



**REPORT TO THE PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES
COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2011**

SUBJECT REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT FOR THE TOWN OF VIEW ROYAL

PURPOSE

The Town of View Royal has submitted "Town of View Royal Regional Context Statement - Official Community Plan (OCP), 2011", for acceptance by the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board as required by Section 866 of the *Local Government Act*.

BACKGROUND

The Town of View Royal is completing its comprehensive OCP review process. The OCP received first and second reading on July 19, 2011 and a public hearing will be conducted on September 20, 2011. The draft OCP builds on previous OCP's to envision a sustainable future for View Royal.

The View Royal OCP includes the regional context statement, and as required by Section 866 of the *Local Government Act*, the Town of View Royal has officially submitted the regional context statement for approval by the CRD Board.

The referral was received on July 22, 2011 and circulated internally to the appropriate departments. The end of the review period for the Town of View Royal context statement is September 20, 2011.

Regional Context Statement Requirements

Section 866 of the *Local Government Act* requires that each CRD member municipality prepare, as part of its OCP, a regional context statement which identifies the policy linkages and consistencies between the municipality's OCP and the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). The regional context statement addresses how local planning and land use policy will work towards the goals and objectives of the RGS to achieve consistency. A regional context statement is binding on a municipality and, as such, acts as a key implementation mechanism of the RGS.

According to LGA, the context statement must:

1. Identify the relationship between the OCP and the content of the RGS;
2. If the OCP is not consistent, indicate how the municipality intends to bring itself into consistency, and
3. Be consistent with the rest of the OCP.

Under the *Act*, a municipality refers its context statement to the Board for review and acceptance. The Board must respond by resolution within 60 days after receipt indicating whether or not it accepts the context statement. If the Board does not accept the context statement, it must indicate:

- a. each provision to which it objects; and

b. the reasons for its objections.

If the Board fails to act within the period for acceptance or refusal (in this case, by September 20th), the Board is deemed by the *Act* to have accepted the context statement.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the Board accept the Regional Context Statement for the Town of View Royal, and notify the Town of View Royal to this effect.
2. That the Board conditionally accept the Regional Context Statement for the Town of View Royal, subject to the inclusion of the suggested improvements in Appendix A and consideration of comments attached in Appendix B.
3. That the Board refuse to accept the Regional Context Statement for the Town of View Royal, and notify the Town of View Royal to this effect, indicating: (a) each provision to which it objects, and (b) the reasons for its objection.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

REGIONAL GROWTH IMPLICATIONS

The regional context statement review determines the degree to which the OCP responds to the strategic direction of the RGS's five applicable land use designations and the eight strategic initiatives. Overall, View Royal has done a good job of meeting and exceeding the expectation of the CRD and its departmental review. Positive sentiments were passed along from all internal reviewers of the document, noting a high level of comfort with the language and level of commitment expressed by View Royal in its updated OCP. No conceptual conflicts were noted; suggestions were limited to minor wording changes and suggestions, with the exception of Land Use and Urban Design and Transportation and Mobility chapters where more detailed comments and suggestions are provided.

The body and Appendix A of this report responds to the referred RCS with suggested improvements that will clarify consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy. Additional suggested comments on specific policies can be found in the attached Appendix B and are intended to be complimentary and helpful to the View Royal OCP.

The Regional Context Statement broadly refers to parts and sections of the OCP indicating policies that align with the RGS. Specific OCP policies were not referenced in the context statement so the review thoroughly examined the document to ensure that the policies were consistent with the RGS policy and vision. The review therefore consists of an evaluation of the context statement itself as well as the sections and policies of the OCP in an effort to understand how the RCS is implemented in policy.

The View Royal OCP generally acknowledges the region as well as the RGS concept and selected policy areas in its overviews and neighbourhood descriptions. However, there is a notable absence of regional policy reflected within the OCP policies and actions. For example, the View Royal policies and actions pertaining to the Urban Growth Boundary in the Land Use section appears to reflect the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area

(RUCSPA) of the RGS, however the OCP would be strengthened by overtly indicating such regional support for local policies.

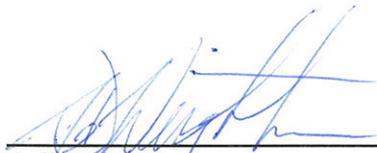
Following from this, improving linkages between the RCS and the OCP, by cross referencing OCP policies to the RCS, would enhance the level of clarity by demonstrating how the higher level statements of the RCS are implemented. It is recommended that an identifier, such as a section number, be inserted in the RCS to provide the reader with the OCP policy where the RCS is reflected or implemented. These recommended modifications would provide complimentary support between the regional and local policy levels.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The Town of View Royal Regional Context Statement reflects the intent of the RGS and its policies, however, due to the broad nature of the policy references it is sometimes difficult to ascertain from the context statement which specific policies fulfil the alignment of the OCP and RGS. Each policy was examined, drawing a number of suggestions and comments from staff for improvement, the suggested changes in the body of this report would provide an increased level of comfort throughout the plan's implementation phase. The suggestions outlined in the main body of this report and Appendix A amount to what is expected to be included in View Royal's OCP if Alternative 2 is accepted; suggestions in Appendix B are considered optional at the discretion of View Royal staff.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board conditionally accept the Regional Context Statement for the Town of View Royal, subject to the inclusion of the suggested improvements in Appendix A and consideration of comments attached in Appendix B.



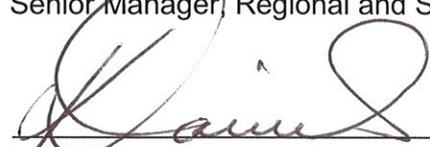
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COMMENTS

Appendix A

The View Royal OCP generally acknowledges the region as well as the RGS concept and selected policy areas in its overviews and neighbourhood descriptions. However, there is a notable absence of regional policy reflected within the OCP policies and actions. For example, the View Royal policies and actions pertaining to the Urban Growth Boundary in the Land Use section appears to reflect the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area (RUCSPA) of the RGS, however the OCP would be strengthened by overtly indicating such regional support for local policies.

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Vision: The Town of View Royal's role in the region is reflected in the *Framework For Our Future Vision*, contained within Appendix A of the RGS:

“View Royal will have a series of economic centres providing expanded retail, professional financial and convenience services. Single family detached housing will remain the predominant housing form with some provision made for other types of housing. A network of foot and cycle paths will provide neighbourhoods with access to shopping, recreation and natural open space. Natural amenities associated with shorelines, streams, estuaries, hillsides and forested areas will be protected.”

The CRD staff review of the View Royal OCP and regional context statement indicates support for this vision and strategic direction of the RGS through OCP policies.

Land Use and Urban Design:

The intended objectives of the RGS servicing policy are twofold:

1. To reduce sprawling development patterns throughout the region by containing the majority of urban and suburban growth within a containment boundary, defined as the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area.
2. Maximize the efficiency of infrastructure, by minimizing the costs associated with extending, operating and maintaining piped infrastructure throughout the region.

The general philosophy of the RGS is to contain urban growth within defined growth areas, and protect rural, resource and park land, in order to prevent the incremental loss of these amenities through unmanaged growth. By publicly declaring the desirable location of development and the location of future public infrastructure investment, a clear message can be sent to the development sector.

View Royal has an established Urban Growth Boundary which matches, for the most part, the RUCSPA boundary, with the exception lower Thetis Lake Park and Mill Hill Park where View Royal has tightened the boundary. The boundary now excludes the Park and Rural areas, effectively preserving these areas. This positive tightening of View Royal's Urban Growth

Boundary should be taken into consideration in the RGS Review, with complimentary amendments to the RUCSPA to reflect this progressive modification.

When referencing the Urban Growth Boundary, it is suggested that a notation be provided that elaborates on the relationship to the Regional Urban Containment Boundary and Servicing Policy Area (RUCSPA), or in the Glossary of Terms, provide a definition which reflects the relationship. The Urban Growth Boundary policy makes many references to the promotion of compact development and discouraging development outside of the Urban Growth Boundary, however, there are very few references to the regional servicing policy tool that supports the Urban Growth Boundary policies.

Transportation and Mobility

In this section, the context statement refers to progressive policies in both the Transportation and Mobility and Land Use and Urban Design chapters of the OCP, which tackle a number of topics such as intercity and commuter rail, multi modal travel, cycling and water transportation. In reviewing the Transportation and Mobility chapter, there are few references to regional transportation initiatives which are supportive of local transportation improvements.

Regarding the section on transportation plans, the TravelChoices RGS sub-strategy is noted, however the OCP would benefit from additional references to its offspring plans and strategies, which have been completed or are currently under development:

- The recently completed CRD *Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan* is specifically mentioned in the OCP. Suggested wording changes are as follows: “*The Plan will build on the RGS and the Travel Choices Strategy, setting out specific priorities for improvements to the **primary inter-community cycling and pedestrian network and referencing the design guidelines for cycling and pedestrian facilities established in the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.***”
- The CRD has just completed the first phase of the *Transportation Corridor Plan* which provided a preliminary definition of the network of principle transportation corridors in the region and provisional (subject to municipal and provincial endorsement) corridor standards and priorities. The Transportation Corridor Plan follows directly from *TravelChoices Commercial Vehicle (Working Paper #3)*, *Roadway Network (Working Paper #5)* and *Managing and Funding Transportation (Working Paper #9)* sub-strategies. It is recommended that the Regional *Corridor Plan* be documented in the OCP along with a statement of how View Royal plans to engage with the CRD and other stakeholders in further stages of the Plan.
- The CRD is also developing a *Transportation Demand Management Strategy* for the region. This regionally based plan also follows from TravelChoices sub-strategy (Working Paper #6). It is recommended that the Regional *TDM Strategy* be documented in the OCP and referenced as a source of information in the development of the Town’s TDM strategy.
- Both of the *Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Project* and *Transit Future* plans of BC Transit follow from the *TravelChoices Transit* sub-strategy (Working Paper #4) and provincial direction. It is recommended that they be acknowledged in the OCP, with reference to policies specific to rapid transit and transit improvements.

Further policy TR3.1 would benefit from a reference to regional transportation plans and strategies and Action TR1 would benefit from the insertion of the words “**and design guidelines**” between the words “*standards*” and “*and*” in the second bullet point.

Natural Environment, Energy and Climate

This section is satisfactory in terms of its alignment with the current RGS and its strategic initiatives related to these topic areas: Protect Regional Green and Blue Spaces, Sustainably Manage Natural Resources and the Environment and Increase Transportation Choice. Only minor suggestions are made with regard to ongoing regional climate change initiatives (See Appendix B).

Community Infrastructure and Servicing

This section closely ties the Capital Regional District with View Royal as a supplier of servicing and infrastructure. The most comprehensive policy definition of the RUCSPA as a policy tool is outlined in this section, and staff recommends that the policy in this section also be referenced in other Urban Growth Boundary policies. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy in the description of the water service cost structure. The annual rental to cover the cost of maintenance, amortization of capital costs and water consumed was incorporated into the water rate many years ago. There is no separate charge.

Appendix B

The comments in this section have been collectively submitted by CRD departments as suggested improvements to the OCP. They are considered optional at the discretion of View Royal staff and are not required as part of the report recommendation. Effectively they have been restricted to minor wording changes, and additions to clarify the intention of the statement, policy, or objective.

Statement “planning for climate change” has been used throughout the document in a number of different ways. It may be more accurate to state “**mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change**” instead. There are a number of environmental, social and economic consequences of climate change impacts – View Royal will need to continue to plan for change, but it will be more important to actively *adapt* because change is already happening.

Reference under RCS ‘Local Context’:

“An extended network of trails and transit will provide neighbourhoods with better access to shopping, recreation, natural open space and commuting alternatives.”

There is an opportunity in this section to repeat the strong language that is articulated in the transportation section under Planning for Change – page 69 – namely acknowledging View Royal’s commitment to growing compactly and strategically in support of improving the efficiency and financial viability of transit.

Land Use and Urban Design

Page 2, par. 1 and Page 85, par. 3 - Need to note that View Royal is committed to becoming carbon neutral **in their operations**. The current draft reads like the whole community has committed to become carbon neutral by signing on to the BC Climate Action Charter.

Page 8 Paragraph 1: Correction: Capital Green Lands **Policy Area**.

Paragraph 2: Major Parks, change to Capital Green Lands Policy Area

Paragraph 3: Unprotected Greenspace Areas, change to Unprotected Greenspace **Policy Area**

Page 9 Paragraph 2 & 3: Acknowledge the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy (RHAS) and reference which policies within the OCP constitute alignment.

Page 15, par. 4 - Could refer to expanding both bike and pedestrian **networks** and facilities. Draft only notes facilities.

Objective LU5 – Could provide some language regarding the support of the Capital Green Lands Policy Area, or the complimentary nature of the two policies.

Page 50, Policy LU3.2 Town Centre Vision - Consider adding to element: “A mix of residential, commercial and civic/public uses, including a range of attached housing forms, and shops and services **that are designed to maximize district energy potential**”

Policy LU4.13 Sustainable Structures and Buildings - Consider changing language to: “Encourage the design and construction of sustainable and environmentally responsible structures and buildings. This includes those that reduce demand for services, create less waste, make efficient use of resources and create healthier living environments **but also those that can adapt to climate change impacts.**”

Page 52, Policy LU.3 Green Infrastructure - Consider including **a reference to the existing condition** so that it is clear that this policy does not only apply to new.

Policy LU5.3 Green Infrastructure - Consider adding to language: “Plan for adaptability by ensuring new buildings and infrastructure can be easily retrofitted over time **and take into account projected climate change impacts.**”

Potential New: Policy LU5.10 “Shorelines” - Consider adding new policy statement such as: **“Support the protection of shorelines by reducing risks associated with sea level rise and storm surges.”**

Would require associated action that could be: **“Conduct risk and vulnerability assessment of View Royal coast lines”**

Action LU11 – It may be helpful to note that the CRD will be developing a food security strategy as well as part of the RSS, with the hopes of supporting local efforts such as this.

Transportation and Mobility

Page 57, Northern Gateway Community Corridor - Development in the Northern Gateway Community Corridor could also be considered for its **potential for district energy systems and heat recovery associated with proximity to the Victoria General Hospital.**

Page 62, Par. 1 -Consider revise wording to “personal vehicle” instead of “car” in statement.
Potential New: Policy TR1.12 Electric Vehicles - **“Support the transition to electric vehicles through preferential parking and provision of vehicle charging infrastructure in suitable areas such as Town Centre, Neighbourhood Centres, shopping areas, and schools.”**

Page 73 – Policy 3.6 – A relevant reference would be TravelChoices Road Network sub strategy and CRD Transportation Corridor Plan on the need to establish a hierarchy of transportation facilities pertaining to regional function.

Policy TR3-7- Beautify the appearance of the major transportation corridors in conjunction with traffic calming **without reducing the capacity or altering the function of key regional links.**
Page 74, Transportation Implementation Actions - As with suggested new policy above, could include a reference to committing to **integrate electric vehicle infrastructure in new and existing developments.**

Natural Environment, Energy and Climate Change

Page 85 – Introduction to Climate Change - This section refers to goals around *mitigating emissions* but **does not include reference to adaptation to climate change.** The CRD Climate Action Program can provide short written summary that includes projected changes and considerations for View Royal.

Page 87, Environmental Planning Initiatives and Tools - May want to include reference to **View Royal Climate Action Plan** and **View Royal Corporate Energy and Emissions Plan** in the list.

Page 98, Policy NE4.5 Corporation Carbon Neutrality - Suggest more accurate and succinct wording: **Annually measure, reduce and offset/balance GHG emissions generated from**

the Town of View Royal's corporate operations to achieve carbon neutrality starting in 2012.

Page 99, Action NE7 - Suggest adding: "Continue to support and participate in initiatives by other municipalities and other levels of government, community organizations and environmental groups to protect and restore natural ecosystems and habitat and achieve climate action goals.

Page 99, Energy and Climate Actions - Suggest adding new action: "**Support waste reduction, high efficiency transportation and building-related retrofit projects and initiatives that will reduce GHG emissions.**

Community Infrastructure and Servicing

Page 101, Infrastructure - Consider making explicit reference to importance of **reducing risks associated with Community Infrastructure and Services by actively preparing for climate change impacts on View Royal's water, sewer and drainage systems.**

The correct spelling is MACAULAY POINT not McCAULEY

Policy IS 1.1 – This policy is the most comprehensive and complete reflection of the RUCSPA and should be referenced in other Urban Growth Boundary policies to accurately reflect the regional policy tools being utilised.

Page 107, Policy IS2.2 - Suggest including reference to **energy efficient upgrades, renewable and district energy systems** within green infrastructure list.

Page 110, Policy IS5.4 Flood Planning - Consider adding: "Require buildings **and infrastructure** located in areas susceptible to flooding to be adequately flood-proofed"

Parks and Recreation

Page 118 – Final paragraph – list of relevant documents could also include the Park Management Plan for Thetis Lake, Mill Hill, and Francis King Regional Parks