



## STAFF REPORT

To: Electoral Area Services Committee

Date: 2025-02-13

From: David Bennett, Planner II

File No. 3360-23-2024-02

**Subject: Major Official Community Plan and Zoning Amendments to facilitate the redevelopment of 52285 52375 52425 52445 Yale Road, Area D, into a residential subdivision with commercial and multifamily land uses**

**Reviewed by:** Katelyn Hipwell, Manager of Planning  
Graham Daneluz, Director of Planning & Development  
Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer

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### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** the Fraser Valley Regional District Board direct staff to host a public information meeting to present and review the redevelopment proposal for 52285, 52375, 52425, 52445 Yale Road, Electoral Area D prior to consideration of any readings of *Fraser Valley Regional District Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1767, 2025* and *Fraser Valley Regional District Zoning Bylaw No. 1766, 2025*, in accordance with Section 4.6 of the *Fraser Valley Regional District Development Procedures Bylaw No. 1377, 2016*.

### BACKGROUND

The purpose of *Fraser Valley Regional District Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1767, 2025 (Bylaw 1767)* and *Fraser Valley Regional District Zoning Bylaw No. 1766, 2025 (Bylaw 1766)* is to facilitate the redevelopment of 52285 52375 52425 52445 Yale Road, Area D, into a residential subdivision with commercial, multifamily and single family homes (with suites) land uses.

The proposed development is 265 dwelling units and approximately 1.6ha (4 acres) of outdoor RV and container storage.

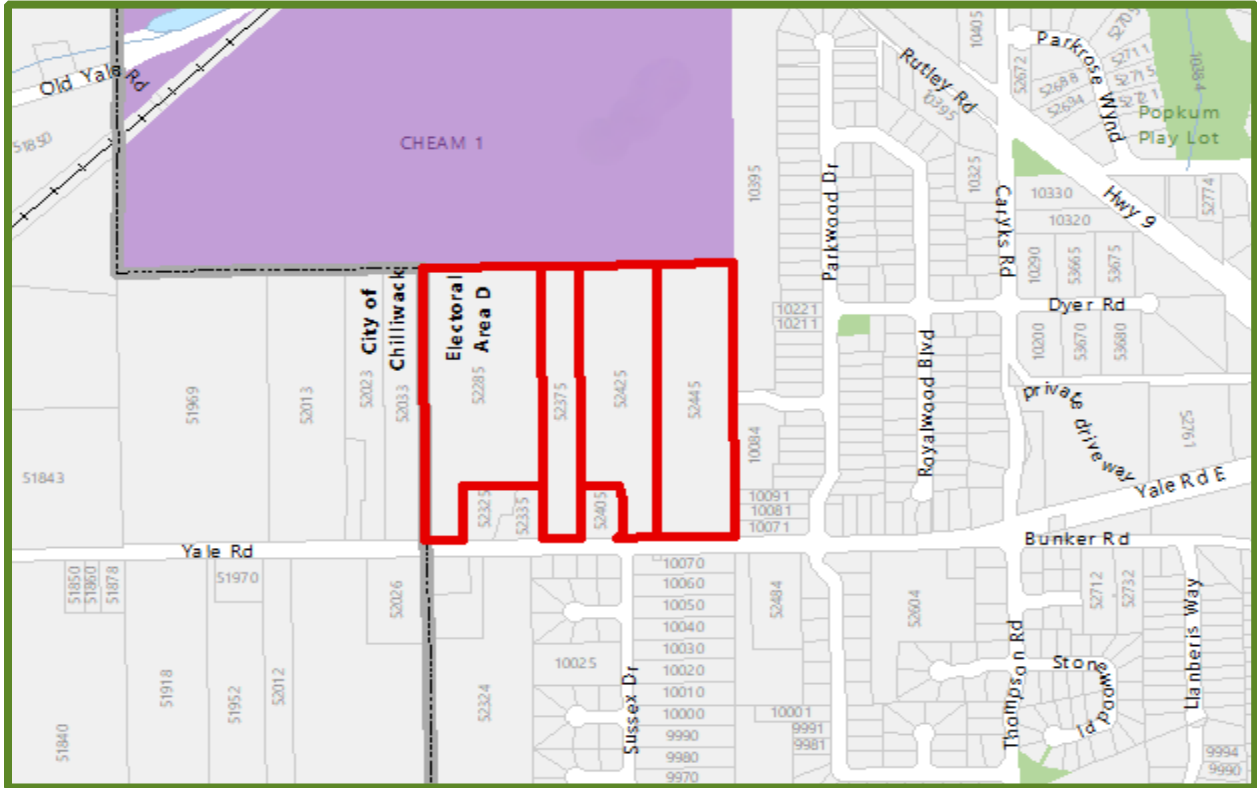
**Proposed Densities** – 83 residential lots with secondary units (166 Units)  
99 Townhouse Units  
1.6ha (4 acres) of RV and container storage

To serve the development at this density, the developer is proposing a new Community Sanitary Sewer System consisting of a wastewater treatment plant and wastewater disposal fields on the lands within the BC Hydro Right-of-Way. The proposed Community Sanitary Sewer System would be owned and operated by the FVRD.

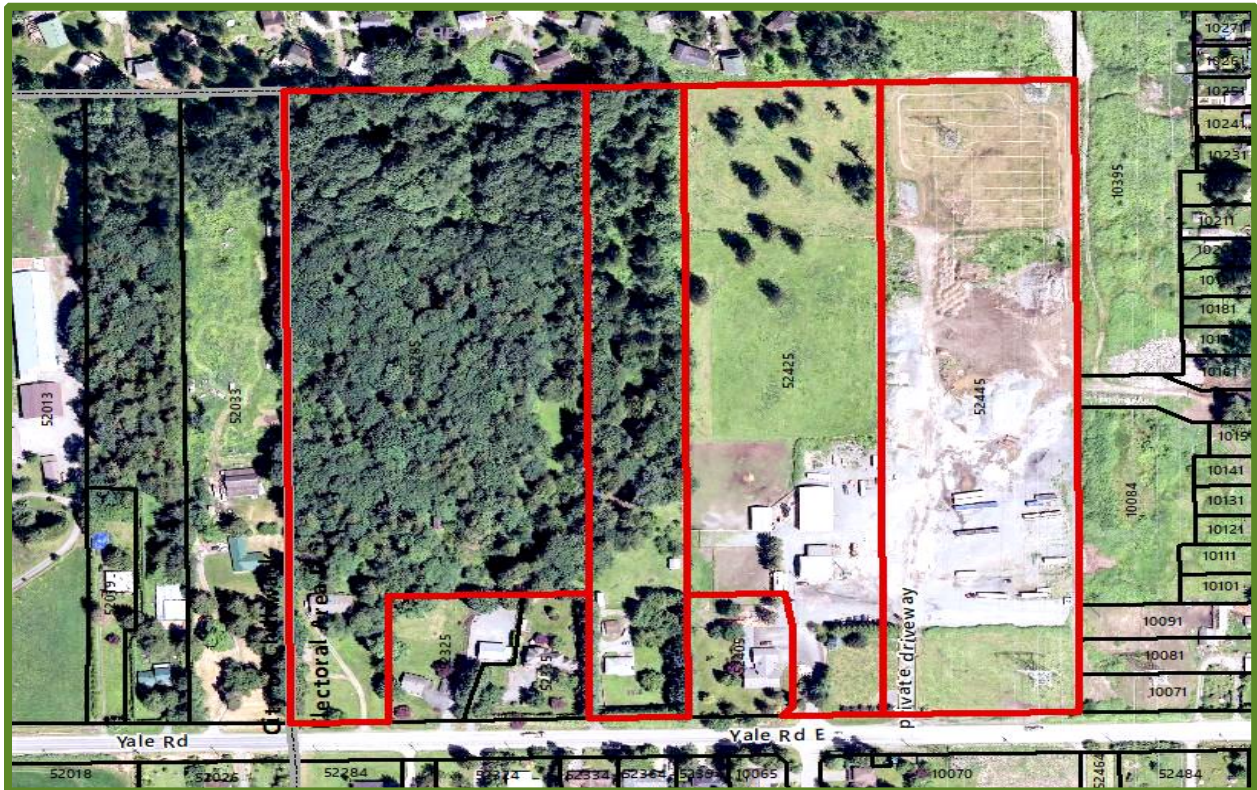
PROPERTY DETAILS			
<b>Address</b>	52285, 52375, 52425 and 52445 Yale Road	<b>Area</b>	D
<b>PID</b>	005-817-358, 008-783-357, 009-522-395, 009-522-379	<b>Owner</b>	Norah Properties Land Corporation
<b>Folio</b>	733.06640.500 733.06640.100 733.06638.000 733.06637.000	<b>Agent</b>	Precision Building Design
<b>Lot Size</b>	15.1 hectares (total)		
<b>Current Zoning</b>	Rural Residential 1 (RR-1)	<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	New zone
<b>Current OCP</b>	Suburban Residential (SR)	<b>Proposed OCP</b>	New designation
<b>Current Use</b>	Residential & Commercial	<b>Proposed Use</b>	Residential
<b>Development Permit Areas</b>	5-D Riparian Areas		
<b>Agricultural Land Reserve</b>	No		

ADJACENT ZONING & LAND USES		
<b>North</b>	^	Cheam 1 Reserve; residential
<b>East</b>	>	Suburban Residential 2 (SBR-2); BC Hydro corridor, residential.
<b>West</b>	<	City of Chilliwack; Agricultural
<b>South</b>	v	Suburban Residential 2 (SBR-2); Yale Rd., residential

# NEIGHBOURHOOD MAP



# PROPERTY MAP



DISCUSSION

Existing Residential Development in Popkum

High-quality, master-planned, in-fill residential subdivisions that are connected to the existing community and serviced by financially viable community infrastructure are generally accepted in Popkum. This aligns with the FVRD’s general approach to development and servicing in the area. Popkum offers relatively large lots, high-quality homes, access to outdoor recreation, and proximity to urban areas with schools, employment opportunities, and highway access. These attributes make Popkum a desirable neighbourhood for those seeking a more suburban and rural lifestyle.

Most existing lots in Popkum are served by the FVRD community water system with independent on-site sewage disposal (septic systems). The recent construction of the FVRD’s community waste water treatment plant at the former Minter Gardens site, led to the Official Community Plan supporting fully serviced 800m² lots that accommodate single-family homes with secondary suites. Without connection to a community sanitary service, minimum residential lot sizes cannot be less than 2000m² (Fraser Valley Regional District Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 1319, 2015).

Official Community Plan

The proposed development is located in West Popkum and is within the Suburban Residential designation of the Official Community Plan for Electoral Area D. The Suburban Residential designation recognizes that West Popkum is an area that can accommodate future residential growth. The designation supports the infilling of West Popkum residential areas because the lands are generally free from geotechnical and flooding constraints, serviced by community water, have access to community sewer or on-site septic, and are outside of the agricultural land reserve and environmentally sensitive areas.

Electoral Area Growth

Growth in Electoral Area D reflects development pressures in Chilliwack and the limited availability of low-density housing in the municipality. As land scarcity and housing demand increase, new low-density development is no longer commonplace in adjacent municipal areas, with townhomes and small lot residential becoming predominant. Consequently, demand for smaller lot developments is increasing in Popkum as is interest in developing attached multi-family units.

Electoral Area D Housing Needs

The 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report identifies the number of housing units required to meet current and anticipated housing needs for the next five and twenty years, as shown in the table below. The proposed development would supply Electoral Area D with more than enough new homes to meet Electoral Area D’s housing needs for the next five years.

Households (2021 Census)	5-Year Need	20-Year Need
712	+ 162	+ 550

## Development Concept

The proposed development introduces new housing types and densities in the Regional District in the form of townhomes and row homes. This represents a departure from the traditional 800m<sup>2</sup> and 1100m<sup>2</sup> lot sizes found throughout the neighbourhood. The concept includes a variety of single-family home lot sizes, ranging from 400m<sup>2</sup> to 1000m<sup>2</sup>. By placing the single-family lots on the outer edges of the project site and situating townhomes and row homes towards the centre, this layout offers a gentle transition between the existing community and the higher density built form.

## Community Feedback

**Early and ongoing consultation with area residents is important to understand the neighbourhood's level of acceptance for this new type of housing proposed for West Popkum.** It is recommended that the application proceed to an FVRD **Public Information Meeting prior to the FVRD Board's** consideration of any readings. The purpose of the meeting is to present the proposal and information submitted with the application, discuss specific details with the neighbourhood, and outline the application review process. This meeting will also provide an opportunity for FVRD Board members to **attend and hear residents' initial feedback directly.** **Public engagement is often iterative and responsive to community concerns and comments.** The developer will be invited to attend this meeting to answer questions directed to them about their proposal.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Indigenous Relations
2. Engineering
3. Parks and Trees
4. Financial Viability
5. Fraser Valley Future 2050 (Regional Growth Strategy)
6. Neighbourhood Consultation

### 1. INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

The proposed development is located in an area of high archaeological potential and borders on Cheam 1 - Cheam First Nation. The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) recognizes and respects the autonomy and self-governance of local Indigenous organizations as they work to strengthen their communities and their visions for the future. The FVRD is committed to a collaborative, government-to-government relationship with Indigenous communities, built around the principles of UNDRIP.

## Cheam First Nation

### Community Sanitary Sewer System

The viability of the proposal is dependent on the construction of a new community sanitary sewer system. This system should be designed and constructed with the ability to add additional capacity to serve the surrounding community, including Cheam First Nation. The FVRD is committed to working with Cheam First Nation to explore opportunities to provide sanitary service to Cheam 1 – Cheam First Nation. In January 2025, FVRD staff initiated early consultation with Cheam First Nation staff to understand **Cheam's** sanitary needs and preferred servicing direction. Cheam First Nation is interested in participating in the sanitary sewer service and indicated a preference to coordinate servicing conversations through the FVRD rather than directly through the developer. Prior to consideration of any readings of the amending bylaw applications, the feasibility of partnerships between the developer, the FVRD, and Cheam First Nation should be fully explored. The FVRD Board should give direction on the community sanitary servicing strategy.

### Place Naming and Cultural References

**It is OCP policy to incorporate Halq'eméylem language and Indigenous Peoples identity in place naming and interpretive signage.** This may be achieved by coordinating with Cheam First Nation to receive input on place naming and incorporation of place-based cultural references.

### Trail Network and Community Connections

There is an existing informal trail network under the BC Hydro right-of-way that connects Cheam First Nation to Yale Road. The development proposal presents an opportunity to formalize this trail network and improve community connections. This would improve **Cheam residents' access to the various services and amenities in Electoral Area D including commercial stores and transit stops.**

### Reserve Boundary

The development site is located immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of Cheam 1 (Cheam First Nation). The developer is proposing to construct a concrete wall to delineate the site boundary next to Cheam 1. The wall would prevent future encroachment onto Cheam lands from adjacent residential uses. Further discussion with Cheam First Nation to confirm the most appropriate interface between the development site and Cheam 1 will be required.

## Engagement Plan

If the application proceeds, the FVRD will engage with Cheam First Nation and prepare an Indigenous communities engagement plan for endorsement by the Board.

## 2. ENGINEERING

### Community Sanitary Sewer

The viability of the proposal is dependent upon the construction of a new community sanitary sewer system. OCP Section 7.4 Sewage Disposal supports the creation of a new Sanitary Sewer Servicing Node in West Popkum recognizing the demand for smaller lot developments.

To ensure a high-quality waste water treatment standard, operational efficiency and oversight, the sewer system must **be publicly owned and operated to a Class "A" standard. Development of any new community sanitary sewer system is a significant infrastructure project.** New systems require community support, partnership with Indigenous communities, and co-ordination with land developers. Establishing a new sewer system will be a multi-year process. In the meantime, ensuring higher density development proceeds with a plan for sanitary service is an objective of the OCP. Plan policies only support increased density-suburban residential growth in areas with a publicly owned sanitary sewer system.

### Stormwater

At this time, the proposal does not address storm water management. A coordinated lot grading plan and stormwater management plan will be required. Any proposal for the use of Ministry road ditches or downstream ditching in the City of Chilliwack to convey storm water will require prior approvals. Consultation with the City and Ministry is required.

### Access and Roads

One of the key issues considered by the subdivision approving authority (the Ministry of Transportation and Transit) is the provision of access to new lots and the layout of road networks. FVRD staff initiated early consultation with Ministry staff and reviewed the conceptual layout. Additional information will be required to determine if the conceptual road layout and access to Yale Road are acceptable. The Ministry indicated that a Traffic Impact Assessment will be required. The terms of reference for this assessment/study will be determined by the Ministry.

It is Official Community Plan policy that upgrades to Yale Road should include expanded road shoulders which provide suitable and safe designated paths for pedestrian, cycling uses and in agricultural areas for horse riding. A pedestrian movement analysis prepared by a qualified professional to ensure safe and connected pedestrian routes will be required.

It is Official Community Plan policy that bus shelter enhancements for BC Transit riders should be provided in a safe and convenient location in Popkum and that BC Transit should explore opportunities for a shared bus shelter location in consultation with School District Number 33. The FVRD will consult with both BC Transit and the School District on these policies to determine any on-site or off-site amenities that this development proposal can support or enhance.

The connectivity policies of the OCP support the proposed east-west access road from the development site through to Parkwood Drive. The developer will be responsible for the construction and dedication of this Road.

### 3. PARKS AND TREES

The developer's proposal for the provision of public Park includes dedicating lands under the BC Hydro right-of-way as Park, the provision of Park in location(s) that are unencumbered by utility right-of-ways as well as providing public linear trails and pathway features throughout the development. The location, ownership, operation and maintenance of the proposed linear park pathways throughout the development requires further review and consideration. The development would also add new sidewalks and street trees.

The OCP's policies on Environment and Resources support tree retention and preservation. It is OCP policy to retain as much of the natural vegetation cover as possible and prioritize tree retention when preparing land for housing, or other forms of development. The site plan submitted with the application does not retain any existing vegetation. The developer's intention to completely clear the site has not been supported by technical reporting and requires detailed review. This means that the developer's lot grading, stormwater management, road layout, proposed building sites and civil works must be coordinated with an arborist to support the OCP's policies for tree protection and retention. Until that work is done, it remains unclear how much of the existing natural vegetation can be retained, if any.

### 4. FINANCIAL IMPACTS

A critical information gap is the absence of a servicing and financial feasibility study to understand how the proposed development will impact existing ratepayers and what the service costs will be for new residents.

A Servicing Feasibility Study is necessary to identify servicing needs, including:

- all site services that would be the responsibility of FVRD to maintain and replace
- off-site service needs including fire protection, parks/trails, solid waste, transit, etc.
- Determine all capacity and infrastructure improvements that will be needed to support the development and its residents
- identify thresholds or triggers for the additional capacity or infrastructure (i.e. when it is needed)
- Estimate capital and long-term operation, maintenance and capital replacement costs
- Determine the impact of service demands on existing taxpayers
- Develop a strategy for funding new infrastructure and service expansion that considers:
  - 'Developer pay' principle that costs for new infrastructure and service needs associated with the development be paid by the developer



- Consider the overall sustainability and affordability of service expansion and new infrastructure for both FVRD and taxpayers
- Perform a sensitivity analysis, particularly with respect to break-even timelines, market absorption of dwelling units and rate stabilization.

Undertaking a Servicing Feasibility Study for various services will require discussion with external consultants, FVRD Engineering, Planning, Fire Services, and Parks staff, Cheam First Nation and others. This work would be undertaken by the FVRD after consideration of First Reading.

## 5. FRASER VALLEY FUTURE 2050 (Regional Growth Strategy)

Preliminary comments on the consistency of the applications with the FVRD's Regional Growth Strategy are attached in the report dated January 17, 2025 (Appendix A). The proposed development in Popkum's Electoral Area D aims to introduce 265 new dwelling units, potentially adding approximately 663 residents. This growth aligns with the Fraser Valley Regional District's (FVRD) goals of increasing housing supply, diversity, and affordability. Key considerations include integrating public transit infrastructure, managing increased traffic, and adopting sustainable building practices. The report also identifies opportunities to amend the Official Community Plan (OCP) to better align with regional growth strategies.

## 6. NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSULTATION

The developer has not undertaken community consultation prior to making their applications. OCP policy 6.1.1 states that rezoning applications to facilitate subdivision of new residential parcels should complete early and ongoing neighbourhood consultation to address the following:

- Share proposal information, including comprehensive design drawings to illustrate building form and character, lot layout, overall development concept, and how the design will satisfy the Design Guidelines for West Popkum Residential Development;
- Coordinate with Cheam First Nation for large scale development proposals to receive input on place naming and incorporation of place based cultural references;
- Obtain feedback;
- Respond to community concerns; and,
- Ensure ongoing community communication, including the posting of signage to advise of developer contact information.

In 2022, an application to rezone 52425 Yale Road was proposed. That application was only for 33-800m<sup>2</sup> lots with a new community sewer system. The developer held one (1) open house and received limited feedback. It is possible that the muted community response to that proposal was due, in part, to the fact that the developer was proposing to use the SBR-3 zone and maintain the larger 800m<sup>2</sup> lot sizes. As noted in the OCP, residents in Popkum prioritize the following community values:

- Maintaining high-quality suburban residential character,
- Continuing policies for large lot sizes (800 m<sup>2</sup> to 1100 m<sup>2</sup>),

- Ensuring trail connections for active lifestyles and local service access,
- Preserving trees and natural vegetation,
- Designing new developments that respect the scale and privacy of established homes,
- **Integrating Halq'éméylem language** and Indigenous Peoples identity in place naming and signage, and
- Mitigating highway noise through thoughtful lot layout, berms, landscaping, and building design elements like triple-pane windows and soundproofed walls.

The proposal today now includes 400m<sup>2</sup> lots, townhomes and row homes and commercial outdoor storage uses. This level of density and these housing types have not been fully discussed in a community forum, and it is unknown how the proposal will be received by the neighbourhood.

Proposed Bylaw No. 1767 is an Official Community Plan amendment. In accordance with Section 475 of the Local Government Act, the FVRD must:

- (a) consider whether the opportunities for consultation with one or more of the persons, organizations and authorities should be early and ongoing, and
- (b) specifically consider whether consultation is required with the following:
  - (i) the board of the regional district in which the area covered by the plan is located, in the case of a municipal official community plan;
  - (ii) the board of any regional district that is adjacent to the area covered by the plan;
  - (iii) the council of any municipality that is adjacent to the area covered by the plan;
  - (iv) first nations;
  - (v) boards of education, greater boards and improvement district boards;
  - (vi) the Provincial and federal governments and their agencies.

Consultation under this section is in addition to the public hearing required under section 477 (3) (c).

Should the applications proceed to First Reading, FVRD staff will develop a consultation strategy and undertake early and ongoing consultation in accordance with the Act.

## **PATH FORWARD**

### **Working towards consideration of First Reading**

This application is in the initial review stage. This section outlines a roadmap for moving the development application through the necessary stages of consultation, review, and approval towards consideration of First Reading. It emphasizes the importance of community engagement, thorough analysis, and collaborative efforts between the developer, the FVRD, Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders. The path forward must include thorough consultation and technical reporting to build consensus and address concerns. Without meaningful engagement public confidence in FVRD processes is likely to degrade. Our experience is that an iterative process that builds on each consultation event leads to better overall outcomes, less conflict, and greater trust in the development approval process.

#### **1. Public Information Meeting (PIM) and External Referrals**

The first step involves the FVRD hosting a Public Information Meeting (PIM) to present the development proposal to the community. This meeting should be advertised well in advance, with notices delivered to area residents west of Highway 9 and timed to avoid Spring Break and therefore could be scheduled in early April 2025. This meeting will provide residents with an opportunity to learn about the project details, ask questions, and express their views. Invitations will be extended to area residents, Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders. Additionally, referrals will be sent to external agencies, including the Ministry of Transportation and Transit, the City of Chilliwack, Cheam First Nation, Chilliwack School District, BC Transit, the Agricultural Land Commission and other relevant bodies to gather their input on the proposal.

#### **2. Initial Feedback Review and OCP Policy Review**

Comments and feedback obtained from the public and external agencies will be compiled. Feedback on aspects such as density, housing types, traffic impacts, environmental considerations, and infrastructure needs will help determine how the application proceeds. The developer will be directed to prepare a summary of what they heard and how their application will address concerns and comments. Following the PIM, FVRD staff will prepare a summary report of the PIM for the FVRD Board. FVRD staff will then undertake a comprehensive review of the Official Community Plan (OCP) and applicable FVRD bylaws to analyze the proposal's alignment with existing policies and bylaws. A spreadsheet will be prepared to document how the proposal meets or deviates from the OCP and when certain technical reports will be required.

#### **3. Applicant Review and Response**

The applicant will receive the compiled public comments and referral reviews. They will be tasked with reviewing the feedback and providing responses to the concerns raised. This may involve revising the development proposal to address specific issues, such as modifying the site layout, adjusting densities, or enhancing community amenities. The applicant's commitment to responding to community input is essential for moving the project forward.

#### **4. New Public Information Meeting for New Information**

If significant changes are made to the proposal or if there are unresolved issues, a second Public Information Meeting may be required by the FVRD Board. This meeting will present updated information to the community, ensuring transparency and providing residents with another opportunity to engage with the proposal. It will help to clarify any modifications and gather additional feedback on the revised plans.

#### **5. Consideration of First Reading**

With the applicant's revisions and responses in place, the proposal will proceed to the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) Board for consideration of First Reading. The Board will review the application, the summary reports on feedback received, and assess whether the proposal aligns with regional objectives and community interests. Approval at this stage allows the application to advance to more detailed analysis.

#### **6. Detailed Technical Reports**

Upon receiving First Reading, the applicant will be required to submit detailed technical reports. These reports may include:

- Servicing Feasibility Study: To understand the impact on existing ratepayers, the costs for new residents, and strategies for funding new infrastructure and service expansion.
- Traffic Impact Assessment: To evaluate the effects on local traffic patterns and identify necessary road network improvements.
- Stormwater Management Plan: To address stormwater runoff and outline sustainable management practices.
- Environmental Assessments: To assess potential impacts on natural habitats, vegetation, and wildlife.
- Archaeological Assessments: Given the high archaeological potential of the area, studies will ensure protection of cultural heritage resources.
- These technical reports will provide in-depth information to support the proposal and address any outstanding technical concerns.

Please note that:

- This path forward is not comprehensive. It is intended as a high-level summary outlining broad steps and key actions.
- Steps are not intended to be strictly discrete and sequential. There will be opportunities for steps, or parts thereof, to proceed concurrently.
- Steps can, and most likely will, be adjusted as the work progresses.

## **COST**

Development application fees: Major OCP Amendment and zoning amendment           \$215,625.00  
PAID by the applicant.

The proposed development would add new FVRD-owned and operated infrastructure, including water lines, sewer, sidewalk, linear park, storm sewer, street lights, and street trees and require new service areas.

## **CONCLUSION**

This report identifies key considerations for the FVRD Board and recommends hosting a public information meeting prior to any readings of the bylaws. Following this meeting, a detailed assessment of the proposal, along with the public information meeting summary, will be presented at a future FVRD Board meeting.