

Community Planning 101

Presentation Outline

- What is a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)?
- What is an Official Community Plan (OCP)?
 - Development Permit Areas
 - Land use designations
- What is Zoning?
 - Development Variance Permit
- Relationship between the RGS, OCP, and Zoning
- How does the development process work?
 - A Development Permit, Development Variance Permit , and rezoning application
- Regional District vs. Municipality
- Discussion

What Is an Regional Growth Strategy?

- The RDN and municipalities adopted a RGS in 1997 in response to concerns about the impacts of growth.
- An agreement between the RDN and its member municipalities on how growth and development will be managed and planned for on a region-wide basis.
- The RGS aims to establish a more sustainable pattern of growth by:
 - keeping urban settlement compact;
 - directing development to designated urban areas;
 - protecting rural areas;
 - protecting the environment;
 - increasing service efficiency; and,
 - improving mobility.
- All RDN OCPs and Bylaws must be consistent with the RGS.

RGS Goals

1. Strong Urban Containment
2. Nodal Structure
3. Rural Integrity
4. Improved Mobility
5. Environmental Protection
6. Vibrant and Sustainable Economy
7. Efficient Services
8. Cooperation Among Jurisdictions

OCP Review Process Notes

- Adopted by bylaw (4 readings)
- Minimum public consultation requirements
 - Sec. 879 - 1 or more opportunities it considers appropriate
 - Discretion on early and ongoing consultation with affected parties
 - Public hearing
- Agencies (Prov., Fed, FN)
- Must be referred to ALC
- Must be approved by the Minister of Community Development and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

What Is an OCP?

- Policy document which provides direction on how an area should grow and change over time.
- Policies must be implemented by using other tools such as zoning.
- Once an OCP is adopted all future land-use decisions must be consistent with the Official Community Plan.
- Not written in stone.
- Does not commit the Regional District of Nanaimo to any specific action.

OCP Content

- Section 877 and 878 of The **Local Government Act** specifies the required and optional OCP content.
- Required:
 - Location and amount of residential density
 - Restrictions on the use and development of hazardous and environmentally sensitive lands
 - Location of sand and gravel deposits
 - Affordable Housing Policies
 - Targets for Greenhouse Gas reduction
- Optional:
 - Social needs
 - Agricultural Policies
 - Other

Development Permit Areas (DPAs)

- Certain lands are designated as DPAs within the OCP.
- DPAs can be used to meet certain objectives defined in the LGA.
- Information requirements are specified by the DPA Guidelines.
- Purpose is to require a more detailed review, to ensure consistency, and to provide certainty.
- The Official Community Plan defines and maps each DPA.
- Development within a DPA must be consistent with the DPA Guidelines.
- Most development activities within a DPA can not proceed until a Development Permit has been issued.
- Most Development Permit applications require Board approval.
- A DPA is not a setback and is not a “no-go buffer area”.

Land Use Designations

- Policy not regulation
- Guides future development
- May contain minimum parcel sizes
- Applicable to development proposals
- May or may not be consistent with the current zoning

What is Zoning?

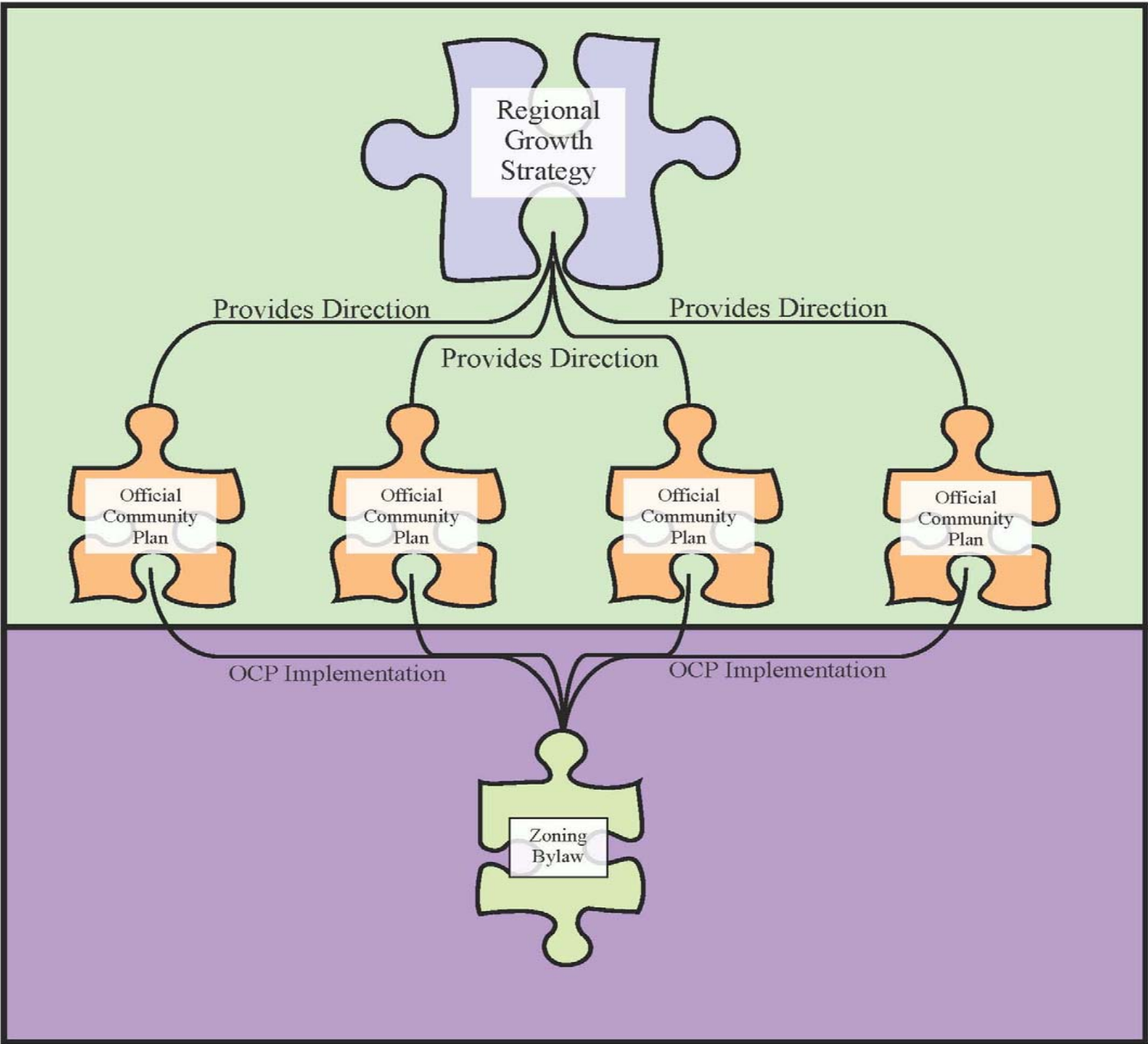
- Zoning is regulatory in nature.
- It is a means of implementing the policies in the Official Community Plan.
- Defines the rules and regulations pertaining to current land use:
 - Permitted uses
 - Minimum setback requirements
 - Minimum parcel sizes
 - Maximum height requirements

What is a Development Variance Permit?

- Process to relax provisions of the Zoning Bylaw
- Addresses situations where zoning regulations are unreasonable or do not result in desirable development potential.
- Can not vary use or density
- Approval is discretionary
- Applications are evaluated for consistency with the RDN variance policy.
- Notification to adjacent property owners
- Approval only through Board resolution

Relationship between RGS, OCP, and Zoning

- All work together
- Hierarchical relationship
- An RGS provides direction to the OCP.
- An OCP must work towards purpose and goals of the RGS.
- An OCP is a means of implementing the RGS.
- Goals, objectives and policies of an OCP must not be in conflict with the goals and policies of the RGS.
- Zoning is a means of Implementing an Official Community Plan.



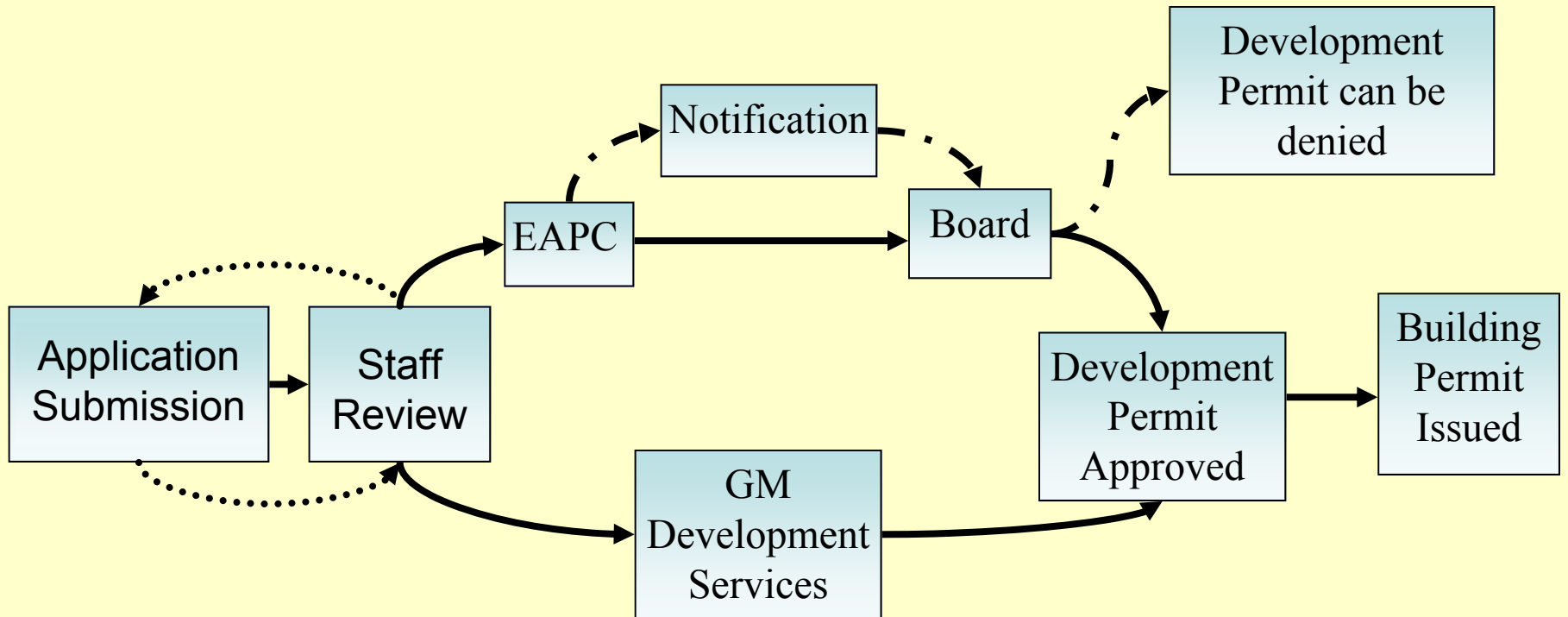
(Provides direction on how the region and community should be developed)

Policy

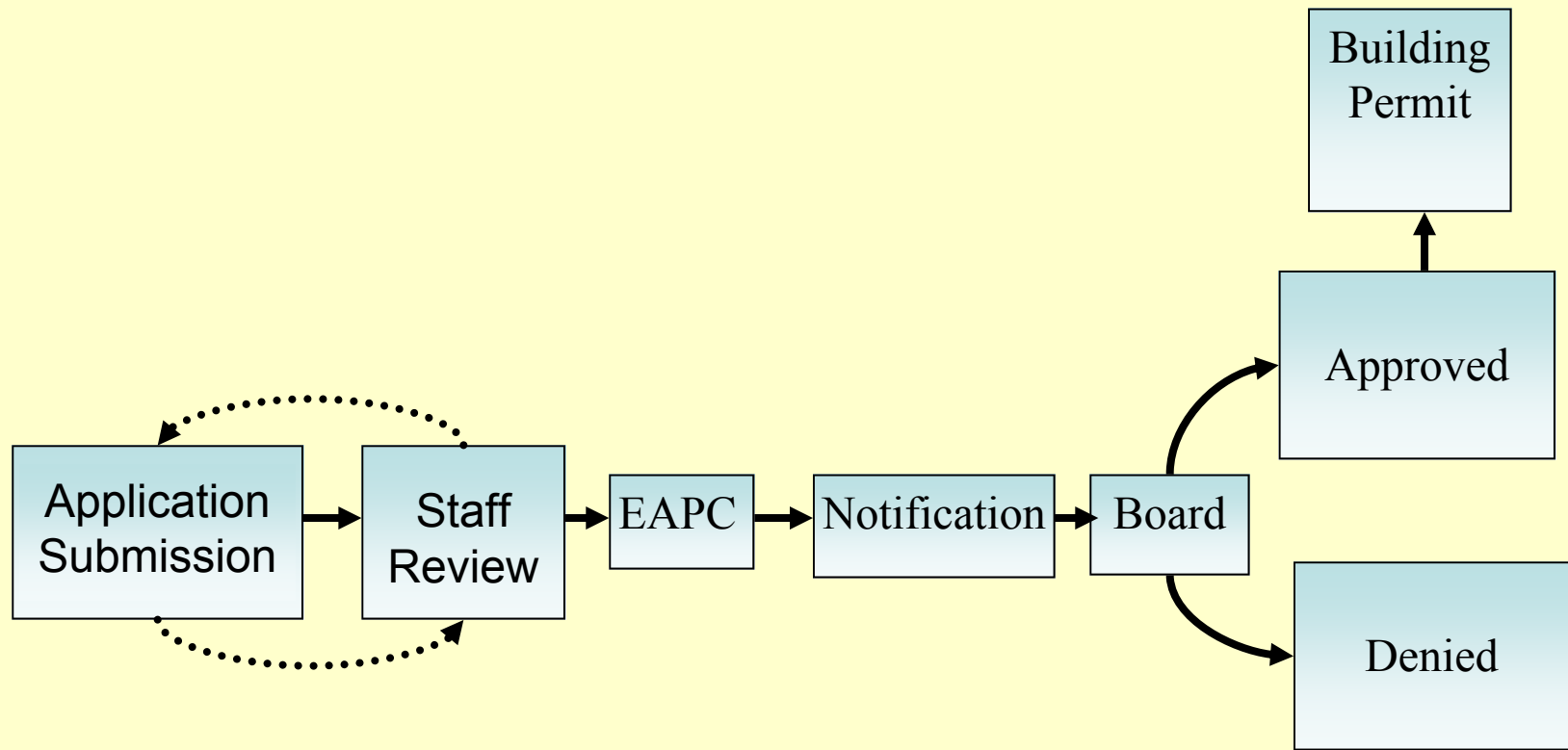
(Regulates current development activities)

Regulation

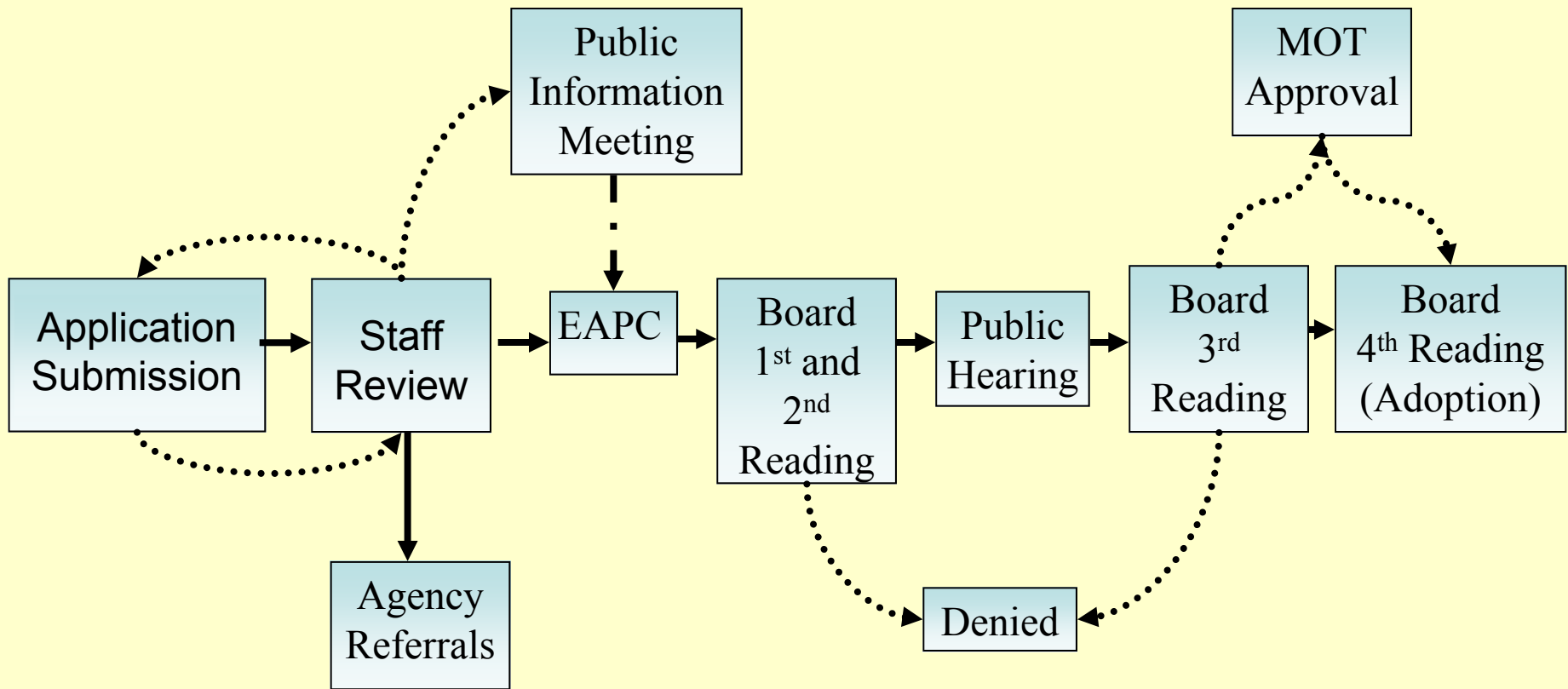
Development Permit Application and Review Process



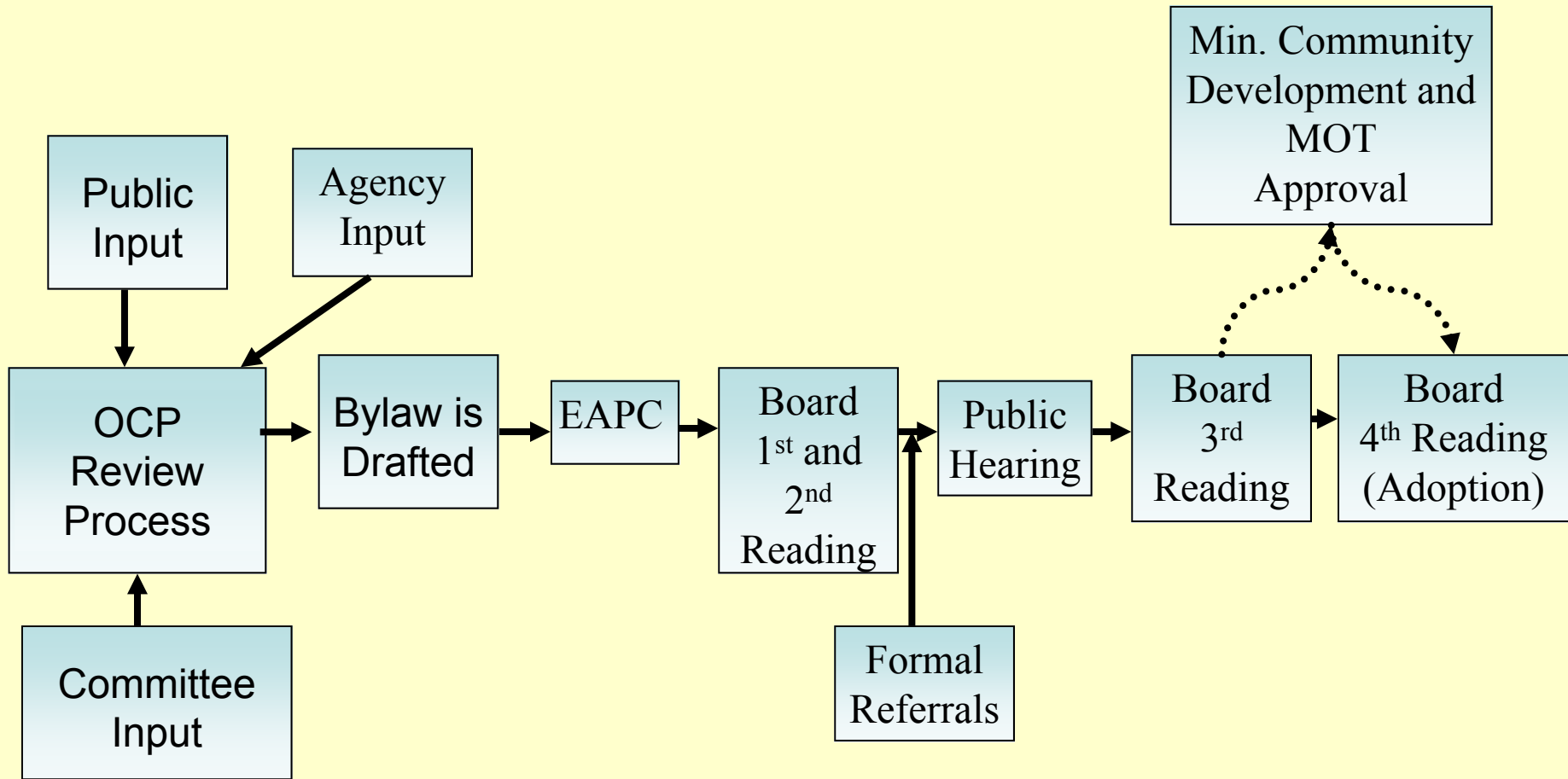
Development Variance Permit Application and Review Process



Rezoning Application and Review Process




Official Community Plan Bylaw Adoption Process



Regional District vs. Municipality

- Subdivision, public roadways, sidewalks, drainage
- Funding of local services
- Political structure
- RD's can provide regional services
 - Transit, solid waste, parks, etc.
- Legislative differences (special authority)
 - Tree cutting
 - Business licensing

A photograph of a forest path with trees and fallen leaves, overlaid with the word "Discussion". The path is made of dirt and is covered with fallen leaves. The trees are tall and thin, with green and yellow leaves. The word "Discussion" is written in a large, black, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

Discussion