

Galloway Lands Development Proposal Information on RDEK Meetings January 13th and 14th

The Galloway Lands Development Proposal is scheduled for first review and approval for rezoning at the RDEK Planning and Development Services Commission (PDSC) meeting on **Thursday, January 13, beginning at 1:00 pm**. Numerous delegations with concerns about the Proposal are presenting at this meeting, including Fernie Snow Valley Community Association, Elk River Alliance, WildSight and several concerned citizens. If the proposal is approved at the PDSC meeting, it will move to the RDEK Board meeting on Friday, January 14 for 1st and 2nd readings, and then to a public hearing later in January.

The PDSC meeting (via Zoom) is open to all public to view and listen and **we encourage everyone to attend and listen to the relevant portions**. The Galloway Proposal presentation and delegation presentations will begin at approximately 1:15pm, and the Board discussion of the Proposal will begin at approximately 3:30 pm (stay tuned to the Rethink Galloway Facebook Page on Thursday for real-time updates). **Zoom link details will be provided on Wednesday.**

In the package to the RDEK Board, its staff are recommending approval of rezoning despite the following concerns highlighted by affected agencies. You will note that these comments support our recommendation to **RETHINK GALLOWAY, and postpone the approval process until fulsome, independent impact studies have been completed.**

- Interior Health: Recommend **not approving**, pointing out **lack of diversified housing** and major concerns with **water and wastewater management**.
- City of Fernie: Recommend **not approving** due to **inconsistencies with the OCP** and **lack of fire suppression** and noted that “large lots with much infrastructure will continue the practice of **habitat destruction for the benefit of the very few**”.
- RCR: Generally supportive but request a **hydrological study** with respect to impacts on FAR drinking water as well as a **traffic impact study**.
- Forests, Lands, Natural Resources: Notes that the scale of development will result in a **large loss of wildlife habitat** and suggests a **Qualified Professional** do a full assessment.
- Transportation: Restrict development until a **traffic impact assessment** is complete, additional work required to expand on preliminary TIA results.
- BC Parks: Noted that **Mt. Fernie Park has the potential to become increasingly isolated as a habitat “island”**. The park will also experience additional conservation and recreation pressures. BC Parks recommends that services of a **Qualified Professional** be retained to assess and mitigate impacts of the proposed development.
- In addition to the concerns raised by these agencies, this development does not address any of the key findings identified in the **RDEK Housing Needs Report** published just a few weeks ago.

Our elected officials deserve to have complete and detailed information prior to making this major land-use decision that will have generational financial, social, and environmental impacts on our community.

Thanks to everyone for staying engaged! Let's keep the momentum going to RETHINK GALLOWAY! <https://www.rethinkgalloway.com/sign-petition>

Sincerely,
The Rethink Team

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The agenda, Proposal application (Bylaw 3102, 3013) and referring agency reports (groups asked to provide input) can be found here:

<https://pub-rdek.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=13792>

Specific excerpts of the referral input are highlighted below.

Transportation and Infrastructure (pg 91)

As a condition of approval under s.52(3)(a) of the Transportation Act, the Ministry requires the developer to register a covenant on the subject lands that restricts development until a traffic impact assessment is completed, accepted and the recommendations of the report are implemented. Prior to registration of the covenant, the Ministry must approve the proposed language to be used. The Ministry will not provide preliminary approval for the rezoning until a suitably worded covenant is provided. (The Ministry reviewed the TIA report provided and has stated that additional work is required).

Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations (Environment) (pg 92)

"The scale of development will result in a large loss of wildlife habitat. Recommend a Qualified Professional assess the area and develop a mitigation plan which includes retention of wildlife values prior to any development. The area has high wildlife values; property fencing should be wildlife friendly."

Interior Health (pg 104)

"...we recommend not approving the OCP and Zoning amendments to allow 75 rural residential parcels restricted to single family dwellings serviced by onsite drinking water and wastewater systems. The main reason being that it does not contribute to the identified housing needs of the community. We suggest this development offers an opportunity to supply the community with more diverse housing forms and tenure types, especially if community drinking water and/or wastewater infrastructure were also proposed. If the OCP and Zoning amendments are approved then we offered considerations and recommendations for supporting the community and future residents as best as possible."

"Health research and our experience indicates that larger community water systems, in particular those owned and operated by local governments, are best able to provide consistently good quality drinking water. We assume it would be similar for community wastewater systems too. The main reason is the governance structure of larger organizations with higher capacity for asset management, ongoing maintenance and operator knowledge. Although, the decision making for a private individual water systems is simple, **property owners**

rarely have the depth of knowledge or interest to ensure their drinking water and wastewater systems are adequately treated and maintained."

City of Fernie (pg 109)

"City of Fernie Staff is not in favour of the proposed bylaw amendments."

"The kind of development proposed in Bylaws 3102 & 3103 is not sustainable considering that density is an important goal of the City. Large lots with much infrastructure will continue the practice of habitat destruction for the benefit of the very few at a time where communities need to infill rather than spread out. These large lots are along a mountainside requiring expensive infrastructure that is difficult to maintain. The City is concerned that such nearby developments may become a part of our municipality over the long term and perpetuate the problems we already have here."

"Servicing 75 properties with no water supply for fire suppression. This would mean Fire and Emergency Services would need to shuttle water to emergency scene from hydrant (Boomerang way) on ski hill."

RCR (pg 113)

Resorts of the Canadian Rockies: Generally supportive if specific concerns are addressed: 1) a hydrology study should be completed to ensure no negative impacts to the resort's community water sources and the study should include possible effects of septic field outflows, and 2) traffic impact assessment which considers that the resort has a single access and also that future development at the resort should not be impacted by the proposed vehicle access to the development

BC Parks (pg 115)

"If this development is approved as proposed, Mt. Fernie Park, which already has significant residential development on its eastern side, has the potential to become increasingly isolated as a habitat "island". It will also experience additional conservation and recreation pressures."

"BC Parks recommends that services of a Qualified Professional be retained to assess and mitigate impacts of the proposed development in relation to the following:

- Impacts to movement corridors and access to the Lizard Creek for long ranging species like Grizzly Bear and ungulates. By spreading 74 building sites throughout the subject property, this proposal has the **high likelihood of negatively impacting that wildlife connectivity and further fragmenting wildlife habitat** for the lower reaches of Lizard Creek and its tributaries.
- This proposal will **impact numerous established mountain biking trails**. Rerouting of existing recreational trails to areas identified for community/public use or closing trails altogether will further impact wildlife habitats and will increase recreation pressure on remaining trails."

"In addition to the landscape level impacts resulting from this application, BC Parks is concerned about the proximity of building envelopes north of the "Lizard Creek Tributary" to

Mt. Fernie Park. These sites are close to the park boundary, with the northernmost three sites under 200 metres from the park. The zoning proposed by the development prescribes only a minimum 100 meter vegetated buffer between the development and the park (130 metres when each lot's covenant area is included). This is less than the prescribed buffer that is proposed to abut Crown land. **Not only is the buffer quite narrow, once the lots are sold, how do the respective zones and covenants get monitored and enforced?"**