



Regional Board Report

Information

To: Regional Board

From: Director of Community Services

Date: December 15, 2022

Subject: Regional Agricultural Strategy Update

Voting Entitlement: *All Directors - Unweighted Corporate Vote - Simple Majority (LGA s.208)*

Purpose: To provide an update to the Regional Board regarding the Regional Agricultural Strategy and present the Background Report.

Executive Summary:

The Regional Agricultural Strategy (strategy) was identified as a priority project under the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Priority Projects Plan (2017). The purpose of the strategy is to support knowledge sharing, data collection, joint investments, and develop regionally consistent policies to help the larger agricultural food system. The strategy will support related regional initiatives and will coordinate implementation of actions embedded in local level agricultural plans.

The strategy consists of three phases: Phase 1: background scoping, Phase 2: stakeholder and public engagement, and Phase 3: developing the strategy. The Background Report (attached) concludes Phases 1 and 2 will act as the foundation for developing the strategy in Phase 3 planned for 2023. The strategy will require Regional Board engagement and adoption in 2023.

Recommendation:

THAT the Regional Board receive the report Regional Agricultural Strategy – Background Report from the Director of Community Services, dated December 15, 2022, for information.

Respectfully submitted by: Michael Czarny, Senior Planner

Approved by:

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

Todd Cashin
Director of Community Services

Attachments:

- Regional Agricultural Strategy – Background Report
- September 26, 2022, Regional Board Report - Regional Agricultural Strategy – Update
- Regional Board Presentation – December 15, 2022

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Priorities: Sustainable Communities

Values: Good Governance, Regional Perspective

Background:**Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1336**

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 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 to create a region that promotes growth that is economically, environmentally and socially healthy over a twenty (20) year time horizon.

The Regional Agricultural Strategy (RAS) aligns with the goals and policies of the following regional issues areas as identified by the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS): Our Land, Our Economy, Our Water Resources, Our Health, Our Food, Our Climate, Our Ecosystems, and Our Governance.

Regional Growth Strategy Priority Project Plan

In accordance with the RGS, through a collaborative process, RDCO staff, RGS Steering Committee members and elected officials developed a 5-year action plan to outline the priority initiatives to implement the RGS. The action plan is the framework for RGS implementation and based on the regional initiatives identified within the RGS. The Priority Projects Plan was endorsed by the Regional Board on July 24, 2017.

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

Regional Agricultural Strategy

The Regional Agricultural Strategy (RAS) is identified as Project No. 8 in the RGS Priority Project Plan. Its purpose is to support knowledge sharing, data collection, joint investments, and develop regionally consistent policies to help several aspects of the larger agricultural food system. The RAS would support related regional initiatives and could coordinate implementation of actions embedded in local level agricultural plans including the District of Lake Country's Agricultural Plan adopted in 2020, City of Kelowna's Agricultural Plan adopted in 2017 and the City of West Kelowna's Agricultural Plan adopted in 2011 and 2016.

The RAS consists of three phases:

1. Phase 1: Project Initiation, Background Scoping, Agricultural Profile
2. Phase 2: Engagement Strategy, Public and Stakeholder Engagement
3. Phase 3: Develop the Strategy

Upland Agricultural Consulting

Our consultants for the RAS are Upland Agricultural Consulting who have provided agricultural planning services to local governments in BC and completed over 18 Agricultural Plans since 2010. The Upland Agricultural Consulting team members include a sub-consultant, Urban Food Strategies, who have in-depth professional and personal knowledge of the Okanagan's agricultural sector and how it fits within the larger BC context. Examples of work that has been completed by Upland Consulting in the area includes the District of Lake Country Agriculture Plan, (2020), City of Kelowna Agriculture Plan (2017), Westbank Centre Agriculture Plan (2016), Food Secure Oliver (2018), and Regional District of North Okanagan Regional Agricultural Plan (2014).

Regional Agricultural Strategy – Background Report

The purpose of the Background Report is to provide a biophysical review to develop an agricultural profile of the region, to provide a policy review including member municipalities agricultural plans, complimentary projects, and applicable legislation, and develop an engagement strategy and provide a summary of findings through engagement with the agricultural community, partners, and stakeholders. The Background Report will inform the future RAS. The Background Report consist of two phases:

1. Phase 1: Project Initiation, Background Scoping, Agricultural Profile
2. Phase 2: Engagement Strategy, Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Completion of the Background Report completes approximately 50% of the proposed workplan and methodology required for the RAS. Additional engagement with the Regional Board, stakeholders and the public will be part of developing the RAS in Phase 3. Undertaking the RAS will occur in 2023 when additional funding and grant opportunities are available.

Considerations:

Organizational/External: As per the funding agreement with Investment Agriculture Foundation, the RDCO is responsible for completing the Background Report by December 31, 2022, and for meeting reporting requirements.

Financial: The total budget for the Background Report is \$60,000. The Local Government Partnership Program funding through Investment Agriculture Foundation contributed a maximum of 50% of the cost eligible activities equal to \$30,000.

Considerations not applicable:

- Legal/Statutory Authority
- Alternate Recommendation

Approved for agenda

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corie Griffiths'.

Corie Griffiths, Deputy CAO