



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN
REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY
"One Region, One Future"



Regional Growth Strategy Public Participation Summary Report

July 28, 2011



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy was developed over several years, with three rounds of public consultation taking place since 2007. Consultation on the Regional Growth Strategy included activities such as public surveys, open houses, public meetings, stakeholder and elected official workshops, presentations to North Okanagan municipal councils, growth issue working group meetings and presentations to agencies, the business associations and community groups. Consultation has occurred with North Okanagan citizens, affected local governments, First Nations, school districts, stakeholders, business groups and the provincial and federal governments and their agencies. Phase I consultation focused on setting a direction for the Regional Growth Strategies and identifying the issues that would be explored. Phase II consultation informed the creation of Regional Growth Strategy policy that was included in the Regional growth Strategy Bylaw. Phase III consultation confirmed the direction and contents of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw through an exploration of tradeoffs between different futures.

The Board of Directors gave the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 first reading on February 16, 2011 and referred the Strategy out to the public, First Nations, members of the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee and municipal councils for comment and input. The Regional District of North Okanagan undertook Phase III Public Engagement between February 24, 2011 and April 6, 2011. The public consultation objectives for Phase III public engagement were to provide all parties with a final opportunity to review of Regional District of North Okanagan (Regional Growth Strategy) Bylaw 2500, 2011 (January 2011) and to provide comments before the Regional Growth Strategy proceeded to second reading on June 16, 2011. The Public Hearing was held on July 6, 2011 and, immediately after, the Regional Growth Strategy was submitted to member municipalities and adjacent regional districts for acceptance.

All public meetings were advertised through local media and on local and regional government websites. The Regional Growth Strategy Support Team, made up of senior planners representing all North Okanagan communities, discussed policy and implementation issues. Meetings with senior government agencies, through the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, participated during the development and review of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw. Consultation for the development of the North Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy has followed the provisions set out in section 855 of the *Local Government Act*.





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1.0 OVERVIEW

Every Regional Growth Strategy is unique, reflecting the regional context, the values and needs of the communities involved, and the core issues identified in its development. In the North Okanagan, a bottom up, collaborative approach was taken to the development of the Regional Growth Strategy from the beginning. Involvement of community members, stakeholders and elected officials in all stages of policy development has been a key to its successful development, suggesting effective implementation may begin in Fall 2011.

Creating a Regional Growth Strategy for the North Okanagan required a comprehensive planning process that was inclusive, identified major issues, defined flexible objectives, explored alternatives, evaluated consequences of policy decisions and created a plan that balances the long range vision of all the communities involved. The process maintained a strong focus on implementation on the ground, action planning and performance monitoring.

The Regional Growth Strategy Participation Plan envisioned broad public engagement across the region, providing every resident an opportunity to present their perspective. Stakeholder group representatives and passionate community members participated in the eight working groups, providing additional input in issue specific “think tanks”. As well, municipal councils and Electoral Area Directors participated throughout the strategy’s development, from contributing to the creation of the regional vision statement to commenting on policy direction.



The Regional Growth Strategy process has embraced collaboration and cooperation with all partners from the creation of the vision and to identification of methods for moving towards that desired future. By the time the Regional Growth Strategy reaches second reading in June 2011, 830 residents, seniors and youth have expressed their concerns, their ideals and their suggestions about how to move the North Okanagan toward a more sustainable future. Policies were suggested to elected officials through consensus based, community driven collective work by citizens, community groups, experts and the many stakeholders in the region through eight growth issues working groups.

Through this iterative process information was continually exchanged, feedback was encouraged and all participants, including the public, retained ownership of the results. The Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw provides a growth management vision for a sustainable future and will guide the development of the North Okanagan over the coming decades. It was through this challenge of building capacity and strengthening relationships that successful implementation is more likely to success.



A summary of public consultation and participation events and outcomes are listed below:

Community Events

- 4 community surveys (540 responses total)
- 8 Open Houses (200 attendees, 184 comments)
- 40+ letters and e-mails
- Over 80 community meetings
- Youth Essay Contest (28 submissions)
- 1 Youth Workshop (25 students)
- City of Vernon Earth Day Event
- Public Hearing

Political Engagement

- 1,500+ Municipal Council and EAAC comments
- Over 60 Municipal Council/EAAC presentations, meeting, workshops
- 2 Elected Officials Forums
- Elected Officials Issue Prioritization Session
- Board of Directors Futures' Game Workshop
- Over 500 First Nations interaction, including meetings, invitations, referrals, telephone calls and e-mails

Working Groups (Policy Recommendation Development)

- 135 Working Group Members, including 28 citizens responding to ads
- 37 Working Group Meetings
- 1,300 volunteer hours
- 200 recommendations for consideration
- 1 Regional Future Symposium

Media

- 20 press releases
- 155+ RGS Ads (across all North Okanagan media)
- 50+ Media Stories (including newspapers, radio and television)

2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

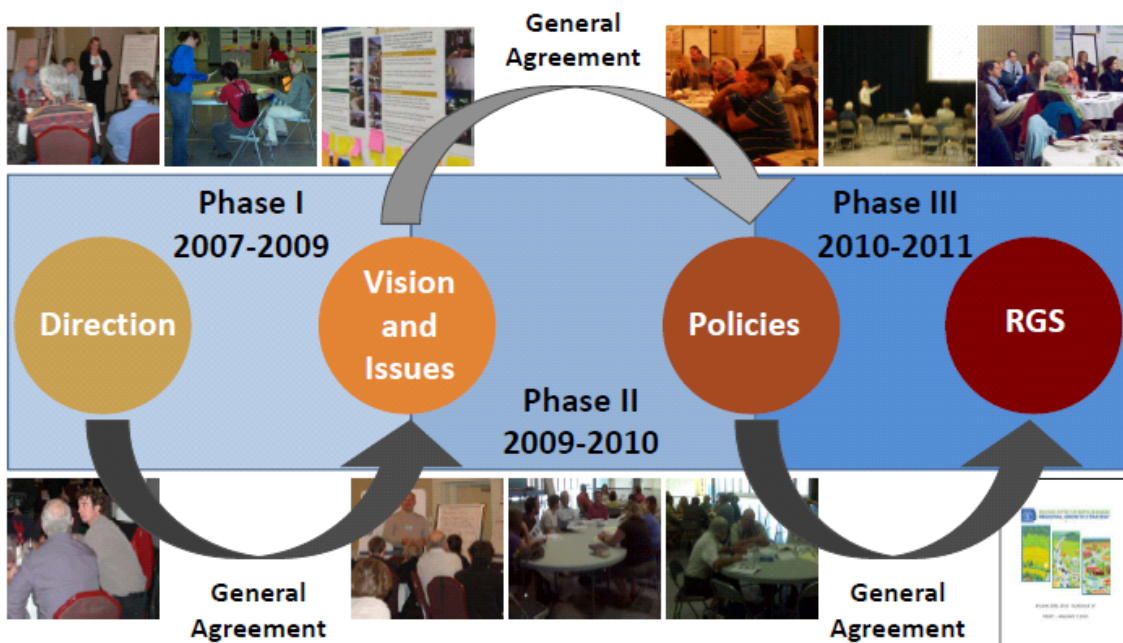
The development of the Regional Growth Strategy has been driven by the cooperation, coordination and partnership of all of the communities in the North Okanagan. The questions “where are we going?”, “where do we want to be? and ‘how do we get there?’ were the themes of our public engagement activities. Public and elected official input has been, and will continue to be, essential during the development and implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy. The result will be a Strategy that focuses on a clear vision of the future and the creation of a new approach to regional cooperation for the next 20 years. The Regional Growth Strategy, when adopted, will express how our communities have agreed to work together to enhance our quality of life and long-term sustainability. Recommended policies were developed through general agreement by eight growth issue working groups, consisting of residents, key stakeholders, community groups, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, service providers, and local, regional and provincial government staff, with



invitation extended to the region’s First Nations. The working groups’ policy recommendations form the basis of the draft Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw.

2.1 Why did we use a Collaborative Planning Approach?

Collaborative planning is the most transparent, most inclusive and most implementable. Collaborative planning can minimize conflict by using the planning process as the forum for considering the multitude of interests and values when reaching agreement on what a regional plan should look like. The planning process may take a little longer but if the process results in an implementable plan without years of dispute and mediation. This approach can save time and money and result in better decisions. At each major milestone, general agreement was obtained by elected officials, working group members, local and regional staff, stakeholders, senior levels of government and the public.



The Regional District created a collaborative process which engaged the diverse interests in our communities throughout the planning process, involving them in making decisions on policy creation process. As a result, when the Regional Growth Strategy is adopted, all the participants feel a commitment to the resulting plan - and the chances of implementation are increased dramatically.

2.2 The Participation Plan

The Regional Growth Strategy Participation Plan, endorsed by the Board of Directors on November 5, 2008, envisioned broad public engagement across the region, providing every resident an opportunity to provide their perspective. Two components of the Participation Plan, the Youth Engagement Strategy and Seniors’ Engagement Strategy, have been successfully implemented and resulted in positive outcomes. The first surveys and open houses were moderate successes, with 129 people that commented, all of which were over 45 years of age. Moving forward, it became clear that more innovative, more creative and more inclusive methods of engagement were necessary to get people interested and involved. An Age-Friendly Initiative was undertaken that relied on diverse partnerships to mobilize people and solicit feedback, organize meeting and speaking engagements



and making certain that you went to the places where people feel comfortable. The result of this initiative was an additional 450 people providing their ideas, including 138 youth under 25, when the Regional District of North Okanagan was defining the policy direction of the Regional Growth Strategy.



Traditional methods of reaching out the public – having a strong internet presence, using news media to advertise events and using traditional survey, workshop and open house formats have limited effectiveness in North Okanagan. Up to 30 percent of the population either doesn't use internet or is on a dial-up service, greatly reducing your potential audience. News media stories or advertisements provide greater public awareness of regional planning, but effective coverage requires a longer period than budgets will allow. Open Houses and information sessions bring out the 'usual suspects' that are already involved in advocacy. Reaching the broader public, especially when the issue is regional planning for a 20 year period, and ensuring that it is relevant to their communities and their lives is more difficult.

2.3 The Working Group Approach

The approach that we took concentrated on collaborative and participatory regional policy development through multi-stakeholder working groups. These issue specific working groups were made up of 135 members, including interested citizens, community organizations, business leaders and chambers of commerce, industry associations, not-for-profit organizations, experts, First Nations representatives and local, regional and provincial staff. The diversity of issues, ideas and perspectives provided an opportunity to discuss the issues and create policy recommendations for consideration by our communities' elected officials. Any policy recommendations that were made were reviewed by a panel of senior planners, representing every jurisdiction, before they were brought forward to the elected officials for consideration.

2.4 First Nations' Engagement

The Regional Growth Strategy process was designed to ensure early and ongoing opportunities for First Nations input and participation. Extensive opportunities for First Nations participation were provided throughout the Regional Growth Strategy process. The RGS Participation Plan and resulting efforts exceeded First Nations participation responsibilities of the Regional District as specified in *Section 855 (1)(a) and (2)(b) of the Local Government Act (see below)*:

“Section 855 (1) During the development of a regional growth strategy, (a) the proposing board must provide opportunity for consultation with persons, organizations and authorities who the board considers will be affected by the



regional growth strategy. (2) For the purposes of subsection (1) (a), as soon as possible after the initiation of a regional growth strategy, the board must adopt a consultation plan that, in the opinion of the board, provides opportunities for early and ongoing consultation with, at a minimum, (c) first nations.”

First Nations staff has been invited to all working group and committee meetings, Elected Officials Forums. As well, all Regional Growth Strategy documents and recommendations have been referred to Chief and Council of the Splatshin Nation and Okanagan Indian Band. The Regional District of North Okanagan has endeavored to include the participation of First Nations during the development of the Regional Growth Strategy and will continue to provide numerous opportunities for First Nations participation during implementation of the Strategy. Over 500 First Nations interactions have been chronicled since the beginning of the project.

3.0 PHASE I

3.1 Objectives

The objective of Phase I Public Engagement was to establish a strategic direction for the Regional Growth Strategy through:

1. The establishment of a Vision Statement that would guide the development of the Regional Growth Strategy;
2. Obtain broad support for the Regional Growth Strategy Terms of Reference; and
3. Explore the issues and provide policy development direction to the Growth Issues Working Groups.

3.2 Public Participation Activities

Phase I public engagement was designed and implemented to provide numerous opportunities for public, elected official and stakeholder involvement and input when established the overall strategic direction of the Regional Growth Strategy. The public events are summarized below

Date	PHASE I Actions
Mar 7, 2007	Board initiated RGS process
2007-2008	Identified 8 growth issues and developed the draft Terms of Reference (ToR)
Nov. 5, 2008	Board endorsed Participation Plan and Working Group ToR
Jan. 9, 2009	Board identified completion of RGS the top regional priority
Jan. 14, 2009	Board endorsed the RGS Work Plan
Jan-Mar 2009	Municipal councils and EAAC endorse the RGS ToR
Apr 16, 2009	First Elected Officials Forum – Vision and Working Groups’ direction
May 6, 2009	Board endorses the RGS Terms of Reference
June –Aug 2009	Public Engagement I– Open Houses and Survey
Jun 17, 2009	Board endorses new Vision Statement and Working Group Membership



3.2.1 Communication Activities

The Regional District of North Okanagan utilized a broad range of marketing and outreach methods during Phase I to get the community involved. Residents, business owners, community groups and organizations enjoyed many opportunities to learn about and participate in Phase I of the Regional Growth Strategy process.

A specially designed, easily recognizable Regional Growth Strategy logo was included in all publications and display materials. The Regional District also created a Regional Growth Strategy website (www.rdno.ca/rgs) that provided opportunities to learn about the RGS process and comment on the issues. Numerous newspaper articles, print and radio advertisements and presentations to community groups raised the profile of the RGS early in the process.

A partnership with the North Okanagan library system resulted in RGS public displays at local branches during Spring and Summer 2009.

Some methods of input were facilitated by the click of a mouse. An open comment form, a general growth issues comment site, and the Phase One growth issues survey focused on the growth issues considered most important for the Regional Growth Strategy were on the Regional Growth Strategy webpage. Print and radio media helped keep members of the community apprised on the process of upcoming events and of past results.

3.2.2 Participation

Participation within the first round of Regional Growth Strategy Public Engagement was lower than anticipated, even with three open houses, an easily accessible survey, community meetings, and widespread advertisement. There were 129 participants involved in the public events, 22 surveys were returned and 5 written submissions were received.

3.2.3 Feedback Received

The following provides statistics regarding formal comments that were received from the public at during the public engagement period:

- 22 Phase I surveys were returned
- 106 people attended the 3 open houses, with the highest turnout in the City of Enderby
- 129 post-it note comments were received at the 3 open houses
- 5 written submissions were received

3.2.4 Elected Officials' Forum

The Regional District of North Okanagan hosted the first Regional Growth Strategy Elected Officials' Forum on the evening of April 16, 2009 at the Prestige Hotel and Conference Centre to begin to answer the question 'Where do we want to be by 2031?'. Answering that question was the focus of the discussions and facilitated exercises.





The 41 participants in attendance were elected officials (26) and senior staff (15) from the City of Armstrong, District of Coldstream, City of Enderby, Village of Lumby, City of Vernon, Township of Spallumcheen and Electoral Areas 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E' and 'F'. First Nations were invited to the Elected Officials' Forum but were not in attendance at the event. The convergence of elected officials from all North Okanagan jurisdictions was a great success and provided a basis for discussions and collaborative policy development through the rest of the process.



The first exercise concentrated on refining the 2007 Terms of Reference Vision statement to reflect current regional priorities, values and expectations for the future. Four groups of elected officials, supported by senior staff, discussed changes to the vision statement and, through group consensus, put forward several suggestions for new vision statement statements.

The growth issues that were explored during the second and third exercises were economic development, agriculture and food systems, water stewardship, environmental impacts of growth, transportation and infrastructure, affordable housing, governance and service delivery and urban containment. Broad strategic objectives and goals for each were agreed upon by group consensus during the second exercise and additional goals were suggested through an individual exercise at the end of the forum.

3.2.5 Open Houses

The Regional Growth Strategy held three (3) open houses to gain input into the growth issues prior to the first meetings of the growth issues working groups. The first was held on June 22, 2009 in Vernon at the Recreation Complex, the second was held on June 23, 2009 in Enderby at the Drill Hall and the third was held on June 25, 2009 in Lumby at the White Valley Community Centre. A total of 106 participants attended these sessions, with 36 in Vernon, 66 in Enderby and 4 in Lumby. Over the course of the three open houses, there were 129 growth issues comments posted on the display boards.

Governance and service delivery received the fewest comments at each event, with environment and natural areas, agriculture and food systems and water stewardship received the most comments overall, although the Enderby open house influenced the final percentages due to the focus on issues surrounding a single proposed local development and not broad regional growth issues



3.2.6 Growth Issues Comment Form

Growth issue comments forms were available at the three open houses for participants to provide a comprehensive set of comments about the eight growth issues. The comment forms were also available to the residents of the North Okanagan from June 26 to August 1, 2009 on the Regional



Growth Strategy website, the Regional District Aberdeen Office, at displays a the Lumby, Armstrong, Enderby and Vernon public libraries and each North Okanagan municipal hall.

To create awareness for the open houses and the advertise the availability of the growth issues comment forms, a press release was issued on May 25th, 2009 and several articles about the event were in local papers and on radio media. Black and white advertisement were placed in the Friday, June 12th, Sunday, June 14th and Wednesday, June 17th, 2009 editions of the Vernon Morning Star, the Friday, June 19th, 2009 edition of the Lumby Valley Times and the Tuesday, June 16th edition of the North Valley Echo. As a pilot project, 4,200 open house advertisements were mailed to residences in Electoral Areas ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘F’, with instruction on how to use and access the comment form after the open houses. Twenty-two (22) Growth Issues Comment Forms were returned.

3.2.7 Intergovernmental Advisory Committee

The Regional Board is required to establish an Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC) when the RGS is initiated pursuant to Section 867 of the *Local Government Act*. The IAC includes representatives from provincial agencies, planners from local authorities and others with an interest in managing the impacts of growth over the long term. The role of the IAC is to:

- Advise local governments on the development and implementation of the RGS; and
- Coordinate the facilitation of provincial and local government actions, policies and programs

The Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC) is an advisory committee that provides advice and recommendations for consideration by the Regional District of North Okanagan Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee (RGMAC). The IAC met three times during Phase I to discuss and provide advice when establishing the direction of the Regional Growth Strategy.

Date	Committee	Reason for Meeting
March 26, 2008	IAC	Kick-off meeting for the RGS process, present draft outline of the Terms of Reference for consideration and comment.
May 20, 2008	RGMAC	IAC meeting minutes presented on agenda for information.
June 25, 2008	IAC	Revisit the Terms of Reference, local and provincial planning considerations within a regional context (Vernon Official Community Plan 2008 and Agricultural Land Commission policy). The discussion and presentation points are reflected within the RGS Bylaw No. 2500, 2011.
July 22, 2008	RGMAC	IAC meeting minutes presented on agenda for information.
January 28, 2009	IAC	Discuss Crown Land tenure-private land interface within regional context, Integrated Land Management Bureau lead discussion and the outcomes were considered during the development of RGS policies (UC-2.6, UC-2.7) and the RGS designation framework. Okanagan Basin Water Board strategic concerns and results of discussion were also captured. Update on Work Plan, Participation Plan and Terms of Reference. Discussion about composition of Working Groups.
March 25, 2009	RGMAC	IAC meeting minutes presented on agenda for information.



3.2.8 Working Group Recruitment

The Growth Issues Working Group Participant Selection Criteria and list of identified key stakeholders was endorsed by the Regional Board on January 14, 2009. Regional District staff invited potential Working Group participants based on consideration of the following criteria:

- Broad representation of perspectives on growth issues;
- Expressed interested in Working Group participation with a background, previous or current involvement, and/or expertise pertaining to one of the eight growth issues;
- Representation of growth issue understanding, expertise and knowledge within the North Okanagan context;
- Representatives who can commit the time necessary to attend the majority of Working Group meetings (<75%), review information and options, and participate throughout the duration of the Regional Growth Strategy process;
- Representatives must devote the necessary time, prior to any Working Group meeting, to do requisite preparation, including completing any pre-meeting work books, reviewing provided information and developing recommendations that will be discussed at the Working Group meeting.
- Representatives who will review all necessary growth strategy information, strategies, policies, and options with the understanding those environmental, social, and economic impacts and the best interests of the community must be considered objectively;
- Representatives who are willing to work collaboratively and respectfully towards consensus-based recommendations, but will also accept majority decisions when consensus cannot be reached;
- Can take a positive, solution-oriented, respectful approach to problem-solving in a collaborative and cooperative team environment;
- Representation from a diverse group of not-for-profit and for-profit organizations, groups, or institutions that have a significant interest and expertise in any of the growth issues;
- Representatives from the Okanagan Indian Band and the Splotsin Nation;
- And, at least one staff representative from the Regional District of North Okanagan and /or member municipalities will sit on the Working Group.

An open invitation to participate in the eight Growth issue Working Groups was extended to the Okanagan Indian Band and the Splotsin Nation on March 3, 2009. Local advocates for the public-at-large were requested through advertisements in local newspapers and radio stations. In addition to advertisements in local newspapers, recruitment of advocates for the community-at-large also included news stories in local newspapers and on several radio stations, Regional District of North Okanagan website and in a general region-wide press release. The call for Working Group applications was open from February 18 to April 15, 2009. The result of these efforts was 27 applications received for Working Group appointment. Before the Working Groups met in September 2009, 4 additional citizen representatives requested placement on the Working Groups.

3.2.9 Working Groups Orientation Session

The Growth Issues Working Groups' Orientation Session was held on July 20, 2009 at the Vernon Recreation Complex Auditorium. Thirty-five Working Group members attended the event.



The Working Groups’ Orientation Session provided an initial opportunity for the members of each group to become acquainted and to begin the discussion regarding the development of goals, objectives, strategies and policies recommendations to the RGS Support Team, Community Advisory Committee, Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee and Regional Board. Low attendance was attributed to the fire situation throughout the Okanagan and working group participant prior commitments.

The Growth Issues Working Groups’ Orientation Session was a ‘pre-meeting’ and the facilitated exercise was designed to provide an opportunity for the participants to begin to discuss the growth issues.

3.3 Key Milestones

3.3.1 Vision Statement

The Elected Officials’ Forum used a visioning exercise that resulted in small roundtable vision statement drafting, based upon elected official group consensus. Each group consisted of elected official from numerous jurisdictions and these groups were encouraged to think regionally when developing these vision statements. A vision statement was drafted that captured the direction and essence of the original elected official suggestions. The adopted vision statement reflected the collective input from our elected officials on the desired future of the North Okanagan. The Regional Board adopted the Vision Statement on June 17th, 2009.



“The Regional District of North Okanagan is a unique region that will continue to be recognized for its diverse natural habitats, robust 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:

- ***Growth is managed to reflect our social, environmental and economic values;***
- ***The Region’s natural constraints to growth are water availability, agricultural lands, and environmentally-sensitive areas;***
- ***Rural and urban lifestyle choices are maintained through designated growth areas and urban boundary management;***
- ***Agricultural lands are protected and a sustainable regional food system is supported and encouraged;***
- ***A strong, sustainable, and diverse economy that reflects our values and the identities of our communities;***
- ***Our natural systems, including air, land and water, are respected and protected; and***
- ***Inclusive, accountable and effective governance based upon a foundation of regional cooperation.***



3.3.2 Terms of Reference

The Regional Growth Strategy Terms of Reference provide a strategic framework and structure for developing the Regional Growth Strategy, including the regional vision statement, guiding principles, objectives and organization. The Regional Board at a key strategy session, held on January 8 and 9, 2009, determined that reconfirmation of the Regional Growth Strategy Terms of References by newly elected municipal councils.

All municipal councils and the Electoral Area Advisory Committee reconfirmed and supported the Terms of Reference:

Municipality	Presented to:	Presentation Date	Outcome
City of Vernon	Council	January 12, 2009	Council Resolution – January 26, 2009
District of Coldstream	Committee	February 2, 2009	Council Resolution – March 9, 2009
City of Armstrong	Committee	February 23, 2009	Council Resolution – February 23, 2009
City of Enderby	Council	March 2, 2009	Council Resolution – March 2, 2009
Village of Lumby	Council	March 2, 2009	Council Resolution – March 16, 2009
Township of Spallumcheen	Committee of the Whole	March 16, 2009	Council Ratification – April 6, 2009
Electoral Area Advisory Committee	Committee	March 17, 2009	Resolution of Support – March 17, 2009

The Regional Growth Strategy Terms of Reference were adopted by the Regional Board on May 6, 2009.

3.3.3 Policy Development Strategic Direction

The input from the Elected Officials’ Forum and comments received from the Open Houses and growth issues comment forms revealed some common recommendations and potential policy directions for the eight growth issues. The following is a brief summary of agreement on broad strategic direction between elected officials and the commenting public:

Economic Development

Recommendations from the public and elected officials have focused on very similar issues:

1. The need for regional cooperation on economic development;
2. The need (or lack of) for an increased industrial land base; and
3. Local and regional economic diversity, with a jurisdiction-specific focus.



Environment and Natural Lands

Elected officials and the commenting public have identified a series of common recommendations:

1. The preservation of urban and rural natural lands using a series of techniques and tools;
2. The increase in urban green space and the trail network; and
3. Polluting land uses and watershed protection will need to be addressed.

Urban Containment

Elected officials and the commenting public agreed on several urban containment directions:

1. Urban containment boundary management was necessary, using a variety of tools;
2. Development should be focused on existing communities; and
3. Smart Growth principles should be considered when making land use decisions.

Water Stewardship

Elected officials and the commenting public agreed on several water stewardship policy directions:

1. Coordination and collaboration of various levels of government on water stewardship issues, including addressing data gaps;
2. Watershed and water resource protection initiatives;
3. Developing policy and implementing techniques that will increase water conservation within a semi-arid environment; and
4. The need for a uniform and transparent regional water quality management and reporting system.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Elected officials and the commenting public have generally agreed on several policy directions:

1. The regional transportation network requires appropriate investment, inclusion of various modes of transportation and cooperative relationships with various levels of government;
2. Land use planning and transportation decision-making should be integrated; and
3. Appropriate infrastructure should be in place prior to development.

Governance and Service Delivery

Elected Officials and the commenting public agreed on several policy directions, including:

1. Focus on regional service provision and delivery – appropriate, efficient, effective and cooperative; and
2. Regional and municipal coordination and cooperation will be necessary when developing regional/sub-regional services.

Agriculture and Food Systems

Elected Officials' Forum outcomes and input received from the commenting public highlight several agricultural policy directions:

1. Preservation of the Agricultural Land Reserve will be key to maintain the agricultural sector;



2. Collaboration and coordination by various levels of government on developing supportive local agricultural policies, incentives and infrastructure funding opportunities;
3. The development of a viable, sustainable and profitable agricultural sector will require diversification, value added production and local distribution; and
4. Greater involvement by citizens in the regional food system.

Housing

Elected officials and the commenting public focused on numerous methods to achieve a diverse housing mix within the region.

1. The challenge moving forward will be determining the appropriate tools and policies that reflect the needs and realities of the North Okanagan.

The Phase I participation outcomes guided the Board of Directors, Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee and the Growth Issues Working Groups during the development and evaluation of growth issues policy recommendations that formed the basis of the Regional Growth Strategy.

4.0 PHASE II

4.1 Objectives

The objective of Phase II Public Engagement was to develop the policy framework that would form the basis of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw:

1. Provide the opportunity for the eight Growth Issue Working Groups to recommend policy options that were established through consensus;
2. Reaffirm and, if necessary, refine the strategic direction of the Regional Growth Strategy process; and
3. Develop the Regional Growth Strategy policy framework through elected official engagement, discussion, input and general agreement, based upon an inclusive and transparent process.

4.2 Public Participation Activities

Phase II public engagement focused on reaffirmation of the direction of the Regional Growth Strategy policy development, creation of issue specific policy recommendations through working group consensus. The results of that public engagement work was refined through numerous opportunities for elected official input and discussion, resulting in general agreement on the policy framework that would form the basis of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011. The public events are summarized below.





Date	PHASE II Actions
Sept 2009-May 2010	Working Groups develop policy recommendations – reach consensus
Oct 7, 2009	Board endorses Phase I Outcomes – is the direction for Working Groups
Oct – Dec 2009	Public Engagement II – Youth and Senior Surveys, Youth Contest
Dec 2009 – June 2010	RGSST (Planners) review Working Group recommendations
April – Oct 2010	Board refers the Working Group recommendations to councils /EAAC
April-June 2010	IAC – review and comment on policy recommendations
June –Sept 2010	Municipal and EAAC workshops, presentations – 1,400 comments
Sept 10, 2010	Board includes Energy and Emission targets and policy in RGS
Oct 27, 2010	RGMAC reviews municipal and EAAC comments
Nov 17, 2010	Board includes minor amendment process in draft RGS
Nov 24, 2010	RGMAC Workshop, recommends policies for inclusion in RGS
Nov 2010 – Jan 2011	RGSST (Planners) look at Housing, Environment and Economic Development sections – make policy recommendations

4.2.1 Communication Activities

Two age friendly survey and a youth contest were undertaken early in Phase II and a full advertizing advertising campaign occurred between late September and early December 2011. Advertisements were placed in local papers for 10 weeks, survey stations were established in the library system and within senior’s centres throughout the North Okanagan. Information was distributed through partnerships with School Districts 22 and 83 and seniors organizations and youth organizations, including the North Okanagan Boys and Girls Club and Seniors’ Action Network. Four press releases were sent out promoting the surveys and content.

4.2.2 Participation

The Regional Growth Strategy Age-Friendly initiative was very successful, with 303 senior’s surveys and 106 youth surveys returned. There were 28 entries into the youth essay contest.

4.2.3 Youth Survey

The Regional District of North Okanagan, as a component of the Participation Plan and associated Youth Engagement Strategy, undertook a Youth Survey that identified issues and concerns that were priorities for our residents under 25 years of age. The survey was undertaken in partnership with School Districts 22 and 83, the Okanagan Regional Library system, the local Boys and Girls Clubs and various community organizations. The youth survey was conducted between October 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009 and was advertized in all local papers in October and November 2009.





The youth survey was also available at the Earth Day event, held on April 22, 2010 at the City of Vernon Spirit Square. The Regional District received 106 returned surveys.

The youth survey was conducted was an iPod Nano Draw to encourage submissions. The winners of the draw were Emily Odell, Electoral Area “C” and Devan McConnell, City of Vernon.

Within all responses, there were four clear themes:

1. **Natural Amenities and Environmental Concerns:** Youth considered the natural beauty and environmental amenities the defining attributes of the North Okanagan. A strong environmental awareness appears to be present in the youth that commented, with a strong desire for the development of an eco-friendly community over the next 20 years.
2. **More Youth Activities/Opportunities:** This was considered one of the most significant issues that must be addressed, although the Regional Growth Strategy has not dealt with youth amenities and opportunities directly.
3. **Small, Friendly Compact, Complete Communities:** One of the most quoted attributes about the North Okanagan was the small size of the communities and friendly nature of the residents. Many respondents expressed a desire for the North Okanagan stay the same and retain the small town character.
4. **Better Jobs and More Affordable Housing Options:** The lack of employment opportunities, the need for more transportation options and few affordable housing options relate to social issues that may limit the ability of youth to stay in the community.

4.2.4 Seniors’ Survey

An age-friendly survey was developed and distributed as part of the Seniors’ Engagement Strategy, as part of the Regional Growth Strategy Participation Plan, that would assist in the development and evaluation of strategic growth management policies. Through numerous partnerships, including numerous seniors’ complexes and activity centres, the Social Planning Council of North Okanagan, the North Okanagan library system and member municipalities, surveys were distributed throughout the Region. A total of 303 completed forms were collected throughout the North Okanagan.

Twenty questions were asked within the Age-Friendly Communities Survey inspired by the eight domains of community life identified by the *Global Age-friendly Cities* project. Through the assessment of the surveys, a clearer view of the population of adults who make up our older population and identified two important themes. The first was that affordable, accessible and appropriate housing was the most significant barrier to developing an age-friendly community. Affordable housing concerns extended beyond seniors demand, affecting younger residents. The second theme was the barrier of transportation options – transit service is limited outside of the City of Vernon, the hours of operation are limited to daytime hours and active transportation infrastructure is lacking or in disrepair. The table below summarizes the



responses received during the survey period.

Survey Questions	Yes	No	Don't Know
Q1: Is there enough housing for seniors	21	224	57
Q2: Housing for seniors is affordable	41	203	57
Q3: Is there enough housing for younger people	29	171	100
Q4: Public transportation is sufficient	79	175	49
Q5: Transportation options to medical appointments	77	161	67
Q6: Transportation for disabilities	42	150	109
Q7: Public transportation options are affordable	101	104	94
Q8: Local parks/trails accessible to seniors	155	91	57
Q9: I don't need a car to access essential services	103	177	21
Q10: Safe when walking across the street	148	143	10
Q11: Affordable recreational activities	150	81	70
Q12: Programs bring youth and seniors together	70	108	122
Q13: Service I use are sufficient for my needs	188	94	21
Q14: Seniors are treated with respect	222	53	26
Q15: Seniors serve in an advisory role	133	48	120
Q16: Community consultations - all ages	86	54	167
Q17: Planning process consider seniors	100	71	130
Q18: Volunteer opportunities for seniors	182	54	68
Q19: Recognition for seniors that volunteer	111	107	93
Q20: Enough paid opportunities for seniors	19	129	150

4.2.5 Youth Essay Contest

The Regional District of North Okanagan held a Youth Essay Contest between October 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010, to facilitate input into the Regional Growth Strategy process. The project was undertaken in partnership with School Districts No. 22 and 83, Okanagan College, Boys and Girls Clubs of North Okanagan, the Okanagan Regional Library system and a variety of community organizations. The youth contest was advertised in all local papers in October and November 2009 and displays were set up in recreational facilities and the library system. Twenty-eight entries were received. The youth contest winners were:

- 1st Place - Nicole Moore, Village of Lumby: \$250 Cash Bursary
- 2nd Place – Naomi Fourier, Electoral Area “F”: \$100 Cash Bursary
- 3rd Place – Ashley MacNicol, Village of Lumby: \$50 Cash Bursary

The winners were chosen with the criteria of writing skill, thoughtful discussion of growth issues and meaningful youth input into the Regional Growth Strategy process.



4.2.6 Growth Issues Working Groups

The eight multi-stakeholder Working Groups, with a total of 135 members, were provided with the mandate to develop policy recommendations, based upon Board of Directors direction that would be considered by the Board of Directors for inclusion within the Regional Growth Strategy. The Working Groups undertook this responsibility through 37 meetings (and over 1,300 volunteer hours) held between September 2009 and April 2010, resulting in 200 recommended policies. The Board of Directors referred all Working Group recommendations to member municipalities for consideration and comment, starting on April 7, 2010 and ending on September 15, 2010.



4.2.7 Intergovernmental Advisory Committee

The Intergovernmental Advisory Committee met twice during Phase II. The first meeting discussed the policy direction that the Board of Directors and the municipal partners established for the Growth issues Working Groups. Several IAC provincial representatives were also invited to participate in the Working Groups during the development of the policy recommendations. The second IAC meeting focused on discussing and providing feedback on the working group policy recommendations.

Date	Committee	Reason for Meeting
September 22, 2009	IAC	Interior Health Authority presentation and discussion regarding built environment and health, outcomes considered during policy development. Update on RGS progress before working groups meet.
September 2009	Working Groups	All IAC meeting minutes provided to working group members for consideration during the development of RGS policy recommendations, local IAC provincial representatives were invited to participate in growth issues working groups.
September 2009 to April 2010	Working Groups	8 Working Groups (37 3-hour meetings) developed 200 RGS policy recommendations.
November 25, 2009	RGMAC	IAC outcomes were presented to RGMAC in verbal update, IAC (unadopted) meeting minutes circulated.
April 29, 2010	IAC	IAC discussed the Working Group policy recommendations and provided some comment and context. The draft policy recommendations were presented to the IAC for comment prior to BoD consideration. The policy recommendations were formally referred to IAC member agencies, departments and organizations for formal response.
May 4, 2010	RGMAC	IAC outcomes were presented to RGMAC in verbal update, IAC (unadopted) meeting minutes circulated.



May-October 2010	Municipal Councils & EAAC	Working Group policy recommendations referred out to member municipalities for consideration and comment.
November-December 2010	RGMAC	RGS Policy Recommendation Workshop to consider all comments received to date (over 1,500) when providing RGS policy recommendations to be considered by the BoD. The outcome of this Workshop provides the basis of the RGS Bylaw No. 2500, 2011.
December 2, 2010	IAC	Conference call update with provincial ministries regarding RGS process and progress. Working Group recommendations still under consideration by the BoD. An FTP site is set up to provide access to all RGS documents.

4.2.8 Referral of Working Group Policy Recommendations

The Board of Directors referred out the draft Regional Growth Strategy Working Group recommendations to member municipalities, the Electoral Area Advisory Committee (EAAC), First Nations and the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC) for review and comments by September 15, 2010.

The Regional Growth Strategy Coordinator and General Manager, Planning and Building, extended an invitation to assist all municipal councils and the Electoral Area Advisory Committee during the review of the referred working group recommendations, at their convenience. Below is a summary of the meetings attended and workshops conducted by Regional District of North Okanagan staff.

Date	Jurisdiction	Action
April 26, 2010	City of Armstrong	Council presentation and discussion regarding Water Stewardship, Agriculture and Food Systems and Economic Development recommendations
May 17, 2010	District of Coldstream	Discussion with council regarding the Water Stewardship, Agriculture and Food Systems and Economic Development recommendations
May 17, 2010	Township of Spallumcheen	Presentation and discussion with council regarding the Working Group recommendations
June 22, 2010	City of Enderby	Meeting with Enderby Administrator to receive council input into all Working Group recommendations
July 12, 2010	District of Coldstream	Discussion with council regarding all working group recommendations - council input to follow
July 22, 2010	Township of Spallumcheen	Informal discussion with council regarding the Working Group recommendations and preferred approach. It was decided that a workshop format would be appropriate.
August 9, 2010	City of Vernon	Presentation on working group recommendations and process
August 16, 2010	City of Enderby	Presentation on working group recommendations and process
August 16, 2010	Township of Spallumcheen	Council RGS Recommendations Workshop I



August 25, 2010	Township of Spallumcheen	Council RGS Recommendations Workshop II
August 25, 2010	City of Armstrong	Meeting with Armstrong Administrator to receive council input on the general direction of the Regional Growth Strategy. Specific comments on Working Group recommendations to follow.
August 30, 2010	Village of Lumby	Council RGS Recommendations Workshop I
August 31, 2010	EAAC	EAAC RGS Recommendation Workshop I
September 13, 2010	Village of Lumby	Council RGS Recommendations Workshop II
September 13, 2010	EAAC	EAAC RGS Recommendation Workshop II
September 13, 2010	District of Coldstream	Presentation to council regarding RGS progress, general municipal input and next steps

Detailed commentary on the Working Group policy recommendations was received by the majority of municipal councils, EAAC and the IAC. All input was considered during the development of the Regional Growth Strategy policy framework

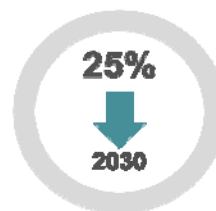
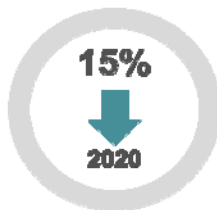
4.3 Key Milestones

4.3.1 Policy Recommendations

The eight Growth Issues Working Groups, through dedication, insight and general consensus-building, brought suggested 2000 policy recommendations after 37 meetings and over 1,300 volunteer hours. Their efforts created the policy foundation for the Regional Growth Strategy.

4.3.2 Regional Energy and Emissions Targets and Policy

Energy and emissions policies and reduction targets were developed through a collaborative planning process, led by the Regional District of North Okanagan and the Sheltair Group (Stantec). The process was designed to bring key staff together from each member municipality and the Regional District to define regional policies and GHG reduction targets for each municipality and the region as a whole. Together, senior staff agreed on a set of GHG policies built on Regional Growth Strategy policy recommendations as well as Official Community Plans and GHG reduction targets that were included in the Regional Growth Strategy. The agreed upon regional targets for GHG emissions are:





4.3.3 Agreement of the RGS Policy Framework

The Regional District of North Okanagan referred working group recommendations to all member municipalities, the Electoral Area Advisory Committee (EAAC), First Nations and the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee for consideration and comment, beginning on April 7, 2010. The official deadline for council and advisory committee comments was extended from August 3, 2010 to September 15, 2010, although comments received prior to October 13, 2010 were accepted for discussion by the Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee. Over 1,500 comments were received.

The policy recommendations that achieved general agreement included within the Regional Growth Strategy policy framework without further discussion. The remaining policy recommendations required further discussion and deliberation by the Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee (RGMAC) to determine their status. Four additional policies were identified by councils and/or the EAAC for consideration of inclusion within the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).

Agree	Agree with the recommendation, no changes.
Agree in Principle	Agree with the intent of the recommendation, but needs more work
Clarify	The recommendation needs to be clarified because is confusing, may only apply to a few communities or could be interpreted in several ways
Disagree	The recommendation is inappropriate for a RGS or does not reflect the strategic direction of Council

The comments that were received fell within the following five categories:

1. **General Agreement:** The municipal council and EAAC comments received were generally supportive of the Working Group recommendations and/or intent of the policy direction. These recommendations will be included within the RGS Policy Framework. There were 107 recommendations that fall within this category.
2. **Mixed Comments, Major RGS Policy:** The municipal and EAAC comments received were diverse and additional discussion was required to establish clear policy intent and direction. The inclusions of the intent of these recommendations were crucial for the successful realization of the adopted vision statement or the legislative requirements of *Section 850(2) of the Local Government Act*. There were 25 policy recommendations that fell within this category.
3. **Mixed Comments, Minor RGS Policy:** These recommendations received a diversity of comments and warranted further RGMAC discussion on how these policies were dealt with within the process. Although these recommendations were developed by the Working Groups based upon the strategic direction of the Board of Directors, their inclusion within the RGS was not critical to realizing the adopted vision statement or meeting the requirements of Part 25 of the *Local Government Act*. There were 49 recommendations that are included within this category.
4. **Potential Removal:** There was general disagreement with the inclusion of these recommendations in the Regional Growth Strategy. All of the recommendations within this category were not essential to meeting the requirements of the *Local Government Act* or responding to the vision statement and guiding principles. The Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee may consider removing these recommendations. There were 6 recommendations in this category.



5. **Potential Additions:** Four new policies were suggested by member municipal councils or the EAAC for inclusion within the Regional Growth Strategy Framework.

A workshop was conducted with the Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee of November 24, 2011 to discuss the outstanding 93 policy recommendations. The result was general agreement on the policy contents of the draft Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011.

5.0 PHASE III

5.1 Objectives

The objective of Phase III Public Engagement was to assess the public support for the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011, as presented at first reading, and evaluate:

1. Public response and support for the direction of the Regional Growth Strategy, as presented through plan outcomes; and
2. Public response to the goals and strategies as presented in the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw

5.2 Public Engagement Events

Phase III public engagement was designed and implemented to provide numerous opportunities for public involvement and input when considering revisions to Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 prior to second reading. The public events are summarized below.

Date	PHASE III Actions
Jan 5 and 19, 2011	Board endorses the policies to be included in the RGS, including Housing and Economic Development
Jan 19, 2011	Board endorses RGS 5-Year Action Plan
Feb 16, 2011	Board gives first reading to RGS Bylaw, referral for local government comment
Feb 24, 2011	Elected Officials Forum
Feb. 25, 2011	Phase III Public Engagement Begins - Survey, community meetings, youth engagement activities
Mar. 1,2, 3, 2011	Enderby, Vernon and Lumby Open Houses
Mar. 8. 2011	Regional Future Symposium – Working Group Members
Mar. 22 ,24, 2011	Okanagan College and Armstrong Open Houses
Mar. 28, 2011	Intergovernmental Advisory Committee Meeting
Apr 1, 2011	Phase III Public Engagement Activities End
April 1-31, 2011	Review comments from local and regional governments, IAC, stakeholders and the public when revising the RGS
May 9, 2011	Revised RGS Bylaw for Review by RGSST
June 16, 2011	Board of Directors gives RGS Bylaw 2 nd Reading



July 6, 2011	RGS Public Hearing – 5 written, 3 verbal submissions
Jul 9, 2011	Submission of RGS to affected local governments to accept or not accept RGS.
Sept 7, 2011	Affected local government acceptance period ends
Sept 21, 2011	RGS Bylaw is considered for 3 rd Reading and Adoption

5.2.1 Communications Activities

Broad media coverage and advertising was essential to publicizing any public engagement strategy and the Regional District of North Okanagan used numerous methods to inform the public of the open house dates and survey locations. An open invitation was sent to community groups and associations to set up community meetings. The following advertising methods were used in Phase III:

- E-mails with the Regional Growth Strategy Public Engagement Phase III press release, survey and open house schedule were sent to working group members, community organizations and associations, business associations, chambers of commerce, and not-for profit organizations, with a request to pass on to their members through newsletters and other means, potentially reaching over 10,000 residents;
- Press releases to all media organizations within the North Okanagan;
- Print advertisements from February 24 to March 31, 2011, and on July 1 and 3, 2011 in the Cherryvillian, Lumby Valley Times, Vernon Morningstar, Okanagan Advertiser, full page advertisement in the Armstrong-Spallumcheen Parks and Recreation Guide (Winter 2011) and Salmon Arm Observer;
- Posters, flyers and surveys were provided to all municipal halls;
- Posters were put up in community bulletin boards, recreation complexes and municipal downtown locations;
- School Board Districts 22 and 83 provided the press release and open house schedule to their respective schools for distribution;
- A large, 15 foot banner was placed in Polson Park in Vernon; and
- Twelve Regional Growth Strategy stories were broadcast on print, radio and television media.

5.2.2 Participation

Participation within the third round of Regional Growth Strategy Public Engagement was lower than anticipated, even with five open houses, an easily accessible survey, community meetings, widespread advertisement and attempts to provide youth involvement opportunities. There were 232 participants involved in the public events, 106 surveys were returned and 13 written submissions were received. The vast majority of comments from, and interactions with, the public were very positive and supportive of the policy direction of the Regional Growth Strategy. Low turnouts at three of the Open Houses may be attributed to conflicting with several NHL playoff hockey games.

5.2.3 Feedback Received

The following provides statistics regarding formal comments that were received from the public at during the public engagement period:

- A total of 106 surveys were submitted prior to the submission deadline.



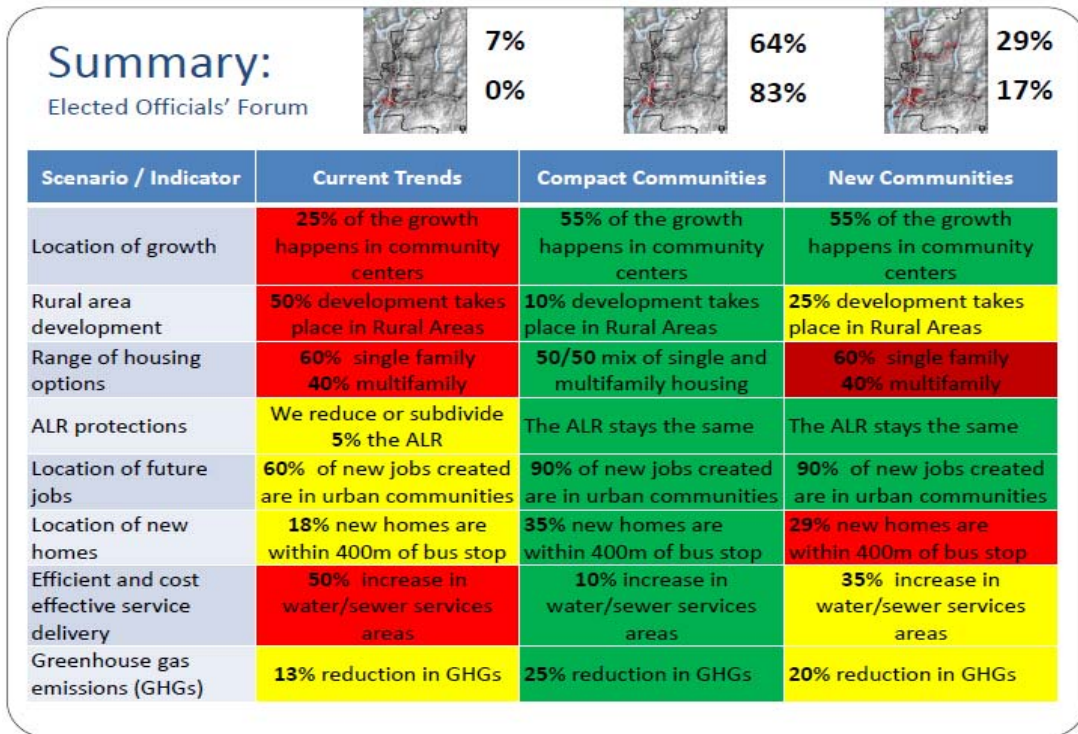
- 70 people attended the 5 open houses, with the highest turnout in the City of Vernon and Okanagan College
- 55 post-it note comments were received at the 5 open houses
- 13 formal written submissions were received
- 135 people attended four community meeting
- 25 high school students were involved in a youth workshop
- 5 written and three verbal comments at the July 6, 2011 Public Hearing

5.2.4 Elected Officials’ Forum (February 24, 2011)

The Elected Officials Forum, held on February 24, 2011, brought together 28 elected officials, 3 First Nations representatives and 3 Administrators from throughout the region to discuss the Regional Growth Strategy. The Regional Growth Strategy Support Team, made up of senior planners that represented every jurisdiction, facilitated the small breakout groups and provided their expertise to the discussion.

The three primary objectives of the symposium were as follows:

1. To discuss the direction of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw and identify any outstanding issues;
2. Identify and discuss key issues and strategies in our Regional Growth Strategy that will need to be addressed immediately; and,
3. Create an understanding of the linkage between regional growth tradeoffs and policy outcomes.

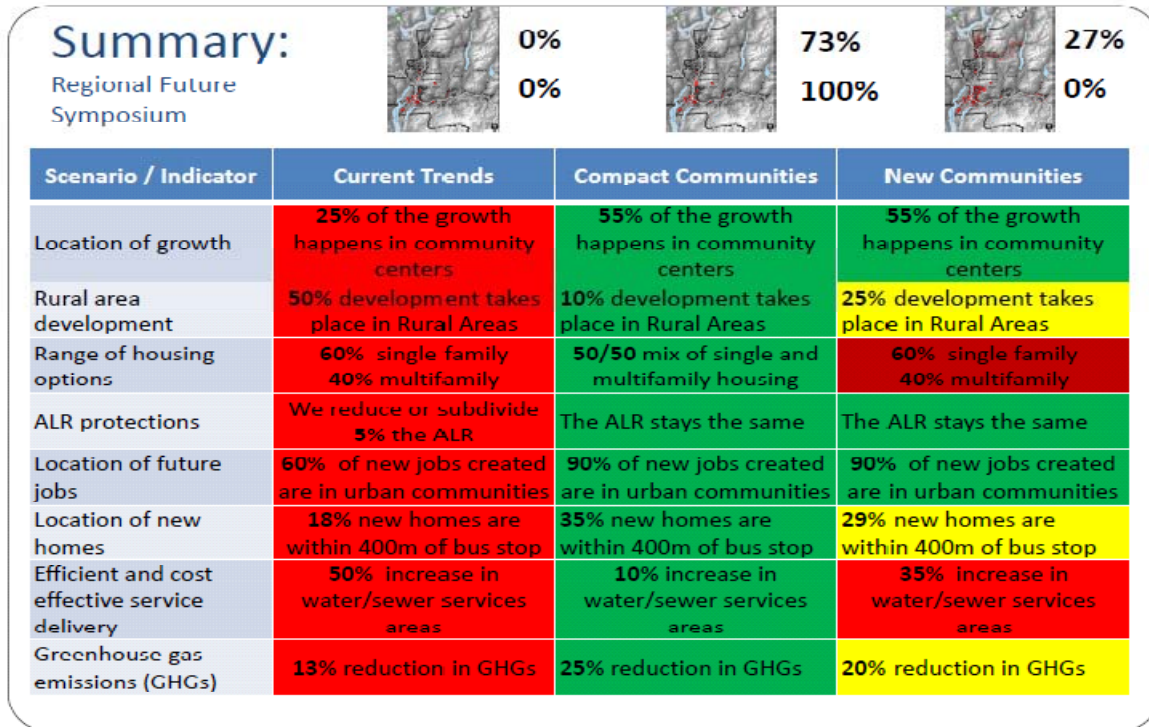


The elected officials that attended this Forum generally supported the direction of the Regional Growth Strategy, although some policy areas have been identified for further refinement.



5.2.5 Regional Future Symposium

The Regional Future Symposium, held on March 8, 2011, provided the opportunity for the working group volunteers who provided their time, passion and insight during the development of policy recommendations to discuss the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw policy framework. These working group members had provided the Board of Directors with 200 draft policies to consider in early 2010.



The participating Working Group members voted on preferred scenarios and policy outcome, discussed the policy direction of the Regional Growth Strategy and identified what needs to be accomplished within the next 5 years for successful implementation. The majority (80%) of attendees supported the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw with little or no reservations. Those that wanted to see a major revision of the Regional Growth Strategy were concerned that policies were not detailed enough, did not address their major concerns or did not provide a strong commitment to implementation.

5.2.6 Open Houses

An inform display board session was held between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. at the City of Armstrong, City of Enderby, Village of Lumby and City of Vernon Open Houses. The Okanagan College Open House in Coldstream was held between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm to accommodate the students' schedules. These open houses were widely advertised. The display boards provided an overview of the Regional Growth strategy process, tradeoffs and provide and overview of the Regional Growth Strategy policy direction. The public was invited to view the displays and speak with Regional District staff about the project.



There were a total of 81 attendees that attended the five Regional Growth Strategy open houses. Although the 'twitter-lite' post-it note comment exercise was anonymous, casual observation by Regional District staff indicates that this method of comment was popular with attendees. Over the course of the five open houses, there were 55 comments posted on the display boards. The comments were supportive of the goals and direction of the Regional Growth Strategy and stressed the importance of some issues. Questions and concerns regarding implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy were the most common written and verbally expressed issue.

5.2.7 Community Meetings

Throughout the Regional Growth Strategy process, community groups were encouraged to arrange meetings with Regional District staff to discuss the Regional Growth Strategy process, direction and policies. Many community associations, community organizations and not for profit organizations have been involved during the development of the Regional Growth Strategy and are aware of the progress of the Strategy. A notice was sent out to numerous community associations, community groups, and business associations and not for profit organizations throughout the North Okanagan to provide awareness of the opportunities for input and engagement. Four public meetings, with a total attendance of 137 people, were organized to discuss the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw and solicit feedback and input, which included:

- Vision North Okanagan on March 1, 2011 in Vernon at Community Futures (20 attendees)
- Seniors' Action Network on March 8, 2011 in Vernon at Peoples' Place (12 attendees)
- Kingfisher Community Association on March 25, 2011 at Kingfisher Community Hall (35 attendees)
- North Okanagan Naturalists Club on April 6, 2011 in Vernon at the Vernon Lodge (70 attendees)

The result of these community meetings was general support for the policy direction of the Regional Growth Strategy and working toward a regional approach to many important issues. The concerns that were discussed at all four community meetings involved the commitment to implication of the Strategy, the need for more detailed planning to achieve the goals and a general lack of confidence in maintaining the partnerships and relationships necessary to move toward actions.

5.2.8 'Regional Future' Public Survey

The survey was designed to complement the growth scenario tradeoff and preference exercises that the elected officials, at the February 24, 2011 Elected Officials Forum, and working group members, at the March 8, 2011 Regional Growth Symposium. The two page survey consisted of 6 questions, with 5 based on regional growth scenario alternatives preference and 1 question on prioritizing the growth issues. There were 106 surveys returned.

The age of residents that responded to the Phase III survey was significantly younger than expected, based upon the demographics of the North Okanagan, although several aspects of the Youth Engagement Strategy were successfully used, included a setting up a Youth Workshop and hosting an Open House at Okanagan College. The majority (59%) of survey respondents were from the City of Vernon, with the rest representing the five Electoral Areas and the municipalities of Armstrong, Coldstream, Enderby, Lumby and Spallumcheen. Approximately 60% were female and 34%, due to extensive youth engagement, were under the age of 25.



Summary:
Public Survey

Scenario / Indicator	Current Trends	Compact Communities	Future Growth Areas
Vibrant Community Centres	Community Centres attract 25% of new resident	Community Centres attract 55% of new resident	Community Centres attract 55% of new resident
Rural and Natural Lands Protected	Mostly greenfield development	Mostly infill development	Balance between greenfield and infill development
Housing Options	50% new housing is rural single family	Many housing and lifestyle options	Many housing and lifestyle options
ALR Protected	ALR shrinks by 5%	No change in the size of the ALR	No change in the size of the ALR
Diverse Regional Economy	60% of new jobs created are in urban communities	90% of new jobs created are in urban communities	90% of new jobs created are in urban communities
Water Conservation	Greater reliance on groundwater and septic solutions	Most residents rely on municipal water	Most residents rely on municipal water
Infrastructure Service Area	Urban service area increases by 50%	Urban service area increases by 10%	Urban service area increases by 25%
Efficient and Cost Effective Services	Most costly, largest service area	Least costly, smallest service area	Moderately costly, new service areas
Energy and Emissions	13% reduction in GHGs	25% reduction in GHGs	20% reduction in GHGs

The results of the scenario evaluation are similar to the preferences that resulted from the Elected Officials’ Forum and Regional Future Symposium, indicating that the participating elected officials, working group members and public generally agree with the vision and policy direction of the Regional Growth Strategy.

5.2.9 Youth Workshop

An open invitation to set up youth workshops or speak to classes about the Regional Growth Strategy was part of the public engagement strategy and there were attempts to organize several events at high schools in the North Okanagan. Due to the timing of Spring Break and other education priorities, one youth workshop was undertaken with the Global Education class at Fulton High School in Vernon. Twenty-five students took part in a three hour workshop where issues were discussed and Regional Growth Strategy outcomes were evaluated. The class raised several very good questions, including how to balance rural and urban lifestyle choices when directing growth into our community centres, how are we going to handle economic development, especially downtown revitalization, when most retail is in the mall and the Anderson subdivision and how will this impact them in the future. The class liked compact communities the best, but wanted some of the flexibility of future growth areas to keep options open and provide more rural lifestyle options. The class filled out surveys at the end of the session.

5.2.10 Written Responses

The Regional District of North Okanagan received 13 formal written responses from the public that were taken into consideration during the review of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011.



5.2.11 Intergovernmental Advisory Committee

The IAC met during the review and referral of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 after First Reading to discuss any concerns or issues from senior levels of government.

Date	Committee	Reason for Meeting
February 2, 2011	RGMAC	RGS Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 review and recommended first reading
February 16, 2011	BoD	RGS Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 receives first reading and will be immediately referred out to all parties, committees and agencies for review and comment, including the IAC.
February 17, 2011 to April 6, 2011	Public Engagement	12 public events and a survey are undertaken (the IAC is a Committee and therefore not represented within the public engagement schedule)
March 28, 2011	IAC	IAC discusses the RGS Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 implications and issues - Crown lands and recreational resort policy are discussed.
April 20, 2011	IAC comments	Comments are accepted by all parties, including IAC members, until April 20, 2011.
May 19, 2011	RGMAC	All comments and responses are presented to the RGMAC for consideration and a series of recommendations for amending the RGS Bylaw 2500, 2011 prior to second reading.

5.3 Key Milestones

5.3.1 Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011

The outcomes of all Phase III public engagement events, activities and the survey were very similar to the Elected Officials’ Forum and Regional Future Symposium. There was general support for the overall direction of the Regional Growth Strategy, which focuses on compact communities with the flexibility of future growth areas. Very few respondents and event attendees supported a ‘business as usual’ approach. All of the information generated during Phase III public consultation was taken into consideration when reviewing the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 prior to second reading.

The amended Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011, based upon the comments received to date, received Second Reading on June 16, 2011 and a Public Hearing was held on July 6, 2011

The Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 was referred out to all affected local governments, which include member municipalities and adjacent regional districts, for acceptance and the Electoral Area Advisory Committee for endorsement. All parties accepted and/or endorsed the strategy prior to the September 7, 2011 deadline. The final step is final adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw by the Regional District of North Okanagan Board of Directors.

5.3.2 Public Hearing (July 6, 2011)

On June 16, 2011 the Board of Directors gave Second reading to the North Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 and referred it to a Public Hearing. The Board of Directors



held the Public Hearing on July 6, 2011 and 5 written submissions were received the and 3 persons spoke.

The Board of Directors, in response to comments received from the City of Vernon at the Public Hearing, brought forward the flowing resolution at the July 6, 2011 regular session.

“That the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 be amended by replacing the phase “as well as the identification of suitable and sustainable water sources that are adequate for the level of planned development” with “the identification of water sources” in Policy UC-1.9 and the definition of Future Growth Areas, and read a second time as amended.”

This amendment to the Regional Growth Strategy, following Public Hearing, was the only change to Bylaw No. 2500, 2011 prior to submission to local affected governments, including member municipalities and adjacent regional districts, for acceptance as specified in Section 857 of the *Local Government Act*.

5.3.3 Formal Submission to Affected Local Governments for Acceptance

The formal acceptance period began on July 9, 2011 and concluded on September 7, 2011. The Board of Directors decision to initiate the acceptance process came more than three years after the Regional District began a public engagement program to ensure that all residents, stakeholders, First Nations, senior levels of government and municipal councils have numerous opportunities to become involved in the development of the Regional Growth Strategy. The result has been a Regional Growth Strategy that reflects a vision of the North Okanagan that has been created through extensive, inclusive and intensive public consultation and participation.

Affected Local Government	Date of Resolution	Outcome
City of Armstrong	August 8, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
District of Coldstream	August 8, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
City of Enderby	August 15, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
Village of Lumby	July 18, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
Township of Spallumcheen	August 15, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
City of Vernon	August 8, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
Regional District of Central Okanagan	August 22, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
Columbia Shuswap Regional District	August 18, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
Thompson Nicola Regional District	August 11, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
Regional District of Kootenay Boundary	August 25, 2011	Recommendation to Accept
Regional District of Central Kootenay	July 21, 2011	Acceptance with no reservations
Electoral Area Advisory Committee	August 18, 2011	Endorsement



All affected local governments accepted the North Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy prior to September 7, 2011, fulfilling the requirements of Section 857, Part 25 of the *Local Government Act*. The Electoral Area Advisory Committee endorsed the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw on August 18, 2011. The Board of Directors can now proceed with Third Reading and Adoption of the Bylaw.

6.0 Conclusion

The Regional District of North Okanagan contains approximately 83,000 people spread over six municipalities and five electoral areas. Although the majority of the population are within the Greater Vernon area (City of Vernon, District of Coldstream, Electoral Areas 'B' and 'C'), engaging the public throughout the North Okanagan can be challenging, insightful and rewarding.

Widespread community participation was essential when envisioning a common future and creating an understanding of our growth management options as contained within the Regional Growth Strategy. Working meaningfully together, in a collaborative and cooperative way, through a process informed by regional residents, local governments, elected officials, provincial and federal agencies, First Nations and interested stakeholders, ensures that the Regional Growth Strategy will be determined by the diverse perspectives and interests that define the North Okanagan. Meaningful participation throughout every phase of the process has been essential to successful completion of the Regional Growth Strategy and to building the trust and relationships necessary for implementation.

In the context of regional planning in the North Okanagan, collaborative planning is the delegation of responsibility to prepare and recommend policy recommendations, based upon political direction at the local and regional government levels, to a series of 'stakeholder' working group representing all interested members of the public and organizations that uses consensus-based negotiation to reach agreement. As well, collaborative planning, in the North Okanagan sense, rely upon negotiated agreement between local governments and the Regional District of North Okanagan through a variety of means, including facilitated local and regional government workshops, Elected Officials' Forum and continual referral for local government comment to make certain that 'you get it right' before adoption of the plan.

The development of the Regional Growth Strategy vision, policies and implementation section used inclusive participatory processes that created ownership, strengthened partnerships and built trust among all participants. As a result, the Regional Growth Strategy is the Terms of Reference for implementation. Although municipal and regional governments, through the actions of their elected officials and staff, will be the primary implementing agents, there have been a multitude of participants that are interested in assisting with implementation