

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN



Growth Issues Working Groups Work Plan

Version 4.0

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Summary

Growth Issues Working Groups will be instrumental in developing goals, objectives and strategies that will form the foundation of the Regional Growth Strategy. There will be one Working Group for each key growth issue identified in the Regional Growth Strategy Terms of Reference. These working groups will focus on a specific key growth issue such as affordable housing and social issues, economic development, urban containment, agriculture and food systems, transportation and infrastructure, governance and service delivery, environmental policy and natural lands. And water stewardship. Amongst the participants of the working group, a chairperson will be chosen to run the meetings but also to represent these working groups on the Community Advisory Committee¹.

Introduction

The formation of the Growth Issues Working Groups will provide a participatory forum of experts, local government representatives, First Nations, relevant stakeholders and the advocates for the community-at-large with the goal of providing recommendations throughout the Regional Growth Strategy development process on growth issues. Local knowledge and experience will be the key to success in developing appropriate recommendations for the Regional Growth Strategy that reflect the North Okanagan context. These working groups will be established in Phase I: Building a Foundation and will meet at least three times throughout the Regional Growth Strategy process, providing technical expertise and growth issues recommendations on objectives, goals, and strategies.

The Working Groups will be provided with a Terms of Reference that will focus the discussions on growth issues recommendations. Working Group meetings will be conducted in an inclusive, respectful manner with the primary objectives of consensus-building, understanding, and meaningful discussion that will inform recommendations to the Community Advisory Committee¹.

Each group will identify and propose goals, objectives and strategies. These groups will also be responsible for identifying informational needs required supporting their efforts. They will also be responsible for reporting to the Community Advisory Committee.

Regional Growth Strategy Process and Timeline

The pace of change within the North Okanagan requires critical long-term visioning and planning based on sustainable principles to ensure that livability is not compromised due to growth throughout the region. This is not an initiative to stop growth, but to direct it over the long term for the benefit of the community as a whole.

¹ The Community Advisory Committee will be comprised of the Growth Issues Working Groups chair-people and the Regional Growth Strategy Coordinator. The results of the working groups are represented, through the individual chairs, within the wider process of Regional Growth Strategy development. As a result of the discussion of issues, policies, constraints, and opportunities, the Community Advisory Committee will provide recommendations to the Regional Growth Strategy Support team regarding goals, objectives, strategies and priorities to be included in the Regional Growth Strategy..

Developing a Regional Growth Strategy requires a sound, comprehensive planning process that is inclusive, identifies community issues, defines community objectives, explores alternatives, evaluates the consequences of those alternatives and the inherent trade-offs associated with alternative futures and provides the decision makers with the tools to "*do the right thing*" for the future of the broader community. The process also has to include a strong focus on how the strategies will be implemented on the ground and how the performance will be monitored and readjusted to reflect the emerging issues and concerns.

The Regional Growth Strategy draft timeline will occur in three major phases, as identified in Table 1.

Table 1: Regional Growth Strategy Process Timeline

Phase	Tasks	Expected Timing
I: Building a Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of terms of reference including a vision statement, draft work plan and guiding principles • Development and adoption of a participation plan • Local and regional planning policy literature review • Projections for population and employment • Growth scenario base case analysis • Preliminary issues identification • Refine strategic direction 	January 2007 – April 2009
II: Planning, Analysis, Evaluation and Trade-offs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of goals and objectives, performance indicators • Generation and analysis of alternative growth scenarios and policy alternatives • Evaluation of growth scenarios and policy alternatives based on goals and objectives • Assessment of trade-offs between growth scenarios 	May 2009 – June 2010
III: RGS Final Draft Preparation and Bylaw Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Draft Regional Growth Strategy and Implementation Strategy) • Negotiation of agreement between all affected local governments • Acceptance of Regional Growth Strategy by affected local governments • Adoption of Regional Growth Strategy (bylaw process including public hearings) • Implementation and Monitoring 	July 2010 – August 2011

Development of a Regional Growth Strategy is a collaborative effort involving many parties. There are several groups, departments, agencies, elected bodies, First Nations and individuals involved in the process to develop a Regional Growth Strategy for the North Okanagan. Local knowledge, advice, and experience

will be invaluable during the discussions of the growth issues facing our Region, and the representation of many local perspectives will provide the basis for sound, regionally-appropriate recommendations.

Growth Issues Working Groups Overview

Purpose

Eight working groups will provide recommendations based upon local knowledge, perspective and expertise in growth issues that form part of the Regional Growth Strategy: Economic Development, Agriculture and Food Systems, Environmental Policy and Natural Lands, Governance and Service Delivery, Affordable Housing, Water Stewardship, Transportation, and Urban Containment. Each group will have 10-12 members and diversity of experience and perspective is encouraged.

The Working Groups will be formed to provide a forum for informed and productive discussion on creating goals, actions, and strategies that will form the basis of the Regional Growth Strategy. Working groups will:

- identify local challenges and opportunities related to their growth issue;
- provide local knowledge, experience, and perspectives;
- think through critical issues and trends for their growth issue, and assess how these trends will inform goals, actions, and strategies; and
- **create realistic goals, actions and strategies for their topic area.**

Growth Issues Working Groups Work Plan

Work Plan Summary

The Growth Issues Working Groups work plan will be a vital technical component of the Regional Growth Strategy process, developing recommendations to the CAC and Regional Board. The summary work plan (Appendix 'A') will provide the framework for the progression of working group development, and identify the tasks that will be necessary to successfully implement the Working Group process.

Work Plan Elements

Draft Participation Plan Development and Adoption

The Participation Plan has been developed, and currently is under refinement to reflect an accelerated timeline. This Participation Plan emphasizes the participation, engagement, and collaboration of all participants, as well as provides a framework for participation activities and communication tools. One major discussion forum of the Participation Plan, which will provide a technical forum to discuss the growth issues goals, objectives and strategies, is the Growth Issues Working Groups.

Working Group Terms of Reference

The Growth Issues Working Groups Terms of Reference will outline of the purpose, role and structure of the individual Working Groups, as well as providing guidance on objectives and responsibilities. The development of these Terms of Reference will provide direction and focus when discussing the goals, objectives and strategies recommendations that will be forwarded to the Community Advisory Committee for consideration.

Participant Identification and Selection

The identification of potential participants will be conducted early within Phase I: Building a Foundation, focusing on community members, local government representatives, First Nations and stakeholders that have interest, expertise, and regional context related to the identified growth issues. The potential participants are active in expressing concerns or addressing identified growth issues, bringing their passion, experience, and insight into the discussion of growth issues strategies, goals, and objectives as related to the Regional Growth Strategy. Each potential participant will be contacted to evaluate their interest to participate, ability to maintain that participation throughout the Regional Growth Strategy process, and commitment to the growth issue within the context of the Regional Growth Strategy. Once the Growth Issues Working Groups have been populated, an orientations session will introduce all participants to their role within the Regional Growth Strategy process.

Orientation Session

An orientation session for the Growth Issues Working Groups participants will be scheduled after all of the Working Groups have been formed. This session will provide an introduction to the Regional Growth Strategy process, the role and responsibilities of the Working Groups, and provide an overview of the growth issues that will be explored. As well, this event will provide an opportunity for each Working Group to meet. The orientation session will be conducted in an information session format, with a short introductory breakout period designed around individual Working Groups.

Regular Meeting Schedule

Working Groups will be provided with three (3) to five (5) scheduled 3-hour meetings in which growth issues recommendations and indicators will be developed and forwarded, through the Working Group chair, to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for evaluation. The scheduling of these meetings will allow for sufficient time for recommendations and technical outputs to be discussed by the CAC, Regional Growth Strategy Support Group, and the Regional Growth Strategy Management Committee. Working Groups meetings will be conducted during Phase II of the process, with the orientation session taking place late in Phase I. Appendix 'B' provides a preliminary Working Group schedule, although modifications and additions are anticipated as the Regional Growth Strategy process and needs evolve.

Working Group Meetings

A pre-meeting Workbook will be provided prior to each Working Group meeting, as well as background information. These workbooks will provide the preparation focus needed to develop initial recommendations and think about the growth issue under consideration. The results of the workbooks will be the starting point for the discussions.

The initial Working Group meeting (WG-1) will focus on the identification of issues, assets, and actions² and drafting recommended objectives, goals, and strategies.

² Thinking about what is not working, what do we have to work with, and what action can we take to capitalize on that asset. EXAMPLE: IMPACT—Sprawling Development, ASSET—Agricultural Land Reserve, ACTION—No removal of ALR lands, used ALR in urban boundary development.

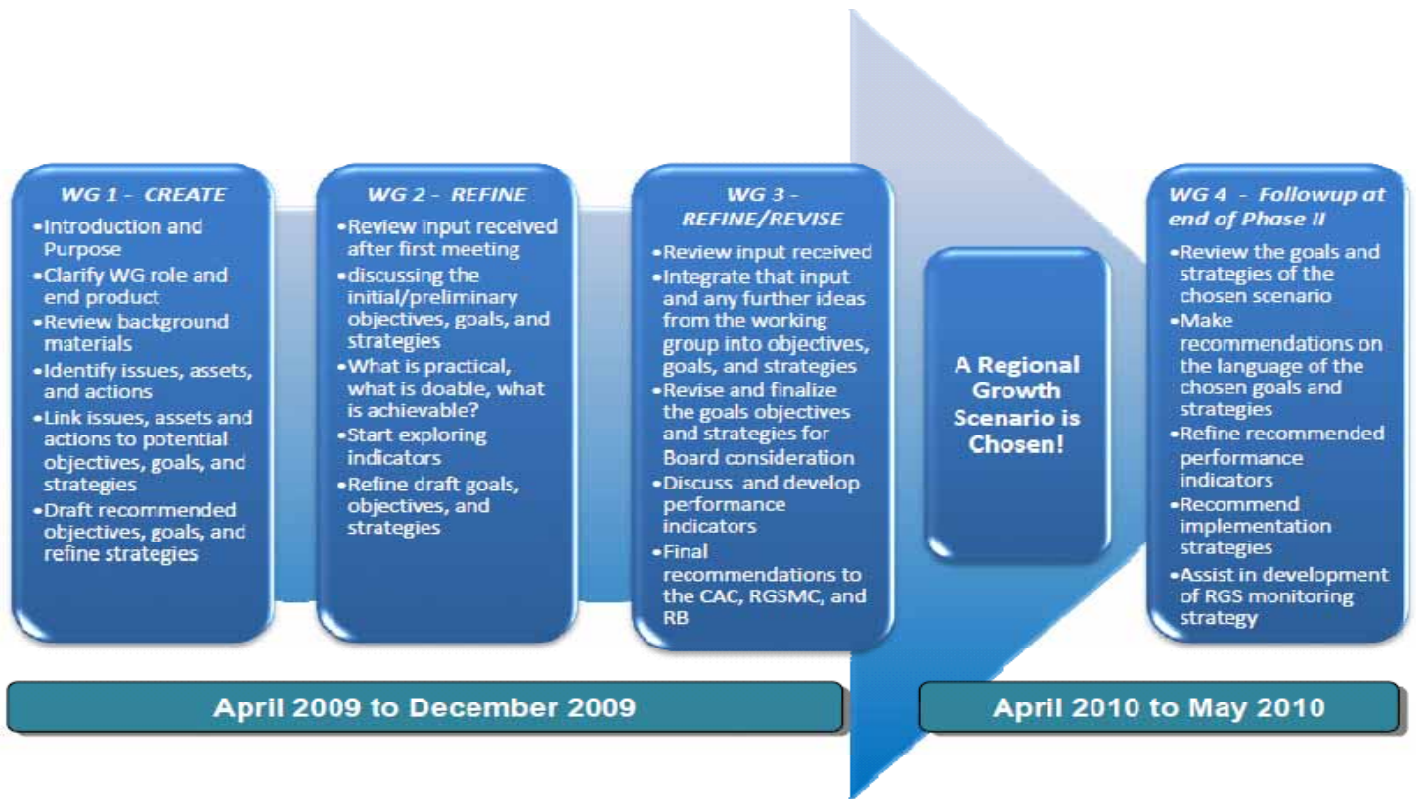
The second Working Group meeting (WG-2) will review input received from the CAC and the Regional Board and discuss draft recommendations and refine the goals, objectives and strategies. As well, the exploration of potential indications will begin.

The third Working Group meeting (WG-3) will further refine goals, objectives, and strategies and finalize those recommendations for Regional Board consideration. Indicators will be discussed and developed within this session.

The last Working Group meeting (WG-4) will take place after a regional growth scenario has been chosen. This final meeting will review the goals, objectives and strategies of the chosen scenario, refining these recommendations and proposed indicators, as well as developing initial implementation strategies.

Additional Working Group meetings will be held if considered necessary.

See the image below for Working Group meeting progression and expectations.



Appendix 'A': Summary Work Plan

Task	Description	Output	Expected Timing
Draft Participation Plan Development and Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a draft timeline for participation activities • As a legislative requirement, will provide the participation, engagement, and collaboration framework for the entire Regional Growth Strategy process (Participation Plan) • Identify the dialogue, engagement, and communication elements of the process 	Participation Plan	November 2008
Growth Issues Working Groups Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the roles and responsibilities for each Working Group • Summarize the organization and procedures for each Working Group • Provide direction for necessary Working Group outputs and technical support 	Growth Issues Working Groups	January 2009
Form Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of individuals, stakeholders, and local government participants • Establish a criteria for the selection of Working Group participants • Evaluate applications and interview candidates 	Working Groups Membership	March to May 2009
Growth Issues Working Groups Participant Orientation Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce participants to the Regional Growth Strategy process and desired outcomes • Provide a round-table environment for working Group participant meeting and initial growth issue discussion 	Report	June 2009
Growth Issues Working Group Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Working Group meeting schedule that will ensure participation 	Meeting Minutes	June 2009 to May 2010