

Consultation Plan

Regional Growth Strategy
Focused Review

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Prepared by
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Strategic & Community
Development



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO

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ACRONYMS

COW – Committee of the Whole

IAC – Intergovernmental Advisory Committee

LGA – Local Government Act

RDN – Regional District of Nanaimo

RGS – Regional Growth Strategy

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Consultation Plan is to establish a process and to guide the work of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) as it gathers input for use in the review of select policies in the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). This Plan outlines the way in which those who are interested and affected will be provided opportunities to comment throughout the RGS review process.

This Plan is intended to meet the RDN Board's responsibilities under Sections 434(2) of the *Local Government Act*, and also be consistent with the RDN Board's Public Consultation/Communication Framework Policy No. A1.23 and procedures bylaws.

2 SCOPE

The scope of this Consultation Plan is focused on providing information to the broader community and seeking input from those stakeholders who may be affected by changes to the policies identified for review. The RGS Review is focused on select land use and servicing policies; the criteria for a minor amendment; and a review of select RGS Indicators. As well, the review will include updating required information (i.e. demographics) and general housekeeping amendments.

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Consultation Plan are:

- To establish a process to share applicable information and to receive input from affected local governments, government agencies, First Nations, residents and other stakeholders.
- To encourage and support stakeholder involvement through the RGS review process.
- Provide affected local governments an opportunity to identify and learn about issues relating to the RGS, and offer direction and insights.
- Communicate the outcomes of consultation to the RDN Board to help inform decision-making about the RGS bylaw.

4 PROCESS

The RGS review process flow chart in Appendix A shows how public consultation is an integrated and ongoing part of the process.

5 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSULTATION

Regional Growth Strategy Amendments

This Consultation Plan is intended to meet Sections 434(1) and (2) of the *Local Government Act* that requires the RDN to provide consultation opportunities relating to proposed changes to a Regional Growth Strategy. Section 434(2) of the *Act* specifically states that:

"...as soon as practicable 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, the following:

- (a) its citizens,*
- (b) affected local governments¹,*
- (c) First Nations,*
- (d) boards of education, greater boards and improvement district boards, and*
- (e) the Provincial and Federal governments and their agencies."*

Under Section 433(1) of the *Local Government Act*, the preparation [and amendment] of a RGS must be initiated by resolution of the Board. Following a resolution to initiate a process to consider an amendment, the Board must give written notice to affected local governments and to the Minister (Section 433(4)). In addition to this notice, opportunities will be provided for 'affected local governments' along with other stakeholders to provide feedback prior to receiving formal referrals as required by the *Local Government Act*. (See Appendix A: Amendment Process).

The RDN Board is required to consider whether the Consultation Plan should include a public hearing to provide an opportunity for individuals and organizations to make their views known before proposed amendments to the RGS are submitted for acceptance by 'affected local governments' (Section 434(3) of the *Local Government Act*).

6 APPROACH

The Consultation Plan will involve residents and a range of stakeholders, from those who are responsible for approving any amendment brought forward, to those who have an interest in the process.

The plan is influenced by the guiding principles of the RDN Public Consultation/Communication Framework that:

¹ For the RDN an "affected local government" means the Council of each municipality all or part of which is covered by the RGS and the Board of each regional district that is adjoining an area to which the RGS is to apply. See the *Local Government Act* Sections 433 & 436.

“Anyone likely to be affected by a decision ...have opportunities for input into that decision”.

To ensure an effective and efficient process, the consultation process will focus on the affected local governments, key stakeholders and approving bodies while maintaining ongoing opportunities for all residents to learn about the review process and to provide input.

Section 436 of the *Local Government Act* states that before any amendments to the RGS can be adopted the changes must be accepted by all “affected local governments”, which are listed in Table 1.

There are also a number of organizations whose formal acceptance of the bylaw is not required under Section 436 of the *Local Government Act*, but who are considered stakeholders in the process and must be provided with an opportunity to provide input as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Local Government, First Nations and Stakeholders

Affected Local Government	First Nations	Stakeholders
City of Nanaimo	Snuneymuxw First Nation	North Cedar Improvement District
City of Parksville	Snaw-Naw-As First Nation	Bowser Waterworks
Town of Qualicum Beach	Qualicum First Nation	Qualicum Bay-Horne Lake Waterworks District
District of Lantzville	K’omoks First Nation	Little Qualicum Waterworks District
Comox Valley Regional District	Stz’uminus First Nation	Deep Bay Waterworks District
Alberni Clayoquot Regional District		Southwest Extension Waterworks District
Cowichan Regional District		
RDN Electoral Area Directors		

In addition to these organizations, other stakeholders may also include people who were involved in the development of the current RGS, people with an interest in buying land for development, or existing property owners with an interest in developing their land now or in the near future. It’s anticipated that through a preliminary round of meetings with the affected local governments and through networking with other groups, organizations and individuals, additional stakeholders will become known. Where this occurs, the stakeholders will be invited to learn about the process and participate by providing feedback and their insights.

Information on the Review

To ensure that the RGS review process provides adequate consultation among all stakeholders, the process provides for a range of active and passive information and input methods, including:

1. Background Information – Hard Copy

Information on the RGS and any proposed amendments will be available for review at the main RDN office.

2. RDN Website/Twitter/Facebook

The RDN “Get Involved” (www.getinvolved.rdn.ca) online communications platform will be used to promote and encourage communications on activities related to the RGS review. Use of Facebook and Twitter will also be used as appropriate.

The project’s Get Involved! page will contain documents related to the review and any proposed amendment, along with staff reports and RDN Board decisions. ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ (FAQs) will be added to provide answers to questions that are anticipated and information that is key to helping residents understand and evaluate any proposed amendment. The website will also include a timeline showing the status on the process as well as any new information as it becomes available.

In addition to these information tools, the website includes a visible comments section to encourage users to share ideas and comments about the various topics.

3. Media Releases

Media releases will be used as appropriate to provide information about the proposed amendment and opportunities for community consultation.

4. RDN Newsletters

Where possible, RDN Perspectives (www.rdn.bc.ca/perspectives) will be used to provide information and updates on the amendment. Electoral Area Directors will also be provided the option of providing this information in their own newsletters (www.rdn.bc.ca/electoral-areas).

5. RDN Staff Availability

RDN staff will be available to answer enquiries and meet with interested people or groups to discuss the proposed amendment.

Engagement & Feedback

As the review is focussed on specific policies, consultation is also focussed on those stakeholders that will be affected by changes to those policies while still providing opportunities for all community members to provided input.

1. Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings are a key component of consultation. Meetings will be held with stakeholders to make them aware of the policy options under consideration and to gain their feedback.

2. Ongoing Ways for the RDN to Receive Comments and Feedback

All residents wishing to provide feedback can at any time provide written comments to the RDN by e-mail, mail, or in person. Community members and other stakeholders may also appear as delegations or submit comments on the amendment to the RDN Board or committees of the Board.

In these instances, the communication will be documented as part of the public record on this amendment and will be made available for review. It should be noted that the RDN Board will not be able to consider any correspondence / feedback received after the end of a scheduled public hearing.

7 ACTIVITIES AND TIMING

The table below shows the proposed timing of different consultation activities and identifies the roles and responsibilities of the RDN. The timing of consultation activities will depend upon the RDN Board approval of the Consultation Plan. The majority of the consultation will be focussed on engaging with stakeholders most likley to be affected by the policies identified for review.

Table 2: Schedule of RGS Review Activities

Consultation activities up to Board approval of the Consultation Plan		
Activity	Date	Lead
Meeting with staff from member municipalities to explore areas of concern relating to RGS policies and processes	August 2017	RDN Staff
Present staff report – RGS Consideration of Review Diecton given to proceed with focused RGS Review	February 13, 2018	RDN Staff
Develop draft Consultation Plan and staff report	April-May 2018	RDN staff
Required notifiation letters sent to the Minister,	June 2018	RDN staff

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local governments and First Nations		
Present Consultation Plan and staff report to Committee of the Whole (COW)	July 10, 2018	RDN Committee of the Whole
RDN Board to approve Consultation Plan	July 21, 2018	RDN Board
Consultation activities following Board approval of Consultation Plan		
RDN “Get Involved” webpage launch Ongoing updates of webpage and other media as appropriate throughout the RGS review process	Launch July 2018 (subject to Plan approval)	RDN staff
Preparation of materials for the three areas of focus	August 2018	RDN staff
Arrange and participate in stakeholder meetings to seek input and insight on identified issues	September 2018 to November 2018	RDN staff
Compile and analyze results from input received. Prepare summary of consultation and draft bylaw amendment	December 2018	RDN staff
Directors’ Briefing	January 2019	RDN staff
IAC meeting to help coordinate provincial and local government actions and processes	February 2019	RDN staff
Prepare staff report and draft bylaw amendment	March 2019	RDN staff
Board gives first and second reading & Board decides to waive Public Hearing		
If Public Hearing waived, provide public notification	March 2019	RDN staff
Bylaw receives first and second readings	April 2019	RDN staff
Update webpage and other media as appropriate	March-April 2019	RDN staff
Board gives third reading of bylaw		
60 days referral period to receive ‘affected local governments’ acceptance	May 2019	RDN staff
Bylaw receives third reading and is adopted	June 2019	RDN Staff
As per RDN Board direction, adopt bylaw amendments		
Update webpage and other media as appropriate	June 2019	RDN staff

8 BUDGET

The staff time, materials and other resources (printing, advertising, hall rentals etc.) needed to implement this Consultation Plan are included in the 2018 and 2019 Long Range Planning Department budget.

9 STAFF RESOURCES

File Manager

The RDN file manager for this amendment is the Senior Planner reporting to the Manager of Long Range Planning.

Planning Staff Time

The 2018 and 2019 Long Range Planning budget accounts for staff time and resources for this focused review.

Corporate Communications

The RDN's Corporate Communications Coordinator has reviewed and provided comment on this Consultation Plan to ensure it is consistent with the RDN's Communication Policies and that it is coordinated with other communications and consultation initiatives scheduled by the RDN for 2018 and 2019.

APPENDIX A: AMENDMENT PROCESS

Legislated Amendment Process for the Regional Growth Strategy – Initiated by RDN

