

**CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT**  
**Regional Planning Services Department**

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee  
Meeting of Wednesday March 17, 2004

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**SUBJECT:**

RGS Corporate Implementation Strategy

**BACKGROUND:**

The Board of the Capital Regional District adopted the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in August 2003. According to the provincial legislation (section 865 of the Local Government Act) a regional district must conform to the provisions of a regional growth strategy. That means all bylaws adopted by the CRD and all services undertaken by the regional district must be consistent with the RGS.

In addition to the provincial legislation requirements, the Regional Growth Strategy contains a policy calling for the development of a Corporate Implementation Strategy which addresses the issue of CRD conformity with the growth strategy:

*I-5 Establish, within one year of the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy, a Corporate Implementation Strategy including policies, programs and procedures that permit the CRD to demonstrate that all its bylaws, services, and spending are consistent with the adopted Regional Growth Strategy as required by legislation.*

It should be noted that as with an OCP, the adoption of the RGS does not commit or authorise a regional district, municipality, greater board or improvement district to proceed with any project that is specified in the regional growth strategy (*Local Government Act*, Section 865). The RGS identifies the need for a number of future initiatives which will require future decisions on project scope and funding, partnership arrangements, and Board approval.

The purpose of this report is to present the Corporate Implementation Strategy to the Regional Planning Committee, along with a number of recommendations.

**DISCUSSION:**

The primary focus of the Regional Growth Strategy is keeping urban areas compact and largely contained within the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Area. The complementary containment policies include increasing the capacity of the existing urban areas, directing new development to the Metropolitan Core and the major centres, and restricting development in the rural areas and lands outside the boundary. The RGS sets a target of locating a minimum of 90% of the region's cumulative new dwelling units to 2026 within the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Area.

In addition to the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing area designation, the RGS limits the extension of urban-standard sanitary sewerage and water services beyond the boundary of this policy area (except for very specific uses: pressing public health and environmental issues, to provide fire suppression or to service agriculture).

**Implications for CRD Departments & Services:**

While the provisions of the RGS are binding on the CRD, it has specific implications for the Parks Department, CRD Water Department, Environmental Services, and the Electoral Area Land Use Planning Services. To identify the relationship between the RGS provisions and the various CRD departments, Regional Planning Services prepared a Corporate Implementation Strategy. This strategy has been presented to the CRD department heads, supplemented by discussions with some of the departments regarding the RGS policies.

The CRD planning staff also sought advice from the provincial authors of the provincial growth strategy legislation and the CRD's legal counsel regarding the implications of the consistency requirement. The legal opinion is dealt with in a separate report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That Regional Planning Committee recommend to the Board:

1. That the attached Corporate Implementation Strategy be approved.
2. That a section be added to all CRD Committee and Board reports, including Juan de Fuca Electoral Area planning reports, to indicate whether a proposed bylaw, policy, acquisition, or service extension is consistent with the provisions of the RGS. This would be similar in form to the section on "Financial Implications" now included on all Committee and Board reports.
3. That the RGS be referenced in all CRD comprehensive plans, including, but not limited to, the Juan de Fuca OCPs (and their equivalent), Parks Master Plans, and the Blue/Green Strategy. The reference can be included in the introductory sections of the plans, where one commonly references other legislative and regulatory context, such as the provisions of the *Local Government Act* and the Agricultural Land Commission.
4. That any request for CRD services to areas outside of the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Area boundary be flagged by the relevant CRD departments and forwarded to Regional Planning Services. It would be the responsibility of Regional Planning Services to deal with the policy and RGS conformity implications, rather than the Water Department or Environmental Services. The requests for servicing would be brought forward in a report to RPC and the Board for consideration, recognising that service extension beyond the

Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Area boundary would likely require an amendment to the RGS.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION:**

N/A

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

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W.M. Jordan, Executive Director