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## REPORT TO PLANNING AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2021

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**SUBJECT** Esquimalt Regional Context Statement Consideration

### **ISSUE SUMMARY**

To review Esquimalt's revised Regional Context Statement (RCS) in relation to the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw (Bylaw No. 4017).

### **BACKGROUND**

On March 14, 2018 the CRD Board adopted the RGS, Bylaw No. 4017.

On April 11, 2018, the CRD Board approved a framework to guide the evaluation of regional context statements. A RCS, adopted within a municipality's Official Community Plan (OCP), relates OCP provisions to the RGS. As per section 446 of the *Local Government Act* (the *Act*), an OCP in a municipality to which an RGS applies must include an accepted RCS. The *Act* requires that all municipal regional context statements be submitted to the Board within two years of RGS adoption. The *Act* also stipulates that upon receipt of a proposed RCS, the CRD Board must respond by resolution within 120 days to the municipal council to indicate whether or not it accepts the RCS. The Board is deemed to have accepted the RCS if it does not respond within the 120 day period.

On June 13, 2018, the CRD Board approved the Township of Esquimalt's RCS, submitted to fulfill the legislative requirements following adoption of the 2018 RGS.

On June 12, 2019, the CRD Board initiated an RGS amendment to update population and employment projections with 2016 census data. The updated RGS projections are provided at the sub-regional level to provide municipalities with the flexibility to reconcile projections in a municipal OCP with the RGS.

On March 1, 2021, the Township of Esquimalt submitted a minor revision to its RCS for Board acceptance (see Appendix A). The RCS was revised in anticipation of updated sub-regional population projections in Table 1 of the RGS. The Township of Esquimalt has indicated that the revisions are necessary to ensure that the RCS can accurately describe the relationship between its OCP and the RGS in accordance with the legislation.

Staff have evaluated the proposed RCS revision in accordance with the Board-approved "Regional Context Statement Framework", as discussed in the implications section of this report.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

#### *Alternative 1*

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

That the Township of Esquimalt regional context statement be considered in relation to the 2018 Regional Growth Strategy (Bylaw No. 4017) and be accepted in accordance with the requirements of section 448 of the *Local Government Act*.

*Alternative 2*

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

That the Township of Esquimalt regional context statement be considered in relation to the 2018 Regional Growth Strategy (Bylaw No. 4017) and not be accepted in accordance with the requirements of section 448 of the *Local Government Act*.



*Alternative 3*

That the Esquimalt Regional Context Statement Consideration report be referred back to staff for additional information based on Planning and Protective Services Committee direction.

**IMPLICATIONS**

*Regional Growth Strategy Implications*

An RGS must include population and employment projections to cover a 20-year period. The proposed revision to the Township of Esquimalt's RCS identifies an updated relationship between the OCP and RGS projections. The RCS now specifies that the RGS projections will not constrain Esquimalt's growth given that such growth continues to align with RGS objectives for the development of complete compact communities. This revision is in keeping with the requirements set out in the Board-approved RCS framework and allows the RCS to demonstrate a good relationship to the RGS.

LGA	RCS Content	Relationship to Legislative Requirement		
		All relevant content is included	Clearly articulates relevant content	Plan to be consistent over time
429(2)(b)	Identify how the OCP relates to the projections provided in Table 1 of the RGS.	 RCS references the legislative requirement for 20-year projections and specifies to which sub-region Esquimalt belongs.	 RCS identifies that Esquimalt will densify to create complete, compact communities.	N/A

The referral period for Board acceptance of a RCS is 120 days (July 11, 2021).

*Intergovernmental Implications*

Board acceptance of the RCS is a key RGS implementation tool as the context statement relates the RGS to a municipality's OCP. The OCP provides policies that guide decisions related to land use, infrastructure, mobility, housing, parks and other content under the authority of a local government. The Township of Esquimalt has indicated that updating the relationship between the RGS projections and the Township's OCP is needed before any changes to the RGS are adopted.

*Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities*

Within the CRD's 2019-2022 Corporate Plan, Corporate Priority 11a-2 is to review municipal RCS's for RGS consistency. Consideration of this RCS supports completion of that priority.

## **CONCLUSION**

Provincial legislation requires that a municipal OCP contain an accepted RCS. Board acceptance of the RCS is a key tool for RGS implementation. Staff have reviewed Esquimalt's proposed RCS in accordance with the Board-approved evaluation framework. Esquimalt's RCS demonstrates a good relationship to the RGS and will work toward achieving RGS vision and objectives.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

That the Township of Esquimalt regional context statement be considered in relation to the 2018 Regional Growth Strategy (Bylaw No. 4017) and be accepted in accordance with the requirements of section 448 of the *Local Government Act*.

Submitted by:	Emily Sinclair, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Regional & Strategic Planning
Concurrence:	Kevin Lorette, P. Eng., MBA, General Manager, Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

## **ATTACHMENT**

Appendix A: Proposed Esquimalt Regional Context Statement