

CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Special Meeting of Wednesday, August 1, 2001

SUBJECT:

Regional Economic Development Strategy - Proposed Partnership Agreement and Project Terms of Reference Update

BACKGROUND:

- Mar 28, 2001: Board approves \$35,000 as a contribution for costs associated with the preparation of a Regional Economic Development Strategy, to be carried out by the Capital Enterprise Partnership (CEP) (now the Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society or GVEPS), subject to - approval of a project description, work plan, and a partnership agreement negotiated under section 176 of the *Local Government Act*.
- May 9, 2001: Draft of proposed Regional Economic Development Strategy partnership agreement reviewed and discussed by representatives of the GVEPS (Lorne Whyte, Glenn Terrell), the CRD (Chairman Causton, Vice-Chair Hunter, Mark Hornell) and Mayor Beth Gibson (representing the Mayor's Economic Summit).
- June 5, 2001: GVEPS representatives Lorne Whyte, Ken Stratford and Doug Taylor meet with Mark Hornell to discuss revisions to the proposed partnership agreement.
- June 20, 2001: Proposed Regional Economic Development Strategy Partnership Agreement approved in principle by Regional Planning Committee (Attachment A)

DISCUSSION:

The proposed partnership agreement approved in principle and included in Attachment A, has been referred to the regional solicitor for review and comment back by August 17, 2001. GVEPS has referred the proposed agreement to their solicitor for a similar review.

The GVEPS Board of Directors met on June 17, 2001 with Mark Hornell, Mayor Lowe and Mayor Gibson in attendance to discuss next steps in the process. A subcommittee of the GVEPS Board has been established to develop terms of reference for the project and to prepare a request for proposals (RFP). The GVEPS Board would like to expedite the process and kick off the project with a press conference in September. As such, they have requested that the proposed partnership agreement, project terms of reference, and a request to authorize release of the CRDs funding contribution of \$35,000 go forward to the Board for approval at the September 12th meeting. Since this meeting would precede the regularly scheduled meeting of Regional Planning Committee on September 19th, it would be advisable to have the items discussed by Committee of the Whole on September 12th, with any recommendations forthcoming going to the Board meeting immediately following. It should be noted however, that this would put consideration of the proposed regional economic strategy prior to the Board's consideration of council comments on the proposed regional growth strategy.

At the present time it is unclear if the overall Regional Growth Strategy project will be delayed in the Fall. Currently, all comments submitted by member councils and others, along with a full staff report and recommendations, are scheduled for presentation to the September 19th meeting of Regional Planning Committee. Any committee recommendations made on September 19th would not go before the Board until October 11, 2001, due to the cancellation of the Board meeting because of the UBCM conference

scheduled for the last week of September. If the timeline on the RGS is delayed as a result of the Board's deliberations, this may result in delays to the three sub-strategies for transportation, housing affordability and economic development. If the committee and the Board wish to expedite the process to prepare a regional economic development strategy, consideration should be given to de-linking it from the proposed regional growth strategy. Under this scenario, the Board could consider treating the \$35,000 contribution as a direct grant to GVEPS and amending the proposed partnership agreement accordingly.

Presently GVEPS will be developing project terms of reference. The partnership agreement provides some direction to the content of the terms of reference with regard to shared goals (in the preamble and clause 2) and consultation (in clause 3-c). The committee may wish to provide additional comments and recommendations to the Board of GVEPS regarding the scope and content of the project terms of reference.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Regional Planning Committee:

1. receive this report for information;
2. provide direction to staff and the Board of the Greater Victoria Economic Partnership Society regarding the timeline for Board approval of the partnership agreement, project terms of reference and CRD funding; and,
3. provide direction to staff and the Board of the Greater Victoria Economic Partnership Society regarding the scope and content of the terms of reference for the regional economic development strategy.

Mark Hornell, MCIP
Acting Director of Regional Planning Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

W.M. Jordan, Executive Director