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**REPORT TO THE PLANNING AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY JULY 23, 2008**

SUBJECT

RGS Consultation Strategy for the Initial Phases of the RGS 5-year Review

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Preliminary Phase and Phase One Consultation Strategy for the RGS 5-year review.

BACKGROUND

The RGS Consultation Strategy is designed to reflect the approved RGS workplan and project phasing.

The project phasing plan for the RGS 5-year review was approved by the Committee of the Whole on April 30, 2008. The 5-year review is organized in four project phases and is designed to: update the land use and growth assumptions; refocus the process to address municipal-provincial concerns; and restructure the document to balance the need for long-term predictability with short-term responsiveness by developing a range of policy and implementation tools.

The first phase of the project is the preliminary phase which involves a technical review, including the demographic analysis, development of the land use inventories and release of the RGS State of the Region (monitoring) report. Phase one of the review includes the issues and trends analysis, review of emerging legislation and policy, and clarification of growth assumptions and growth drivers.

These two project phases contribute to information updating and a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of the Regional Growth Strategy from the perspective of the affected local governments. Consultation efforts will be directed to obtaining technical data and expert opinion primarily from the member municipalities and the relevant provincial agencies. At the conclusion of Phase one the Board will have answers to the following:

- How successful has the RGS been at meeting the stated targets?
- How many of the RGS actions have been initiated and/or completed?
- How will changes in Provincial policy direction and actions affect the RGS?
- How much growth is anticipated over the next 25 years?
- To what extent is the zoned land base sufficient to accommodate the anticipated growth?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the RGS from the perspective of those jurisdictions that have worked with the document?
- What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of regional growth strategies from the perspective of other regions who have adopted growth strategies?
- What are the opportunities for improving the value of the RGS to the member municipalities?

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

The RGS Revision Consultation Plan is guided by the provisions of the *Local Government Act* that pertain to regional growth strategies. Section 855(2) of the *Local Government Act* states that:

[A]s soon as possible after the initiation a regional growth strategy, the board must adopt a consultation plan that, in the opinion of the board, provides opportunities for early and ongoing consultation with, at a minimum;

- (a) Its citizens
- (b) Affected local governments
- (c) First Nations
- (d) School district boards, greater boards and improvement district boards
- (e) Provincial and federal governments and their agencies.

The consultation strategy is intended to fulfill those stated responsibilities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The consultation strategy proposed for the Preliminary Phase and the Phase One of the RGS Review can be funded through the core budget provisions.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The RGS Consultation Strategy is designed to reflect the approved workplan and project phasing and responds to anticipated consultation requirements for the Preliminary Phase and Phase One of the project. These two project phases are dealing primarily with technical analysis and gaining input from RGS users. As such, the consultation strategy provides opportunity for member municipal elected officials and staff, First Nations, Ministry staff and staff from other regional districts to inform the background work on the review. Opportunity will be provided for other stakeholders to contribute to this phase through on-line feedback and access to committee reports and process. Subsequent project phases will require a more comprehensive engagement process.

At the conclusion of the Phase One work, a report will be made to Committee regarding the options for next steps and their potential scope, consultation requirements, and outcomes or deliverables. The report will include a revised workplan, a revised consultation strategy to guide the subsequent phases and an updated budget projection.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning & Protective Services Committee receive the report for information.

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Concurrence

COMMENTS: