

# Regional Growth Strategy

## Overview



### RGS at-a-glance

The Regional Growth Strategy is a vision for the future of the Capital region. The document guides decisions on regional issues, focusing on matters that have impacts beyond municipal borders.

#### Seven Theme Areas:

1. Growth Management
2. Environment and Infrastructure
3. Housing and Community
4. Transportation
5. Economic Development
6. Food Systems
7. Climate Action

**Authority:** Provincial legislation authorizes RGS preparation and implementation.

**Collaboration:** The CRD, the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF EA) and the 13 local municipalities collaboratively developed the RGS. The RGS does not apply to Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands as they fall under the planning authority of the Islands Trust.

**Adoption & Implementation:** The CRD adopted the RGS as bylaw in March 2018, following unanimous municipal approval and JdF EA endorsement at the Board. The CRD, the JdF EA and the municipalities implement the RGS through service delivery, infrastructure investment and policy.

**Monitoring & Reporting:** The CRD is responsible for monitoring and yearly reporting on progress toward achieving RGS objectives.

### Inside the updated RGS

The 2018 RGS replaces the region's first growth strategy, adopted in 2003. The RGS update provides new population, dwelling unit and employment projections to 2038. The update found that the original vision for the future of the region is sound and affirmed the following strategic directions:

- Maintain a policy of urban containment that focuses growth within a clearly defined boundary
- Direct growth to centres where employment, housing and recreational services are close to one another, thereby reducing transportation costs and time as well as supporting more efficient transit
- Provide for growth in the West Shore communities
- Expand the accessibility and range of active transportation options (walking and biking) in the region
- Protect, enhance and expand natural areas to maintain high water quality, preserve ecosystem health and provide recreation areas
- Sustain farming and forestry
- Support and increase current employment activities (airport, harbours, post-secondary institutions, tourism Department of National Defense, government services, etc.)
- Support the growth of 'new economy' businesses
- Expand the range of available affordable housing

The update also provides new direction on the following:

- Mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Strengthen food and agriculture systems for food security
- Locate new growth centres in growing communities to respond to employment, housing and recreational needs.
- Evaluate requests for water service extensions according to RGS criteria, allowing designated communities in the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area to apply for water service extensions
- Integrate content and direction from approved CRD planning documents, including the Regional Transportation Plan