

June 9, 2026

LEGISLATIVE AND MUNICIPAL POLICY SUMMARY

Since adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in 2018, provincial legislation and municipal policy have significantly reshaped how growth, housing, and infrastructure are planned. These changes have implications for growth patterns, transportation demand, and servicing requirements that were not fully anticipated in the current RGS.

An RGS update would allow these changes to be considered collectively, support alignment across jurisdictions, and ensure regional policy reflects current conditions.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

Since 2018, provincial legislation has significantly changed how housing, density, and infrastructure are planned. Recent legislation has accelerated housing delivery, enabled more density in urban and transit-served areas, and increased provincial direction in local planning. These changes are influencing where and how growth occurs, with implications for transportation demand, infrastructure planning, and regional coordination.

Bill 18 (2019) Municipal Affairs and Housing Statues Amendment Act

- Requires municipalities to prepare Housing Needs Reports on a regular cycle
- Assesses housing demand, population trends, and affordability
- Informs OCPs and land use decisions

Implications:

- Strengthens evidence-based planning
- Increases expectations for housing supply responsiveness

Bill 16 (2022) Transportation Amendment Act

- Establishes the legislative basis for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
- Enables provincial influence over land use and density near major transit infrastructure

Implications:

- Reinforces integration of land use and transportation planning
- Signals increased provincial influence on growth along corridors

Bill 43 (2022) Housing Supply Act

- Enables provincial housing target orders for municipalities
- Includes enforcement mechanisms where targets are not met

Implications:

- Accelerates housing delivery timelines
- Reduces local discretion over the pace of growth
- Increases pressure on infrastructure and services

Bill 44 (2023) Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment

- Enables small-scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH) in urban areas
- Supports increased density near transit corridors and in growing communities
- Streamlines approvals and updates housing planning requirements

Implications:

- Expands density across a broader range of neighbourhoods
- Shifts growth patterns beyond traditional centres and corridors

Bill 46 (2023) Development Financing

- Introduces Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) and expands eligible infrastructure categories

Implications:

- Improves tools for funding growth-related infrastructure
- Supports more comprehensive cost recovery

Bill 47 (2023) Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA)

- Required municipalities to designate *Transit-Oriented Areas* around major transit hubs.
- Sets minimum densities and limits restrictions on development

Implications:

- Concentrates growth in transit-accessible areas
- Supports transit investment and reduces reliance on private vehicles

Bill 16 (2024) Planning and Housing Amendments

- Expanded and clarified *inclusionary zoning* powers, allowing municipalities to require affordable housing units in new developments.
- Strengthens links between development and infrastructure servicing

Implications

- Enhances ability to deliver affordable housing
- Improves coordination between growth and infrastructure

Overall Direction of Province

Since 2018, provincial policy has increasingly focused on:

- Accelerating housing supply
- Enabling density, particularly in urban and transit-served areas
- Reducing regulatory barriers
- Strengthening infrastructure funding tools
- Increasing provincial oversight of municipal planning

Implications for the RGS:

These changes alter growth assumptions, increase the pace and distribution of development, and require stronger alignment between regional policy, municipal planning, and infrastructure investment.

MUNICIPAL POLICY AND OCP UPDATES

Since 2018, municipalities across the CRD have updated OCPs in response to provincial requirements, housing demand, and local priorities. These updates reflect consistent regional trends:

- Increased density in centres, corridors, and villages
- Expansion of small-scale multi-unit housing
- Greater emphasis on transit-oriented development
- Concentration of growth to limit sprawl and protect rural lands
- Integration of climate action, resilience, and low-carbon development
- Continued collaboration with First Nations
- Support for local food systems and community amenities

Implications for the RGS:

While broadly aligned with the RGS vision, these plans have evolved independently and on different timelines. An update is needed to confirm regional objectives, ensure consistency, and better integrate municipal growth directions into a coordinated regional framework.

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Taken together, these legislative and policy changes have significantly altered the regional growth context since 2018:

- Growth is occurring more quickly and in different forms than anticipated
- Density is being enabled across a wider range of locations
- Provincial direction is playing a larger role in shaping development
- Municipal plans are evolving independently
- Infrastructure and transportation pressures are increasing

Implications for the RGS:

These shifts increase the risk of misalignment between municipal planning, regional infrastructure, and provincial policy. Updating the RGS will help ensure it remains an effective coordinating framework for growth, infrastructure, and transportation across the region.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN RGS UPDATE

In response, an RGS update should:

- Reassess growth distribution assumptions in light of SSMUH and TOAs
- Confirm or refine the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB)
- Review and update the settlement concept and growth areas
- Align population and housing projections with revised growth patterns
- Address provincial housing targets within a regional framework