



**Regional District  
of North  
Okanagan**

The Regional District of North Okanagan initiated the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) process in early 2007 and is currently in the first phase of the Project. The RGS will involve the cooperation and coordination of the Region's six (6) member municipalities, which include the City of Vernon, District of Coldstream, Village of Lumby, City of Endersby, City of Armstrong, and Township of Spallumcheen, and the five (5) Electoral Areas (B, C, D, E and F).

# Regional Growth Strategy Update

## What is a Regional Growth Strategy?

**The regional growth strategy (RGS) is a vision of the region, adopted by the Regional Board, to establish the economic, social and environmental objectives that promote healthy communities.**

A RGS is an agreement, developed and approved by the member municipalities, electoral areas and the regional district in partnership and its purpose, under Part 25 of the *Local Government Act*, is to "...

*promote human settlement that is socially, economically, and environmentally healthy and that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land and other resources."* A RGS expresses how communities have agreed to work together to enhance regional quality of life and social well-being.

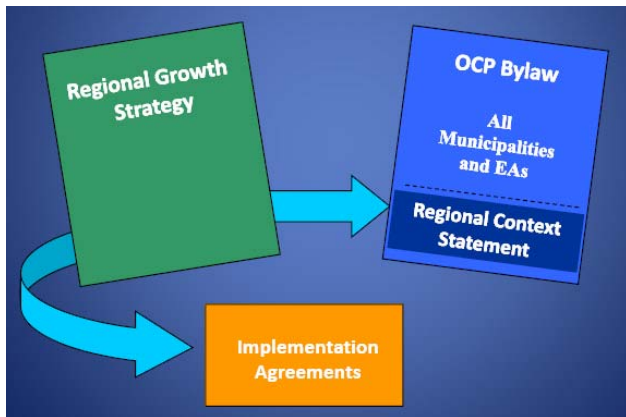
A RGS is a long-term vision with at least a 20 year time horizon that must include regional policies for key regional growth inter-

ests that will address growth management.

The regional growth strategy provides direction in the development of policy for official community plans (OCPs) and bylaws of the member municipalities and the regional district. The RGS commits all local governments to a shared vision, and requires the consent of all member municipalities and electoral areas for implementation.

Subsequent official community plans must include regional context statements to confirm how the plan conforms to the objectives of the RGS between the regional growth strategy and the OCPs

A RGS cannot regulate land use within member municipalities. The intent of a RGS is to provide common direction, allows municipalities to have flexibility in the implementation of the objectives of the strategy.



## What are the Benefits?

Growth and change are happening and growth impacts cross political boundaries.

**"Made in the North Okanagan" solutions to growth over the long-term**

Focus on local knowledge and expertise to identify issues and develop solutions

Strengthening relationships between local governments in the Region

Framework for local and provincial decision-making and provincial investment

Opportunities for broad community participation

**Building a Sustainable Region...**

*"The proof of the planning would be in the living."*

**- Harry Lash,  
Planning in a Human Way (1976)**

## Vision Statement

An integral component of the Terms of Reference for the RGS is a Vision Statement that can provide guidance to the public, stakeholders, staff and elected officials throughout the process.

The Regional District of North Okanagan is a unique region that will continue to be recognized for its diverse natural habitats, diverse economies, outstanding recreational opportunities and the high quality of urban and rural lifestyles provided in established communities. As such, the Regional Board will strive to conserve and enhance the very reasons that make the North Okanagan so attractive by ensuring:

- Lifestyle opportunities sustained by a safe, clean, healthy inclusive place to live, work and play;
- Sustainable growth is achieved through a responsive Regional Growth Strategy;
- Effective relationships and partnerships with all levels of government;
- Open, cohesive and effective regional governance;
- The Regional District of North Okanagan will remain a trusted organization to serve regional, sub-regional and local interests.

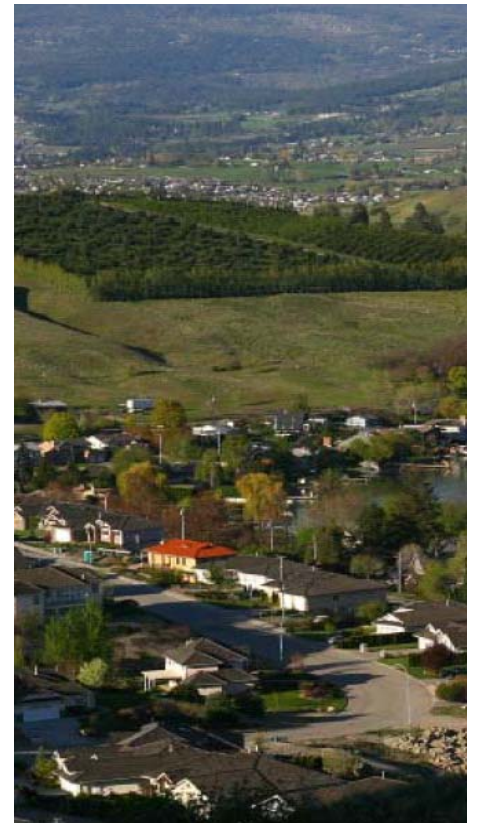
This vision will be refined during the RGS process to be more reflective of broader community values and priorities.

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## Guiding Principles

With any strategic level planning process that will include participation by many different stakeholders with numerous interests and goals, it is important to have principles to guide the process. On February 20th, 2007, the Regional Growth Management Committee resolved to incorporate the 10 Smart Growth Principles into the Terms of Reference as guiding principles for the RGS process. **Smart growth** is a collection of land use and development principles that ensure that growth is fiscally, environmentally and socially responsible and recognize the connections between development and quality of life. These include:

1. **Mix land uses**
2. **Build well-designed compact neighbourhoods**
3. **Provide a variety of transportation choices**
4. **Create diverse housing opportunities.**
5. **Encourage growth in existing communities**
6. **Preserve open spaces, natural beauty, and environmentally sensitive areas**
7. **Protect and enhance agricultural lands**
8. **Utilize smarter, and cheaper infrastructure and green building**
9. **Foster a unique neighbourhood identity**
10. **Nurture engaged citizens**



### Why A Regional Growth Strategy?

The Regional District of North Okanagan has been developing and changing quickly, with a population that is increasing and aging, an economy that is shifting, and a growth pattern that will continue to impact our communities, natural landscape, and quality of life. With the growth challenges that must be addressed, both by our communities and the Region as a whole, as we plan for our future development, a regional-level common vision must provide guidance.

The Regional Growth Strategy will develop a policy framework that will provide a common direction for the Region, with emphasis on collaborative, cooperative, and complimentary policy development. The sheer complexity of relationships is one reason why a regional growth strategy is planned at the regional rather than local level.

## The Participation Plan



**Widespread Community Participation** is essential to envisioning a common future and an understanding of our management of growth contained within the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). Working meaningfully together, in a collaborative and cooperative way, through a process informed by regional residents, First Nations, local governments, elected officials, provincial and federal agencies, and interested stakeholders, will ensure that that our shared vision will be defined through capturing the diverse perspectives and interests present within the Region. Meaningful participation throughout every phase of the process is essential to successful development of the Regional Growth Strategy and building the trust and relationships necessary for implementation.

This means working together, in a collaborative and cooperative way, with our member municipalities and electoral areas, through a process informed by regional residents, the Province, First Nations, neighbouring jurisdictions, and federal agencies.

The RGS Participation Plan focuses on establishing a collective direction on managing growth over the next 20

years. The public will have numerous opportunities, at key points in the process, to provide comment and input into the RGS process, including:

- Diverse media, including newsletters, information releases, newspaper advertisements, and other media forms;
- Information Sessions/Open Houses;
- Public and Stakeholder Workshops;
- Public Events;
- Growth Issues Working Groups;
- Other Participation Activities; and
- Comment forms using a variety of media, RGS workbooks, and other written comments

The draft Participation Plan was endorsed by the Regional Board on November 5th, 2008. The Plan will now be reviewed by municipalities and First Nations to ensure adequate and appropriate opportunities for participation.

Details of the Participation Plan can be found in the report *RDNO Regional Growth Strategy Participation Plan* on the RDNO website.

## The Regional Growth Strategy Process

Phase	Tasks	Expected Timing
I: Building a Foundation (WE ARE HERE!)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Development of a Participation Plan</li> <li>• Projections for population and employment for 20 year period</li> <li>• Growth scenario base case analysis</li> <li>• Preliminary issues identification</li> <li>• Confirm vision statement, guiding principles and Participation Plan</li> </ul>	January 2007 – April 2009
II: Planning, Analysis, Evaluation and Trade-offs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of growth issues goals and objectives, performance indicators</li> <li>• Development of alternative growth scenarios and policy alternatives</li> <li>• Evaluation of growth scenarios and policy alternatives</li> <li>• Assessment of trade-offs between growth scenarios</li> </ul>	May 2009 – June 2010
III: RGS Final Draft Preparation and Bylaw Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of Draft Regional Growth Strategy</li> <li>• Negotiation of agreement between all affected local governments</li> <li>• Acceptance of Regional Growth Strategy by affected local governments</li> <li>• Adoption of Regional Growth Strategy</li> <li>• Implementation and Monitoring</li> </ul>	July 2010 – August 2011

Regional Growth  
Strategy



For Inquiries, Please  
Contact:

Anthony Kittel, Regional  
Growth Strategy  
Coordinator

Regional District of North  
Okanagan  
9848 Aberdeen Road  
Coldstream, BC  
V1B2K9

Phone: 250-550-3750  
Fax: 250-550-3754

E-mail:  
anthony.kittel@rdno.ca

For more  
information on the  
Regional Growth  
Strategy process  
and how you can  
get involved, visit  
us at:

[www.rdno.ca](http://www.rdno.ca)

**WHAT'S NEXT: Growth Issues Working Groups**

Within the Regional Growth Strategy process, Working Group participants will be an essential focal point for gathering expertise, for discussion of, and deliberation on growth issue priorities, strategies, goals, and objectives, and for guidance on growth issues recommendations that may be considered by the Regional Board.

The selection of interested and knowledgeable local participants, for inclusion in the Growth Issues Working Groups will be conducted using evaluation criteria that will ensure broad local community representation within a collaborative, respectful and productive environment.

The Regional District of North Okanagan will populate these Working Groups with interested, knowledgeable, and experienced local representatives from organizations (local government, for-profit and not-for-profit) or educational institutions that have the necessary local expertise, knowledge, or experience in the identified growth issues.

Local advocates for the public-at-large, with experience in the growth issues that are under examination, are encouraged to inquire, although, with such few positions, the focus will be on interested, knowledgeable, and experienced

citizens. **The Growth Issues Working Groups are:**

- Economic Development
- Water Stewardship
- Urban Containment
- Attainable Housing
- Natural Lands and Environmental Policy
- Governance and Services
- Transportation
- Agriculture and Food Systems

Populating the Growth Issues Working Groups with appropriate representatives, experts, and advocates will provide the diversity of perspectives

that will present the catalyst for the development of key growth issues recommendations that are innovative, regionally representative, and incorporate the numerous experiences and views on growth issues and potential solutions within the Regional District.

*IF YOU WANT TO BE CONSIDERED FOR A WORKING GROUP, PLEASE FILL OUT THE WORKING GROUP APPLICATION FORM ON THE RDNO WEBSITE OR CONTACT THE RGS COORDINATOR (LEFT)!*



**The Regional Growth Strategy Update will published quarterly, providing news and information on the process, what is happening, and opportunities for you to get involved!**