



DIRECTION REQUEST

Climate Action Part 1: Current Context & Opportunities

Meeting date: January 25, 2024

To: SLRD Committee of the Whole

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to: 1) share background and current context on SLRD Climate Action; 2) provide the Board with an opportunity to discuss SLRD Climate Action and 3) seek direction regarding Climate Action in relation upcoming processes and future work – to inform next steps and budget/work plans.

REQUEST:

THAT the Board provide direction regarding the SLRD Climate Action framework and proposed integration into the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and RGS Review consideration in 2024.

THAT the Board provide direction regarding the Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP) funding and proposed implementation toward EV charging stations at the SLRD office.

THAT the Board provide direction regarding the LGCAP funding and potential implementation toward Sea-to-Sky/Friendship Trail upgrades or a regional transit pilot.

THAT the Board provide direction regarding general Climate Action priorities for the SLRD to inform next steps, including budget and staff work plans.

THAT the Board direct staff to bring back a follow up report outlining next steps and budget/work plan implications to a future Committee of the Whole meeting, based on direction received on the Climate Action Part 1: Current Context & Opportunities report.

THAT the Board rescind the following previous Climate Action resolutions:

Date: June 24, 2020

Resolution

THAT the City of Rossland - Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy Change resolution be referred to the Climate Action Plan discussion when it comes to the Board.

Date: January 3, 2020 (Board Workshop)

Resolution

Develop a Community Energy and Climate Action Plan in line with the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change science-based targets and including water conservation and food sustainability as guiding principles by June 30, 2020.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

[Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008 Integrated Sustainability Plan \(2012\)](#)

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:

The SLRD Board has made climate action an area of priority, as per the inclusion in the SLRD Board Strategic Plan 2019-2022. Important Climate Actions are being implemented across the SLRD as part of current work; there is also opportunity to consider Climate Action as part of upcoming processes and future work.

Process

SLRD staff suggest a two-part process for Board-level Climate Action discussions and direction, as follows:

Climate Action Part 1 – Current Context & Opportunities

- Current Climate Action: What we are already doing
- Future Climate Action Opportunities: What processes are coming up
- Board Direction Request:
 - 1) specific direction regarding the SLRD Climate Action framework and proposed integration into the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and RGS Review consideration in 2024;
 - 2) specific direction regarding the LGCAP funding and potential projects and
 - 3) general direction regarding Climate Action priorities for the SLRD to inform next steps, including budget and staff work plans.

Climate Action Part 2 – Priorities & Implementation

- Budget
- Work Plans

A Part 2 Direction Request, informed by the Part 1 discussions and direction, can be brought to a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

BACKGROUND:

Previous Staff Reports

[Climate Action Overview – September 16, 2020](#)
[SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Annual Report - 2020](#)
[SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Annual Report - 2022](#)

Previous Board Resolutions

Board Resolutions	Department	Status Update
January 26, 2022: <i>THAT the Board direct SLRD staff to prepare greenhouse gas targets based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) for inclusion in the Regional Growth Strategy as part of a future Regional Growth Strategy amendment.</i>	Climate Action & Resilience – now with Planning & Development Services	To be addressed as part of the RGS Review consideration/process in 2024.

<p><i>THAT at a future Committee of the Whole meeting, the Board discuss additional monitoring indicators that could be incorporated into the Regional Growth Strategy, such as: access to child care; food production; alignment of greenhouse gas emissions indicators/monitoring approach used by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District and its member municipalities; and capacity of recreation amenities.</i></p>		<p>To be addressed as part of the RGS Review consideration/process in 2024.</p>
<p>November 24, 2021: <i>THAT the following items be referred to the workplan of the new Climate Action and Resilience Specialist (once the position is filled, currently anticipated to be late January 2022):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>the development of a plan for a transition from SLRD internal combustion fleet vehicles to an SLRD electric fleet vehicles and associated charging stations by 2030; and</i> <i>the development of a plan to increase the availability of walking and cycling trails in the electoral areas by 2030.</i> 	<p>Environmental Services</p>	<p>Status update to come from Environmental Services as part of a future report.</p>
<p>May 11, 2021: <i>THAT staff investigate the potential for the installation of a Level 2 electric vehicle charging station at the SLRD Administrative Office with funding from Cost Centre #2900 (General Select)</i></p>	<p>Environmental Services</p>	<p>Quotes have been obtained for Level 2 charging station.</p>
<p>October 28, 2020: <i>THAT staff explore with Sea to Sky EV Expansion project leaders how the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District could get involved with this project going forward and bring back a report to a future Board meeting.</i></p>	<p>Protective Services – now with Planning & Development Services</p>	<p>This could be addressed as part of the Climate Action Part 2 report and/or as part of the integration work into the RGS and RGS Review consideration/process.</p>
<p>June 24, 2020: <i>THAT the City of Rossland - Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy Change resolution be referred to the Climate Action Plan discussion when it comes to the Board.</i> Link to correspondence</p>	<p>Protective Services – now with Planning & Development Services</p>	<p>The intent of resolution can be actioned as part of the Climate Action work and process currently being discussed at this COW and a potential future COW, noting that it is now 2024.</p>

May 27, 2020: <i>THAT the SLRD's carbon credit program be included in the Board's discussion at a future Board meeting in respect of the development of the Community Energy and Climate Action Plan.</i>	Project and Program – now with Planning & Development Services/Finance	This could be addressed as part of the Climate Action Part 2 report and/or as part of the integration work into the RGS and RGS Review consideration/process.
January 3, 2020 (Board Workshop): <i>Develop a Community Energy and Climate Action Plan in line with the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change science-based targets and including water conservation and food sustainability as guiding principles by June 30, 2020. (this is also connected to the SLRD Board Strategic Plan 2019-2022 Land Goal)</i>	Protective Services – now with Planning & Development Services	Staff recommend the Climate Action framework/implementation plan/strategy be integrated into the RGS rather than creating a separate standalone plan/strategy or framework. And that this work be addressed as part of the RGS Review process in 2024.

New Resiliency/Climate Action Coordinator

As reflected in the 2020-2024 Financial Plan, the Board approved the addition of a 50% position for a new resiliency coordinator/climate action position. This position was in place for a number of months, but is no longer filled and many Climate Action tasks have now been re-assigned to the Planning and Development Services Department.

SLRD Regional Growth Strategy

The SLRD Regional Growth Strategy is an initiative of the SLRD (excluding Electoral Area A, which is not a party to the RGS), the District of Squamish, the Resort Municipality of Whistler, the Village of Pemberton and the District of Lillooet. The Regional Growth Strategy provides a “*broad policy framework describing the common direction that the regional district and member municipalities will follow in promoting development and services that are sustainable, recognizing a long-term responsibility for the quality of life for future generations*”.

The SLRD Regional Growth Strategy supports collaborative planning and consensus-based problem solving across the region.

Based on a 20-year planning approach, the RGS is to “*guide development and encourage collaborative approaches to a sustainable future*”. The RGS has eleven goals with a set of indicators identified for each goal. Thirty-one indicators in total are used to monitor progress toward these goals. The SLRD RGS indicators were monitored in 2021 for the 2016-2020 time period: see the [2016-2020 Indicator Monitoring Report](#) and [Snapshot](#).

SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Goals

- GOAL 1 Focus Development into Compact, Complete, Sustainable Communities
- GOAL 2 Improve Transportation Linkages and Options
- GOAL 3 Generate a Range of Quality Affordable Housing
- GOAL 4 Achieve a Sustainable Economy
- GOAL 5 Protect Natural Eco-system Functioning
- GOAL 6 Encourage the Sustainable Use of Parks and Natural Areas
- GOAL 7 Create Healthy and Safe Communities
- GOAL 8 Enhance Relations with Indigenous Communities and First Nations
- GOAL 9 Improve Collaboration among Jurisdictions
- GOAL 10 Protect and Enhance Food Systems
- GOAL 11 Take Action on Climate Change

CURRENT CONTEXT:

Current Climate Action (what the SLRD is already doing):

Important Climate Action is being implemented across the SLRD – from growth management, solid waste management, risk and resilience, agriculture and food systems, development and land use planning, trails and transportation.

Growth Management

- SLRD Regional Growth Strategy directs growth and settlement development towards Member Municipalities and existing SLRD Master Planned Communities. Non-settlement lands continue to be protected.
- SLRD Regional Growth Strategy affordable housing policies have enabled 15% inclusionary zoning for employee/non-market housing as part of new master planned communities.
- Housing Need and Demand Study implementation, resulting in expansion of carriage house/auxiliary dwelling unit regulations.

Solid Waste Management

- Zero Waste Initiatives
- SLRD Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan implementation
- Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Solid Waste & Resource Management Plan - Focus Amendment – Squamish Landfill Lateral Expansion
- Food Scraps Collection
- Diversion Storage Technical Design Guidelines

Risk and Resilience

- Geohazard risk prioritization reports
- Wildfire Mitigation program
- Emergency preparedness and response

Agriculture and Food Systems

- Agriculture Plan Implementation
 - Good food program/local food procurement
 - Food Hub Feasibility
 - Wildfire preparedness webinars
 - Land linking programs
 - Local food system branding, agricultural awareness brochure, farm tours

- Preservation of Agriculture Lands – no subdivisions or exclusions of ALR; policies that support farming as highest and best use of farmland
- Agricultural Land Use Inventories

Development and Land Use Planning

- Zoning/OCP Amendment processes: Fossil fuel free communities; step code, active transportation, transit infrastructure, complete communities, natural hazards protection
- Development Permit processes: Wildfire Protection Development Permit Area (DPA); Natural Hazards Protection DPAs; Form, Character and Conservation DPA
- Building Permit processes: implementation of the BCBC (which includes step code), Natural Hazards Policy

Trails and Transportation

- Sea to Sky Trail

Future Climate Action Opportunities (what processes are coming up):

There is an opportunity to consider Climate Action as part of upcoming processes and future work. The RGS review, Local Government Climate Action Plan (LGCAP) Program and Funding, and legislative changes to the *Emergency Program Act* are important considerations.

RGS Review (2024)

- Opportunity to update greenhouse gas targets to align with those established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (and as per previous Board resolution)
- opportunity to revise indicators
- opportunity to integrate Climate Action framework/implementation plan/strategy into RGS rather than creating a separate standalone plan/strategy or framework
- opportunity to consider having the RGS apply to Electoral Area A

Local Government Climate Action Plan (LGCAP) Program and Funding (2022-2024)

- Scope: Supports CleanBC Roadmap, Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy & local objectives
- 72k per year for three years; can be pooled regionally and can be put into reserve to use
- SLRD LGCAP funds have been put into reserve: ~\$97,000 in reserve at the end of 2023 and the SLRD will have another \$70,082 in 2024 (total reserve funds ~\$165,882)
- Funding must be used by March 31, 2025
- Other local governments have used the LGCAP funding for staffing, plans, infrastructure, programs, pilots, etc. – so it is really quite open.
- opportunity to think strategically and regionally about how to affect Climate Action
- opportunity to consider regional transit pilot, active transportation upgrades, or other big impact action

Modernized Emergency Management Legislation (2023-2024)

- On November 8, 2023, [the Emergency and Disaster Management Act](#) came into force, replacing the *Emergency Program Act*.
- The updated legislation reflects the realities of the modern world including global pandemics, security threats and climate change, and shifts from focusing on emergency response to the four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery.

- While some powers and duties under the Act are now in effect, others will be brought into force through regulation (e.g. guiding principles for emergency management, including the concept of emergency management phases (mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery) are now functional; Risk and Resilience Assessment requirements will become effective after regulations are made). See the [Provincial Factsheet](#) for full details.
- new provincial legislation has an increased emphasis on disaster risk reduction and includes rules, obligations, or authorities related to each phase
- there will also be requirements for consideration of climate change, with provincial ministries, local authorities (municipalities and regional districts), and critical infrastructure owners required to consider climate change in risk assessments. These requirements will come as once regulations are brought into force.

OPPORTUNITIES & DIRECTION REQUEST:

RGS Review Opportunity

Rather than preparing an additional stand-alone Climate Action Plan/Strategy, there is an opportunity to integrate this work – including targets, strategic directions, indicators/monitoring, and implementation – into the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy. Based on a 20-year planning approach, with growth management at the core and the ability to influence regional and community change, the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy provides a framework for collaborative, integrated climate action.

Additionally, the RGS Review (to be considered in 2024), provides a strategic opportunity to integrate a broader climate lens, including mitigation and adaptation, throughout all SLRD Regional Growth Strategy goals and strategic directions and to focus efforts on prioritizing actions for implementation via an embedded implementation strategy.

Should the Board support the approach to integrate the Climate Action Plan/Strategy intention into the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy, rather than a new stand-alone document, focus could be on setting priorities, targets, and indicators/monitoring with an implementation strategy to action.

LGCAP Funding Opportunity

The SLRD will have \$165,882 of LGCAP funding in reserve in 2024 and this funding must be used by March 2025. There is an opportunity to use this funding to invest in EV charging (related to May 2021 EAD resolution), Sea-to-sky trail/friendship trail upgrades (related to Nov 2022 Board resolution), and/or a regional transit pilot.

Modernized Emergency Management Legislation Opportunity

There is an opportunity for the SLRD to consider the four phases of emergency management - mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery – in concert with climate action. Once regulations are brought into force and local government requirements are outlined, potential synergies around climate action and risk assessments will be better understood.

REGIONAL IMPACTS ANALYSIS:

Climate Action – including mitigation and adaptation – has regional impacts. The SLRD Regional Growth Strategy 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; and it could be a tool to integrate Climate Action priorities, targets, indicators/monitoring and implementation across the SLRD. LGCAP Funding could be used to support local or regional climate action, with impacts varying depending on the nature of the action. The new *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* and the resulting requirements for local governments will have regional impacts.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (PREFERRED OPTION)

THAT the Board provide direction regarding the SLRD Climate Action framework and proposed integration into the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and RGS Review consideration in 2024.

THAT the Board provide direction regarding the LGCAP funding and proposed implementation toward EV charging stations at the SLRD office.

THAT the Board provide direction regarding the LGCAP funding and potential implementation toward Sea-to-Sky/Friendship Trail upgrades or a regional transit pilot.

THAT the Board provide direction regarding general Climate Action priorities for the SLRD to inform next steps, including budget and staff work plans.

THAT the Board direct staff to bring back a follow up report outlining next steps and budget/work plan implications to a future Committee of the Whole meeting, based on direction received on the Climate Action Part 1: Current Context & Opportunities report.

THAT the Board rescind the following previous Climate Action resolutions:

Date: June 24, 2020

Resolution

THAT the City of Rossland - Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy Change resolution be referred to the Climate Action Plan discussion when it comes to the Board.

Date: January 3, 2020 (Board Workshop)

Resolution

Develop a Community Energy and Climate Action Plan in line with the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change science-based targets and including water conservation and food sustainability as guiding principles by June 30, 2020.

Option 2

As per Board discretion.

FOLLOW UP ACTION:

As per the Board's direction.

Submitted by: C. Dewar, Senior Planner

Reviewed by: K. Needham, Director of Planning and Development Services

Approved by: H. Paul, Chief Administrative Officer and N. Gilmore, Interim Chief Administrative Officer