

CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, June 20, 2001

SUBJECT:

Proposed New Mandate Statement for Regional Planning Services Department

BACKGROUND:

- Oct. 18, 2000: Staff report to Regional Planning Committee (RPC) estimates the staff complement and budget necessary to maintain the Regional Growth Strategy program in conformity with Part 25 of the *Local Government Act* following adoption of the RGS. The staff report identified a core RGS program that would have to be maintained under statute, and noted staff and budget implications beyond current department capacities if regional strategies for transportation, housing affordability and economic development are initiated at the Board's direction.
- Jan 17, 2001: RPC reviews discussion papers prepared on housing affordability and regional economic development, as well as a project outline on a regional transportation strategy prepared by BC Transit. The Committee directs that RPS work with BC Transit and the Housing Affordability Partnership to develop detailed terms of reference for the committee's review. Further, the committee directs staff to continue to participate in discussions regarding the establishment of a Capital Enterprise Partnership (CEP), and take part in the development of detailed terms of reference for a regional economic development strategy once the CEP is established.
- Feb 28, 2001: The Board authorizes publication and distribution of the *Proposed Regional Growth Strategy for B.C.'s Capital Region* for pre-bylaw review and comment to the end of July 2001.
- Mar 21, 2001: RPC recommends that the Board initiate projects to develop regional strategies for transportation and housing affordability and that \$80,000 and \$50,000 be allocated from the RGS 1.330 Budget Contingency for 2001 as the CRDs contribution to the costs of these projects. Further, RPC recommends that the Board allocate \$35,000 from the RGS 1.330 Budget Contingency for 2001 as a CRD contribution to the preparation of a regional economic development strategy, to be carried out by CEP, subject to: approval of a project description and work plan, and an agreement negotiated and signed under section 176 of the *Local Government Act*.
- Mar 28, 2001: The Board approves all three recommendations of March 21st.
- Apr 18, 2001: RPC recommends to the Board that application be made for a RGS Planning Grant for \$37,000 as the provincial contribution to the preparation of a regional transportation strategy.
- Apr 25, 2001: The Board approves the RPC recommendation of April 18th.

DISCUSSION:

As the chronology of decisions noted-above bears out, the CRD Board has taken significant steps in 2001 to advance the implementation of the RGS program.

This report covers two topics:

1. An estimation of the required staffing and budget necessary to maintain the RGS program following adoption as required by Part 25 of the *Local Government Act*; and,
2. A proposed mandate statement for RPS, that recognizes the need to maintain the RGS on an ongoing basis.

1. RGS Program Ongoing Maintenance

The adoption of an RGS Bylaw, currently estimated to occur in the Spring 2002 at the earliest, will effectively conclude the *Foundations For Our Future* process. The RGS will be complete and in place as a regional policy. However, any strategy only has effect if it results in action consistent with its aims. Four measures - regional context statements, a monitoring program, a master implementation agreement, and a corporate implementation strategy - establish the core institutional mechanisms at the regional and local level required by statute to give the RGS effect. As such, as with an OCP, there is a minimum level of staffing and effort required to maintain the RGS program on an ongoing basis.

RPS must maintain a staff complement and budget sufficient to maintain, at a minimum, the annual monitoring and reporting process, and the capacity to participate effectively in the corporate implementation strategy, the negotiation and update of regional context statements, and any initiatives that flow from a master implementation agreement. As well, RPS must have the capacity every 5 years, to undertake the review and update of the RGS required by statute. These core requirements are outlined in the implementation section on page 14 of the Proposed RGS.

This need to maintain this core capacity was reinforced by the direction of March 28, 2001, when the Board, consistent with initiatives set out in the Proposed RGS, authorized the funding and significant participation of the CRD in the preparation of regional strategies for transportation, housing affordability, and economic development.

In terms of staff and budget, this means that there will be an ongoing need for the Senior Planner position as a dedicated full time position for the RGS program, and a full-time Planning Assistant/Planning Technician level position shared between the RGS program and the Transportation Planning program. The total budget estimate for the ongoing maintenance of the RGS program, including these two positions and supporting funding, is estimated at approximately \$250,000 per annum. These funds were approved in the 2001 RGS 1.330 Budget, along with additional funds in contingency to cover costs associated with the preparation of regional strategies for transportation, housing affordability and economic development.

In addition, every 5 years there will be single supplementary budget requests to support additional work required to complete the statutory 5-year review and update.

2. New Departmental Mandate Statement for RPS

Historically, RPS was built-up by the addition of new functions on the base Regional Information Service (RIS) program that remained after the regional planning function was eliminated in the 1980s. Beginning as a division of the Administration Department, with a role to maintain and distribute regional development data, responsibility for maintaining the regional transportation model was added in the mid-1990s. The RGS was added as a free-standing project in 1996, which led to the re-establishment of RPS as a separate department, essentially with a division structure reflecting the historic addition of functions. The department's existing mandate and mission statement (Attachment A) reflects this progression.

Attachment B outlines, for the Committee's consideration, a proposed mandate for RPS that recognizes the need to maintain the RGS on an ongoing basis. The upcoming adoption of the RGS gives a more central role to policy and strategic planning in the department's work. As a result, the department should focus on addressing regional and corporate issues, and developing policy, in an integrated and co-ordinated way.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Regional Planning Committee receive this report for information and endorse the Proposed Mandate for Regional Planning Services Department.

Mark Hornell, MCIP
Acting Manager, Regional Planning Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

W.M. Jordan, Executive Director

Attachments
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ATTACHMENT A

Regional Planning Services - Mandate

Regional Planning Services (RPS) is provided as a joint effort by the member municipalities and electoral areas of the Capital Regional District to:

- Coordinate with member municipalities the development and implementation of a regional growth strategy;
- Provide input to CRD Board on policies and issues related to Regional Growth Strategy including ongoing monitoring of its implementation;
- Maintain a regional information and perspective of population, development, land use, transportation and employment trends;
- Maintain and apply regional transportation database and transportation model; and,
- Provide useful regional and subregional statistics to a wide variety of clientele.

Regional Planning Services - Mission Statement

Using a regional perspective and our strong local knowledge we:

- Help the public and private sectors of the regional community to access and understand past, present and future regional issues, trends, and indicators by gathering, analysing and reporting information;
- Support a process to develop, implement and monitor a Regional Growth Strategy.

Proposed New Mandate for Regional Planning Services Department

June 7, 2001

Mission:

Regional Planning Services Department (RPS) is a regional service jointly funded by the member municipalities and electoral areas of the Capital Regional District. Regional Planning Services' mission is to facilitate planning and on-going decision-making that seeks to build and maintain a Capital Region that is economically vital, where communities are livable, where the environment and resources are stewarded with care, and where residents enjoy a healthy and rewarding quality of life.

Mandate:

To carry out this mission, RPS maintains information, undertakes research, develops policy and facilitates action in partnership with others and within the context of the Capital Region's Regional Growth Strategy. This role is based on strong knowledge about the past, present and forecast future of the region and expertise in research, technical modelling, evidence-based policy development and strategic planning. This knowledge and expertise is applied to the department's research and policy work and is also used by other CRD departments, member municipalities, other government agencies and the broader regional community including business, non-government organizations and citizens.

The efforts of RPS to carry out its mission are based on four principles:

- **Knowledge-based:** a comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date base of information about the region's people, land, work, income, housing, and travel now and in the future, coupled with state-of-the-art technical systems, tools and skills in research, modelling and analysis.
- **Vision-driven:** the CRDs Regional Growth Strategy vision, goals, and objectives provide the target and the measure of success.
- **Strategic:** research, analysis, and policy and program recommendations target limited resources in innovative ways to effectively meet the needs and aspirations of the regional community.
- **Partnership-focused/Agreement-seeking:** transparent, inclusive and respectful processes build effective partnerships and agreements to modify the direction of regional growth and development toward the overall regional vision and other regional goals that may be defined.