

Delegation: Lance R. Nater, re Regional Growth Strategy Amendment to Implement the Town of Qualicum Beach Official Community Plan

Summary: About five years ago, the Town attempted to shift the RGS boundary for urbanization to the municipal boundary. At that time, the Town stated a full and complete OCP review had been conducted per the Local Government Act. This so-called OCP review consisted of one evening meeting attended by about 40 residents. The Town requested this change be considered as a minor amendment. There were a number of delegations for and against the Town request. After considering the delegations and correspondence, the RDN Board voted to reject the Town's request as being a minor amendment.

Now, five years later, the Town is back requesting the RDN amend the RGS to reflect its Growth Containment boundary to match the Town Municipal boundary - as a minor amendment. There are some differences between then and now. Instead of having one urban containment boundary, the Town would have two, the GCB and the UCB. The definition for both boundaries is very similar but the Town states it does not intend to extend basic services beyond the UCB unless other circumstances prevail. The Town, this time, states that their request is the result of a two year process to develop the draft OCP. The timing is correct but the implication that this request was the result of two years of discussion is simply false. The decision to amend the OCP to include this amendment request was raised and voted on by Council with NO public input before or after.

In October, local candidates for office liberally used words such as transparency, openness, consultation, honesty. It would be refreshing if those elected would try to measure their actions against these words. Qualicum Beach is a member of the RDN. Residents pay taxes to the RDN. What actions the Town may take with respect to land use can impact the Region. I urge the RDN Board to only consider the Town's amendment request as being a regular amendment. Approval of this request as proposed would be sanctioning the effort by the town to short cut a previously accepted process under the guise of simplification, efficiency, and governance. If a land use project cannot withstand the regular amendment process, there is a problem with the project or the process.

Action Requested: The Town of Qualicum Beach has applied for the RDN to modify the Regional Growth Strategy to reflect moving the Growth Containment Boundary to the Town's Municipal Boundary as minor amendment. The Town claims this request is based upon a two year process to fully review the Official Community Plan. The Town further claims that this request is not for reasons of any specific development, but to simply concentrate governance within Qualicum Beach to the exclusion of the RDN and member Districts and Municipalities.

I am opposed to the Town's request for the following reasons:

1. Staff reports imply that the Town request was considered and discussed with residents during the two year period the draft OCP was developed. That implication is not correct.
2. The Town states their request is simply to concentrate governance of land use decisions within Qualicum Beach, at the exclusion of any involvement of the RDN and its members.
3. Residents of the Town will continue to pay RDN taxes without the benefit of RDN consideration.