

Regional Growth Strategy Primer

Regional Growth Strategy Review

CRD Regional Planning

2009



Making a difference...together

RGS PRIMER

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGIES	
Definition	The RGS is a strategic-level agreement - developed and approved by the member municipalities and the regional district to address the cross-boundary issues and impacts associated with growth and development throughout the region. The RGS is based on a regional vision that commits affected municipalities and regional districts to a course of action to meet common social, economic and environmental objectives.
Purpose	The purpose of a RGS established in section 849(1) 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.”
Benefits	<p>The development and implementation of a RGS can add value to the region in the following ways: It can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ work more efficiently on common goals and projects that affect multiple jurisdictions – such as sustainability, climate change responses transportation, housing affordability, open space systems, resource lands, economic resiliency, etc. ➤ build investor confidence and developer certainty by establishing development and servicing priorities ➤ support municipal decision-making on growth management issue ➤ develop and sustain a shared information, research, and mapping/GIS base for member municipalities, electoral areas and first nation communities. ➤ develop partnerships, particularly with provincial ministries and agencies, to implement projects ➤ provides a framework for provincial and federal investment in the region ➤ be used to improve accountability on the part of senior levels of government to the regional vision and objectives (and the provincial goals) ➤ serve as the integrated plan required for obtaining gas tax funding
Provincial Legislation	<p>The RGS legislation reflects a significant departure from the pre-1983 regional planning regime as it emphasizes a more collaborative process. Regional Growth Strategies have some elements in common with an OCP but differ in that they focus on the issues that cross local government boundaries and cannot be managed by one jurisdiction alone. The RGS provides the means of ensuring consistency or compatibility among the various OCPs within a region and a means of linking these with actions and plans of other levels of government and other organizations. A RGS is not an OCP done at a larger scale: instead it provides a framework for the individual OCPs within the region.</p> <p>Municipal OCPs are an essential means of implementing a regional growth strategy. The legislation requires that, within a region that has adopted a regional growth strategy, all community plans must be updated within two years to include a regional context statement (section 866). The regional context statement sets out the relationship between the RGS and the OCO and how they will be made</p>

	<p>compatible over time. To ensure that the OCP and RGS remain compatible over time, the context statement is required to be referred to the regional district of acceptance every five years.</p> <p>The RGS applies to, and is binding on, the CRD</p> <p>Only the regional context statement is binding on the Municipality.</p>
RGS Content Requirements	<p>Regional growth strategies are general guides as to how the region will grow, change and develop over a 20-year period. They are limited and focused on a set of key issues that must be managed at a regional scale. Section 850(2) outlines the minimum content all strategies must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A 20-year minimum time frame ➤ A comprehensive statement on the future of the region, including the social, economic and environmental objectives of the strategy ➤ Population and employment projections ➤ A list of actions to meet the needs of the projected population, including actions for housing, transportation, regional district services, parks and natural areas, and economic development.
CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY	
CRD RGS - Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adopted August 2003 ➤ Incorporates the principles and vision from the CRD's <i>Foundations for our Future Agreement</i>, adopted in 1998 ➤ Contains 8 strategic initiatives organized under 5 themes ➤ Contains 6 land use policy designations, reflected on RGS maps ➤ Reflects the 14 provincial goals established in the <i>Local Government Act</i>
Based on Four Fundamental Principles:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainability 2. Appropriateness (to regional context & local conditions) 3. Continuity (build on existing CRD plans & initiatives) 4. Cooperation, Collaboration and Coordination (multi-jurisdictional approach)
Elements of the Regional Vision: As contained in the Framework for our Future Agreement, 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The majority of future population is housed in existing urban areas ➤ Rural areas experience limited population increases and maintain strong agricultural and resource base ➤ A belt 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 and links town to country ➤ Downtown Victoria remains the regional employment, business and cultural centre but is complemented by a major employment and population centre in Langford and Colwood ➤ The proportion of trips taken in single occupant automobiles is reduced, trips by public transit are increased and there is a region-wide foot path and cycle network ➤ Established employment centres are enhanced ➤ A wide range of housing types and tenures meet the needs of regional

	<p>residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communities are socially and physically complete with new development that enhances the identity and walkable human scale of neighbourhoods.
5 Themes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing and balancing growth 2. Environment and resources 3. Housing and community 4. Transportation 5. Economic development
8 Strategic Initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep urban settlement compact 2. Protect the integrity of rural communities 3. Protect regional green and blue space 4. Manage natural resources and the environment sustainably 5. Build complete communities 6. Improve housing affordability 7. Increase transportation choice 8. Strengthen the regional economy.
6 Land Use Policy Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital Green Lands Policy Area: <i>promotes land conservation</i> 2. Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area: <i>promotes retention of working landscapes</i> 3. Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area: <i>promotes containment within existing settlement footprint and restriction on servicing extensions</i> 4. Unprotected Green Space Policy Area: <i>promotes protection of ecological values on private lands</i> 5. Rural/Rural Residential Policy Area: <i>promotes minimal change to rural residential development area.</i> 6. Victoria International Airport Special Policy Area: <i>recognizes lands under federal jurisdiction and special agreement.</i>
3 Sub-Strategies	<p>The RGS called for the development of three sub-strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transportation (TravelChoices adopted 2005) 2. Housing affordability (Regional Housing Affordability Strategy adopted 2007) 3. Economic development (Economic Development Blueprint – not adopted)
Reflects the 14 Provincial RGS goals <i>(contained in the Local Government Act)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoiding urban sprawl and ensuring that development takes place where adequate facilities exist or can be provided in a timely, economic and efficient manner 2. Settlement patterns that minimize the use of automobiles and encourage walking, cycling, and the efficient use of public transit 3. The efficient movement of goods and people while making effective use of transportation and utility corridors 4. Protecting environmentally sensitive areas

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Maintaining the integrity of a secure and productive resource base, including the agricultural and forest land reserves 6. Economic development that supports the unique character of communities 7. Reducing and preventing air, land and water pollution 8. Adequate affordable and appropriate housing 9. Adequate inventories of suitable land and resources for future settlement 10. Protecting the quality and quantity of ground water and surface water 11. Settlement patterns that minimize the risks associated with natural hazards 12. Preserving, creating and linking urban and rural open space including parks and recreation areas 13. Planning for energy supply and promoting efficient use, conservation and alternative forms of energy and 14. Good stewardship of land, sites and structures with cultural heritage.
Key Implementation Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual report (in place) 2. Monitoring program (in place) 3. Master Implementation Agreement to give effect to the RGS (not completed) 4. Corporate Implementation Strategy (completed) 5. Regional Context Statement (12 in place; significant variability) 6. Interim Update (cancelled by Board. Replaced with RGS amendment) 7. First Nations engagement (varied by FN community) 8. Coordination with CVRD and Islands Trust (not formalized)
Municipal Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop Regional Context Statement which reflects the regional vision, 8 strategic initiatives, 6 land use designations (where applicable), and the 14 provincial goals. ➤ Develop OCPs which reflect commitment to responsible growth management and sustainability ➤ Staff participation in on-going advisory committee (DPAC) ➤ Collaborate on sub-strategy development and implementation ➤ Sustain commitment to collaboration and cooperation, mainly through the actions of the Board.