

Land Use Planning Myth-Busting

This plan will cause property taxes to rise.

Taxes will not rise if these bylaws are passed. Properties across the whole RDKB already have land use planning services included in their taxes.

I won't be allowed to continue what I'm doing on my property.

A use of a property that is already in place when a zoning bylaw is adopted can continue. These uses are considered to be "grandfathered in" or legally non-conforming.

If that use stops for 6 months and it is not allowed in the zone, it would no longer be considered 'grandfathered'. An amendment can be applied for if the property owner wants to try to have that use included in that zone. This gives the community an opportunity to have a say on whether an activity continues in the area.

I won't be able to start a new business from my property

Home-based businesses are allowed in all zones on privately owned land up to 100m² in floor area. This is the same area allowed for home-based businesses in the ALR. Any landowner can start a home-based business within that amount of space. More space can be allowed through applying for a variance to the zoning bylaw.

This plan will regulate "unsightly premises".

There are no regulations about unsightly premises in the Official Community Plan or Zoning Bylaw. This means that there are no rules in these bylaws saying that a property has to look a certain way. An unsightly premises bylaw could be considered if there were enough interest in it. As it could increase taxation, it would have to go to referendum or an Alternate Approval Process.

This plan will prevent anything new or different from happening.

A zoning amendment can be applied for to change uses in a zone or density. This gives the community an opportunity to have a say on new activities starting in an area.

This plan will ban manufactured homes and tiny homes.

This plan does not ban manufactured homes or tiny homes.

A manufactured home is a single family dwelling and would be permitted wherever a single family dwelling is allowed, which is most zones.

A home on a foundation can be as small as a person wants as long as it meets building code and the building bylaw.

A tiny home on wheels is considered an RV. RVs are allowed to be lived in for 120 days per calendar year.

We already have the ALR, so we don't need planning.

Most of the land in the Plan Area is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) that has its own set of rules and regulations. Applications to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for subdivision and non-farm use are sent to the RDKB for a recommendation; however, without land use planning the Board of Directors have nothing to guide a recommendation. Land use planning can provide that guidance through the objectives and policies that were developed with community input.

This plan was developed by "those people in Trail"

A steering committee, made up of local residents was created in 2015. The committee met regularly with Planning staff to discuss the goals of the community and the policies and regulations to achieve those goals. Staff's role was to present options for the committee to consider. Decisions regarding the content of the Plan were made by consensus.

The exact same plan will be used in the Rock Creek area.

There is no new land use plan happening for the Rock Creek area, nor is it being discussed as something that will occur any time soon. There are other areas waiting for land use planning and this work takes years to accomplish.

If planning were to happen in the Rock Creek area, it would be planning specific to that area, with a steering committee of locals and would include a series of meetings with locals, in the steering committee and at open houses, to hear what they have to say about the plan. It would be a lengthy process, similar to the one for Rural Bridesville.

The land use plan is a done deal and no one is listening

This assumption was made in 2015 as well, when the planning process started. Members of the public assumed at the time that the Board was ready to adopt a plan. Now in 2022, following two public meetings, 21 steering committee meetings and many conversations with individual property owners, a draft plan is being considered by the Board.

An open house and public hearing are scheduled for Wednesday, August 31, 2022. Further input from the public is welcome. We encourage landowners

to reach out to staff to learn more about their properties and to attend the public hearing. The hearing will be presided over by Director Grace McGregor, Vice-Chair of our Board of Directors. Director Gee will also be in attendance.

How does this get decided on?

Following the public hearing, comments from the public hearing will be sent to the RDKB Board of Directors. The Board will decide whether the bylaws need further revisions, or whether they are enacted.

The pros and cons of planning have not been presented.

The people writing this document are Planning staff, so we tend to like planning and see the value in it. We may not be the best people to outline the cons of planning. However, we can outline some of the benefits of planning as we see it and you can decide whether you see their value as well.

Managing density – allows a community to say where and how much a community can grow. Denser population can impact the quantity and quality of drinking water, can change the rural nature of an area and can put greater pressure on wildlife, including their habitat and corridors.

Protecting agricultural land – this plan, if adopted, will maintain large parcel sizes for land in the ALR, limiting the impacts of urbanization on farmland, and the Board will have direction on how to respond to the ALC applications, based upon what local people from the Bridesville area have put in the plan.

Wildfires and evacuations – wildfires are larger and happening more frequently. By limiting the number of people who move into the “wildland interface”, there is a limit on how many people are at risk and need to be evacuated out of there if there is a wildfire.

Forestry – The plan includes policies around how we will respond to forestry referrals, guiding the RDKB on what to tell forestry companies and how we would like them to work the forest and land.

Utilities – the plan provides a predictable approach to development, that can help plan for upgrading or replacement of aging infrastructure.