

REQUEST FOR DECISION

RGS Minor Amendment and Letter/Resolution Regarding
Garibaldi at Squamish

Meeting date: December 14, 2016

To: SLRD Board

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT the SLRD Board advise Minister Polak and Minister Thomson of the concerns and unanimous agreement of the SLRD and its member municipalities regarding the proposed Garibaldi at Squamish project, as per the letter found in Appendix A.

THAT SLRD staff be directed to proceed with a minor amendment of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008 to address the following text amendments:

- Replace the first bullet under Strategic Direction 1.1 a) with: *Direct growth and settlement development towards Member Municipalities and existing SLRD Master Planned Communities.*
- Amend the Master-Planned Communities land use designation description by replacing the phrase “Significant future growth will be accommodated in these communities” with:
 - *For existing SLRD master planned communities, further growth is not supported beyond what is currently contemplated in SLRD Official Community Plans (OCPs) and what is specified in the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). Zoning and OCP amendments that propose to increase density or area of existing SLRD master planned communities are not supported.*
 - *New master planned communities and/or urban areas are not supported outside of the established settlement areas.*
- Remove the Destination Resort language found on pages 24-26 of the RGS Bylaw.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:

The SLRD RGS 5-year review is underway. As part of this process, an Elected Officials Forum was held on November 10, 2016. At this forum, the RGS Steering Committee was requested to address specific concerns regarding the proposed Garibaldi at Squamish (GAS) project and specific items regarding growth management in advance of the RGS Review amendment process. The above resolutions reflect these specific requests.

The SLRD and its member municipalities continue to have serious concerns regarding the establishment of new urban communities or destination resorts in the SLRD outside of existing community boundaries. As such, by unanimous agreement of those attending the Elected Officials Forum, the SLRD and its member municipalities have directed that a letter be sent to Honourable Mary Polak (Minister of Environment) and Honourable Steve Thomson (Minister of

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Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations) in order to advise that none of the local governments covered under the SLRD RGS are planning to introduce an amendment to the RGS to support the proposed Garibaldi at Squamish (GAS) project, as such a development is inconsistent with the SLRD's growth management objectives.

Further, SLRD staff is seeking permission to proceed with the preparation of a RGS minor amendment to address GAS and to strengthen existing policies that direct future growth within the Region to existing communities and to eliminate policies regarding the development of destination resorts.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008

BACKGROUND:

As part of the RGS 5-year Review process, an Elected Officials Forum was held on November 10, 2016. This was the second of three forums planned for and committed to in the RGS Review Consultation Plan, and the focus was on growth management. At this forum, the RGS Steering Committee received direction to: prepare a letter to the province regarding GAS and the non-support of the local governments regarding GAS; and prepare a minor amendment of the RGS to strengthen existing policies that direct future growth within the Region to existing communities and to eliminate policies regarding the development of destination resorts.

The letter to the province (see Appendix A), is being brought to the member municipality Council's for endorsement. At the time of writing, no comments have been received. Given the dates of Council meetings at which this letter is to be discussed, SLRD staff will likely be delivering these comments to the Board verbally at the December 14, 2016 Board meeting.

ANALYSIS:

As the proposed amendments (see Appendix B) are text amendments and housekeeping in nature, the RGS Steering Committee recommends that the Board resolve to proceed with a minor amendment process. See Figure 1 and 2 below for details.

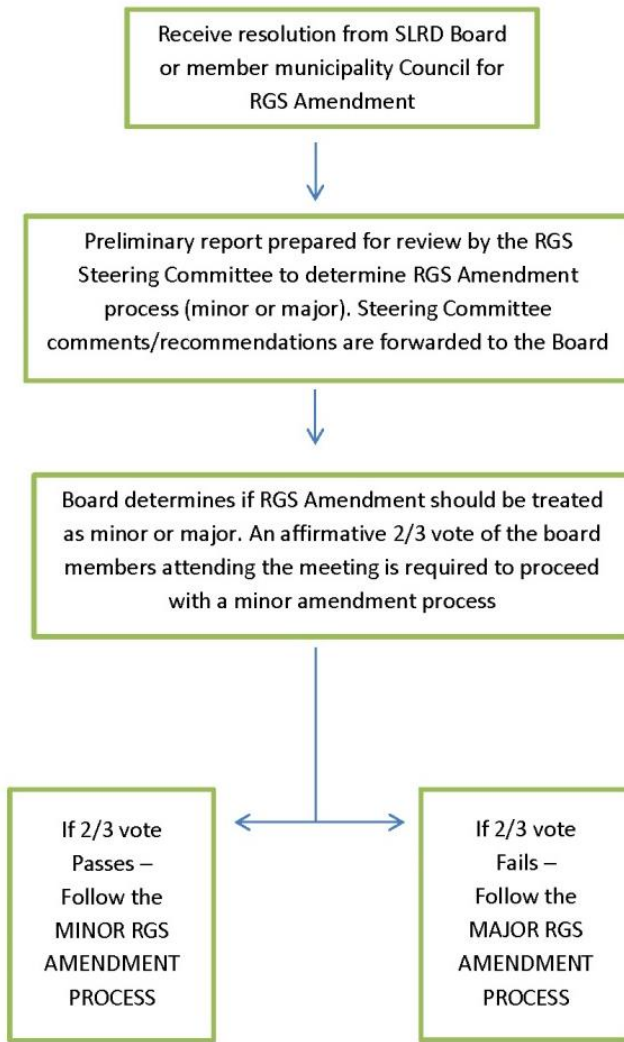


Figure 1: RGS Amendment Process

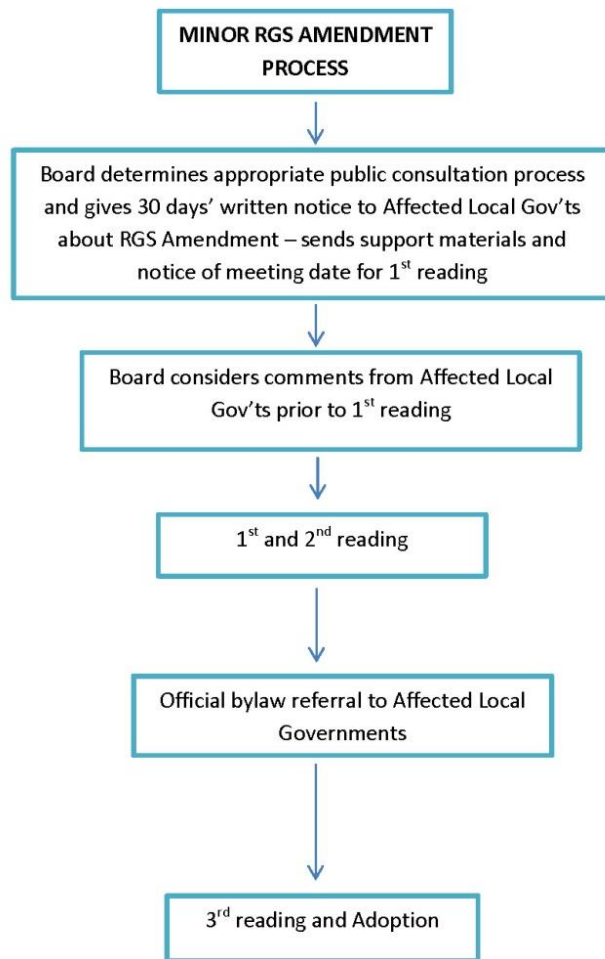


Figure 2: RGS Minor Amendment Process

REGIONAL IMPACTS ANALYSIS:

The SLRD RGS is an initiative of and applies to the four member municipalities and Electoral Areas B, C and D. It is a tool to support collaboration and achievement of *smart growth*. Any amendments to the RGS will impact all those who are signatory to the RGS Bylaw. Further, amendments conducted through the minor amendment process involve referrals to affected local governments.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (PREFERRED OPTION)

Direct that the letter included in Appendix A be sent to Honourable Mary Polak and Honourable Steve Thomson.

Direct staff to proceed with a minor amendment of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008 to address the following text amendments:

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- Replace the first bullet under Strategic Direction 1.1 a) with: *Direct growth and settlement development towards Member Municipalities and existing SLRD Master Planned Communities.*
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 - *New master planned communities and/or urban areas are not supported outside of the established settlement areas.*
- Remove the Destination Resort language found on pages 24-26 of the RGS Bylaw.

Please see the attached Appendix B for more details as to the rationale of these changes.

Option 2

Revise the letter included in Appendix A and direct staff to send the revised letter to Honourable Mary Polak and Honourable Steve Thomson.

Direct staff to proceed with a minor amendment of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008 to address the text amendments as noted above.

Option 3

Do not send a letter and/or do not support a minor amendment (as noted above) of the RGS Bylaw.

Option 4

As per the Board's discretion.

FOLLOW UP ACTION:

Should the Board resolve to proceed with a RGS minor amendment, SLRD staff will prepare a bylaw for first reading, early in 2017.

Should the Board resolve to send the letter to Minister Polak and Minister Thomson, SLRD staff will send this letter out immediately.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Letter to Ministers Re: SLRD Regional Growth Strategy and Garibaldi at Squamish Project

Appendix B: Proposed RGS Amendments

Submitted by: C. Daniels, Planner

Endorsed by: K. Needham, Director of Planning and Development

Reviewed by: L. Flynn, Chief Administrative Officer



December 14, 2016

Honourable Mary Polak,
Minister of Environment, British Columbia
Room 112, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4

and

Honourable Steve Thomson,
Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, British Columbia
Room 248, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC
V87 1X4

Attention Ministers Polak and Thomson:

Re: SLRD Regional Growth Strategy and Garibaldi at Squamish Project

We write to advise you that the board of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) has recently instructed the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Steering Committee (a committee of SLRD and its member municipalities' planning staff) to include, as part of a scheduled review of the RGS, the strengthening of existing policies that direct future growth within the Region to existing communities and the elimination of policies regarding the development of destination resorts. The purpose of these changes is to emphasize that the RGS does not contemplate the development of new satellite urban areas or destination resorts consisting of residential and tourist accommodation development, such as the proposed Garibaldi at Squamish project at Brohm Ridge.

We would like to highlight that the Reasons for Ministers' Decision dated January 26, 2016 (Reasons) in respect of the Garibaldi at Squamish environmental assessment certificate application were issued despite the fact that the project as proposed is inconsistent with the RGS.

By indicating in the Reasons that the Ministers' decision does not presume how independent statutory decision makers such as the SLRD Board of Directors might approach or decide on separate authorizations for the project, the Reasons appear to assume that an RGS amendment may be initiated to authorize the project. Consistent with the SLRD's RGS amendment process, any amendments to the RGS can only be introduced by the SLRD itself, or by one of its member municipalities – The District of Squamish, the Resort Municipality of Whistler, the Village of Pemberton or the District of Lillooet.

The SLRD and its member municipalities continue to have serious concerns regarding the establishment of new urban communities or destination resorts in the SLRD outside of existing community boundaries. As such, by unanimous agreement, the SLRD and its member municipalities have directed that this letter be sent to your attention, in order to advise that none of the local governments covered under the SLRD RGS are planning to introduce an amendment to the RGS to support the proposed Garibaldi at Squamish project, as such a development is inconsistent with the SLRD's growth management objectives.

Yours truly,

Jack Crompton
Chair, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

cc: District of Squamish - Attention: Mayor Patricia Heintzman
Resort Municipality of Whistler - Attention: Mayor Nancy Wilhelm-Morden
Village of Pemberton - Attention: Mayor Mike Richman
District of Lillooet - Attention: Mayor Margaret Lampman
Garibaldi at Squamish Inc.
Jordan Sturdy, MLA West Vancouver-Sea to Sky
Peter Fassbender, BC Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Appendix B: PROPOSED RGS AMENDMENTS

#1: Replace the first bullet under Strategic Direction 1.1 a) with: *Direct growth and settlement development towards Member Municipalities and existing SLRD Master Planning Communities.*

Current RGS

Goal 1: Focus Development into Compact, Complete, Sustainable Communities, includes the following language: *Population growth and settlement development will be primarily directed to compact Urban Areas and Master Planned Communities on the basis of smart growth principles. New urban communities will not be considered outside of the established settlement areas. Non-Settlement Areas that have important agricultural, environmental, backcountry recreational, aesthetic and natural resource values will be protected.*

And Strategic Directions:

1.1 The SLRD and member municipalities agree that:

a) The RGS Settlement Planning Map will be used in conjunction with Official Community Plans to:

- ***encourage compact development within Urban Areas, Master Planned Communities, and Serviced Residential and Rural Communities;***
- *maintain the rural, low density character of Serviced Residential and Rural Residential Areas; and*
- *protect and maintain Non-Settlement Areas.*

Rationale

- The current RGS includes language directing growth and settlement development to urban areas and master planned communities, but this language is buried in the Goal 1 text. Further, the formatting of this introduction section is inconsistent with the approach used in the rest of the RGS Goal chapters.
- The proposed new bullet strengthens the Strategic Direction, emphasizing growth is to take place in Urban Areas and SLRD Master Planned Communities rather than the non-urban settlement areas (Serviced Residential, Rural Residential, Rural Community). This is not clear from the bullets currently under Strategic Direction 1.1 a).

#2: Amend the Master-Planned Communities land use designation description by replacing the phrase “Significant future growth will be accommodated in these communities” with:

- ***For existing SLRD master planned communities, further growth is not supported beyond what is currently contemplated in SLRD Official Community Plans (OCPs) and what is specified in the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). Zoning and OCP amendments that propose to increase density or area of existing SLRD master planned communities are not supported.***
- ***New master planned communities and/or urban areas are not supported outside of the established settlement areas.***

Current RGS

The Master Planned Communities designation includes the following language: *Master-planned Communities refers to larger scale developments that are planned on a comprehensive basis within the defined boundaries of Britannia Beach, Furry Creek and Porteau Cove, as shown on the Regional Settlement Planning Map and the Howe Sound Settlement Planning Map 1e. **Significant future growth will be accommodated in these communities.** The objective for these areas is to encourage compact, clustered residential and local commercial, mixed use development with distinct edges and full community water and sewer services.*

Rationale

The current RGS does not explicitly state the intentions behind SLRD Master Planned Communities; clarification will support implementation and the overall achievement of RGS Goal 1.

#3: Remove Destination Resort Language

Current RGS

The current RGS has 3 pages of policy statements contemplating Destination Resorts. See pages 24-26.

Rationale

There are currently no Destination Resort areas designated or supported in the RGS. Further, the development of new Destination Resorts with significant residential development is not aligned with the Goals of the RGS. The proposed Garibaldi at Squamish project has been identified as a regional concern warranting specific attention through the RGS Review; removing the Destination Resort language clarifies that this type of development is not supported in the SLRD at this time. To be clear, the desire (and proposed idea) is not to prevent the development of new recreational amenities (limited to an appropriate scale and location); backcountry recreation is contemplated separately in the RGS.