



Meeting #4 – Land Uses

June 17, 2026

Village of Fruitvale Office – Council Chambers

2:00-4:00pm

Objectives

- Identify key issues and opportunities for review.
- Plan engagement activities to involve the general public.

Agenda

1. Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of respect, truth and reconciliation, we honour and thank the Indigenous Peoples on whose traditional and unceded lands we operate.

2. Adoption of Agenda

3. Adoption of Meeting Notes

4. Data Centres – policy discussion

5. Land Use Designations Mapping Exercise continued

6. Next steps

Materials

Agenda; April 22 Meeting Notes; Meeting materials



Steering Committee Meeting Notes

April 22, 2026

Village of Fruitvale Office – Council Chambers

3:00-5:00pm

Advisory note: *The Steering Committee is an advisory body that provides input to RDKB staff for the Electoral Area A OCP Review. The Committee does not make binding decisions; recommendations and draft materials are subject to further refinement and applicable RDKB processes.*

Steering Committee Members Present: Rob Ironmonger, Lindsay Partridge, Linda Green, Craig Stemmler, Travis Mashford, Fred Buckley, Rick Fillmore, Ali Grieve (Director Area A)

Regrets: Shelley Levick, Kirby Epp

RDKB Staff Present: Liz Moore, Senior Planner

Guests: none

1. Land Acknowledgement

Senior Planner read the land acknowledgement.

2. Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Notes

Agenda and Meeting Notes adoption moved and seconded.

3. Review of Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

- Add in statement around "Collaboration with Beaver Valley communities"
- Watershed protection and sustainability board – starting with Kelly Creek
 - o Policy around sharing information and collaborations with RDCK and Forestry Companies

4. Issues and Opportunities Discussion – Mapping Exercise

Rural Residential 1& 2

- Consider limiting the number of animals, in particular chickens and pigs
- Short term rentals have not come up as a big concern in these areas

- Discussed water systems in both areas and the minimum parcel sizes. Limitations on both systems for adding new connections.
 - o Why are these two areas separated out? There are very few parcels that could be subdivided at 1 ha minimum.
 - o The large parcels have topographic issues.

Agricultural Resource 1 & 2

- Comments around density and challenges with service provision – including Fire and Policing
- Question around Agricultural Resource 1 minimum parcel size. In areas connected to the water system, impression was that it used to be 5 acres. When did it change?
- For land in the ALR - Soil classifications in this area are not always accurate – some parcels have clay-based soils that are challenging to work and grow in.
- Pressures on farmers to run farms are growing – it's expensive to send cows to abattoirs as they are now located far away.
- Many farmers are interested in smaller lots – providing opportunities for younger people and farmers want to give land to their kids.
- Sense that farming is shifting to smaller parcels that are intensively farmed market gardens – Earthly Organics.
- Interest in review of ALR boundaries in the Beaver Valley.
- Steering Committee support reducing the minimum parcel size for subdivision to 5 acres.
 - o Comment from one member that they want to support farmers, but would also like to keep the area rural.

5. Public Outreach and Engagement

Mail-out to all owners in Area A - May

Join the Conversation – website to share information about this project.

Open House – June

Survey – suggestion of providing incentives

6. Next Steps

Next meeting – June 17

Public Outreach and Engagement

Tweaks to engagement schedule

Post cards mail out **in summer**

Post Cards will go to every household letting residents know about the OCP process and directing them to the online engagement page.

Open House – **October**

Phase 1: Understanding	2026	
	January	Steering Committee meeting
	March	Steering Committee meeting
	April	Steering Committee meeting
Phase 2: Listening	June	Steering Committee meeting
	July/ August	Letters to Interested Parties Postcard mail out Launch of online engagement page (Join the Conversation)
	September	<i>September 11 - Local Government election nominations close</i> Steering Committee meeting (may be cancelled for UBCM)
	October	<i>October 17 - Local Government Elections</i> Steering Committee meeting – may be cancelled for Election. Social Media Posts/ads Open House#1
	November	Steering Committee meeting Updates to Online Materials

		Engagement Summary
	December	No meetings
Phase 3: Writing and Refining	2027	
	January	Steering Committee meeting
	February	Steering Committee meeting Social Media Posts/ads Survey Open House #2
	March	Steering Committee meeting Engagement Summary
	April	Steering Committee meeting
	May	Steering Committee meeting Final Engagement Summary
	July/August	No Steering Committee Meetings Online sharing of Engagement Summary and Draft
	September	Steering Committee Meeting Social Media Posts/ads Open House #3
	October/November	Draft OCP to Board of Directors Social Media Posts/ads Public Hearing
Phase 4: Finalizing	January 2028	OCP and Public Hearing Minutes to Board of Directors

Policy Considerations for Data Centres in Official Community Plans

There has been a growing concern amongst the public about the use of lands for the development of AI data centres. An AI data centre, as defined on Wikipedia “is a specialized data centre facility designed for the computationally intensive tasks of training and running inference for artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning models.”ⁱ

Opposition to the development of AI data centres is being seen in jurisdictions across Canada and the United States. Other areas have taken a pro-data centre stance, such as the Province of Alberta, who have released a strategy outlining how their communities are well resourced to accommodate development of AI data centre.ⁱⁱ

Policy Direction in Canada

AI has been identified by the Canadian Federal Government as a major economic driver in coming years. In the recently released Canada’s National Artificial Intelligence Strategy: AI for All, the Federal Government is proposing that AI will be a key part of innovation to improve the lives of people, including through improved medical diagnostics, supporting adaptability in farming, and advancements in manufacturing.ⁱⁱⁱ

They believe Canada is uniquely positioned to build AI infrastructure as: 1) being a cold weather country, there will be lessened power demands for cooling the data centres; 2) Canada’s power grid is largely powered through renewable, low-emission sources, primarily hydro, nuclear, and wind. They say that data centres that rely on renewable and low-emission sources reduce their operating emissions by 90%. These factors support their vision for large-scale sovereign AI data centres being built in Canada. The strategy also speaks to the requirement of doubling the Canada’s electricity grid capacity by 2050 to support the development of AI Data Centres.

Concerns about Data Centres

Concerns being raised by members of the public across many communities are water usage, power usage, heat production and noise.

Data centres use large amounts of power to operate and the processing power required for AI to operate consumes even more power than data centres that store

data. Concerns are being raised about how these power demands will impact the grid at large and other consumers will experience rate increases.

An April 17, 2026 Meritt Herald article discusses how many of the water usage concerns come from the open cycle cooling systems that are used to cool the equipment used in data centres.^{iv} A smaller data centre on an open loop cycle could use up to 26 million litres of water a year.^v A closed loop system can reduce the amount of water used but these systems require more energy to extract the heat.

Public opposition to the development of AI centres also centres around the perception that the wealthy owners of AI companies will largely be the beneficiaries of AI technologies while people in the communities where AI centres are placed will suffer the environmental consequences with few or diminishing economic benefits.

Data Centres in Area A

The Electoral Area A Zoning Bylaw also does not permit data centres or warehouses in any zone. As stated in section 303.1 of the Area A Zoning Bylaw says “All uses not expressly permitted by the Bylaw are prohibited.”

To permit a data centre of any kind in Area A, a zoning amendment application would need to be applied for, which would go to the Board of Directors for approval and a public hearing if the Board supported it.

RDKB Data Centres

In RDKB, Electoral Area C/Christina Lake, there is one zone that permits data warehouses, which is intended to permit the data centre on the parcel. This zone is the Industrial 3 (I3) Zone and it applies to one parcel in Electoral Area C/Christina Lake. It permits the following:

Data Warehouse, provided 70% or more of each side of the building is enclosed with solid siding, while the remainder is enclosed with cooling panels that have acoustic properties;

A Data Warehouse is defined as “a building that is used for electronic storage and processing of information.”

This use was added to a new zone, Industrial 3, following a zoning bylaw amendment application and approval. At the time of this application, the use consisted of Bitcoin mining.

DMG Blockchain Solutions is the company that operates the data centre on this parcel. They have recently promoted how they are working on an agreement to expand their offerings to support AI processing. They recently reported that they

have installed data centre infrastructure to support secure computing for Canada's defence and other branches of government.^{vi}

While the use of the parcel is not considered to have changed, they are subject to other permitting requirements for anything that they build or structures they place on the parcel. This will mean that they need to apply for and meet requirements to obtain development and building permits.

Prior to DMG's data centre beginning to operate, a Fortis electrical substation was installed to accommodate the power demand from the business.

RDKB's Current Approach

RDKB's Board of Directors are advocating to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) to have the Province introduce regulations governing the design and operation of new and existing data centres, "aimed at minimizing and controlling their energy and water consumption to ensure the long-term sustainability of these critical resources and further, that these entities engage communities around the issue of data centres."^{vii}

RDKB's Electoral Area Services committee provided direction "That the Planning and Development Department Draft Work Plan be amended to add amendments to all RDKB Official Community Plans to establish a policy for data warehousing in order to protect against excessive electrical and water consumption, and all RDKB Zoning Bylaws to prohibit data warehousing use in a manner consistent with such policy."^{viii}

Policy direction for Electoral Area A OCP Review

At this stage in the review process, we can draft policies to be included in the Electoral Area A OCP when it is adopted. The policy will be included in the OCP public consultation to gain insights into residents' thoughts on data centres and what sorts of mitigations should be considered for Area A.

A draft policy to be considered in the OCP can be a requirement for a zoning bylaw amendment that outlines a set of standards to address typical concerns that arise with AI data centres and how they will be mitigated by the proposed project, including, but not limited to:

- a. Water usage and impact of regional water availability;
- b. Power usage and potential impacts to the grid infrastructure and service rates; and
- c. Noise mitigation.

A policy could also take the form of recommending a complete prohibition of data centres in Electoral Area A, which would then be included in the Zoning Bylaw.

i https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AI_data_center

ii <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/f6fe5816-12ac-4ba6-805c-d0a0dd5aebf9/resource/26d62103-ff38-4310-a98f-ab4595a4af74/download/ti-albertas-ai-data-centre-strategy.pdf>

iii https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/canadas-national-artificial-intelligence-strategy-ai-all#_Toc75

iv <https://www.merrittherald.com/concerns-raised-over-merritt-ai-centre-water-usage/>

v <https://journal.uptimeinstitute.com/dont-ignore-water-consumption/>

vi <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2026/04/06/3268646/0/en/DMG-Blockchain-Solutions-Receives-2-MW-of-SCIF-Rated-Prefabricated-Data-Center-Units-at-Its-Christina-Lake-Data-CenterPower-March-Preliminary-Operational-Results.html>

vii **May 27, 2026 RDKB Board of Directors Minutes –**
<https://rdkb.civicweb.net/filepro/document/206788/Board%20of%20Directors%20-%2027%20May%202026%20-%20Minutes.pdf>

viii **Nov. 13, 2025 EAS Committee minutes:**
<https://rdkb.civicweb.net/filepro/document/199307/Electoral%20Area%20Services%20Committee%20-%2013%20Nov%202025%20-%20Minutes.pdf>