



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Annual Report - 2019

Meeting date: July 22, 2020

To: SLRD Board

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board accept the annual update report on 2019 Regional Growth Strategy activities, as presented.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:

Section 452 of the *Local Government Act* (LGA) sets requirements for regional districts with adopted regional growth strategies (RGS). Specifically, a regional district must

- a) establish a program to monitor its implementation and the progress made towards its objectives and actions, and
- b) prepare an annual report on that implementation and progress.

Note at the May 24, 2017 Board meeting it was resolved:

THAT the Board revise the RGS monitoring program thereby directing: 1) staff to prepare annual reports on RGS implementation and progress, as required by s. 452 of the Local Government Act; and 2) staff to retain consultants to monitor RGS and ISP indicators only every 2-5 years to better reflect data availability.

Assuming there is sufficient data available, RGS and Integrated Sustainability Plan (ISP) indicators will be monitored in mid-2021 for the 2015-2020 time period.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an update on the ongoing activities associated with the RGS over the past year, pursuant to the LGA requirement above.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

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

BACKGROUND:

The RGS was adopted by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) Board in June, 2010 by acceptance of all member municipalities and participating electoral areas (excluding Electoral Area A, which is not a party to the RGS) as well as all seven adjacent regional districts (affected local governments). The RGS provides a “*broad policy framework describing the common direction that the regional district and member municipalities will follow in promoting development and services which are sustainable, recognizing a long term responsibility for the quality of life for future generations*”.

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. As stated in the RGS Bylaw, monitoring has two purposes – to measure progress in RGS implementation and to measure substantive improvements in the core conditions or results that are targeted by the RGS. The SLRD RGS indicators were last monitored for the 2014-2015 period. The SLRD plans to conduct indicator monitoring in 2021, for the 2015-2020 time period

Included below is a summary of ‘general work’ conducted in association with the RGS and ‘works specific to goals & strategic directions’ – which provide an update on implementation and progress.

SUMMARY:

Over the past year, there has been significant work conducted in association with and in support of the RGS.

GENERAL WORK

RGS Review (RGS Amendment Bylaw No. 1562-2018)

- Project completed and bylaw adopted in October 2019.
- Process and outcomes reflect collaborative planning efforts, with extensive time and expertise provided by the RGS Steering Committee*, and ultimately approval from all member municipalities and affected local governments.
- Included the addition of two new important goals with strategic directions: GOAL 10 Protect and Enhance Food Systems, and GOAL 11 Take Action on Climate Change.

*The RGS Steering Committee is comprised of the planning director, or another representative, of the SLRD, District of Lillooet (DoL), Village of Pemberton (VoP), Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), and District of Squamish (DoS), as well as the Regional Growth Strategies Manager for the Southern Interior region at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The RGS Steering Committee meets as needed, with the purpose to: serve as a forum where regional and inter-municipal trends can be discussed, information shared, problems and opportunities identified, and solutions defined for issues of common concern; guide the implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy; to advise the SLRD Board of Directors and member municipalities on Regional Growth Strategy issues/matters, including providing comments and recommendations to the Board/Councils on proposed Regional Growth Strategy amendments and development issues of regional, inter-municipal, and inter-agency significance; and, serve as the intergovernmental advisory committee for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, when called upon.

Regional Context Statements – Member Municipality Updates

- Currently working with member municipalities to update existing Regional Context Statements to address changes from the RGS Review, where necessary; updated Regional Context Statements to be submitted within two years of the adoption of RGS Amendment Bylaw No. 1562-2018 (RGS Review).
- RGS Steering Committee meeting scheduled for June 23, 2020.
- Note Regional Context Statements are accepted by the SLRD Board.

WORKS SPECIFIC TO GOALS & STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS*

*Implementation and progress updates listed by relevant goal and strategic direction; not all strategic directions are included in this staff report.

GOAL 1 Focus Development into Compact, Complete, Sustainable Communities			
1.1 The SLRD and member municipalities agree that:			
a) The Settlement Planning Maps will be used in conjunction with Official Community Plans to:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct growth and settlement development towards Member Municipalities and existing SLRD Master Planned Communities; • maintain the rural, low density character of Serviced Residential and Rural Residential Areas; and • protect and maintain Non-Settlement Areas. Official Community Plans should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) establish policies that are consistent with the Regional Settlement Planning Map; (ii) direct major settlement growth to the Urban Areas and Master Planned Communities; (iii) prevent major settlement growth in Non-Settlement Areas; and (iv) encourage Smart Growth strategies appropriate to the settlement types and local circumstances 			
IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As part of RGS Review, Settlement Mapping was updated to align with member municipality comprehensive OCP Update processes and in support of compact, complete sustainable communities. See <i>Table 1: Land Area Over Time by RGS Land Use Designation</i> below. - Regional Context Statements are to be submitted by member municipalities within two years of the RGS Amendment Bylaw adoption (as discussed above). - No new RGS Amendment applications or boundary expansions have occurred. 			
Table 1: Land Area Over Time by RGS Land Use Designation			
RGS Land Use Designation	2018	2019	*Net Change
Urban	7,630 ha	8,695 ha	1,065 ha
Master Planned Community	1,273 ha	1,273 ha	-
Serviced Residential	292 ha	292 ha	-
Rural Community	265 ha	265 ha	-
Rural Residential	5,475 ha	5,475 ha	-
*Changes incorporated as part of the RGS Review.			

GOAL 2 Improve Transportation Linkages and Options

Regional Road Network Improvement Priorities (Table 4 in RGS Bylaw)

- Fountain Slide (10 Mile Slide) Area

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Works continue to be underway, led by the Province.

Regional Preferred Modes of Transportation Priorities (Table 5 in RGS Bylaw)

- Complete Friendship Trail connecting Pemberton and Mount Currie.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Works ongoing; 1 km of the Friendship Trail completed in 2019, with the trail now connected from the Village of Pemberton to Pemberton Industrial Park.

- Sea-to-Sky Regional Transit Service

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

While there is nothing significant to report with respect to Regional Transit, the SLRD continues to lobby and advocate for Provincial support toward Regional Transit funding and implementation where opportunities exist. The SLRD is in the process of submitting a response to TransLink's Call for Ideas respecting its Transport 2050 Plan which will encourage and recommend Regional Transit linkages to TransLink's transit system. Additionally, the Board resolved to support the resolution by District of Squamish that will be brought to UBCM with respect to Provincial funding support for a Sea-to-Sky Regional Transit system.

- Maintain and enhance Sea-to-Sky Trail

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Works ongoing; \$130,000 grant from Trans Canada Trail (The Great Trail) and \$234,000 allocated from Sea to Sky Trail Cost Centre for a new section between Whistler and Pemberton, for 6 km of new trail to be completed in 2020.

- Seek opportunities to implement pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure in conjunction with other capital projects

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure being incorporated into the master planned communities of Britannia Beach and Furry Creek, as part of rezoning and development permit processes.

- Encourage Complete Streets designs in all new development and road projects.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

- Complete Streets design principles being incorporated into commercial development programs for the master planned communities of Britannia Beach and Furry Creek as part of the rezoning and development permit processes.

GOAL 3 Generate a Range of Quality Affordable Housing

3.1 The SLRD and member municipalities agree to:

a) Establish collaborative and consistent affordable housing policies, targets and tools to generate an adequate supply of quality affordable housing and a diversity of housing types for employees, seniors and people in need in the region.

This will be pursued by requiring a description of affordable housing policies, targets and tools within member municipality Regional Context Statements and SLRD Official Community Plans. Specifically, statements/descriptions should include the following:

- *Inclusionary zoning requirements with aggressive targets, preferably at a minimum of 15 % affordable housing in perpetuity (e.g. purpose built rental, cooperative housing, etc.);*
- *Tools to secure affordable housing in perpetuity through deed/title restrictions and price controls;*
- *Strategies for the acquisition of community land banks for housing;*
- *Incentives and/or targets for affordable rental housing.*

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

- To come as part of Regional Context Statement Updates.
- SLRD Affordable Housing Initiatives and Development Applications include:
 - o SLRD Housing Needs Report completed in 2019;
 - o 14 rental residential units, covenanted for restricted rental prices, (in addition to 73 market townhouses) secured at Britannia Beach North (BODC);
 - o Inclusionary zoning targets and tools being implemented in the review of development applications at WedgeWoods Estates and Furry Creek.

h) Work collaboratively to address impacts of short-term nightly rentals and home ‘sharing’ on housing supply.

This will be pursued through bylaw enforcement, business licences, exploring the use of property rental programs matching business owners with property owners for workforce housing and targeted communications and outreach efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

- SLRD Bylaw enforcement complaint based; no zoning amendments or regulatory changes in 2019.

GOAL 4 Achieve a Sustainable Economy

f) Implement the recommendations of the Northern SLRD Economic Development Assessment, Strategy and Action Plan and the Northern SLRD Economic Development Governance Model Feasibility Study, including working to establish an inclusive, multi-party regional economic development committee.

Implementation will be pursued by undertaking a series of strategic initiatives outlined in the reports that will guide future investment in the Lillooet area economy in collaboration with the St’át’imc

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

The SLRD, with funding from Northern Development Initiatives Trust (NDIT), engaged the services of a consultant to review and update the 2012 Northern SLRD Economic Development Assessment, Strategy and Action Plan in 2019. The updated plan was received by the SLRD Board in 2020.

i) Support the economic viability of the local agricultural sector. This will be pursued by developing regulations that strengthen the capacity of local farmers to produce and reach their markets and highlighting/recognizing the importance of agriculture to the region’s economy in decision-making.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Squamish Valley Agricultural Plan adopted in 2019. Implementation of the Electoral Area B, District of Lillooet and St'at'mic Agricultural Plan and the Pemberton Valley Agricultural Plan continue to support the economic viability of the local agricultural sector. SLRD regulatory amendments continue to support agriculture.

GOAL 5 Protect Natural Eco-system Functioning

f) Take an active approach to responsible vegetation management, including, where appropriate, consideration of alternatives to herbicides in rights-of-way maintenance, and cost-effective measures to control the spread of noxious weeds and alien invasive species. This will be pursued by promoting alternatives to chemical treatments; enforcing SLRD and member municipality Soil Deposit and Removal bylaws; supporting the works of the Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council and Lillooet Regional Invasive Species Society; and investigating the introduction of a noxious weed bylaw and awareness program (e.g. restricting fill movements, etc.).

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

The SLRD adopted a Noxious Weed Control Bylaw in February 2018. Annual funding supports the works of the *Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council and Lillooet Regional Invasive Species Society* to provide for the service of invasive species management and control within the SLRD. In 2019 this annual funding was \$75,000, with the District of Squamish, RMOW, Village of Pemberton, District of Lillooet and SLRD Electoral Areas all contributing.

GOAL 6 Encourage the Sustainable Use of Parks and Natural Areas

d) Continue supporting the development of the Sea to Sky Trail as a regional amenity, and continue advancing the goals of the Sea to Sky Recreation Trails Program. As trails are developed, they will be designed to be compatible with farm and ranching operations. This will be pursued in collaboration with provincial, regional and local land managers including the Agricultural Land Commission, land owners in the ALR, clubs and stakeholders to preserve and maintain existing trails and plan new trails for the future.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Works ongoing; \$130,000 grant from Trans Canada Trail (The Great Trail) and \$234,000 allocated from Sea to Sky Trail Cost Centre for a new section between Whistler and Pemberton.

GOAL 7 Create Healthy and Safe Communities

c) Undertake integrated, coordinated emergency preparedness planning on a regional basis, including strategic planning for fire protection services, natural hazards management, extreme weather events, other large-scale emergencies, and expanding 911 emergency services. This will be pursued by a Regional District committee and staff.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Current regional emergency planning initiatives and actions of the SLRD include:

- SLRD chairs the Sea to Sky Regional Emergency Program Coordinators group, which meets bi-monthly or as required. Group membership includes Bowen Island, Lions Bay, Squamish, Whistler, Pemberton, Lil'wat Nation and Squamish Nation. Key stakeholders such as EMBC, Canadian Red Cross and others participating regularly depending on the agenda.

- SLRD is an active member of the Lillooet area EPC group, currently chaired by the District of Lillooet and includes the SLRD Areas A and B, Lillooet, STS, LTC and EPC representatives from individual FN members.
- The SLRD is an active member of the Pemberton Valley Emergency Management Committee, which was formed in 2019 to bring a collaborative and coordinated approach to natural hazard emergency preparedness and planning among the four jurisdictions in the Pemberton Valley. There is elected official, CAO/COO and emergency program representation from Lil'wat Nation, VOP and SLRD, with the PVDD Operations Manager also a member. Initiatives from this group have included joint and mutually supported funding applications and joint advocacy to the relevant provincial ministries on key issues such as landslide monitoring and flood hazard management.

GOAL 8 Enhance Relations with Indigenous Communities and First Nations

b) Continue to support the creation of SLRD-Indigenous Liaison Committees to work on information sharing protocols, learning resources, and engagement tools on matters of joint interest such as land use planning, servicing, economic development, etc. This will be pursued through discussions with Indigenous communities, First Nations and relevant member municipalities.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

The SLRD continues to work with Indigenous communities, First Nations and member municipalities on matters of joint interest. As part of the ongoing effort to strengthen relationships between neighbouring communities in the Southern Stl'atl'imx region, the SLRD, in collaboration with the Village of Pemberton, Lil'wat Nation, N'Quatqua, Samahquam and the Lower Stl'atl'imx Tribal Council, co-organized and delivered two Nukw7antwal Leadership Gatherings through the Community 2 Community (C2C) Forum program (2017 and 2018). A third planned event has been delayed, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but is planned to take place later in 2020 if possible.

f) Support an ongoing process of information sharing and mutual learning to increase understanding, build trust, and foster collaboration. This will be pursued by supporting community-to-community forums and other opportunities for mutual dialogue and discovery.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

In an effort to foster increased sub-regional collaboration in the northern SLRD, the SLRD has worked to strengthen relationships with northern St'at'imc communities and related organizations. As part of these efforts, an Intergovernmental Relations Working Group (IRWG) was established in 2016 composed of representatives from the SLRD, District of Lillooet, Lillooet Tribal Council and the northern St'at'imc communities of Sekw'el'was, T'it'q'et – through its P'egp'ig'lha Council (PC), and Tsal'alh. The IRWG was tasked with drafting a Protocol Agreement for Communication and Cooperation, developing processes to facilitate ongoing intergovernmental communication and cooperation of shared priorities and co-organizing a leadership forum. The IRWG met several times over the course of 2017 to finalize the first draft of the PACC, and a leadership forum was held on November 15, 2017 which brought together 25 elected leaders and senior staff from the DoL, SLRD, Lillooet Tribal Council and the northern St'at'imc communities of T'it'q'et, Xaxli'p and Xwisten. The Protocol Agreement was signed on Thursday, May 24, 2018 and provides a framework to

establish stronger relationships between the parties through improved communication and enhanced collaboration.

GOAL 9 Improve Collaboration among Jurisdictions

b) Encourage SLRD and member municipality staff departments (administration, planning, finance, engineering, etc.) to develop mechanisms by which they may share information, collaborate and co-operate with their respective peers across the jurisdictions including, but not limited to: regular staff meetings; referral systems; working committees; etc. This will be pursued through collaborative approaches to regional and trans-boundary issues

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

The RGS Steering Committee continues to be a key opportunity for planning departments to collaborate, cooperate and share information. SLRD Planning staff is also actively involved in the Metro Vancouver RGS Review process (Metro 2050).

GOAL 10 Protect and Enhance Food Systems

10.1 The SLRD and member municipalities agree to:

a) Implement Agricultural Plans in conjunction with Indigenous communities and First Nations, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Land Commission. This will be pursued by ensuring that local and regional land use policies and bylaws reflect and support the vision and priorities set forth in the Agricultural Plans, and by supporting local community groups, organizations and initiatives in their implementation efforts.

b) Preserve the agricultural land base for sustainable agriculture through the recognition that the highest and best use of agricultural land is for agriculture. This will be pursued by supporting the management of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) by the provincial government, encouraging the provincial government to protect the agricultural land base through the ALR, and utilizing appropriate Zoning Bylaw, OCP, and RGS policy tools to strictly regulate non-farm uses and the subdivision of farmland in accordance with the Agricultural Land Commission Act and Regulation.

c) Promote agricultural viability with an emphasis on food production and sustainable practices. This will be pursued by working with other levels of government to ensure all jurisdictional regulations are aligned and beneficial to producers and food production, including pursuing strategies and actions to increase actively farmed agricultural land, encourage sustainable land-based aquaculture, emphasize food production, support local food processing and distribution, and reduce barriers to the economic viability of agricultural activities. This will be pursued further by encouraging communities to set policies/targets for local and sustainable food procurement.

d) Strengthen regional connections with community-based food initiatives and organizations in support of an economically viable and ecologically sustainable food system. This will be pursued by recognizing and supporting the efforts and visions of community-based food system initiatives, strategies and organizations, including Indigenous communities and First Nations – and by ensuring that urban and rural planning facilitates greater connectivity in the food systems, including decision-making. This may also involve the development of a Regional Food System Strategy

h) Seek input and advice from the local agricultural community on food system issues. This will be pursued through maintaining and regularly engaging with the Agricultural Committees, Farmers Institutes/Societies and organizations, and by working with indigenous communities and First Nations.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

- The SLRD continues to support (with financial and staff resources) the Lillooet Agriculture and Food Society (LAFS) in their implementation of the Electoral Area B, District of Lillooet and St'at'mic Agricultural Plan.
- The SLRD is working with the Squamish Food Policy Council and the District of Squamish on an implementation plan for the newly adopted Squamish Valley Agricultural Plan.
- Recent zoning amendments in Electoral Area C support the visions and priorities of the Pemberton Valley Agricultural Plan.
- Squamish Valley Agricultural Plan completed in 2019.
- Pemberton Valley Agricultural Land Use Inventory updated in 2019 (report to be presented to the Board in the coming months).
- SLRD participation in the Whistler Centre for Sustainability facilitated Squamish Lillooet Food Task Force.
- SLRD developed an Agricultural Awareness Brochure in 2019 as a regional resource (action identified by the Squamish Lillooet Food Task Force).
- Electoral Area B Agricultural Advisory Committee and Electoral Area C Agricultural Advisory Committee continue to meet regularly, advise to the SLRD Board on agricultural issues.

GOAL 11 Take Action on Climate Change

11.1 The SLRD and member municipalities agree to:

a) Adopt Provincial GHG reduction targets.

This will be pursued by incorporating targets into SLRD and member municipality OCPs and establishing/maintaining corporate and community emissions inventories. Under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act and reconfirmed through the Climate Leadership Plan (2016), the following targets are established for the purpose of reducing BC GHG emissions:

- (i) by 2020 and for each subsequent calendar year, BC greenhouse gas emissions will be at least 33% less than the level of those emissions in 2007;*
- (ii) by 2050 and for each subsequent calendar year, BC greenhouse gas emissions will be at least 80% less than the level of those emissions in 2007.*

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Work ongoing. The District of Squamish, RMOW, and the District of Lillooet have incorporated such GHG reduction targets into their OCPs; the SLRD and Village of Pemberton are still to incorporate such targets into their OCPs.

b) Maintain status as BC Climate Action Charter signatories. The SLRD and member municipalities are signatories to the BC Climate Action Charter. Signatory Local Governments agree to develop strategies and take actions to achieve the following goals: "(i) being carbon neutral in respect of their operations by 2012, recognizing that solid waste facilities regulated under the Environmental Management Act are not included in operations for the purposes of this Charter. (ii) measuring and reporting on their community's GHG emissions profile; and (iii) creating complete, compact, more energy efficient rural and urban communities (e.g. foster a built environment that supports a reduction in car dependency and energy use, establish

policies and processes that support fast tracking of green development projects, adopt zoning practices that encourage land use patterns that increase density and reduce sprawl.)”

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Status maintained and work ongoing.

e) Substantially reduce GHG emissions:

(i) from mobile sources

This will be pursued by limiting growth outside of established urban areas and prioritizing infrastructure development and policies that support preferred modes of transportation for inter and intra community travel.

(ii) from stationary sources

This will be pursued through collective prioritization of energy efficient development and may include establishing Green Building Policies, creating incentive structures, encouraging retrofit programs, exploring development controls, exploring district energy systems, and lobbying the province for building code extensions. Additionally, the SLRD and member municipalities agree to explore the BC Energy Step Code.

(iii) associated with solid waste management

This will be pursued by continuing to develop and implement policies, practices and targets toward achieving Zero Waste Goals.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Efforts to substantially reduce GHG emissions are ongoing. Growth continues to be directed to member municipalities and SLRD master planned communities. The SLRD member municipalities have adopted various levels of the BC Energy Step Code, and the District of Lillooet is exploring the BC Energy Step Code. The SLRD will be moving to Step 3 by 2022.

f) Ensure regional/municipal decision-making is structured to achieve GHG reduction targets and energy goals.

This will be pursued by supporting compact, complete, efficient land use patterns and using an integrated asset management approach in which consideration is given to the full costs throughout an asset’s life cycle (lifecycle costs), prioritizing opportunities for GHG and energy reduction. This may also involve expanding/updating corporate purchasing policies.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Work ongoing. Development continues to be directed to Urban Areas and Master Planned Communities.

i) Consider impacts to local community GHG emissions in decision-making around GHG-intensive industries and utilities, LNG, and commercial recreation and leisure operators.

This will be pursued through development approval and environmental assessment processes and lobbying efforts with provincial and federal government.

IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS UPDATE:

Work is ongoing. Impacts to local community GHG emissions are being considered in the review of development applications and environmental assessment referral responses.

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*.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (PREFERRED OPTION)

Accept the annual update report on 2019 Regional Growth Strategy activities as presented.

Option 2

Do not accept the annual update report on 2019 Regional Growth Strategy activities as presented.

Option 3

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: K. Clark, Interim Chief Administrative Officer