RDEK Electoral Area Director

CANDIDATE GUIDE

Everything you need to know before running for position of RDEK Electoral Area Director in 2026

Regional District of East Kootenay

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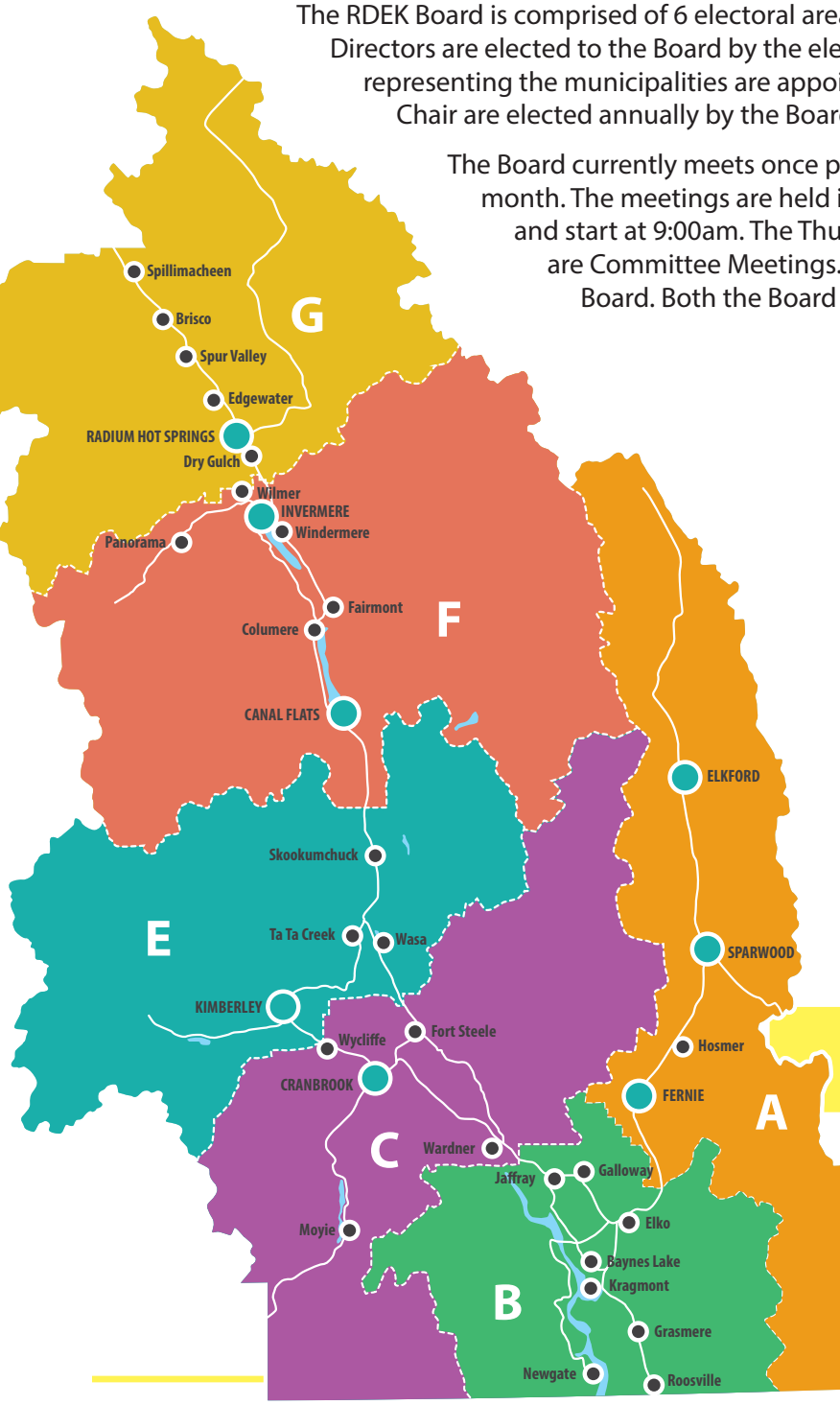
ABOUT THE RDEK

The RDEK is one of 28 regional governments formed by the Province to provide local government services to unincorporated areas. Regional districts are BC's way of ensuring that all residents have access to commonly needed services, no matter where they live. The RDEK functions as a partnership of the municipalities and electoral areas (unincorporated areas) within its boundaries to provide and coordinate services in both urban and rural areas.

The Board is the governing body, responsible for setting a vision, developing strategies to achieve the vision, and formulating policies. The Board is responsible for the services provided, and actions taken by, the organization. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) implements the Board's policies and decisions, and oversees all operations.

The RDEK Board is comprised of 6 electoral area directors and 9 municipal directors. Electoral Area Directors are elected to the Board by the electors in the areas they represent. The Directors representing the municipalities are appointed by their respective Councils. The Chair and Vice Chair are elected annually by the Board.

The Board currently meets once per month, generally on the second Friday of the month. The meetings are held in the RDEK Board Room (19 24th Ave S, Cranbrook) and start at 9:00am. The Thursday immediately before the Board Meeting, there are Committee Meetings. The Committees make recommendations to the Board. Both the Board and Committee meetings are open to the public.



Stats from 2021 census

ELECTORAL AREA POPULATIONS

Area A	1,875	**Area E**	1,686
Area B	2,011	**Area F**	3,521
Area C	6,536	**Area G**	1,654

FIRST NATIONS POPULATIONS

Yaq̓it ʔa·knuq̓ti ʻit	96	**Cassimayook IR 5/Isadore's Ranch**	5
ʔaq̓ am	145	**Shuswap IR**	319
St Mary's	10	**ʔakisq̓nuk**	149

MUNICIPAL POPULATIONS

City of Fernie	6,320	**City of Cranbrook**	20,499
District of Invermere	3,917	**District of Sparwood**	4,148
City of Kimberley	8,115	**Village of Canal Flats**	802
District of Elkford	2,749	**Village of Radium Hot Springs**	1,339

POPULATION	DWELLINGS	LAND SIZE
65,896	35,931	27,542.69 KM²

RUNNING FOR ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTOR

Knowledge and Abilities

Electoral Area Directors represent the electorate in governing the provision of local, inter-jurisdictional and regional services to communities of the regional district. An Electoral Area Director's role is to ensure good government, provision of services, and stewardship of public assets, and to foster the current and future economic, social and environmental well-being of the region and its communities.

Electoral Area Directors reflect the diversity of views and opinions that naturally reside within the regional district. As an Electoral Area Director you will have a chance to be a leader in the community.

There are no special qualifications required by legislation to be an Electoral Area Director, however, visionary thinking, strong communication skills, enthusiasm, conflict resolution skills, and an ability to accept opposing views are great attributes to bring to the Board table.

Informed Decision

Of all levels of government, local government is the closest to the needs and expectations of the people it serves. Electoral Area Directors have the opportunity to significantly influence the future of their communities. This can make an Electoral Area Director's job both demanding and rewarding.

Before submitting nomination papers, it is important to figure out whether or not you have adequate time to devote to the position, and to make sure the job will meet your expectations.

As an elected official, you will:

- Bring your perspectives to the decision-making table;
- Influence changes that benefit the community and ensure its sustainability;
- Put forward new ideas for debate and possible implementation and change;
- Make a positive difference in the quality of life in the community;
- Provide a voice for the community with other levels of government; and
- Be part of a team that makes decisions that affect all aspects of community life.

ASSETS FOR THE ROLE OF AN ELECTED OFFICIAL:

- **An interest in broad-based community issues, a desire to contribute, and a willingness to learn.**
- **As an Electoral Area Director serves their term of office, they are expected to develop a body of knowledge supportive of informed decision-making.**
- **Ability to establish and maintain courteous, tactful, diplomatic working relationships with other Board members, employees of the RDEK and the general public.**
- **Ability to make objective and informed decisions.**
- **Ability to engage in effective interpersonal communication (verbal and written), problem solving and conflict resolution.**
- **Ability to speak in public and effectively communicate complex or technical information.**
- **Ability to behave in a way that inspires the public trust and sets an example for the organization.**
- **Ability to meet deadlines.**
- **Ability to participate as an engaged member of a team.**
- **Ability to prioritize and competently manage a variety of activities and conflicting demands.**
- **Analytical and problem-solving skills.**
- **Ability to analyze concepts and strategies, to establish goals and priorities and to work within general objectives.**
- **Ability to allow for respectful disagreement, accept majority decisions even when they conflict with their own opinion, and accept responsibility for their actions, decisions, and those of the Board.**
- **A basic understanding of parliamentary procedures.**
- **Proficient computer skills .**
- **Familiarity with web browsers and the use of the Internet.**

Eligibility and Requirements

A person is **qualified** to be nominated, elected, and to hold office as a member of local government if they meet the following criteria:

- Canadian citizen;
- 18 years of age or older on general voting day: Saturday, October 17, 2026;
- resident of BC for at least 6 months immediately before the day nomination papers are filed; and
- not disqualified under the Local Government Act or any other enactment from being nominated for, being elected to or holding the office, or be otherwise disqualified by law.

A person is **disqualified** as a candidate for office if they fall within any of the following categories:

- are a Judge of the Provincial Court, Supreme Court or Court of Appeal;
- are an employee of the RDEK [unless a leave of absence is taken to run for office and agrees to resign if elected]; including if you are running as a regional district Electoral Area Director when employed by a municipality which is a member of that regional district;
- are under sentence for an indictable offence and are in custody or in prison; or
- are disqualified from candidacy under any law or enactment (ie failure to file a candidate disclosure statement in the previous election, not making an oath of office, etc)

To become a candidate for any local government office, a person must be nominated by two people who are qualified to vote, either as a resident or non-resident property elector in the electoral area that the candidate is running for office. [Any person who is entitled to make a nomination may sign as many nomination documents as there are offices to be filled]. A candidate should be prepared to have additional nominators in the event one or both of are not eligible to be a nominator.

BOARD COMMITMENT

Electoral Area Directors will serve a four-year term if elected. The 2026 Board of Directors will be sworn in at the first meeting of the Board in November 2026 and serve office until October 2030. Serious consideration should be given for the time required to balance Board commitments with personal life, work life, volunteer hours, and other priorities.

Significant time is required to review materials in preparation for Board, Committee and other meetings and events such as advisory commission meetings, town hall meetings and public hearings. Electoral Area Directors may also be required to attend meetings and events, as well as respond to constituents, during the evenings and on weekends.

This role generally requires a time commitment comparable to at least a part time job, and at times, may involve activities equivalent to or greater than those of a full time position.

Directors are expected to attend each meeting fully prepared to make informed decisions for the benefit of the community. Background work will be required to thoroughly read agenda packages, prepare questions, and be knowledgeable about the subject matter shared at a meeting. The Board Chair and Vice Chair will also meet with the CAO to discuss strategic priorities, directions for bylaw, policy, programs, and initiatives, as well as any ongoing problems, concerns, or questions.

Regular Committee and Board Meetings

- Board meetings are generally scheduled every 2nd Friday of each month. Commencing at 9:00am and usually take 1.5 – 2 hours.
- Committee meetings are scheduled for the Thursday before Board. Typically, these meetings begin at 1:00pm (sometimes as early as 10:00am) and finish early in the evening, depending on the number of agenda items, delegations and discussion.
- Annual budget meeting deliberations are typically held on the Wednesday of Committee and Board week in February of each year.

Special Meetings

- Special Meetings may be scheduled under certain circumstances and in accordance with the RDEK Procedure Bylaw.

Appointments to Other Groups and Organizations

Individual Directors may be appointed to represent the RDEK Board on internal and external committees, boards or agencies. Meetings vary by each committee, board, or agency and can be held either bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly or as required.

Conferences and Training

The RDEK is part of the Association of Kootenay and Boundary Local Governments (AKBLG), the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). The AKBLG, UBCM and FCM hold annual conferences and conventions that Directors may attend. Directors may also be required to attend various training opportunities or other conferences.

Travel Requirements

An Electoral Area Director should expect regular local travel throughout the electoral area, routine travel to Board and Committee meetings in Cranbrook, occasional regional and provincial travel, and after-hours driving, using a personal vehicle and claiming reimbursement under the regional district's expense policies.

Some Electoral Area Directors may have modest routine travel, and others may spend a substantial amount of time on the road depending on the size and remoteness for the electoral area, current local issues or major projects, and expectations the Electoral Area Director sets with constituents. For someone in the role of Electoral Area Director in the RDEK, travel is usually a regular part of the job rather than an occasional exception.

Travel expenses are claimed under the regional district's expense policies and vehicle mileage rate is paid at the per kilometer rate approved by the Canada Revenue Agency.

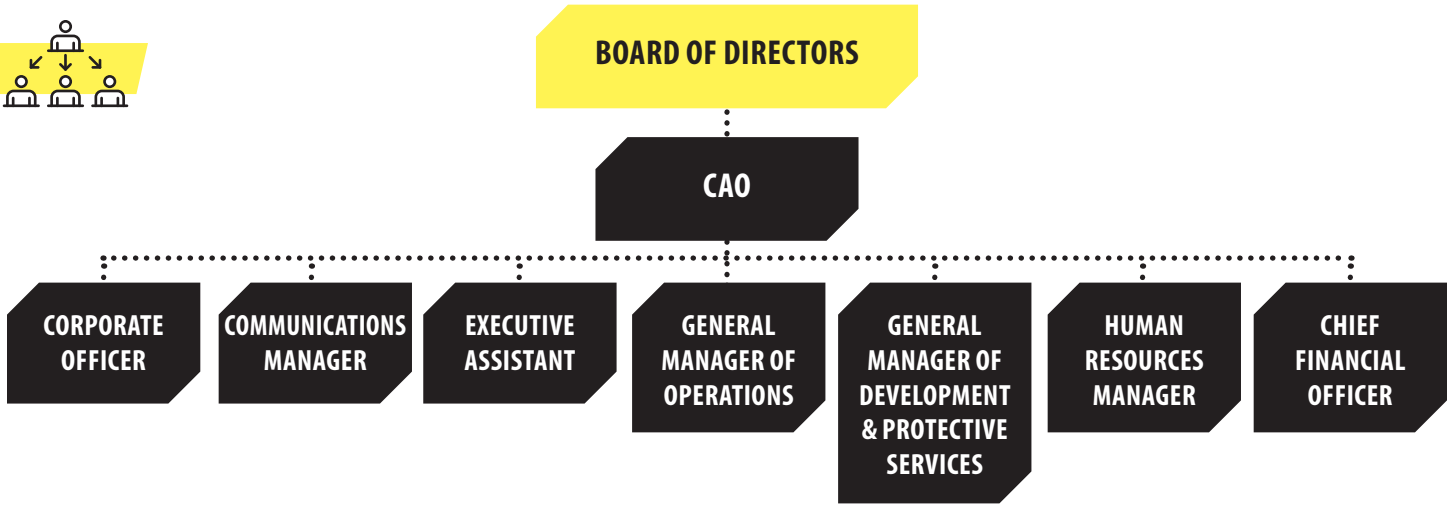
REGIONAL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

The Board is responsible for setting a vision, developing strategies to achieve the vision, and providing policy direction. The Board is comprised of six electoral area directors and nine municipal directors, appointed by their respective councils.

City of Cranbrook (2)	City of Fernie	City of Kimberley
District of Elkford	District of Sparwood	District of Invermere
Village of Radium Hot Springs	Village of Canal Flats	

RDEK Electoral Area A	RDEK Electoral Area B	RDEK Electoral Area C
RDEK Electoral Area E	RDEK Electoral Area F	RDEK Electoral Area G

The Board of Directors is headed by the Chair, who is elected annually by the other Directors. The CAO implements the Board's policies and decisions and oversees all operations. The below organization chart shows the basic structure of a Regional District, with the CAO as the conduit between the Board and staff.



An Electoral Area Director works within a governance structure where representation is based on their electoral area. Services can vary from one area to another and some decisions affect only the participants in a specific service, while other decisions have broader implications for the regional district as a whole. As a result, the Electoral Area Director's role at the board table can shift depending on the matter under consideration. The Electoral Director has two connected responsibilities - represent their electoral area, and participate in regional decision-making for the whole district. This balance is one of the most important parts of the role.

The Electoral Area Director speaks to the needs, concerns, and priorities of the people in their area, to help ensure rural perspectives are heard alongside municipal perspectives, including matters such as:

- land use and planning
- local services
- community infrastructure
- emergency preparedness
- recreation and community facilities
- rural service levels and taxation impacts

Adopting Bylaws

While Directors don't write or develop individual bylaws, they do set the direction for staff to bring bylaws forward for consideration. Upon adoption, bylaws provide the regulations which are enforceable by Compliance Officers and other authorities, if so given.

Bylaws are fundamental pieces of public policy that regulate, prohibit, and impose regulations or requirements within the community. Some bylaws are mandatory as they are required by legislation while others are discretionary and reflect the Board's decision to regulate or address a specific issue in the community.

Adopting Policy

Board policies shape our governance, strategic direction, and high-level decision-making and are established by the Board of Directors.

Operational policies govern day-to-day activities within the organization and are established by the CAO.

KOOTENAY EAST REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT (KERHD)

The Kootenay East Regional Hospital District provides up to 40 percent capital funding for acute care facilities in the region for equipment and facility construction and renovation.

The Hospital District extends beyond the boundaries of the RDEK to include the Towns of Golden and Creston, and the portions of the Regional Districts of Central Kootenay and Columbia Shuswap surrounding those municipalities. For a total of 21 KERHD Board of Directors.

The purpose of the KERHD is to provide capital funding to Interior Health for equipment, construction, and renovations of hospitals and hospital facilities. There is no involvement in operations, or operational funding.

KERHD Board meetings are held quarterly, on the Friday following the RDEK Board meeting at 12:00pm.

ELECTION CALENDAR

Election Period

Thursday, January 1, 2026 – Friday, September 18, 2026

- Period beginning January 1 of an election year until 29 days before General Voting Day. Campaigns must report all expenses incurred during the election period.

Nomination Period

Tuesday, September 1, 2026 @ 9:00am – Friday, September 11, 2026 @ 4:00pm

- The period for candidates to submit their nominations to local election officials.

Pre-Campaign Period

Monday, July 20, 2026 – Friday, September 18, 2026

- At the beginning of this period election advertising rules come into force and continue through General Voting Day.

Campaign Period

Saturday, September 19, 2026 – Saturday, October 17, 2026

- The period that begins on the 28th day before General Voting Day and ends at the close of voting on General Voting Day.
- Candidate and third-party expense limits apply during this period.

Advance Voting Opportunity

Wednesday, October 7, 2026 @ 8:00am - 8:00pm (Locations to be determined)

Second Advance Voting Day

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 @ 8:00am - 8:00pm (Locations to be determined)

General Voting Day

Saturday, October 17, 2026 @ 8:00am - 8:00pm (Locations to be determined)

Campaign Financing Disclosure Statement Filing Deadline

Friday, January 15, 2027

- Deadline to file campaign financing disclosure statements

Campaign Financing Disclosure Statement Late Filing Deadline

Tuesday, February 16, 2027

- Final deadline to file campaign financing disclosure statements. Late filing before this deadline incurs a $500 late filing fee.

2026 RDEK BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING CALENDAR

- **January 9**
- **February 13**
- **March 13**
- **April 10**
- **May 8**
- **June 12**
- **July 10**
- **August 14**
- **September 11**
- **October 9**
- **November (TBD)**
- **December 11**

2026 KERHD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING CALENDAR

- **March 13**
- **June 12**
- **September 11**
- **December 11**

Regular meeting schedule of the Board is adopted in August of each year for the following year.

RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

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