



Governance & Services Committee

TO: Governance and Services Committee

FROM: Todd Cashin
Director of Community Services

DATE: February 13, 2020

SUBJECT: Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plan: 2020 Projects (6430-40)

Purpose: To provide the Governance & Services Committee with an overview of the 2020 projects outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plan.

Executive Summary:

On June 23, 2014, Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1336 (RGS) was adopted, and on July 24, 2017, the Regional Board endorsed the Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plan. This five-year Action Plan outlines priority initiatives for the RDCO to implement based on commitments defined in the RGS. Regional planning projects in the five-year Action Plan were approved in principle by the Regional Board with projects requiring RDCO funding being reviewed annually through the budget deliberation process.

Planning staff is suggesting several regional planning projects in this report that are identified as having significant strategic investment values supporting the RGS. These projects have been selected and scoped to provide regional coordination and collaboration with our member municipalities in support of regionally shared needs.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Governance and Services Committee receive for information the Regional Growth Priority Projects Plan report dated February 13, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Cashin".

Todd Cashin
Director of Community Services

Approved for Committee's Consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Reardon".

Brian Reardon, CAO

Prepared by: Janelle Taylor, Planner

Implications of Recommendation:

Strategic Plan:	<p>Receiving the RGS Priority Projects Plan – 2020 Projects for information achieves the following Regional Board Strategic Priorities 2019-2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation and Mobility • Sustainable Communities • Environment
Policy:	<p>Receiving the RGS Priority Projects Plan – 2020 Projects for information complies with numerous policies outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1336.</p>
Legal/Statutory Authority:	<p>Receiving the RGS Priority Projects Plan – 2020 Projects for information adheres to Local Government Act, Section 452</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1) “A regional district that has adopted a regional growth strategy must <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) establish a program to monitor its implementation and the progress made towards its objectives and actions, and (b) prepare an annual report on that implementation and progress.” • 2) “At least once every 5 years, a regional district that has adopted a regional growth strategy must consider whether the regional growth strategy must be reviewed for possible amendment.”

Background:

Regional Growth Strategy

The RDCO adopted Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1336 on June 23, 2014. A regional growth strategy is a long-range planning tool governed by Part 13 of the *Local Government Act* that assists local governments to plan a coordinated future for their communities while dealing with regional issues and decisions that cross local political boundaries. The RGS is also a collective vision from the regional partners for the future in order to create a region that promotes growth that is economically, environmentally and socially healthy over a twenty (20) year time horizon.

RGS Steering Committee

The RGS Steering Committee, created in 2016, is a forum for senior representatives of regional and municipal planning departments, First Nation and agencies with an interest in regional planning to coordinate the strategic priorities around the Region and align the priorities with the goals and policies of the RGS.

RGS Priority Projects Plan

In accordance with Section 4.1.2 of the RGS, through a collaborative process, RDCO staff, RGS Steering Committee and elected officials will develop a 5 year action plan to outline the priority initiatives to implement the RGS. The 5 year action plan will be the framework for RGS implementation and based on the regional initiatives identified within the RGS and by the Regional Board.

On July 24, 2017 the Regional Board passed the following resolution:

THAT the Regional Board endorse the Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plan as presented.

The Plan contains nine projects supporting over 25 policies, across eight Issue Areas of the RGS. These projects are a framework for maintaining momentum toward RGS goals and

policies. The projects have been selected and scoped to support regional coordination and collaboration in support of regionally shared needs and goals, and with the expectation that there will be efficiencies from conducting work at the regional level.

The Plan is not a rigid five-year work plan. Each year, the RDCO Board will be asked to consider the recommended projects and approve the requisite resource allocations on a case-by-case basis. As new opportunities or unexpected demands arise, the projects in this Plan can be revised, re-sequenced or replaced as needed.

It should also be noted that this document does not identify all high priority projects to be undertaken to implement the direction in the RGS. Many projects are underway supporting RGS priorities in environmental, transportation, water stewardship, economic and other areas. The projects highlighted in this Plan are based on gaps identified by the RGS Steering Committee in RGS implementation. A summary timeline of the Five-Year Action Plan is provided (Table 1) followed by detailed project descriptions and rationale.

Table 1 Five-Year Action Plan Summary and Timeline. Dark green indicates one-time projects of limited duration; light green indicates projects that, once initiated, will be ongoing or recurring.

#	Project	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Page
1	Regional Flood Management Plan: Phases 2 and 3						18
2	Regional Planning Lab						19
3	Regional Housing Needs Assessment						21
4	Regional Growth Strategy Monitoring Program						23
5	Regional Citizen Survey						25
6	Regional Housing Strategy						26
7	Regional Growth Strategy Five-year Review						28
8	Regional Agricultural Strategy						29
9	Regional Employment Lands Inventory						32

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment and Regional Growth Strategy Monitoring Program were completed in 2019. The Regional Flood Management Plan: Phase 2, Regional Planning Labs, and Regional Housing Strategy have commenced and are anticipated to continue on into 2020. The proposed projects for 2020 include:

- **Project Number 1: Regional Flood Management Plan: Phases 2 and 3**

Description and Rationale: Flooding is a serious concern for developed areas in the Central Okanagan and will only become more of a risk with the effects of Climate Change. Given this, the RDCO has outlined a three-phase Regional Floodplain Management Framework with the objective of developing a better understanding of flood risk in order to reduce and mitigate damage and impacts from future floods in our region. Completed in June of 2016, the Regional Floodplain Management Plan: Phase 1 Final Report identified flood hazards within the Central Okanagan and established the scope and priorities of Phases 2 and 3.

Phase 2 is ongoing and focused on delineation and confirmation of the flood-prone streams and floodplains identified in Phase 1. Through funding from RDCO, OBWB,

UBCM, NDMP, and Infrastructure Planning Grant, plus partnerships with local government agencies, the following projects have been completed or are underway:

- Mission Creek floodplain mapping update;
- Mission Creek dike breach analysis;
- Okanagan Lake flood level mapping;
- Wood and Kalamalka Lakes flood level mapping;
- Trepanier and Bellevue Creek dike maintenance assessments;
- Dam failure inundation mapping; and
- Major floodplains, alluvial fans and flood-prone sections of watercourses.
 - Including Peachland and Trepanier Creeks floodplain and alluvial fan confirmation within urban areas.

Phase 3 seeks to use the information collected through Phases 1 and 2 to create mitigation strategies. The project will include an extensive outreach component to gain input from member local governments, Syilx communities in the region, stakeholders and the public to ensure that the proposed mitigation options are acceptable and supported.

- **Project Number 2: Regional Planning Labs**

Description and Rationale: Planners from across the region are regularly struggling with common challenges and developing effective solutions. However, the collective experience and lessons-learned from this work is not always shared. Further, particularly stubborn challenges often require creative approaches and ideas for problem solving that can only come from multiple perspectives, discussions among experienced professionals, and the lesson learned from piloting potential solutions.

A Regional Planning Lab is a forum for planners and other professionals from around the region to meet (once or several times over a series of meetings) to work through difficult technical challenges related to a specific planning topic, or the production of regionally significant projects. As a forum for discussion and relationship building, the Lab is strengthening the foundation of regional knowledge-sharing and consistency. As a space to identify and test possible solutions to shared problems, the existence of the lab continues to expand the opportunities for collaboration. This latter point is key: the labs begin with an exploration of the challenges faced, and end with actions that can be implemented, learned from, and improved upon.

Since 2018, the RDCO has hosted five Regional Planning Labs and published four Regional Planning Bulletins to communicate the outcome of Labs plus ongoing regional work. Feedback received from participants continues to demonstrate that there is great interest and value in working collaboratively together to tackle regional issues; the April 2019 Regional Planning Lab encouraged the region to move forward with the Regional Agricultural Compliance and Enforcement Strategy.

- **Project Number 5: Regional Citizen Survey**

Description and Rational: A Regional Citizen Survey is a way of collecting data that cannot be attained any other way, and can be an invaluable resource for staff and elected officials in decision-making, as well as a strong communications tool for raising awareness about regional issues. It can also be used to supplement the RGS

Monitoring Program's objective indicators (Project 4, which is a required legislative component as per the Local Government Act) with the experiences and perceptions of the public. As area surveys are completed regularly in some local jurisdictions or for other projects, care will be taken to ensure survey tools and questions are not repetitive or redundant; however, parallel projects may also provide an opportunity to leverage resources by combining survey tools.

Similar work has been completed by Regional District of North Okanagan, Metro Vancouver and Regional District of Comox Valley.

- **Project Number 6: Regional Housing Strategy**

Description and Rational: The Strategy is a continuation of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (Project 3), and would develop an Implementation Plan with goals, targets, or planning objectives. Such a plan would identify and clarify roles that different groups would take toward achieving regional housing goals, including the Regional District, member municipalities, First Nations communities, non-profit partners, and other governmental agencies (e.g. Interior Health Authority).

This work can support development of new housing plans/initiatives in communities that do not have them by demonstrating the specific aspects of the housing continuum where they can have the most impact. For communities that already have housing plans in place, the regional level implementation plan can support coordination of groups working on local level actions. Additionally, it may provide the rationale for pooling regional resources to support implementation of actions from a local level housing plan. For example, where some areas lack resources to provide certain services themselves (such as emergency shelters and transitional housing), it may make sense to expand that service in a neighbouring community to support a larger population.

Similar work has been completed by Metro Vancouver and Capital Regional District.

- **Project Number 7: Regional Growth Strategy Five-year Review**

Description and Rational: 2019 will mark five years since the RGS was adopted and, as mandated under the *Local Government Act*, the Regional Board will consider whether or not a more comprehensive review of the RGS is warranted. This preliminary review will be completed at a high-level with input from affected agencies, member municipalities, First Nations, and other stakeholders.

As per Section 4.1.5 Plan for Five-Year Review of the RGS, the "review process provides an opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the growth strategy, assess performance and re-evaluate solutions to persistent region-wide issues and responses undertaken."

Similar work has been completed by Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen and Metro Vancouver.

- **Project Number 8: Regional Agricultural Strategy**

Description and Rational: A Regional Agricultural Strategy could help support knowledge sharing, data collection, joint investments, and developing regionally consistent policies to help a number of aspects of the larger agricultural and food system.

Agriculture is closely associated with a number of systems that operate at a regional level including labour markets; warehousing, packing centres, and distribution networks; tourism; ecosystem connectivity; water resources; real estate development; and, of course, food systems. As such, taking a regional perspective on agricultural issues is a sensible response. This was anticipated by the RGS in Policy 1 of “Our Food”, which explicitly calls on regional partners to consider development of a Regional Agricultural Strategy.

It would support related regional initiatives (e.g. Project Number 9: Regional Employment Lands Inventory) and could also help coordinate implementation of actions embedded in local level agricultural plans - some Central Okanagan communities have already developed Agriculture Plans (or at least plans for specific locations), most recently the Cities of West Kelowna (2011 and 2016), Kelowna (2017), and District of Lake Country (to be updated 2019-2020).

Similar work has been completed by Regional District of North Okanagan, Regional District of Nanaimo, and Sunshine Coast Regional District.

Financial Considerations:

Where applicable, staff has applied for external funding to offset the cost of projects. Any financial considerations for RDCO will be considered as part of the 2020 budget process.

External Implications:

The RGS Priority Projects Plan received direction from staff representing the RDCO, District of Peachland, City of West Kelowna, Westbank First Nation, City of Kelowna and District of Lake Country. In addition, detailed input was received from specialized staff of organizations that may be affected by proposed projects, and an early draft was circulated to affected agencies.

In addition to receiving input from the Regional Board and Governance & Services Committee, a draft was also presented for input to all member municipality Councils and Westbank First Nation Chief and Council.

This process allowed a number of opportunities to provide direction and feedback to influence the development of the Plan.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

- *General*
- *Organizational Issues*
- *Alternative Recommendation*

Attachment(s):

- Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plan