



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



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Whether you're starting a new business, expanding an existing one, or planning for land development, understanding local government requirements can be challenging. We can help. This guide is intended to help you understand the steps involved for business development in Valemount, McBride and Electoral Area H of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. It will assist you to better plan for and anticipate community requirements, providing a more seamless and efficient process on your way to success.

Understanding Local and Regional Governments

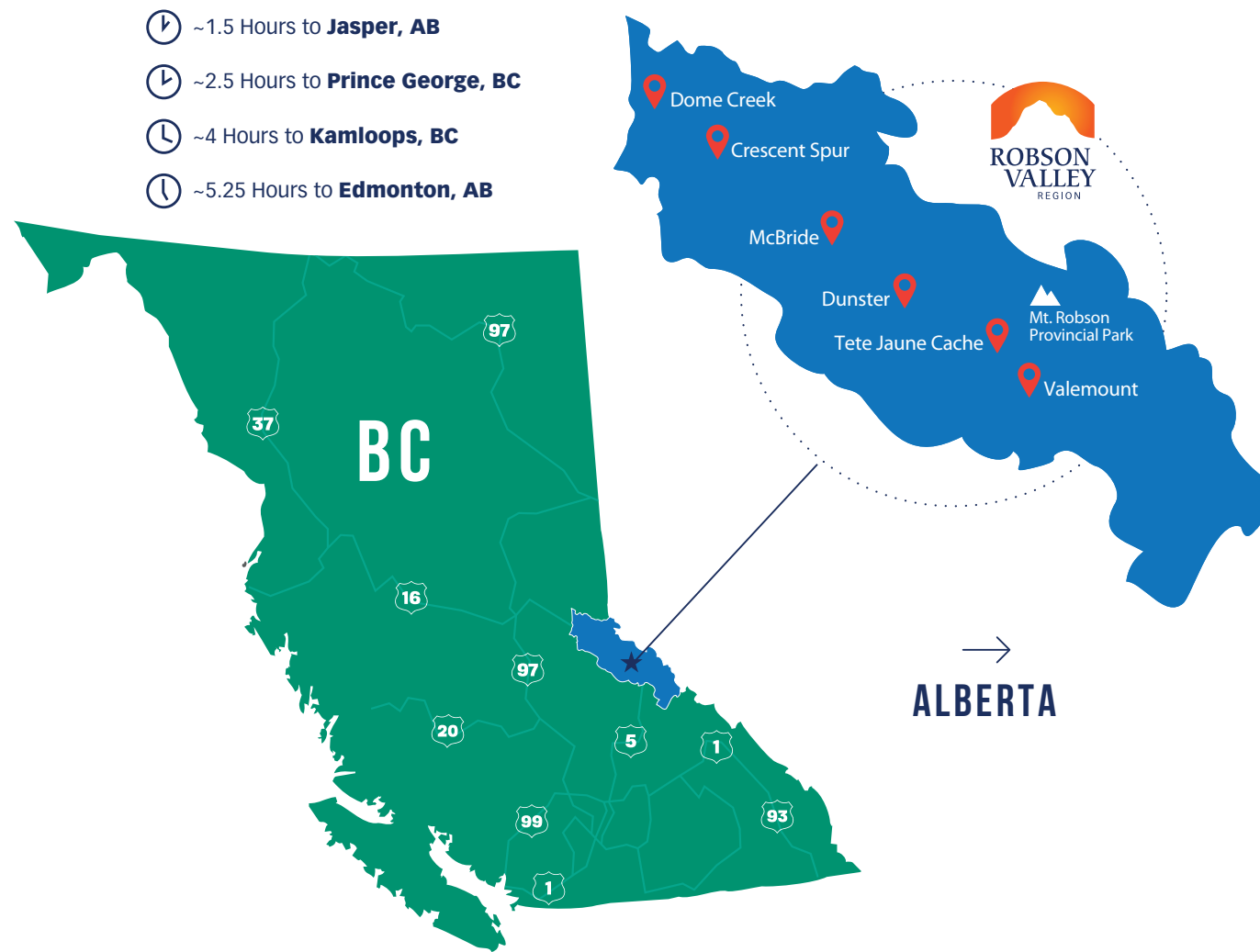
Valemount, McBride and Electoral Area H are in the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. (See Map 1: Regional District Area, *page 4*). The Villages of McBride and Valemount are incorporated municipalities governed by an elected Mayor and Council. These two villages are nestled in the Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H, but are separate municipalities. Within municipal limits, like most municipalities, the Villages exercise a range of management tools to ensure compliance with provincial statutes and community plans.

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG) governs the surrounding rural area, delivering services in varying areas with common needs. The Regional District typically provides municipal-style services to unincorporated communities, as well as wide-ranging services like 9-1-1 and solid waste

management to extensive areas covering thousands of square kilometers.

All businesses moving to or setting up in Valemount, McBride and Electoral Area H should notify the McBride and District Chamber of Commerce and/or Valemount and Area Chamber of Commerce for inclusion into the local business database and community business listings, which are published on the web and in hard copy.

In addition, all business owners expanding into the Robson Valley Region should notify the appropriate local government economic development department for assistance with establishing your business.



Robson Valley Region Guiding Documents

Village of Valemount Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) gives direction and guidelines for the future of Valemount. It provides a framework for future growth through planning objectives and policies, providing direction for the future form and character of the village. The Village will evaluate development proposals to ensure that they are consistent with the vision of the Plan. The OCP also establishes the basis for more specific Bylaws and programs such as the Zoning Bylaw and Downtown Revitalization Program.

The plan also describes the objectives of development permit areas, hazard lands and special management areas. Land use maps are provided to indicate designations.

The OCPs are intended to be relevant guides to future land use in the area.

The Zoning Bylaw

The Zoning Bylaw is the major tool by which the Village of Valemount, Village of McBride and Regional District of Fraser-Fort George use to implement OCPs by regulating the use, size and siting of land and buildings. Each local government has its own zoning Bylaw. Zones identified on Zoning Bylaw maps are more detailed than those of the OCPs' and describe permitted uses, densities, siting, as well as building form. The purpose of the zoning is to ensure the orderly development of the community, and to avoid conflicts between incompatible land uses.

The Zoning Bylaw is a living document that can be amended; either to implement future land uses in keeping with the direction provided in the OCPs or in response to a particular situation not contemplated when the Bylaw was written.

Please contact the respective municipality directly or visit the website for a copy of the Zoning Bylaw.

Village of McBride Official Community Plan

The purpose of the Official Community Plan is to state the broad land use objectives and policies of the Council of the Village of McBride to guide decisions for planning and land use management for the Village. The Plan consists of statements of the Council's objectives and development policies, as well as maps of existing and future conceptual land uses for the Village. The Plan is intended to be a relevant guide to future land use in the area for a period of at least five years, but up to ten years depending on conditions or events that occur to influence land use.

Electoral Area H - Upstream and Downstream Official Community Plans

Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H has two Official Community Plans (OCP) that provide blueprints for future development. The Robson Valley-Canoe Upstream and Robson Valley-Canoe Downstream OCPs identify different types of land uses – agriculture/resource residential, commercial, industrial and institutional (schools and parks, for example), as well as the objectives and development policies of the land uses.

Standard Business Start-up List

- Complete your market research.
- Develop a business plan.
- Obtain financial commitments before proceeding with start-up expenditures. Contact Community Futures Fraser-Fort George for small business start-up advice, business plan review and arranging financing (if necessary).
- If you intend to operate as a sole proprietor or partnership, register your business with the Corporate Registry (onestopbc.ca). This Corporate Registry will walk you through registering your business with the Canada Revenue Agency and WorkSafeBC.
- Contact the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, the Village of McBride or the Village of Valemount for land use requirements, appropriate permits, inspections and licences. The remainder of this document outlines applicable municipal government processes. The Regional District's website is rdffg.bc.ca, Village of McBride's mcbride.ca, and the Village of Valemount's valemount.ca.
- Obtain appropriate insurance and leases.
- Understand the applicable labour regulations (labour.gov.bc.ca/esb/esaguide).
- Ensure all health regulations relating to your business have been investigated.
- Ensure all environmental regulations relating to your business have been investigated.



Development Process

The Robson Valley Region is made up of three local governments that have services to facilitate development while protecting property rights, community standards and the environment as represented by Regional Board policy.

Services provided by each local government:

- Land Use Planning; and
- Building Inspections.

If you are planning to develop a site within the Village of Valemount, Village of McBride or Robson Valley Electoral Area H, you should first discuss your proposal with the appropriate local government planning department before you invest a lot of time and money in your project.

Where applicable, some of the Bylaws that you will need to consult include:

- Village of Valemount or Village of McBride Official Community Plan;
- The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George's Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H Downstream and Upstream Official Community Plans; and
- The respective municipal or regional zoning Bylaw and requirements.

Developing in the Village of Valemount

For information regarding land use and development within the Village of Valemount, visit valemount.ca. Here you will find Bylaws, mapping, application forms and information on:

- Zoning Amendments
- Official Community Plan Amendments
- Development Permits-Development Variance Permits
- Temporary Use Permits-Subdivision & Land Development

Key Documents

Village of Valemount

- Official Community Plan
- Building Bylaw
- Zoning Bylaw
- Development Procedures Bylaw
- Business License Bylaw

Village of McBride

- Official Community Plan
- Building Bylaw
- Zoning Bylaw
- Subdivision Servicing Bylaw
- Development Procedures Bylaw
- Business License Bylaw

Robson Valley Electoral Area H

- Downstream Official Community Plan
- Upstream Official Community Plan
- Building Bylaw
- Zoning Bylaw
- Subdivision Servicing Bylaw

Developing in the Village of McBride

The Village of McBride completed a 5-year Economic Development Action Plan in 2018 to guide actions in support of economic diversification and to encourage business growth and investment in and around McBride. This and other investment related documents can be found on the Village of McBride website: mcbride.ca/business/information-for-investors.

Guides, procedures and applications related to zoning and OCP amendments, development, subdivision, temporary use and variance permits as well as relevant investor Bylaws are available at the above weblink.

Developing in Robson Valley Electoral Area H

The principal functions of land use planning are:

- To prepare land use plans and policies to promote the allocation of resources in support of planned and orderly development for Regional District Board consideration;
- To serve the community by responding to a wide range of inquiries and applications related to the use and development of land;
- To administer Regional land use Bylaws, standards and policies;
- To provide the opportunity for meaningful public consultation concerning policy and the law; and
- To guide the Regional Board on planning and development matters. Policies of the Regional Board concerning land use are expressed in the Robson Valley-Canoe Downstream and Upstream Community Official Plans, and regulations are adopted in the form of Bylaws.

Prospective developers must complete an application form, supplied by the Regional District. It is recommended that prospective developers contact the Regional District to discuss their proposal before they make an application. There are often issues that can be dealt with prior to making an application.

Changes to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

The OCP and the Zoning Bylaw generally deal with issues concerning land use and density.

An application for a change to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw will require significant consideration by the Regional Board, as the application may represent a change in Board policy or direction. However, if the request for a Zoning Bylaw amendment is consistent with what the Board, through the OCP, has already

identified as an appropriate land use, the process may be considerably shortened as an OCP amendment will not be required. The Regional District makes its decisions based on a wide variety of input and policy.

Village of McBride

Village of McBride Zoning and Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendments are tools to allow for changes to provisions of the Zoning and OCP Bylaws. Amendment procedures in the Village of McBride follow a similar path as outlined by the RDFFG above:

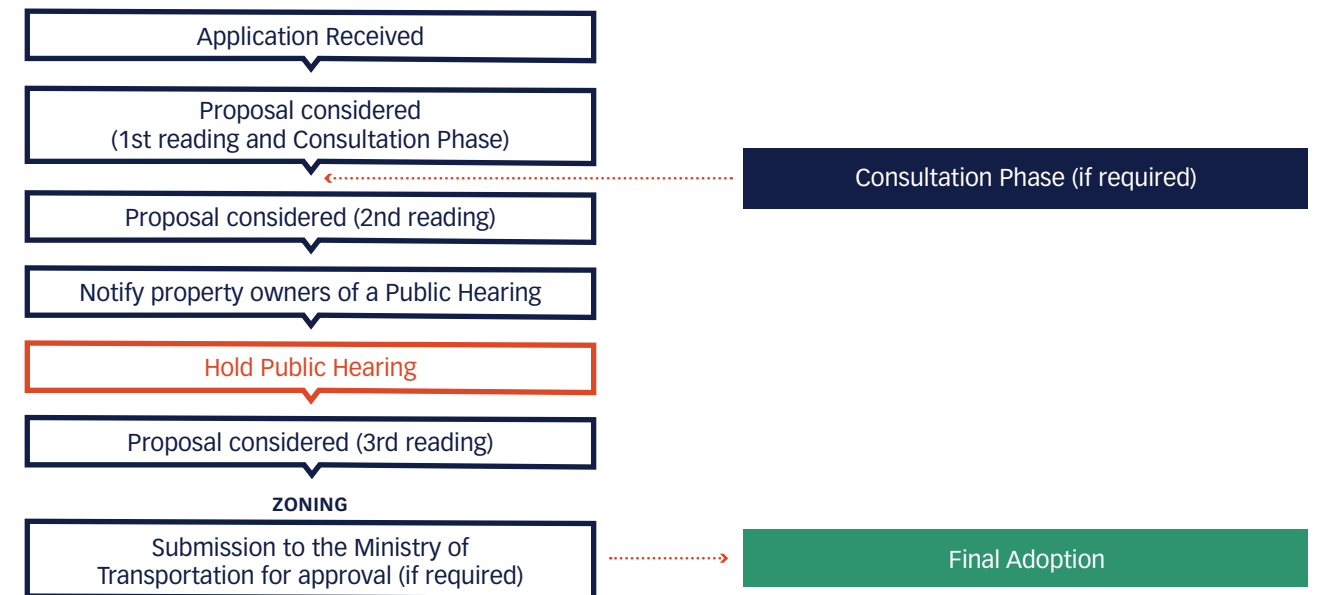
- Applications are reviewed by Village staff who prepare the amending Bylaw to go before Council for first and second readings.
- Staff organizes and advertises a Public Hearing hosted by Council where members of the public are invited to comment on the amendment application.
- Council gives third reading, taking into account input collected at the Public Hearing.
- Council holds a final reading where the amendment Bylaw may be approved by Council. The Village will engage the services of a professional consultant as needed. The amendment process may take a minimum of three months.

Approval is not guaranteed. For more information visit mcbride.ca/business/information-for-investors.

Village of Valemount

For more information regarding zoning and OCP regulations, visit valemount.ca.

General Steps - Changes to the OCP and Zoning ByLaws



Development Variance Permits

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

Development variance permits are usually used to change regulation in a zoning Bylaw. These permits cannot change land use or density; however, they can change the required development setbacks or other requirements, such as, maximum height of a building, or maximum/ minimum size of a building.

If a development variance permit is issued, it is registered on the property title.

Village of McBride

A Village of McBride Development Variance Permit is a tool used to vary the regulations of a Village Bylaw on a site-specific basis such as set-backs, height restrictions, parking spaces, etc. The process may take a minimum of 6 weeks as follows:

1. Applications are reviewed by staff and brought before Council for consideration.

2. If the application is granted preliminary approval by Council, staff notifies adjacent property owners and tenants. Council will take any collected information into account when making a final decision.

3. Council holds a final application review and may approve the application, request additional information or minor adjustments.

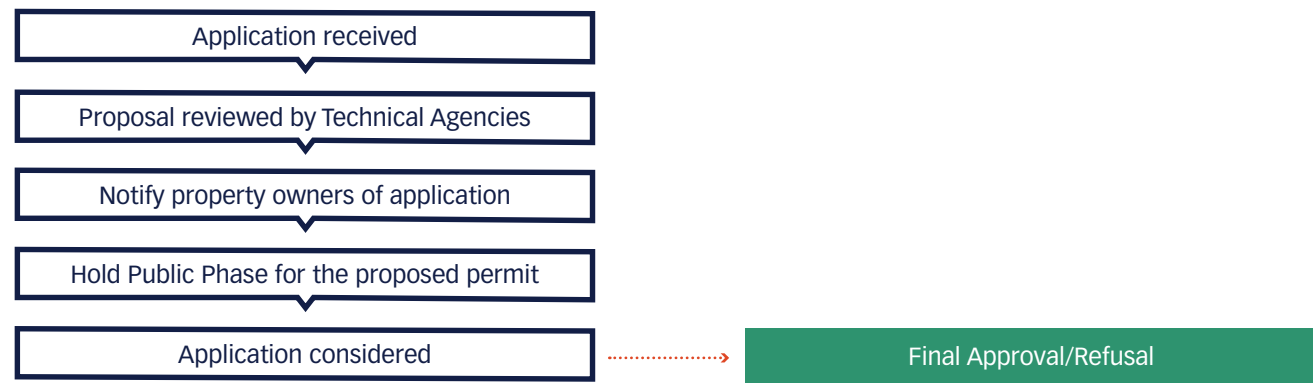
4. If successful, the Village will register the Development Variance Permit with BC Land Titles and the project can begin. Approval is not guaranteed. For more information visit mcbride.ca/business/information-for-investors.

Village of Valemount

For more information regarding zoning and OCP regulations, visit valemount.ca.



General Steps - Development Variance Permit



Development Permits

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

Your land may be located in a Development Permit Area identified in the OCP. Development in these areas may require a separate permit. Development Permit Areas are typically along fish bearing streams, areas of hazardous conditions, areas of significant environmental importance and areas where wildfire is a very real danger.

If your land is in a designated Development Permit Area, you will need the Regional District's approval for development. Regional staff have the authority to issue residential permits, while the Regional Board must consider industrial, commercial or subdivision permits.

Development Permits, once issued, are registered on the title of your property.

Village of McBride

Village of McBride Development Permits are required for subdivision of land located with a Development Permit Area and for any construction, alteration or addition of a structure on land within the designated Development Permit Area. Since 1985, Council and the residents of the Village of McBride have supported the concept of a turn-of-the-century railway style for the Village core. More information and application forms are available at mcbride.ca/business/information-for-investors.

Village of Valemount

For more information regarding zoning and OCP regulations, visit valemount.ca.

General Steps - Development Permits



Temporary Use Permits

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

The Regional Board can issue a temporary use permit for uses that are only going to be needed for a short period of time on land that is not zoned for the proposed land use. A Temporary Use Permit is like a mini-rezoning for a limited time.

Village of McBride

A Village of McBride Temporary Use Permit is a tool used to allow property owners to conduct a practice that is not defined for the subject property within the Zoning Bylaw or Official Community Plan. The application and approval process may take a minimum of 6 weeks to complete as follows:

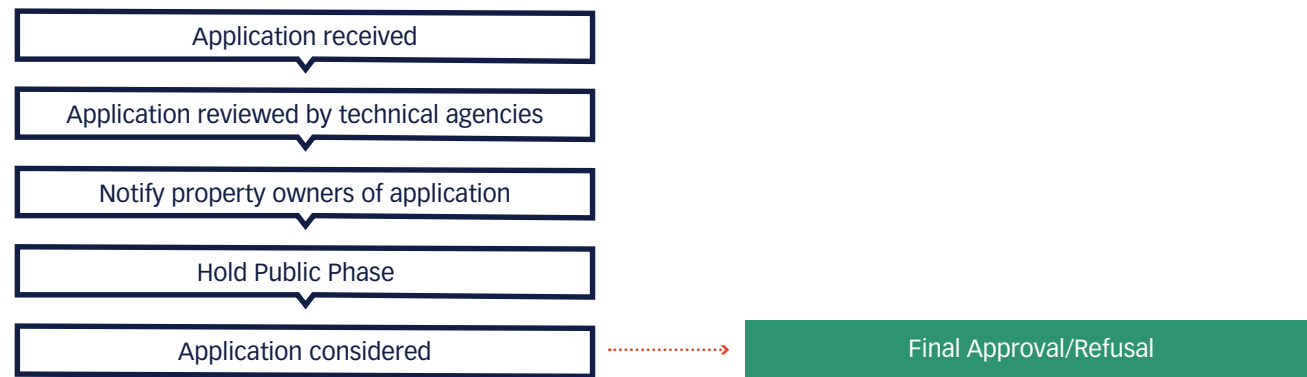
1. Applications are reviewed by staff and brought before Council for consideration.
2. If the application is granted preliminary approval by Council, staff organizes and advertises a Public Hearing hosted by Council where members of the public are invited to comment on the application. Council will take any collected information into account when making a final decision.

3. Council holds a final application review and may approve the application, request additional information or minor adjustments.
4. If successful, the Village will register the Temporary Use Permit with BC Land Titles. Approval is not guaranteed. For more information visit: mcbride.ca/business/information-for-investors.

Village of Valemount

For more information regarding zoning and OCP regulations, visit valemount.ca.

General Steps - Temporary Use Permit



Subdividing Land

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

Subdivision of land, either creating one lot or creating a number of lots, is more complex than OCP or Zoning changes. In Electoral Area H, approval of subdivisions is the responsibility of the Provincial Approving Officer who works for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The Regional District works closely with the Ministry for subdivisions, as the Regional District Subdivision Servicing Bylaw sets some of the standards for subdivision.

Prior to making a subdivision application, a developer should discuss the application with both Regional District and Ministry staff. Arranging to meet with both agencies at the same time is recommended. Often there are issues that have to be dealt with for one or both of the agencies before the Ministry can approve a subdivision. The actual subdivision application showing the proposed lot layout is made to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. It is the approving Officer of this Ministry who will ultimately sign the survey plan creating the new lots.

Some of the issues that a subdivision needs to address include:

- Access to the property (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Provision of potable water (Regional District)
- Sewage disposal (Northern Health Authority)

- Frontage on public road (Regional District)
- Park dedication (Regional District)
- Geotechnical issues (Regional District and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Lot layout (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Construction of subdivision roads (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Registration of covenants (Regional District, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure)
- Permission to subdivide in the Agriculture Land Reserve (Regional District and Agricultural Land Commission). Due to the length of time this application takes, if needed, the ALR matters should be taken care of before a subdivision application is made to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Village of McBride

Those interested in subdividing land within the municipality of the Village of McBride are encouraged to contact the Village Office for more information. The Subdivision Process with Application is available on the Village of McBride website at mcbride.ca/business/information-for-investors.

Village of Valemount

For more information regarding zoning and OCP regulations, visit valemount.ca.



Building Inspections

The Villages of Valemount and McBride and the Regional District issue building permits to ensure that building construction provides for the basic health and safety of homeowners and business owners, pursuant to the BC Building Code. The Building Bylaw states that a building permit is generally required for any construction, alteration, repair, move or demolition of a building or structure of more than 10 square metres or a change of occupancy. A building permit is not normally required for routine maintenance and repairs. Repair or replacement of walls, floor and ceiling finishes may not apply. If unsure if a building permit is required, please contact the Village of McBride, Village of Valemount or Regional District prior to construction starting.

New residential building permits require structural and mechanical documentation associated with Homeowner Protection Office requirements, and may require letters of assurance for all construction requiring oversight by an engineer or architect. Proof of approved sewage disposal from the Northern Health Authority is required.

Regional District Inspections are conducted at the following stages:

- Footing forms
- Foundation forms
- Foundation prior to backfill
- Rough in plumbing
- Concrete slab prior to pouring
- Framing and above-ground plumbing
- Wood heating unit
- Insulation and vapour barrier
- Final inspection
- Occupancy



Valemount, McBride and Robson Valley - Building Permit Activity

		Residential			Commercial			Industrial			Institutional			Total	
Year	No. of Permits	Housing Starts	New construction Value (Single Family Dwelling)	Additions Value (Single Family Dwellings)	Total Residential Construction Value	No. of Permits	Construction Value	No. of Permits	Construction Value	No. of Permits	Construction Value	No. of Permits	Construction Value	No. of Permits	Construction Value
Village of Valemount															
2017	24	4	\$756,000	\$301,000	NA	4	\$396,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	28	\$0	28	\$1,453,000
2018	20	6	\$1,284,000	\$135,000	NA	9	\$5,038,000	0	\$0	3	\$0	32	\$129,000	32	\$6,586,500
2019	30	5	\$700,500	\$292,000	NA	2	\$108,500	0	\$0	1	\$0	33	\$20,000	33	\$121,000
Village of McBride															
2017	15	1	\$187,000	\$1,000	\$267,250	1	\$40,000	0	\$0	3	\$0	19	\$259,000	19	\$566,000
2018	10	1	\$151,000	0	\$236,000	2	\$10,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	12	\$0	12	\$246,000
2019	24	1	\$166,000	\$2,000	\$349,000	3	\$45,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	27	\$0	27	\$394,000
Robson Valley - Canoe Electoral Area H															
2017	56	6	\$1,549,000	\$73,000	\$2,290,000	1	\$7,000	2	\$49,000	2	\$80,000	61	\$80,000	61	\$2,426,000
2018	45	6	\$395,000	\$62,000	\$1,003,500	0	\$0	1	\$20,000	0	\$0	46	\$0	46	\$1,023,500
2019	70	3	\$446,000	\$219,000	\$1,165,000	4	\$919,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	74	\$0	74	\$2,084,000
Total															
2017	95	11	\$2,492,000	\$375,000	\$2,557,350	6	\$443,000	2	\$49,000	5	\$339,000	108	\$44,450,000	108	\$4,445,000
2018	75	13	\$1,830,000	\$197,000	\$1,239,500	11	\$5,048,000	1	\$20,000	3	\$129,000	90	\$129,000	90	\$7,856,000
2019	124	9	\$1,312,500	\$513,000	\$1,514,000	9	\$1,072,500	0	\$0	1	\$20,000	134	\$20,000	134	\$2,259,000



Business Costs

Village of Valemount

All businesses require a business license to operate within the Village of Valemount. Please visit valemount.ca for more information.

Village of McBride

Water and sewer connection fees as well as building permit fees may apply to new construction. Contact the Village of McBride office for more information.

The Village of McBride requires all businesses operating in the municipality to purchase a Business License as per Bylaw 752. Business License application forms are available on the Village website at mcbride.ca/business/information-for-investors.

Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H

There are no development cost charges in Robson Valley-Canoe Electoral Area H.

There are no publicly owned water and sewer systems in Electoral Area H.

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George does not require business licenses.

Provincial Regulations

Doing Business on Provincial Crown Land

The Robson Valley Region's spectacular terrain can be used for adventure tourism operations. Many of these operations are located on public lands and therefore require permits for use authorized by the provincial government.

Local land use plans guide the appropriateness and scale of these operations, which the Province uses as an evaluation tool to determine permit allocations. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources and Rural Development is the Provincial Government agency responsible for leading this process and should be the first point of contact if you are considering doing business on public lands.

Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve

Portions of Electoral Area H are within the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Traditionally, the provincial Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) regulates these lands generally with respect to subdivision, land use and removal and placement of fill (including soil and rock).

Most applications made to the Agricultural Land Commission are initially processed by the local government for consideration before proceeding to the Commission for a final decision. To find further information regarding the Agricultural Land Commission, regulations and application processes, visit their website at alc.gov.bc.ca.



First Stop Information Sources

Regional District of Fraser Fort George

155 George St.
 Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
TF | 1-800-667-1959 (BC)
P | 250-960-4400
E | district@rdffg.bc.ca,
rdffg.bc.ca

Village of Valemount

P.O. Box 168
 735 Cranberry Lake Road
 Valemount, BC V0E 2Z0
P | 250-566-4435
valemount.ca

Village of McBride

100 Robson Centre
 PO Box 519
 McBride, BC V0J 2E0
P | 250-569-2229
mcbride.ca

Community Futures Fraser Fort George

1566 Seventh Avenue
 Prince George, BC V2L 3P4
P | 250-562-9622
E | general@cfdc.bc.ca,
cfdc.bc.ca

McBride & District Chamber of Commerce

Mailing Address: Box 2
 McBride, BC V0J 2E0
TF | 1-866-569-3366 (US & Canada)
P | 250-569-3366

Valemount Chamber of Commerce

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 690
 Valemount, BC V0E 2Z0
P | 250-566-0061

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

5th Floor - 499 George Street
 Prince George, BC V2L 1R5
P | 250-561-3479
E | frontcounterBC@gov.bc.ca
frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca

Ministry of the Environment

P | 250-387-1161
gov.bc.ca/env

Northern Health Authority

Services Delivery Area
P | 250-565-2649 (Prince George)
P | 250-569-2251 (McBride)
P | 250-566-9138 (Valemount)
northernhealth.ca

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

4051 18th Ave
 Prince George B.C, V2N 1B3
P | 250-565-6135



LEARN MORE
WWW.INVESTRVR.CA

Regional District of Fraser Fort George

155 George St.
Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
rdffg.bc.ca

TF | 1-800-667-1959 (BC)
P | 250-960-4400
E | district@rdffg.bc.ca