

# Framework for Our Future:

An Agreement Between the Capital Regional District and  
Member Municipalities on a Framework for the Preparation  
of the Capital Region's Growth Management Strategy

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S E P T E M B E R 1 9 9 8

(Updated December 1999)



**Foundations For Our Future**

*Capital Regional District  
Regional Growth Strategy*

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Prepared by  
**Regional Planning Services**  
**Capital Regional District**

In Association With  
**The Inter-Municipal Planning Advisory Committee**

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# A Message From the Capital Regional District Board

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September 1998

What kind of region do residents of the Capital Region want in the future? What things do we hold dear about this place and how can we protect them, so that we still find them here 25 or 30 years from now? How can we make our region an even better place to live for all residents? How can we work together cooperatively as communities to enhance the region as a whole, while maintaining and enriching our local identities?

The CRD Board has been considering these questions and others since embarking on the *Foundations For Our Future* Regional Growth Strategy process early in 1996. Discussions with regional residents, ministries and agencies of government, First Nations, neighbouring jurisdictions and member councils, reveal a basic understanding: collective action must be taken now on the challenges we face, if we hope to maintain our present quality of life and deliver the region to future generations at least as beautiful as it is today.

Our research and discussions with you reveal that we have much that unites us, that our collective visions for the future are generally complementary and that we hold many values in common; in particular, we share a strong commitment to greenspace, natural resource and agricultural land protection. Nevertheless, we face challenges to realizing our visions for the future. The *Foundations For Our Future* process gives us the opportunity to work together to address our priority issues and build on opportunities to make our regional vision a reality.

Following review of a proposed framework by regional residents, member councils, and agencies and ministries of government the Board, on July 15, 1998, resolved to adopt this revised framework to guide us as we develop alternative approaches to addressing our priorities and realizing our vision.

This framework has been endorsed by all member councils and electoral area directors, except for the councils of North Saanich, Sidney and Metchosin, as the basis for further work toward the development of a Regional Growth Strategy for the Capital Region. Outstanding issues raised by these three municipalities will be the subject of further discussion as we proceed to develop growth strategy alternatives.

Geoff Young  
Chair of the Board

## Explanatory Notes on the December 1999 Update

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General progress and decisions in the Regional Growth Strategy process since July 1998 require updating the *Framework for Our Future* Agreement. In addition to minor corrections to spelling and punctuation, the Framework Agreement has been updated as follows:

- The text has been amended to reflect the extension of the planning horizon for the Regional Growth Strategy from 2021 to 2026;
- Map 2 has been amended to define as rural/rural residential areas of North Saanich and Central Saanich that had been incorrectly identified as urban/suburban;
- Population figures reported on page 15 have been adjusted to reflect the 1996 census (adjusted for the census undercount) and the most recent population forecast prepared by BC Stats (P.E.O.P.L.E. 24) to the new horizon year of 2026;
- The Board decision to adopt in principle, on September 30, 1998, Regional Growth Strategy Evaluation Criteria is reflected in text changes on page 30 and the inclusion of the Evaluation Criteria in the new Appendix B;
- The Board decision, on January 27, 1999 to put off final resolution of outstanding issues related to the Framework Agreement is reported on page 31; and,
- General adjustments have been made to the reported Regional Growth Strategy project time line to reflect process delays in 1998 to approve Regional Growth Strategy Alternatives.

In 1999 the new District of Sooke and the new Juan de Fuca Electoral Area were established. The maps and vision statement in the Framework Agreement, however, have not been adjusted to reflect these two new jurisdictions at this time.

# Overview of the *Foundations For Our Future* Process

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## What is a Regional Growth Strategy?

In early 1996, the CRD Board initiated the *Foundations For Our Future* Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Project. A RGS is a political agreement between a regional district and its member municipalities on social, economic and environmental goals and priority actions, aimed at achieving a common vision of the region's future. Its purpose, as set out in legislation, 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." Ultimately, a RGS is a policy tool communities can use to manage growth to enhance regional quality of life.

A RGS includes actions that seek over time to make the regional vision a reality. It puts the focus on overcoming the key challenges, and building on the most promising opportunities, to improve regional quality of life. It gives us a basis for joint action on issues of mutual concern, and through mechanisms such as regional context statements and implementation agreements, a means to link and coordinate the plans and actions of individual communities and other levels of government. Regular monitoring and review allow us to check our progress, and if necessary, shift our efforts in ways that work better.

## What Must It Contain?

The Province's *Growth Strategies Act* identifies five topics that a RGS must address:

- housing;
- transportation;
- regional district services;
- parks and natural areas; and
- economic development.

Further, it must:

- cover a period of at least 20 years;
- address social, economic and environmental matters;
- include population and employment projections;
- include a regional statement of a preferred future; and,
- set out an agenda for action to meet the Board's objectives.

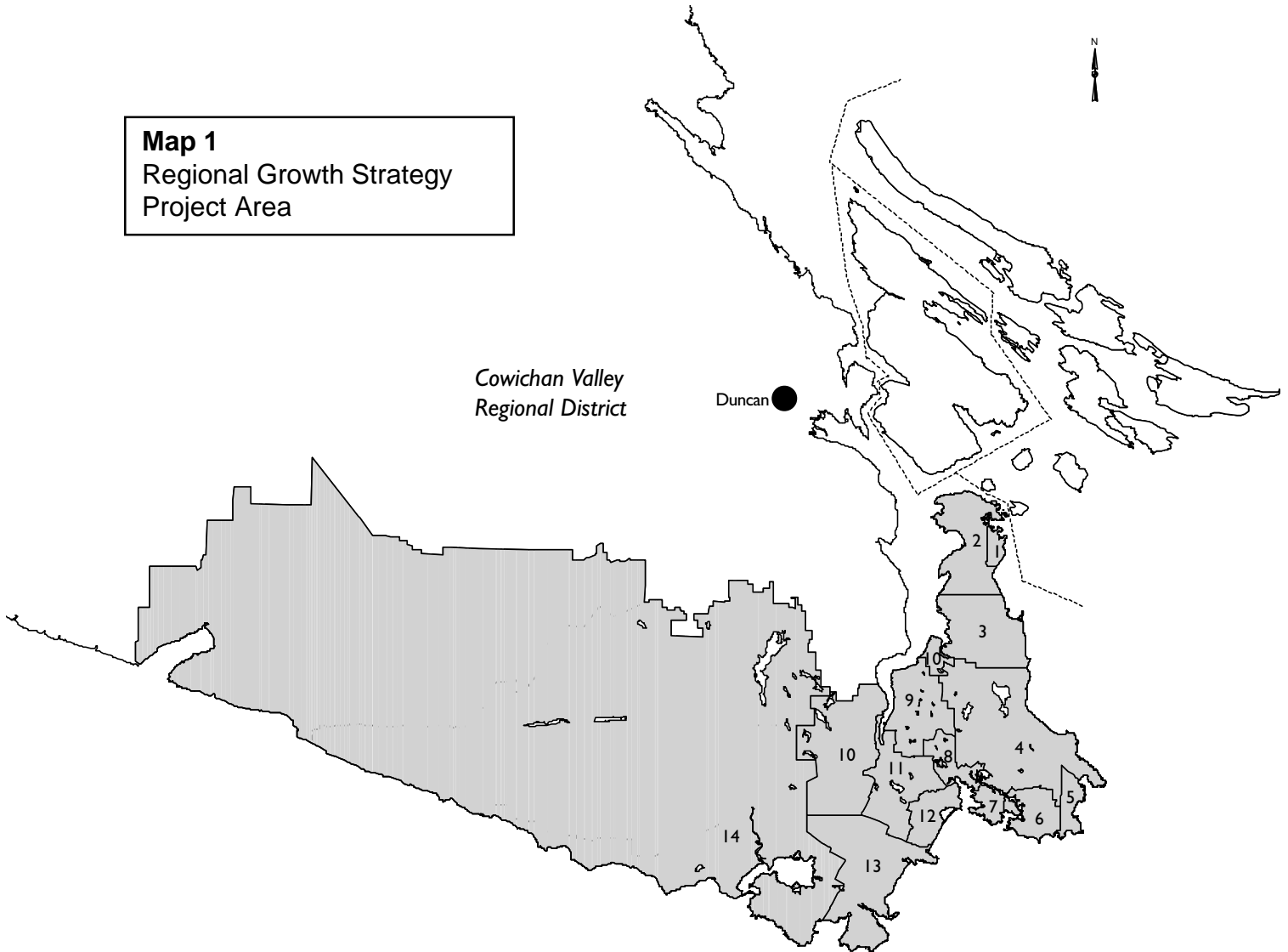
In addition to these mandatory requirements, regional districts can include other matters that cross local government boundaries and cannot be managed by one jurisdiction alone. The Act's 14 provincial goals spell out what a RGS should aim to achieve (see Guiding Principles).

The *Foundations For Our Future* process will look ahead to 2026. Once a RGS is adopted, we will monitor, report on its implementation and update it every 5 years.

## What Area is Covered?

The boundaries of the Capital Region's RGS are those of the Capital Regional District, except for the Saltspring Island and Outer Gulf Islands Electoral Areas. Legislation specifically gives the Islands Trust planning jurisdiction for Saltspring Island and the Outer Gulf Islands Electoral Areas (Map 1).

**Map 1**  
Regional Growth Strategy  
Project Area



### Participating Municipalities & Electoral Areas:

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Sidney          | 8. View Royal         |
| 2. North Saanich   | 9. Highlands          |
| 3. Central Saanich | 10. Langford E.A.     |
| 4. Saanich         | 11. Langford District |
| 5. Oak Bay         | 12. Colwood           |
| 6. Victoria        | 13. Metchosin         |
| 7. Esquimalt       | 14. Sooke E.A.        |

## **Why a Framework?**

A RGS does not do everything – it concentrates only on what is most important to us regionally. A framework establishes agreement between the CRD Board and member councils on the scope, overall vision, priority areas and guiding principles of the *Foundations For Our Future* project. By gaining agreement now on these fundamentals, we can concentrate on those matters which all parties agree are important.

## **How Will We Use the Framework?**

The framework will provide the context within which we develop alternative approaches to our identified regional priority areas. In particular, it will identify those information gaps and key challenges and opportunities we need to explore, in an effort to develop a range of workable, achievable strategy alternatives. In short, the framework will set out the vision we hope to achieve, the issues we need to work on, and the principles we will use to make choices.

More specifically, the framework provides the terms of reference for the development of RGS Alternatives, and the vision and principles from which evaluative criteria will be developed and used to assess the merits of RGS Alternatives. Ultimately, the framework will be used in the selection of a preferred RGS Alternative, upon which the growth management strategy will be based. RGS Alternatives will be the subject of consultation with regional residents, member councils, participating ministries and agencies, and neighbouring governments in 2000.

## **Relationship to First Nations**

First Nations communities are our neighbours and share this region with us. As neighbours, decisions we take individually can affect each other. First Nations councils have noted the impact of development on sacred and cultural sites and the use and enjoyment of traditional territories and resources. The CRD Board has noted that Indian Reserve lands have significant potential for urban development, making the participation of First Nations Councils critical to the long term success of any strategy to manage growth in the region. The Board has and will continue to make efforts to engage First Nations in the process of developing and implementing the RGS.

The Board recognizes that First Nations in the Capital Region have asserted within their traditional territories aboriginal rights and title currently undergoing formal definition through modern treaty and other processes. The Board recognizes that the nine First Nations Councils in the Capital Region are neighbouring governments, with a shared interest in managing long term development to preserve and enhance regional quality of life.

The Board further declares that the development of a regional growth strategy for the Capital Region is proceeding without prejudice to any aboriginal rights or title that may currently exist, or be further defined through treaty or other processes. The CRD will endeavour to work with First Nations governments to acknowledge and reconcile these rights and interests within the adopted RGS.

# A Framework For Our Future

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## Based on OCPs and Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy

The CRD Board and member municipalities, following review of technical research, discussions with regional residents through the *Capital Ideas* process and with elected officials at the *First Regional Summit of Elected Officials*, conclude that there is a positive, workable regional vision expressed in the combination of local official community plans (OCPs) and the *Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy* (GBSS).<sup>1</sup>

Although we face challenges to achieving the vision, specifically in six priority areas, and while in some places the consensus is unclear – most notably with regard to economic development and social well-being – our composite vision summarizes well the aspirations of all communities in the Capital Region. Further, many existing programs and policies that support the regional vision are already in place, such as the preservation of farm and forest lands through the administration of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and Forest Land Reserve (FLR).

The vision describes a region where:

- **growth occurs within physical limits** – the majority of any future population increase is accommodated in existing urban areas, primarily in Langford and Colwood, with some infill and redevelopment in the Core municipalities.
- **community and sub-regional diversity is preserved and enhanced** – small urban communities and the rural areas of the Peninsula and the Western Communities, experience stable to limited population increases, and maintain a strong agricultural base.
- **environmentally sensitive and natural resource lands are preserved and protected** – this includes the FLR, the ALR, and regionally significant green and blue space areas: our composite regional vision supports the vision articulated in the *Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy*, adopted by the CRD Board on November 26, 1997 as a guide for the preparation of the RGS.
- **three employment centres exist** – The Metropolitan Core (Downtown Victoria – Town and Country) is complemented in the west by a major employment concentration in the Langford and Colwood town centres, and on the Peninsula by an employment centre in the vicinity of Victoria International Airport.
- **regional governance means local governments working together** – cooperating, collaborating, and coordinating as necessary, to address matters of common concern.

The composite vision of our OCPs and the *Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy* taken together, form the broad framework for the development of the Capital Region's growth management strategy.

<sup>1</sup> The GBSS sets out a comprehensive, long-term strategy for maintaining, conserving, rehabilitating and restoring green/blue spaces on public and private lands in the region, including areas with ecological, aesthetic, renewable resource, outdoor recreation and greenways values (See Appendix A: Our Essential Nature – A Regional Green/Blue Spaces Vision and GBSS Objectives). Currently, the CRD is updating the *Parks Master Plan*, a major tool to implement the GBSS.

## **Growth Within Limits - The Capital Region's Composite Vision**

The OCPs of the region, and the *Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy*, describe a long range vision of the future ...

*where modest growth and economic diversification occur while we continue to maintain and enhance our natural environment, our agricultural landscapes, our arts and culture and our established neighbourhoods and communities. The core municipalities experience infill and modest population increases, with the bulk of new residential growth occurring in the Western Community municipalities of Colwood and Langford, some in a limited number of new neighbourhoods. The Saanich Peninsula retains its rural and small town character as does Sooke, Metchosin and the Highlands. While the Metropolitan Core remains the dominant cultural and business hub of the region, economic expansion occurs in employment centres in Colwood and Langford. Limited employment expansion occurs in the vicinity of Victoria International Airport. Transit, commuter cycling and walking are common alternatives to travel by private automobile. A regional green/blue spaces system protects and maintains the full range and diversity of the natural environment that surrounds us, including significant green spaces, the marine environment, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, unique ecosystems, and the remnant ecosystems that flourished here before the time of Captain Cook. Natural systems that have suffered damage have been restored where possible. By 2026, stable and durable physical limits contain ongoing change to urban communities and rural settlements in the Capital Region*

More specifically by sub-region:

## **The Western Communities**

- *Colwood will become a more urban community while retaining its exceptional heritage resources and natural areas. Colwood Corners is transformed into an attractive, welcoming town centre. Royal Bay, Olympic View and Colwood Corners have expanded as complete communities. Hatley Park Estate is the home of Royal Roads University and features extensive public open space.*
- *The District of Langford has a cohesive town centre with pedestrian areas, commercial districts, and convenient vehicle access, providing a central community focus and an enhanced regional role. An open space system made up of treed areas, lakes and streams links and defines neighbourhoods.*
- *View Royal has an identifiable town centre providing expanded retail, professional, financial and convenience services. Single family detached housing remains the predominant housing form, with some provision made for other types of housing. A network of foot and cycle paths gives neighbourhoods access to shopping, recreation and natural open space. Natural amenities of shorelines, streams, estuaries and hillsides are protected.*
- *The Highlands will continue to preserve large areas of natural green space protecting elements of the regional ecosystem and providing outdoor recreational opportunities for CRD residents and visitors. Lands retained in a natural state preserve diversity of plant and animal life. Development remains primarily residential on rural acreages or large lots, with no role as an area for urban development.*

- *The Langford Electoral Area, as with the Highlands, remains very much the same as in 1996 – with large areas of green space and rural residential development on large lots or rural acreages.*
- *Metchosin is a community of rural character with a choice of rural lifestyle options. Agriculture is diversified with a great range of specialty products and organic crops grown. Natural areas, sensitive ecosystems and biodiversity are preserved, and there is a system of local and regional parks and natural open spaces linked with multi-use trails, along with improved access to shoreline areas. Metchosin village is the primary commercial centre with some room for limited expansion.*
- *Sooke, located on the Sooke Harbour and Basin, will encourage more population and commercial development within its Urban Containment Boundary providing an enhanced centre for the surrounding coastal communities of Saseenos, East Sooke, Otter Point and Shirley. These neighbouring areas will continue to have strong rural character with a choice of rural lifestyle options. The Sooke Electoral Area contains significant provincial, regional and locally controlled parks and trail systems as well as ecological reserves. It will continue to preserve large areas of forest and natural green space for outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the Capital Region.*

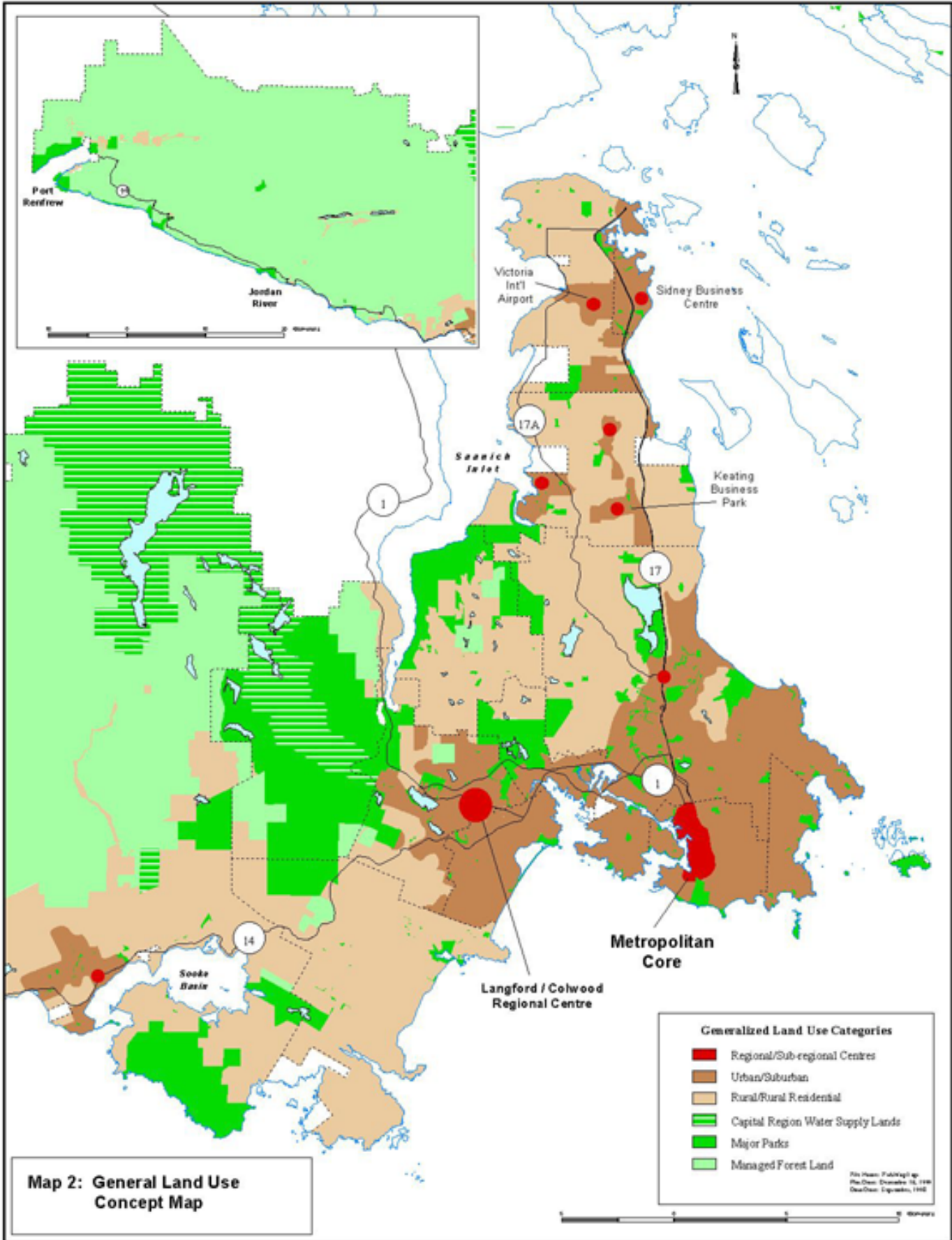
## **The Core**

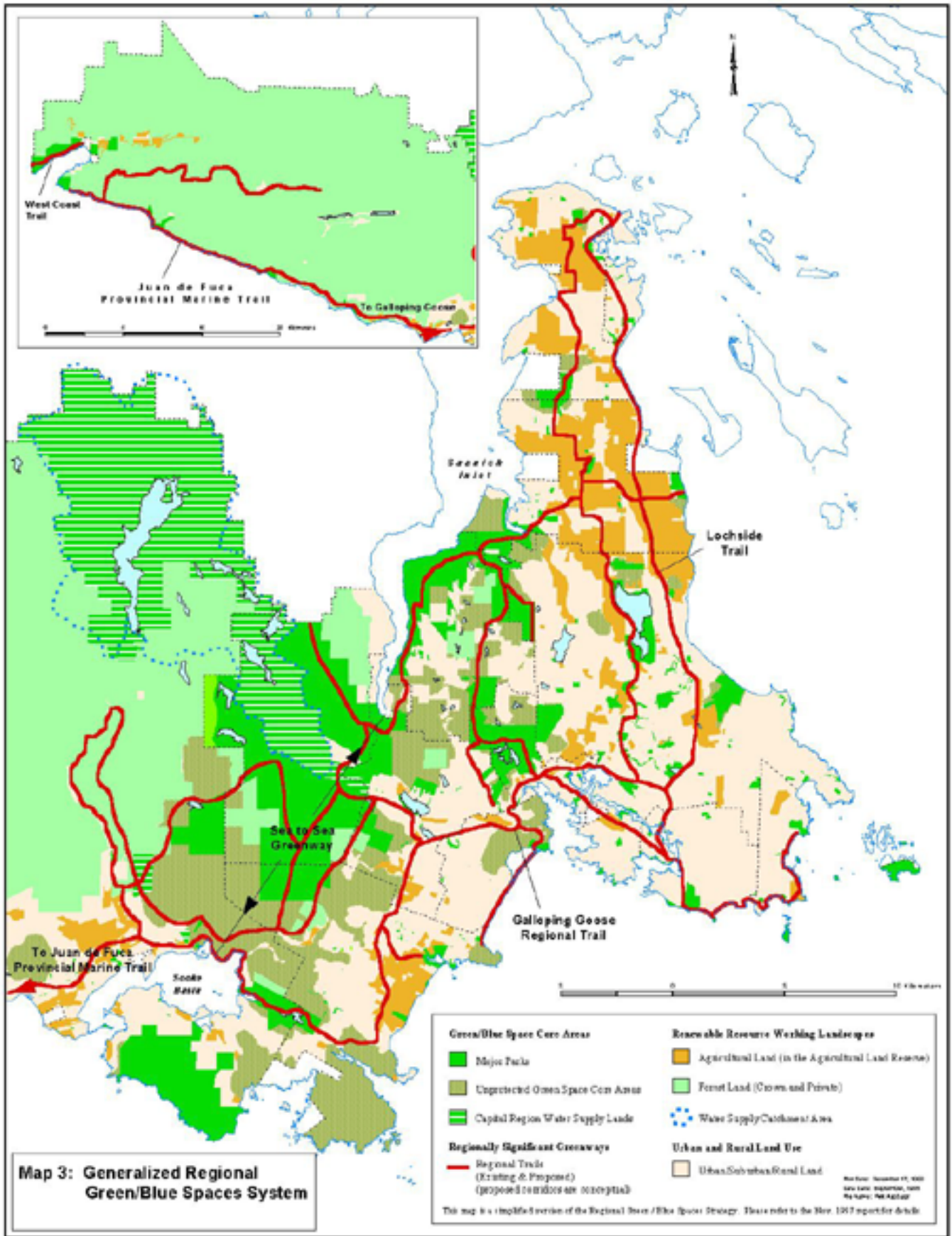
- *Esquimalt exhibits a more sustainable model of urban development where the quality of the natural and built environment passed on to the next generation is healthier than at present. The Wardroom/Hospital DND site has clusters of low and medium density multiple family housing surrounded by green space. Macaulay Point/Work Point is a complete community that is pedestrian oriented, socially diverse, with a mix of uses and services and park space, treed areas, and continuous waterfront access.*
- *Saanich remains a series of community focused neighbourhoods, within an urban containment boundary that clearly separates the urban area from the rural portion of the municipality. Rural Saanich forms part of the peninsula farm lands. Population increases are managed within the context of the local area planning process, where land use, density and development policies encourage diversity of lifestyle, housing, economic and cultural opportunities.*
- *In Victoria, compact communities, with a diverse mix of population and housing, exist within walking distance of facilities and services. Victoria encourages home based business and local neighbourhood services; reduced trips to and from work; live/work accommodation; and, urban village and main street upper storey accommodation. Downtown Victoria is a compact, walkable neighbourhood and the cultural and commercial heart of the city and region. Overall traffic movement in Victoria is balanced with the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.*
- *Oak Bay continues to be a green, landscaped, quiet residential community with a mix of housing types and neighbourhood commercial centres with a special emphasis on heritage preservation. Oak Bay village is a strong shopping area and the historical, cultural, community and business core of the municipality. Public access to waterfront amenities including clean safe beaches is maximized.*

## The Peninsula

- *Situated at the northerly tip of the Saanich Peninsula approximately 27 kilometers north of downtown Victoria, the District of North Saanich is a collection of coastal focused neighbourhoods which surround agricultural lands. The community's long term development plans are based on the desire of residents to retain rural character and safeguard environmental qualities. External demands for housing growth are not accommodated. The District's policies reflect a strong commitment to preserve the agricultural land base and agricultural activities in the municipality.*
- *Sidney remains the commercial centre for the north Peninsula and the economic competitiveness of Sidney is maintained and enhanced. Orientation between the town and the ocean is strong, including enhanced ocean-side amenities.*
- *Central Saanich provides agricultural land, light industrial land, residential areas with rural and suburban character, and small commercial centres. Slow and managed residential growth is accepted outside of rural and agricultural areas. High quality knowledge-based and light industrial business and industrial growth are accepted in the Keating Industrial area.*

This vision is illustrated on Map 2 (General Land Use Concept) and Map 3 (Generalized Regional Green/Blue Spaces System)





**Map 3: Generalized Regional Green/Blue Spaces System**

<b>Green/Blue Space Core Areas</b>	<b>Renewable Resource Working Landscapes</b>
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Major Parks	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Agricultural Land (in the Agricultural Land Reserve)
<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Unprotected Open Space Core Areas	<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Forest Land (Crown and Private)
<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Capital Region Water Supply Leads	<span style="color: blue;">★</span> Water Supply Catchment Areas
<b>Regionally Significant Greenways</b>	<b>Urban and Rural Land Use</b>
<span style="color: red;">—</span> Regional Trails (Existing & Proposed) (proposed corridors are conceptual)	<span style="color: tan;">■</span> Urban/Suburban/Rural Land

Map Date: November 17, 2010  
 Map Scale: 1:50,000  
 Map Name: MR-031010

This map is a modified version of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy. Please refer to the May, 2017 report for details.

## Six Regional Priority Areas

The CRD Board and member municipalities have concluded that although many issues have been identified as regionally significant, further work in the *Foundations For Our Future* process should focus, in no particular order, in six priority areas:

- Managing and Balancing Growth;
- Transportation;
- Economic Development;
- Environment and Resources;
- Housing; and
- Social Well-Being.

Challenges in these priority areas stand in the way of achieving our regional vision. New or revised approaches to address the challenges in these six areas will be investigated, opportunities explored, and a range of workable alternatives will be developed, tested and reviewed. A short list of workable alternatives (which will describe specific RGS content proposals), along with the results of technical assessment, public review, and formal review by participating municipalities, agencies and governments, will be presented to a Second Regional Summit of Elected Officials later in the process. At the Second Summit, elected officials will identify and recommend a preferred alternative to the CRD Board, as a basis for a draft RGS.

Although parks and regional district services have not been identified as regional priorities, legislation requires us to address these matters in a RGS. The *Foundations For Our Future* process will consider parks and regional district services in relation to the six priority areas. Further, the RGS will acknowledge those broad policy directions in existing OCPs that support achievement of the regional vision, in a manner that integrates with and acknowledges the inter-relationships between the six priority areas.

For each of the priority areas the following outlines:

- what the vision implies;
- the base information;
- information gaps; and
- challenges and opportunities to explore.

Although not all aspects of the six priority areas can be covered in the framework, this material will serve to focus development of revised or alternative approaches to help us achieve our regional vision.

Where cost and time permit, information gaps will be closed. However, this is not always possible and we will have to make choices with incomplete information.

## Priority Area: Managing and Balancing Growth

### Realizing the Vision Means:

A physical limit contains urban settlement and preserves rural, renewable resource and green/blue space lands.

The majority of any future population increase is accommodated in Langford and Colwood with some infill and redevelopment in the Core municipalities.

Rural parts of municipalities in the Peninsula, Western Communities and Sooke experience stable to limited population increases.

Three employment centres – a major employment concentration in Langford and Colwood, and a more limited employment centre in the vicinity of Victoria International Airport – exist in addition to the downtown Victoria/Town and Country metropolitan centre.

## Challenges and Opportunities:

1. A trend is not destiny. How do we use our collective regional vision to anticipate and manage change within limits in ways that enhance regional quality of life, rather than simply reacting to population growth forecasts?
2. Deeply held preferences for single-detached dominated communities where we are dependent on single occupancy vehicles threatens our ability to preserve rural, resource and green/blue spaces in future. Should we: manage the rate of growth, try to change people's housing preferences, increase viable transportation alternatives, place firm physical limits on regional growth and development, or find new lands within or outside the region where growth can be directed? What are the implications of these alternatives?
3. Our population could increase faster than forecast, depending on economic and other conditions outside the Capital Region. How should we manage growth if higher than forecast rates of population increase occur?
4. Achieving Colwood and Langford's urban vision, along with some infill and redevelopment in the Core, may take development pressure off rural, resource and green/blue space areas. Should we try to direct forecast population increases to support the development of urban town centres in Colwood and Langford, and enhance the vitality of existing urban centres, thereby helping to realize the overall regional vision? Are there key pieces of public investment, such as in school sites and schools, waste management and regional water supply facilities, that need to occur to support this process?
5. The Capital Region has a limited supply of land for urban settlement. Our current housing and transportation preferences favour a sprawling low density settlement pattern that would use up lands designated for urban development early in the next century. What can we do by way of settlement and transportation planning to more effectively steward this limited resource for long term regional benefit? What measures, if any, should we take to ensure that the integrity of the regional vision endures beyond the 25 year time horizon of the RGS?
6. Forecast population increases place unequal demands on communities to accommodate growth. Should we address equity and the ability to pay for regional growth, particularly for infrastructure and public facilities such as schools and recreational facilities?
7. Existing Indian Reserve lands have significant potential for urban development and the long term success of any strategy to manage and balance regional growth must take these lands into account. Without active participation of First Nations councils in the RGS process, how do we manage the uncertainty regarding possible future development on Indian Reserve lands?

## Information Gaps:

### Currently, we do not know:

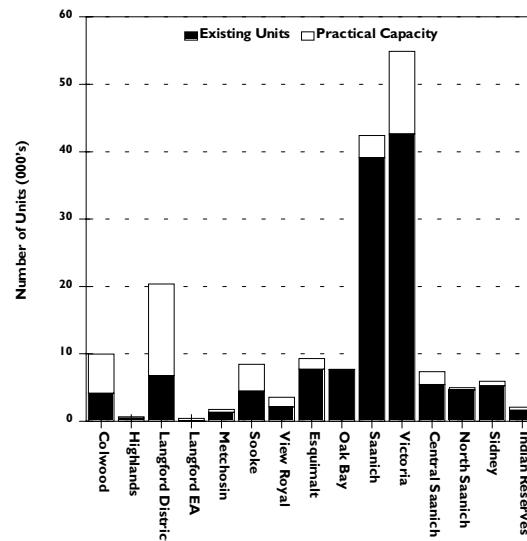
- What level of confidence we can place in forecast population increases, in particular assumptions regarding net migration.
- What the different implications of high, medium and low population forecasts are for the rate of residential capacity depletion.
- To what extent the forecast depletion in residential land supply will reduce net migration, primarily as a result of housing price increases.
- If the apparent shortage of residential land supply is real. Other factors may exist that will either significantly increase or decrease the apparent shortage.
- How efficiently residential land is actually being developed – it may not be safe to assume we can build to 95% of designated capacity.
- How possible future development on federal and Indian Reserve lands, or lands gained by First Nations through the treaty process, will affect the envisioned regional settlement pattern.
- What finite carrying capacities, if any, of land, air and water exist and if these can be used as tools to manage growth.

8. The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) has initiated a RGS process. Significant potential exists for commuter-oriented urban development just north of the CRD boundary in the CVRD, particularly as we deplete the supply of land designated for single detached dwellings. What measures should be taken in concert with the CVRD to address potential commuter-oriented urban development on the CRDs doorstep?

## Base Information:

- **Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Region to add 3 million people:** The population of the area from Campbell River to Olympia, Washington and east to Hope is expected to increase from approximately 6 million people in 1996 to approximately 9 million in 2021. Vancouver Island's population is forecast to increase from just over 600,000 to nearly 1 million in the same period. The Capital Region is at the centre of one of the fastest growing regions in North America.
- **Victoria metropolitan population expected to exceed 407,000 by 2026:** The population of the Victoria Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) is forecast to increase from 318,010 in 1996 to approximately 407,930 by 2026. Reaching this population by 2026 depends upon a number of assumptions, particularly those regarding net migration, continuing to hold.
- **Future rates of growth are unpredictable:** Forecast growth over next 20 to 30 years is expected to be significantly slower, at about 1% per year, compared to the 2% rate experienced during the 1980's. Essentially all future population growth is forecast to come from net migration, primarily from other provinces – the death rate is projected to exceed the birth rate. However, the rate of growth in future is likely to fluctuate. Although trends can be identified, unforeseen events and public policy and action can change actual rates of growth in unpredictable ways.

## Housing Capacity by Jurisdiction



- **Current plans have capacity for 45,880 new dwelling units:** This figure represents 95% of the theoretical capacity of residential lands currently designated – this may overestimate the actual number that can be built.
- **Housing capacity depleted by 2017:** If current housing demand preferences continue in the future, designated housing capacity will be depleted by 2017, with land for single detached dwellings depleted by 2007. However, a number of factors could result in changes to housing demand preferences, such as higher housing prices or lifestyle factors, that would slow the rate of housing capacity depletion. As well, the housing supply could increase due to infill, secondary suites, mixed commercial residential redevelopment, compact development of new neighbourhoods, or changes to OCPs to convert other lands to residential use.
- **Adequate regional service capacity:** Water supply (with conservation and raising the Sooke Dam), sanitary landfill, and sewage treatment capacity (existing and currently planned) are adequate to accommodate forecast population growth.
- **New schools needed in Western Communities:** Well over 50% of new housing is expected to be built in the Western Communities. Approximately 10 new schools will be needed in the Sooke School District (No. 62) to accommodate between 7,500 and 10,000 new students, at a cost of \$100–\$150 million. Victoria School District (No. 61) expects relatively stable enrollments over the next 25 years. Enrollment is expected to increase from 80% to 84% of existing 1996 capacity. Saanich School District (No. 63) also anticipates stable to declining enrollments over the next 25 years. Overall current enrollment is at about 93% of existing capacity, with most enrollment growth expected in Central Saanich and the southern parts of the district.

## Priority Area: Transportation

## Challenges and Opportunities:

1. In a geographically constrained region with a limited urban land base, attempting to build our way out of road congestion cannot occur without negative impacts on other highly valued lands and without significant public subsidy to private automobile travel. Rather than seeking simply to solve roadway congestion problems, can we build new communities and retro-fit existing communities, to maintain or increase the proportion of travel by foot, bike or public transit?
2. Reducing our dependence on the car largely hinges on finding ways to develop communities where people can meet much of their daily needs without using a car; either by walking, cycling, or taking transit. What changes should we make to our communities so that using a car is only one of many viable travel options?
3. Finding ways to reduce the need to make trips, by enabling people to meet more of their needs close to home, within cycling or walking distance (or through telecommunication), or by increasing the range of transportation choice, could help reduce automobile dependency and enhance community vitality. What measures particularly those related to patterns of land use and density, are needed to create more complete communities with a better balance between jobs, housing, and other activities and uses?
4. Increasing numbers of home-based businesses spread throughout the region are difficult to service with public transit. Many home-based businesses are highly dependent on single occupancy automobiles. Do we need to consider limitations to home-based businesses in areas difficult to serve by public transit, or are there ways to encourage home-based business without also encouraging more single occupancy vehicle use?
5. Doubling the size of the bus fleet may be financially unrealistic, and may not result in changes in land use that would increase transit use. Should we find alternative capital funding sources, or are there other means such as transportation demand management (TDM)<sup>2</sup> programs, or other modes such as light rail, that would have a greater positive effect?
6. Population growth in the larger region (Georgia Basin/Puget Sound, Vancouver Island) will increase travel to and from the Capital Region. Can we plan our regional transportation system to maintain or improve inter-regional access without detracting from our quality of life?
7. To effectively address regional transportation problems requires a regional approach. What kind of regional coordination and cost accounting is required to do this?

### Realizing The Vision Means:

Transportation system will serve two major employment/population centres – downtown Victoria and the Langford/Colwood town centres – and a third employment centre near the airport.

The private car's share of trips is reduced.

There is a region-wide foot and cycle path network.

<sup>2</sup> Transportation demand management, or TDM, includes a number of different price-based and other mechanisms, aimed primarily at decreasing demand for automobile based transport and encouraging demand for other modes.

## Information Gaps:

### Currently, we do not know:

- If access management policies for roadways of regional significance are needed to help assure mobility between jurisdictions.
- If TDM programs and other actions are needed to encourage the reduction of automobile trips region wide.
- If we can afford the major increases in bus transit funding required to maintain transit's share of peak hour travel.
- To what extent strategies to increase urban densities and encourage transit oriented development can reduce automobile dependency.
- How we would need to change land use densities and uses to support light rail or other high capacity regional transit, such as express bus, as an alternative public transit mode.
- The full extent of the financial impact on municipalities of potential transportation infrastructure improvements.

8. A major reason to reduce dependence on single occupancy motor vehicles is to reduce negative effects on air quality caused by auto emissions. Forecasts indicate that automobile trips will increase at least in proportion to population growth. Are there steps we can take at the regional level to support air quality improvement, that complement expected future gains from lower emission engines?

### Base Information:

- **Minimal New Road Construction:** Currently a “do minimum” number of new roads and road improvements are proposed for the regional road network.
- **Bus Based Public Transit System:** Standard buses are currently proposed as the only public transit mode.
- **Traffic to grow at same rate as population:** Traffic will grow at about the same rate as population (approximately 28% in the PM peak hour by 2018), with the greatest change expected in the Western Communities, where most new growth is expected to take place.
- **Bottleneck in corridor between Western Communities and Core:** Roadway improvements currently planned will not provide enough capacity either within the Western Communities, or between the Western Communities and downtown Victoria.
- **Congestion to increase:** The length of roadway with noticeable traffic congestion is forecast to increase from 15.6 km to more than 50 km (about 250%), while the length of roadway with serious traffic congestion and complete stoppages is forecast to increase from 0.6 km to 15.2 km between 1996 and 2018.
- **Overall speed reduced:** Overall speed reductions of 10% are expected on both Provincial highways and local roads, especially in the Western Communities, Victoria and Saanich (e.g.: Langford – from 43 km/h in 1996 to 31 km/hr in 2018; Victoria – from 34 km/hr in 1996 to 30 km/hr in 2018).
- **Massive investment to maintain transit trip share:** To maintain public transit's current share of peak hour travel, the existing bus fleet would have to double, and transit use would have to increase by 60% by 2018.

## Priority Area: Economic Development

### Realizing The Vision Means:

Downtown Victoria/Town and Country corridor remains the metropolitan business core in 2026.

An employment centre second only to downtown Victoria will develop in the Langford and Colwood town centres.

Limited employment growth near Victoria International Airport.

Existing employment centres such as downtown Sidney and the Department of National Defence lands in Esquimalt, are enhanced.

More opportunities to live and work locally, including a greater role for home-based business and agriculture.

The light industrial and manufacturing sector grows.

## Challenges and Opportunities:

1. Currently there is no consensus on appropriate economic development in the Capital Region, and no region-wide economic strategy is in place. Specific local aspirations – the development of regionally significant employment in Colwood and Langford, the development of employment opportunities in the vicinity of Victoria International Airport, economic development on Indian Reserve and federal lands – cause concern to other communities who see their interests threatened. Do we need a regional economic strategy and if so, on what should it focus? How do we promote economic development and activity that enhances rather than detracts from regional quality of life?
2. Current information on the regional economy and employment future is poor. Present estimates of future employment are based on straight line projections of current employment patterns, not on modeling of a likely economic future. We have no clear picture of our existing economic strengths, or of emerging sectors that may ensure our economic and employment security in future. Developing base information to properly model and evaluate economic development options will take time and resources. How much can we do with limited information? Can we identify those sectors that should be strengthened, and the growing sectors that should be supported, to provide the greatest long term benefit to the regional economy?
3. Current information on land shortages for office and industrial employment may overestimate the future need for this kind of land. While industrial development is concentrated in a few significant locations, such as the Keating Industrial Lands in Central Saanich, increasing numbers of employees are working out of home offices throughout the region. To what extent will a shift to home-based work affect the development of concentrated employment centres? What effect will this have on regional settlement and transportation patterns and goals to reduce dependency on single occupancy vehicles?
4. The Capital Region is over-represented in service sector employment compared to other regions. The service sector encompasses a broad range of activities from low paid part-time retail positions, the creative arts, to high skill business and professional services. The entire tourism sector is also a service industry. Does this focus on services represent a weakness or a strength of the region's economy and what, if anything, should be done about it? What should we do to make our economy more resilient?
5. Capital Region agriculture enjoys the longest growing season and the widest diversity of cropping options in the country. However, the high cost of irrigation water, transportation and other production factors compared to competing regions, may undermine the economic viability of local farms and limit opportunities for crop diversification. Furthermore, the high cost of land requires more

## Information Gaps:

### Currently, we do not know:

- If our existing economy based on services, public administration and tourism is adequate to maintain and enhance job opportunities and the regional economy in future.
- If there is a real shortage of vacant industrial land compared to apparent demand and if so, what this means.
- If major commercial and industrial centres are in the best locations to support overall regional settlement patterns and transportation objectives.
- If the development of significant employment centres in Colwood and Langford will hurt or complement downtown Victoria.
- How much more economic activity is likely to occur at or near Victoria International Airport.
- How economic development on Indian Reserves and federal lands and any lands gained by First Nations through the treaty process will affect the region as a whole.
- How much more home-based business is likely to grow as a proportion of total employment

intensive production methods to maintain profit margins. What should be done to enhance the economic competitiveness of agriculture in the region, to ensure employment opportunities and to preserve valued renewable resource lands?

6. Forestry, fishing and ecotourism are possible sectors for economic growth in the area from Sooke to Port Renfrew. What, if anything, should be done regionally to support development in these sectors?
7. Advanced technology, manufacturing, film and the arts appear to be growing sectors that could help diversify the region's employment base. The arts in particular appeal to a region-wide local market. What can or should be done at the regional level and cooperatively, to enhance growth in these and other areas?

### Base Information:

- **Employment in the Western Communities to double:** Employment is forecast to more than double from approximately 15,660 in 1996 to more than 38,000 by 2021. This forecast assumes that present population and employment relationships continue over the next 25–30 years, which may not be realistic.
- **Most new jobs will require office space:** About 75% of the 42,000 additional jobs assumed for the Victoria Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) will require office space, 15% will require industrial space, and 10% will require retail space. The dominance of the service sector is forecast to continue.
- **Shortage of vacant land for jobs:** Assumed demand for vacant, employment-supporting land (estimated as a function of forecasted employment) is between 100 and 500 hectares over the next 25 years for the Victoria CMA. Limited supply of land for employment generating development may limit job growth.
- **Three non-traditional sectors expected to grow:** Sectors projecting the largest increase in employment over the next five years according to interviews done as part of the Victoria Economic Strategy, are advanced technology (30%), manufacturing (17%), and film and the arts (16%). All presently have small employment bases in the region. Tourism projects a 7% increase on a currently large employment base.
- **Lower than average labour force participation rate:** Overall participation rates are lower than the provincial average (64% versus 68%).
- **Service sector dominant:** Service sector employment in sectors such as government, finance, tourism and retail was 85% in 1991, compared to a provincial average of 75%.

## Priority Area: Environment and Resources

### Realizing The Vision Means:

Programs are in place to protect sensitive and significant remnant ecosystems and privately held green space core areas as defined in the GBSS.

A band of protected green space runs sea to sea from Saanich Inlet south to Juan de Fuca Strait defining the western edge of Metropolitan Victoria.

An integrated parks, green space, greenways and trail system protects important natural areas, provides opportunities for outdoor recreation, connects settled areas with major parks and gives access to beach, foreshore and marine areas.

Public and private managed forest land, the Forest Land Reserve (FLR) and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), particularly on the Peninsula and in Metchosin, is preserved as working landscape.

## Challenges and Opportunities:

1. More compact development patterns and/or shifting anticipated growth to non-sensitive lands in the region, or outside the region, would reduce pressure to expand the supply of developable land into areas identified for environmental and resource protection. What growth management options would best support long term protection and preservation of environment and resource lands?
2. Although any significant conversion of lands identified for preservation and protection is probably the least likely response to development pressure in the near and mid term, this conclusion could be undermined by factors such as:
  - i. Failure to establish programs that adequately preserve sensitive ecosystems and core green/blue spaces that are privately held (or unprotected public lands, such as federal defence lands);
  - ii. Changes in the economics governing and sustaining resource lands, such as the cost of irrigation water, transportation and land to agriculture, that would make local agricultural production, for example, uncompetitive in the market; and,
  - iii. Diminished local commitment to protect the ALR in the face of depleted urban land supply and corresponding increases in the speculative value of agricultural land.

How do we accommodate or otherwise manage growth while protecting and maintaining the integrity of the natural environment? What immediate, medium and long term priorities should we place on sensitive ecosystem, core green/blue space, renewable resource land, and habitat protection and rehabilitation?

3. Residents of the Capital Region currently enjoy a high level of access to significant parks and open space. Forecast population growth will put more pressure for use and access on these limited lands. What steps can we take now that will ensure a similar level of access to parks and open space in future, to that enjoyed today? How much land should we plan on reserving in future and where should it be located?
4. The implementation of more complex policies and practices to protect surface and ground water quality, marine and foreshore areas, and unprotected core green/blue spaces in private ownership, could impact the form, location and cost of future urban development. How can we fairly and cost-effectively include stormwater quality and other programs to prevent pollution of land and water, and ensure environmental protection, into the normal processes of managing urban development?
5. The higher cost of regionally supplied water for irrigation, especially if the quantity and quality of groundwater sources decline, could limit the economic viability of farming, leading to increased pressure to convert farmland to other uses. How can we address the need for more irrigation water for agriculture in an economic and sustainable way? Are there viable options for managing stormwater

## Information Gaps:

### Currently, we do not know:

- How effective current plans, programs and policies (both local and regional) are in supporting the implementation of green space preservation and environmental protection goals.
- What additional plans, policies and programs are needed to support preservation and protection goals, including both direct (land acquisition, management, etc.) and indirect (regulation, subsidies) activities.
- If the management, protection and development of groundwater and surface water resources should be a higher priority.
- To what extent subsidizing regional water supply irrigation rates, or otherwise making water more available to agriculture, would help preserve the agricultural land resource and help the local farm economy.

and wastewater to improve ground water supply for agricultural purposes?

6. Currently, air quality concerns – apart from localized effects of wood smoke in the winter months – are not generally considered a significant public health or environmental issue. We have no well developed air quality plan and minimal monitoring in place. What should we do to ensure that we have good air quality over the long term and avoid adverse public health effects?
7. Currently the CRD is preparing a liquid waste management plan for the core municipalities. At what point in time and in which location should a core integrated wastewater facility be constructed? Are there alternative methods of wastewater treatment that can be implemented that would delay the need for such a facility?
8. Aggregate resources – sands and gravels – available at reasonable cost are necessary for urban development. Depleting supplies of developed local aggregates could lead to a situation where in future, sand and gravel may have to be imported from outside the region at greater cost. Are there locally available supplies that we should identify and reserve now for future use?

## Base Information:

- **Two thirds of the regional land base is environment and resource lands:** Natural areas, agricultural and crown forest and forest land reserves, parks, and CRD Water lands, account for about 60% of the regional land base. In the metropolitan area this amounts to approximately 40,000 hectares. Of these lands, 8,000 hectares is in the ALR (10%), 9,600 hectares are managed forests (12%), and 14,000 hectares are CRD Water lands (35%).
- **A quarter of the regional land base is sensitive ecosystem:** About 20,000 hectares are sensitive ecosystems, with about 60% of these lands in public ownership.
- **High level of public ownership and resource protection:** Considerable public ownership of areas identified as core green/blue spaces and the existence of the ALR and FLR, combine to provide reasonably good protection for many of these environment and resource lands.
- **Private lands at greatest risk:** Privately held lands, smaller remnant ecosystems, hazard land, sensitive watersheds other than CRD Water lands, green/blue corridors and resource lands outside of core green/blue space areas are at the greatest risk of development.
- **Little protection for surface and groundwater:** On a region-wide basis, key programs targeted at preservation and protection goals, such as ground water recharge zone designations, surface water management programs, and stream corridor and riparian regulations are either non-existent, or in early stages of consideration. A comprehensive picture of groundwater resources, along with accurate

monitoring and regulation, does not exist. Outside of the Sooke River watershed and a few smaller watersheds, surface water management primarily focuses on the collection and conveyance of untreated runoff to receiving streams and the ocean.

- **Current plans do not protect the full range of green/blue spaces:** Some lands identified in the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy are not fully protected at the regional and local level, although some plans protect lands in addition to those referenced in the Strategy. Hazard lands, such as flood plains, steep slopes and seismic areas are typically protected only to the extent that they are coincident with other protected areas.
- **Few alternative sources of irrigation water:** Irrigation water for agriculture comes primarily from the regional water supply and groundwater, with limited supply from alternative surface water sources.

## Priority Area: Housing

## Challenges and Opportunities:

1. Currently there is no agreement on the accuracy of forecast shortages of single-detached housing. Nonetheless, any housing shortage will likely result in higher housing costs. High housing prices in the region are already causing many who would have historically sought to retire in the Capital Region to seek more affordable locations up-Island. What would be an appropriate strategy to increase housing affordability in a geographically confined region where residential land supply has finite limits?
2. The Capital Region's population is becoming older, more ethnically diverse, and with a greater number of people living in small households. What are our options to ensure appropriate and affordable housing for our future population and in particular, those with special needs?
3. The regional vision describes a region with diverse housing forms and tenures to meet the needs of all people. However, there is no consensus on an appropriate regional strategy to address this part of the vision. As housing becomes more expensive, this goal will become increasingly difficult to achieve. What regional strategies should we employ to promote housing diversity?
4. The Capital Region, due to its mild climate and enviable quality of life, is currently and will likely remain a high price housing market due to strong demand from outside the region. Although over time affordability in relation to other Vancouver Island centres may moderate (due largely to price rises elsewhere on the Island), prices will continue to remain high compared to other parts of Canada, as long as regional quality of life remains highly considered. Nevertheless, unaffordable housing can have negative effects on economic vitality and social equity, particularly for people earning low to moderate incomes in service sector employment. What regional strategies should we pursue to increase housing affordability to low and moderate income earners?

### Realizing The Vision Means:

A wide range of housing types and tenures meets the needs of all regional residents.

Resident populations live in walkable downtowns and town centres.

There is appropriate and affordable housing including secondary suites in some communities, and rural housing options exist as an alternative to urban living.

### Base Information:

- **Projected Housing Demand Outstrips Planned Supply:** Current residential designations in our OCPs have the capacity for 45,880 new residential units (95% of theoretical potential), compared to forecast demand for 53,640 new residential units by 2021.
- **Single Family Detached Share of Supply to Drop:** Housing supply is forecast to shift between 1996 and 2018 from current ratio of over 50% single detached to 31% single detached, with the remainder either apartments, townhouses, duplexes or other ground oriented forms.
- **Most New Housing Supply in West:** Well over 50% of designated new housing supply is in the Western Communities. Most other areas have limited designated residential capacity.

- **Affordability a Problem:** The Capital Region is one of the most expensive places to live in Canada. One indication is the region's consistent standing at or near the bottom of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's "Affordability Index".

## **Information Gaps:**

### **Currently, we do not know:**

- The number of existing secondary suites and the future capacity of secondary suites, how much of the housing market is using secondary suites, and whether or not secondary suites are providing an affordable alternative for those looking for ground-oriented housing.
- To what extent expected price increases for single-detached housing will result in a shift in demand to townhouses, duplexes, and apartments as the single-detached capacity is depleted.
- Which social problems will worsen as a result of increased housing prices due to limited supply.
- Which aspects of housing affordability and appropriateness are not currently being addressed

## Priority Area: Social Well-Being

## Challenges and Opportunities:

1. Currently there is no consensus on an appropriate approach to achieving social well-being in the Capital Region. Social priorities and the appropriate roles of municipalities and regional districts is undefined. At the very least, any strategies designed to address the challenges listed under the preceding 5 priority areas, will have a variety of social implications. How should we assess the social and quality of life implications of our strategic alternatives? Do we need a regional social well-being strategy and on what should it focus?
2. The regional vision describes socially and physically complete communities where community character, identity and human scale is enhanced. What, if anything, should be done at the regional scale to help achieve this part of the vision?
3. Social well-being is strongly related to an individual's sense of connection with, responsibility for and commitment to community and place. The antidote to urban alienation is a strong sense of attachment – feeling at home – to place. Human-scaled, comprehensible communities that have character and feel within our control, help maintain and enhance identity and attachment. Are there practical steps that should be taken regionally, to enhance community character and citizens's feelings of attachment and commitment to their communities and the region?
4. The Capital Region is home to a thriving arts sector that is an important component of our high quality of life. People participate in, enjoy and patronize the arts without reference to jurisdictional boundaries – the strong local arts scene has region-wide benefits. Should we provide appropriate support on a regional basis for arts and culture and how would we do this?

### Realizing The Vision Means:

Communities are socially and physically complete, exhibit a mix of ages and lifestyles and provide enhanced personal and community safety.

New development is sensitive to the form, scale, and character of existing communities, respects heritage and rural character; and enhances the identity and human scale of neighbourhoods.

Community services, parks and recreation facilities provide leisure and other opportunities for all age groups.

The arts and local arts community are promoted.

### Base Information:

- **Population is aging:** The median age of the Capital Region's population is expected to increase from 34.6 in 1981 to 43.2 in 2011. The most rapidly growing population segment is the 55–64 year group, expected to increase by 123% (36,000) between 1996 and 2021.
- **Income Levels Below Provincial Average:** In 1990 average household income was 3% below the provincial average. Of total income, 65% comes from employment compared to 76% province wide, largely because of the large retired population.
- **More ethnically diverse in future:** Between 1986 and 1991, the percent "British single origin" dropped from 38.7% to 34.6%. Chinese, Aboriginal and South Asian residents are showing the largest increases.
- **Smaller household size:** Average household size declined from 2.9 (1971) to 2.3 (1991), and is expected to continue to decline in future (to 2.18 in 2010)

## Information Gaps:

### Currently, we do not know:

- The current capacity of public recreational facilities and forecast demand for these facilities.
- The capacity of the southern Vancouver Island market to support a variety of large public use facilities such as performing arts centres, museums, sports facilities etc.
- If there are alternative funding mechanisms for school land acquisition, in addition to the 5% land dedication provided for in the *Municipal Act*.
- If we have the resources to provide additional long term and acute care facilities to serve an aging population.
- If forecast job growth can be realized and if this will be adequate to provide jobs for our future population.
- What impact population increases and decreased housing affordability will have on personal security and safety, and public services.

## Guiding Principles

The following general principles will guide the development of alternative approaches to the identified priorities and the preparation of the RGS. These principles are derived from the CRDs 1993 *Regional Values, Goals and Priorities* research, the 1997 *OCP Option* document, and the Board's adopted RGS project work plan.

### **1. The Capital Region's Growth Management Strategy will be based on the following four fundamental principles of:**

**Sustainability:** actions to meet our needs today do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and ensure the ongoing healthy functioning of the natural systems that sustain life.

**Appropriateness:** actions are appropriate to the aspirations and local conditions of the Capital Region, and do not simply reflect the uncritical application of ideas developed for other places and situations.

**Continuity:** the strategy will build on work that has already been undertaken by the CRD and its member municipalities, and will consider the thoughts and ideas contributed by individual residents and community associations.

**Cooperation, Collaboration and Coordination:** the CRD, member municipalities, provincial ministries and agencies, and regional residents will work together to develop and implement the strategy. First Nations, the Islands Trust, and the Cowichan Valley Regional District are neighbouring governments and will be invited to participate.

These four principles will underlie all RGS alternatives developed for consideration and review.

### **2. In developing alternative approaches to our priorities, we will favour solutions that aim to achieve the regional vision and support the values of:**

1. Personal safety and security;
2. Efficient and effective local and regional government;
3. High quality natural and built environment;
4. Rural character and agriculture;
5. Community stability; and,
6. Community and regional character and diversity.

### **3. In addition, the development and evaluation of alternative solutions will pay due regard to the following 14 provincial goals set out in the *Growth Strategies Act*:**

1. Avoid urban sprawl;
2. Minimize automobile use and encourage walking, cycling and efficient public transit;

3. Move goods and people efficiently, making effective use of transportation and utility corridors;
4. Protect environmentally sensitive areas;
5. Maintain a secure and productive resource base, including the agricultural land and the forest land reserves;
6. Encourage economic development that supports the unique character of communities;
7. Reduce and prevent air, land and water pollution;
8. Ensure adequate, affordable, and appropriate housing;
9. Ensure adequate inventories of suitable land and resources for future settlement;
10. Protect the quality and quantity of ground and surface water;
11. Minimize the risks to settlement associated with natural hazards;
12. Preserve, create and link urban and rural open space including parks and recreational areas;
13. Promote efficient use, conservation and alternative sources of energy; and,
14. Ensure good stewardship of land, sites and structures with cultural heritage value.

## Evaluation Criteria

On September 30, 1998, the Board gave approval in principle to a set of evaluation criteria based on the regional vision and the guiding principles noted above, including the Province's 14 goals for regional growth strategies. These criteria, as weighted by the Board, will be further refined to include measures and indicators of success against which four RGS alternatives can be tested.

The evaluation criteria will be used in all future steps in preparing a regional growth management strategy, including:

- the evaluation of a range of RGS alternative concepts to define those that best address the six priority areas, while supporting the vision and values expressed in this framework;
- assessing the merits of four RGS Alternatives during the technical review process;
- consultation processes with regional residents, member councils, and other participating governments and agencies; and,
- as a basis for the development of benchmarks and indicators for use in monitoring the effectiveness of RGS implementation in future years.

At the *Second Regional Summit of Elected Officials*, scheduled for 2000, participants will have an opportunity to reconsider the approved weightings of the criteria, in considering the relative merits of RGS Alternatives.

Although the evaluation criteria have received approval in principle from the Board, they have been reviewed but not endorsed by member councils. Finalization of evaluation criteria will be addressed after the Second Summit. As such, the evaluation criteria do not form part of this Framework Agreement, but are included for information in Appendix B.

## Next Steps

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For the remainder of 1998, 1999, and 2000 the *Foundations For Our Future* process will focus on:

### I. Resolution of Outstanding Issues

Three outstanding issues have been raised by Metchosin and North Saanich that the Board will seek to resolve through political discussions concurrent with the development of RGS alternatives. Through the resolution of these issues, the Board will endeavour to obtain endorsement of the framework from the councils of Sidney, Metchosin and North Saanich.

The three outstanding issues are:

- **Interim Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment**  
**Process:** North Saanich Council suggests that for the duration of the process to prepare and adopt a RGS, that changes to OCPs only occur within the context of an inter-municipal review process that would consider potential issues of regional impact;
- **Social Well-Being and Public Safety:** North Saanich and Metchosin councils raise different questions regarding the Social Well-Being Priority Area. North Saanich Council questions whether or not social well-being is a regional issue, citing differences between municipalities regarding their flexibility to provide necessary jobs, transportation and affordable housing. Metchosin Council raises a concern that the matter of public safety, previously identified by regional residents as their number one priority through the *CRD Values and Goals Survey*, is not given sufficient prominence in the framework.
- **Approval of Evaluation Criteria:** North Saanich Council recommends that RGS evaluation criteria should be approved by member municipalities on the recommendation of the Board, rather than by the Board acting on the input of member municipalities through their regional directors.

Municipal responses to the Board's recommendations to address the outstanding issues were inconclusive. As such, the Board resolved on January 27, 1999 to delay resolution of the outstanding issues until after the Second Regional Summit of Elected Officials, scheduled for 2000.

### 2. Development and Review of RGS Alternatives

During the Fall of 1998, four RGS alternatives will be developed that address the priority areas and vision described in the framework. One of four alternatives will specifically put forth a "slow growth" program, which will identify the policy and action initiatives required to slow the forecast rate of population growth, as part of a strategy to achieve the regional vision and address the priority areas of the framework.

The Board has approved an approach to preparing a RGS that puts the focus on finding the best way to achieve framework's vision and the pattern of development that supports that vision. Following this approach, population and employment capacity figures derived from each alternative will be compared against the most recent population forecast for the Capital Region and where differences occur, each alternative will outline how it would deal with the difference. This ensures that we focus on achieving our vision but still take population forecast information seriously, and consider measures to manage any risk the forecast may pose.

A technical assessment of the four RGS alternatives will be undertaken in the Fall 1999/Spring 2000, using approved evaluation criteria derived from the vision and principles of the framework. The technical assessment will identify and assess the implications for implementation for each of the four RGS alternatives, if migration occurs either 50% slower or faster than forecast using the latest projection prepared by BC Statistics.

Also during the Spring 2000, a major process of public, political and agency review of the four RGS alternatives will be conducted, involving regional residents, member councils, public agencies and ministries of government, First Nations councils, and neighbouring jurisdictions. Consultation with regional residents will include random and non-random surveys and a series of community forums throughout the region.

### **3. Consultation and Coordination with First Nations, the Cowichan Valley Regional District and the Islands Trust**

The Board will continue make efforts to engage First Nations councils in the RGS process. Further, in light of the cross acceptance requirements of the *Growth Strategies Act*, the CRD will initiate discussions with the Cowichan Valley Regional District on the relationship of the *Foundations For Our Future* process and the RGS process recently initiated in the CVRD, and with the Islands Trust regarding portions of the *Islands Trust Policy Statement* relevant to Saltspring Island and the Outer Gulf Islands Electoral Areas.

### **4. Process to Select a Preferred RGS Alternative**

Information gained through the technical evaluation and review process on the four RGS alternatives will be presented at a *Second Regional Summit of Elected Officials*, scheduled for 2000. Participants will identify a preferred alternative and recommend it to the CRD Board as the basis for preparation of a draft growth management strategy.

### **5. Preparation of a Draft Regional Growth Strategy**

Following the Board's consideration of the recommendations of the second Regional Summit, a draft RGS will be prepared.

## Appendix A

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### **Our Essential Nature: A Regional Green/Blue Spaces Vision**

There are times when we just want to roam the Gowlland Range and listen to the sound of air stirred up by eagles' wings. Or stroll the Swan Lake boardwalk and watch a family of proud ducklings parade past our feet.

Then there are days when splashing about with our children in the cool, clean waters of Thetis lake is the only thing worth doing. Or maybe it's kicking up the warm, soft sand of Willows Beach.

Perhaps it's walking along the Colquitz Creek that makes our world come alive. Or taking a second, reflective look at a rare old Douglas-fir on the grounds of Royal Roads.

Whether it is the pastoral splendour of the Saanich Peninsula Farmlands, or the stark and wild beauty of the Juan de Fuca coastline, our ability to appreciate nature begins with whatever captivates our senses. It then expands to values we feel deeply by rarely capture in words.

All of us who live in the Capital Regional District cherish the natural environment that is so essential to our quality of life, and we are determined that it never be compromised.

So although we already enjoy a diverse network of protected areas that stretches from the southern Gulf Islands to Port Renfrew, we cannot be complacent. As the region's population continues to grow, we must ensure that the stewardship of the natural environment remains integral to all forms of urban, suburban and rural development.

But we don't protect nature just so we can hike, relax and contemplate. We must also safeguard endangered species and sensitive ecosystems such as Garry Oak meadows and stands of old growth Douglas-fir. And we need to give Pacific salmon a fighting chance to return to urban streams.

To that end we envision the development of a regional green/blue space system that will protect and maintain the full range and diversity of the natural environment that surrounds us, including significant green spaces, the marine environment, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, and unique ecosystems.

We are also committed to protecting and maintaining the last remnants of ecosystems that flourished here before the time of Captain Cook, and to restore natural systems we have altered.

This is neither a park plan nor a policy document, but a vision of cooperative stewardship that integrates the contributions of citizens, landowners, businesses, communities, and all levels of government. It is a vision of sustaining the essential nature of our region, of continually creating and protecting a livable and healthy community – and passing on that legacy intact to future generations.

## **Objectives of the Green/ Blue Spaces Strategy:**

The objectives of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy are to:

- conserve rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems and species in the CRD;
- maintain biological diversity by protecting and enhancing a variety of habitats;
- conserve ecologically valuable areas in large, diverse, contiguous units and connect them with greenways;
- maintain the character and diversity of green/blue spaces in the CRD;
- enhance and restore areas that could have green/blue space values;
- develop a comprehensive set of priorities for the conservation of green/blue spaces in the CRD;
- provide appropriate outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to experience and enjoy green/blue spaces in the CRD;
- educate people about the value of protecting green/blue spaces in the CRD; and,
- foster partnerships for the conservation and stewardship of green/blue spaces.

## Appendix B

### **Regional Growth Strategy Evaluation Criteria – Approved in Principle by the Board, September 30, 1998**

The following evaluation criteria were approved in principle by the CRD Board on September 30, 1998. They were weighted by the Board at a subsequent workshop held on October 14, 1998 and circulated in November 1998 to all member councils for review and comment by January 9, 1999. No consensus emerged from the comments received and the Board resolved, on January 27, 1999 to delay final approval of Regional Growth Strategy Evaluation Criteria until after the Second Regional Summit of Elected Officials.

Criteria	Description	Board Weighting
<b>Liveable Human Settlement</b>		<b>19.7%</b>
<p>1. The character of the Region, and each community's unique identity, character and role in the Region is recognized and preserved.</p>	<p>Diverse community characters are maintained. Rural character is preserved. Land use conflicts with urban areas are minimized. Urban areas are compact and defined; some urbanized lands are redeveloped and uses intensified to accommodate future needs; sprawl is avoided. Community stability is maintained (at regional, municipal, neighbourhood levels). The majority of population growth occurs within defined urban areas. Heritage conservation is supported.</p>	
<p>2. Supplies of suitable land, infrastructure and resources are provided to accommodate preferred future settlement.</p>	<p>Land for commercial, industrial, institutional and residential purposes is available to meet stated goals. Infrastructure (roads, utilities, regional services, public services) is provided efficiently and in a timely fashion. Renewable and non-renewable resources are conserved and demand for them is managed.</p>	
<p>3. Transportation infrastructure for all modes adequately and safely serves the region.</p>	<p>Auto dependence has been reduced. Congestion is reduced when feasible. Goods and people are both moved efficiently. Settlement patterns optimize the opportunities for and encourage travel by a variety of travel modes. Travel both within and beyond the Region is provided for. System considers a range of accessibility in terms of physical and financial ability.</p>	

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Board Weighting</b>
<b>Economic Vitality</b>		<b>20.1%</b>
4. The economy is strong and diverse.	The economy is resilient to business cycles and moderates external economic conditions. The business climate is competitive and innovative.	
5. Economic development activities support a wide range of business opportunities in existing sectors and develop new ones consistent with the regional vision.	Community economic development strategies are supported. Communities coordinate their business development efforts. Entrepreneurship is encouraged. Retention and expansion of local businesses is encouraged. Includes farming and forest-related, tourism and service sectors; research; small and home businesses; knowledge-based industry; and low impact and renewable resource-based industry.	
6. A wide range of employment opportunities are available for regional residents.	Opportunities are available in a range of skill levels, fit different and changing age and lifestyle situations, and maintain and enhance personal and household income.	
7. Employment centres as identified in the Regional Vision are supported.	The metropolitan core is complemented in the west by a major employment concentration in the Colwood/Langford town centres and on the Peninsula, by an employment centre in the vicinity of the Airport. Employment at other regionally-significant centres such as the Keating Industrial Park, University of Victoria, and CRB Esquimalt, is enhanced.	
8. The arts and cultural and sports community are supported as a significant contributor to the local economy.	Professional and community arts, culture and sports industry are supported for the economic benefits they provide.	
<b>Enhanced Quality of Life</b>		<b>14.8%</b>
9. The completeness of the Region's communities is enhanced.	Opportunities to live, work and play (ie. Housing, employment centres and recreation areas) are integrated. All regional residents have good access to goods, services and community activities. Needs of residents of all ages, life situations and incomes are accommodated. The Region's cultural heritage is protected.	

Criteria	Description	Board Weighting
10. Community health and stability is maintained and enhanced.	There is a high degree of social well-being. Community social networks are developed and strengthened. Diversity and differences are acknowledged and celebrated. Education, health services and other community resources are provided by appropriate agencies. Participation in the community is encouraged for all residents. Personal and public safety is maintained or enhanced. The arts are supported for social benefits provided by them to the Region's population.	
11. Housing is available to meet the needs of residents.	Adequate, affordable, and appropriate housing is available for all residents, including the full range of household, life stage, and lifestyle types and income levels.	
<b>Environment and Resource Stewardship</b>		<b>28.8%</b>
12. Core green and blue space areas are protected and maintained.	The Green Blue Spaces Strategy is implemented as approved, including linkages. Natural beauty of the Region is maintained. The healthy ecological functioning of natural systems is maintained, enhanced and remediated if necessary.	
13. Risks to life and property associated with natural hazards are minimized	Development is limited or controlled on lands which may be hazardous due to flood, slippage or other natural process.	
14. The quality and quantity of water resources are protected.	Ground water, surface fresh water, watershed and marine waters are included. Demand management strategies are enacted for water and sewage discharge. Cost effective and efficient waste management is practiced.	
15. Renewable and non-renewable natural resources are conserved and stewarded.	Productive land reserves are secured and maintained (ALR, FLR) to foster a secure supply of food and agricultural products. Regional self-reliance for food and energy supply is improved. Recycling of energy, materials and nutrients is enhanced.	
16. Air, land and water pollution is reduced and remediated.		

Criteria	Description	Board Weighting
<b>Implementation Principles</b>		<b>16.6%</b>
17. Implementation of the RGS alternative is affordable to the public and all affected levels of government.	<p>Costs of the various public facilities (physical and social infrastructure) are reasonable. Estimates of the costs to consumers (total, and per capita) are considered (e.g.: total costs of transport, including private vehicles, congestion costs, as well as infrastructure costs). Feasibility of recovering costs through DCCs, user fees, property taxes, grants from elsewhere, etc., are considered.</p>	
18. The implementation of the RGS alternative is practical within the time horizon identified.	<p>It is reasonable to expect that changes in policies and regulations required to implement the alternative can be made, considering the time available to do so, and public reaction to the changes. Implementation mechanisms are within the jurisdiction of the partners in the RGS.</p>	



**Foundations For Our Future**

*Capital Regional District  
Regional Growth Strategy*

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