

Report: Discussion with OBWB Deputy Administrator on One-Hectare Policy

Date: December 5, 2025

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Background

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) has a long-standing policy requiring new parcels less than 1.0 hectare in area to connect to a community sewer system. This policy aligns with provincial infrastructure grant criteria and OBWB requirements.

Discussion Summary

During my discussion with the OBWB Deputy Administrator, the following question was posed:

- Is there any discretion to allow a development that is less than one hectare to be approved without jeopardizing eligibility for provincial infrastructure grants and OBWB funding?

Response from OBWB Deputy Administrator:

- There is no discretion in applying the one-hectare policy.
- Allowing a development of less than one hectare, even if outside OBWB jurisdiction, would affect provincial grant eligibility, and only affect OBWB grants within the OBWB area.

Implications

- Strict adherence to the one-hectare policy is required to maintain eligibility for provincial infrastructure grants.
- Approving developments below this threshold could jeopardize future funding opportunities for major sewer projects.
- OBWB and provincial authorities consistently apply this policy across all jurisdictions.

Conclusion

The OBWB Deputy Administrator confirmed that there is no flexibility in the application of the one-hectare policy. Compliance remains critical for securing both provincial and OBWB infrastructure funding.

The following is a summary of the Development Variance Permit G2025.022 which if accepted would allow for the creation of new parcels to be serviced by a private on site sewage system and less than 1.0 ha in area at 792 Daly Avenue Hedley. (This was item C.3 at the last Board meeting).

Subject: Proposed subdivision at 762 Daly Avenue, Hedley
summary

Property Size

- Existing parcel: ~783 m² (0.0783 ha).
- Proposed subdivision: two parcels of ~372 m² each (0.0372 ha per parcel).

One-Hectare Rule

- RDOS Bylaw No. 2900 requires parcels >1.0 ha may use individual septic systems; parcels <1.0 ha must connect to a community sewer system.
- Provincial guidance: 1.0 ha minimum prevents septic failure and protects groundwater.

Compliance Status

- Proposed parcels are far below 1.0 ha.
- Application seeks a variance to allow septic on parcels not compliant with RDOS policy and provincial standards.

Risks of Approval

- Contravenes long-standing RDOS policy.
- Jeopardizes eligibility for provincial infrastructure grants tied to 1.0 ha policy.
- Sets precedent for similar requests in other areas.

Alternatives

- • Connect to existing community sewer system.
 - Develop a strata-owned or private community sewer system to meet bylaw requirements
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Administrative Recommendation

Deny the variance to maintain compliance and protect future funding opportunities.