

**Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, October 19, 2005**

SUBJECT:

Regional Economic Blueprint – Comments from Member Municipalities

PURPOSE/PROBLEM:

Review of municipal comments received in response to the Board's referral of the October 2004 *Economic Opportunities Blueprint*.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND:

History:

- Jan. 9/02 The Board approves execution of a partnership agreement with the Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society (GVEPS), and a funding contribution of \$35,000 to the preparation of a Regional Economic Development Strategy, subject to receipt of final confirmation of project funding approval from Western Economic Diversification Canada.
- Aug. 14/02 The Board approves the transfer of \$35,000 from the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) 1.330 budget to the GVEPS, to match a \$50,000 funding contribution from Western Diversification Canada, and \$45,000 in private sector in-kind contributions.
- June 5/03 The Economic Opportunities Blueprint document, revised to reflect the feedback received from stakeholders at a April 1st workshop is approved by the GVEPS.
- Sept.10/03 The GVEPS presents the Economic Opportunities Blueprint to the Board, indicating that they would be working in the coming months to revise the report to reflect opportunities related to the 2010 Olympics, the Neptune Project, and other recent initiatives.
- Nov. 24/04 The Board refers the October 2004 Update of the Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint to the Committee for review and comment.
- Jan. 19/05 The Committee receives for information, a GVEPS funding request for \$35,000 towards development of Blueprint implementation plan, to be reconsidered in context of review of Economic Opportunities Blueprint.
- Feb. 23/05 The board refers the Blueprint to member councils and electoral area directors for comment, and directs staff to request UBCM to consider including \$35,000 in funding for a Blueprint implementation plan as part of a formal request to access \$25 million in provincial tourism funds.

Comments Received:

Between February and June, Bruce Carter and Lorne Whyte of the GVEPS made presentations

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on the Blueprint to most CRD member municipalities upon request. Responses from Central Saanich, Esquimalt, Oak Bay and Saanich were presented to the committee on July 20th. Since then, the City of Victoria submitted a response on September 7th (Attachment A).

All responses received are summarized in the table below:

Municipality	On the Blueprint & the Partnership	On the Role of Local Government & the CRD
Central Saanich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Support inclusion of agricultural sector. – Move forward with a more positive approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Private sector should take lead role in implementation.
Esquimalt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Does not support inclusion of the Blueprint in the RGS
Oak Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maintain the partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Private sector should lead
Saanich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Endorse subject to more balanced emphasis on major centres. – Start implementation with establishment of non-profit, private sector driven and funding organization. – Focus implementation on governance and ongoing funding. – Approach senior government for start-up funding. 	<p style="text-align: center;">No comments</p>
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hold a workshop with all councils to discuss concerns with the draft Blueprint. – Refer the draft Blueprint back to a consultation process with at broad range of interests to determine if there is support. – Consider inter-government partnerships before establishing an economic development agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide a range of services and infrastructure that allow business to prosper. – Analyze and inform businesses of economic conditions and trends. – Communicate benefits of economic development as part of a triple bottom line approach. – Provide leadership in establishing partnerships. – CRD board to establish principles regarding governance, leadership and consultation.

ALTERNATIVES

Options for moving forward will be presented to the Committee at the November 2005 meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint has been prepared under a partnership agreement between the CRD, the Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society and others in response to RGS initiative 5.1.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

1. Nearly all member municipalities requested presentations from the GVEPS on the Blueprint.
2. Councils that responded expressed some interest in continuing the partnership.
3. Few comments were received on the substance of the draft Blueprint.
4. No council supported an expanded economic development role for the CRD.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Committee receive this report for information.

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