



Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda Planning and Protective Services Committee

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

9:00 AM

6th Floor Boardroom
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

Z. de Vries (Chair), K. Williams (Vice Chair), B. Desjardins, M. Little, C. McNeil-Smith, D. Thompson, A. Wickheim, R. Windsor, C. Plant (Board Chair, ex officio)

The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and all people are treated with dignity. We pledge to make our meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [24-164](#) Minutes of the January 17, 2024 Planning and Protective Services Committee Meeting

Recommendation: That the minutes of the Planning and Protective Services Committee meeting of January 17, 2024 be adopted as circulated.

Attachments: [Minutes - January 17, 2024](#)

4. Chair's Remarks

5. Presentations/Delegations

The public are welcome to attend CRD Board meetings in-person.

Delegations will have the option to participate electronically. Please complete the online application at www.crd.bc.ca/address no later than 4:30 pm two days before the meeting and staff will respond with details.

Alternatively, you may email your comments on an agenda item to the CRD Board at crdboard@crd.bc.ca.

6. Committee Business

6.1. [24-303](#) District of Saanich Regional Context Statement

Recommendation: The Planning and Protective Services Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That the District of Saanich 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.

Attachments: [Staff Report: District of Saanich Regional Context Statement](#)
[Appendix A: Saanich Regional Context Statement Referral](#)
[Appendix B: Regional Context Statement Evaluation](#)

6.2. [24-304](#) Requirements for Consideration of Regional Growth Strategy Updates

Recommendation: The Planning and Protective Services Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That CRD staff be directed to undertake the studies listed in Table 1: RGS Studies, identify whether additional policy direction is needed, and report back to the Planning and Protective Services Committee with these findings.

Attachments: [Staff Report: Requirements for Consideration of RGS Updates](#)

6.3. [24-305](#) Previous Minutes of Other CRD Committees and Commissions for Information

Recommendation: There is no recommendation. The following minutes are for information only:
a) Development and Planning Advisory Committee minutes of January 29, 2024

Attachments: [Minutes: Development & Planning Advisory Cttee - Jan 29, 2024](#)

7. Notice(s) of Motion

8. New Business

9. Adjournment

The next meeting is **May 15, 2024 @ 9:30 am.**

To ensure quorum, please advise Tamara Pillipow (tpillipow@crd.bc.ca) if you or your alternate cannot attend.

Meeting Minutes

Planning and Protective Services Committee

Wednesday, January 17, 2024

9:00 AM

6th Floor Boardroom
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

PRESENT

Directors; Z. de Vries (Chair) (EP), K. Williams (Vice Chair) (EP), M. Little (EP), C. McNeil-Smith (EP), D. Thompson, A. Wickheim, C. Plant (Board Chair, ex officio) (EP)

Staff: L. Hutcheson, General Manager, Parks and Environmental Services; K. Lorette, General Manager, Planning and Protective Services; S. Carby, Senior Manager, Protective Services; E. Sinclair, Senior Manager, Regional and Strategic Planning (EP); C. Vrabel, Manager, Fire Services; M. Lagoa, Deputy Corporate Officer; T. Pillipow, Committee Clerk (Recorder)

EP - Electronic Participation

Regrets: Directors B. Desjardins, R. Windsor

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 am.

**MOVED by Director McNeil-Smith, SECONDED by Director Wickheim,
That the rules of the Capital Regional District Board Procedures Bylaw be
suspended to allow Director de Vries to Chair the meeting remotely.
CARRIED**

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Director Wickheim provided a Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Director Williams, SECONDED by Director Wickheim,
That the agenda for the January 17, 2024 Planning and Protective Services
Committee be approved.
CARRIED**

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [24-078](#) Minutes of the October 18, 2023 Planning and Protective Services
Committee Meeting

**MOVED by Director Plant, SECONDED by Director McNeil-Smith,
That the minutes of the Planning and Protective Services Committee meeting of
October 18, 2023 be adopted as circulated.
CARRIED**

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair de Vries requested that committee members save their discussion points on what indicators we should be tracking for the Regional Growth Strategy, until the staff report on what an RGS update would require, is presented at a future meeting.

5. Presentations/Delegations

There were no presentations or delegations.

6. Committee Business

6.1. [24-011](#) 2024 Planning and Protective Services Committee Terms of Reference

K. Lorette presented Item 6.1. for information.

6.2. [24-029](#) Regional Growth Strategy Indicators Report

K. Lorette presented Item 6.2. for information

Discussion ensued regarding:

- opportunities for improving data collection on the affordable housing supply
- sharing data with the region's municipalities upon request
- how the strategic priorities are addressed within the Regional Growth Strategy
- staff to request that BC Housing provide a breakdown on their subsidized housing supply

Motion Arising:

**MOVED by Director Plant, SECONDED by Director Thompson,
That staff include the Regional Growth Strategy Indicators report and appendix
as part of future Board Strategic Priorities check-ins.
CARRIED**

6.3. [24-051](#) Capital Regional District Emergency HazMat Team Service Review

K. Lorette spoke to Item 6.3.

**MOVED by Director McNeil-Smith, SECONDED by Director Plant,
The Planning and Protective Services Committee recommends to the Capital
Regional District Board:
That staff be directed to distribute the report and to engage interest holders and
to report back to the Committee with an implementation plan.
CARRIED**

6.4. [24-084](#) Previous Minutes of Other CRD Committees and Commissions for Information

The following minutes were received for information:

- a) Local Government Emergency Program Advisory Commission - August 17, 2023

7. Notice(s) of Motion

There were no notices of motion.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

9. Adjournment

**MOVED by Director Little, SECONDED by Director Plant,
That the January 17, 2024 Planning and Protective Services Committee meeting
be adjourned at 10:02 am.
CARRIED**

CHAIR

RECORDER



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REPORT TO PLANNING AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

SUBJECT District of Saanich Regional Context Statement

ISSUE SUMMARY

To review the District of Saanich 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 14, 2021, the CRD Board amended the RGS with updated population projections (Bylaw No. 4328).

An RCS, adopted within a local government's Official Community Plan (OCP), relates OCP provisions to the RGS. Per section 446 of the *Local Government Act* (the *Act*), an OCP in a local government to which an RGS applies must include an accepted RCS. The *Act* 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 April 11, 2018, the CRD Board approved a framework to guide the evaluation of regional context statements.

On December 12, 2023, the District of Saanich submitted an RCS for Board acceptance (see Appendix A). The RCS was prepared to reflect the content of a new 2023 District of Saanich OCP in relation to the 2018 RGS. The CRD Board has until April 10, 2024, to review and respond to the District of Saanich RCS. The CRD Board approved Saanich's previous RCS on March 11, 2020.

CRD Regional and Strategic Planning staff have evaluated the District of Saanich RCS in accordance with the Board-approved "Regional Context Statement Framework". This framework identifies three criteria against which staff should evaluate an RCS:

- 1) **All relevant content is included:** The RCS addresses all RGS content relevant to the OCP. Content that is not applicable in the context of the OCP should be identified as "not applicable".
- 2) **Clearly articulates relevant content:** The RCS provides a sufficient level of detail to convey how the specific OCP content relates to the RGS.
- 3) **Plan to be consistent over time:** The RCS identifies how the OCP will become consistent with the RGS over time if content is not immediately consistent.

Appendix B presents a summary of the evaluation.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

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

That the District of Saanich 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 District of Saanich 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 District of Saanich regional context statement report be referred back to staff for additional information based on Planning and Protective Services Committee direction.

IMPLICATIONS

Service Delivery Implications

Reviewing RCSs for consistency with the RGS is an ongoing standard procedure completed for all updated OCPs in accordance with section 448 of the *Local Government Act*.

Intergovernmental Implications

Board acceptance of the RCS is a key RGS implementation tool as the context statement relates a local government's OCP to the RGS. 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 District of Saanich has submitted a proposed RCS to fulfill its statutory obligation to have an accepted RCS that demonstrates the relationship of its new OCP to the RGS. An accepted RCS is necessary for Saanich to adopt its new OCP.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The District of Saanich's proposed RCS demonstrates a strong relationship to the RGS that will work toward achieving the RGS vision and objectives, based on CRD staff's analysis against the RCS evaluation criteria. The RCS fully captures all relevant OCP content (*criteria #1*) and identifies how the OCP relates to the RGS (*criteria #2*). The RCS does not identify the need for any OCP areas to become consistent with the RGS over time (*criteria #3*).

As outlined in Appendix B, the RCS addresses population projections and RGS objectives for growth management, environment and infrastructure, housing and community, transportation, economic development, food systems and climate action. The District of Saanich will direct the majority of future growth into the Uptown Core, urban centres of McKenzie and Quadra, Shelbourne, Royal Oak and Burnside and Tillicum, and growth corridors along McKenzie Avenue, Quadra Street, and Shelbourne Street. These areas are aligned with the RGS growth management plan described in RGS Maps 3a and 3b. OCP policies on the Urban Containment Policy Area are aligned with the RGS and is consistent with the RGS objectives to keep urban settlement compact.

Environmental & Climate Implications

The CRD Climate Action Strategy identifies sustainable land use, planning, and preparedness as an important goal area to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. RGS implementation, including the approval of RCSs that will help reduce community-based GHG emissions, is a key action. As shown in Appendix B, the District of Saanich RCS demonstrates a strong relationship to the RGS by prioritizing compact development, supporting climate adaptive agriculture, protection of rural lands and natural areas, adopting energy efficiency for building performance and municipal infrastructure, transportation policies that support transit and active transportation options, adopting policies focused on reducing carbon emissions by 2030 and eliminating emissions by 2050, increasing renewable energy use, and integrating climate action and adaptation into local government decision-making.

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 the District of Saanich’s proposed RCS in accordance with the Board-approved evaluation framework. The District of Saanich’s RCS demonstrates a strong 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 District of Saanich 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 and Strategic Planning
Concurrence:	Kevin Lorette, P. Eng., MBA, General Manager, Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Saanich Regional Context Statement Referral
- Appendix B: Regional Context Statement Evaluation

District of Saanich
Legislative Services Division t. 250-475-5501
770 Vernon Ave. f. 250-475-5440
Victoria BC V8X 2W7 saanich.ca



File: 2330-25

December 12, 2023

Via email: kmorley@crd.bc.ca

Kristen Morley
General Manager, Corporate Services/
Corporate Officer
Capital Regional District
625 Fisgard Street
Victoria BC V8W 1R7

Dear Ms. Morley:

RE: PROPOSED UPDATED OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN (REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT)

This letter confirms that at their meeting held December 11, 2023, Saanich Council considered the Report of the Director of Planning dated December 1, 2023 regarding the proposed updated Official Community Plan and resolved as follows:

"That:

1. Council refer consideration of first reading of Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2023, No. 10000 to the December 11, 2023 Special Council meeting;
2. **Council direct staff to refer the Official Community Plan Regional Context Statement to the Capital Regional District for acceptance in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (s. 448);**
3. Council direct staff to prepare a report to Council for consideration of the proposed Official Community Plan in conjunction with the financial plan and applicable waste management plans in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (s. 477 (3)(a));
4. Council direct staff to refer the proposed Official Community Plan to the Agricultural Land Commission in accordance with the *Local Government Act* (s. 477 (3)(b)); and
5. A Public Hearing be called to further consider the proposed Official Community Plan."

As well, Council gave First Reading to Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2023, No. 10000.

Please find attached the Report of the Director of Planning and a copy of the Regional Context Statement for your consideration in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

Should you have any questions, I can be reached at 250-475-5501.

Sincerely,



Sharon Froud
Deputy Corporate Officer

Attachments

cc: Brent Reems (CAO)
Lindsay Chase, Director of Planning
Bob Lapham, Strategic Advisor – Housing Supply
Cameron Scott, Manager of Community Planning
Amber Walker, Senior Planner



16.0 Regional Context Statement

As a one of the core municipalities within the Capital Regional District (CRD), Saanich works collaboratively with 12 member municipalities and an electoral area to achieve regional objectives. The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), adopted by the CRD Board in March 2018, provides a framework to achieve a regional vision for growth and change that enhances quality of life, sustainability and social well-being.

The RGS framework specifies ten interconnected objectives supported by principles, policies and 2038 targets to achieve regional sustainability:

1. Keep urban settlement compact;
2. Protect the integrity of rural communities;
3. Protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health;
4. Manage regional infrastructure services sustainably;
5. Create safe and complete communities;

6. Improve housing affordability;
7. Improve multi-modal connectivity and mobility;
8. Realize the region's economic potential;
9. Foster a resilient food and agriculture system; and
10. Significantly reduce community-based greenhouse gas emissions.

As required under Sections 446 and 447 of the "Local Government Act", CRD member municipalities collectively support the RGS by preparing regional context statements identifying the relationship between the OCP and RGS. The following demonstrates how the Saanich OCP aligns with and achieves the objectives of the RGS.

Objective 1: Keep Urban Settlement Compact

The land use characteristics and development patterns in Saanich are largely influenced by its central location in the region and its unique context with both urban neighbourhoods and rural agriculture lands. Within this context, Saanich plays an important role in the Capital Regional District as the municipality with the highest population and the largest area.

Saanich has adopted growth management policies and strategies in the OCP aimed at limiting urban sprawl while creating opportunities to develop more complete, compact and sustainable communities with access to a range of housing choices, close to employment, amenities and services. The OCP supports concentrating growth within the Urban Containment Boundary as a principal tool of growth management which contributes to the RGS target of accommodating 95% of new dwelling units within the Containment Area by 2038 (see Policy 7.1.2).

Given that Saanich is a well-established community with a strong commitment to sustainability, growth for the most part will come from redevelopment and infill. The majority of future growth is focused on walkable, mixed use Primary Growth Areas with opportunities for new multiple family residential, commercial, institutional and civic development (see Section 7.3). Residential infill in established neighbourhoods within the Urban Containment Boundary will also continue to take place to increase housing options for residents. The OCP contains infill development policies supporting secondary suites, garden suites, houseplexes, multi-family residential and mixed-use development (see Section 7.4).

The OCP population and housing supply projections, described in Section 2.2, are generally consistent with the RGS sub-regional core area population projections. The Saanich projected short-and- long-term population growth is 136,800 people by 2031 and 152,000 people by 2046. To support this population growth an additional 15,400 net housing units will be needed by 2046.

Objective 2: Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

Rural Saanich is valued for its natural beauty, diverse environments, high biological diversity, agriculture, forested lands and rural lifestyle. Policies and environmental protection measures in the OCP help retain the character of rural communities, maintain the health of its natural systems and demonstrates Saanich's commitment to the preservation and strengthening of rural areas. Future development is expected to be consistent with the rural scale and character, contributing to the RGS goal to limit new dwelling units to a maximum of 5% outside of the Urban Containment Policy Area and within the Rural/Rural Residential Policy Area (see Section 7.7).

Containing and concentrating growth within the Urban Containment Boundary is key to better protection and retention of rural, agriculture and environmentally significant lands. Furthermore, limiting urban sprawl and the extent of rural development and subdivision is achieved through policies to maintain farming, food production and rural residential as predominate land uses. Large lot sizes are appropriate for these land uses. Most of the parcels are designated A-1 and A-4 Rural Zones which require a minimum lot size of 2.0 and 4.0 hectares, respectfully, which is reinforced through policy in the OCP (see Policy 7.7.3). The OCP also aims to minimize conflicts between rural and urban uses through the clear delineation of land uses and buffering rural and agricultural lands from adjacent urban residential development as part of redevelopment and subdivision proposals, where appropriate (see Policy 12.1.9).

Infrastructure services in rural areas includes on-site services which is in keeping with the rural character and helps limit development to the scale, form and density consistent with the intent of the rural land use designations. The OCP also limits consideration for a Sewer Service Area extension outside the Urban Containment Boundary, only as a means to resolve current health problems if no reasonable alternative is feasible or for public facilities or parks, where there would be significant community benefit (see Policy 10.2.2).

Objective 3: Protect, Conserve and Manage Ecosystem Health

The RGS aims to protect the landscape character, ecological integrity, and biodiversity of the Capital Region. Saanich's OCP reinforces the RGS by emphasizing the importance of preserving, protecting and managing its diverse natural environment and ecosystems for the well-being of the community and the region. Saanich's natural environment is comprised of designated environmentally sensitive areas, urban forests, watersheds, water courses, floodplains, parks, open space and trails (see Maps 1, 15 and 16).

Regionally significant parks, identified in the RGS as Capital Green Lands, represent a diverse range of recreation and natural areas and include PKLOS (Mount Douglas Park), Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, Rithet's Bog Conservation Area, Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Parks and Francis King Regional Park. Additional regionally significant parks are found throughout the municipality in both urban and rural areas (see Map 15).

Saanich's OCP supports policies related to protecting and restoring habitat and ecosystems; connecting environmentally sensitive areas and green spaces with "greenways"; promoting conservation of existing and additional tree cover; requiring restoration plans as a result of disturbance; and, prioritizing condition assessments for streams, riparian and wetland areas (see Sections 6.1-6.3).

Ongoing stewardship is seen as a foundational and fundamental tool for preserving and enhancing Saanich's natural heritage. Policies encourage habitat creation and biodiversity improvements, focus on principles of Naturescaping and landscaping that utilizes native species and climate resistant plants on both public and private public lands (See Policy 6.1.9). Policies in the OCP recognize the importance of partnerships with CRD, First Nations, local and senior governments and other stakeholders to promote stewardship of our watercourses, groundwater and marine environments, and education initiatives (see Section 6.5).

Through partnerships to improve source control and reduce contamination entering our watercourse and marine environment as well as policies that support an integrated planning approach to restoration of and management of watercourses, surface water, drainage and

groundwater, the OCP supports the RGS objective to protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health (see Policies 6.3.1 and 10.3.1).

Through comprehensive environmental master plans and implementation tools that inform land use decisions, such as the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and the Urban Forest Strategy (both in progress), Saanich is equipped to maintain the integrity of the natural environment. Development Permit Area (DPA) Guidelines provide guidance on land use issues in and around sensitive ecosystems and within hazard areas such as flood plains and areas susceptible to wildfires (See Schedule B). DPAs also provide guidance on conservation of water and energy, improvements to storm water management, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, the Streamside and Floodplain DPAs are significant contributors to addressing the protection of environmentally sensitive landscapes during development and support the RGS target to reduce contaminants in water bodies. Within rural Saanich, environmentally sensitive areas and green spaces are better protected by focusing growth within the Urban Containment Boundary (See Policy 7.1.2).

Objective 4: Manage Regional Infrastructure Services Sustainably

In order to accommodate the anticipated population increase in the region, the RGS supports long-term sustainable planning and management of regional infrastructure services that take into consideration the conservation of land, water and energy resources and the impacts of climate change and natural hazards. Regional infrastructure services include drinking water, liquid and solid waste while services in Saanich supplement this infrastructure with collection and distribution systems.

The OCP supports the RGS target of preparing long-term capital plans for CRD utilities that are cost-effective and efficient to serve. Section 7.9 of the OCP also supports the development and implementation of an asset management strategy for the District to guide the effective stewardship of assets and to provide satisfactory and sustainable levels of service to the public.

Saanich growth management strategies promote efficient and cost-effective infrastructure planning and management through compact land use patterns, concentrating growth in Primary Growth Areas. This allows investments to be directed towards maintenance and improvements to existing infrastructure, rather than on new infrastructure (see Policy 7.3.1). This is also supported through policies that restrict major infrastructure extensions (see Sections 10.2 and 10.4).

Buildings themselves also have a profound effect on the environment and health, as they consume large quantities of energy, water, and materials, and emit significant levels of greenhouse gases and generate other waste. These impacts can be significantly reduced by encouraging zero carbon and sustainable building practices. For example, the OCP includes policies and implementation tools for future development, requiring building and site design to reduce impervious surfaces and incorporate features that will encourage ground water recharge through methods such as green roofs, vegetated swales and pervious paving materials (Section 7.8).

Other policies contribute to sustainable infrastructure by: 1) encouraging reduced consumption of non-renewable resources; and 2) by supporting CRD initiatives to reduce solid

waste and develop efficient and environmentally acceptable long-term waste disposal solutions, working towards Zero Waste generation (see Section 10.6).

Within rural areas, OCP policies emphasize low impact and low-density development approaches that help conserve environmentally significant lands and reduce public infrastructure needs with requirements for on-site services (see Section 7.7).

The OCP limits consideration for a Sewer Service Area extension outside the Urban Containment Boundary, only as a means to resolve current health problems if no reasonable alternative is feasible or, for public facilities or parks, where there would be a significant community benefit (see Section 10.2). The OCP also limits consideration of water extensions outside the Urban Containment Boundary to those that are in keeping with RGS principles and that address pressing public health and environmental concerns, provide fire suppression, or service agriculture (see Section 10.4). Additionally, the OCP supports opportunities to improve water quality and enhance environmental features through retaining open-channel stormwater drainage system comprising of watercourses, ditches, flood plains and other water retention and detention features (see Section 10.3).

Objective 5: Create Safe and Complete Communities

The OCP emphasizes the importance of building complete communities with access to a diverse range of housing types and tenure, employment options, shops, services, community amenities, and public open spaces (see Section 7.0). As part of the 2023 update, Saanich incorporated the 15-minute community concept into its planning approach which builds on the complete community approach in the 2008 version (Section 7.0, Objective F and Strategic Land Use Directions). An important element in the development of complete communities is to provide mobility options that support walking, cycling and transit, and foster healthy lifestyles and safe neighbourhoods (Policy 9.1.3).

A key tool to creating complete communities is to focus future growth in mixed use Primary Growth Areas within the Urban Containment Boundary. Through the integration of transportation planning, land use and urban design, “Centres”, “Villages” and “Corridors” of various scales and levels of completeness help to establish vibrant places to live, work, and enjoy (see Section 7.2). These are supplemented by small-scale Hubs to support Saanich’s transition to a 15-minute community.

Centre, Corridor, and Village Plans provide a policy framework to implement the vision of the OCP and guide growth and change for neighbourhoods and Primary Growth Areas (see Section 1.2). Policies in these plans help retain neighbourhood character and a sense of place by capturing issues unique to each area and provide a higher level of detail in articulating how the broader OCP vision is implemented at the local level. OCP policies further support developing a sense of place through promoting community connections and social interactions within safe, diverse and inclusive communities (see Section 13.0).

Development Permit Guidelines (Schedule B) contribute to the development of complete communities by providing direction on how to design buildings and developments that are sensitive to the existing character of an area and add to the community through improved streetscapes, pedestrian mobility, and quality open spaces (Section 7.8). In addition, Development Permit Guidelines can minimize risk and provide guidance on land use issues in and around sensitive ecosystems, and within hazard areas such as floodplains and areas susceptible to wildfires.

Additional policies in the OCP address public safety through building community awareness and taking action. Supporting public education on emergency and disaster preparedness, the development of transportation safety infrastructure, and the implementation of crime and fire prevention programs are some examples of the means by which the OCP works to improve public safety (see Section 13.6).

Objective 6: Improve Housing Affordability

A variety of affordable housing policies (see Section 8.0) in the OCP seek to address the RGS targets to increase the supply of more affordable housing; reduce the number of people in core housing need; and, reduce the number of people who are homeless.

The OCP recognizes there is a significant need in the community to increase affordable housing across the housing spectrum to improve quality of life, community health, and support the economy.

Policies in the OCP aim to increase the diversity of housing by type and tenure, thereby helping to ensure residents have access to housing suitable and desirable to their life stage and income, and to prioritize and incentivize those housing types that are most needed according to the District's Housing Needs Report (see Sections 8.1 and 8.4). Policies supporting residential development in Primary Growth Areas as well as residential infill in neighbourhoods, allow for increased housing diversity and supply in a way that complements the District's equity and sustainability goals by ensuring transit access, services and amenities are within walking distance and that neighbourhood areas serve a broad range of housing needs (see Sections 7.3 and 8.1).

The OCP also supports housing affordability through policies aimed at retaining, renewing, and developing all forms of rental housing across the housing spectrum and leveraging the development process as a way of gaining affordable housing units (see Section 8.2 and 8.3).

The OCP provides direction for the District of Saanich to work collaboratively with partners from the Capital Regional Housing Corporation, BC Housing, the Federal Government, non-profits, and other agencies to support the construction of supportive housing projects within Saanich and to address both immediate and long-term homelessness issues (see Section 8.5).

The District's Housing Needs Report, Housing Strategy, and Affordable Housing Fund provide a comprehensive approach to implementing the District's housing goals by providing strategies for achieving a healthy, diverse, and affordable housing supply for Saanich.

Objective 7: Improve Multi-Modal Connectivity and Mobility

The RGS supports the development of a balanced and sustainable transportation system providing residents with reasonable and affordable multi-modal transportation choices that enhance the overall regional quality of life. From a regional perspective, the OCP recognizes the importance of working with the CRD and member municipalities to implement the regional transportation plan which outlines priorities for a regional multi-modal network (See Policy 9.1.1).

Increasing population growth in Saanich and throughout the CRD will continue to place increasing pressure on Saanich's transportation system. OCP policies seek to support a multi-modal transportation and mobility network for the community that will help create safe, convenient, effective, and sustainable mobility choices to move around the community (see Policy 9.1.5 and Maps 4 and 8-10). Transportation and mobility networks that encourage and promote a range of active travel choices, such as walking and cycling, present opportunities for significant quality of life, health, safety and economic benefits.

Land use and development patterns play a profound role in shaping how sustainable, convenient, safe and attractive active transportation is. Integrating well-designed land use and transportation systems can positively affect several factors that relate to establishing more sustainable communities with people who drive less to meet their daily needs, participate more in cost-effective and active ways of moving around the community, and actively engage in social connections. Focusing growth around well-designed Primary Growth Areas defined through formal land use planning processes, is another important contributor to making active mobility more viable (see Section 7.0).

The many actions taken by the District to promote multi-modal connectivity are backed by strong policies in the OCP (see Section 9.0). Saanich's Active Transportation Plan is an implementation strategy that establishes a vision, goals and targets to improve active transportation and to ensure that walking and cycling are accessible, comfortable, and convenient transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities. Targets set in this OCP are generally consistent with the RGS target to achieve a transportation system that would see 42% of all trips made by walking, cycling, and transit by 2038.

Objective 8: Realize the Region's Economic Potential

As the population grows in the region, realizing diverse and economic opportunities to improve the region's economic potential is vital to achieving a sustainable economy (see Section 14.0). Comprehensive economic development policies integrated throughout the OCP, support a balanced economy by encouraging a broad range of commercial, service, research, high-tech and industrial uses and contribute to achieving the RGS target of 0.6 for the jobs to population ratio within the Core Subregion.

Policies in the OCP support focusing the majority of employment growth and mixed-use development in Saanich's Uptown Core and in other designated Primary Growth Areas. These locations prioritize access to active mobility options, promote improved access to jobs and services close to home, and create a network of vibrant, livable communities connected by an efficient transportation system (See Sections 7.3, 14.1, and 14.3).

Protecting the region's industrial land supply is imperative to accommodate the growing economy and employment. People and businesses depend on local industrial services, such as production, distribution, and repair. Industrial areas are protected and supported by OCP policies to accommodate the growing economy and employment (see Section 7.6 and 14.2). In addition, policies encourage improved utilization and intensification of industrial areas for industrial activities and ensure that the zoning and regulatory controls respecting industrial areas continue to encourage and support their economic viability (see Section 7.6).

Other major employment areas provide opportunities for increasing jobs and the economy. The OCP supports providing opportunities to new advanced technology and knowledge-based businesses by supporting expansion of Vancouver Island Technology Park, and research related activities at the University of Victoria, Camosun College, Royal Roads campuses (See Policy 14.2.6).

Within rural areas, policies encourage market diversification of agriculture by supporting specialty agri-tourism businesses on commercial farms, which are in keeping with the scale and character of rural Saanich (see Policy 14.2.7).

Objective 9: Foster a Resilient Food and Agriculture System

Saanich has a long history of farming and retains a significant amount of agriculture and arable land within its rural areas. Applying to agricultural land in both rural and urban areas, agriculture and food security policies in the OCP (see Section 12.0), recognize agriculture as a significant contributor to the region's landscape, identity and economy.

Key tools that have assisted in protecting agricultural land for current and future generations in rural Saanich are the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the Urban Containment Boundary and the Sewer Service Area. Established by the Agricultural Land Commission, ALR designated land helps to preserve agricultural value and encourage farming (see Sections 7.7 and 12.1). Focusing future growth in compact, complete and sustainable urban Primary Growth Areas helps to limit urban sprawl, protect agricultural land from the pressure of urban development, and support the protection of the Renewable Resource Lands Policy Areas (see Section 7.0).

Land use regulations and education can help protect agricultural land and increase awareness and understanding of farm operation requirements for those living adjacent or near farms while managing potential conflict between farm operations and neighbouring landowners. The OCP supports buffering rural and agricultural lands from adjacent urban residential development as part of redevelopment and subdivision proposals, where appropriate (see Policy 12.1.10). In addition, partnerships with surrounding municipalities, the CRD, non-profit organizations, and community groups, have been and will continue to be vital in enhancing agriculture and food security in Saanich and the region.

The following OCP policies for agriculture and food security (see Sections 12.1 and 12.2), directly contribute to increasing the amount of land in crop production for food by 5,000 ha by 2038, an RGS target for municipalities: 1) supporting efforts of farm operators and other agencies to enhance farmland and increase crop yield, by improving water supply and undertaking drainage improvements and improving soil capabilities, while considering environmental impact; and 2) supporting the development and operation of specialty crop farms to diversify farm production, increase economic development, increase local food production, and improve farm income.

Objective 10: Significantly Reduce Community-Based Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In addition, opportunities for increasing food production in urban neighbourhoods are supported in the OCP (see Section 12.2). The OCP supports local sustainable agriculture by promoting urban farming initiatives that make use of private and public green spaces to produce an inexpensive, safe, and nutritious food supply. For example, the parks and open space policies consider opportunities to incorporate food producing community gardens into parks and other public open spaces, where appropriate (see Policy 11.1.6). Community gardens on private or public land can contribute to neighbourhood renewal and stability, strengthen community bonds, provide food, and create recreational and therapeutic opportunities.

The Agriculture & Food Security Plan provides a coordinated approach for implementing OCP policy directions, supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich.

Comprehensive policies integrated throughout the OCP address strategies to protect the community, improve Saanich's quality of life, support a diverse economy, and reduce local and global risks associated with a changing climate. The RGS emphasizes the importance of reducing community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to address the effects of a changing climate.

Section 4.0 of the OCP reinforces the RGS objective of reducing community-based greenhouse gas emissions through the adoption of a guiding framework and policy lens that emphasizes sustainable development. Supporting OCP policies that encourage reducing GHG emissions include: reducing impacts from public and private buildings through green building design, energy efficiency technologies, renewable energy sources and efficient energy distribution systems; creating compact and complete communities within urban areas that encourage alternative transportation options that lead to reduced vehicle emissions; and, protecting and managing the natural environment, environmentally sensitive areas, urban forests, and aquatic habitat (see Sections 6.1-6.5, 7.1-7.4, 7.8, 9.1, 9.3- 9.5, 10.1).

The RGS set targets to reduce Community Green House Gas Emissions by 33% (from 2007 levels) by 2020, and by 61% by 2038. Saanich has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions with OCP targets that align with those of the RGS (see Section 5.3). One of the key implementation strategies, the *Climate Plan: 100% Renewable and Resilient Saanich*, adopted in 2020, seeks to implement more accelerated targets including:

- Reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 50% of 2007 levels by 2030;
- Achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050;
- Become a 100% renewable energy community by 2050; and
- Prepare for a changing climate.

These comprehensive targets are implemented through prioritized actions established in the *Climate Plan: 100% Renewable and Resilient Saanich*; the OCP integrates both these targets as well as policies to support reaching these targets.

REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT EVALUATION

The Regional Context Statement (RCS) has been reviewed in accordance with the evaluation framework approved by the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board on April 11, 2018. The evaluation framework relies on the three criteria shown below.

1. **All relevant content is included:** The RCS addresses all Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) content relevant to the Official Community Plan (OCP). Content that is not applicable in the context of the OCP should be identified as “not applicable”.

***Example:** The regional context statement contains headers, sections, a table, or other such format that clearly identifies each applicable RGS objective. Should an objective not apply, such as if a municipality contains no identified food or farmlands, the context statement would note that the objective does not apply.*

2. **Clearly articulates relevant content:** The regional context statement provides a sufficient level of detail to convey how the specific OCP content relates to the RGS.

***Example:** The regional context statement provides content specificity such that it is clear what the Board is accepting. An example is: “RGS Objective X is implemented by building in “...” location, at a range of “...” densities and proximate to “...” services.” A context statement with content as follows: “RGS Objective X is implemented with OCP policies A, B and C” would not be sufficiently specific.*

3. **Plan to be consistent over time:** The regional context statement identifies how the OCP will become consistent with the RGS over time if content is not immediately consistent.

***Example:** A regional context statement identifies that a municipality will undertake a population projection to determine how to align with the RGS population projections over time.*

Below is a list of acronyms used in the RCS evaluation:

Acronyms	
CRD	Capital Regional District
LGA	Local Government Act
OCP	Official Community Plan
RCS	Regional Context Statement
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy

Table 1. Regional Context Statement Evaluation Framework

LGA	RCS Content	Relationship to Legislative Requirement For CRD* Board consideration		
		All relevant content is included	Clearly articulates relevant content	Plan to be consistent over time
429(2)(a)	Identify how the OCP relates to the RGS vision on p. 1 of the RGS.			N/A
	The RCS relates to the vision and seven topic areas from the RGS.		Identifies how the objectives and policies are to be implemented.	
429(2)(b)	Identify how the OCP relates to the projections provided in Table 1 of the RGS.			N/A
	The RCS identifies how the OCP relates to population projections in RGS Table 1.		The RCS is aligned with RGS growth targets of approximately 1% per year.	
Managing and Balancing Growth (Objectives 1.1 & 1.2)				
429(2)(c) and (d); 429(3)	Identify how the OCP relates to the RGS.			N/A
	The RCS identifies how the OCP aligns with RGS objectives for managing and balancing growth.		The RCS references OCP sections on the Urban Containment Boundary (7.1.2). The RCS references policies to guide future growth areas (section 7.3) and residential infill (section 7.4). These growth concepts and policies are aligned with RGS Maps 3a and 3b. The RCS provides policies to protect the integrity of rural and agricultural lands.	

Legend: Regional Context Statement Evaluation



Strong alignment with evaluation criteria; recommend approval



Moderate alignment with evaluation criteria; recommend approval



Weak alignment with evaluation criteria; do not recommend approval

Relationship to Legislative Requirement
For CRD Board consideration

LGA	RCS Content	All relevant content is included	Clearly articulates relevant content	Plan to be consistent over time
Environment and Infrastructure (Objective 2.1 & 2.2)				
	<p align="center"></p> <p>The RCS identifies how the OCP aligns with RGS objectives for environmental protection, sustainability, and the efficient delivery of infrastructure.</p>	<p></p> <p>The RCS supports RGS principles for sustainability and protection of Capital Green Lands Policy Area lands.</p> <p>The RCS notes OCP policies on protection of ecologically significant areas and preservation of water quality in accordance with zoning and shoreline development permit process.</p> <p>The RCS supports the RGS objective of focusing efficient and sustainable delivery of infrastructure within the Urban Containment Boundary.</p>	N/A	
Housing and Community (Objectives 3.1 & 3.2)				
	<p align="center"></p> <p>The RCS identifies how the OCP aligns with RGS objectives for housing and complete communities.</p>	<p></p> <p>The RCS supports a framework for growth that is consistent with the “Complete Community Criteria” set out in the RGS. This includes supporting a variety of housing types, diverse transportation options, and walkable 15-minute communities.</p> <p>The RCS references the OCP vision of guiding growth to Primary Growth Areas in “centres”, “villages”, and “corridors” (section 7.2).</p>	N/A	

Legend: Regional Context Statement Evaluation

 Strong alignment with evaluation criteria; recommend approval

 Moderate alignment with evaluation criteria; recommend approval

 Weak alignment with evaluation criteria; do not recommend approval

Relationship to Legislative Requirement
For CRD Board consideration

LGA	RCS Content	All relevant content is included	Clearly articulates relevant content	Plan to be consistent over time
Transportation (Objective 4.1)				
	The RCS identifies how the OCP aligns with RGS objectives for transportation.		<p>The RCS references OCP policies that support the Regional Transportation Plan.</p> <p>The RCS states OCP policies support a multi-modal transportation network that will help create safe, convenient, effective, and sustainable mobility choices (section 9.1.5 and maps 4 and 8-10). Land use policies are integrated to shape development patterns that will achieve transportation objectives (section 7)</p> <p>The RCS is aligned with the RGS goal of achieving a system by 2038 where 42% of all trips are made by walking, cycling, and transit.</p>	N/A

Legend: Regional Context Statement Evaluation



Strong alignment with evaluation criteria; recommend approval



Moderate alignment with evaluation criteria; recommend approval



Weak alignment with evaluation criteria; do not recommend approval

Economic Development (Objective 5.1)



The RCS identifies how the OCP aligns with RGS objectives for economic development.



The RCS references OCP objectives that align with RGS policies on maintaining an adequate supply of employment and industrial lands in diverse range of sectors.

The RCS expresses an intent to focus employment growth in the Uptown Corridor, as this area allows for a variety of active mobility options.

The RCS aligns with RGS policies on the conservation and management of Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area.

N/A

Food and Agricultural Systems (Objective 6.1)



The RCS identifies how the OCP aligns with RGS objectives for food and agricultural systems.



The RCS aligns with the RGS objective for fostering a resilient food and agriculture system and has a strong focus on the sustainability and economic viability of agriculture in the community.

The RCS references agriculture and food security policies in the OCP and the Agriculture and Food Security Plan that support agricultural activity in the district.

N/A



Climate Action (Objective 7.1)



The RCS identifies how the OCP aligns with RGS objectives for climate action.



The RCS aligns with the RGS objective and policies of reducing community-based greenhouse gas emissions.

The RCS identifies OCP policies that address the reduction of greenhouse gasses through: green building design, energy efficiency technologies, renewable energy sources and efficient energy distribution systems; compact and complete communities that encourage alternative transportation options; and, protecting and managing the natural environment, environmentally sensitive areas, urban forests, and aquatic habitat.

N/A





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REPORT TO PLANNING AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

SUBJECT Requirements for Consideration of Regional Growth Strategy Updates

ISSUE SUMMARY

To report on key inputs and studies required prior to Capital Regional District (CRD) Board considering the need for an update of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in 2026.

BACKGROUND

The RGS is a vision for the future of the capital region, developed in partnership with the region's 13 local governments and the Juan de Fuca (JdF) Electoral Area. The RGS guides decision making in support of the long-term livability of the region. The CRD Board adopted the RGS in 2018 and amended the RGS with updated population projections in 2021.

On November 8, 2023 the CRD Board carried the following motion:

"That staff report back on the timing and implications of the work required to consider an update to the Regional Growth Strategy in 2026."

Local Government Act Requirements

Section 429 of the *Local Government Act* specifies the required content for an RGS. An RGS must have a 20-year planning horizon and include population and employment projections. The RGS must include actions related to housing, transportation, regional district services, parks and natural areas and economic development, as well as greenhouse gas reduction targets. Additional regional matters may be included, subject to agreement of all participants.

Section 436 requires that all 13 local governments subject to the RGS accept the RGS before the CRD Board can adopt it as a bylaw.

Section 452(2) of the *Local Government Act* requires the CRD Board to consider the need for an RGS amendment once every five years. The CRD Board will make this consideration in 2026.

Matters to Consider

There are three key questions the CRD Board will need to consider when deciding whether to initiate an update of the RGS in 2026:

1. Can the RGS accommodate 95% of projected population growth within its urban containment boundary?
2. Do RGS policies provide sufficient guidance to the CRD and local governments on how to accommodate projected growth?
3. Do the CRD and local governments have the tools they need to successfully implement the RGS?

Trends and Inputs

The CRD Board will need to consider these matters against growth management trends and inputs. Current trends affecting growth management include new housing and planning legislation and revised projections signaling higher than anticipated population growth. The key task for CRD staff is to identify the policy implications of these changes to the RGS regional growth management framework.

CRD staff advise that four planning studies are needed to gather data, undertake analysis, and validate RGS policy direction. Table 1: RGS Studies lists the studies that will inform consideration of the need for an RGS update.

Table 1: RGS Studies

Study	RGS Input
1. Demographic research	20-year population, dwelling unit and employment projections
2. Industrial and employment lands survey	Spatial analysis to inform consideration of RGS mapping and policy updates related to economic development objectives
3. Collaborative planning with First Nations	Foundation for a collaborative planning process and guidance for how to better reflect First Nations communities in the RGS

In addition, a growth and mobility study is currently underway and will provide a spatial analysis to inform consideration of RGS mapping and policy updates.

CRD Board direction is needed to confirm that these studies will inform consideration of the need to update the RGS in 2026. Study results could also be considered against existing CRD plans and strategies to validate the policy direction in those foundational documents.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

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

That CRD staff be directed to undertake the studies listed in Table 1: RGS Studies, identify whether additional policy direction is needed, and report back to the Planning and Protective Services Committee with these findings.

Alternative 2

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

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

CRD Corporate Plan Initiative 8a-2 is to assess the need for an update to the RGS and accompanying monitoring program. Additionally, the CRD Corporate Plan identifies that the RGS covers the breadth of regional service delivery. The proposed studies connect to other Corporate Plan initiatives and will deliver the co-benefit of advancing the RGS and corporate priorities.

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

To implement the vision expressed in the RGS, the CRD has developed a range of plans that set policy to guide regional investment and policy. These include:

- Regional Housing Affordability Strategy (2018)
- Regional Transportation Plan (2014)
- Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (2022 – 2032)
- Regional Trails Management Plan (2016)
- Solid Waste Management Plan (2021)

- Regional Water Supply Master Plan (2022)
- Climate Action Strategy (2021)
- Liquid Waste management Plans (various dates)

In considering of the need for an RGS update, CRD staff will review plans and strategies developed post-2018 for new policy direction that could be integrated into the RGS. For plans that have not been updated in the last five years, CRD staff will confirm whether new policy direction is needed and align timing as needed.

Climate Action

RGS Objective 7 is focused on Climate Action. In considering the need for an RGS update, CRD staff will review the CRD's targets and policies related to climate action. This will be informed by the CRD Climate Action Strategy, and research completed since its inception.

Environmental

RGS Objective 2 is focused on environment and infrastructure, with the goal of protecting, conserving, and managing ecosystem health. The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 provides direction to undertake conservation research within the regional parks system. CRD staff will review results in consideration for the need for an RGS update.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Demographic data provided in the Census will be considered when the population and dwelling unit and employment projections are updated. While not forming part of the RGS, demographic data will be reviewed against RGS objectives and policies to support an equity lens analysis.

Financial Implications

Costs for studies listed in Table 1: RGS Studies will be identified through the 2025 service and financial planning processes. The regional growth strategy operating reserve would provide one-time funding for these studies. The Growth and Mobility Study is already funded through a Union of BC Municipalities Complete Communities grant. Costs to update CRD plans and strategies to seek additional policy direction would be identified, as needed, once the proposed RGS studies are complete.

First Nations Reconciliation

Currently, First Nations within the CRD are not partners in the RGS. This means that RGS objectives and policies do not apply to First Nations lands. In recent years, some First Nations have indicated an interest in seeing their communities reflected in the RGS. To better understand if and how the nations would want to be brought into the RGS framework, additional engagement is needed. A collaborative planning study undertaken in partnership with interested First Nations, would help identify the potential benefits, challenges, and risks of joining the RGS framework.

Intergovernmental Implications

RGS approval requires unanimous acceptance from all 13 local governments. Developing the RGS requires collaborative planning and decision making across the region. The proposed studies will be scoped to include technical input from the 13 local governments, JDF, province and First Nations. The Development Planning Advisory Committee, comprised of Planning Directors or their designates from the 13 local governments and the JDF, will be used to facilitate collaborative planning.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The proposed studies will advance work on the RGS according to the following principles:

1. **Values-based:** The RGS must be aligned with core CRD values as set out in the CRD mission statement.
2. **Data-informed:** The RGS must rely on data that can be validated, analyzed, and interpreted to develop robust policy responses to growth pressure.
3. **Partner-centered:** The RGS must respect local government and regional district authorities related to land use and service delivery, broadly defined.

These principles will support a working partnership approach among the CRD, 13 local governments and JDF, to ensure that the proposed studies meet partner needs.

The RGS represents how local Official Community Plans fit together in a regional context, showing planned land use and mobility patterns across the region. The studies proposed in Table 1: RGS Studies will support spatial analysis related to housing, transportation, climate action and industrial land availability. This analysis will promote shared regional understanding of the cumulative impacts of growth on communities. Study results are inputs to the RGS maps, including the Growth Management Concept Plan and the Settlement Concept. Based on study results, additional policy direction may be needed from an update to the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy and confirmation of the Regional Multi-modal Network as set out in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Service Delivery Implications

The existing work plan can accommodate the proposed studies.

Social Implications

The RGS vision is for residents to enjoy a healthy and rewarding quality of life, with a vital economy and livable communities. The proposed studies will help confirm alignment of this vision with RGS objectives and policies, to be considered when determining the need for an RGS update.

CONCLUSION

The RGS is a vision for the future of the capital region, with objectives and policies to guide shared regional decision-making. The CRD Board is required to consider the need for an RGS update by 2026. CRD staff propose to undertake studies to develop the inputs needed for the Board to make an informed decision about whether to update the RGS.

RECOMMENDATION

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

That CRD staff be directed to undertake the studies listed in Table 1: RGS Studies, identify whether additional policy direction is needed, and report back to the Planning and Protective Services Committee with these findings.

Submitted by:	Emily Sinclair, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Regional and Strategic Planning
Concurrence:	Kevin Lorette, P. Eng., MBA, General Manager, Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer



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Development and Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC) – Meeting Notes

Held Monday, January 29, 2024 at Central Saanich Municipal Hall

PRESENT: Staff: E. Sinclair, Senior Manager, Regional and Strategic Planning; D. Elliott, Senior Manager, Regional Housing; I. Lawrence, Manager, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Planning; J. Douillard, Research Planner, Regional and Strategic Planning; N. Brotman, Research Planner, Regional and Strategic Planning, D. Pagani, Administrative Clerk, Regional and Strategic Planning.

Also present: A. Boel, District of Oak Bay; I. Bourhill, City of Colwood; B. Brown, Township of Esquimalt; K. Clark, District of Central Saanich; P. Hartling, District of Saanich; L. Klose, City of Victoria; K. Lesyshen, District of Metchosin; J. Lunney, District of North Saanich; C. Newcomb, Town of Sidney; A. Pickard, District of Central Saanich; D. Sametz, City of Langford; L. Taylor, Town of View Royal.

REGRETS: L. Beckett, District of Highlands; J. Matanowitsch, District of Central Saanich.

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 am.

1. Welcome and Introductions

E. Sinclair welcomed members of the Development and Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC) and provided a Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. RGS Indicators Report

J. Douillard summarized the 2023 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Indicators Report, which examines progress toward RGS goals. Topics included new dwellings, rent price, vacancy rates, mode-share, community greenhouse gas emissions and the jobs-to-population ratio.

Regarding the number of net dwelling units where more than 45% of residents walk/bike/bus, the group discussed why this target was raised from 42% in 2022 and why it may return to 42% going forward.

ACTION: CRD and District of Central Saanich will further discuss new net dwelling units outside the urban containment boundary.

3. Discussion of New Provincial Policies – Bills 44, 46 & 47

To begin this discussion, N. Brotman presented current staff analysis and a draft map showing prescribed transit-oriented areas (TOAs) and bus frequency.

The group discussed the map and problems of criteria, such as variable bus service over weekends and routes that are just below the service frequency threshold. Questions were raised regarding how these policies might affect Official Community Plans (OCPs) and plans for Frequent Transit Networks (FTNs), how much flexibility local governments have to set criteria, how service could impact land-use (i.e., advocates for or opponents of growth pushing bus scheduling to get permissions for development or suppressing it to avoid it respectively) and how long-term planning will line up with housing goals, growth and distribution.

The group also discussed public hearings in the new legislation.

The group determined that being on the same page, while still acknowledging different local contexts and priorities, is essential.

- **ACTION:** Members to work toward a shared regional interpretation of “frequent transit stops” criteria.
- **ACTION:** CRD to reach out to BC Transit and Province to include in discussion.

Multiple growth and transportation plans are currently in place, including the BC Transit Futures Plan, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the RGS and local government transportation plans. While these plans are generally in alignment, work could be done to make them more consistent.

- **ACTION:** Members to seek further alignment of aforementioned plans at future meetings.

J. Douillard encouraged those interested in viewing a version of the map that includes routes that do not quite meet the strictest criteria to review the materials emailed to members on January 17, 2024.

- **ACTION:** Members to identify which bus routes they may want designated as “frequent” and to provide these to CRD staff for inclusion in updated analyses and maps.

Housing Needs Report

N. Brotman shared that the Province has not yet published guidance on an updated approach to Housing Needs Reports and it remains unclear when that may be released. The CRD is still committed to the general concept of approaching it collectively (either internally or hiring a consultant). Updates will be provided when available.

The group discussed how the June zoning bylaw updates are progressing.

E. Sinclair encouraged members to consider the possible future role of regional growth management and how DPAC might provide advice to big picture thinking.

- **ACTION:** Members to submit questions, comments and study ideas for regional-scale research to CRD staff by mid-February, ahead of the March update to the CRD Board.

E. Sinclair left meeting; N. Brotman served as Chair for remainder of meeting.

Discussing Strengths, Weaknesses, Challenges and Implications of New Policies

General conversation on the three provincial bills ensued, covering topics like housing targets, input received from developers and public input related to OCPs.

4. Planners’ Updates and Roundtable Discussion

Members briefly discussed the provincial changes to short-term vacation rentals and the District of Central Saanich’s tree removal bylaw litigation.

5. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.