Meeting date: October 28, 2015

To: SLRD Board

PURPOSE:
The purpose of this report is to update the SLRD Board on the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Review Scoping Period process to date and identify next steps required in advance of initiating the formal RGS Review.

At the April 22, 2015 Board meeting, the Board resolved:

   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.

The RGS Review Scoping Period has warranted more comprehensive and robust growth management discussions than originally anticipated. As such, SLRD staff will follow up with the summary report and recommendations within the first quarter of 2016.

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.
On April 22, 2015 the Board also resolved:

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.

The RGS Steering Committee has been meeting regularly to conduct the preliminary review/scoping period. This report provides an update on the process and focus of discussions to date. A Request for Decision report, including recommendations regarding the process, content and schedule of the RGS Review, will be brought to the Board in early 2016.

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

BACKGROUND:
Regional Growth Strategies
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 Section 849(1) of 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.

Regional Growth Strategy Amendments
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.
Purpose of the RGS 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.

Through the RGS Review Scoping Period, SLRD staff has been working with the RGS Steering Committee to develop a recommended approach for the RGS Review. The following section provides an update on the process and focus of discussions to date.

ANALYSIS:

Scoping Period Process
The RGS Steering Committee has met 6 times since initiation of the preliminary review/scoping period on April 22, 2015. The Minor Amendment Criteria and Process, as well as Growth Management, have been the topics of focus for these meetings. The RGS Steering Committee also developed a Terms of Reference for the committee, as one had not previously been created, and it was felt that the committee would benefit from a clear set of operating criteria (see Appendix C). Regional Roundtable updates (where each community representative on the RGS Steering Committee provides an update on their activities) have taken place each meeting. This has helped to improve collaboration and communication between member municipalities and the SLRD on a range of regional and inter-municipal planning initiatives.

The RGS Steering Committee has focused discussions on the RGS Minor Amendment Criteria and Process, with efforts made to: increase clarity around implementation of the RGS Bylaw
and Amendment Process; support growth management priorities; and reflect current best practices. Proposed revisions have been developed through extensive collaboration and consensus-based decision making, and will be presented to the SLRD Board as part of the formal RGS Review.

As part of the RGS Review Scoping Period, Implementation Guidelines have been prepared as resources to assist in implementing the Regional Growth Strategy. They include guidelines for the preparation of and amendments to Regional Context Statements, for amendment of the Regional Growth Strategy, and for establishing protocols for OCP/Zoning Amendment referrals. These guidelines are intended to live outside the RGS Bylaw, detail processes and procedures with regards to the implementation of the RGS, and create norms by which member municipalities and the SLRD communicate and collaborate on matters of regional significance. These Implementation Guidelines will be included in the recommendations regarding the RGS 5 year review process which will be presented in early 2016.

As per s. 854 of the Local Government Act, 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, in early 2016.

**Process to Date and Proposed Next Steps**
1. Initiate a preliminary review/scoping period lead by the RGS Steering Committee ([SLRD Board resolution, April 22, 2015](#))
2. Provide an opportunity for input on the need for review of the RGS, as per Section 869(3) of the Local Government Act ([SLRD Board Report and Resolution were forwarded to affected local governments and agencies in April, 2015](#))
3. Provide the Board with updates on the RGS Steering Committee scoping period, as relevant information is available ([SLRD Board Report, October Update](#))
4. Seek input from provincial agencies on SLRD RGS Review scoping period in November ([SLRD letter via email](#))
5. Report back to the Board on the need for review and provide recommendations regarding the RGS Review process, content and schedule ([SLRD Board Report, early 2016](#))
6. Initiate RGS Review ([By SLRD Board Resolution, early 2016](#))

The RGS Steering Committee met on October 8, 2015 and is scheduled to meet again in October, November and December.

Please note that as revisions to the Minor Amendment Criteria and Process are being proposed, it is likely that the RGS Review will involve a major amendment process.

**REGIONAL IMPACT ANALYSIS:**
The SLRD Regional Growth Strategy is an initiative of the SLRD, in partnership with 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 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. As the RGS bylaw applies to the four member municipalities and three electoral areas (Electoral 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.

ATTACHMENTS:
Appendix B: Request for Decision SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Review – Scoping Period (April 22, 2015)
Appendix C: Proposed RGS Steering Committee Terms of Reference

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:
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:
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
REQUEST FOR DECISION
SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Review
Scoping Period

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, \textit{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
Regional Growth Strategy
STEERING COMMITTEE
Terms of Reference

Purpose
The purpose of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Steering Committee is:

1. To serve as a forum for planning/development services staff from member municipalities, the regional district and the province, where regional and inter-municipal trends can be discussed, information shared, problems and opportunities identified, and solutions defined for issues of common concern;

2. To guide the implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy. This includes: reviewing the annual monitoring report on progress made in achieving the goals of the Regional Growth Strategy; reviewing all requested amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy; and guiding the process of reviewing and updating the Regional Growth Strategy;

3. To advise the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District 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,

4. To serve as the intergovernmental advisory committee for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, when called upon, to advise applicable local governments on the development and implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy, including Regional Growth Strategy reviews, and to facilitate coordination of Provincial and local government actions, policies and programs as they relate to the development and implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy.

Establishment & Authority
The Steering Committee’s role is advisory. Advice, comments or recommendations from the Steering Committee shall be forwarded to the Board for consideration. The Steering Committee receives its authority to serve as the intergovernmental advisory committee for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District from Section 867 (1) & (2) of the Local Government Act and SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008.

Composition
The Steering Committee shall consist of the planning director, or another representative, of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (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 Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD).

When called upon to act as the intergovernmental advisory committee, this core Steering Committee may be expanded upon to include: senior representatives of the Provincial government and Provincial government agencies and corporations, determined by the minister after consultation with the board; and representatives of other authorities and organizations if invited to participate by the Board.

**Organization**
The Chair of the Steering Committee shall be the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Director of Planning & Development Services or equivalent.

**Procedures**
1. The Steering Committee shall meet as needed, with the number and frequency of meetings varying according to the work plan for each year.
2. An annual meeting of the Steering Committee shall be conducted to review the RGS Monitoring Report, to discuss the achievements and challenges experienced in the implementation of the regional growth strategy (as shown by the indicators), and to determine the future regional growth strategy work program. The annual meeting shall be held in October to permit committee discussion and input to the development of the following year’s regional growth strategy program work plan and budget.
3. The Steering Committee is not a formal decision-making body, but rather a forum for inter-municipal and inter-agency discussion, issue identification and resolution related to regional planning and the Regional Growth Strategy. As such, the committee will be non-voting and can conduct its business informally without reference to a quorum of the membership. Recommendations are based on consensus and if consensus is not reached differences are noted.
4. Steering Committee members having a priority interest in an application or who are personally affected by an application /applicant must step aside from the discussion on that particular matter.
5. Representatives of other authorities and organizations may attend meetings of the Steering Committee either by invitation, or as identified through consultation with the Chair or the SLRD staff member responsible for the Regional Growth Strategy.
6. Executive and secretarial support for the Steering Committee will be provided by the SLRD Planning Department.
7. An agenda for the Steering Committee will be prepared by SLRD Staff and emailed to Committee members one week in advance of their meeting.
8. The agendas and minutes of the meetings of the Steering Committee shall be circulated to all Steering Committee members.
9. Steering Committee members will check in/report back to their member municipalities, including elected officials, as needed.

**Resources & Support**
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Planning Department shall provide financial and human resources to support the work of the Committee.