Meeting date: April 22, 2015

To: SLRD Board

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board consider the 5 year review of the “Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008” as per Section 869 (2) of the Local Government Act.

THAT the Board accept the RGS Steering Committee recommendation to not initiate a review of the “Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008” at this time, and to instead undergo a preliminary review period through the RGS Steering Committee.

THAT the Board direct staff to follow up with a report and recommendations regarding the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008” review at the end of 2015.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:
Section 869 of the Local Government Act (LGA) sets requirements for regional districts with adopted regional growth strategies. Specifically, at least once every 5 years, a regional district that has adopted a regional growth strategy must consider whether the regional growth strategy must be reviewed for possible amendment.

As it has been seven years since the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw was completed (the RGS Bylaw was completed and received first/second reading in 2008, though not adopted until 2010), the SLRD needs to consider whether a review of the RGS is required.

It should be noted that the RGS Bylaw underwent a significant “housekeeping amendment” in 2013-2014. This was undertaken mainly to provide for the acceptance and inclusion of member municipality Regional Context Statements and associated text and mapping amendments. This process also provided an opportunity to address other “housekeeping items,” such as: the inclusion of employment projections, as required by s. 850 of the LGA; refinement of the RGS monitoring indicators; and enhancement of layout and graphics. The RGS Amendment Bylaw was adopted on January 28, 2015 by way of a minor amendment process.
Although the concept of a 5 year review of the RGS is supported by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD) as well as the RGS Steering Committee*, the recommended approach is to begin by entering into a preliminary review period in which to identify the need for a review, focus on key issues and develop any draft content. This review and scoping period would inform the RGS Review, which could be initiated in 2016.

* The RGS Steering Committee is comprised of the planning director, or another official appointed by the applicable Board/Council, of the SLRD, District of Lillooet, Village of Pemberton, Resort Municipality of Whistler, and District of Squamish as well as Brent Mueller, Regional Growth Strategies Manager at the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD).

RELEVANT POLICIES:
Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008

BACKGROUND:
Most of BC’s high growth regions – comprising 83 percent of the population – are using regional growth strategies to manage population change and guide decision-making and collaboration. The purpose of a regional growth strategy under Part 25 of the LGA is to “promote human settlement that is socially, economically, and environmentally healthy and that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land and other resources.”

Covering a period of at least 20 years, the SLRD RGS is intended to “provide 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”. Regular review of this bylaw helps ensure consistency and relevance in planning documents and approaches across the region. It also continues to foster a collective commitment to the RGS vision and supports collaborative governance.

ANALYSIS:
After considered discussion, the RGS Steering Committee is advising that a review of the RGS not be initiated at this time. Rather, the RGS Steering Committee is recommending that the year 2015 be set aside as a preliminary review or “scoping” period. It is felt that a scoping period will support a more effective and efficient review process, recognizing that RGS development is cyclical and that the Board can initiate a review at any point in time. Specifically, initiating a scoping period now will enable the RGS Steering Committee to determine the following key components, which will ultimately inform their recommendations to the Board for an RGS Review:
Process -- Minor or Major Amendment: it is difficult to determine the appropriate process to enter into without understanding what content needs to be addressed. A preliminary review period will provide time for the RGS Steering Committee to identify and develop draft content. The content will provide direction as to the appropriate application and required amendment process.

Content -- New and Revised: although draft priorities have been identified, developing content will take significant time and effort. The RGS Steering Committee feels they can do much of this work in advance of initiating a formal review, supporting a more efficient and effective process. Draft priorities developed by the RGS Steering Committee include:
- Minor amendment criteria
- Minor amendment process
- Food security – new – this was not included in the RGS and the RGS Steering Committee would like to explore how this can be included in the RGS as food security is now a more pressing concern.
- Regional Road Network improvements – revise and update
- Improve Transportation Linkages and Options – review section
- Memorandum of Understanding regarding referrals – determine when/what to be referred to SLRD/member municipalities, etc.
- Fringe Growth/Boundary expansion- develop policies
- Enhance relations with Aboriginal communities
- Special Planning Areas – review/revise and determine necessity of this land use category
- Table 1: Description of Settlement Planning Map – review/revise to ensure consistency across jurisdictions.
- Bylaw housekeeping

Schedule -- Consultation and Timelines: the content and process will determine the required consultation and timelines for the review. A preliminary review period will ensure the appropriate steps and engagement is taken, supporting a meaningful RGS review.

Through a preliminary review period, clarity around the process, content and schedule of the RGS Review will be gained. Additionally, a preliminary review period led by the RGS Steering Committee contributes to and creates the space for continued collaboration and alignment throughout the SLRD. The Steering Committee will provide the Board with updates with respect to this process as relevant information is available.

Proposed Next Steps
1. Initiate a preliminary review period lead by the RGS Steering Committee (SLRD Board resolution)
2. Provide an opportunity for input on the need for review of the RGS, as per Section 869(3) of the Local Government Act:
   • Forward this Board Report and Resolution to affected local governments (Steering Committee members may wish to include this with an Information Report to their
respective municipalities), First Nations, school district boards, the Pemberton Valley Dyking District, and the provincial and federal governments and their agencies (SLRD Staff)

- Offer an web page to citizens informing them of the review process and providing options for involvement (SLRD Staff)

REGIONAL IMPACT ANALYSIS:
The SLRD Regional Growth Strategy is an initiative of the SLRD, the District of Lillooet, the Village of Pemberton, the Resort Municipality of Whistler, and the District of Squamish. The RGS Bylaw is intended to provide a board 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. As the bylaw applies to the four member municipalities and three electoral areas (Areas, B, C, and D; the RGS does not apply to Area A) and spans a 20 year horizon, the goals, strategic directions and resulting implementation process have regional impacts – present and future.

OPTIONS:
Option 1 (PREFERRED OPTION)
Accept the RGS Steering Committee recommendations to: 1) consider the 5 year review of the “Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008”; 2) not initiate a review at this time and instead undergo a review and scoping period; and 3) direct staff to come back with a report and recommendations regarding the need for a review at the end of 2015.

Option 2
Accept the RGS Steering Committee recommendations with revisions from the Board.

Option 3
Do not accept the RGS Steering Committee recommendations and refer back to staff for more information.

Option 4
Initiate a 5 year review of the Regional Growth Strategy at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

Submitted by: C. Daniels, Planner
Endorsed by: K. Needham, Director of Planning and Development
Reviewed by: L. Flynn, Chief Administrative Officer
Meeting date: March 18, 2015

To: SLRD Board

PURPOSE:
The purpose of this report is to advise the SLRD Board about the required consideration of a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) 5 year review, and to update the Board on the work that staff is undertaking with the RGS Steering Committee in order to assess whether a review is recommended, and what the scope of that work may be.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:
Section 869 of the Local Government Act (LGA) sets requirements for regional districts with adopted regional growth strategies. Specifically, at least once every 5 years, a regional district that has adopted a regional growth strategy must consider whether the regional growth strategy must be reviewed for possible amendment.

As it has been seven years since the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw was completed (the RGS Bylaw was completed and received first/second reading in 2008, though not adopted until 2010), the SLRD needs to review the RGS and consider whether a review is required.

In 2014, staff completed a housekeeping amendment of the RGS undertaken to provide for the acceptance of member municipality Official Community Plan Regional Context Statements, and also made some minor housekeeping changes to the RGS. The housekeeping amendment did not involve a comprehensive review of the RGS. The concept of a 5 year review of the RGS is supported by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD) as well as the RGS Steering Committee*. SLRD staff is working with the RGS Steering Committee to develop a recommended approach for this review which will be presented to the Board.

* The RGS Steering Committee is comprised of the planning director, or another official appointed by the applicable council, of the SLRD, District of Lillooet, Village of Pemberton, Resort Municipality of Whistler, and District of Squamish as well as Brent Mueller, Regional Growth Strategies Manager at the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD).
RELEVANT POLICIES:
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BACKGROUND:
Most of BC’s high growth regions – comprising 83 percent of the population – are using regional growth strategies to manage population change and guide decision-making and collaboration. The purpose of a regional growth strategy under Part 25 of the LGA is to “promote human settlement that is socially, economically, and environmentally healthy and that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land and other resources.”

Covering a period of at least 20 years, the SLRD RGS is intended to “provide 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”. Regular review of this bylaw helps ensure consistency and relevance in planning documents and approaches across the region. It also continues to foster a collective commitment to the RGS vision and supports collaborative governance.

ANALYSIS:
Purpose of a RGS 5 year review
Meet LGA Requirements: the LGA requires a regular review of regional growth strategies, with a review to be considered at least once every five years.
Improve implementation: through implementation of the RGS Bylaw, SLRD staff and the RGS Steering Committee have identified some issues with the RGS, including the Minor Amendment Criteria and Process that may require further revision.
Evolve Policy and Processes: the SLRD has experienced considerable change since the RGS was initiated in 2003. There have also been changes at the provincial and federal level that have impacted regional district planning. Finally, member municipalities, through the RGS Steering Committee, have identified a number of issues to be considered. Consideration of a 5 year review will provide the opportunity to evolve policy and processes to reflect the current and future context.
Continue Collaboration: an RGS 5 year review will continue the collaborative efforts as noted in the RGS Bylaw by continuing to assist all parties with an interest in the region to:
1. Work together to address matters of common regional concern;
2. Demonstrate respect for each other’s jurisdictions and processes;
3. Maintain good communications and coordination with respect to land use and other decisions of a regional and sub-regional nature;
4. Create a long term vision informed by the key principles of sustainability and embark on a path to our future in a manner that finds a responsible balance between the environmental, economic, and social needs of our communities.
Current and Next Steps

1. Develop a Recommended Approach: SLRD Staff and the RGS Steering Committee will continue to work to develop a recommended approach regarding a 5 year review. Whether the review involves a Minor or Major Amendment Process, and what content the review includes as a result, is to be determined. The RGS Steering Committee met on February 19, 2015 and is scheduled to meet again on March 26, 2015.

2. SLRD Board Resolution: As per s. 854 of the LGA, preparation of the regional growth strategy (including a review) must be initiated by resolution of the board. SLRD Staff will present the recommended approach to the Board, for their acceptance, at a future meeting date.

3. Project Initiation: The scope and next steps of an RGS 5 year review will be dictated by whether the proposed review requires a Minor or Major Amendment Process. As noted previously, a recommended approach will be itemized in a future report to the Board.

Submitted by: C. Daniels, Planner
Endorsed by: K. Needham, Director of Planning and Development
Reviewed by: L. Flynn, Chief Administrative Officer