoning by-law is required if the proposal is within 800 metres of the Provincial highway.
- Submission to the Ministry of Community and Rural Development is required for some OCP amendment by-laws.
- Final adoption of the amending by-law(s) by the Board.

Due to the requirements for public input, the approval process will take three to four months to complete from the time that you submit a complete application; however, approval is not guaranteed. The Regional Board makes its decisions based on a wide variety of input and policy.

# KEY STEPS - CHANGES TO THE OCP AND ZONING BY-LAW



# **Development Variance Permits**

Development variance permits are usually used to change a regulation in a zoning by-law. These permits cannot change land use or density; however, they can change the minimum distance to build from a property line, or the minimum distance to build from a lake. They can also vary characteristics such as maximum height of a building, or maximum/ minimum size of a building.

Submit your application to the District a minimum of two weeks before the application formally enters the approval process, in order to allow staff to identify any issues associated with the proposal.

# These are the steps in the process:

- Following receipt of your application a staff report with a draft permit is taken to the next Board meeting. A public hearing is held at the Board meeting before a decision is made.
- The Board will consider your application after the public hearing and approve or refuse the permit. Conditions may be applied to the permit based on the results of staff's evaluation and recommendations, the Board's consideration of the permit and public input.

If a development variance permit is issued, it is registered on the property title. Generally a development variance permit application takes four to six weeks to process.



# **KEY STEPS - DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT**

> Final Board Approval/ Refusal

# **Development Permits**

Your land may be located in a Development Permit Area identified in the OCP. Development in these areas may require a separate permit. Development Permit Areas are typically along fish bearing streams, areas of avalanche danger, areas of significant environmental importance and areas where wildfire is a very real danger.

If your land is in a designated Development Permit Area, you will need the Regional District's approval for development given through a development permit. Regional staff have the authority to issue residential permits, while the Regional Board must consider industrial, commercial or subdivision permits.

Prospective developers must complete an application form supplied by the Regional District. Submit your application to the District a minimum of two weeks

before the application formally enters the approval process.

The process is as follows:

 Your application is presented to the Regional District Board, who approve or refuse the permit. Conditions may be applied to the permit, based on the results of staff's evaluation and recommendations and the conditions from the Board.

Development permit applications can be generally processed in approximately four to six weeks.

Development Permits, once issued, are registered on the title of your property.



# EY STEPS - INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL **DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**

# **Temporary Commercial or Industrial Use Permits**

The Regional Board can issue a temporary use permit for commercial or industrial developments that are only going to be needed for a short period of time on land that is not zoned for the proposed land use. A Temporary Use Permit is like a mini-rezoning for a limited time.

Discuss your application with Planning staff prior to making an application. Submit your application to the District a minimum of two weeks before the application formally enters the approval process.

The formal approval process is as follows:

Your application will be reviewed by outside technical agencies for comment.

# Final Board Approval/Refusal

- The Regional District will advertise a public hearing for the proposed permit in the newspaper and to nearby property owners and tenants. Written and verbal comments will be received at the public hearing and recorded.
- Your application and the public hearing minutes will be presented to the Regional Board as a report. They will consider the application either to approve or refuse the permit. Conditions may be applied to the permit based on the results of staffs evaluation and recommendations and the Board's consideration.

Temporary use permit applications can be processed in approximately two months.

# **KEY STEPS - TEMPORARY** COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL **USE PERMIT**

**Hold Public Hearing** 

> Final Board Approval/ Refusal

# **Subdividing Land**

Subdivision of land, either creating one lot or creating a number of lots, is more complex than OCP or Zoning changes. In Electoral Area H, approval of subdivisions is the responsibility of the Provincial Approving Officer who works for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The Regional District works closely with the Ministry for subdivisions, as the Regional District Subdivision Servicing By-law set some of the standards for subdivision.

Prior to making a subdivision application, a developer should discuss the application with both Regional District Planning staff and Ministry staff. Arranging to meet with both agencies at the same time is recommended. Often there are issues that have to be dealt with for one or both of the agencies before the Ministry can approve a subdivision.

The actual subdivision application showing the proposed lot layout is made to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. It is the approving Officer of this Ministry who will ultimately sign the survey plan creating the new lots.

Some of the issues that a subdivision needs to address include:

- Access to the property (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Provision of potable water (Regional District)
- Sewage disposal (Ministry of Health)
- Frontage on public road (Regional District)
- Park dedication (Regional District)
- Geotechnical issues (Regional District and Ministry) of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Lot layout (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Construction of subdivision roads (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- · Registration of covenants (Regional District, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)

Permission to subdivide in the Agriculture Land Reserve (Regional District and Agricultural Land Commission (because of the length of time this application takes if needed, the ALR matters should be taken care of before a subdivision application is made to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure))

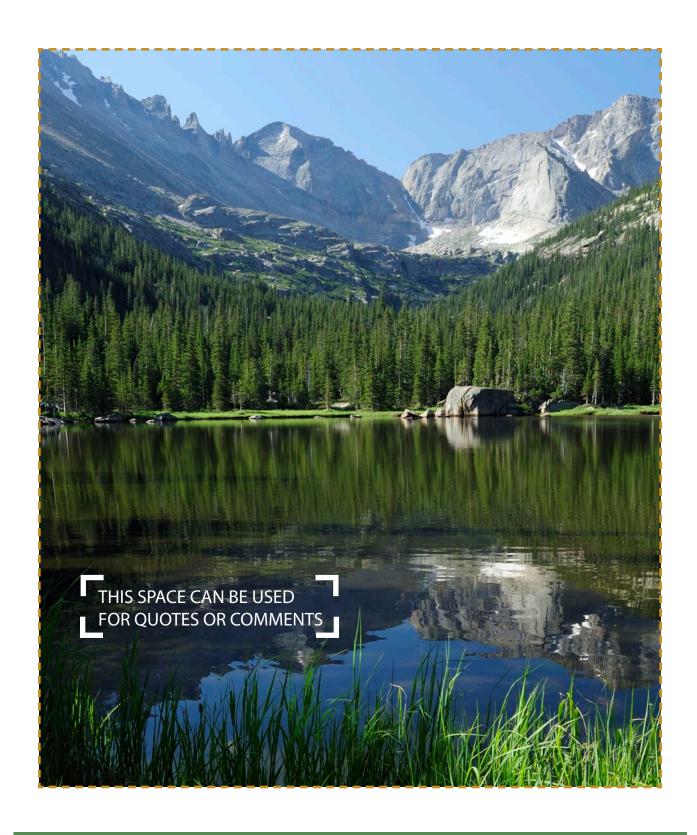
# **Building Inspections**

The Village of Valemount and Regional District issue building permits to ensure that building construction provides for the basic health and safety of homeowners and business owners, pursuant to the BC Building Code. The Building By-law states that a building permit is required for any construction, alteration, repair, move or demolition of a building or structure of more than 10 square metres or a change of occupancy. A building permit is not normally required for routine maintenance and repairs. Repair or replacement of walls, floor and ceiling finishes may not apply.

New residential building permits require structural and mechanical documentation associated with Homeowner Protection Office requirements, and may require letters of assurance for all construction requiring oversight by an engineer or architect. Proof of approved sewage disposal from the Northern Health Authority is required.

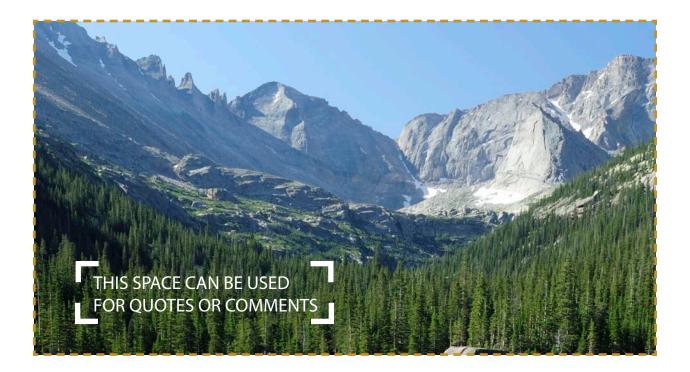
Inspections are conducted at the following stages:

- Footing forms
- Foundation forms
- Foundation prior to backfill
- Rough in plumbing
- Concrete slap prior to pouring
- Framing and above-ground plumbing
- Wood heating unit
- Insulation and vapour barrier
- Final inspection
- Occupancy



# VALEMOUNT, McBRIDE AND ROBSON VALLEY -**CANOE-BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY**

				Residential		Com	Commercial	Ind	Industrial	Inst	Institutional		Total
Year	No. of Permits	Housing Starts	New Con- struction Value (Single Family Dwelling)	Additions Value (Single Family Dwelling)	Total Residential Construction Value	No. of Permits	Construction Value						
2006	٦٢ ا	3006 JE			\$60E 000	n	£1 739 000					30	£1 738 000
2006	25				\$685,000	U	\$1,738,000					30	\$1,738,000
2007	33				\$1,032.000	4	\$791,000			_	\$5,000	38	\$796,000
2008	29				\$513,000	5	\$271,000			ω	\$66,000	37	\$337,000
2009	24				\$1,293,000	9	\$105,000			4	\$227,000	37	\$332,000
Valle	Valley of McBride	Bride											
2006	8	1	\$215,000	\$61,000	\$276,000			1	\$26,000			9	\$302,000
2007	7	ω	\$714,000	\$44,000	\$758,000	5	\$113,000			_	\$8,000	13	\$878,000
2008	7	2	\$363,000	\$172,000	\$535,000	ω	\$693,000					10	\$1,228,000
2009	6	1	\$306,000	\$167,000	\$473,000	3	\$65,000					9	\$538,000
Robs	son Vall	ey-Cano	Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H	rea H									
2006	14	6	\$1,059,500	\$137,000	\$1,196,500	3	\$254,400			3	\$794,000	20	\$2,244,900
2007	17	10	\$2,651,000	\$134,000	\$2,785,000	ω	\$151,000	_	\$125,500			21	\$3,061,000
2008	22	17	\$3,619,000	\$147,000	\$3,766,000	4	\$617,000					26	\$4,383,000
2009	16	9	\$1,335,000	\$368,000	\$1,703,000	2	\$90,000	1	\$500,000	1	\$216,000	20	\$2,509,000
Total													
2006	47	7	\$1,274,500	\$198,000	\$2,157,500	8	\$1,992,400	1	\$26,000	з	\$794,000	59	\$4,284,900
2007	57	13	\$3,365,000	\$178,000	\$4,575,000	12	\$1,055,000	_	\$125,000	2	\$13,000	72	\$4,736,000
2008	58	19	\$3,982,000	\$319,000	\$4,814,000	12	\$1,581,000	0	\$0	ω	\$66,000	73	\$5,948,000
2009	46	10	\$1,641,000	\$536,000	\$3,469,000	14	\$260,000	_	\$500,000	Сī	\$443,000	66	\$3,379,000



# **BUSINESS COSTS**

# **Village of Valemount**

There are construction building permits for residential development projects. The value of the permits fees vary by the framed construction type. Please visit www.valemount.ca online and click on "Permits" for the permit fees.

There are water and sewer system inspection and connection fees. The value of the fee is based on the size of connection. Please visit www.valemount. ca online and click on "Services" for the most recent water and sewer fees.

The Village of Valemount requires business licenses for home occupations, standard businesses, mobile vendors, professionals, contractors, sub-contractors, hairdressers or similar occupations. Please visit www. valemount.ca online and click on "Permits" for the most recent license rates.

# Village of McBride

All businesses in the Village of McBride require business licenses as outlined in By-law 533 and the Village of McBride Business Licence Amendment Bylaw No. 671, 2006.

# **Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H**

There are no development cost charges in Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H.

There are no publicly owned water and sewer systems in Electoral Area H.

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George does not require business licenses.

# PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS

# **Doing Business on Provincial Crown Land**

The Robson Valley Canoe Electoral Area's spectacular terrain can be used for adventure tourism operations. Many of these operations are located on public lands and therefore require permits for use authorized by the provincial government.

Local land use plans guide the appropriateness and scale of these operations, which the province uses as an evaluation tool to determine permit allocations. The Integrated Land Management Bureau is the Provincial Government agency responsible for leading this process and should be the first point of contact if you are considering doing business on public lands.

# **Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve**

Portions of Electoral Area H are within the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Traditionally, the provincial Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) regulates these lands generally with respect to subdivision, land use and removal and placement of fill (including soil and rock). Applications to include or exclude land from the ALR, subdivide land in the ALR or to use land for non-farm purposes must be made through the Regional District Development Services Department.

The formal approval process is as follows:

- If your application is consistent with the OCP, staff will forward the application to the District Board who can make the decision to approve or refuse the application.
- If your application is not consistent with the OCP, it is sent to the ALC for a decision to approve or refuse the application.

Applications that are consistent with the OCP can be processed by the District in approximately two months. Applications that are inconsistent with the OCP can be processed by the ALC in approximately six to eight months.

It is interesting to note that Fraser-Fort George is one of two Regional Districts in British Columbia that has delegated approval authority for ALR subdivision and non-farm use applications. In all other Regional Districts, applications are adjudicated by the Commission.

# **KEY STEPS - DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS** ON PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURE LAND RESERVES

Final District Approval

> Final District Refusal

Final ALC Approval/Refusal



# FIRST STOP INFORMATION SOURCES

# **Regional District of Fraser Fort George**

155 George St. Prince George, BC V2L 1P8 Toll Free (BC) 1-800-667-1959, Tel: 250-960-4400

E-mail: district@rdffg.bc.ca, Website: www.rdffg.bc.ca

# Village of Valemount

P.O. Box 168 735 Cranberry Lake Road Valemount, BC V0E 2Z0 Tel: 250-566-4435

Website: www.valemount.ca

# Village of McBride

100 Robson Centre McBride, BC V0J 2E0 Tel: 250-569-2229 Website: www.mcbride.ca

# **Community Futures Fraser Fort George**

1566 Seventh Avenue Prince George, BC V2L 3P4 Tel: 250-562-9622 E-mail: general@cfdc.bc.ca, Website: www.cfdc.bc.ca

# McBride & District Chamber of Commerce

Mailing Address: Box 2 McBride, BC V0J 2E0 Toll Free (US & Canada): 1-866-569-3366, Tel: 250-569-3366

## Valemount Chamber of Commerce

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 690 Valemount, BC V0E 2Z0 Tel: 250-566-0061

# **Integrated Land Management Bureau**

Toll Free: 1-800-663-7867 Website: www.ilmb.gov.bc.ca

# **Ministry of Community and Rural**

Development, Local Government Department Toll Free: 250 356-6575 Website: www.gov.bc.ca/cd/

# **Ministry of Health Services**

Toll Free: 1-800-465-4911 Website: www.gov.bc.ca/health/

# **Ministry of the Environment**

Tel: 250-387-1161

Website: www.gov.bc.ca/env/

# Northern Health Authority - Northern Interior Health

Services Delivery Area Tel: 250-565-2649 (Prince George) Tel: 250-569-2251 (McBride) Tel: 250-566-9138 (Valemount) Website: www.northernhealth.ca/

