



**REPORT TO PLANNING AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2019**

SUBJECT **Regional Growth Strategy Indicator Report**

ISSUE

To provide an update on Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) implementation.

BACKGROUND

The RGS was approved on March 15, 2018. Reporting on annual progress shows a commitment to implementation and fulfills a requirement under the *Local Government Act* Section 452 to prepare an annual report on implementation and progress towards the goals and objectives of the RGS. An annual report ensures that the strategy, its indicators and policies are actively monitored and assessed as the region continues to grow. The 2019 RGS Indicator Report (Report) (Appendix A) is the first report since adoption.

The Report tracks how the region is progressing on delivering on RGS goals, policies and targets.

The Development and Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC), made up of municipal and Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF EA) Planning Directors or designates, reviewed a draft of the Report at a December 17, 2018 meeting and over the following month. DPAC input was incorporated in the Report provided in Appendix A.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1:

That the Planning and Protective Services Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

- a) That the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Indicator Report be received for information; and
- b) That Regional and Strategic Planning staff be directed to forward copies of the RGS Indicator Report to municipal and Juan de Fuca Electoral Area staff as well as relevant CRD Divisions with encouragement to take actions to further advance progress towards RGS targets.

Alternative 2:

That the report be referred back to staff for additional information.

DISCUSSION

RGS monitoring allows the CRD Board to review and evaluate progress being made and prompt resolution of any issues that require further attention.

The Report tracks 20 indicators. The indicators have been selected to capture progress on each of seven RGS Objectives. Criteria for selection of indicators included: relevance, data availability, accuracy, cost and effort. While many indicators use data that are available annually, some

indicators rely on census data that are only available every five years. Given the time lag associated with data availability, much of the data used to prepare the Indicator Report reflect trends in place prior to RGS approval. The Report in essence identifies the baseline against which future progress will be measured.

The seven RGS Objectives and related progress can be summarized as follows:

Managing and Balancing Growth:

The RGS's objective is to keep urban settlement compact. While the Urban Containment Policy Area (UCPA) has remained largely static over time, the number of dwelling units being built in areas that are not conducive to walking, cycling and transit continues to outpace the number of dwelling units that are built in areas that are efficiently served by transit and active transportation. This trend is further demonstrated by the increasing percentage of new dwelling units being built outside of the UCPA.

East Sooke and Otter Point in the JdF EA continue to grow at or below the targeted number of net new dwelling units per year.

Environment and Infrastructure:

The RGS aims to protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health. The protection of the Sea-to-Sea Green/Blue Belt will provide a continuous connected greenbelt network from Tod Inlet to the Sooke Basin. The target is for the CRD and other levels of government to acquire 11,310 hectares. By September 2018, 90.5% had been acquired. The percentage of the Regional Trail Network that has been completed is increasing. The percentage of businesses in compliance with the Source Control Bylaw standards remains high while the number of discharges with high public health concern rating has decreased. The amount of solid waste disposed per capita has increased in recent years but remains below the British Columbia average, while still falling short of the targeted 350 kg/person. Average daily potable water consumption per capita remains static, at around the Canadian average.

Housing and Community:

Between 2011 and 2016, minor progress was made in reducing core housing need. However, the price of a two bedroom rental has outpaced inflation since 2008 and the vacancy rate remains very low. The number of subsidized housing units that have a financial relationship with BC Housing has increased since 2013 -- a positive trend.

Transportation:

The RGS aims to improve multi-modal connectivity and mobility. Positive progress is being made towards achieving a transportation system that sees 42% of all trips made by walking, cycling and transit by 2038. The total number of trips made by walking, cycling and transit have steadily increased between 2006 and 2017 to 26.6%.

Economic Development

RGS policies strive to realize the region's economic potential. In addition to providing an indication of economic development, this indicator also is important to track land use patterns so that employment opportunities are located close to where people live. A balanced distribution of jobs and population supports both land use and transportation objectives. Minor progress has been made towards achieving a jobs to population ratio of 0.60 in the Core Area, 0.53 in the Saanich Peninsula, and 0.36 in the West Shore.

Food Systems

The RGS aims to foster a resilient food and agricultural system. The widespread impact of food and agriculture and the nature of the challenges likely to be faced in coming years make food and agriculture a matter of regional interest. Challenges include loss of farmland, high cost of land and high average age of farmers. Minor progress is being made towards the target of increasing the amount of land in crop production for food by 5,000 ha by 2038. The average age of farmers in the region remains higher than the national average, a negative trend.

Climate Action

The RGS aims to reduce community based greenhouse gas emissions by 33% from 2007 levels by 2020 and by 61% by 2038. When last measured in 2010, the CRD was on trend to fall significantly short of the target. Recent progress toward this target is unknown due to lack of provincial data.

IMPLICATIONS

Implementation Implications

The Report shows that the region is on track to meet some RGS targets and objectives, but is falling short on others. Following receipt by the Board, the RGS Indicator Report will be posted on the CRD's website. Staff's recommendation is that the report also be forwarded to municipal and JdF EA staff as well as key CRD Divisions with encouragement to take actions to further advance progress towards RGS targets.

CONCLUSION

The *Local Government Act* requires the preparation of an annual report on the regional growth strategy's progress. The RGS Indicator Report provides a summary update on relevant performance measures. Staff will provide annual updates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Planning and Protective Services Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

- a) That the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Indicator Report be received for information; and
- b) That Regional and Strategic Planning staff be directed to forward copies of the RGS Indicator Report to municipal and Juan de Fuca Electoral Area staff as well as relevant CRD Divisions with encouragement to take actions to further advance progress towards RGS targets.

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Attachments: Appendix A - Regional Growth Strategy Indicator Report