

Chronology of Key Decisions and Events in Developing the Growth Strategy

February 1995 - August 2003

RGS Project Initiation:

February 1995: The Regional Services Committee (RSC), at the direction of the Board, reviews a proposal for undertaking a regional growth management strategy. This proposal was prepared by a working committee of the Inter-Municipal Planning Advisory Committee (IMPAC), CRD staff, and the Vice Chair of the RSC.

June 1995: The Provincial Legislature gives Royal Assent to Bill 11, the Growth Strategies Statutes, Amendment Act, 1995, enabling regional districts in cooperation with their member municipalities and electoral areas to prepare regional growth strategies. The Board adopts a recommendation to support in principle the initiation of a regional growth strategy.

RGS Project Launch & Background Research (Feb. 96 – May 97):

This phase established a common understanding of the project and obtained agreement on the purpose, workplan, consultation program, schedule, and budget. Trends and planning policies were examined to identify their implications on future growth in the Capital Region.

February 1996: The Board formally initiates the Regional Growth Strategy in accordance with the Municipal Act, Section 854, and authorizes formal letters of notification sent to member municipalities, school boards, the Cowichan Valley Regional District, First Nations, the Islands Trust, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The Board also approves the consultation program, establishment of a Public Advisory Committee, and the Inter-Governmental Advisory Committee (IAC) as required by the provincial legislation. The Regional Planning Committee is established to oversee the RGS project.

October 1996: The background reports: Analysis of Policies and Priorities in the Capital Region (CitySpaces Consulting Ltd); and An Island in a Sea of Change : Trends Affecting the Capital Regional District (Westland Resource Group) prepared and distributed to member municipalities and IAC members for review and comment.

February 1997: Members of First Nation councils formally invited to participate in the RGS project development and the Inter-governmental Advisory Committee.

April 1997: The background report: Island Outlook: A Discussion Paper on the Implications of Growth in the Capital Region (Westland Resource Group) is prepared and distributed to member municipalities and IAC members for review and comment.

Review Base Case & Develop Framework Agreement (June 97 – Aug. 98)

This phase involved preparation, technical evaluation, and public discussion of a growth management scenario called the OCP Option that was based on an extension of existing municipal Official Community Plans.

August 1997: A public survey is conducted and the public Capital Ideas Group meetings held to foster discussion on growth issues among residents.

November 1997: Results from the technical evaluation and the public survey are considered by elected official at the First Regional Summit of Elected Officials (Capital Summit 1) to identify regional priority areas for the RGS. Elected official at the Summit identified six regional priority areas for the RGS:

- Managing & balancing growth
- Transportation
- Environment & resources
- Economic development
- Housing
- Social Well-being

November 1997: Board approves use of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy as a planning tool and information source for the RGS.

April 1998: Capital Ideas Public Forum on Regional Growth is conducted

May 1998: The Board tables a recommendation to adopt the *Proposed Framework for our Future Agreement*, and refers it as a draft to member municipal councils for review and acceptance. The Board also resolves that BC Statistics population forecast for the Capital Region be used as only one scenario in the development of RGS alternatives, and refers the concept of a slow growth alternative back to the RPC for further consideration.

May 1998: A workshop involving representatives of advisory committees and RPC members is held to identify and confirm the first draft of the RGS evaluation criteria based on regional vision, principles and goals contained in the Framework Agreement.

July 1998: The Board adopts the *Framework For Our Future Agreement*. The Framework identifies a regional vision (based on local OCPs and the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy), challenges and opportunities associated with each of the regional priorities, and the overall scope of the RGS. The *Framework Agreement* was developed to be used as the basis for developing the Growth Strategy Alternatives. All member councils except North Saanich and Metchosin endorse the framework. Key elements of the Framework are that:

- The majority of future population is contained within existing urban areas

- Rural areas support a strong agricultural and resource base
- A belt of protected green space runs sea-to-sea from the Saanich Inlet south to the Juan de Fuca Strait
- An integrated parks, green space, green-ways and trail system protects the important natural areas and links town to country
- The Metropolitan Core remains the dominant employment, residential, retail and cultural centre for the region
- A shift in development patterns toward Colwood, Langford, and View Royal for residential and commercial development.

July 1998: The Board authorizes a concurrent process to resolve the 3 outstanding issues related to social well-being, personal security and safety, an interim OCP amendment review process and final approval of evaluation criteria.

Develop & Evaluate Growth Strategy Alternatives (Sept.98 – Sept.2000)

A base strategy of rural protection **September 1998:** The Board approves in principle the revised RGS evaluation criteria, approved the process to resolve 3 outstanding issues and sending letters to municipal councils to that effect, and approves hiring Westland Resource Group to prepare 4 RGS alternatives.

October 1998: A Board workshop facilitated by Facilitech International develops the preliminary weighting for the RGS evaluation criteria.

November 1998: The Board refers the report, *Development and Weighting of Regional Growth Strategy Preliminary Evaluation Criteria* to member councils for review and comment.

December 1998: The draft report: *Growth Strategies Alternatives for the Capital Region* is received and distributed to the Board for consideration at RPC on Jan. 20/99 and the Committee of the Whole Jan.27/99

February 1999: Board authorizes distribution of draft report (#2), *Proposed Growth Strategy Alternatives for the Capital Region*, along with budget and proposed RGS work plan details, to member councils for review and comment.

April 1999: The report, *Proposed Growth Strategy Alternatives for the Capital Region* is published and released for public review. The alternatives are presented to member councils, advisory committees and various stakeholder groups.

September 1999: The board reviews comments received from member councils and considers staff recommendations to finalize the alternatives report; approves four growth strategy alternatives for technical evaluation, public survey, and discussion leading to the identification of a preferred alternative on which to base the development of a draft Regional Growth Strategy. The four growth strategy alternatives included:

- A base strategy of rural protection and urban containment to effectively achieve the current (1996) development capacities in the municipalities.
- Metropolitan Core and Major Centres – new growth directed to downtown Victoria and eleven other existing major centres
- Transit-Linked Towns – development is concentrated in designated mixed-use, complete communities along a high-capacity transit corridor
- Hierarchy of Walkable Centres – new growth is directed to pedestrian-oriented villages and larger centres through out the region.

October 1999: A comparative technical assessment of the four growth strategy alternatives is initiated, and conducted by a consulting consortium led by City Spaces. The report, *Growth Strategy Alternatives for the Capital Region* is published.

May 2000: Approximately 109,000 copies of *A Citizens' Guide to Growth Strategy Options for the Capital Region*, including a pull-out survey, are distributed as an insert to the community newspapers. The Guide and survey are also posted online, and for pick up at various locations around the region.

June 2000: A random and non-random survey is conducted on the RGS options. There are 500 survey responses from the random sample, and over 900 responses from the non-random survey.

Select, Prepare & Adopt the Growth Strategy (Sept. 200- Aug. 2003)

September 2000: Capital Summit 2: The Second Regional Summit of Elected Officials is held over two days to review the RGS options and identify the preferred option. Participants agree on the concept of establishing a regional urban containment boundary and select the Metropolitan Core and Major Centres Option as the basis of a Regional Growth Strategy, and incorporated some components from the Transit-Linked Towns Option.

November 2000: The Board endorses in principle the conclusions of the Second Regional Summit of Elected Officials and authorizes staff to prepare a Regional Growth Strategy on that basis, consistent with the overall vision and guiding principles of the *Framework for our Future Agreement*.

February 2001: The Board authorizes publication and distribution of the *Proposed Regional Growth Strategy for B.C.'s Capital Region* for pre-by-law review and comment.

March 2001: The Board authorizes initiation of projects to develop a transportation strategy and a regional housing affordability strategy and funds for cost-sharing these projects with other agencies. The Board also authorizes CRD staff to enter into discussions with the proposed Capital Enterprise Partnership on the terms of reference for preparation of a regional economic development strategy.

July 2001: All pre-bylaw referral material for a Proposed Regional Growth Strategy for B.C.'s Capital Region is received from member councils, advisory committees, neighbouring jurisdictions, First Nations and stakeholder groups.

September 2001: Responses to the Board's pre-bylaw referral of the *Proposed Regional Growth Strategy* is presented to RPC.

October 2001: The Board approves a motion that *A Proposed Regional Growth Strategy for B.C.'s Capital Region* be prepared as a draft bylaw. The Board also authorizes the execution of the Housing Affordability Strategy Partnership agreement and the initiation of work on the Strategy.

January 2002: The Board approves execution of the proposed Regional Economic Development Strategy Partnership agreement and endorses the Regional Economic Development Strategy project description. The Board also approves the execution of the Regional Transportation Strategy project proposed partnership agreement and the project terms of reference.

February 2002: The Board gives 1st and 2nd reading to Bylaw No. 2952, *A Bylaw to Adopt a Regional Growth Strategy for the Capital Region*. The Board further authorizes the public hearing and statutory referral of the growth strategy to affected local governments for acceptance as required by the Local Government Act. The Board also passes a resolution requesting that the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services appoint a facilitator under section 856 of the Local Government Act to assist in reaching agreement on RGS.

April 2002: The public hearing on Bylaw No. 2952 is conducted.

April 2002: The Regional Growth Strategy, Bylaw No. 2952 is formally submitted for acceptance to municipal councils, the Cowichan Valley regional District, and the Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. The bylaw is also distributed for information to the Islands Trust, school districts, First Nations, and the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

September 2002: Correspondence is received from the Provincial Facilitator extending the bylaw referral period to October 31, 2002. The referral period was originally scheduled to conclude Aug. 6, 2002. The referral period was extended twice, first to September 30th and then to October 31st to permit outstanding issues to be resolved.

October 2002: The statutory referral period concludes on October 31, 2002. Two municipalities out of the 13 do not accept the RGS, and the formal dispute resolution process begins.

July 2003: The RGS dispute is resolved through final proposal arbitration on 28 July 2003.

August 2003: The Board gives final approval to Bylaw No. 2952, as amended through the arbitration process. The arbitration resulted in a change to the Implementation Chapter, action item #1, to bring the wording into

alignment with the requirements of the provincial legislation. RGS section I-1c now reads: *At least once every 5 years, consider whether the regional growth strategy should be reviewed for possible revision and amendment.*

Implement & Monitor the Regional Growth Strategy (2003+)