

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

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

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**SUBJECT:**

Interim Approach For Review Of Development Applications Related To The Regional Growth Strategy

**BACKGROUND:**

The Regional Growth Strategy reflects a joint commitment among the province, regional district and member municipalities to work toward region-wide sustainability. The provisions within the RGS reflect a commitment on the part of the member municipalities to a common vision and guiding principles for managing regional growth and development. To a large degree, this commitment is realised through the day-to-day review and permitting of development applications.

The Implementation Chapter of the Regional Growth Strategy contains the following provision:

I-2. Prepare and adopt, within two years of the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy, a Master Implementation Agreement that gives effect to key Regional Growth Strategy actions and establishes procedures for its maintenance, amendments, and periodic update. The agreement will also address such matters as the CRD's role in coordinating implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy including public investments, equitable approaches to financing regional growth and development, agreed criteria for defining regionally significant development initiatives, including the expansion or extension of services beyond the Regional Urban Containment & Servicing boundary, and effective procedures to initiate processes for their inter-jurisdictional review.

**DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of this report is three-fold:

1. To provide guidance to members of the Regional Planning Committee and the Board on what types of development applications may affect the RGS and/or the provision of CRD services.
2. To suggest an interim and streamlined approach to addressing some of the issues outlined in the implementation chapter
3. Provide guidance to the local jurisdictions regarding the criteria for referral of development applications to the CRD.

An important consideration in the proposed approach is to avoid putting more process and time-delays in the path of developments which would contribute to regional sustainability and the achievement of the RGS goals.

The regional review process is intended to provide information and an opportunity for the municipal representatives on the Board and its committees to review development applications that may be inconsistent with the provisions of the RGS. Of particular concern, are development applications that are not only inconsistent with the RGS, but require CRD services. Because the RGS is binding on the CRD,

the Board needs to know of potential inconsistencies, and take whatever action they deem appropriate.

### **Applications for Regional Review**

Development applications which would warrant regional referral and review include those which:

- a) Require the extension of CRD water and/or liquid waste management services beyond the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area identified in the RGS Map 3.
- b) Significantly increase the current density of lands designated rural or contained within the Rural/Rural residential Policy Area
- c) Significantly increase the density and traffic generation in centres or nodes outside of those designated in the RGS
- d) Alter the boundaries for the following policy areas identified on Maps 3 and 4 of the RGS:
  - Capital Green Lands Policy Area
  - Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area
  - Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area

### **Applications Which Would *Not* Warrant Region-Review:**

The Regional Growth Strategy is not intended to be a zoning map or a large-scale OCP. It is intended to provide policy direction and definition for land use within the Capital Region. Thus, a change to municipal land use designations should *not require referral* to the CRD where they meet the following criteria;

- a) The proposed change is consistent with the policies and overall intent of the Regional Growth Strategy.
- b) The proposed change would not have significant cross-jurisdictional impacts that may affect neighbouring municipalities, electoral areas or adjacent regional district.
- c) The proposed change would not materially affect the land use and growth projections that were the basis of the regional Growth Strategy.
- d) The proposed change does not materially affect the adequacy or availability of CRD services to the immediate area or to the overall service area identified in the RGS.
- e) The proposed change would not materially alter the boundaries for the following policy areas identified on Maps 3 and 4 of the RGS:
  - Capital Green Lands Policy Area
  - Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area
  - Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area

### **Referral Information Requirements**

To assist in the determination of a regional review, local jurisdictions are requested to include the following information in their referral distribution to the CRD (through Regional Planning Services):

1. The location of the application relative to the regional policy areas listed on page 6 of the RGS and shown on RGS maps 3 and 4 policy.
2. The location of the application relative to adjacent jurisdictions (local, provincial, other)
3. An indication of the intensity of use proposed for the site: number of residential units, retail floor space, employment-use floor space or employment generation.
4. Whether an OCP amendment is requested or required.
5. For rezoning applications, the definition of the zone (*since they differ for each municipality*)
6. Indication of CRD servicing requirements.

### **Next Steps**

There are three areas pertaining to RGS consistency that should be addressed through the more formal implementation agreements:

1. A process for considering adjustments to the urban containment boundary which differentiates between very minor and significant changes.
2. Clarification of the provincial roles and commitments to the RGS, particularly provincial initiatives which alter the ALR and the disposition of crown land; changes to road classifications, functions, and capacities; and, changes to use intensities on crown land in the community/urban interface.
3. A process for making modest improvements and clarifications to the RGS which facilitates a more responsive and relevant approach to addressing shared interests in growth management.

Development of these agreements will require the input and expertise of the municipal planners and the relevant provincial staff. For #3, it is proposed that the CRD staff contact other regional districts involved with growth strategies to develop a process and an advocacy strategy to alter the current approach to modifying the RGS. Provincial staff requires a formal process and 120 day municipal referral for any change to the RGS, no matter how minor.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Regional Planning Committee direct staff to:

- 1) Apply the development review guidelines to development referrals from municipalities and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.
- 2) Work with members of the Inter-Municipal Planning Advisory Committee (IMPAC) to develop a process for dealing with applications which may affect the urban containment boundary, including servicing extensions beyond the boundary, and applications to alter the boundary.
- 3) Work with the provincial representatives and the members of the Inter-governmental Advisory Committee (IAC) to develop an implementation agreement which clarifies the provincial roles, responsibilities and commitments to the Regional Growth Strategy, particularly those related to

transportation, land use changes, and activities in the crown/community interface.

4) work with staff from the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS) and other interested regional district staff to develop a process to facilitate a more responsive and timely approach to making minor modifications, corrections and improvements to the Regional Growth Strategy.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION:**

N/A

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

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W.M. Jordan, Executive Director