

## Do you get frustrated by delays, unexpected obstacles and seemingly endless permit costs?

*Village and Regional District staff all-too-often share these moments of frustration with customers around planning-related permits and Building Permits. Here are some suggestions and considerations that may help you get to the answers you need faster and more cost-effectively.*

- 1. Before you purchase property, engage an architect, or invest in any significant improvements, look into the zoning regulations of the property in question.**  
*You may find that your dream plans will require some additional work with the local government in regards to development permits, zoning changes, or compliance with the Official Community Plan. You can find the Zoning, OCP and Development bylaws on our website under Municipal Services, Bylaws.*
- 2. Understand what a legal non-conforming property might mean for you when it comes to zoning regulation.** *Customers sometimes believe that legal non-conforming land uses or “grandfathering” means that they can disregard current zoning regulations and OCP policies. This is not true. The Local Government Act determines what is classified as non-conforming. **Only your existing improvements and uses are grandfathered and even then, the uses are only grandfathered in if they are current. A use that has not been active for six continuous months is no longer considered non-conforming.** You may want to consider informally discussing your plans with the Village Office before submitting an application.*
- 3. Development or zoning variance permits are not always granted.** *While they may often seem like an expensive formality, there will be times when an application will be refused for reasons related directly to existing OCP or zoning bylaw content. The better quality of information you provide staff at the beginning of your process will enable you to be better informed of any possible permitting challenges.*
- 4. Re-zoning can be a significant public process.** *Re-zoning your property is not a matter of filling out a form and sitting back. Staff, Council, and the general public all have a role in reviewing your application and Council makes the final decision. There may not be a permitted use in the bylaw that fits your plans. If your plans require wholesale changes to zoning regulations, you must be prepared to discuss the benefits of your proposals with both Council and the general public. This will require time and effort on your part without a guarantee of success. The process for these applications can take several months to complete and there is no guarantee that your application will be approved.*
- 5. Be cognisant that you are working with two local governments.** *Building regulation services are provided by the Regional District of Central Kootenay. Planning services are provided by the Village of Nakusp. The Village does not direct the RDCK Building Official and the RDCK Development Services Department does not manage or interpret the Village’s planning procedures. Consider requesting joint meetings with the Chief Administrative Officer and Building Official if you feel that clearer feedback is required. Scheduling a meeting with both officials on-site could be beneficial to your project.*
- 6. When subdividing property, consult with the Approving Officer at the earliest stages of your plans.** *Work at an early stage with the Village’s Approving Officer and your own qualified professionals to outline your concept **and** assess what your likely costs will be. Review the Zoning Bylaw and Subdivision Development Services bylaw to ensure your project complies with current legislation. Surveyed drawings and detailed specifications are typically required at an early stage for review and consideration. Depending on the scale and nature of the subdivision, you could be required to undertake a number of commitments at your own expense, like the implementation of infrastructure relating to water and sewer servicing. Larger, more complicated subdivision applications are reviewed by a Consultant, hired by the Village, and fees are paid by the applicant. It is important to be prepared for that and perhaps have some contingency funds budgeted.*
- 7. Past practices, fee schedules and approaches are often amended, repealed or replaced.** *It is the job of local government staff to interpret and apply the bylaws and policies currently in force. As the customer or proponent, staff will offer every assistance in providing up to date bylaws and policies. Make some inquiries before applying.*