

About Subdivisions

A Subdivision alters legal property boundaries by:

- *creating two or more properties from one parcel*
- *adjusting or realigning an existing property line*
- *reconfiguring two or more properties into one lot*

The *BC Municipal Act* and *Land Title Act*, and the Municipality require that all subdivisions be approved by a legally appointed approving officer. This approval ensures:

- *adequate size and shape of lots*
- *adequate road, sewer, water and other services*
- *consideration of open space requirements*
- *provision of roads, lanes and emergency vehicle access*
- *protection of natural features*
- *compatibility of subdivision patterns*
- *preservation of future subdivision opportunities*

Applying for a Subdivision

Step 1: Pre-Application Meeting

Before submitting your proposal, a pre-application meeting and site visit of the subject property should be arranged with a Planner. The meeting will help to determine what supporting documents, reports, etc. will be needed. The Planner will provide you with a checklist of items that will be necessary to make a complete application and provide you with the correct fee amount that accompanies your proposal.

Step 2: Submitting an Application

Submit your plan, and application along with the application fee. Application forms are available from the Development Services Department or through the municipality's website www.northcowichan.ca.

Your application and supporting documentation may be returned if your application is incomplete and/or if fees are unpaid - refer to the checklist provided to you by the Planner.

Additional information may be requested, following an application review.

Step 3: Application Review

Once Development Services receives your complete application, a file is started and it is circulated to other departments and agencies for review. During this process, these departments/agencies will review the application and provide the Planner with feedback as to what is required in order to move forward with the development. This information is compiled into a Detailed Team Review letter which may require

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clarification, further information, or plan revisions. If further information is required, you will need to provide it within 30 days to keep your file active. If no further information is required, your application can proceed to a decision.

Step 4: Preliminary Layout Approval

After reviewing all staff comments, the approving officer reviews the application. If it all appears to be acceptable, the approving officer signs a Preliminary Layout Acceptance (PLA) letter approving your proposed subdivision layout. The letter specifies the conditions that must be met prior to final approval of the subdivision.

These conditions typically include:

- *adjustments to lot dimensions or road patterns*
- *requirements for park land, linear open space, or walkway dedication*
- *covenants and easements to protect or access or services*
- *certificates of non-encroachment for remaining buildings*
- *road and servicing requirements*
- *requirements from other agencies*
- *payment of all fees, charges and any outstanding property taxes.*

The PLA is valid for 12 months. All conditions must be met within that period, though an extension may be granted.

Step 5: Works and Services Design Approval

If your proposed subdivision requires the construction of any new services (e.g. roads, water, sewage, or drainage works), then you may need to retain a professional engineer to prepare construction drawings showing all existing and proposed works and services required by the municipality. Submit these drawings to the Engineering Department for approval.

Step 6: Final Approval

Once all the conditions have been met in the PLA letter, including payment of applicable fees, you may submit the final survey plan to the Approving Officer. Your survey plan must be prepared by a registered BC Land Surveyor and signed by all parties having a registered interest in the land. Submit the survey plan to the Approving Officer within three months of the survey completion date; otherwise, the approving officer may require a re-inspection of the survey.

Register your plans and supporting documentation with the Land Title Office within two months of the plan approval date. When registering the subdivision plan, provide the new legal plan number and copies of the document bearing the Land Title Office registration numbers.



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How Long It Takes

An application that is correct and complete can be processed in 12 weeks depending on Staff workloads at the time of submission.

Remember ...

Plan your development proposal thoroughly and carefully. In preparing your proposal, you should be aware of the Municipality's plans, policies and regulations that may affect your property, including:

Official Community Plan

North Cowichan's Official Community Plan (OCP) divides the municipality into designated land use areas. Check the OCP for your property's designation. If the activity you propose is not permitted by the OCP, then you must apply for an OCP Amendment and receive approval before your zoning amendment application can be considered.

Development Permit Area Guidelines

Community Plan contains specific design guidelines that affect your application. You may review development area maps and guidelines through the municipality's website www.northcowichan.ca or visit the Development Services Department.

Works and Services

All developments must include utilities (e.g. sewer and water) at the developer's expense. Check with the Development Services and Engineering Departments on the availability of the required services, and whether additional servicing is necessary.

Zoning Bylaw

Zoning regulations apply to every property in the municipality. In each zone, specific uses and activities are permitted. Check the bylaw to determine the zoning regulations that apply to your application. The use and density of a site cannot be varied by a Development Variance Permit.

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