

CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT
Regional Planning Services Department

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, November 19, 2003

SUBJECT:

Monitoring Program for the Regional Growth Strategy: Revised

BACKGROUND:

The Board approved the Regional Growth Strategy in August 2003. The provincial legislation requires the regional district to develop a program for monitoring the progress of the RGS and to report annually on its implementation.

At its meeting of 15 October 2003, the Regional Planning Committee reviewed the proposed monitoring program and offered some suggestions for improvement. The purpose of this report is to bring forward a revised monitoring report which responds to the suggestions made.

DISCUSSION:

The monitoring program (Attachment A) is designed to meet the requirements of the provincial legislation, as well as provide feedback to the Regional Board and the municipal councils on the Regional Growth Strategy. It is also intended to balance the need for monitoring with resource availability, including data availability, staff resources (regional & municipal) and budgetary considerations.

The first draft of the monitoring program was reviewed by the Regional Planning Committee and Inter-Municipal Planning Advisory Committee. While there wasn't total consensus on the suggestions, the revision has tried to find a balance in terms of project scope and level of detail.

The choice of indicators reflects the following:

- Alignment with the strategic directions, policies, and targets contained within the RGS
- Consideration of indicators established for growth strategies prepared by other jurisdictions, to enable comparative analysis on relevant measures
- Consideration of the measures developed through MCAWS for tracking performance on regional growth strategies
- Consideration of the measures suggested in the implementation strategies prepared for transportation, housing, and economic development.

Indicators *were not* developed for:

- Activities and issues that are entirely local in nature
- Issues that are not dealt with in the RGS as strategic directions, policy or targets

- Issues that lack sufficient levels of analysis to track changes. For example, the RGS recognizes the need for coastal zone management and watershed planning, however, no problem assessment, field work, or policy analysis has been carried out. As such, tracking a few indicators may not provide very meaningful information. Information may be better conveyed through a discussion paper or an initial feasibility study.

The monitoring report was revised to provide better measures of:

- Proposed and actual changes to the urban containment boundary
- Applications to change the ALR
- Amount of ALR converted to non-farm uses
- Development activity in centres and mixed use nodes, and
- Changes to the RGS policy areas, including un-protected green-space areas

The monitoring report can be modified over time as required. Some of the basic growth and development measures should remain constant to allow for comparisons over time, but other measures can be added or modified as required to track implementation issues. Since the program is in very early stages, it is suggested that the members of the Inter-Municipal Advisory Committee (IMPAC) contribute to the development of the annual monitoring report for release next year, and seek guidance from the RPC on scope, format and content.

Monitoring report findings may indicate that new policies need to be created, existing RGS provisions need to be modified, and/or that the underlying growth assumptions need to be modified. The monitoring program can provide timely information for the proposed Interim Update and any subsequent amendments to the RGS.

Two main deliverables are proposed: an annual report, and a more comprehensive “state of the region” report prepared every five years to reflect the census data production cycle.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Regional Planning Committee recommend that the Board approve in principle the attached monitoring program for the Capital Regional District’s Regional Growth Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

Tracy K. Corbett, MCIP
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Mark Hornell, MCIP
Director of Regional Planning Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

W.M. Jordan, Executive Director

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Attachment