



DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

File: 0360-505

April 3, 2007

Tracy K. Corbett, Senior Manager,
Capital Regional District, Regional Planning
Box 1000
Victoria, BC V8W 2S6

Dear Ms. Corbett,

**Re: District of Metchosin Bylaw No. 505, Official Community Plan Amendment
Bylaw to adopt a Regional Context Statement**

At its meeting of April 2, 2007, the Council of the District of Metchosin amended the above bylaw in Schedule 1, section 14.1.1 *Keep Urban Settlement Compact*, at the request of the CRD to clarify that the extension of water is intended to service growth already contemplated in the OCP. I have enclosed a copy of the amended bylaw for the Board's consideration.

Please contact me or Sherry Hurst if you require any further information.

Yours truly,

Rachel Parker
Deputy Clerk

DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

BYLAW NO. 505

A Bylaw to Adopt a Regional Context Statement for the District of Metchosin

WHEREAS by Section 876 of the *Local Government Act*, a local government may adopt a community plan to apply to land in the municipality that is designated in the plan as being covered by that Plan; and

WHEREAS by Section 877 of the *Local Government Act*, a community plan shall be in writing and may include plans, maps, tables, or other graphic materials and shall include statements and map designations for the area covered by the Plan; and

WHEREAS Sections 877 and 878 of the *Local Government Act* lists the subjects and items that must be addressed in a Plan; and

WHEREAS by Section 879(1) of the *Local Government Act*, the local government has provided one or more opportunities appropriate for consultation with persons, organizations and authorities it considers will be affected by the Plan; and

WHEREAS a regional growth strategy has been adopted by the Capital Regional District and applies to all the same area of the District of Metchosin as this Plan, and Section 866 of the *Local Government Act* requires an Official Community Plan to contain a regional context statement, to indicate how the Plan conforms to the provisions of the regional growth strategy.

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the District of Metchosin, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

TITLE

1. This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as the "**Metchosin Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw, No. 505.**"

APPLICATION

2. This Bylaw applies to all lands and the surface of all waters within the District of Metchosin.

COMMUNITY PLAN AMENDMENTS

3. Schedule "A" of "Metchosin Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 258" is amended as follows:
 - (1) By inserting in the **TABLE OF CONTENTS** after "**13.6 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES,**" a new line reading "**PART 14 – METCHOSIN REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT;**"

- (2) By inserting after "Section 13.6 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES," the new "PART 14 - METCHOSIN REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT," in the form appended hereto as **Schedule 1**, and then re-numbering the page references accordingly.

READINGS

Read a first time this	20 th day of	February	2006.
Read a second time this	20 th day of	March	2006.
Public Hearing held this	20 th day of	April	2006.
Amended this	2 nd day of	April	2007.
Final Acceptance by CRD Board confirmed this	day of		2007.
Read a third time this	day of		2007.
Finally adopted by Council this	day of		2007.

Chief Administrative Officer

Mayor

**Certified a true and correct copy
of the original document(s)**



**Deputy Corporate Officer
District of Metchosin**

PART 14 – METCHOSIN REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

A Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) for the Capital Regional District was approved by the CRD Board of Directors in August 2003. Section 866 of the *Local Government Act* requires that each Capital Regional District member municipality prepare, as part of its Official Community Plan (OCP), a Regional Context Statement which identifies the policy linkages and differences between the municipality's OCP and the RGS.

Regional Context Statements should determine:

1. The extent to which the municipal OCP is consistent with the RGS;
2. If it is not consistent, how the municipality intends to bring itself into consistency, and
3. The elements of the RGS which *are not* applicable to the municipality (e.g. development of urban centres in rural municipalities).

RGS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The RGS provides eight “Strategic Directions” under the following headings:

Managing and Balancing Growth

- 1.1 Keep Urban Settlement Compact
- 1.2 Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

Environment and Resources

- 2.1 Protect Regional Green and Blue Space
- 2.2 Manage Natural Resources and the Environment Sustainably

Housing and Community

- 3.1 Build Complete Communities
- 3.2 Improve Housing Affordability

Transportation

- 4.1 Increase Transportation Choice

Economic Development

- 5.1 Strengthen the Regional Economy

14.1 *Managing and Balancing Growth*

14.1.1 Keep Urban Settlement Compact

The RGS proposes that rural communities should grow moderately and slowly. This is also a key objective of Metchosin's OCP. Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2 of the OCP illustrate that the build-out of potentially developable lots under existing zoning is anticipated to take approximately 15 years (as of 2006). Metchosin's 2005 population is considered to be consistent with the population scenarios that were projected in 1994, which serves to demonstrate the slow and managed growth of the District.

The OCP does not anticipate an increase in build-out density above that which is already provided for, through policies that have been in effect since 1995. Key objectives

included in Part 6 aim to ensure: a type, scale, intensity and rate of residential development that maintains the rural character of Metchosin; a scale and form of future development minimising demand for extensive community services (i.e. to permit residential development only where an adequate quantity and quality of water is demonstrated, and where soil conditions are suitable for the satisfactory long term operation of on-site septic disposal systems); a choice of rural lifestyles (large lots, small farms and farming on larger holdings) as desirable alternatives to urban living.

Metchosin is located entirely outside the boundaries of the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area (designated on Map 3, *Growth Management Concept Plan*, appended to the RGS). Water quality and quantity have long been primary concerns of Metchosin; the District was serviced with piped water well before the RGS was adopted. Parts of Metchosin rely upon vulnerable aquifers and low water sources – these are often marginally adequate for fire suppression needs, especially within the context of a “high” to “extreme” interface fire hazard regime. Improved flows and access to water sources for fire suppression are therefore essential to protect life and property. Piped water service is also needed to improve the arability of Metchosin’s agricultural land base, which is important for the local and regional economy.

Section 12.8 of the OCP supports the expansion of a community water system to existing residents, and to service the limited growth contemplated by and consistent with the OCP. The build-out density anticipated by the OCP, and the associated land use policies, have remained consistent and in effect since 1995. That these densities remain unchanged after more than 10 years is evidence of the District’s commitment to the OCP’s objective of maintaining the rural character and integrity of Metchosin. Notably, the District’s bylaws do not require the extension of community water; however, the District remains committed to community water as an option to ensure appropriate levels of water quality and quantity for residents.

The OCP also promotes the development of a “water strategy” to guide decision-making with respect to water quality and quantity, and to determine the impact of development on water resources in general. In this context, Metchosin considers the future extension of piped water services to be in keeping with Initiative 1/ Action 5 of the RGS.

Section 12.9 of the OCP acknowledges that Metchosin is not serviced by a community sewage disposal system and that all sewage waste generated with the District is to be disposed of by private septic disposal systems. Section 12.9.2 further states that no building permit is to be issued unless the proposed sewage disposal system has been approved by the Medical Health Officer. These policies indicate that piped community sewers are not supported in Metchosin. The District does not support the extension of sewers or any regional treatment of sewerage in the municipality. Furthermore, Metchosin does not support the connection of any of its lands to sewers located outside the municipal boundary. This is consistent with the RGS policy that limits urban sewers to the RUCSPA.

14.1.2 Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

Strategic Direction #1.2 of the RGS “*seeks to protect the character and quality of rural communities, to ensure that they remain strongly rooted in the agricultural and resource land base, and that the rural countryside and natural landscape remain a durable fact of life in the Capital Region.*” It promotes the long term goal to keep urban settlement

compact by protecting the region's green infrastructure, which includes natural assets such as major parks, ecological reserves, forests, farmland and watersheds identified in the Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy.

The policies and objectives of Metchosin's OCP collectively act to achieve this strategic initiative. The importance of maintaining Metchosin's rural integrity, which includes its agricultural and resource land base, is emphasized throughout the OCP, and Metchosin's residents continue to express strong support for the preservation of the agricultural land base and the protection of the community's rural values.

A key objective of Metchosin's OCP is to ensure the sustainability and economic viability of Metchosin's agricultural lands. Approximately 15% of the District's land base is contained within the Agricultural Land Reserve (OCP Map 7). The designated agricultural land is consistent with the RGS Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area (Map 3, *Growth Management Concept Plan*), with the possible exception of those lands designated for "Commercial" uses on Plan Map 10 - Village Centre Development Permit Area. Those lands may at some time be considered for exclusion from the ALR to address the growth of the Village Centre. With this exception acknowledged, the District does not support the removal of lands from the ALR.

Section 1.1 of the OCP introduces Metchosin as a low-density rural-agricultural community comprised of agricultural lands, small farms, acreage-residential lots, and parks and open spaces containing a unique and diverse natural environment, and providing significant regional recreational opportunities. Sections 3.2 and 3.3 present objectives and policies addressing the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of agricultural lands and agricultural operations, including: minimizing and buffering adverse impacts on the future viability of agricultural land; encouraging the development of new farms and diversification of existing farming operations; encouraging the consolidation of small parcels of agricultural land into larger, more viable agricultural units; discouraging large-scale "industrial" agriculture (as contrasted with traditional practices) which may have significant impacts on surrounding areas or reduce arable areas; encouraging innovations and efficiencies in irrigation to increase the viability of farming and land arability; and recognizing that subdivision of ALR lands is subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

The following definition for a "rural" community is provided in Section 3.3 of the OCP and this definition is reinforced throughout the District's OCP policies, especially those provided under Part 3 (Agriculture) and Part 6 (Residential):

"The open land, pastures, farming and grazing lands are the foundation of the community and are complemented by large tracts of uplands land, residential areas, forests, walking and riding trails and park land. The fragile interdependence between these primary rural uses [and the lifestyle that accrues from it] is essential to Metchosin and is considered a non-renewable regional resource which shall be protected."

Metchosin contains a number of areas that are designated within the Capital Green Lands Policy Area, including the easternmost part of Matheson Lake Park, Blinkhorn Nature Park, Witty's Lagoon Park and Sooke Hills Regional Park. Collectively, the OCP recognizes Metchosin as having significant unique and highly valued parks and open spaces, marine areas and sensitive environmental features; policies and objectives found

in Part 2 (Environmental Policies) and Part 5 (Parks) are of particular relevance in this regard. These policies are consistent with Action #1 of RGS Strategic Direction #1.2.

Metchosin also has significant forested areas that are highly valued by residents. Some of these forested lands were included within the Forest Land Reserve, a designation that is now replaced by the Private Managed Forest Lands designation. Together with the ALR lands, the formerly designated FLR lands are identified as “Renewable Resource Lands” on Maps 3 and 4 of the RGS. In addition to the aforementioned policies which support, protect and enhance agricultural lands of the OCP, Section 4.2 of Metchosin’s OCP includes policies that support forest management activities and silviculture uses related to timber production and harvesting, within the lands that were designated as FLR. These OCP policies are consistent with Action #2 of RGS Strategic Direction #1.2, which advocates the long-term protection of Renewable Resource Lands.

Action #3 of RGS Strategic Direction #1.2 advocates policies and statements, including those adopted through a Regional Context Statement that would generally limit rural subdivision and development to the designated OCP capacity levels, as determined at the date of the adoption of the RGS bylaw. Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2 of Metchosin’s OCP provide an acknowledgement that the District has sufficiently pre-zoned lands to accommodate projected population growth for at least 15 years. In support of Action #3, Metchosin agrees to generally maintain density and capacity levels to be consistent with those existing at the date of adoption of the RGS bylaw. Furthermore, the District will seek to investigate policies and implement mechanisms that will serve to maintain and manage growth within those levels. Examples of such mechanisms include the amenity zoning provisions pursuant to Section 904 of the *Local Government Act* and the conservation subdivision (“amenity development”) provisions pursuant to Section 6.8 of the OCP.

One of the overriding principles advocated by Metchosin is the protection of its rural values, lifestyles and landscape characteristics outside of the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area. Metchosin offers residents an alternative to urban densification and regulation; the community defends its rural lifestyle from the insidious costs and consequences of urban sprawl. Recognizing that Metchosin’s natural heritage and way of life will continue to be protected for future generations, a key challenge for Metchosin will be to limit demands for residential growth and servicing.

As a “greenbelt” community that promotes the freedoms of a rural lifestyle, Metchosin is an essential part of the Capital Region. It is valued as a refuge and recreational outlet by residents throughout the Region, especially as urban areas become increasingly dense. While policies and regulations emerge and evolve within Metchosin, they are continually being tested and shaped through active public participation and on-going consultation, such that the balance between the freedom of rural lifestyle and the protection of rural ambience may be defined.

Metchosin agrees to continue its efforts to protect the community’s rural landscape, resources and values. In keeping with Action #4 of RGS Strategic Direction #1.2, the District will continue to develop and implement policies and guidelines that will reinforce buffering and land use transitions between the District and adjacent urban areas. The District will encourage working with neighbouring jurisdictions in support of mechanisms (such as bilateral agreements) that will reinforce buffering and land use transitions along the municipality’s boundaries (much of which coincides with the

Regional Urban Containment and Servicing boundary), and to protect Capital Green Lands and Renewable Resource Lands.

Overall, the policies and objectives of Metchosin's OCP are consistent with the "Renewable Resource Land" and "Regional Green/Blue Spaces System" policy areas designated on Maps 3 and 4 appended to the RGS.

14.2 *Environment and Resources*

14.2.1 Protect Green and Blue Space

Metchosin is proud of its natural heritage which includes unique landforms, varied topography, extensive open space, forest and agricultural areas, wetlands and watercourses, and marine and foreshore areas. The District's OCP, consistent with Strategic Direction #2.1 of the RGS, contains policies and objectives which aim to protect landscape character, ecological heritage and biodiversity throughout the District, including the "Green and Blue Space" lands identified by the RGS.

The District agrees to work with the CRD, its member municipalities, and with the Provincial and Federal governments, to protect from development (as much as possible) the lands identified as "Unprotected Green Space Policy Area" on Map 3 and 4, and to protect the ecological integrity of the marine areas identified as "Blue Space Core Policy Area" on Map 4 of the RGS. The District will actively promote partnerships with these other jurisdictions in order to establish the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System identified on Map 4, and agrees to further establish programs aimed at protecting lands within the area identified as Unprotected Green Space Policy Area on Map 4.

The District's OCP, particularly in Part 3, includes a number of environmental policies and guidelines to protect Green and Blue Space environmental features, including sensitive vegetation and wildlife habitat, steep slopes, riparian and marine areas, areas subject to erosion, forested areas, rare and endangered plants and ecosystems, and tree cover. Mechanisms such as Development Permit Areas and Development Approval Information Areas are now adopted, and will continue to be utilized, to protect these unique and sensitive features.

Part 5 of the District's OCP, and the Metchosin Parks and Recreation Master Plan, provide policies and objectives that further work towards the protection of the Regional Green/Blue Spaces System. The acquisition of parks and open space, the protection of marine areas, and the development of an integrated system of parks and trails (pedestrian, cycling and equestrian) to link points of interest, protect the environment, and support and enhance Metchosin's rural lifestyle, are prioritised by Part 5. The OCP also provides direction to secure sensitive lands through means such as subdivision, rezoning, tax incentives, purchase, covenants, donation, or through the implementation of "amenity development," where infrastructure is concentrated to protect open space without the effect of any increased density. Metchosin recognizes the Regional Trail network and the OCP has a number of policies that address the acquisition and construction of links to this network within the District's boundaries.

14.2.2 Manage Natural Resources and the Environment Sustainably

The policies of the District's OCP strongly support and promote the principles of sustainability as provided for by Strategic Direction #2.2 of the RGS. These principles are noted as follows:

1. Waste discharges of all types should not exceed the assimilative capacity of the natural environment (including land, air and water);
2. Depletion rates for natural resources should not exceed the regenerative capacity of the ecosystems that produce them;
3. Consumption of scarce renewable and non-renewable resources should be minimized through conservation, efficiency and application of "reduce, reuse and recycle" practices; and,
4. Decision-making should give first priority to options that maintain ecosystem health and support the ongoing ability of natural systems to sustain life.

Section 2.2.1 provides the general objective for the District to base its land use decisions on the capability of the land to support various types, scales and intensities of use. Section 12.9 emphasizes the value of recycling as a valuable alternative to the disposal of wastes. As for managing sewage waste, Section 12.9.2 states in effect that no lands can be built upon, unless the sewage waste that is being discharged is effectively being disposed on-site, to the satisfaction of the Medical Health Officer.

Policies found throughout Part 2 and in Section 12.10 of the OCP furthermore advocate the protection and management of rain water runoff on lands "at the source," through the use of source controls that promote recharge to natural systems and processes. The policies ensure that runoff and land use activities will ultimately maintain and protect the "Proper Functioning Condition" of wetlands and watercourses throughout the District. Policies 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 provide specific guidance for Council and the Approving Officer, respectively, to implement, and have due regard for, methods that will maintain and protect riparian-wetland areas and sensitive environmental areas.

The policies adopted through the OCP emphasize ecosystem health and sustainable practices: they collectively support the goal of maintaining healthy natural systems in order to sustain life, maintain natural functions and processes, and provide for the stewardship of resources for future generations. Metchosis also supports the regional initiative for a Master Implementation Agreement with other relevant jurisdictions, to establish:

- Best practices policies, procedures, benchmarks and targets for the management, delivery, and extension of physical and environmental services, consistent with the principles of sustainability and overall intent of the RGS;
- An integrated watershed planning approach to managing surface water, drainage and groundwater in non-catchment watersheds throughout the region, consistent with the principles of sustainability included in the RGS; and
- Policies and targets regarding regional air quality, environmental contaminants, and energy efficiency, and to monitor indicators for these as part of the RGS monitoring program.

14.3 *Housing and Community*

14.3.1 **Build Complete Communities**

Although this strategic direction applies primarily to urban areas, the District's OCP contains a number of objectives and policies that support this initiative. For example, the objectives and policies found in Part 7 of the OCP promote the Village Centre as the commercial, institutional and recreational focus for the community. The District recognizes the importance of maintaining the existing commercial activity of the Village Centre (s.7.2.1). While some limited expansion to this area may be considered, the OCP is explicit in stating that ribbon commercial development is to be prevented (s.7.2.3), and that isolated commercial development in areas other than the Village Centre is to be discouraged.

The Village Centre also forms the transportation "hub" for the District, providing links to inter-municipal transit services. The District has identified the objective to improve public transportation services (s.10.2.2; s.10.3.5), and advocates alternative "low impact" transportation through an emphasis on cycling, walking and equestrian modes of travel (s.10.3.6 - s.10.3.9).

Beyond promoting commercial activities in the Village Centre, the OCP also strongly supports home-based businesses throughout the District, to encourage the "job-housing" balance that is advocated by this Strategic Direction. All commercial activity that is encouraged by the District is low-impact and rural-focused in nature (s.7.2.5; s.7.3.4).

Overall, Metchosin's OCP supports the concentration of urban development within "Metropolitan Core" and "Major Centres" located in the Urban Containment and Servicing Area, as opposed to rural, non-serviced areas of the Capital Regional District. This is consistent with Strategic Direction #3.1.

14.3.2 **Improve Housing Affordability**

Metchosin is resoundingly a rural community. As such, it provides for "*a choice of rural lifestyles (large lots, [small farms] and full-time farming on large holdings) and it is the intent of [the District's OCP] to maintain these opportunities as desirable alternatives to urban living.*" Within this rural context, the OCP provides for a range of housing types to accommodate a range of household needs and incomes. A key objective identified in the OCP is *to provide opportunity for a range of housing types, size, prices and tenure consistent with maintaining a rural community* (s.6.2.8). Affordable housing (in the form of secondary suites) is specifically encouraged throughout all residential zones, by the policies provided under s.6.3.6.

In April 2004, District Council passed a resolution to support in principle the Four Key Strategic Actions with respect to the Regional Housing and Affordability Strategy. The OCP policies support the initiatives of Strategic Direction #3.2.

14.4 *Transportation*

14.4.1 Increase Transportation Choice

The OCP supports a balanced, sustainable, safe and convenient transportation system in keeping with Strategic Direction #4.1 of the RGS. In this respect, Part 10 of the OCP identifies a number of key objectives and policies: promoting the protection of trail corridors for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians in new subdivisions and other development proposals as alternative means of transportation to various facilities and points of interest; ensuring new road patterns and improvements take into account existing and proposed development; establishing a mechanism to review transit routing, facilities and supportive programs to encourage greater use by residents; providing walking facilities and paved passenger standing areas on all transit routes (as a long-term objective); reducing CO₂ emissions and other atmospheric pollution due to transportation.

14.5 *Economic Development*

14.5.1 Strengthen the Regional Economy

As a rural community, Metchosin's contribution to the regional economy is based primarily on its land resources, particularly through promotion of agriculture and the natural environment (especially for recreation and eco-tourism). A paramount principle advocated by the OCP is promoting a sustainable local economy that is consistent with the District's rural character and its natural environment. Moreover, the District contributes to the diversity of residential choices in the Capital Region, making the Region more attractive to investors. Metchosin is also the location of several major regional institutional uses (e.g. William Head Penitentiary and Pearson College).

Regional economic development is specifically addressed by sector through Parts 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 of the OCP, respectively: Agriculture, Forestry, Commercial, Commercial Recreation, and Industry. Key economic development policies include: improving agricultural productivity and diversity (s.3.2.8; s.3.3.2); protecting the agricultural land base by minimizing negative impacts on agriculture from the non-agricultural use of land (s.3.3.1; s.3.3.3; 3.3.9); strengthening and enhancing the Village Centre as the commercial, recreational and institutional focus of the District and encouraging home-based businesses in all residential designations (Part 7); reinforcing the community's function and acknowledging its unique natural attributes (open space, shore lands, watercourses and wooded hills) as a regional recreational area (Part 2; Part 8); and allowing selective harvesting on forest lands to maintain forest health and reduce forest fire hazards (Part 4). The policies and objectives of the OCP are therefore consistent with Strategic Direction #5.1 of the RGS.

14.6 *Implementation*

The District of Metchosin is committed to forming partnerships with the Capital Regional District, its member municipalities and other jurisdictions (such as the Vancouver Island Health Authority), to achieve the mutual goals and strategic directions of the RGS. The District acknowledges the importance of working collaboratively with these jurisdictions, and is committed to achieving common goals and resolving disagreements within a cooperative framework of consultation, such as through the Master Implementation Agreement.