



Official Community Plan and Zoning Amendments in the RDBN

What is Zoning and an Official Community Plan?

What is Zoning?

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) provides planning and development management services to the RDBN's seven Electoral Areas. Zoning is the most important regulation used to manage the development of land and implement the goals and objectives of an Official Community Plan.

The RDBN zoning bylaw is titled "Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Zoning Bylaw No. 700, 1993." This bylaw applies to the entire Regional District and most privately owned land within the RDBN is assigned a specific zoning designation.

The bylaw contains 30 different zones which specify the permitted uses on the land; the density of those uses; and the number, size, and siting of buildings and structures on the land. Zoning also includes regulations regarding subdivision, parking requirements, setbacks from water features, and home based business.

What is an Official Community Plan?

Currently, the RDBN has seven different Official Community Plans (OCP's) which cover most of the privately owned land within the RDBN.

An OCP sets out the community vision for the plan area, and contains statements of goals and objectives identified by the community.

An OCP also contains policies and direction specific to the objectives of the plan. These policies are used to guide decisions on planning and land use management.



What is Rezoning?

Rezoning is the process to amend the zone applied to a specific property. A rezoning application is made to the RDBN by a property owner when they want to use the land for a use that is not permitted in the zone for their property.

When a rezoning application is made the RDBN looks to the policies in the OCP to help evaluate the application to change the use of the land. The application is also reviewed for its potential impact on the immediate area.

All zoning changes must be consistent with the policies in the area's OCP, otherwise an amendment to the OCP is also required. The Regional District Board is the approving authority for all applications.

For information on applicable fees, please see the enclosed application form

The Application Process

An application to amend a zoning bylaw or an Official Community Plan must follow a process that is outlined in the *Local Government Act* and in the Regional District's Development Approval Procedures and Notification Bylaw .

A bylaw amendment must receive three readings and adoption from the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board and a public hearing is required between first and third readings. A bylaw amendment may also require approval from certain provincial agencies. For a summary of the bylaw approval process please see page 4.

The time required to process a zoning and/or OCP amendment varies considerably depending on the scale of the proposed development and the number of issues that need to be addressed. Generally, expect the process to take a minimum of four months.

If a OCP amendment or rezoning bylaw is not adopted within a period of 24 months after the date of first reading the bylaw will expire. A new application is then required to proceed with the amendment that was the subject of the lapsed bylaw.

Step 1 Speak with Planning Department Staff.

Prior to submitting an application, applicants are encouraged to speak with Planning Department staff about the proposed development. Staff can provide information on the application requirements and the review process. This will help ensure that a complete application is submitted and prevent unnecessary delays.

Step 2 Submit a complete application.

To start the rezoning/OCP amendment process, a complete application with the required supporting documents and fees must be submitted to the RDBN.

Step 3 Referrals sent to other Agencies

Once a complete application has been received, it will be sent to other agencies for their comments. Other agencies that may receive a referral include the Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Environment, Agricultural Land Commission and Northern Health Authority. These agencies are requested to provide comments within 21 days.



Step 4 Staff report

Staff review all of the information related to an application, including the comments received from other agencies and prepare a report. The staff report will include a summary of the proposed development, an analysis of the potential impacts, and a recommendation on the proposed bylaw amendment. The staff report also includes a draft bylaw and a list of actions to be undertaken as part of the process.

Step 5 Regional District Board Consideration of First and Second Readings

The staff report and amendment bylaw/s are then sent to the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board for consideration. If the Board gives the bylaw first and second reading the application will proceed to the next step. First and second reading are comparable to the board saying the proposal merits further consideration and should proceed to a public hearing. If the application is denied, the file is closed, a portion of the application fee is refunded, and the application does not proceed to a public hearing.

Step 6 Post a sign

If a bylaw amendment receives first and second reading, the applicant is respon-

sible for posting a sign on the property under application at least 10 days before the public hearing. The sign shall be removed within 3 days of the conclusion of the related public hearing.

The purpose of the notification sign is to advise neighboring and nearby property owners about rezoning applications considered by the Regional District Board. The sign can be rented from the Planning Department or made to specifications by the applicant. The sign has to conform to certain standards regarding size, location, materials etc.

Step 7 Public Hearing

A public hearing is held before the bylaw can proceed to consideration for third reading. A public hearing is scheduled and two notices are placed in consecutive issues of a newspaper. Also, a notice is mailed or delivered to nearby property owners/tenants. The purpose of the public hearing is to allow those who feel their interests are affected by the bylaw to comment on the application.

A report of the public hearing is prepared and submitted to the Regional District Board for consideration.

Step 8 Third Reading

After the public hearing, a staff report along with the report of the public hearing and all written submissions are presented to the RDBN Board for consideration. At this time the Board will consider whether to give the bylaw amendment third reading or to deny the application. The Board may also make minor changes to the bylaw. Substantial changes to the bylaw will require an amended second reading and another public hearing. If the bylaw receives third reading, the applicant will be notified of any actions to be taken prior to fourth reading and adoption of the bylaw. As well, if required, the RDBN will request approval from other agencies prior to adoption.

Step 9 Adoption

Once all of the conditions for approval have been satisfied, the RDBN Board will consider adopting the bylaw.

A Guide to the OCP Amendment & Rezoning Application Process

The following information may be required along with your amendment application when submitted to the Planning Department. The Planning Department can assist you by checking off the information required in order to complete your application. Please note, additional information may be required upon further review of your application.

General Information

- Copy of the Certificate of Title dated within 30 days of the date of the application
- Letter of Authorization signed by all registered property owners if the agent is not the owner
- Application fee
- Completed and signed application form, Contaminated Sites Regulation Questionnaire
- Site plan drawn to a scale showing the following:
 - boundaries and dimensions of parcel
 - size and location of all existing and proposed buildings, structures, and uses on the site including measurements from all proposed and existing structures to the nearest parcel line
 - location and name of road(s) adjacent to the property
 - existing and proposed parking and driveways
 - topographic features, water bodies and waterways including measurements from all proposed and existing structures to the natural boundary, stream centre line or top of bank, whichever is applicable
 - proposed subdivision layout, showing the number and approximate location of lots and/or consolidation of the parcel(s)
 - north arrow and scale
 - Other: _____



Additional Information

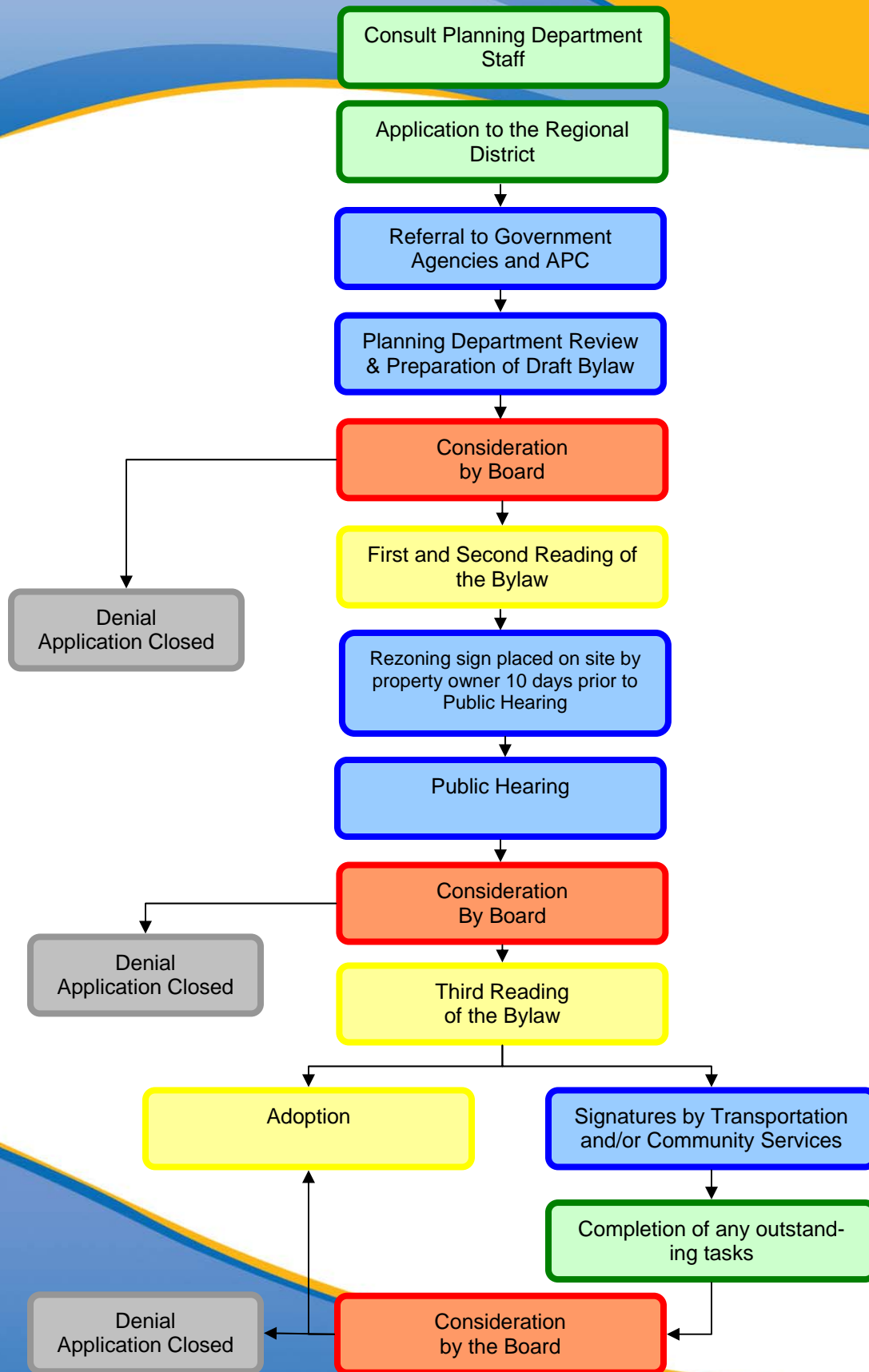
- A detailed plan of building profiles
- Location and details with respect to all existing and proposed signs
- Proposed area under amendment application
- Location of existing and proposed vehicular, cycling, and pedestrian accesses
- Landscaping plan
- A completed site profile pursuant to the Waste Management Act
- Geotechnical report prepared by a qualified engineer
- Location and type of existing and proposed easements and covenants
- A drainage study conducted by a qualified engineer
- A biological assessment conducted by a registered professional biologist
- Location of all known archaeological sites
- Areas where vegetation removal and retention are proposed
- Location of existing and proposed off-street parking, loading spaces, garbage and recycling provisions
- A hydrological assessment conducted by a registered professional hydrologist
- Any fencing, lighting service connections, signs, location of garbage receptacles and space for recycling receptacles; and
- Survey conducted by BCLS identifying: _____
- Agricultural Land Commission approval
- Section 9 permit from the Ministry of Environment
- Copy of sewerage system filing by qualified person to the Northern Health Authority
- Ministry of Transportation access permit
- Other: _____



Re-submission of Applications

If an amendment application is denied by the Board of the RDBN, the same application cannot be submitted within the next year (Board Procedures Bylaw). If substantive changes are made to the initial application, an amended application can be submitted at any time.

The OCP Amendment Rezoning Approval Process



Need More Information?

Come visit the Planning Department! We are located at the RDBN Office at 37 3rd Avenue, Burns Lake, BC. Call us at: (250) 692-3195 or toll free in BC 1-800-320-3339 Fax: (250) 692-3305

Visit our website at: www.rdbn.bc.ca