



**REPORT TO PLANNING AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**

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**SUBJECT**     **Consideration of Regional Growth Strategy Amendment to Update Population Projections**

**ISSUE**

To receive local government feedback on the proposed amendment to the 2018 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Table 1: Population, Dwelling Unit and Employment Projections, in fulfilment of commitments agreed upon during RGS mediation and in accordance with requirements set out in the *Local Government Act*.

**BACKGROUND**

At its June 12, 2019, meeting, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board resolved to initiate an amendment to the 2018 RGS. As per section 433 of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of the proposed amendment is to update the 2018 RGS population, dwelling unit and employment projections.

The RGS was adopted by the Board on March 14, 2018, following a non-binding dispute resolution process during which participants agreed to update the projections based on 2016 census numbers once census data became available.

The data necessary to update the projections became available early in 2019, and staff then engaged the services of BC Statistics to prepare detailed projections. Projections were prepared at both sub-regional (Appendix A) and municipal (Appendix B) levels.

Appendix B details the projections and methodology. Appendix C provides information for all parts of the region (including Salt Spring Island, the Southern Gulf Islands and First Nations lands). Sections 432 to 434 and 450 of the *Local Government Act* set out requirements for processing the regional growth strategy amendment to incorporate the updated projections.

At its meeting of June 12, 2019, the Board approved a consultation plan as per section 434 of the *Local Government Act*. The consultation plan (Appendix D), outlined how municipalities, the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF EA), First Nations, and the relevant provincial and federal government departments, ministries and agencies were to be consulted. The consultation period was completed on July 31, 2019. This report provides an overview of the feedback received during the consultation period.

Four municipal councils (Esquimalt, North Saanich, View Royal and Sooke) and staff from three municipal planning departments (Victoria, Oak Bay, Metchosin) submitted letters, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans responded with no comment. Appendix E provides a record of all input received. Accuracy of data at the municipal level and disagreement with the model used to prepare the projections were the predominant themes.

Staff have prepared Bylaw No. 4328, to amend the CRD Regional Growth Strategy by updating the population, dwelling unit and employment projections at a sub-regional level (Appendix F).

**ALTERNATIVES**

*Alternative 1:*

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

- a) That the feedback received during the consultation period on the proposed amendment to update the CRD Regional Growth Strategy population, dwelling unit and employment projections (Appendix C) be received; and
- b) That staff be directed to refer proposed Bylaw No. 4328, "Capital Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1, 2018, Amendment Bylaw No. 1, 2019" for a period of 60 days to the following municipalities, the Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee, provincial and federal departments and agencies, and First Nations for comment.

Central Saanich	Colwood	Esquimalt
Highlands	Langford	Metchosin
North Saanich	Oak Bay	Saanich
Sidney	Sooke	Victoria
View Royal	Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
Ministry of Citizens' Services	Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture	Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources
Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy	Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development	Ministry of Health
Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Agriculture Land Commission BC Hydro	BC Ferries School District 61	BC Transit School District 62
School District 63	Destination British Columbia	Island Health
Islands Trust	CFB Esquimalt	Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Environment Canada	Parks Canada	Victoria Airport Authority
Cowichan Valley Regional District	Cowichan Tribes	Penelakut Tribes
Pauquachin First Nation	Tsartlip First Nation	Tsawout First Nation
Tseycum First Nation	T'Sou-ke Nation	Esquimalt Nation
Beecher Bay (Scia'new) First Nation	Pacheedaht First Nation	

*Alternative 2:*

That proposed Bylaw No. 4328 not be referred.

*Alternative 3*

That more information be provided by staff.

**LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Section 429 of the *Local Government Act* states that a regional growth strategy must include population and employment projections for the time period covered by the strategy. The legislation does not specify the geographic scale at which the projections must be provided. The recommended sub-regional projections would satisfy the legislative requirement.

Section 434(3) of the *Local Government Act* requires that in adopting a consultation plan for the development of a Regional Growth Strategy, the Board must consider whether the plan should include the holding of a public hearing. The consultation plan adopted for the proposed amendment to the CRD RGS directed that a public hearing would not be held as part of the adoption process.

**CONSULTATION FEEDBACK AND IMPLICATIONS**

CRD municipalities and the JdF EA, along with those provincial and federal ministries and agencies identified in the Consultation Plan were invited to provide early comment on the proposed update to the CRD RGS. Eight responses were received, which are both summarized and provided as received in Appendix D.

Generally, municipalities commented on the differences in the projections provided to the CRD for the purposes of the RGS update by BC Statistics, and those either projected or estimated by the municipalities themselves. In order to reconcile these differences, the Development Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC) recommended that Table 1 of the RGS be limited to sub-regional projections. City of Victoria staff also identified an error in the base year (2018) dwelling unit counts, BC Stats acknowledged the error and provided corrected statistics, which have been included in the proposed bylaw.

Esquimalt Council commented that the model used to project population, dwelling units and employment does not accurately reflect the situation in Esquimalt; and, therefore, Esquimalt will not be able to align its projections with the sub-regional projections. The *Local Government Act* does not require Regional Context Statements to align with RGS projections, if there is a discrepancy, such as has been noted by the Township of Esquimalt, the variation could be identified and explained in the next update of municipal Regional Context Statements.

North Saanich Council indicated support for sub-regional projections, and requested that a public hearing be held as part of the bylaw amendment process if there is a high level of interest indicated by the consultation period. Regional Planning staff received no additional comments expressing interest in a public hearing.

**TIMING IMPLICATIONS**

Having now completed of the initial consultation period, staff have prepared Bylaw No. 4328 for referral by the Board to municipal councils, the Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee, and to relevant provincial and federal ministries and agencies.

Upon closure of the referral period, comments received will be returned to the Committee for consideration, along with a recommendation regarding first and second reading. Should the Board proceed with the Bylaw, a public hearing may be held at the Board's discretion. The Bylaw would then be sent to municipal councils for acceptance. Upon confirmation of the acceptance by all 13 municipalities, the Bylaw could then be read a third time and adopted by the Board.

### **DISCUSSION**

The 2018-2038 projections have been prepared using a demographic approach based on BC Statistics' PEOPLE (Population Extrapolation for Organizational Planning with Less Error) methodology. This method projects population using a Component/Cohort-Survival model. This model uses fertility, mortality and migration assumptions, and applies them to a base year age-specific population. Over time, cohorts are 'aged', while also considering the effects of net migration, deaths and births.

This approach contrasts with a land-use analysis approach, which requires extensive/detailed assessments of developable land in each municipality. This approach has been used by some municipalities within the CRD and could result in projections that vary from those derived using the PEOPLE model.

The DPAC discussed the methodology of both approaches. DPAC supported the use of the data derived using the PEOPLE model, but recommended that the sub-regional projections, rather than municipal level projections, be used on the understanding that the data's accuracy would be more reliable at that scale.

### **CONCLUSION**

Municipal councils and staff participated in the consultation for the development of the proposed RGS amendment to revise Table 1: Population, Dwelling Unit and Employment Projections in the 2018 RGS. A revised RGS Table 1 with sub-regional projections is recommended to address identified concerns.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

- a) That the feedback received during the consultation period on the proposed amendment to update the CRD Regional Growth Strategy population, dwelling unit and employment projections (Appendix C) be received; and

- b) That staff be directed to refer proposed Bylaw No. 4328, “Capital Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1, 2018, Amendment Bylaw No. 1, 2019” for a period of 60 days to the following municipalities, the Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee, and provincial and federal departments and agencies for comment.

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Attachments:

- Appendix A: Sub-regional Projections
- Appendix B: Municipal Projections
- Appendix C: Projection Methodology
- Appendix D: Approved Consultation Plan
- Appendix E: Consultation Feedback
- Appendix F: Proposed Bylaw No. 4328